

In the news from Amateur Radio New South Wales for this week;

The ARNSW library, here at VK2WI, will be open tomorrow afternoon, the 4th of February. Members can contact the library via email, at library@arnsw.org.au.

The CCARC's Wyong Field Day is coming up at the end of the month, Sunday the 24th of February. Instead of the normal morning bulletin, VK2WI News will have a special edition on Saturday evening before the field day, starting at 7:30pm local time. This will include the usual National news, as well as club news and any last-minute Field Day updates. On the evening of the 24th, VK2WI News will on at 7:30pm as normal, and will include a brief report from the Field Day.

For those in the Port Stephens area, the Port Stephens ARC has set up a new 70cm repeater. Its at Gan Gan, and its on 439.7MHz with a -5MHz offset.

Education Update

A change is underway in how Amateur Radio Examinations and licencing are organised in Australia.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority, the ACMA, announced on the 1st of February that, after an open tender process, they have selected the University of Tasmania—through its institute the Australian Maritime College (AMC)—to deliver amateur radio examinations, issue amateur certificates of proficiency and for related callsign management.

The previous arrangement with the Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA) came to an end on 1 February 2019. The ACMA is now working with the AMC to finalise the arrangements in order for the AMC to progressively commence delivery of services from 25 February 2019.

The change may affect amateur training and examination activities coming up in the next couple of months – especially as the details of the new arrangements are still being finalised. The ARNSW Education team is contacting those who enrolled in our upcoming courses. If you have signed up with another group, they should be in touch with you soon, to let you know how the changes will affect you.

We will have more details in the VK2WI news bulletins as they become available.

ARNSW Elections

The next Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio New South Wales is on Saturday the 13th of April 2019.

At the AGM, a new management council is to be appointed.

Nominations are open for members who wish to be on the council for the year 2019 and 2020. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the website, arnsw.org.au or can be obtained from the office.

Nominations will close at midday on Saturday 2nd of March 2019.

*Peter VK2EMU
Returning Officer*

Note: Amateur Radio New South Wales is a business name of the company registered as Wireless Institute of Australia New South Wales Division. This company was originally incorporated in New South Wales in 1922.

Since 2004, the company uses the business name, Amateur Radio New South Wales, to avoid confusion with the independent incorporated entity, The Wireless Institute of Australia.

40 Metre Dipole Buildathon

ARNSW is holding a 40 metre antenna buildathon, on Sunday the 10th of March, here at VK2WI Dural. While the day is primarily intended to be of interest to Foundation licencees, all members are of course welcome to attend.

The session will start at 10am with a brief presentation on the how and why of the dipole antenna. Following this, you will sit beside an experienced ham to assist you in constructing your own 1:1 balun. This is fairly easy, as it is in kit form, with half of the assembly already done

After completion, your dipole will be tested and following this...lunch.

The attendance fee on the day includes the antenna kit, consisting of the 1:1 balun, two insulators and 20 metres of hi-quality Kevlar antenna wire.

Also, for an additional fee we will have available kit-sets to make up some feedlines – with a 15m run of RG58 type coax, and a couple of PL-259 connectors. Again, on the day you will make this up yourself under supervision.

So, at the end of the day, you will have a fully functioning dipole antenna complete with a 1:1 balun and 15metres of feedline, ready to go on air; All of which you made yourself.

All this stage we only require an expression of interest, not confirmation of attendance – so if you are interested please send us an email, to events@arnsw.org.au – including your name, callsign, and a contact phone number.

*AI VK2OK
Event Co-ordinator, ARNSW*

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 25th to the 31st of January.
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	25 th	26 th	27 th	28 th	29 th	30 th	31 st
10cm flux	75	77	74	76	73	74	72
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	10	5	3	0	0	0	11 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	9	6	2	1	1	1	11 estimated
T index	-19	-21	-17	-22	-17	-19	-14

Solar activity was low on the 26th and 28th, and very low otherwise.

Geomagnetic activity started out at quiet to unsettled levels on the 25th and 26th, was then quiet from the 27th to the 30th, before returning to quiet to unsettled levels on the 31st.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, started off depressed 20% during the day and 15% during the night on the 25th; 15% depressed during the day and 20% depressed during the night on the 26th; and on the 27th, near predicted during the daytime but again depressed 15% at night. The 28th and 29th were depressed 15% throughout, the 30th remained depressed 15% during the day but improved at night to near predicted, and the 31st was near predicted all day.

