

## Tracks4Africa Mailing List Information

Some general guidelines and information for members of the T4A mailing list. Although it would make more sense to first discuss the workings of the mailing list, many readers will not read this document in its entirety, so the first page covers some general rules, mainly of a common-sense nature. The rest of this document describes how the list works and provides some general information and self-help tips.

### General Posting Rules

- Stay on topic – the T4A list is for discussing GPSR's and T4A maps and related issues. There are other forums for discussing travel in Africa and for getting information concerning possible destinations, availability of fuel, border post procedures, etc. [www.overland.co.za](http://www.overland.co.za) is one such example.
- Choose your audience – in response to a posting on the T4A group, you may post a reply to the entire group when in fact this would be of no interest to anyone except the original poster. Always remember that when you send a message to [tracks4africa@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa@googlegroups.com) you are sending an email to approximately 800 or more people. So, before you click "Send", think whether you really want to send your message to everyone or whether you really only needed to send it to one person.
- Restrict attachments – as a matter of good etiquette, don't send attachments larger than about 100 kB if possible. Often images are posted – one such instance was a 3 Mb image showing some arbitrary bush scene – multiply 3 Mb by e.g. 800 individual emails to the list members and suddenly, one single email has resulted in over 2 Gb of unintended Internet bandwidth consumption.
- Be polite – needs no further explanation.
- The list language is English – a generally accepted international language.
- No commercial posting – we don't want commercial advertising on the list as this could easily turn into an advertising war between vendors. If you as a private individual are looking to sell or buy your GPS or external antenna, or related goodies, then feel free to post a personal advert. We also don't need to see 15 lines of email signature giving all the details of your company as this may also equate to commercial advertising.
- DO NOT send unsubscribe requests to [tracks4africa@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa@googlegroups.com) – the list members don't care if you want to unsubscribe, they cannot help you and in fact you are wasting people's time. Such email addresses are added to the banned list. If you are unable to help yourself using the procedures described later in this document, then send an email to [tracks4africa-owner@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa-owner@googlegroups.com) and ask for help.
- Trim your posts – please be considerate in this regard. When replying to a group message, leave a small portion of the original message so that readers can see to which message you are responding, and delete the rest of the thread. This is particularly applicable to readers who choose to receive the group emails in digest form. Replies to digest messages that are not trimmed make subsequent digest messages unreadable because it becomes difficult to discern which portions of the message have already been read and which are new contributions.

# T4A Mailing List FAQ

## Who Should Join The T4A Google Group Mailing List ?

People interested in contributing to and enhancing T4A Maps and those wishing to remain abreast of related developments as well as those wishing to get help concerning GPSR hardware and software issues will find membership of this list useful. People wishing to get more information about travel in Africa will NOT find this list particularly useful (see URL for the Overland website above).

By virtue of the fact that T4A Maps were first developed for Garmin™ GPSR's, generally most list members own Garmin hardware although this list and T4A have no formal relationship with Garmin or any of its subsidiary companies.

There is occasional discussion of other software packages that are used such as GIS Russa™, OziExplorer™, Garmin Mobile XT, etc., but this is not the main focus of the T4A list.

Many discussions are related to items found on the T4A maps or are related to hardware or software queries.

If the above does not interest you, then the chances are the T4A email list is not for you.

## How Do I Join The T4A Mailing List ?

Prospective members are added to the T4A List after they have submitted a request to join at [http://www.tracks4africa.co.za/t4a\\_community.asp](http://www.tracks4africa.co.za/t4a_community.asp)

There is little compulsory information required of the user at the above web page, but essentially, should the reason for joining indicate the user has no idea whatsoever what T4A is about, then such requests are rejected. On the other hand, filling in a few fields indicating what GPS you use, what countries you like to visit in Africa and expressing an interest in joining T4A will result in the request to join being readily accepted.

Once the request to join has been received, the list administrator will add the new member to the list of members in Google Groups. This usually will happen within 24 hours, so please don't submit multiple requests in a short space of time.

