

Silent Key

It is with regret that we begin this week, with news of a silent key.

[Play File: 4-SK-ZTM1.wav]

Duration: 0m57s

In: It is with great sadness...

Out: ...Vale Tim Mills, VK2ZTM.

[unless updated]

As this news bulletin goes to air, the service arrangements for Tim have not been finalised. There will be an update on the ARNSW website once the details have been confirmed.

[Play ID File: 5-OP ID1.wav]

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

Greetings to all our XYL's and YL's on this - your day.

A reminder that, with the current restrictions due to Covid-19, there are no events at VK2WI Dural for the month of May; the May Foundation course and the Trash and Treasure have been cancelled, and the ARNSW Radio Experimenter's group is planning an online meeting.

In response to restrictions introduced as part of managing the ongoing Covid19 public health emergency, many clubs and groups have increased on air activities. Later in the bulletin, we have a summary of on air activities from various groups in Sydney and across News South Wales.

We would like to hear about activities happening in your area, please let us know; by emailing 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.

If you are having reception difficulties of either 3595 or 7146kHz, a reminder that this new bulletin is relayed via VKE580, on 5425 kHz USB, which covers the null zone between the normal coverage's of 80 and 40 on most occasions. There is also the streaming service, which you will find at arnsw.org.au/audio.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 1st to the 7th of May.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
10cm flux	70	69	69	69	69	70	69
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	5	3	5	8	7	6	5 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	4	2	2	3	3	2	3 estimated
T index	0	0	1	6	5	6	5

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 1st, conditions were enhanced 15% during local night and 20% after local dawn; on the 2nd, 25% during local night and 20% after local dawn. The 3rd was enhanced 30% during local night and 20% after local dawn, the 4th was enhanced 50% during local night and the 5th, 50% during local night and 25% after dawn. The 6th was enhanced 55% during local night; and the 7th saw enhancement of up to 70%(!) during local night and 25% after local dawn.

Now, the forecast for the 8th to the 14th of May;

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

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be mostly quiet, with the possibility of some unsettled periods.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should be near predicted monthly values with some enhanced periods likely.

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 9th to the 31st

And looking ahead to June, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 70
With no peak prediction at the present time.

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 April 2020

Complied with data courtesy of Space Weather Services

Solar activity was predominately at Very Low levels this month, with no M or X class flares observed. Four sunspot regions were observed; numbered 2759 to 2762. Region 2759 was a relatively long-lived, new cycle region. A CME from behind the west limb that was observed in LASCO and STEREO-A images late on 14 April, impacted Earth at 0232 UTC on the 20th of April. While the wind speed associated with this event was not elevated, there was a period of approximately seven hours where the north-south interplanetary magnetic field was mildly southward, to -15 nanoTesla. Mild to moderately elevated solar wind streams, associated with coronal holes, were observed during the month.

The Geomagnetic field in the Australian region was mostly quiet, with some unsettled periods due to coronal holes. A short period of minor geomagnetic storming was observed on the 20th of April, after a weak impulse of 10 nanoTesla at 0232 UTC, associated with a slow CME impact.

The ionosphere was also relatively stable; There were periods of sporadic E and spread F, mostly observed around night hours. The largest depression of 20% observed on the 12th and 13th of April.

In the solar and geophysical report each week, we talk about the maximum usable frequencies both observed in the report period, and in the forecast for the next week. This is based on observations of foF2, which is the maximum frequency reflected vertically by the ionosphere. While a vertical propagation path in itself is not particularly useful, the data is a reference point, from which estimates of frequencies for any oblique circuit can be made.

The foF2 is the most important parameter describing the state of the ionosphere at a particular location. Along with the T-index, foF2 is a key indicator of ionospheric conditions.

[Play ID File: 6-OP ID2.wav]

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.

[Play File: 7-FCAL113.wav]

Duration: 2m52s

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

AZERBAIJAN; Look for Azerbaijani amateur radio operators to be using either 4J75 or 4K75 prefixes starting May 5, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the victory in WW2. The length of the activity is not known at this time.