Now, the forecast for the 1st to the 7th of February;

Solar activity is expected to be very low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to range from quiet to active levels on the 1st and 2nd, with possible minor storms on the 1st. Quiet to unsettled conditions are expected on other days.

Maximum Usable Frequencies are expected to range from near predicted monthly values, to depressions of up to 30%.

Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.

Solar Flux Index update

Here are the updated Solar Flux Index (SFI) figures for this week.

The figures for January were;

Minimum of 68, Average of 72, and a Maximum of 77
With peak dates between the 3rd and 4th, and the 27th to the 31st

At the start of February, the prediction is a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 72, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates between the 2nd and 9th, and the 14th to the 28th

And looking ahead to the prediction for March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates between the 13th to the 18th.

Update with thanks to Noel, VK2FUL.

[using daily data updates from :
<http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/usaf-45-day-ap-and-f107cm-flux-forecast>]

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What use is an F-call?

Tonight, we continue with the series, written and produced by Onno VK6FLAB. Each episode looks at different aspects of the diverse hobby of Amateur Radio.

[Play File: E-FCAL033.wav]

Duration:3m12s

In: "What use is an F-call?"

Out: "I'm Onno vk6flab"

For more information about this series, including transcripts and useful resources for F-calls, Onno's website is; vk6flab.com, or follow him on Twitter, @VK6FLAB.

ARRL DX news

FIJI; Jim, WB2TJO is active as 3D2JS from Taveuni Island, IOTA OC-016, until March 7. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

BAHRAIN; Special event station A91KWT is active until February 28 to mark Kuwait National Liberation Day.

PHILIPPINES; Christian, F4EBK is active as DU3/F4EBK from Luzon Island, IOTA OC-042, until March 31. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and various digital modes. In addition, Bodo, DF8DX plans to be active as DU1WQY/1 from Palawan Island, IOTA OC-128, from February 4 to 14.

SPAIN; Special event station EG3WCD is active on all bands, until February 4 to mark World Cancer Day.

IRELAND; Members of the Kerry Amateur Radio Group are active as EI100YXQ during 2019 to mark the hundred years since the first transatlantic voice transmissions from Ballybunion, Ireland to Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island, Canada.

PANAMA; Special event station H31A is active until August 15 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the founding of Panama City. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres using SSB, RTTY, PSK31 and FT8.

THAILAND; Special event station HS55RAST is active until March 31 to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the Radio Amateur Society of Thailand.

GRENADA; Peter, G4HSO will be active as J3/G4HSO from February 4 to 16. Activity will be holiday style on the HF bands using mainly CW.

JAPAN; Special event stations 8J0M, 8J2M and 8J9M are active until April 30 to mark the 30th General Assembly of the Japan Medical Congress in Chubu.

GUAM; Yoshi, JE2EHP is active as K1HP/KH2 until February 4. Activity is on 80 to 6 metres using CW, SSB and FT8.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA; A group of operators are active as P29VCX from Manus Island, IOTA OC-025, until February 5, and then as P29NI from Daru Island, IOTA OC-153, from February 6 to 11. Activity is on 40 to 15 metres, and possibly 160 and 80 metres, using CW, SSB and RTTY.

BONAIRE; Fred, WW4LL and Michael, NN9DD will be active as PJ4/ homecalls from February 4 to 10. Activity will be on the HF bands using SSB, RTTY and FT8. They will be active as PJ4Z in the upcoming CQ WPX RTTY contest.

SWEDEN; Special event station SE19SKI will be active from February 4 to 17 during the Alpine World Ski Championships.

VIETNAM; Bogdan, SP2FUD and Zen, SP2GCJ will be active as XV9FUD and XV9ZT, respectively, from February 4 to 18. Activity will be on 40 to 12 metres using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

KOSOVO; Mome, Z32ZM is active as Z68M until February 5. Activity is on 160, 80 and 30 metres using FT8.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The North American CW Sprint, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre Fox Hunt, NCCC Sprint CW Ladder, Vermont QSO Party, 10-10 International Winter SSB Contest, Mexico RTTY International Contest, F9AA CW Cup, Black Sea Cup International, Minnesota QSO Party, FYBO Winter QRP Sprint, AGCW Straight Key CW Party, British Columbia QSO Party and FISTS Winter Slow Speed CW Sprint will certainly keep contesters busy this weekend.

