

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

Welcome to the first evening news bulleting from VK2WI News, for 2020. Later in the bulletin tonight, we continue the series, “what use is an F-call”, along with DX news from the ARRL.

All our news bulletins, along with selected events here at VK2WI Dural, are streamed live on our website, at arnsw.org.au/audio, with a recording of the audio uploaded the following day.

Tonight’s news bulletin is also available via the EchoLink “HAM” conference, and the ANZEL network; a reminder that callbacks to this news will be taken after the bulletin, and our thanks to John VK3HJQ and the ANZEL team for making this relay available to VK2WI News.

The ARNSW library re-opens for 2020, tomorrow afternoon the 20th of January. As the following Monday is a public holiday, the library is next open on the 3rd of February.

Next Sunday the 26th January is the first Trash & Treasure for 2020; doors open at 9am. Members can enquire with Bob VKCAN for information about membership details and renewals, along with badge orders. Also available on the day will be the Foundation Manual. There will be a stock of surplus chairs free for the taking on the day; they will be over at the small green shed area.

The January 2020 edition of our Newsletter, *ALL ACCESS* will be out in electronic form soon, with paper copies to follow.

Today - Sunday - is the final day of the VHF - UHF Field Day. The Ross Hull contest continues until the end of the month.

Here at VK2WI, the 160 and 80 metre broadcast antennas are now fed by underground co-ax, replacing the former overhead feeds. The remaining HF antennas will follow soon. Also, the aging 20 and 10 metre transceivers, which provide both news broadcast and callbacks, have recently been replaced with more modern equipment.

United Nations Amateur Radio Contest DX Club station 4U1A set a Guinness record by a single operator in 2019, with 93,856 contacts.

VK2RSY Beacons

The VK2RSY beacons operating from the Amateur Radio NSW site here at Dural. They transmit in the CW mode with between 20 and 30 watts transmitter power output.

The beacons transmit the callsign and maidenhead locations at 40 second intervals, followed by a period of continuous carrier.

The 10 metre beacon is on 28.262MHz, with a vertically polarised antenna. Six metres is on 50.289MHz into a horizontal dipole; 2 metres and 70 cms are 2 bay horizontal crossed stacked dipoles and 23 cm is a horizontally polarized slot antenna. The 23cm beacon may have to relocate to a temporary vertically polarised antenna, as the old tower will soon be decommissioned. We will have more updates here on VK2WI News, closer to the date.

Reports on beacon reception – or any Amateur Radio NSW service – are always welcome; you can email signal reports to; callbacks@arnsw.org.au.

ARNSW Radio Experimenters Group

Coming up on Sunday the 26th of January, right after the Trash and Treasure event here at ARNSW, is the first Radio experimenter's group meeting 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, right after the Trash and Treasure.

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

ARNSW Board Elections

The next Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio New South Wales will be held on Saturday 18th April 2020.

With the new constitution passed at last year's AGM, board members are elected for a two year term, with 4 positions being elected one year and 5 the next year, to serve overlapping terms. At this year's AGM, half of the board will be standing down. Nominations will shortly be open for eligible members who wish to be on the board.

The forms will shortly be available for download from the website www.arnsw.org.au, or from the divisional office.

Nominations close at midday on Saturday 7th March 2020.

Peter VK2EMU
Returning Officer

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 10th to the 16th of January.
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	10 th	11 th	12 th	13 th	14 th	15 th	16 ^t
10cm flux	73	74	72	72	72	71	72
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	6	4	2	2	2	2	7 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	5	5	1	2	2	4	4 estimated
T index	-28	-24	-16	-27	-23	-29	-21

Solar activity was very low, and Geomagnetic activity was at quiet levels, all week.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, were mostly near predicted monthly values, though there were some periods of depressions. Depressions of 20% were observed during local day on the 10th and the 12th, and depressions of 20% during local night on the 14th.

Now, the forecast for the 17th to the 23rd of January;

Solar activity is expected to be very low to low, with no active or returning regions.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with a chance of some isolated Active periods on the 19th and 20th.

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 71, and a Maximum of 74
With peak dates from the 8th to the 15th

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>]

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What use is an F-call?

Tonight 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

SRI LANKA; Peter, DC0KK is active as 4S7KKG until March 30. Activity is on the HF bands using CW and various digital modes.

