

VK port-a-log – A brief guide.

Version Gisborne_01

Disclaimer: This Android application is provided "as is" without warranty of any kind, either express or implied, including without limitation any implied warranties of condition, uninterrupted use, merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, or non-infringement.

VK port-a-log is an Android application written by Peter VK3ZPF to assist with logging functions associated with SOTA, WWFF, VK Shires and portable activations. The application has been written for use on Android phones and tablets. VK port-a-log is available for Android version 4.0 or later.

VK port-a-log versions before V20191026_01, including Moondarra, must be uninstalled before installing this version. All user data will need to be re-entered after installation.

****All prior logs should be copied from the device before uninstalling previous version – just to be sure!**

Most functions of the application should be self-evident.

Log entry cannot be saved if critical QSO data, such as call sign, frequency and mode are missing or not of the correct format or length.

Log files can be copied or emailed using third party apps such as ES Explorer File Manager



VK port-a-log can only be installed if device allows Unknown sources...See **Settings/Security/unknown sources**

SOTAwatch and ParksPeaks spot notifications

Your SOTA, WWFF and VK Shires references show here. See 'Activation Details'

The screenshot shows the main interface of the VK port-a-log application. At the top, it displays the current location: 'VK port-a-log : 45 km SE Melbourne'. Below this, the current time and date are shown as '08:59:15z' and 'VK3/VC-028 VKFF-2187 CS3 QF21QW'. The main form contains fields for 'Call: VK2IO', 'Sent: 59', 'Rec'd: 59', 'Name: Gerard', 'QTH:', 'Frequency (MHz): 7.144', and 'Mode: SSB Power: 100'. A 'Save' button is prominently displayed in green. Below the form is a table of recent QSOs with columns for VK1-VK8, TIME, CALL, MHz, TX, RX, NAME, and QTH. A keyboard is visible at the bottom, with call signs like VK2IO, VK2YK, and VK2JNG appearing above the keys.

Tap to access menu options (see figures 4 & 18) May be 'soft key' at bottom left or right on some devices. May also look like ≡ on some devices

Your Maidenhead locator – use Location menu option to derive from GPS. (locator on screen and in ADIF log) and GPS coordinates (in ADIF log only)

Tap button to enter up to 5 call signs during pile up
First call sign entered is copied to Pile up screen (x) shows number of call signs in pile up screen See figure 3

Clears entered QSO data

Common suffixes for call sign

Current activation QSO summary

QSO info scrolls up and down – See figure 2

Hot keys – can be VK call prefix, numbers 0 - 9 or user defined
Change format in 'Logger Settings' or tap and hold VK1 key to change format

Log of contacts for today. Can be scrolled up and down. Latest QSO always on top. Number of QSOs shown varies on size of device screen. Collapse keyboard to see more QSOs.

Tap QSO to edit contact.

Tap and hold QSO to delete contact.

Figure 1 - Main screen

Call: / /P /M

Sent: 59 Rec'd: 59

Name:

QTH:

Frequency (MHz)

Mode: SSB Power:

SOTA ref: XXX / XX - 000

WWFF ref: VKFF - 0000

Gridsquare: XXnnYY

VK Shires ref: XX0

Notes:

QSL message: Thanks for the QSO

Figure 2 – QSO details

To speed up recurring entries, line four can be set to any of the following fields;
 QTH, SOTA ref, WWFF ref, Gridsquare, VK Shires ref.

Tap and hold on the text, i.e. **QTH**, to change or 'Logger settings, Miscellaneous settings, Logger line 4 options'

Tap in each field to enter QSO details.

Swipe up to access SOTA, WWFF, Gridsquare, VK shires and Notes fields.

Default Sent and Received RS(T) can be set in 'Logger Settings'.

Name will be populated from names.csv file if available

Call signs beginning with AX will use the name from the same VK call sign if available

Frequency can be kHz or MHz see 'Logger settings, Miscellaneous logger settings, Log frequency in kHz'

Slashed zero in call can be set in 'Logger settings, Miscellaneous logger settings, Slashed zero'

Call, Frequency, and Mode are mandatory fields.

Maximum field lengths:

Call	20
RS(T)	10
Name	25
QTH	100
Frequency	10
Mode	5
Power	4
Notes	200
QSL message	200

Entries more than the maximum length are truncated.

SOTA, WWFF and VK Shires references must be correct format as shown.

