

## **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 follow the updates to public health advice, and plan to resume in person activities once it is practical. But for now, the site remains closed to visitors. You can still make contact via email, to [office@arnsw.org.au](mailto:office@arnsw.org.au), or by phone message to 02 9651 1490.

Due to 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](mailto: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.

A reminder for those who took part in the RD Contest last weekend; if you made any contacts – even if only just a few – be sure to send off your log without delay, as every point helps your State score. There's still time; details are on the WIA website.

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.

[RD contest information;  
<https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/news/2020/20200815-2/index.php>]

# Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of August.  
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	14 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>
10cm flux	71	71	71	71	71	71	70
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	3	3	5	3	7	9	4 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	2	0	2	2	4	0	1 estimated
T index	2	6	0	2	-3	+3	1

Solar activity was very low, and geomagnetic activity remained at quiet levels, all week.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, again this saw considerable enhancements, compared to predicted monthly values.

The 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> saw enhancements of 15% during local day, and 30% both after local dawn and at night. The 16<sup>th</sup> remained near predicted during the day but was enhanced 30% after local dawn and at night.

The 17<sup>th</sup> was enhanced 15% during the day, 40% at night and 20% after local dawn. The 18<sup>th</sup> remained near predicted during the day but was enhanced 25% after local dawn and at night; the 19<sup>th</sup> was enhanced 15% during the day, 25% after local dawn and 35% at night; and the 20<sup>th</sup> was near predicted during the day, enhanced 30% after local dawn and 20% at night.

Now, the forecast for the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> of August;

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

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with isolated active periods possible on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of August.

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.

Having just finished July, we had a;

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

So far for August, we expect a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 72, and a Maximum of 75  
With peak dates from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup>; and the 30<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup>

And looking ahead to September, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 72, and a Maximum of 73  
With peak dates from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup>; and the 27<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>

*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 2m3s*

*In: "What use is an F-call?"*

*Out: "...I'm Onno vk6flab"*

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For more information about this series, including transcripts and useful resources for F-calls, Onno's website is; [vk6flab.com](http://vk6flab.com), or follow him on Twitter, @VK6FLAB.

## **ARRL DX news**

Several stations are active especially for the International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend, ILLW;

AZORES; Antonio, CU8AS will be active as CR2W from Ponta da Albarnaz Lighthouse, ILLW PT0001. In addition, Joao, CU8AI will be active from Lajes Lighthouse, ILLW PT0038.

CUBA; Special call sign T45FM will be active from the Punta Maya Lighthouse, ILLW CU0005, on 160 to 10 metres using mainly SSB and FT8.

FRANCE; Chris, F5OHH and Dyd, F4ELJ will be active as TM2LW from Kerprigent Lighthouse, ILLW FR-0031.

GERMANY; Club station DL0MFK will be active from Karnin Lighthouse, ILLW DE-0013, on Usedom Island, IOTA EU-129.

ITALY; A group of operators from ARI Genova will be active as II1L from La Lanterna.

PORTUGAL; the Oeste DX Gang are active as CQ0ODX/p from the Cape Carvoeiro Lighthouse, ILLW PT-0002, until August 23. Activity is on the HF bands, plus 6 and 2 metres, using CW, SSB, FT8 and FT4.

SCOTLAND; Members of the Na Fir Chlis ARC will be active as GB9UL from the Ushenish Lighthouse on the Isle of South Uist, IOTA EU-010. Activity will be mostly on 40 and 20 metres.

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

KENYA; Andy, G3AB is now active as 5Z4VJ from Nairobi.

MOROCCO; Members of the Association Royale des Radio-Amateurs du Maroc are active with the special prefix 5E7 until August 31<sup>st</sup> to mark the 67th anniversary of Morocco's Revolution Day.

NORTH COOK ISLANDS; Warwick, E51WL is active from Penrhyn Atoll, IOTA OC-082. Activity of late has been on 20 metres using FT8 and FT4. He may soon be active on 2 metres EME.

ARGENTINA; Members of Radio Club QRM Belgrano will be active as LU4AAO, LU4AAO/A and LU4AAO/D from August 23 to 29 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first regularly scheduled AM radio transmissions on August 27, 1920. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW, SSB and FT8, as well as the V/UHF bands and FM Satellites.

DENMARK; Special call sign OZ200EM is active until the end of 2020 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the discovery of electromagnetism by Hans Christian Orsted.

HONG KONG; Special call sign VR2HK9O is active until May 31, 2021 to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Hong Kong Amateur Radio Transmitting Society.

CAMBODIA; Tad, JA1DFK is active as either XU7AKU or XU7AKV from Phnom Penh during the next couple of years. Activity is on the HF bands using mainly CW and SSB with some digital activity.

INDONESIA; Special event station 8A62BALI will be active from August 21 to 23 to celebrate the founding of the Bali Province 62 years ago. Activity will be on 80, 40 and 2 metres.

