

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

With the restrictions currently in place due to Covid-19, there are no events at VK2WI Dural. We continue to monitor the advice from public health organisations and the updates to government regulations, with a view to resume in person activities when it is practical.

For now, the VK2WI site unfortunately must remain closed to visitors. You can still make contact via email, to office@arnsw.org.au, or by phone message to 02 96511490.

As a result of the public health restrictions, many clubs and groups have increased on air activities. Later in this 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. Also a reminder that the CovidSafe app has been recently updated; so if you use this application, you may wish to download the latest version.

For many years now, these VK2WI News bulletins have been relayed via many VHF and UHF repeaters, and we would like to thank those clubs for their continued support of our news service.

US Licence examinations

A couple of weeks ago here on VK2WI News, we mentioned that the VEA team in Sydney was resuming some limited US licence exam sessions. So this week we congratulate Robin KJ7PBM on receiving a US licence.

For more information on VEA and US licencing, you can visit the group's website, vea.org.au.

Submitted by Julian VK2YJS (and AG6LE)

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 10th to the 16th of July.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	10 th	11 th	12 th	13 th	14 th	15 th	16 th
10cm flux	69	69	68	68	69	68	69
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	3	2	3	7	9	6	4 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	0	0	0	5	5	4	2 estimated
T index	-1	-2	-7	-2	+8	+1	0

Solar activity was at very low levels all week.

Geomagnetic activity was at quiet levels from the 10th to the 13th, Quiet to unsettled on the 14th and 15th, returning to quiet levels on the 16th.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, started out near predicted monthly values during local day, with enhancements at night; of 15% on the 10th, 30% on the 11th, and 35% on the 12th and 13th. The 14th saw enhancement of 15% during local day and 55% during local night. The 15th was enhanced 30% during local night and 20% after local dawn, and the 16th remained near predicted values during the day, with enhancement of 35% during local night and 20% after local dawn.

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

Solar activity is expected to be very low.

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

Maximum Usable Frequencies should be mostly near predicted monthly values. Dural local nights, spread F may affect communications. Afternoons, evening and near local dawns, sporadic E propagation is possible.

Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.

Solar Flux Index update

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

For June, we had a;

Minimum of 67, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 73
With peak dates from the 6th to the 13th

So far for July, we expect a;

Minimum of 67, Average of 69, and a Maximum of 70
With peak dates from the 4th to the 7th; and the 17th to the 31st

And looking ahead to August, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 68, Average of 68, and a Maximum of 69
With peak dates from the 1st to the 2nd; 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?

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: 6-FCAL125.wav]

Duration 2m25s

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

BRUNEI; V84SPU will celebrate the 74th birthday of Sultan of Brunei, Haji Hassanal Bolkihah [*HAH-jee HAHS-uh-nahl BOL-kee-uh*]. Activity will be until July 31 on all bands and modes.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES; To commemorate the launch of the Mars "Hope Probe" and the 50th anniversary of the union of the UAE, special event station A60EMM will be active with multiple stations (i.e. A60EMM/1, /2, etc.)

FINLAND; Ric DL2VFR, plans to be active as OH73ELK until July 30. Activity is mainly on CW.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA; Members of the Nikola Tesla Radio Club are celebrating Tesla's 164th birthday with the call sign E7TESLA until July 20.

HUNGARY; The Hungarian FIRAC group is active with the call sign HA70MAV until December 1.

ITALY; Members of the Italian Naval Old Rhythmers Club (I.N.O.R.C.) will be using the call sign I10ICEH until August 1, to commemorate the Andrea Doria disaster.

OGASAWARA; Takashi, JH1FFW is active as JD1/JH1FFW until July 19 on 40 to 6 metres using SSB and FT8.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; The Grayson County Amateur Radio Club commemorates the Red River Bridge War of 1931, a boundary conflict between Oklahoma and Texas, with the call sign W5I until July 26.

BULGARIA; George, LZ2VP is active as LZ77VP until the end of July.

GREECE; Members of the Radio Amateur Association of Western Peloponnese (RAAWP) are dedicating the special event call sign SX3SP to the memory of Saint Paisios of Mount Athos, until July 31.

DODECANESE ISLANDS; Stathis, SV5DKL plans to participate in the RSGB IOTA Contest, July 25 and 26, in the single-op, all-band, CW, High-power category from his home station on Rhodes Island.

TAIWAN; BX2AB is planning to operate as BV0WPX from the PengHu Islands during the RSGB IOTA Contest, July 25 and 26. He will be single-op assisted. Also, Bruce, BV2KI will be active in the contest as BV9AYA, also single-op assisted.