Default WWFF reference prefix can be set in 'Logger settings'

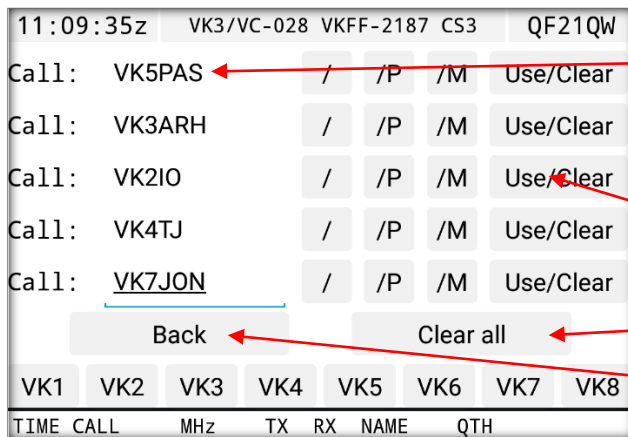
A SOTA chaser entry is created when a SOTA reference is entered.

QSL message format can be set in 'Logger setting, ADIF options'

All QSO details are available in ADIF export file.

Mandatory fields are highlighted until completed.

Save button changes to green when ready to save QSO.



- Enter up to five call signs during pile up. First call sign is copied from main screen when Pile up button is tapped
- Tap button to copy call sign to logging screen. Call sign is cleared once on logging screen. Tap and hold button to clear call sign
- Tap button to clear all call signs
- Tap button to return to logging screen

Figure 3 – Pile up screen

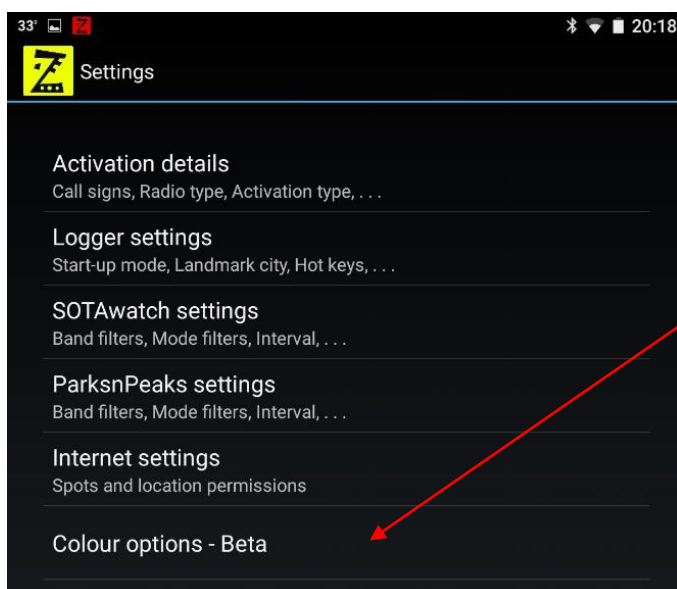
A names file is included on your device at **Device/sdcard/VKportalog/names/names.csv**

This file retains the operator name of each call sign worked where the name has been entered. This file may be edited with a simple text editor to add names. Please keep the format as shown below

```
Call,Name
VK3ZPF,Peter
VK3ARH,Allen
VK3KAB,Kevin
```

VK port-a-log will pre-fill the name on the logger screen if the name is already stored in names.csv.

If you change this name in the logger screen you are prompted if you wish to save the change.



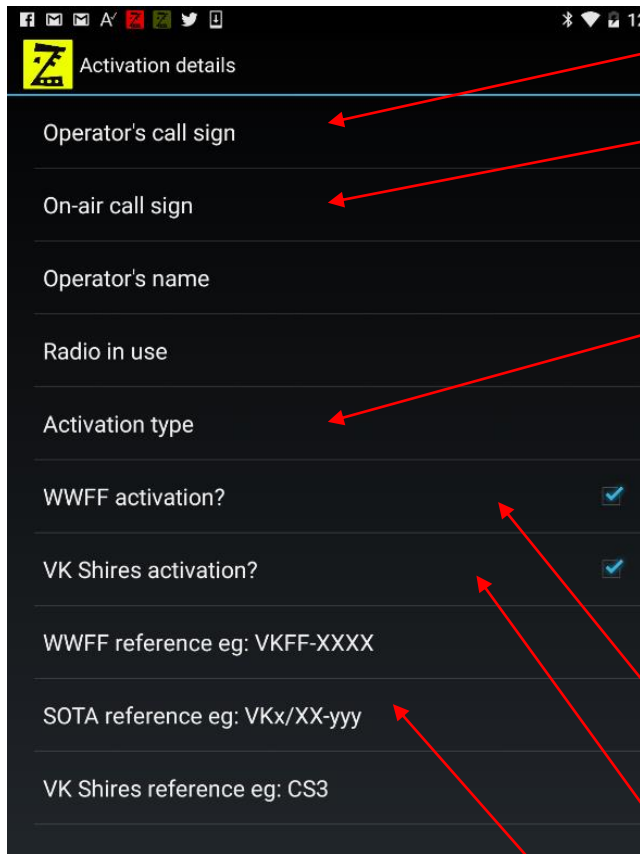
Colour options:

Screen shots in these instructions are either;

- White on black
- Black on white

Colour options have not been extensively tested. If you are having troubles select Default.