INDONESIA; Members of the ORARI are active as 8C2WFH (Work From Home), until May 19. Activity is on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres using CW, SSB, RTTY, BPSK31 and FT8.

JAPAN; Special event station 8J1ITU is active until May 31. Activity is to celebrate the anniversary of the ITU World Telecommunication and Information Society Day on May 17.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES; Look for activity with special call sign A60FTDMC during FT8DMC activity weeks, July 1 to 31, on various HF bands.

INDIA; Members of the West Bengal Radio Club, VU2WB, will be active as AU2COV until July 26. Activity is to provide assistance in fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic.

ENGLAND; Members of the RSGB Contest Club will activate the following call signs May 1 to 31 and August 1 to 31: GB1945PE, GB1945PJ and GB75PEACE. Operations will be on various HF bands and 6 metres using CW, SSB and the digital modes.

SOUTH KOREA; Look for special event station HL40GDM until May 31. Activity is to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the May 18 Democratic Uprising in Gwangju. Operations will be on all bands and modes.

AUSTRIA; Jo, OE4VIE is active as OE50MHZ until June 30 to mark the 30th anniversary of the first provisional release of the frequency range 50 to 52 MHz for Amateur Radio in Austria. Operations will be on CW, SSB and the digital modes on 6 metres.

POLAND; Czeslaw, SP9FZU will be active with the special call sign SN100PS in memory of the Second Silesian Civil War in 1920. Activity will be on various HF bands.

KENYA; Andy, 5Z4/G3AB is active on CW in his evenings on 20 and 17 metres.

ZAMBIA; Mario, IK1MYT is active as 9J2MYT. He plans to be active through the end of this month. Look for him using SSB on 20, 17, 15 and 10 metres.

STAY AT HOME STATIONS. More special event stations will join the cause to raise awareness of restrictions necessary to fight the spread of the coronavirus and to thank health and medical workers worldwide, including:

3G2HOME Chile, HG20HO Hungary, 4J0STAYHOME Azerbaijan, 4MSTAYHOME Venezuela, HZ1STAYHOME Saudi Arabia, 4U2STAYHOME Austria, IO6STAY Italy, 4X2BESAFE Israel, 5B4STAYHOME Cyprus, 5W19STAYS SAFE Samoa, K2H United States, 6Y6STAYHOME Jamaica, 8A1HOME Indonesia, OD50SH Lebanon, OH0PYSYKOTONA Finland, 9K9STAYHOME Kuwait, A60SH/1 U.A.E., OH0STAYHOME Aland Island, AT2GOK India, ON4HEROES Belgium, AX2020STAYHOME Australia, CH2IR Canada, CN20SH Morocco, CQ8STAYHOME Azores, CT1STAYHOME Portugal, CV7STAYHOME Uruguay, DX0STAYHOME Philippines, E2STAYHOME Thailand and E7STAYHOME Bosnia & Herzegovina.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF WWII; During the month of May, many stations will be active commemorating the end of World War II. Look for the following special event prefixes to be active: 4X75 Israel, RP75 Russia, EV75 Belarus, GB75 England and N. Ireland, GU75 Guernsey, UP75 Kazakhstan.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The SARL VHF/UHF Digital Contest, CQ-M International DX Contest, VOLTA WW RTTY Contest, SKCC Weekend Sprintathon, Arkansas QSO Party, FISTS Spring Unlimited Sprint, 50 MHz Spring Sprint and the WAB 7 MHz Phone Contest are on this weekend.

The 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint is on May 11 and the RSGB 80-Metre Club Championship is on May 13.

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.

[OEM link; <https://www.emtraining.nsw.gov.au/>]

[Play ID File: 8-OP ID3.wav]

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 until further notice. The club's executive team will soon be advising members on the conduct of first online business meetings will be on the 16th of May; details have been sent to club members.

Work also continues on the clubs MMDVM based Brandmeister DMR repeater. The system recently had a hardware upgrade, but work is still in progress.