GHANA; Matteo, IZ4YGS travels to Ghana on July 24. After quarantine, he will be at his station starting August 8 and continuing until mid-September as 9G5GS.

TURKEY; YM9SIX is a new six metre beacon, running five watts to a vertical on 50.4035MHz. It is located at the QTH of TA7OM in grid KN80. Testing is underway. It may be moved to grid LN10 and another frequency at some point.

UKRAINE; Look for EM44L to be active from the Regional Landscape Park "Feldman Ecopark" (URFF-0194; New One) on July 18 and 19.

THE NETHERLANDS; Special event station PA75WSN is active until the end of the year to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of The Netherlands in World War II. Activity is on various HF and UHF bands using SSB and the Digital modes.

RUSSIA; Members of the Fifth Ocean Club are active as UE45SA until July 19, celebrating the 45th anniversary of the Apollo-Soyuz joint mission in space. Operators are Victor, RV3YR and Viktor, RN3YN and R3YC.

FT8DMC ANNIVERSARY; More special call signs celebrating the 3rd anniversary of the FT8 Digital Mode Club, until July 31 include CB3DMC, XR3DMC and XR3FT8 from Chile; GB8DMC from England, and OZ8FTDM from Denmark.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The Russian Radio Team Championship, Trans-Tasman Low-Bands Challenge, Feld Hell Sprint, North American QSO Party, RTTY, CQ Worldwide VHF Contest, RSGB Low Power Contest, Run for the Bacon QRP Contest and the CQC Great Colorado Gold Rush are all on this weekend.

The SKCC Sprint is on July 22 and the RSGB 80-Metre Club Championship, Data is on July 23.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association. Due to COVID-19, WICEN has limited non-emergency activations, and has moved meeting to radio and other electronic means.

Preparations continue for the 2020 Hawkesbury Canoe Classic, planned for the 24th and 25th of October. This event supports Arrow, the bone marrow transplant foundation. The Volunteer Memorial Day for 2020 is at Mrs Macquarie's Chair in the Domain, at 11am on Sunday the 11th of October.

On Sunday the 2nd of August at 9am, there will be a repeat by request, of the videoconference session held on 6 May, on VRA online administration and training systems. Training for Rural Fire Service communications support roles is also available. WICEN members are encouraged to take advantage of the free courses offered by the Office of Emergency Management.

WICEN is now running weekly nets on Sunday evenings. The main net is at 6pm, with a check-in net at 6:30pm. On the 1st, 4th and 5th Sundays this will be on the Chatswood 2m repeater, then on 2nd and 3rd Sundays the Kurrajong - Berowra 70 cm FM system, followed at 6:30pm by a net on User Activated Talk Group 3810 on the VK-DMR network.

The WICEN website is at nsw.wicen.org.au; which includes membership information and 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, which has moved all its events, including its enthralling lectures, online or on-air. The next event planned is the BMSC Narooma Rally on the 1st of August, followed by the LCCC "Blue Range Rallysprint" on September 5. The BMSC National Capital Rally is September 26 & 27, with operators required. For more information visit the website, at the new address of crarc.org.au or the CRARC Facebook page.

WICEN Victoria has a weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz. They are planning to resume involvement in events, starting in October. More details on their website, vic.wicen.org.au.

[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.

The Friday night get-together, scheduled for Friday the 17th of July, was cancelled due to the Covid-19 situation.

The club's AGM is scheduled for Saturday the 1st of August. Notice of the meeting has been being sent out, assuming the meeting will be able to proceed as an in person meeting. The committee is continuing to monitor the the current Public health regulations.

Membership subscriptions are now due. Thank you to those members who have already renewed.

There are two club 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. In the absence of meetings, members and visitors are encouraged to participate in the club on air nets as often as possible; 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 newly published July 2020 issue of the club's bimonthly newsletter, Oxtales, is now available, and past issues are available on the website as well. The current issue includes a detailed article by club member Ian VK2IDL, describing the construction of the stand-alone Morse decoder that he has designed. Listeners with long memories may remember that Ian wrote the software for the very popular VZ-200 RTTY Module, which was published in ETI magazine in November and December 1984 and sold as a kit by Dick Smith electronics (K-6318) at the time.

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

Last night club members took part in the 2020 Trans-Tasman Low Band Contest utilising club station VK2AFY. This was also a great introduction for the club's new members to experience contesting and how fun it can be. The club would like to acknowledge Geoff VK2FGSE, Jim VK2FJEG, and Ryan VK2FRTS who took place in their first contest and had an absolute blast. Club member Alan VK2MG also took part, operating from Brisbane Water National Park. Hopefully, some of you made successful contacts with either station during the evening.