Figure 4 – Settings – Main options

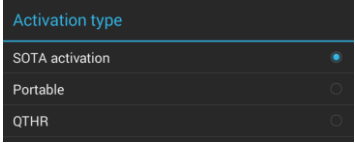


Your normal licensed call sign

The call sign used on air during the activation

Select appropriate activation type

- SOTA makes SOTA V2 CSV and ADIF files
- Portable makes ADIF log
- QTHR makes ADIF log without GPS info or locator
- SOTA V2 CSV file is made if any SOTA station is worked regardless of activation type chosen



Check if activating a WWFF area
Creates separate ADIF activator file for each WWFF area activated each day.

Check if activating a VK Shires area
Reference used for logging and spots.

Activation references must be in the correct format.
e.g.:

WWFF	VKFF-0876
SOTA	VK3/VC-025
VK Shires	CS3

Figure 5 – Settings – Activation details

Logger settings

- Start-up mode**
Set first operating mode for logger
- Landmark city**
Set City for location reference when portable
- Call sign hot keys**
Select type of call sign hot keys in logger
- Default received WWFF prefix**
Select default prefix for received WWFF station
- Maidenhead Locator options**
Select when Maidenhead Locator is obtained
- Default RST values**
Set default values for send and receive RST
- Auto clear fields - new QSO**
Clear previous QSO info after save
- Auto clear fields - QSO entry**
Clear QSO info when field is clicked
- ADIF options**
Set options for ADIF files
- SOTA csv options**
Set options for SOTA csv files
- User defined values**
Hot keys, Landmark, etc
- Miscellaneous logger settings**
Options that don't seem to belong elsewhere

Callouts:

- Sets the mode default operating mode
- Sets reference city for distance description
- Change hot keys format
 - Call sign hot keys
 - 0-9
 - VK1-VK8
 - User defined
- Set method for getting Maidenhead and location info.
 - Maidenhead Locator options
 - Use MAIDEN button to get Locator
 - Prompt to use GPS to get Locator
 - Always use GPS to get Locator
 - Use Location page when portable or WWFF
- Sets which logger fields are returned to default for each new QSO
- Sets which logger fields are cleared when field is tapped during QSO entry
- Sets options for ADIF export files – see figure 7
- Sets options for SOTA csv export files – see figure 8
- Sets user defined values;
 - Distance unit (km or miles)
 - Call sign hot keys
 - RS(T) hot key values
 - Landmark city values
 - Default Received WWFF prefix
- Sets other logger options – see figure 9

Figure 6 – Settings – Logger Settings

ADIF options

- QTH field options**
Set options for ADIF QTH field
- Notes field options**
Set options for ADIF NOTES field
- Comments field options**
Set options for ADIF COMMENTS field
- QSL message field options**
Set options for ADIF QSLMSG field

Figure 7 – ADIF options

SOTA csv options

- Include operator's name in SOTA csv**
If checked operator's name is added to SOTA csv notes field
- Include RST in SOTA csv**
If checked RST is added to SOTA csv notes field
- Include S2S notation in SOTA csv**
If checked S2S notation is added to SOTA csv notes field
- Include notes in SOTA csv**
If checked log Notes are added to SOTA csv notes field
- Include Gridsquare in SOTA csv**
If checked other station's entered gridsquare is added to SOTA csv notes field. (%QRA% included if Freq > 1 GHz)