The RSGB 80-Metre Club SSB Championship is scheduled for February 4.

The ARS Spartan CW Sprint is scheduled for February 5.

The CWops Mini-CWT Test, UKEICC 80-Metre SSB Contest, Phone Fray and QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for February 6.

The Canadian National Parks on the Air, CNPOTA, event runs throughout 2019, with special stations active from Canada's parks and historic sites.

WICEN News

WICEN has been asked to assist NSW SES Bush Search and Rescue during a remote canyon exercise on February 15-17 in the Waratah Ridge - Bungleboori Creek area of the Wollemi National Park. This exercise is to test and compare the effectiveness of three systems, GRN, HF and Satellite-based text messaging, in a remote canyon environment. Please contact WICEN Operations if you can assist.

The next WICEN training day will be here at ARNSW in Dural, next Sunday, 10th of February.

WICEN will be at the Wyong Field Day, Sunday the 24th of February. This is a good opportunity for members to pay their annual membership. Volunteers are sought, to staff the stand.

The 2nd and 3rd of March are planned as a training weekend at Newnes, near Lithgow. This is the site of the Glow Worm Marathon, which WICEN will again support, in mid-June.

Members should remain prepared, as summer storms and fires periodically result in the services of WICEN being required.

The WICEN website is at nsw.wicen.org.au and includes a web contact form. Facebook users will find an official WICEN NSW page, and an informal national WICEN group.

WICEN Northern Rivers holds a weekly net on Tuesdays at 8pm, on the Lismore repeater VK2RSC on 146.8 MHz, requiring a 123 Hz tone. Listen for VK2WIR.

The WICEN Mid North Coast Region meets at 3:30pm on the first Saturday of the month, at SES HQ, Central Road, Port Macquarie. The region is also running an HF net on Thursday evenings from 7pm, on the band-plan's 80 metre WICEN frequency of 3.6MHz.

WICEN ACT is part of the Canberra Region Amateur Radio Club, supporting events in the ACT and Capital Country, and on the South Coast of NSW. Dementia Australia is kicking off the 2019 Memory Walk & Jog season in Canberra, on the foreshore of Lake Burley Griffin, on the 24th of February, supported by WICEN ACT. The Canberra Two Day walk is March 30 and 31. See the WICEN and Events pages on www.crarc.ampr.org.

WICEN Victoria will be supporting the 2019 Pajero Challenge next weekend, the 9th and 10th of February, at Big River. Duncan's Run is an Ultra-Marathon on Saturday the 23rd of March, and the Sunraysia 400 is on the 27th and 28th of April. The group runs a net on 3.6 MHz each Tuesday from 8:30pm local time. More information can be found on the website, vic.wicen.org.au.

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Club News

We start this week, with news from the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club. Their next meeting is the Friday night gathering on the 15th of February, in the SES Building in Port Macquarie.

The club's annual Antenna Shootout is next Sunday the 10th of February, at Tuffins Lane Sportsfields in Port Macquarie. Facilities will be available to test both home brew and commercial antennas on 6 metres, 2 metres and 70 centimetres. The day will commence with set up at 9am with a bacon and egg BBQ breakfast for early arrivals. There will be a sausage sizzle BBQ lunch at noon, in the shade of the covered picnic tables. The communications caravan will be on site in the carpark with tea, coffee, water and soft drinks.

If you still don't have a copy of the 2019 Club Calendar, there are still some available at club activities.

The club conducts two nets each week; the mid-week net starts at 7:30pm on Thursday nights, and the weekend net starts at 9am on Sunday mornings. Both nets are on the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater, 146.7MHz. This repeater requires a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone for access.

Visitors are always made very welcome at the club's monthly general meetings at 2pm on the first Saturday of each month, and at the Friday night gathering at 7pm on the evening of the third Friday of each month. The venue for all these meetings is the SES Building in Port Macquarie.

For more information about the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club, visit the website at orarc.org. The site contains a wealth of Amateur Radio items in addition to club information. The January 2019 edition of the Club's bimonthly newsletter, Oxtales, is now online, and past issues are available on the website as well. The club is also on Facebook; just search for ORARC.