The Central Coast WICEN branch held their AGM yesterday; the office bearers are President Glenn VK2GEM, Secretary Col VK2ZCO and Treasurer Bob VK2ZAR.

The Clubs AGM is scheduled for the 15th of August, to take place both in person at the clubrooms and via Video Conference; the details of which, will be supplied closer to the date.

Present Social distancing rules allow a maximum of 10 occupants within the club's meeting room and 4 occupants within the radio room. Pending weather, the club will try to accommodate external parties within the undercover area outside via video link, however, space will be limited under the four-square metre rule

The club wishes to say special thanks to Bob VK2AOR for hosting the "Are you okay" net at 10am each day, on the VK2RAG repeater on 146.725MHz. The concept was formed after the club's Thursday evening net and then grew into a significant achievement. After the announcement last week, a further consensus was taken regarding the future of daily nets; at this point, the nets will continue, however they will be scaled back.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week, was facilitated by Brad VK2NMZ. Topic of the evening was, *"If you could have the ultimate workspace, what equipment would you have?"* The net ran for just under 2 hours, with many wishes for for radio test sets, spectrum analysers and wrap around benches. Some very creative ideas indeed!

The Thursday evening net is on the VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, on 146.725Mhz; If you're within range of our repeater, why not drop by? You can also join in via EchoLink using the *CCARCNSW* conference server and more recently via IRLP reflector 9509, plus you can view the live stream on the club's Facebook page.

You can find out more about the CCARC on the web at ccarc.org.au; or on Facebook, just search for Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

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

Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club

Face-to-face activities at the club remain suspended, however the weekly on-air nets are still running.

The 80 metre net Starts at 8pm on Tuesday evenings, on 3543 kHz, and the 2 metre net starts at 8pm on Wednesday, on the club's 2 metre repeater on 147.050MHz with a 123Hz tone for access.

The committee position of technical officer is still under consideration.

Last year, several members of the club collaborated with Scouts NSW, to run a series of workshops to help scouts get their amateur radio licence. During these workshops, scouts gained a theoretical understanding behind amateur radio as well as practical knowledge on calling procedures, operating handhelds, using repeaters and setting up a simple radio system. The last workshop was held at 1st Greystanes Scout Hall, where both James VK2GOH and Eric VK2VE conducted the assessments. Welcome to;

Thomas, Luke, Taha, Zaran, Alannah, Beth and Tim.

The club would like to thank Brett VK2BNN, National JOTA coordinator, for the opportunity to be involved in getting more young people on the air.

More information about the club can be found on the website, at <http://www.bmarc.org>.

*73 from James VK2GOH
Publicity Officer, Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club.*

St George Amateur Radio Society

Last night was the annual Trans-Tasman low band contest, on 40, 80 and 160 metres. It was a good precursor for the St. George Amateur Radio Society's annual 80m contest, which is on next Saturday the 25th of July.

For many years, this contest has been run on the last Saturday night in July, as a practice for the RD contest a few weeks later. Starting this year, the contest is open to all amateurs.

It runs from 6pm to midnight, and more details are on the society's website; www.sgars.org.

*Peter VK2EMU
Publicity Officer, St George Amateur Radio Society.*

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Activities on the air

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

Great Lakes Radio Club weekly net 7pm Monday on VK2RGL, 147.1MHz.

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

Hunter Radio Group meeting net Wednesday 7:30pm on 146.9MHz.
VK2AWX News 7:30pm Monday, on 146.9Mhz and 438.025MHz.

Central Coast ARC net Thursday night on VK2RAG 146.725Mhz, 91.5Hz; also Echolink *CCARCNSW*.

Amateur Radio Central West Group afternoon tea net 4pm, Monday and Friday night at 8pm, on VK2RCW. HF net 8pm Wednesday on 3653kHz.

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

Blue Mountains ARC nets 8pm Tuesday on 3543kHz, 8pm Wednesday on VK2RBM, 147.050MHz with 123Hz tone.

WICEN nets now on Sunday evenings from 6pm.

Waverley ARS net 8pm Monday on VK2RBV, 438.1125MHz. Activities online and in person, see website for details.

Fishers Ghost ARC net 7:30pm Thursday on VK2RFG, 438.65MHz. Next Monthly meeting net on Wednesday the 29th.

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

HADARC Monday night 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz, on air net Tuesday the 14th at 8pm on VK2RNS – net control VK2WAH[we are home].

Manly-Warringah on air meeting net, Wednesdays 8pm on 146.875MHz.

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