Once you are a member, your first postings to the list are moderated until the list administrator can clearly see that any new member is indeed a bona fide member and is not some kind of spammer. Thereafter, postings to the list are un-moderated and we rely on members more-or-less conforming to the rules listed at the beginning of this document.

## How Does The Mailing List Work ?

Members of a mailing list submit messages for discussion to a single email address, in this case [tracks4africa@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa@googlegroups.com) and the message is delivered to all the current list members.

This is an extremely efficient means of transferring knowledge and information. Someone with a query will post their question and one of the knowledgeable members will hopefully post a possible answer. Other

answers and discussion thereof will follow in what is known as a thread – i.e. a single discussion topic. Immediately, all other members of the list who didn't know the answer have suddenly increased their knowledge. The above sounds rather obvious in the extreme, but it is the main reason for the existence of such special interest email groups.

All messages submitted to the list address are stored in online archives on the web. New list members can search the archives to see if their question has already been answered during previous discussions. Existing list members may search for a topic they know has already been discussed, but which they wish to re-read. Access to the group archives requires a Google Account as discussed below.

In addition to browsing message history or current messages on the web, members may change their email delivery preferences themselves. Users may choose to receive no emails, individual emails (i.e. one message per every message sent to the group) or choose between two types of summarised single daily emails. The first option of no mail is particularly useful if you are going on leave for a few weeks and don't want to flood your mailbox while you are away.

The above two features are available **ONLY** if the member has created a Google Account associated with their email address and have logged in to the group on the web. The creation of a Google Account is described in detail below.

### How Do I Create A Google Account ?

To access the T4A Google Group on the web and either read the discussions there or change your email delivery options, you need a Google Account. This account **MUST** be associated with **THE SAME** email address that you used to originally subscribe to the list. The above has already been emphasised, but experience has shown that list members are most often caught out by this issue – for example, [joe.soap@yahoo.com](mailto:joe.soap@yahoo.com) subscribes to the list, but mostly they send email from their mail client where their email address has been set to send from [joe.soap@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:joe.soap@yahoo.co.uk). The user soon forgets the slight difference between the two email addresses and then wonder why all attempts to communicate with the group from the second address (e.g. to unsubscribe via email) fail.

To create your Google Account, follow the simple steps below.

1. Go to <http://groups.google.com/>
2. Click the "Sign in" link near the top right of the page
3. Click the "Create an account now" link.
4. Fill in the following screen . . .

**Required information for Google account**

Your current email address:   
 e.g. myname@example.com. This will be used to sign-in to your account.

Choose a password:  [Password strength: Strong](#)  
 Minimum of 8 characters in length.

Re-enter password:

Remember me on this computer.

Creating a Google Account will enable Web History. Web History is a feature that will provide you with a more personalized experience on Google that includes more relevant search results and recommendations. [Learn More](#)

Enable Web History.


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**Get started with Google Groups**

Nick name:

Location:

Word Verification: Type the characters you see in the picture below.





Letters are not case-sensitive

Terms of Service: Please check the Google Account information you've entered above (feel free to change anything you like), and review the Terms of Service below. [Printable Version](#)

Google Terms of Service

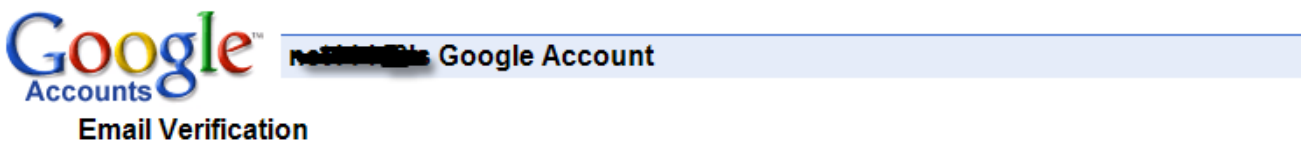
Welcome to Google!

1. Your relationship with Google

By clicking on 'I accept' below you are agreeing to the [Terms of Service](#) above and the [Privacy Policy](#).

Once you have read the Terms of Service and Privacy policies, click on the “I Accept. Create my account” button.

