

Silent Key.

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

The Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club have advised of the passing of their friend and fellow club member, Greg Hilder VK2KGH on the 17th of July.

Greg had been a member of the club since 1988 and he was also a member of Liverpool and Districts Amateur Radio Club. He spent a lot of time assisting with amateur radio for the Girl Guides at Austral with his wife, Kathryn VK2FOWL. He also had an association with the Macarthur community radio station, 2MCR.

Greg also had a number of other active interests including avionics and four wheel driving.

Greg's service was held on 23 July at the Gledswood Homestead and Winery with many family and friends to celebrate his life.

Please pause with us now, while we remember Greg.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Greg Hilder VK2KGH.

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

[Play ID File: 4-OP ID1.wav]

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.

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.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 17th to the 23rd of July.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	17 th	18 th	19 th	20 th	21 st	22 nd	23 rd
10cm flux	68	68	69	69	70	70	70
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	5	4	4	3	5	5	4 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	1	1	1	1	2	1	1 estimated
T index	-2	-2	-1	-2	-6	-1	-2

Solar activity was at very low levels all week.

Geomagnetic activity was at quiet levels all week.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained near predicted monthly values during local daylight hours all week. Some enhanced propagation was observed; with 15% during local night on the 17th; 20% during local night and 35% after local dawn on the 18th; 30% during local night on the 19th; 15% during local night on the 20th; 30% during local night on the 22nd; and enhancement of 50% during local night on the 23rd.

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

Solar activity is expected to be very low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet, to unsettled levels, though some isolated active periods are possible on the 24th of July.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should be mostly 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 June, we had a;

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

Nearing the end of 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 22nd to the 31st

And looking ahead to August, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 68, Average of 68, and a Maximum of 70
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-FCAL123.wav]

Duration 2m47s

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

Several stations are on air this weekend especially to take part in the RSGB IOTA contest;

TAIWAN; Bruce, BV2KI will be active as BV0WPX from Liu-Chiu Yu Island, IOTA AS-155, in the contest as a Single Op/Island DXpedition/Assisted entry.

CHINA; Operator BA4MY will be active as BG4OP from Lingshan Island, IOTA AS-150.

PORTUGAL; Members of the Portuguese DX Group will be active as CS5DX from Pessegueiro Island, IOTA EU-167. Activity will be on 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres using CW, SSB and FT8.

MADEIRA ISLAND; Ulf, DL5AXX will be active as CT9ABV as a 12 Hour Mixed entry; and Paul, DL5CW will be active as either CR3W or CT9/DL5CW in the remaining 12 Hour Mixed category.

PHILIPPINES; Operators DV8VMI, DX8CAD and DX9EVM will be active from Mindanao, IOTA OC-130. DV8VMI will be active on 40 metres, with DX8CAD and DX9EVM being active on all bands.

ESTONIA; Igor, ES0IA will be active from Kassar Island, IOTA EU-034.

ITALY; Raf, IH9YMC will be active from Pantelleria Island, IOTA AF-018.

BELGIUM; Ivan, ON4IBM will be active as PA/ON4IBM from Schouwen Duiveland, IOTA EU-146, during the contest as a Single Op /SSB Mode/24 Hrs/High Power entry.

DENMARK; Palle, OZ2PBS will be active from Zealand Island, IOTA EU-029, as a Single Op/ All Band/ Assisted/ High Power entry.

POLAND; Kuba, SQ6NEJ will be active from Wolin Island, IOTA EU-132, as a Single Op/40 to 10 metre/SSB Mode entry.

GREECE; Thomas, SV2CLJ will be active as J48L from Amoliani Island, IOTA EU-174.

DODECANESE; Stathis, SV5DKL plans to be active from Rhodes Island, IOTA EU-001, in the RSGB IOTA contest as a Single Op/All Band/CW Mode/Assisted/High Power entry.

...And in other DX activity for this week;

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES; Special event stations A60EMM/1 through A60EMM/9 are active to commemorate the Hope Probe project, as part of the UAE's involvement in the exploration of the planet Mars.

GERMANY; Mike, DG5LAC is active as DG5LAC/p from Hooge Island, IOTA EU-042, until July 28. Activity is on the HF bands using SSB, FT8 and FT4. This includes an entry in the RSGB IOTA contest.

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

FRANCE; Station TM11AD will be operated by the British Breakout from Normandy Museum in its annual liberation festival, on August 1 and 2. Look for them on HF CW, SSB and digital modes. They are hoping to use genuine WWII era gear and demonstrating it to the public.

HUNGARY; Members of the Hungarian FIRAC are active with special event call sign HA70MAV from Budapest until December 1 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Hungarian Railway. Activity is on various HF bands.

