

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

In response to restrictions introduced as part of managing the ongoing Covid19 public health emergency, many clubs and groups have increased on air activities. Here at ARNSW, we are currently continuing with VK2WI Morning News bulletins, and later in the bulletin, we have a summary of on air activities from various groups in Sydney and across News South Wales.

If there is a new activity happening in your area, please let us know; you can email the details to news@arnsw.org.au – we don't need formatted news items, just the details of the activity and contacts. We also welcome any updates on the progress in these activities; which we can report on VK2WI News, and tell listeners how it went.

We should also remind our listeners of some telephone services that are available, if you have health concerns at this time. The National COVID hotline is 1800 020 080, providing general advice; If you are feeling unwell, Healthdirect is on 1800 022 222. Both of these services are available 24 hours a day, and are a free call from most telephone services.

Last Sunday, the ARNSW Radio Experimenter's Group had another online meeting, using Skype. If you couldn't join in live on the day, during the week, audio of the meeting is uploaded to the ARNSW audio page, at arnsw.org.au/audio; along with the recordings of VK2WI News and other special events.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 24th to the 30th of April.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	24 th	25 th	26 th	27 th	28 th	29 th	30 th
10cm flux	71	69	69	69	69	70	70
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	6	5	5	6	6	4	2 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	5	2	4	4	3	1	0 estimated
T index	-2	+4	5	12	9	4	0

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

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained mostly near predicted monthly values during daylight hours all week, with some with some periods of enhanced conditions. On the 24th, conditions were enhanced 35% during local night and 20% after local dawn; on the 25th, 65% during local night and 20% after local dawn. The 26th was enhanced 40% during local night, the 27th was enhanced 60% during local night and the 28th, 40% during local night. The 29th was enhanced 25% during local night and after dawn; and the 30th saw enhancement of 30% during local night and after local dawn.

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

Solar activity is expected to be very low, to low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should be 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 April, we had a;

Minimum of 68, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 71
With peak dates from the 12th to the 13th

As we start May, we expect a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 70
With peak dates from the 1st to the 6th, and the 18th to the 31st

And looking ahead to June, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 69, and a Maximum of 70
With peak dates from the 1st to the 2nd, and the 14th to the 15th.

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?

Today 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:3m20s

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

STAYING AT HOME; Several new stations this week;

CANADA; Ian, VO2IR is active as CH2IR until June 20 to remind everyone to Stay-At-Home. Activity is on various HF bands.

CHILE; Stay-At-Home station 3G2HOME is active, mainly on 20 metre CW.

ISRAEL; Isaac, 4Z1TL will activate Stay-At-Home station 4X2BESAFE until August 12. Activity will be on various HF bands.

JAMAICA; Nigel, 6Y5HN is supporting the COVID-19 Stay-At-Home event as 6Y6STAYHOME. Activity has been on 40 metres.

LEBANON; Members of the Radio Amateurs of Lebanon (RAL) will activate special event call signs OD50SH and OD5STAYHOME to spread awareness and Stay-At-Home as part of social distancing policies.

More stations in the stay at home effort:

4U2STAYHOME, 5W19STAYHOME, AT2SHI, IO6STAY, OD50SH, OD5STAYHOME, OE1STAYHOME and OQ1HOME.

BAHRAIN; Operators Fawaz, A92AA, Ahmed, A92AB and Ely, A93LT will be active as A91WTIS from May 10 to 17 for World Telecommunication and Information Society Day. Activity will be on various HF bands.

ANTARCTICA; Members of the Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition team (JARE) will be active as 8J1RL from Showa Research Station, Queen Maud Land (AN-015), until January 2021. Listen for operators Take, JA1AGS and Hiro, JH7JCX. Activity will be on various HF bands using CW and the digital modes.

CHINA; Members of the Chinese Radio Amateurs Club (CRAC) will activate 10 special event call signs (B0CRA - B9CRA) across their country to make QSOs with hams all over the world. Operations will take place until May 7.

