

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 currently planned 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. But for now, the site remains 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. We would like to thank those clubs for their continued support of this news service.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

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

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	24 th	25 th	26 th	27 th	28 th	29 th	30 th
10cm flux	70	70	71	71	72	73	73
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	0	27(!)	3	5	0	4	5
Australian Index (Aaus)	10	8	1	0	0	3	2 estimated
T index	-1	+6	-7	-3	0	+1	-1

Solar activity was at very low levels all week.

Geomagnetic activity was at quiet to active levels on the 24th, quiet to unsettled on the 25th, then quiet from the 26th through to the 30th.

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 25% during local night on the 24th and 45% during local night on the 25th; 20% on the 26th and 27th; 25% during local night and 20% after local dawn on the 28th; 20% during local night on the 29th; and enhancement of 25% during local night, and 20% after local dawn, on the 30th.

Now, the forecast for the 31st of July to the 6th of August;

Solar activity is expected to be very low to low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with a chance of isolated active periods on the 2nd of August.

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.

Having just finished July, we had a;

Minimum of 67, Average of 69, and a Maximum of 73
With peak dates from the 22nd to the 31st

At the start of August, we expect a;

Minimum of 68, Average of 69, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates from the 1st to the 8th; and the 24th to the 29th

And looking ahead to September, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 68, Average of 68, and a Maximum of 68
With no peak prediction just yet.

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 3m53s

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

UGANDA; Shabu, M0KRI is active as 5X1RI until mid-August.

GERMANY; Members of the German section of the International Police Association are active with special event station DL70IPA, celebrating the organisation's 70th anniversary. Activity is Sundays and Thursdays during August and September, on 40 and 80 metres, respectively. They may be active on 20 metres depending on conditions.

France ; Members of radio club F4KKE at Saint-Martin-des-Besaces in Normandy are active with special callsign TM11AD until August 3, to commemorate the role played by the British 11th Armoured Division during Operation Bluecoat in July and August 1944. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

ENGLAND; Special event stations GB75PEACE, GB1945PE and GB1945PJ will be active during August to mark the end of World War II in the Pacific.

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.

ITALY; Simone, IU4HRJ will be active as IM0/IU4HRJ from Maddalena Island, IOTA EU-041, from August 4 to 10. Activity will be on the HF bands using SSB and various digital modes.

FINLAND; Jukka, OH3OJ is active as OH3OJ/1 from Kaurissalo Island, IOTA EU-096, until August 5. Activity is on 80 to 6 metres using CW, some SSB, and FT8.

ARUBA; Thomas, KM4VI will be active as P4/KM4VI from August 2 to 7. Activity will be on the HF bands using SSB and QRP power.

NETHERLANDS; Special event station PI75VERON is active until the end of 2020, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Dutch National Club VERON.

MEXICO; Special event station 4A2MAX is active during August to honour the memory of Maximilian Kolbe. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

VIETNAM; Jesùs, WP4JBG is active as XV9G from Ho Chi Minh City. Activity is on the HF bands.

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

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The ARRL 222 MHz and Up Distance Contest, North American CW QSO Party, QRP 20-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, Batavia FT8 Contest, 10-10 International Summer SSB Contest, European HF Championship, WAB 144 MHz Low Power Phone, RTTYOPS Weekend Sprint and SARL HF Phone Contest will certainly keep contesters busy this weekend.

The RTTYOPS Weeksprint, ARS Spartan CW Sprint and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest are scheduled for August 4.

The VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, CWops Mini-CWT Test and Phone Fray are scheduled for August 5.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association. WICEN has currently limited non-emergency activations, and has moved meetings to radio and other electronic means. Volunteers are sought for various logistic and administrative tasks; including ongoing repeater and APRS management, and asset management.

Preparations continue for the 2020 Hawkesbury Canoe Classic, planned for the 24th and 25th of October, subject to "Return to Sport" rules. Volunteer Memorial Day for 2020 is at Mrs Macquarie's Chair in the Domain, at 11am on Sunday the 11th of October.

WICEN members are encouraged to take advantage of the free courses offered by the Office of Emergency Management. Members should also check their VRA email, for information regarding training for RFS communications support roles.

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, at nsw.wicen.org.au; 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, followed by the BMSC Narooma Rally on the 19th. In October, ANU's "Inward Bound" runs from the 9th to the 11th, and the Brookvale Horse Enduro is planned for the 11th. 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 with the Baw-Baw Extreme, which runs (literally) from October 31 to November 1. More details on the 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 was scheduled for yesterday, the 1st of August, but due to the current Covid-19 situation, it has been postponed. The new date for the AGM, is Saturday the 5th of September.

The club Committee met yesterday and the minutes of the meeting will be emailed to members.

In response to risks arising from the current public health situation, the Club's Committee has reluctantly cancelled all planned face-to-face club activities for August. In addition to the AGM, this also includes the August Monthly General Meeting and the Friday Night Get together scheduled for the 21st of August. As it is not possible to maintain the mandated physical separation within the club's Communications Caravan, the planned VK2BOR participation in the RD Contest and the International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend, is also cancelled.

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.*

Westlakes Amateur Radio Club

The Club is planning to soon commence classes for both Foundation and standard licences, subject to physical distancing and other public health rules.

For more information, or to book, phone 0478 228 983.

Westlakes has a net every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 09:30am on 3565kHz.

Barrie VK2QG

President, Westlakes 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 upcoming activities and additional restrictions in place, the club will unfortunately be unable to run as multi operator, single station for the upcoming Remembrance Day contest.

The club's executive team is considering a dedicated HF operating night, with an emphasis on those who are just coming into the hobby and may not have stations setup at their QTH. Further logistics are being discussed.

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 monthly business meeting was held yesterday, both in person at the club rooms and via teleconference. The club thanks those who participated.

The Clubs AGM is being held on 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 Alan VK2MG. Topic of the evening was, "*Latest happenings and interests*". The net ran for around 2 hours, with discussions of power supplies, building magnetic loop antennas, and one operator who made a successful contact into Spain on QRP in the 40-metre band - the new sunspot cycle seems to have started early, with some great propagation reports coming in.

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.

St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society is continuing to hold their monthly gatherings on line; the next is this coming Wednesday the 5th August, starting at 7:30pm. After some short announcements and a general catch up, there will be a presentation by Greg VK2GSB.

Greg recently looked at an old hotspot he had been using for DMR and decided to try D-STAR just for fun - and also to see if anyone was still there using that mode. To his surprise, there's still a fair bit of activity, so he decided that it was worthy of a closer look.

Greg will share his recent on air experiences with D-STAR along with a refresher on how D-STAR works. He'll also talk about the latest equipment available for hotspots as well as some tips on how to program radios and get on the air.

For more information on the St George Amateur Radio Society – including the login information for the virtual meeting on Wednesday night – visit the website at; www.sgars.org.

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

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. Net control is using the callsign VK2WAH, with the phonetics "We Are Home".

These on air nets are 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.

The Club’s website has more details on this and other changes to club activities, along with information on how to use Jitsi; it’s at www.hadarc.org.au.

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.