

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

On Australia Day, all Australian radio amateurs can use the alternate AX prefix on their callsign, instead of the usual VK. This is also authorised on Anzac Day, April 25th, and the 17th of May, World Telecommunication Day.

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. Today's Radio Experimenter's Group meeting, was also streamed live and the recording will be available from tomorrow on the website.

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.

A reminder to take care when operating mobile. While use of a radio microphone is permitted, use of a mobile phone is not; and on a long weekend, the latter will earn you 10 demerit points. It is always important to be aware of driving conditions, and especially so in long weekend traffic.

During February, Waverley and St. George have Foundation and assessment weekends. At the Wyong Field Day, you can sit for either an Australian or USA license. The first ARNSW Foundation and assessment weekend is in March.

The ARNSW newsletter - *All Access* – was sent out last week by both email and post.... WHAT - you did not get it? Check your membership? The calendar mail out had your expiry date for 2019 or earlier. Please inquire with membership@arnsw.org.au as to your status. The membership form, which is also applicable for Renewals, can be downloaded from the ARNSW Web site, under Membership.

ARNSW Balun Buildathon Day

On Sunday May the 24th, AR New South Wales is holding another 'balun buildathon'. Its here at VK2WI 63 Quarry Road Dural and it starts at 10am.

You'll have your choice of constructing a 1:1, 4:1 or 9:1 balun from a kit. You can also order hi-quality Kevlar antenna wire. All items must be pre-ordered and paid for on the day.

Further information is in the newsletter, *All Access*, and on VK2WI News closer to the day.

For enquiries or bookings, you can email events@arnsw.org.au or contact Al VK2OK by phone, on 0415 259 777.

73 Al VK2OK

Function and Events Co-ordinator for AR New South Wales.

Sydney Amateur Radio Ferry Contest

The fifth annual Sydney Amateur Radio Ferry Contest is on Sunday, March the 8th, from 10am until 4pm local time, taking place on and around Sydney Harbour.

This unique contest aims to gather radio amateurs to the harbour and make VHF/UHF contacts from any of the system's ferries and wharves. With all-day travel for just \$2.80 (less for seniors and concession holders) using an Opal Card, this is a great way to spend a Sunday!

Operation is restricted to hand-held radios (any mode) and can include repeater, simplex or "eyeball" (a handshake) contacts. Contestants can obtain points multipliers by working multiple ferries and multiple wharves during the six-hour contest. A number of awards, including the prestigious "Worked All Ferry Lines" are available.

The event is being run by the Waverley Amateur Radio Society, and Club station VK2BV will be at Rose Bay Ferry Wharf for the duration of the contest. We hope to eyeball as many contestants as we can during the day.

Not only is this a fun contest for the amateur radio community but also a great way to promote amateur radio to the community at large.

Full contest details are on the Waverley Amateur Radio Society's website, at vk2bv.org.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 17th to the 23rd of January.
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	17 th	18 th	19 th	20 th	21 st	22 nd	23 rd
10cm flux	72	71	72	71	71	72	71
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	2	3	2	2	4	4	3
Australian Index (Aaus)	3	2	1	1	5	4 estimated	2 estimated
T index	-28	-18	-25	-18	-20	-17	-19

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

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, were near predicted monthly values during local daylight hours, on the 17th and 18th, with depressions during local night hours, of 20% and 15% respectively. The 19th was depressed 15%, the 20th depressed 15% during the day, recovering at night to near predicted; the 21st was depressed 15%, the 22nd again was depressed 15% during the day and recovering at night to near predicted; finally, the 23rd improved and remained near predicted monthly values.

Now, the forecast for the 24th to the 30th of January;

Solar activity is expected to be low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with a chance of some isolated unsettled periods on the 27th.

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 8th to the 11th

And looking ahead to February, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 71, Average of 72, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates from the 2nd to the 6th, and the 22nd to the 29th.

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: 3m0s

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

Out: "73 de 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

Several stations are active this weekend, especially for the CQ World Wide 160-Metre CW Contest.

GEORGIA; Mamuka, 4L2M is active as a Single Op/High Power entry

ISRAEL; A group of operators are active as 4X2M

BAHAMAS; Harmon, WB4OMG is active as C6AEI from Grand Bahama Island, IOTA NA-080.

TURKEY; A large group of operators are active as TC0X from Bozcaada Island, IOTA AS-099.

EUROPEAN RUSSIA; A group of operators are active as UA7K from Kerch, as a Multi/Single entry.

INDONESIA; Members of the Grobex Team Contest Indonesia are active as 7A2A from Zone 28.

CAYMAN ISLANDS; Stan, K5GO is active as ZF5T from Brac Island, IOTA NA-016.

PARAGUAY; Manu, ZP9MCE is active in the contest.

In other DX activity around the world for this week;

THE GAMBIA; Russell, G5XW will be active as C5XW beginning January 28th, for 10 days. Activity will be holiday style on 40 to 17 metres using CW and SSB.

CUBA; Members of the DX Group of Cuba are active with special event call sign T40DXXE until the end of January, to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Mexican DXXE Group. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and FT8.

REUNION ISLAND; Roland, F8EN is active as FR/F8EN until March 19. Activity will be mostly on 30 and 20 metres using CW.

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

CZECH REPUBLIC; A group of operators are active with special event callsign OL725PLZ during 2020, to commemorate the founding of Plzen 725 years ago.