OGASAWARA; Makoto, JI5RPT will be active as JD1BLY from Chichijima Island (AS-031) from October 3 to 6. The schedule may change depending on the status of COVID-19. Activity will be on 630 to 6 metres using CW, SSB and the digital modes (No 6 metre EME). He will focus on the 630 metre band, 160 metre SSB, the RS-44 satellite and FT8 on the HF bands. 630 metre activity will be mainly on JT9.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend, The QRP 20-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint Ladder, Hawaii QSO Party, Ohio QSO Party, RTTYOPS Weekend Sprint, CVA DX SSB Contest and 50 MHz Fall Sprint are all on this weekend.

The Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest and RTTYOPS Weeksprint are scheduled for August 25. The CWops Mini-CWT Test, SKCC CW Sprint and Phone Fray are scheduled for August 26.

## 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 still required for logistic and administrative tasks; including ongoing repeater and APRS management, and asset management.

The 2 metre repeater at Chatswood, on 147.15MHz, is currently operating on a back-up antenna while waterproofing works are happening on the building's roof. The 23cm repeater on 1273.2MHz remains ON-AIR.

Preparations continue for the 2020 Hawkesbury Canoe Classic, planned for the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup> of October.

WICEN has weekly nets on Sunday evenings, with the main net at 6pm and a check-in net at 6:30pm. On the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays its on the Chatswood 2m repeater, then on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays the Kurrajong - Berowra 70cm FM system, followed at 6:30pm by a net VK-DMR Talk Group 3810.

The WICEN website, at [nsw.wicen.org.au](http://nsw.wicen.org.au); includes membership information the WICEN Covid19 safety plan. 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 current events, online or on-air. The next WICEN event planned is now the Brookvale Horse Enduro on October the 11<sup>th</sup>. For more information, visit the website at the new address of [crarc.org.au](http://crarc.org.au) or the CRARC Facebook page.

WICEN Victoria has a weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on the IARU and WIA recommended emergency frequency of 3.6MHz. The next event planned is the Baw-Baw Extreme, which runs, bikes and paddles, 84km from Walhalla to Mt Baw Baw, from October 31 to November 1. More details on the website, [vic.wicen.org.au](http://vic.wicen.org.au).

## Club News

We start this week with news from the Sydney ATV Group.

The Group's ATV repeater VK2RTS is located at Lawson in the Blue Mountains, and is active on Monday and Thursday nights from 7pm.

The output frequency is 445.5MHz, and can be received on most recent digital tuners that allow manual frequency entry. Reception is possible across the greater Sydney metro area. The repeater has digital and analogue inputs on 23cm and analogue on 6cm.

Repeater liaison is on the 2m repeater, on 147.325MHz with a +600k offset. All are welcome to call in with reports or help with receiving ATV.

Video is also streamed via the British Amateur TV Club web site; just click on the members VK2 call sign at the above local times. On the site, there is also a text message provision where you can inform that you're watching and chat with the group.

*Advised by John VK2ATU  
on behalf of the Sydney ATV Group.*



## Great Lakes Radio Club

The next meeting of the club is the AGM, on Tuesday the 25<sup>th</sup> of August. It is at the studios of Great Lakes FM Community Radio, 16 Douglas Avenue Tuncurry. The meeting will commence at 7:30pm.

The AGM will be followed by a regular business meeting... which will be followed by the usual cuppa and biscuits.

Members should note that annual membership fees will become due at the conclusion of the AGM.

Visitors are welcomed at our meetings but please note that in accordance with restrictions regarding the four-square metre rule and distancing guidelines, the meeting room cannot cater for large numbers. Attendees are required to adhere to the prevailing health advice and guidelines.

For visitors and those unfamiliar with the venue, entry is via the rear door accessed from the car parking area.

Great Lakes Radio Club serves the mid-north coast area of NSW, centred on the twin towns of Forster-Tuncurry. The club operates the VK2RGL repeaters from Cabbage Tree Mountain on 147.1 MHz with a 91.5 Hz tone required and 439.775 MHz with no tone required. The informal weekly club net is on the 2m repeater, commencing at 7:00pm every Monday evening.

The club also has a Facebook group; just search for Great Lakes Radio Club.

*Andy VK2AAK  
Secretary, Great Lakes Radio Club.*

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## Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

The Rescheduled AGM will take place as an online video conference, at 2pm on Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of September. Members will soon receive and email with the conference details.

A short video conference was run last Friday the 21<sup>st</sup> of August, in lieu of the usual Friday night get-together; this gave members a chance to become familiar with Microsoft Teams video conferencing, in readiness for the AGM.

In response to the current public health situation, the Club's Committee has reluctantly suspended in person activities. 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 ILLW, is also cancelled.

In the absence of meetings, members and visitors are encouraged to participate in the club on air nets as often as possible. There are two nets each week; the 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. 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](http://orarc.org). The 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.*

## Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

The Club has resumed training and examinations at the clubrooms, having received approval from the AMC. Last week saw a full-house training session; and due to popular demand, further training has been scheduled for both Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> of August and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September. Assessments are currently planned for the 30<sup>th</sup> of August.

With limited places available, bookings are essential; RSVP to the Club's education facilitator, Karen VK2AKB. Booking information is on the website, at; [ccarc.org.au/education](http://ccarc.org.au/education).