Figure 8 – SOTA csv options

Miscellaneous logger settings

- Autosave operator's name** Save the name of other station for later recall
- Mandatory Field RF power** If checked, RF power must be entered before saving QSO
- Hide all Hot Keys** If checked, all Hot Keys are removed from view
- Allow RST Hot Keys** If checked, Hot Keys can be used for RS(T) values
- Allow non-numeric RST values** If checked, non-numeric RST can be entered
- Log frequency in kHz** If checked, log frequency field is in kHz
- Full keyboard for frequency** If checked, app uses full keyboard for frequency entry
- Display on-air call sign** If checked your on-air call sign shows at the top logging screen
- Display prior reference/s** If checked shows the SOTA, WWFF and VK shire reference, if available, from the last QSO on the same local day
- Scroll my references** Scroll activation reference near top of logging screen
- Keep display on** Display will stay on until power button is pressed or another app is displayed - may considerably shorten battery life
- Logger line 4 options** Select QTH, SOTA, WWFF, Gridsquare or VK Shires reference on logger line 4
- Move messages** Moves app messages to top of log listing
- Hide non-error messages** Hide information messages that are not error messages
- Show spots in colour** Show spots in red for < 15 minutes, orange 15 - 30 minutes
- Slashed zero** Show slashed zero (Ø) in callsign

Most of these options are self-explanatory. None of them are essential for basic logging.

When checked the on-air call sign is shown at the top of the screen. The distance to landmark info shown on the Summary screen

When checked the last SOTA, WWFF or VK shire reference/s logged for the entered callsign on the same local day is offered for faster entry.

Frequency (MHz) 7.090
 Mode: SSB Power: 50 Summary
 VK3PF 29-01-2020 0944z
 SOTA VK3/VE-138 WWFF VKFF-2400 VK Shire TS3
 Close

Tap reference to copy it to the log entry – tap again to remove it from the log entry – edit in log if required.

Offers 5 options, QTH, SOTA, WWFF, Gridsquare or VK shire reference for the line four of the logging screen

Call: VK2IQ / /P /M Pile up (0)
 Sent: 59 Rec'd: 59
 Name: Gerard Clear data
 QTH: Line 4 Save
 Frequency (MHz) 7.144
 Mode: SSB Power: 100 Summary

Figure 9 – Miscellaneous logger options

SOTAwatch settings

Check for new spots how often?

Copy summit ref to QTH field
When checked the SOTA summit reference from a spot is copied to the QTH field

Copy spot info to QSO notes
When checked the SOTA spot information is copied to the QSO notes field

Copy op's name to spot post
When checked the operator's name is copied to the SOTAwatch spot comments field

Show latest spots only
When checked only the most recent SOTAwatch spot for each call sign is displayed

SOTAwatch SMS gateways
Gateways marked ** require registration of mobile phone number and call sign with Andy mm0fmf@hotmail.com

Gateways marked ## do not require registration

SMS costs may apply.

SOTAwatch band filters
160 m, 80 m, 60 m, . . .

SOTAwatch mode filters
AM, CW, DATA, . . .

SOTAwatch spot comments
User defined comments for adding to SOTAwatch spots

SOTAwatch3 user details
Username, password

If a SOTAwatch spot is tapped the spot info is copied to the relevant fields on QSO logger screen.
If this option is checked the summit reference is also copied to the QTH field.

If a SOTAwatch spot is tapped the spot info is copied to the relevant fields on QSO logger screen.
If this option is checked the spot info is also copied to the QSO notes field.

If checked only the latest received spot for each call sign is shown on the SOTAwatch spots list.