CURACAO; Jeff, K8ND and Jim, W8WTS are active as PJ2ND and PJ2/W8WTS, respectively, until February 3. They are active as PJ2T in the CQ World Wide 160 Metre CW contest.

ARUBA; DL4MM is active as P4/DL4MM using CW and SSB, and as P40AA using various digital modes on the HF bands until January 29. He is also a Single Op entry in the CQ World Wide 160 Metre CW contest.

CANADA; Operators Chris, VE3FU, Dave, VE9CB and Frank, VO1HP are active as VO2AC, VO2AAA and VO1HP/VO2, respectively, from the Point Amour Lighthouse on Labrador until January 26. Activity is on 160, 80, 60 and 40 metres, using CW and FT8, including FM on various Satellites from Grid Square GO11. They are also active as VO2AC in the CQ World Wide 160 Metre CW contest.

MEXICO; Members of the DXXE group are active with special event callsign 4A15DXXE during 2020 to celebrate the group's 15th anniversary.

SOUTH AFRICA, ZS. Special event station ZS95SARL is active throughout 2020, to celebrate the 95th anniversary of the founding of the South African Radio League. Activity is on the HF, V/UHF bands and Satellites.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The CQ World Wide 160-Metre CW Contest, Winter Field Day, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC CW Sprint, Malaysia DX SSB Contest, REF CW Contest, BARTG RTTY Sprint and UBA DX SSB Contest will certainly keep contesters busy this weekend.

The QCX CW Challenge is scheduled for January 27.

The CWops Mini-CWT Test, UKEICC 80-Metre CW Contest, Phone Fray and QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for January 29.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW, as a support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, has now activities in support of the NSW RFS during the recent bushfire emergency. The WICEN Committee would like to thank those members, who gave their time to assist, often at short notice and in difficult and stressful operating conditions.

As mentioned last week, WICEN was featured on the BBC World Service program "Digital Planet" as part of the story, "Tech tracking Australian fires". [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. Although a separate legal entity, WICEN NSW is affiliated with the WIA.

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 supported a fun run at Dromana and Rosebud today. Next month the Pajero Challenge runs from February 7th to 9th at Walhalla in the northern Gippsland region. February 14th to 16th is the Oscar's 100 "Hut to Hut", and the "Duncan's Run 100" is on the 21st of March at Turra Bulga in south Gippsland. 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. Fox hunts return to the weekend by popular demand, with the club 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's website and social media pages.

At the Field Day, both Lecture rooms have been filled and in a Field Day first, there will be a special guest attending live via Web Conference. There is a fully airconditioned marquee available for commercial traders, and word is that some traders are planning field-day only specials...

Gates open for traders between 6am and 8:30am, and general public at 8:30am. As always, there's the Field Day raffle with some great prizes up for grabs including a lucky door prize; so make sure you keep your wrist band on you.

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

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

The Clubrooms recently had a data cabling infrastructure upgrade, future-proofing them for years ahead. A big thanks to Lindsay VK2FD and Brad VK2NMZ for the works involved. The club has also received a donation from Graham VK2GRA of some refurbished desktop computers which is a welcome upgrade and will be implemented for club member use soon.

The club's Thursday evening net starts at 8pm, on the VK2RAG 2 Metre. On Thursday evenings, the repeater is connected to Echolink conference server "CCARCNSW"; and to the *HAM* server, with thanks to John VK3HQ – which also relays VK2WI Evening News. You can also watch the net by checking into the live Facebook video stream. 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's D-star repeater is making progress; with a replacement computer is now up and running, the repeater is available locally and will soon be configured to restore full operation.

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 about 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. Club related news is happily accepted at publicity@ccarc.org.au.

*Brad VK2NMZ
Vice-President, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.*

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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.

HF Operators can operate on any HF amateur radio frequency. Show others your portable HF antenna such as an inverted V, loaded or helical vertical or maybe a magnetic loop.

Digital Mobile Radio, DMR, is becoming very popular with nearly 1000 VK DMR users and over 40 DMR repeaters Australia wide. Bring along your handheld DMR transceiver and chat with others on Talk Group 99, Time Slot 1, Simplex 439.200 MHz. If you are new to DMR, come along and make contact with other VK DMR users on Talk Group 505 using the SGARS portable DMR station.

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.

Information about all SGARS events can be found on the website, www.sgars.org.

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*

Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club

Results for the Ted Powell Memorial DX Challenge are now posted on the contest website, contest.fgarc.org.au. Congratulations to the winners, and thank you to everyone who entered.

The next meeting of the Club is this Wednesday the 29th at McDonald's Woodbine, commencing at 7:30pm. Visitors wishing to learn more about the hobby of amateur radio are most welcome to attend.

The AGM will be on the 26th of February, at Campbelltown Performing Arts High School, Beverly Road Campbelltown.

The Club's weekly net, on Thursday evenings, starts at 7:30pm on the Club repeater, VK2RFG. Anyone is welcome to check-in. The repeater has a negative 7MHz input and a 91.5Hz CTCSS tone is required for access. This repeater is mixed-mode (FM/Fusion) and is WIRES-X and Echolink enabled.

The Club's Facebook page can be found by searching for VK2FG, or to find out more about the Club's activities, visit the website at fgarc.org.au.

*Submitted by Peter VK2PR
on behalf of the Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club.*

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.

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

The Ross Hull VHF-UHF contest runs throughout January
MWRS Show and tell night – anything AM – is on the 29th
Fishers Ghost ARC meeting at woodbine also 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
Fishers Ghost ARC AGM at Campbelltown on the 26th
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