The Club wishes to pass their condolences for Timothy VK2ZTM, who passed suddenly on Friday. SK and we are thinking of Tim's Family and ARNSW during these times.

The Club was recently approached by Jay KE6GLA, of the El Dorado County Amateur Radio Club, to facilitate a combined IRLP Net between both club repeaters. They had 20 stations who partook in the net including a high school student, Austin KN6HZM, who had only just recently obtained his licence and our club members were the first international contacts for him. A memorable moment. The club wishes to thank those who participated in the net and hope to connect again in the future.

If you looking to obtaining or upgrading your licence; the Clubs education facilitator, Karen VK2AKB is an AMC Level 3 assessor and the club has the capability to perform remote education and assessment sessions. If you are interested, please reach out to Karen by email to; education@ccarc.org.au.

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 running the net, now in its 35th Day – a great effort! 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.

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.

Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The Society normally meets on the second Tuesday of each month; however, the with the current Covid19 public health restrictions, the next meeting will once again be via radio - it is after all, actually a *radio* meeting!

So, the next RF meeting of the Society will commence at 7:30pm local time this coming Tuesday the 12th of May, using the linked 2 metre repeaters of VK2RMP on 146.850MHz and VK2RUW on 146.675MHz. Out-of-town Members and other interested parties can call in via Echolink on VK2MT-R.

Last month's RF meeting was very well attended, with 27 check-ins. This time around, to make checking-in less crazy and difficult, they will be following a similar format to VK2WI News Callbacks; that is, first calling in portable & mobiles, then north and south of Crown St; and lastly, Echolink stations.

This special RF meeting will follow the normal meeting format, with a welcome, call-ins, apologies, and then general discussion from the floor... or should that be from the repeater...?

Then to try something even more different, IARS Member Simon VK2KU is going to give a presentation from his radio shack on APRS and the use of Arduinos in Amateur radio via a live stream onto the Society's Facebook page. The audio presentation will also be relayed to the Society repeaters and Echolink. At the end of his presentation, he will then take any questions via the repeater connections. This should all prove to be very interesting, informative and probably a lot of fun!

Following this presentation, attendees can break for their own cuppa and cake, or maybe even a cold beverage, before reconvening for the more informal 80 metre catch-up Net at 8:30pm. This net will be on 3.666MHz, plus or minus frequency for other usage.

A reminder of the Society's other weekly Net on Saturday morning run by Steve VK2BGL. Listeners can join-in at 9:30am local time by either using one of the aforementioned 2 metre repeaters, on 6850 or 6675, while the out-of-towners can call-in on Echolink via VK2BGL-R.

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 call-in to the next RF meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society at 7:30pm local time on Tuesday the 12th of May, via the Society's linked 2 meter repeaters of 6850 and 6675, or via Echolink node, VK2MT-R.

Finally, the Society wishes to send their best wishes to all listeners and for them to stay safe in these rather unusual and uncertain times.

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

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the Club will be on the air; this Tuesday the 12th on the VK2RNS 2 metre repeater, starting at 8pm. You can also access the meeting via the HADARC room on Jitsi.

Instead of meetings at Mt Colah, these extra 2m nets will be held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays. Net control will either be under the callsign VK2WAH, using the phonetics "We Are Home"; or VK2MA.

The Club's website has details on this and other changes to club activities during the current pandemic restrictions, including the delay of the AGM which was scheduled for May 26. The address is www.hadarc.org.au.

The Club runs a number of 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.

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.*

[Play ID File: 9-OP ID4.wav]

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 Monthly RF Meeting on Tuesday the 12th; on VK2RMP 146.850, VK2RUW on 146.675, and Echolink. Nets - Tuesday at 8:30pm 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, 438.1125MHz. Other club activities online, see website for details.

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

St George ARS net 8pm Thursday, on VK2RLE 146.8MHz.

HADARC Monday night 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz. Next meeting net Tuesday 12th from 8pm on VK2RNS and on Jitsi.

Manly-Warringah 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.