

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

Just a reminder that there is no evening VK2WI News tonight - Evening news bulletins resume at 7:30pm next Sunday the 19th of January, which feature extended news items, feature segments and DX news. Morning bulletins will return to the usual format, starting at 10am with National News items from VK1WIA followed by NSW state news.

ARNSW News bulletins and certain live events, are streamed live from our website, arnsw.org.au/audio. We also have audio files available for download after they are streamed live.

The ARNSW library is back for 2020, on Monday the 20th, 2020. Members are invited to visit the library team on a Monday evening, or can make enquiries by phone or email, to library@arnsw.org.au.

On air activities continue in January – the CWB 20 metre net recommences for 2020, on the 13th of January at 0603UTC, on 14349kHz. Next weekend is the Summer VHF / UHF field day and the Ross Hull contest continues throughout the month – details of these are on the WIA contest site.

The 6 metre VK2RSY beacon on 50.289MHz has been having some trouble recently, as we mentioned last week. But it's now back to full health with a new balun providing much better SWR response. Reports are welcome, to callbacks@arnsw.org.au.

Another balun day is being planned for later in the year, this time 9 to 1 baluns will be the focus. Expressions of interest to attend can be sent to the events co-ordinator, Al VK2OK, by an email to events@arnsw.org.au.

In a bit of computing news, support for the Microsoft Windows 7 operating system ceases this week, on January 14th. While computers will continue to work, security and other software updates may no longer be available. The OS was initially released on October 22, 2009 and while ten years is considered a long time for any technology, especially in computing, it's still in widespread use - some estimates say that 20% of PCs worldwide are still running it.

ARNSW Radio Experimenters Group

Coming up on Sunday the 26th of January, is the first bi-monthly meeting of the group for 2020.

After the usual “Show and Tell” there will be a presentation on data communication using LoRa spread spectrum radio modules.

LoRa is short for Long Range and these devices can run on tiny amounts of power, they are available for the 70cm band as well as the 900Mhz ISM band.

John VK2ASU and Peter VK2TPM, will show some devices, and demonstrate them using Arduinos. The radio protocol is proprietary but some good reverse engineering has been done, to figure out how they manage to go 10km at QRP levels. They will explain what they know and what the various settings do.

All are welcome – noon on Sunday the 26th of September, here at 63 Quarry Road Dural.

*Advised by Peter VK2EMU
Coordinator, ARNSW Radio Homebrew and Experimenters Group*

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 3rd to the 9th of January.
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th
10cm flux	71	72	72	71	72	74	74
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	6	5	7	9	4	4	9 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	6	6	8	4	4	4	11 estimated
T index	-21	-23	-24	-29	-25	-15	-10

Solar activity was very low all week. Geomagnetic activity was at quiet to unsettled levels from the 3rd to the 6th, quiet on the 7th, then again quiet to unsettled on the 8th and 9th.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, were mostly near predicted monthly values, though there were some periods of depressions; 20% on the 4th, 15% on the 5th, 20% during local day and 15% during local night on the 6th, and 15% during local night on the 7th and 8th.

Now, the forecast for the 10th to the 16th of January;

Solar activity is expected to be very low to low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with a chance of some isolated Active periods.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should mostly remain near predicted monthly values.

Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.

Solar Flux Index update

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

For December, we had a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 71, and a Maximum of 73
With peak dates from the 24th to the 28th

So far for January 2020, we expect a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 72, and a Maximum of 74
With peak dates from the 9th to the 13th

And looking ahead to February, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 71, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates from the 9th to the 23rd.

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>]

Space Weather Summary for December 2019

Compiled with data courtesy of Space Weather Services

Solar activity was again at Very Low levels this month, with no significant solar flares observed. The 10.7 cm solar flux levels continue to be low. Transient spots for both the current and the next cycle, were observed.

There were also no significant geomagnetic disturbances, with the Australian A index remaining below 16, throughout December. The geomagnetic field was predominantly quiet with the greatest activity – reaching an Australian A index of 10 - occurring on the 18th of December, due to coronal hole effects.

The ionosphere was relatively stable, with no ionospheric depressions due to geomagnetic activity, though Australian region maximum usable frequencies were generally low, due to continuing low flux levels of solar ionising radiation. Mild depressions, of 15% below predicted monthly values, were seen at times.