The club is hosting a trip to Mount Elliot VK2/HU-093 on the 29th of August. With many having been surrounded by the same 4 walls as of late; some open space, minimal QRM and a sneaky long path DX station can be good for one's health and wellbeing. There might even be a sneaky Pedestrian fox hunt, weather permitting of course! If you are an avid portable operator, this would be a fantastic opportunity to show others your portable setup, maybe even some side by side comparisons between different radios?

If you are interested in attending, please email the club at [ccarc@ccarc.org.au](mailto:ccarc@ccarc.org.au), contact the club via Facebook or call the club rooms on 02 4340 2500 and leave a voice message.

There is an Amateur Radio International Space Station event occurring tomorrow evening at 7:30pm; the ISS will be making contact with students from a Brisbane based technology school. If you are interested in hearing how the ISS team interacts with the students, the event will be relayed live on the clubs VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, and will be streamed via the club's Facebook page. Please note this be an audio feed only; there will be no interaction with the ISS event.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week was facilitated by Alan VK2MG, with the topic of *"what other interests have you successfully (or otherwise) combined with your radio interest?"* It was wonderful to hear stories of complex SDR setups, to integrating Amateur Radio into one's day to day work, and on a very side topic, one station spoke about their brief experience with glass blowing... Now imagine if you could casually blow your own Nixie tubes or valves...

Thursday evening nets are on the VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, 146.725Mhz; If you're within range of our repeater, why not drop by? You also join via EchoLink using the \*CCARCNSW\* conference server, via IRLP reflector 9509, and 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](http://ccarc.org.au); or on Facebook, just search for Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

*Brad VK2NMZ*

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

## Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The Society meets on the second Tuesday of the month, with the next meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm, directly following the Committee Meeting at 6:30pm. Attendees are welcome to arrive early and enjoy a pre-meeting chat and cuppa in the foyer.

The Society's meetings are at the BlueScope Steel Visitor's Centre, located on the southern side of Wollongong CBD. After turning off Springhill Road into the main entrance of BlueScope Steel, immediately turn right just before the security gates, and follow the signs to the Visitors Centre. Due to the large size of the Visitor Centre, physical distancing requirements can easily be maintained.

At the next meeting, IARS Member Ned VK2AGV will give a presentation on "Life before GPS". Ned has been involved in the Merchant Marine for many years where the use of pre-GPS devices, such as Sextants, was necessary to provide precise and safe navigation. This presentation will surely be interesting and will provide an insight into the more "simple times".

The night will conclude with coffee, tea and cake in the venue's large foyer area where you can socialise with fellow attendees, while still maintaining the necessary physical distancing.

A reminder of the Society's weekly Nets; the Saturday morning net starts at 9:30am, run by Steve VK2BGL. You can join on the 2 metre repeaters, on 6850 or 6675, or call-in on EchoLink, via VK2BGL-R. The second weekly Net is on 80 metres on Tuesday evenings, except for meeting nights; the usual frequency is 3666kHz, plus or minus for other usage, and it starts at 8:30pm.

You can find out more about the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society on the web at [iars.org.au](http://iars.org.au), and the society is also on Facebook. The website again; [iars.org.au](http://iars.org.au).

To conclude, all listeners are invited to attend the next meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society at 7.30pm on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of September; at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, Springhill Road, Wollongong.

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

## **Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club**

With the current public health restrictions, the club has currently suspended in person activities.

On air nets still continue unaffected, of course; 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.*

## Manly-Warringah Radio Society

So close, yet so far... it looked like the society would be able activate Barrenjoey Lighthouse for the International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend; Operators were ready and the club had permission to use the Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage, but a last minute hitch blew everyone's plans out of the water.

Hopefully, VK2MB will be portable this time next year, from Barrenjoey.

Speaking of blowing things out of the water; lectures are finally back; with a presentation entitled "Commercial Blasting with Explosives", from industry expert Michael VK2UCT. The lecture was presented via Zoom on Wednesday, and a recording is now available on YouTube. You'll find a posting on the club web site with the link. Alternatively, go to YouTube and search for VK2MB-TV. Michael's talk is on the Lectures playlist.

[lecture link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oW20aV2OxLM&list=PLH84NJ1xBNgitBvH2U4yuhlvWasvFI7qP>]

Also, a reminder that in place of meetings at the clubhouse, the Society is now running a weekly net, on the two metre repeater VK2RMB, on 146.875 MHz FM with a -600 kHz offset. All are welcome, including shortwave listeners - you'll find the repeater audio link on the menu at [mwrs.org.au](http://mwrs.org.au).

73 and stay safe everyone!

*Richard VK2SKY  
MWRS Publicity Officer*

## Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

Given the ongoing “QRM from COVID”, HADARC has replaced 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". The next net is on Tuesday August 25<sup>th</sup>, at 8pm.

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](http://www.hadarc.org.au).

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

HADARC's VK2RHT repeater on 70 cm, or specifically 438.350 MHz with a - 5.4MHz offset, remains ON-AIR, while works are underway at the Chatswood site..

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. Monthly meeting net has moved; now on Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup>.

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

**HADARC** Monday night 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz, on air net Tuesday 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.