LAOS; Mike, XW2DX is active from Vientiane and is there for the next 5 years. Activity is on 20, 15 and 10 metres.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The QRP 20-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, RSGB IOTA Contest and the ARS CW Flight of the Bumblebees are all on this weekend.

The RSGB FT4 Contest Series is scheduled for July 27.

The RTTYOPS Weeksprint, Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest and QCX CW Challenge are scheduled for July 28.

The CWops Mini-CWT Test and Phone Fray are scheduled for July 29.

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. WICEN involvement will depend on the NSW Public Health Orders in place. The Volunteer Memorial Day for 2020 is at Mrs Macquarie's Chair in the Domain, at 11am on Sunday the 11th of October.

By request, on Sunday the 2nd of August at 9am, there will be a repeat of the videoconference session held on 6 May, on VRA online administration and training systems. WICEN members are encouraged to take advantage of the free courses offered by the Office of Emergency Management.

WICEN has weekly nets on Sunday evenings; with the main net at 6pm and 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 events, including its enthralling lectures, online or on-air. The next event planned is the LCCC "Blue Range Rallysprint" on September 5, and the BMSC Narooma Rally is on September the 19th. The Brookvale Horse Enduro is now planned for early October and the BMSC National Capital Rally has moved to a date in late November. 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 club's AGM is scheduled for Saturday the 1st of August. Notice of the meeting was sent out assuming a face-to-face meeting will be able to proceed, but the committee is continuing to closely monitor 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 club is also on Facebook; just search for Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

*Submitted by Henry VK2ZHE
For the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.*

Hunter Radio Group

The Group conducts a weekly net on the Group's VHF Repeater, on 146.9MHz. The net is on Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm.

The Hunter Radio Group also has a news broadcast on Monday nights starting at 7:30pm, on the 2 metre repeater 146.9MHz, and the 70cm repeater on 438.025MHz. Callbacks are taken after the broadcast.

Rodney VK2CN
Secretary, Hunter Radio Group.

Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

With the Trans-Tasman Low-Band contest last week, some club members are itching to get into contesting again. With both the International Lighthouse and Lightship weekend, and the Remembrance Day contest over the weekend of the 15th and 16th of August, it is sure to be busy times.

A reminder, that annual club membership is due for renewal. Please contact the clubs treasurer if you are unsure of your membership status.

The club's next monthly business meeting will be held on Saturday the 1st of August from 1pm. With some changes to internal infrastructure, there may be some difficulties with effective video conferencing; however, the club will work with the resources available on the day.

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. Position nomination forms have been sent to the club's email distribution list and are also available at the clubrooms.

Present physical 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 previous announcement, a further consensus was taken regarding the future of daily nets; the nets will continue for now, however subject to net control availability.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week, was facilitated by Brad VK2NMZ. Topic of the evening was, "*Portable Operations and You*". The net ran for around 90 minutes, with some amazing stories shared of SOTA and Parks activations to elaborate dedicated portable HF kits. On a side note, Club member Max VK2XOR has a small form radio kit with a wire that fits into a tea leaf container; make sure you check it out the blog post on the clubs' website.

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

With the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, the Club is allowed to meet at the clubhouse again, subject to some conditions.

The committee has decided to run an informal gathering on Saturday 1st August starting at 10am. Members coming in for all or part of the day must remember to sign in, sanitise hands and observe proper physical distancing.

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.

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.*

Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the Club will be on-air, on the Club repeater, VK2RFG, at 7:30pm on Thursday the 30th of July; note the change of date.

The meeting will precede the Club's regular weekly net on Thursday evening, which will go ahead as usual after the meeting, from around 8:00pm. The repeater has a negative 7MHz input and a 91.5Hz CTCSS tone is required for access.

The results of the Ted Powell Memorial DX Challenge for April to June, are now posted on the contest website, contest.fgarc.org.au/#Results. Congratulations to the winners of both categories.

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

Given the ongoing “QRM from COVID”, HADARC will be replacing Mount Colah meetings with extra nets on the VK2RNS 2 metre repeater.

The next such net is on this Tuesday the 28th of July, starting at 8pm. Net control will be using the callsign VK2WAH, with the phonetics "We Are Home".

This will be supplemented by Jitsi video conferencing; not only adding the “show” to the “Show & Tell” segments, but allowing participation in the meeting by out-of-area members. These have worked well, with participants joining via web browser, 'phone or tablet App, or even to dial in from a basic 'phone, worldwide.

The Club’s website has more details on this and other changes to club activities, along with information on how to use Jitsi; the address is www.hadarc.org.au. The site also includes a contact form.

The club has a group on Facebook, which can be found by searching for VK2MA, and on twitter, @VK2MA.

The Club’s three regular nets continue 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.

*Submitted by Julian VK2YJS
HADARC Publicity Officer.*

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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 has moved; now on Thursday the 30th.

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

HADARC Monday night 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz, on air net Tuesday the 28th 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.