5. You should see the following screen . . .



In order to verify that the email address associated with your account is correct, we have sent an email message to **netactive.co.za**. To activate your Google account, please access your email and click on the link provided.

6. Once you have received a validation email as described above and clicked on the link, you will be at the following screen . . .



Google Accounts

Email Address Verified

Thank you for verifying your Google account. Your account is now activated.

You can also [click here to manage your account profile](#).

7. Go and check your account profile by clicking on the abovementioned link. . .



Google Account

Personal information - [Edit](#)

@netactive.co.za

Country: South Africa

[Change email](#)

[Change password](#)

Here you can change your email address or password. More importantly though, click on Edit to take you to the following screen . . .



Google Account

Edit personal information

First name: *(optional)*

Last name: *(optional)*

Nick name: *(optional)*

Zip code: *(optional)*

Country: *(optional)*

Time zone: *(optional)*

Display all timezones

Associate email addresses with your account

Adding email addresses helps Google associate useful information with your Google Account. For example, Google Calendar can show invitations sent to any of your addresses.

@netactive.co.za (Primary email)

Add an additional email address:

Here you can enter all or none of the personal information (at your own discretion), but again, more importantly, you can add another email address to your Google Account. The above is useful in the case that for example you have subscribed to the T4A list using your private email address, but you would also like to be able to post messages from your work address. This will mean you can post messages to the group from both addresses associated with your account, but only receive messages on your primary address.

Click on the “Save” button. You will need to respond to another confirmation email that will be sent to your second email address. If the second address is your work address and you are at home, you can respond to that mail later when you are at work.

8. Now go back to <http://groups.google.com/>, click the Sign In link as before and enter your primary email address and password. You will now see all the Google Groups to which you are subscribed using the email address you just entered . . .

The screenshot shows the Google Groups interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the Google Groups logo on the left and a 'Search Groups' button on the right. Below the search bar, there are links for 'Advanced Groups Search' and 'Preferences'. The main content area is titled 'My groups' and includes a 'Create a group...' button. It displays a grid of group cards for 'Tracks4Africa', 'AcumenNews', 'comp.databases.ms-access', 'LIMS & Lab Informatics', 'microsoft.public.-access', 'camp-fire', 'Google Earth Community Tracks4Africa', and 'Google Groups Help Forum'. Each card shows the group name, icon, and statistics like web views, messages, and new topics. At the bottom, there are links for 'Manage my memberships' and 'Add My Groups to your Google homepage'.

Note that on the above page ( <http://groups.google.com/> ) when you are signed in, there is a link to “My Account” which enables you to change all you account settings.

Sometimes a user has changed their account settings to disallow being invited or added to any Google Groups. The page to change these settings is accessed through the above page, then click on “My Account” and then “Manage subscriptions” next to the “Groups” item.

## How Do I Access The T4A Group On The Web ?

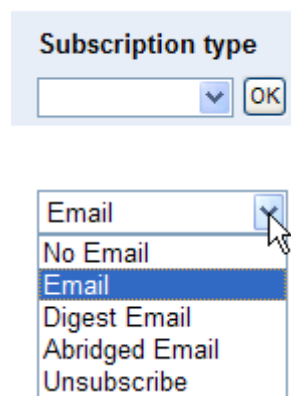
Simply go to <http://groups.google.com/group/tracks4africa> and log in using your Google Account details.

Sometimes a user selects the option “Remember me on this computer.” and they will not need to type in their login details.

## How Do I Unsubscribe From The T4A List ?

The simplest method is to send a message to [tracks4africa-unsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa-unsubscribe@googlegroups.com). This unsubscribe message MUST be sent from the SAME email address that is subscribed to the list. Having said that, so many users complain that the above does not work. Upon investigation, it is normally found that the users sent the unsubscribe message from one of their alias addresses and not the exact address that was subscribed. Occasionally, delays in email transmission may make this method appear to not work.

If the above does not work and the user does have a Google Account, log in to the main Google Groups page at <http://groups.google.com> and select the “Manage my memberships” link. Alternatively, go straight there using <http://groups.google.com/groups/mysubs> and then in the column “Subscription type”, choose the desired option . . .