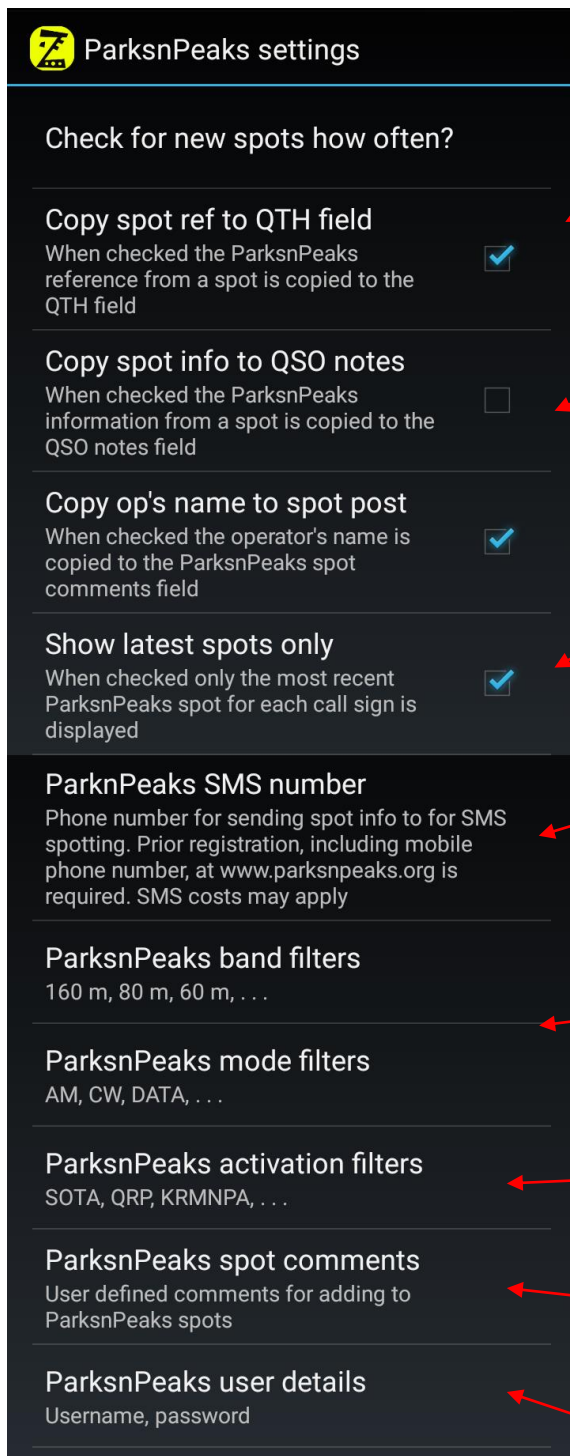
*** Only available on mobile phones ***
Seven options, located in 6 regions, are available for sending SOTAwatch spots via SMS.
Prior registration is required for gateways marked **
These gateways are managed by third party providers.
SMS usage charges may apply.

SOTAwatch spot filtering for band and mode.
NOTE: Filtering works by reading the content of each spot received.
Errors in spot data entered by others may cause some spots not to appear.

Five user defined comments can be pre-saved for adding to SOTAwatch spots.
Comments are accessed by tapping on Comment: in the Post SOTAwatch spot screen

SOTAwatch3 username and password are required for posting spots. See figure 15.

Figure 10 – SOTAwatch settings



If a ParksPeaks spot is tapped the spot info is copied to the relevant fields on QSO logger screen.

If this option is checked the WWFF and/or SOTA reference is also copied to the QTH field.

If a ParksPeaks spot is tapped the spot info is copied to the relevant fields on QSO logger screen.

If this option is checked the spot info is also copied to the QSO notes field.

If checked only the latest received spot for each call sign is shown on the ParksPeaks spots list.

*** Only available on mobile phones ***

One gateway, in Australia, is available for sending ParksPeaks spots via SMS. Prior registration is required at parkspeaks.org. This gateway is managed by a third party. SMS usage charges may apply.

ParksPeaks spot filtering for band and mode.

NOTE: Filtering works by reading the content of each spot received. Errors in spot data entered by others may cause some spots not to appear.

Spot filtering for ParksPeaks activation type: SOTA, QRP, KRMNPA, SANCPA VK & ZL WWFF and all WWFF spots.

Five user defined comments can be pre-saved for adding to ParksPeaks spots. Comments are accessed by tapping on Comment: in the Post ParksPeaks spot screen

ParksPeaks username and password are required for posting spots. See figure 16.

Figure 11 – ParksPeaks spot settings

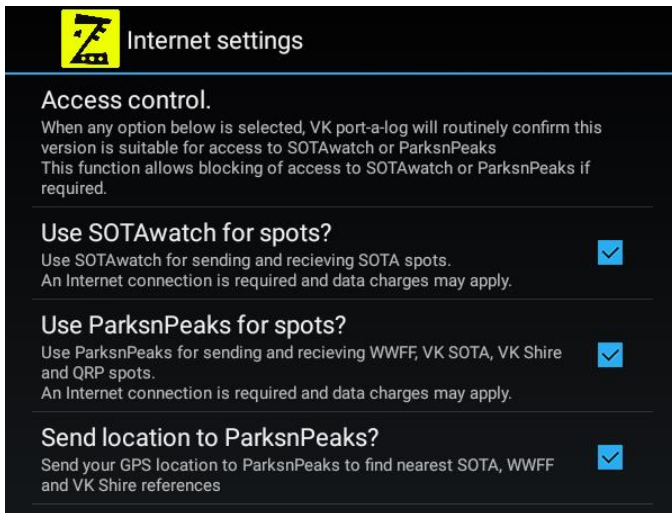


Figure 12 – Internet permissions

Check boxes to allow VK port-a-log access to the Internet for SOTAwatch and ParksNPeaks.

VK port-a-log periodically accesses vk3zpf.com for version verification.