WEST MALAYSIA; Safri Bin, 9M2SAF will be active from Pulau Lalang Perak, IOTA AS-072, from January 21 to 27. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

QATAR; Rasto, OM6AA is active as A75GR until April 2020; activity of late has been on 80 metres.

PAKISTAN; Hasant, AP2HA has been active using FT8 on 30 metres between 1300 and 1400UTC. In addition, he has also been active on 80 metres using FT8 around 0200UTC.

GERMANY; Members of the DARC club of Pulheim are active with special event call sign DL40PUL during 2020 to celebrate the club's 40th anniversary.

GUADELOUPE; Jean-Pierre, F6ITD is active as FG/F6ITD from Desirade Island, IOTA NA-102, until March 9. Activity is on the HF bands using SSB and various digital modes.

HONDURAS; Dirk, WA4DT will be active as WA4DT/HR9 from Roatan Island, IOTA NA-057, until February 2. Activity is on 40 and 30 metres using CW and FT8.

ITALY; Operators S50X, S51V, S52P, S54W, S56DX, S56N, S57DX and S59A will be active as IG9/home calls from Lampedusa, IOTA AF-019, from January 21 to 27. Activity will be on the HF bands. They will be active as IG9/S59A in the upcoming CQ World Wide 160 Metre CW contest.

ARGENTINA; AMSAT Argentina station LU7AA will be active until January 26 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Satellite LO-19, or LUSAT. Activity will be on the HF bands using QRS CW, SSB and FT8.

WESTERN SAHARA; Station S01WS has been active on 17 metres using CW around 1600UTC.

SOMALIA; Ali, EP3CQ is active as 6O1OO from Mogadishu until February 5. Activity is on 160 to 6 metres using CW, SSB and FT8.

PALAU; Operators JI3DNN, JH3LSS, JA3HJI, JA3IVU, JA3ARJ and JA3AVO are active as T88CZ, T88DK, T88DN, T88ED, T88EF and T88MD, respectively, from Koror, IOTA OC-009, until January 23.

COSTA RICA; Rich, W4GKR is active as TI5/W4GKR until February 4. Activity is on 160 to 6 metres using mainly various digital modes and QRS CW.

CANADA; Operators VE3FU, VE9CB and VO1HP will be active as VO2AC, VO2AAA and VO1HP/VO2, respectively, from the Lighthouse Point Amour /Labrador from January 20 to 26. They plan to be active as VO2AC in the upcoming CQ World Wide 160 Metre CW contest.

NORFOLK ISLAND; Janusz, SP9FIH is active as VK9NK until April 12. Activity is on 160 to 10 metres using SSB, RTTY and FT8.

CHATHAM ISLANDS; Chris, ZL7DX is currently active on 20 and 6 metres using mostly digital modes. He plans to be active on other bands soon.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The ARRL January VHF Contest, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC CW Sprint, LZ Open CW Contest, PRO Digi Contest, Hungarian DX Contest, RSGB AFS SSB Contest, North American SSB QSO Party, North American Collegiate SSB Championship, WAB 1.8 MHz Phone/CW Contest and Feld Hell Sprint are all on this weekend.

The Run for the Bacon QRP CW Contest is scheduled for January 20.

The CWops Mini-CWT CW Test, QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt, Phone Fray and SKCC CW Sprint are scheduled for January 22.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW, as a support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, has been active in several activities during the recent bushfire emergency. With the reduction of fire activity and restoration of communications around Bega, WICEN activities there have been suspended. Well done to all involved.

WICEN was featured on the BBC World Service program "Digital Planet" during the week, as part of the story, "Tech tracking Australian fires". The show included an interview with Compton, VK2HRX. The audio can be played from the programme's page, or use the link in the text version of this news.

[Programme link: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3csy67g>]

The next WICEN training day is planned for Sunday, February 2 here at ARNSW Dural.

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. Facebook users will find an official WICEN NSW page, and an informal national WICEN group. The pages have been recently updated with further information and photos of various recent activations.

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 is at vic.wicen.org.au.

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Club News

We start this week with news from the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

The next meeting is the club's February general meeting. It starts at 2pm on Saturday the 1st at the SES Building in Central Road, Port Macquarie and as always, visitors are most welcome.

The club's annual Antenna Shootout will take place at the Tuffins Lane Sportsfields in Port Macquarie on Sunday the 9th of February. Facilities will be available to test antennas on 6 metres, 2 metres and 70cm. Starting time is 10am. A sausage sizzle lunch will be provided. Tea, coffee and biscuits plus cold soft drinks and water will be available from the club's communications caravan.