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What use is an F-call?

From next week, “What use is an F-call” returns to the evening VK2WI News, but just for this morning, we continue with this series, written and produced by Onno VK6FLAB. Each episode looks at different aspects of the diverse hobby of Amateur Radio.

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Duration:2m17s

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

VIETNAM; Wolfgang, DL5MAE is active as 3W2MAE from Phan Thiet. Activity is on the HF bands using CW and SSB.

CUBA; Special event station CO0CW is active during January to celebrate the 5th anniversary of Group CW of Cuba. Activity is on 40 and 20 metres.

ENGLAND; John, M0XIG is active with special call sign GB200FN until February 3, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

ECUADOR; Jon, EA1VE is active as HC2JKT from Puna Island, IOTA SA-034, until January 30. Activity is on 40 to 6 metres using SSB.

JAPAN; Members of the JARL Okinawa Branch are active with special event station 8N6SHURI during 2020 while supporting the reconstruction of Shuri Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage building that burned down in October 2019.

BULGARIA; Members of the Bulgarian Radio Club Blagovestnik are active with special call sign LZ1908IK during January to honour the memory of Bulgarian saints.

BRAZIL; A group of operators will be active as ZW6C from Tinhare Island, IOTA SA-080, from January 16 to 19. Activity will be on 40, 20 and 10 metres using CW and SSB.

PALAU; Operators JI3DNN, JH3LSS, JA3HJI, JA3IVU, JA3ARJ and JA3AVO are active as T88CZ, T88DK, T88DN, T88ED, T88EF and T88MB, respectively, from Koror Island, IOTA OC-009, from January 15 to 23. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres.

COSTA RICA; Rich, W4GKR will be active as TI5/W4GKR beginning January 14 to February 4. Activity will be holiday style on 160 to 6 metres using mostly digital modes and possibly slow CW.

NORFOLK ISLAND; Janusz, SP9FIH will be active as VK9NK until April 12. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and RTTY.

MONTSERAT; Duane, WV2B is active as VP2MDT until January 15. Activity is holiday style on the HF bands using CW and SSB.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS; David, KM3T is active as VP5/KM3T from Providenciales Island, IOTA NA-002, until January 14. Activity is holiday style on 160 to 10 metres using CW and possibly FT8, and includes an entry in the North American CW QSO Party.

INDIA; Members of the West Bengal Radio Club are active as 8T2G from Sagar Island, IOTA AS-153, until January 17 during the annual pilgrimage of people to the Ganges Delta.

SERBIA ; Members of the Serbian CW Club are active with special call YT50SCWC during 2020 to celebrate the club's 50th anniversary.

CAYMAN ISLANDS; Pete, K8PGJ will be active as ZF2PG from Grand Cayman, IOTA NA-016, until January 19. Activity will be on the HF bands. This includes an entry in the upcoming North American SSB QSO Party.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The North American CW QSO Party, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC CW Sprint, YB DX SSB Contest, Old New Year Contest, SKCC Weekend CW Sprintathon, UBA PSK63 Prefix Contest, NRAU-Baltic Contest, DARC 10-Metre Contest, the IQRP Quarterly Marathon and the RSGB AFS Data Contest are all on this weekend.

The Classic CW Exchange runs from January 12 to 15.

The 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint is scheduled for January 13.

The CWops Mini-CWT Test, Phone Fray and QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for January 15.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW, as a support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, has been taking part in several activities during the current bushfire emergency.

WICEN and other VRA squads, continue to support the RFS at various Fire Control Centres and the Bushfire Information Line. Other WICEN members remain active with the RFS and SES.

During the week, WICEN NSW and WICEN ACT have refreshed some of the team members at Bega. This team was sent at the request of the NSW VRA, to assist in re-establishing radio communications services, disrupted by fire activity, for the local VRA squads and other local agencies. WICEN thanks CREST for their significant contribution of equipment and expertise to the effort.

WICEN will be present at the Wyong Field Day on Sunday, the 23rd of February 2020. Also in February, WICEN groups across Australia will be supporting Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events.

WICEN's 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 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. The BMSC "NatCap" Rally is coming up on March 21st and 22nd. For more information, see the WICEN and Events pages on www.crarc.ampr.org.