*Submitted by Henry VK2ZHE
For the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.*

Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

It's now just 3 weeks until the largest hamfest in the Southern Hemisphere; the CCARC Wyong Field Day, on Sunday the 24th February, at Wyong Racecourse. Naturally, there will be a free bus service run by the CCARC to and from Wyong railway station.

Presentations confirmed so far include: "Impacts of Space Weather on Aviation" by Vickal Kumar; "How science works" by Brian VK2GCE; "Satellites and collecting telemetry" by Cameron VK2CKP; a talk on the RAVEN frequency-hopping military radio using valve technology by Ray VK2NO; and a talk on the Multi-Mode Digital Voice Modem (MMDVM) by Lindsay VK2AMV. There will also be raffle prizes on the day, so be sure to check the Field Day website for more information and updates.

Club Vice-President, Jaye VK2FOMG, is interested in collecting some early history of the club, as some has fallen by the wayside over the years. If you have any photographs of old Field Days, stories or snippets about the club, or even a bit of old gossip, then Jaye would love to hear from you.

All meetings of the Central Coast Amateur Radio Club are held at the Club rooms in Dandaloo St, Kariong, just past the fire station at 1pm, preceded by the famous sausage sizzle run by master chef Steve VK2SKC, starting at noon. The Club rooms are accessible by bus, with a stop just opposite Dandaloo St, serviced by the route 34 bus from Gosford railway station every hour. The Club rooms are usually open from 10.30am every Saturday, for general chit-chat and access to the Club workshop and library.

The Club relays VK2WI News broadcasts every Sunday morning and evening. Callbacks are taken after the morning news only, on the Somersby 6m and 2m repeaters VK2RAG on 53.725 and 146.725 MHz respectively; please note that both repeaters require the standard sub-audible tone of 91.5 Hz.

The Club also runs a mixed-mode repeater VK2RAG on 439.950 MHz, which can provide access to P25 and other linked digital repeater networks. A 91.5 Hz tone is required for analogue access, and is highly recommended for receiving.

There is a net every Thursday evening on the 2m repeater VK2RAG on 146.725, starting at 8pm; all members are encouraged to join (especially if Club news for the ARNSW broadcast is involved). Club news is happily accepted at publicity@ccarc.org.au, preferably by 12 noon on Friday. Listeners can “join” the net by email to netmaster@ccarc.org.au and their comments will be read out.

The Club also has a Facebook page: just look for “centralcoastarc”, and be sure to “like” it to receive further updates. New on the page is some video of satellite activities, so be sure to visit and check it out.

There is also a Twitter account, @ccarclub [*pronounced “At CC AR Club”*], and now a Youtube channel as well.

Further information about the Central Coast Amateur Radio Club can be found on the website, www.ccarc.org.au, which has now been updated with a completely new look, and will be developing further soon, thanks to the Club’s dedicated IT team.

Dave VK2KFU

Publicity Officer, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

Hunter Radio Group

The first meeting of the group for the year is coming up on Friday the 8th of February, at Adamstown Bowling Club, 504 Glebe Road, Adamstown. The meeting starts at 7:30pm.

The first Hunter Radio Group Broadcast will be on Monday the 4th of February starting at 7:30pm, through the 2 metre repeater VK2RNC on 146.9MHz and 438.025MHz; listen for VK2AWX. Callbacks will be taken after the broadcast.

*Submitted by Rodney VK2CN
Secretary, Hunter Radio Group.*

Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The Society meets on the second Tuesday of each month, and the next meeting is on Tuesday evening the 12th of February. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm, directly following the Society's Committee Meeting which starts at 6:30pm.

Meetings are held at the Coniston Community Hall in Bridge Street Coniston, which is just a little south of the CBD of Wollongong. The hall is right next door to Coniston Railway Station, so access to meetings by train is very easy.

At the next meeting there will be two presentations showing the work done in erecting suburban towers for Amateur antenna systems. The two Robs - VK2XIC and VK2MT - have recently been working on two different types of towers - self-supporting and guyed - and they will be discussing the problems they encountered in an effort to get their antennas as high-in-the-sky as possible.

The Society now has two weekly Nets, with the addition of an 80m net on Friday nights starting at 8:30pm local time on 3.630MHz, plus or minus for usage. The very popular Saturday morning chit-chat Net continues to grow, ably run by Steve VK2BGL. Listeners can join-in by either using one of the Club's 2 metre repeaters - VK2RMP on 6850 or VK2RUW on 6675, while out-of-towners can call in on Echolink via VK2BGL-R.