Internet data charges may apply



Figure 13 – SOTAwatch spot screen

Swipe left or right to move between the following screens;

- ParksNPeaks post
- SOTAwatch post
- QSO logging
- SOTAwatch spot
- ParksNPeaks spot screens.

Tap on any SOTAwatch or ParksNPeaks spot to transfer info to QSO logging screen.

Band, mode and activation type filters are set in 'Spotter settings'.



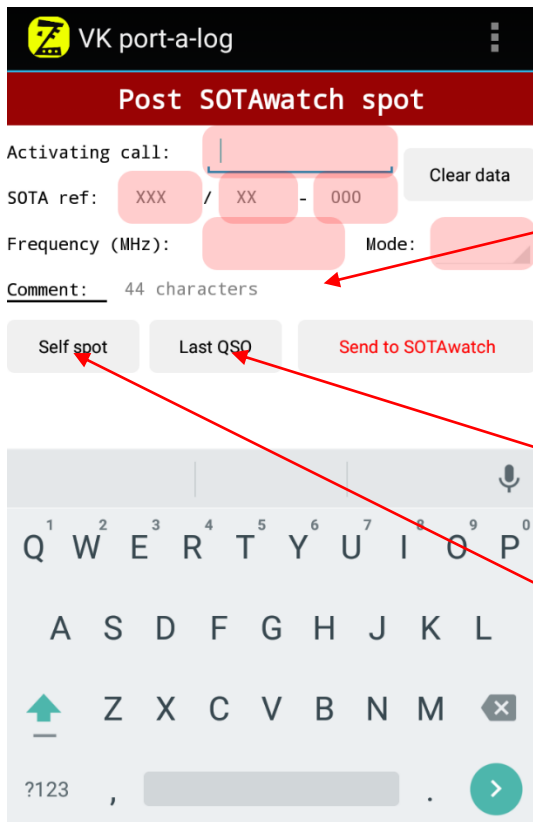
Figure 14 – ParksNPeaks spot screen

NOTES:

Spot data is sourced from www.sotawatch.org and www.parksnpeaks.org

Errors in spot data entered by others may cause some spots not to be shown.

Spots sourced from the WWFF cluster do not contain mode information.



Enter details to send spot via Internet to SOTAwatch.

Mandatory fields are highlighted.

Comment field is limited to 44 characters
Tap **Comment:** to access saved comments

Send button text changes from red to black after sufficient information is entered.

Tap and hold Send button to send via SMS

Self spot copies activation details from settings and frequency from QSO logging screen ready to send spot to SOTAwatch.

**** Check all details before sending spot ****

Last QSO copies details from last QSO in log ready to send spot to SOTAwatch.

**** Check all details before sending spot ****

Figure 15 – SOTAwatch post spot screen



Enter details to send spot via Internet to ParksPeaks.

Class, Park and VK Shire details can be selected from drop down lists or WWFF or VK Shire reference entered.

Mandatory fields are highlighted.

Tap **Comment:** to access saved comments

Send button text changes from red to black after sufficient information is entered.

Tap and hold Send button to send via SMS

Last QSO copies details from last QSO in log ready to send spot to ParksPeaks.

Non-required fields are removed.

**** Check all details before tapping Send ****

Self spot copies activation details from settings and frequency from QSO logging screen ready to send spot to the ParksPeaks site.

Non-required fields are removed.

**** Check all details before tapping Send ****

Figure 16 – ParksPeaks post spot screen

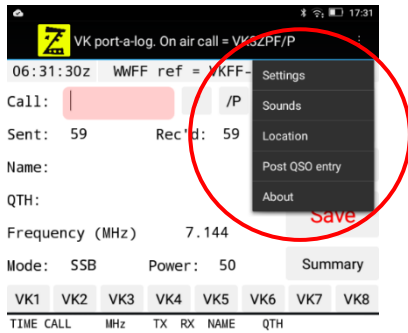
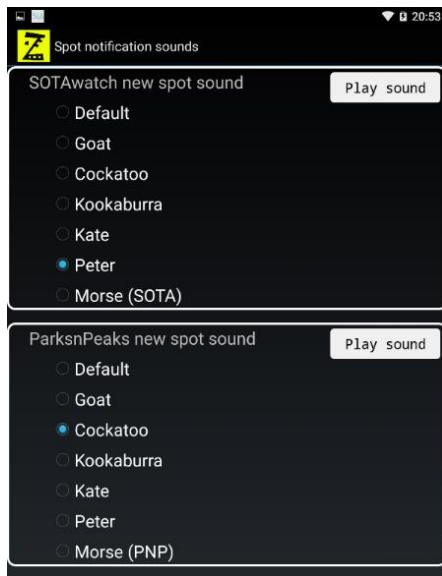