WICEN Victoria will be supporting a fun run at Dromana and Rosebud on January the 26th. In February, the Pajero Challenge runs from February 7th to 9th at Walhalla; this is outside of the area in East Gippsland affected by the fires. February 14th to 16th is the Oscar's 100 "Hut to Hut". The "Duncan's Run 100" is on the 21st of March at Turra Bulga. The weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz. WICEN Victoria's website, which includes an update on the Gippsland fires, is at vic.wicen.org.au.

[URL for OEM: <https://www.emtraining.nsw.gov.au/>]

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Club News

We start this week with news from the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club. The next meeting will be the club's January Friday night gathering, at 7pm this coming Friday the 17th of January, at the SES Building in Central Road, Port Macquarie. The next general meeting will be on Saturday the 1st of February.

Later in February, the club's annual Antenna Shootout will take place at the Tuffins Lane Sportsfields in Port Macquarie on Sunday the 9th of February.

The club's very popular 2020 Calendar is now available, and will be available at all the upcoming club meetings and activities. As usual, the calendar has photos of club members, which is a great aid to putting a face to callsigns. In addition, the calendar has a lot of useful club information; including the dates of upcoming club meetings.

Candidates for the Foundation, Standard and Advanced Licences should contact the club via PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444; training and assessments are planned for early in the New Year.

The club's 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 on 146.7MHz, which 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 2020 issue of the club's bimonthly newsletter, Oxtales, is now available, and past issues are available on the website as well. The club is also on Facebook; just search for Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

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

Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The Society meets on the second Tuesday evening of the month, except in January; so the next meeting will be on Tuesday the 11th of *February* 2020. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm, directly following the Society's committee meeting, which starts at 6:30pm. Attendees are welcome to arrive early and enjoy a pre-meeting chat and cuppa in the foyer.

The venue for the Society's meetings is now the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre on Springhill Road, on the southern side of the Wollongong CBD. The new venue has fantastic facilities and plenty of off-street parking. Attendees should turn off Springhill Road into the main entrance of BlueScope Steel, then immediately turn right just before the security gates, following the large Visitors Centre direction signs.

The February meeting will be a "Show and Tell" night, with a few members keen to show off their latest radio shack and antenna updates. "Show and Tell" photos and videos will be displayed on the Visitor Centre's new LED screen that is the size of a wall, so they will look rather spectacular. The night will conclude with coffee, tea and cake in the venue's foyer.

A reminder of the Society's two weekly Nets; the first is the Saturday morning Chit-Chat Net run by Steve VK2BGL. Listeners can join-in from 9:30am 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 via Echolink, VK2BGL-R.

The second weekly net is on Tuesday evenings – except for meeting nights. It is on the 80 metre frequency of 3666kHz, plus or minus other usage and starts at 8:30pm.

You can find out more about the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society on their website, iars.org.au, and the society is also on Facebook. The website again, is iars.org.au.

To conclude, all listeners are invited to attend the next meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society at 7.30pm on Tuesday evening the 11th of February, at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, Springhill Road, Wollongong.

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

Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club

The October – December period of the Ted Powell Memorial DX Challenge for 2019 has now closed and entries can be submitted until the 14th of January.

The objective of the challenge is to work the most wanted DXCC entities based on their ranking in Clublog's "Most Wanted" list, which is published on the contest website. All Australian amateurs are eligible to enter and entering is easy. You don't need to be a serious DX'er - If you've worked any DX from October to December 2019, just head over to contest.fgarc.org.au and submit your entry.

The website is tidy and easy to understand. Scroll down to the "Entry Submission" section where you will find a number of simple ways to submit your entry. This is a fun and relaxed challenge where you work DX in your own time over a 3 month period. Submitting an entry only takes a few minutes. The website again, is contest.fgarc.org.au.

*Advised by Peter VK2PR
For the Fishers Ghost Amateur Radio Club.*

Waverley Amateur Radio Society

Happy New Year to all; May you have 20:20 vision in 2020.

The first meeting for 2020 is this coming Wednesday, January 15th at the usual venue in the Scout hall, Vickery Ave, Rose Bay commencing at 7:30pm. At this meeting Matt, VK2FLY will be demonstrating a number of recently purchased, cheap handhelds. If you have some show and tell, bring it along as well and show it off, be it some new toy, or something you're working on. As always, many of the members and friends will meet prior to the meeting in the RSL next door for dinner from about 6:00 pm onwards.