The Society's 70cm DMR repeater continues to get a lot of use. It is located at the VK2RMP Maddens Plains site and is on 438.725MHz, with a 5MHz negative offset. On Slot 1 it is presently connected to World Wide Talk Group 91 and on Slot 2, it is connected to the Australian and NSW Talk Groups of 505 and 5052. All listeners in the Wollongong and Sydney region are invited to use the repeater.

To conclude, all listeners are invited to the next meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society at 7.30pm on Tuesday evening the 12th of February, at the Coniston Community Hall in Wollongong.

*Submitted by Rob VK2MT
Publicity Officer for the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society*

St George Amateur Radio Society

The next gathering of the Society is on this coming Wednesday evening, the 6th of February.

This month there will be a presentation by Dr. Brian Clarke VK2GCE.

Is it really so?

Why do we remember Tim Flannery, Al Gore, Robert Mann, and Michael Moseley but forget Ernest Hemingway, Barry Jones, Thomas Kuhn, and Julius Sumner Miller? Are the laws of Isaac Newton and Georg Simon Ohm absolutely unbreakable?

Because events appear to be 'go together' reasonably frequently, is that enough for us to believe that one event causes the others? Is the acceptance of science a democratic process? Why are we so attracted to the 'quick fixes' so beloved of journalists and politicians?

Brian taught research methodology at 4 prestigious universities in the UK, where students taking his course consistently got 1st Class Honours degrees when his peers' students did not. He will give us a snapshot of the methods 'real scientists' use to explain how knowledge is gained, tested and discarded. Brian will dissect some of the questions posed here to help uncover what we really can accept and where we should be sceptical.

There will be the usual refreshments; All members, local amateurs and others interested are invited to attend.

The meeting rooms are at Donnelly Park, Kyle Parade, Connells Point – near South Hurstville, and the gathering starts at 7.30pm

The "What Three Words" address for the club is "torch bath frosted".
[<http://map.what3words.com/torch.bath.frosted>]

*Advised by Peter VK2EMU
for the St George Amateur Radio Society*

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The 12th of February meeting will be replaced with a family-friendly dinner at Magpies, opposite Waitara railway station, starting at 6pm. RSVP to Bob VK2ZRM.

The next meeting at Mt Colah will be on the 26th of February and will feature a number of short talks. If you have a presentation you would like to give then, please let the club know. The Mt Colah Community Centre is near the northern end of Pierre Close, opposite the eastern entrance of Mt Colah Railway Station.

The Club will have a stand at the Wyong field day, shared with ALARA, in the air-conditioned grandstand.

The Club runs three nets each week. Monday's net starts at 8pm on the VK2RNS 2 metre repeater, 147.250MHz No tone is required, but a 91.5 Hz tone is sent. The 80 metre net is on Wednesday evenings on 3608.5 kHz, also from 8pm, and Morning Tea with HADARC is on or near 7106 kHz from 9am on Fridays.

HADARC's website is at: www.hadarc.org.au. The club has a group on Facebook, which can be found by searching for VK2MA, and on twitter, @VK2MA.

*Submitted by Julian VK2YJS
HADARC Publicity Officer.*

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Summary of coming events;

February

St George ARS gathering at Kyle Bay on the 6th
Hunter Radio Group meeting on the 8th
Chifley Amateur Radio Club AGM, 2pm at their clubrooms on the 9th
WICEN training day at ARNSW on the 10th
Oxley Region antenna shootout on the 10th
Summerland ARC AGM also on the 10th; 1 pm at the club rooms.
HADARC family dinner meeting at Waitara, on the 12th
Illawarra ARS meeting on the 12th
Oxley Region ARC Friday night gathering on the 15th
The CCARC's Wyong Field Day, Sunday the 24th
At Wyong on the 24th, there is also the Oz-VE group US licence exams.
HADARC monthly general meeting on the 26th

March

ARNSW Council nominations close on the 2nd
WICEN training weekend at Newnes on the 2nd and 3rd
Westlakes ARC Special General Meeting on the 9th
40 Metre Dipole Buildathon at ARNSW on the 10th
Sydney Amateur Radio Ferry Contest, Sunday the 10th
Westlakes ARC car boot sale, from 9am on the 30th

April

ARNSW AGM on the 13th
Urunga Convention on the Easter weekend, 20th and 21st