Figure 18 – Menu options

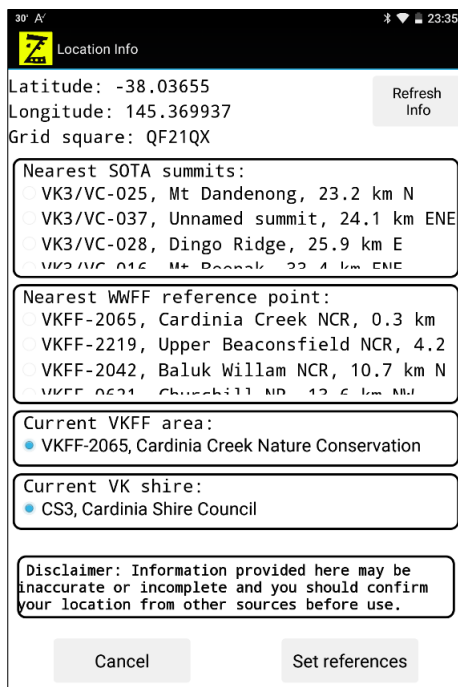


Select notification sound for each new spot being received.

Select different sounds for SOTAwatch and ParksPeaks

Kate and Peter are text to speech voice announcements.

Figure 19 – Spot notification sounds



When the Location Info page is opened the internal GPS is used to get the current coordinates and the Maidenhead gridsquare is calculated.

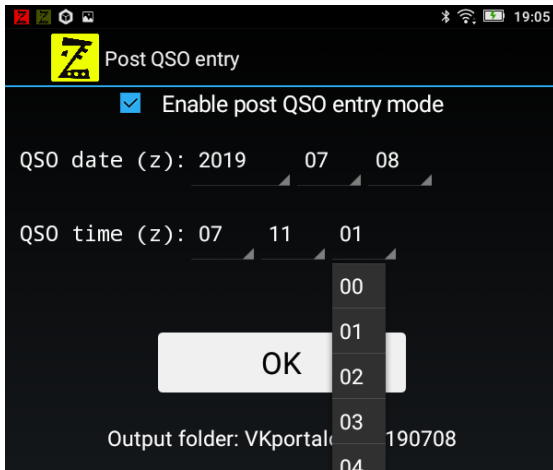
If Internet is available, the nearest five SOTA summits and the nearest five VKFF or NZFF references points within 80 km are retrieved.

If the current coordinates are within a VKFF area this is shown separately.

If the current coordinates are within a VK Shire area this is shown separately.

SOTA, WWFF and Shire references can be selected and then copied to the activation details by tapping the Set references button.

Figure 20 – Location Info



When **Enable post QSO entry mode** is selected the date and time for the QSO becomes available.

Use the drop-down lists to set the UTC date and time for the QSO. The date will be verified after tapping OK.

After saving each Post QSO entry, the date and time selection will return.

Post QSO entries are saved in the folder of the local date that the QSO was made.

Top section of log screen changes to yellow when in Post QSO mode.

Figure 21 – Post QSO time entry

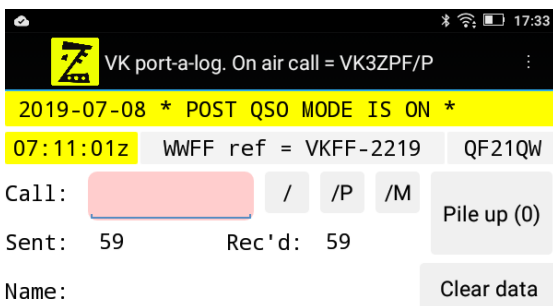
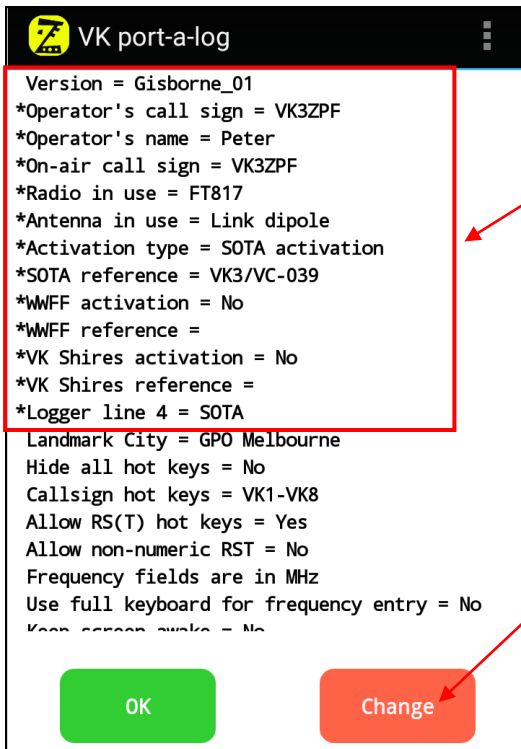