Note that on this page you may also choose the “No Email” option if you only want to temporarily suspend mail delivery. DO NOT unsubscribe if you are merely going on leave as this introduces unnecessary administration when you return and wish to re-subscribe. Either use the above method to select the “No Email” option, or contact the list owner with a “suspend” request as described below.

The third method to unsubscribe is to send such a request to [tracks4africa-owner@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa-owner@googlegroups.com). Make sure that if you are not sending your message from the EXACT email address that is subscribed to the list, you need to tell the list owner which email address needs to be unsubscribed. Failure to do so causes unnecessary searching to try and work out what email address must be unsubscribed. The same applies to “No Email “ requests.

If you wish, you may also visit <http://groups.google.com/group/tracks4africa/post?sendowner=1&hl=en> (you need to be logged in) and send a message to the group owner requesting to be unsubscribed.

## Do I Need To Have A Google Account ?

The short answer is “No”. However, if you wish to change your own email delivery settings or to read historical discussions on the T4A Google Group website, then you need a Google Account. If you want to use more than one email address to send or receive group messages, then you need a Google Account.

Unsubscribe requests via email to [tracks4africa-unsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa-unsubscribe@googlegroups.com) is the only administrative task that a user without a Google Account may perform.

### Is It Safe To Use My “Primary” Email Address To Join The T4A List ?

Many users are concerned about SPAM, and rightly so. To date it seems that there are no SPAM risks associated with using your “main” email address (either your personal or work address that you normally only use for important personal or work emails). Having said that, there are no guarantees that Google Groups will not be hacked and your email address could then be available to spammers. There are also no controls as to whom on the T4A list may forward emails containing email addresses of members embedded in the mails, so it is probably wise to use a “disposable” email address such as hotmail or gmail or an alias to your primary address to join the list. In that case, should spam become a problem, dump that mail address and join with another address.

### Why Can’t I Post Messages To the T4A List Address ?

A very common problem is that people find they are unable to post messages to the list address i.e. to [tracks4africa@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa@googlegroups.com). To help prevent Spammers, ONLY list members may post to the list. Mails sent from non-member addresses are ignored. The most usual explanation for a member not being able to post is that the member has forgotten that they subscribed to the list using a particular email address and they try and post messages from another of their (similar) email addresses. While mail received by that person on both email addresses ends up in the same inbox, mail sent from their mail client will be sent from one or the other of their addresses. Google Groups is not psychic – it cannot be expected to recognise that mail from [johan@mydomain.com](mailto:johan@mydomain.com) is to be treated in the same way as mail from [theboss@mydomain.com](mailto:theboss@mydomain.com). If the member subscribed using [johan@mydomain.com](mailto:johan@mydomain.com), then any mails sent to the group by that person from [theboss@mydomain.com](mailto:theboss@mydomain.com) will be rejected.

### What Can I Do About T4A Mails Cluttering Up My Email ?

Sometimes a flurry of emails from T4A are a nuisance in one’s Inbox. It is best to create a rule in your mail client to store all incoming mails from [tracks4africa@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa@googlegroups.com) in their own sub-folder so that you can browse through them at your leisure. Criteria to use to create such a rule could include “mails from [tracks4africa@googlegroups.com](mailto:tracks4africa@googlegroups.com)” where the subject line begins with “[T4A]”.

### Is It Best To Use Digest Mode Instead Of Individual Mail Mode ?

Some members may elect to have their mail delivered in digest mode because they don’t want dozens of mails each day in their inbox – instead, they will get one daily digest message containing all the posts for the day. The main problem with this is that the digest mails are extremely difficult to read, particularly if posters do as many usually do and don’t trim their posts. It is often easiest to continue to receive the individual mails, but use the tip from the previous paragraph to create a rule to move all T4A messages to a sub-folder. It is then easy to browse the messages by subject and delete threads that hold no interest.

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(Any errors or suggestions, please send to [adrian.jardin@gmail.com](mailto:adrian.jardin@gmail.com))