The 2020 Club Calendar is now available at all 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.

For more information about the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club, visit the website at orarc.org. 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.*

Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

Preparations are well underway for the Club's Wyong Field Day, Sunday the 23rd of February. By popular demand, the club will be hosting not 1 but 2 Fox Hunts, on Saturday the 22nd February, starting from the race course. If you are interested in taking part, please complete the EOI so that planning and catering can be arranged; the form is on the club website and social media.

At the Field Day, both Lecture rooms have been filled and in a Field Day first, there will also be a special guest attending live via Web Conference.

Remember, there are no reserved spaces for boot sales; its first come first served. Gates open for traders between 6am and 8:30am, and general public will open at 8:30am.

There will be both VK and US licence examination and upgrade facilities on the day. To register interest for VK examinations, please email the clubs education officer at education@ccarc.org.au no later than the 20th of February.

For more details on all Field Day activities, head over to www.fieldday.org.au.

The Club held an education and licence upgrade course this weekend, with several candidates sitting for their foundation licence. A big thanks to Karen VK2YX for facilitating it.

Whilst training was taking place at the club rooms, several club members took the opportunity for an outing to Mount Elliot for some QRM free activations. This was a great chance for members to test their setups with some fantastic conditions, despite the wet weather. This worked out well as it also coincided with the VHF/UHF field day; last word there were a few long distance SSB contacts made. The Club is hoping to organise more outdoor adventures, later in the year.

The club holds a net each Thursday evening from 8 PM on the VK2RAG 2 Meter repeater. On Thursday evenings, the club's repeater is connected to Echolink conference server "CCARCNSW"; and to VK2RAG-R, Node 7060 at any other time. Alternatively, IRLP node 6060. Just make sure to disconnect the node when you have finished. You can also watch the net by checking into the live Facebook video stream each Thursday evening. The Club thanks Alan VK2MG for jumping in to run this.

If you are a packet radio operator, the CCARC has a packet radio BBS on 147.6 MHz, as VK2EHQ; it can also be accessed via the digipeater VK2RAG-1.

The Club is working on a number of projects in the background and we hope to share more details soon; probably after club members have had a chance to rest once the Field Day preparations are complete! The CCARC is seeking interest from surrounding clubs for a collaboration workshop on ideas and concepts surrounding the overall Amateur Radio Hobby. If your club is interested, please email the club at ccarc@ccarc.org.au.

You can find out more the CCARC on the web at ccarc.org.au. The club is also active on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Simply search for “Central Coast Amateur Radio Club” and remember to give them a like and follow to keep up to date on the latest happenings.

Brad VK2NMZ

Vice-President, Central Coast 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.*

St George Amateur Radio Society

The first gathering of the Society for 2020, will be on Wednesday the 5th of February.

Members, family, friends and visitors are welcome to attend "HF and DMR by the Bay", a chance for operating portable by the picturesque shores of Kyle Bay or just come along and join in the experience on Wednesday evening, from about 6.30 pm. At sunset, the gathering will continue in our meeting rooms, followed by supper.

This is an opportunity to see how other amateurs go portable by throwing an antenna up a tree or put up a mast, or show others how you do it yourself. There will also be demonstrations of DMR.

The meeting rooms of the Society are at Donnelly Park, Kyle Parade, Connells Point – near South Hurstville.

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 next HADARC event is an informal family dinner at Magpies Club in Waitara on Tuesday the 11th of February, in place of the usual Mid-Monthly meeting. The general meeting for February, will be at Mt Colah 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.

VK2RNS also has a dual mode 70cm repeater. It's on 439.975 MHz, with a -5 MHz offset. FM uses a 91.5Hz tone in and out, and for P25 a NAC of 293. The VK2RHT repeater at Chatswood is DMR only on 438.350MHz and is part of the VK DMR network.

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

Summer VHF contest concludes today

The Ross Hull VHF-UHF contest runs throughout January

The SGARS 2m VHF contest continues until the end of February

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 – including HF and DMR by the bay

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

Summerland ARC AGM 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

SGARS Foundation licence weekend on the 15th and 16th

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

HADARC monthly meeting on the 25th

March

Waverley ARS Sydney Ferry contest on the 8th

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