Figure 22 – Post QSO mode entry indication



Tapping an item marked with an asterisks (*) will open the relevant setting box

Tapping Change will open the settings function where all settings can be accessed.

Figure 23 – Start up summary screen

External keyboard short cuts

**** External keyboard may not function correctly with Android Version 8 or above ****

VK port-a-log : 45 km SE Melbourne

10:22:32z VK3/VC-028 VKFF-2187 CS3 QF21QW

Call: VK2IO / /P /M Pile up (0)

Sent: 59 Rec'd: 59

Name: Gerard Clear data

QTH: Save

Frequency (MHz) 7.144

Mode: SSB Power: 100 Summary

<CTRL> C	Clear data
<CTRL> S	Save QSO
<CTRL> <	Scroll left
<CTRL> >	Scroll right
<CTRL> U	Show summary

VK port-a-log

Post SOTAwatch spot

Activating call: Clear data

SOTA ref: XXX / XX - 000

Frequency (MHz): Mode:

Comment: 44 characters

Self spot Last QSO Send to SOTAwatch

<CTRL> C	Clear data
<CTRL> E	Self spot
<CTRL> L	Last QSO
<CTRL> S	Send spot to SOTAwatch
<CTRL> <	Scroll left
<CTRL> >	Scroll right

VK port-a-log

Post ParksPeaks spot

Activating call: Clear data

Activation class: Select class...

Park name:

WFF reference: -

Frequency (MHz): Mode:

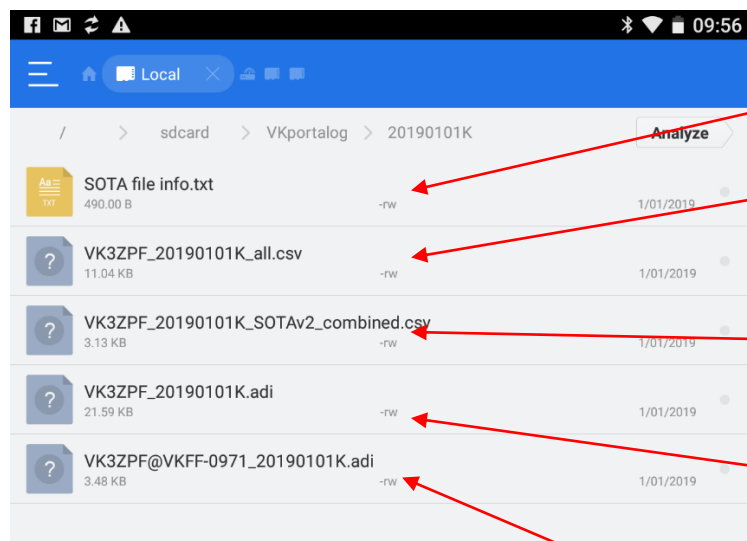
Comment: 44 characters

Self spot Last QSO Send to ParksPeaks

<CTRL> C	Clear data
<CTRL> E	Self spot
<CTRL> L	Last QSO
<CTRL> S	Send spot to Parkspeaks
<CTRL> <	Scroll left
<CTRL> >	Scroll right

Log files are saved at **Device/sdcard/VKportalog/yyyymmddK** – new folder and files are made for each local day.

Log files can be copied or emailed using third party apps such as ES Explorer File Manager



SOTA file info.txt A brief explanation about SOTA activator and chaser files

CSV file containing all data for the local day – Can be opened in Excel. Not suitable for upload to SOTAdata.

SOTA V2 CSV combined file ready for upload to sotadata.org.uk

ADIF file ready for import to third party logging software. Contains all QSOs for the local day.

ADIF file ready for import to WWFF program. Contains only QSOs made from WWFF area mentioned in file name.

Note: As at January 2020;

- WWFF does not accept chaser entries
- VK Shires does not have a defined logging format
- KRMNPA does not have a defined logging format
- SANPCPA does not have a defined logging format

For the latest info visit www.vk3zpf.com/vk-port-a-log