The next project day will be on Saturday February 1st commencing at 1:30pm through to 4 or 5 pm. The next shack night is scheduled for Wednesday February 5th, starting at 7:30pm.

The Morse code group meets on the first Sunday of each month at 11am, so the next meeting is on February 2nd. The digital special interest group usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month; next meeting is February 11th starting at 7:30pm.

At March meeting, we are planning to have Kerrie Doherty back to talk on OSCAR 5, which should be another interesting talk.

As usual, the clubrooms are open most Tuesdays from 10am until 3pm, for those who would like to have a chat, work on a project and enjoy a cup of coffee from our resident barista in a sort of "men's shed" type of atmosphere.

The first Foundation weekend for 2020 will be over the weekend of 8th & 9th of February. Full details and registration form can be found on the website, vk2bv.org.

Don't forget the weekly net on the VK2RBV repeater from 8pm, every Monday evening.

For more information about the Waverley Amateur Radio society, visit the website at vk2bv.org. You can also book courses or assessments online, or use the contact form on the website to contact them.

*73 from Eric VK2VE
For the Waverley Amateur Radio Society.*

Manly-Warringah Radio Society

This Wednesday the 15th is lecture night at the Society. The theme this month, is getting down and dirty with power. More specifically, Dave VK2BPU will tell us all there is to know about repairing switch mode power supplies. The lecture will include a live demonstration, presumably on a dead power supply.

The next Show and Tell night is on the 29th, on the theme "Anything A M", so bring out your Amplitude Modulated gear and show it off. As usual, voting is by gold coin, with prizes for the best gear and best story!

As you're all aware, much of New South Wales has been ablaze, and a number of Amateurs from VK1 and VK2 have been assisting the RFS across the state, in radio and phone hotline roles. Some listeners might be interested in the posting on the MWRS club website, entitled "Your Fire Season Toolkit". It contains links to numerous websites and useful apps to have on your smart phone.

Visit the society's web site for other news, information about the various club projects such as the WebSDR (sponsored by ARNSW), the club YouTube channel VK2MB-TV, the club's Scouting program and much more.

The Manly-Warringah Radio Society meets every Wednesday evening at the 1st Terrey Hills Guides Hall, Beltana Avenue, Terrey Hills. Doors open at 7.30pm for an 8pm start, and visitors are always welcome. If you need directions, call in on the club's two metre repeater on 146.875MHz, or visit the web site at www.mwrs.org.au, for more information.

*73 Richard VK2SKY
MWRS Publicity Officer.*

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The Club is planning a BBQ for this Tuesday the 14th of January, subject to weather conditions, at Hornsby Rifle Range. The venue is If you are planning to attend, RSVP to hadarc@hadarc.org.au.

In February, the Mid-Monthly meeting on Tuesday the 11th February will be a family dinner/evening at Magpies. The first Mt Colah meeting will be on the 25th.

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;

January 2020

Ross Hull VHF-UHF contest runs throughout January

HADARC BBQ at Hornsby, on the 14th

Waverley ARS meeting on the 15th

MWRS lecture night on the 15th

Oxley Region ARC Friday Night gathering on the 17th

Summer VHF contest on the 18th and 19th

ARNSW Trash & Treasure and Radio Experimenters Group on the 26th ...

The 26th is also Australia Day – you can use the AX prefix.

MWRS Show and tell night – anything AM – is on the 29th

February

Oxley Region ARC meeting on the 1st

St George ARS meeting on the 5th

Westlakes ARC first meeting for the year, on the 8th

Waverley ARS Foundation weekend on the 8th and 9th

Oxley Region ARC antenna shootout on the 9th

HADARC family dinner evening on the 11th

Illawarra ARS Meeting on the 11th

Hunter Radio Group meeting, first for the new year, on the 14th

Central Coast ARC - Wyong Field Day on Sunday the 23rd

HADARC monthly meeting on the 25th

March

ARNSW Foundation Training and Assessment weekend, 14th and 15th

ARNSW Trash & Treasure and Radio Experimenters Group on the 29th

Illawarra ARS Meeting on the 10th