BELARUS; The following special event stations will take part in the Pobeda-75 commemoration of the end of World War II: EV75B, EV75F, EV75GK, EV75K, EV75M and EV75PG.

ENGLAND; Members of the RSGB Contest Club will put GB1945PE, GB1945PJ and GB75PEACE on the air during May and August to mark Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan Days. Also, The Royal Air Force Amateur Radio Society (RAFARS) marks the end of World War II in Europe with the call sign GB75VED, active until May 28.

ITALY; The ARI Fidenza Club (IQ4FE) will put a number of special event stations on the air during 2020 to commemorate the life and achievements of Guglielmo Marconi. During May, I14TEA commemorates the first transatlantic transmission in 1903.

BULGARIA; The Bulgarian Federation of Radio Amateurs (BFRA) celebrates its 50th anniversary with the call sign LZ50BFRA until the year's end.

RUSSIA; A large number of special event call signs with the prefix RP75 will be active from Russia celebrating the end of World War II.

AUSTRALIA; Station VI250COOK commemorates Captain James Cook's voyage on HMS Endeavour along Australia's east coast with activity until August 31.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The Araucaria World Wide VHF Contest, 10-10 International Spring Contest, CW, RCC Cup, Microwave Spring Sprint, ARI International DX Contest, 7th Call Area QSO Party, Indiana QSO Party, RTTYOPS Weekend Sprint, Delaware QSO Party, FISTS Spring Slow Speed Sprint and the New England QSO Party are all on over this weekend.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association. Due to COVID-19, WICEN has cancelled participation in all but emergency activations, and moving training and meeting to radio and other electronic means.

Members are encouraged to take advantage of the free courses offered by the Office of Emergency Management.

WICEN is running checkin nets twice daily. In Sydney, the repeaters are VK2RWC on 2m and VK2RWS and VK2RWK on 70cm. For members outside the Sydney basin, there is also a morning-only net on the User Activated Talk Group 3810 on the VK-DMR network, which has reasonable coverage across the state.

More details are on WICEN's website, at nsw.wicen.org.au.

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. For more information, see the WICEN and Events pages on www.crarc.ampr.org.

WICEN Victoria has a weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz and the website is at vic.wicen.org.au, which includes a report on assistance provided to Rotuma (3D2R) during TC Sarai over the New Year period.

[OEM link; <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.

Like many organisations, the Club is operating without face-to-face meetings. Club business continues, with individual members contributing by undertaking various tasks to keep things running. The committee held a virtual meeting for May, and minutes will be emailed to Club members, to keep them abreast of club affairs.

Members and visitors are encouraged to participate in the club on air nets, which appear to be attracting a larger number of participants each week. There are two nets each week; 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. Access to VK2RPM is also available via EchoLink, for those outside the coverage area of the repeater.

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

Despite recent changes to travel restrictions, the club rooms are still closed and face-to-face activities are currently, still on hold. The club's executive team will soon be advising members on the conduct of upcoming business meetings online, which will also be available via teleconference facilities.

The club's repeater committee recently observed a case of the 2 metre repeater going a tad stir crazy. The team swiftly made a late-night rendezvous at the repeater site, restoring the service to normal operation. Work also continues on the clubs MMDVM based Brandmeister DMR repeater. The system recently had a software upgrade, so users should notice an improvement in audio quality. The Clubs project officer thanks all those who have submitted their expression of interest for the MMDVM build day and is working on calculating final costs.

The Club is also making plans for a VK-DMR based repeater system, providing further digital service access.

The tentative date for the 2021 Wyong Field Day has been set, for Sunday the 28th February 2021; so mark that down in your calendar.

The Club hosts a Morning Tea net at 10am each day; grab a cuppa and come along for a chat. We would like to thank Bob VK2AOR for facilitating this. The club also runs a weekly Thursday evening net starting at 8:00 PM. Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2 metre repeater 146.725MHz.

If you have a suggestion for the clubs next weekly net topic, or a burning question; feel free to leave a comment on the club's Facebook page or reach out via email.

Remember, you can view the live stream of the Thursday evening net from Facebook, watch later on the clubs YouTube channel or join in via Echo link using the *CCARCNSW* conference server.

You can find out more about the CCARC on the web at ccarc.org.au.

Brad VK2NMZ

Vice-President, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

Manly-Warringah Radio Society

This week, the Society is activating special event callsign VI250COOK, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's voyage to Australia in 1770. The callsign was organised by the Cairns Amateur Radio Club, to be active during the voyage of the Endeavour from Sydney to Cooktown, from May through August.

Unfortunately, COVID19 has scuttled the Endeavour (so to speak), but the special event station will carry on regardless. Several clubs will be activating the callsign over the coming months, and Manly-Warringah has been granted first bite of the cherry. VI250COOK/portable is now active on various bands using SSB and CW modes, until 6 May. Hope to catch you on air! For more info about VI250COOK, go to qrz.com and search for the callsign.

COVID19 has of course affected other club activities, so the weekly meetings at the clubhouse have been suspended until further notice. Instead, there is a net every Wednesday evening from 8pm, on the club 2m repeater on 146.875MHz. All are welcome to call in.

Check out the club's YouTube channel from a selection of radio-related lectures and other videos. Simply search for the club callsign, VK2MB.

You can also visit the society web site for other news and information about the various club projects. The address is www.mwrs.org.au.

*73 Richard VK2SKY
MWRS Publicity Officer*

St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society would like to thank everyone who participated in the ANZAC Day QSO Party on Saturday the 25th of April. The response by amateur radio operators both in VK and abroad was very pleasing, with many VK amateur operators using the special event AX callsign prefix. The feedback was also positive, with many asking for the event to run again next year.

Please remember to submit your logs to contest@sgars.org before the 10th of May, to receive your participation certificate.

This coming Wednesday the 6th, the Society will be holding a virtual club meeting online starting at 7:30pm. Details on the website, sgars.org.

There is also a weekly 2 metre net on Thursday evenings at 8pm, on the Heathcote repeater 146.8MHz, which has a negative 600 offset and no tone required.

The society also operates the VK2RDX 2 metre repeater at Mt. Bindo in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. This repeater on 146.650 MHz is accessible from many parts of Sydney and provides access to this broadcast and general conversations as far west as Orange.

During April there were 33 callbacks for the morning broadcasts through the Mt. Bindo repeater, but many more were listening. If you do listen via the Mt. Bindo repeater, then please call back if you can, or send an email to callbacks@sgars.org.

Keep safe, Stay In the Shack and Melt Solder.

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

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Activities on the air

Here is a summary of current on air activities, notified to us here at VK2WI News;

Oxley Region ARC nets at 7:30pm Thursday and 9am Sunday.
VK2RPM repeater, 146.7Mhz with 91.5Hz tone.

Westlakes nets Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 9:30am on 3565kHz.

Hunter Radio Group news 7:30pm Monday, on 146.9Mhz and 438.025MHz repeaters, with callbacks after.

Central Coast ARC net Thursday night on VK2RAG 146.725Mhz, 91.5Hz; also on Echolink *CCARCNSW*. Morning tea net daily from 10am, also on VK2RAG.

Illawarra ARS Nets - Tuesday at 8:30pm on on 80m, 3666kHz. Saturday 9:30am on VK2RMP 146.850 and VK2RUW on 146.675.

WICEN daily nets at 9am on the VK-DMR network on Talk group 3810, VK2RWC on 147.150 and VK2RWS 438.275. Evening net at 7pm, on the Sydney repeaters only.

Waverley ARS net 8pm Monday on VK2RBV

Fishers Ghost ARC net 7:30pm Thursday on VK2RFG, 438.65MHz

St George ARS net 8pm Thursday, on VK2RLE 146.8MHz. Next meeting online May 6th from 7:30pm – details on the website.

HADARC Monday night 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz.

Manly-Warringah activating VI250COOK/portable until the 6th of May. The on air meeting net is every Wednesday from 8pm on 146.875MHz.

At ARNSW, Morning News bulletins continue, and audio can be downloaded or streamed live from the website.