

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

This morning saw the start of Daylight Saving time in New South Wales. Since VK2WI News remains at the same local time, propagation conditions may have changed. If you are having difficulty with this news bulletin on your usual frequency, news bulletins can also be streamed live, or downloaded later, from the audio page of our website, arnsw.org.au/audio.

Our News bulletins are also relayed by VHF and UHF repeaters operated by Club around the state, and we would like to thank those clubs for their continued support of this news service.

With restrictions currently in place due to Covid-19, there are no events currently planned at VK2WI Dural, and the site remains closed to visitors. You can still make contact via email, to office@arnsw.org.au, or by phone message to 02 9651 1490. We continue to follow the updates to public health advice, and plan to resume in person activities once it is practical.

In response to these restrictions, many clubs and groups have increased on-air activities. Later in this bulletin, we have a summary of activities from Sydney and across the state.

You can let us know about the activities happening in your area; you can email 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, to tell listeners how it went.

We also wish to remind our listeners of some telephone services that are available, if you currently have any health concerns – 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're out driving this long weekend, remember that Double Demerit points apply in NSW until the 5th of October. While it is legal to use a hand-held microphone for a radio whilst driving, it is important to ensure you are not distracted and keep attention on the road at all times; not only to avoid a fine, but for safety on the road as well.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of 25th of September to the 1st of October.
First, the summary;

| Dates across the columns are | 25 th | 26 th | 27 th | 28 th | 29 th | 30 th | 1 st |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 10cm flux | 73 | 73 | 74 | 74 | 73 | 73 | 73 |
| Fredericksburg Index (Afr) | 17 | 18 | 16 | 21 | 14 | 12 | 9 estimated |
| Australian Index (Aaus) | 12 | 13 | 10 | 16 | 11 | 10 | 8 estimated |
| T index | -6 | 0 | -2 | -13 | -16 | -14 | -18 |

Solar activity was very low all week. Geomagnetic activity, however was a different story; with quite to active conditions observed on the 25th and 26th, quiet to unsettled conditions on the 27th, unsettled to active conditions on the 28th, then returning to quiet to unsettled levels from the 29th of September through to the 1st of October.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian remained mostly near predicted monthly values, with some enhanced conditions early in the week; the 26th was enhanced 25% after local dawn; and the 27th was enhanced 15% during the day and 20% at night.

Now, the forecast for the 2nd to the 8th of October;

Solar activity is expected to be very low.

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

Maximum Usable Frequencies may be mildly depressed on the 2nd of October, otherwise remaining 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 finished September, we saw a;

Minimum of 68, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 74
With peak dates from the 23rd to the 30th

As we start October, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 71, and a Maximum of 73
With peak dates from the 1st to the 5th; and the 20th to the 31st;

And looking ahead to November, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates from the 1st to the 2nd; and the 16th to the 18th.

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>]

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: 5-FCAL111.wav]

Duration 1m59s

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

CHILE; Members of the Chilean Pacific DX Group are active with special event call XR500M during October to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Magellan's navigation of the strait named after him.

OGASAWARA; Makoto, will be active as JD1BLY from Chichijima, IOTA AS-031, until October 6. Activity is on the HF bands and 6 metres using CW, SSB and FT8, and on 630 metres using JT9.

SVALBARD; A group of operators from NRRL's Oslogruppen will be active as JW4O from Longyearbyen, IOTA EU-026, from October 8 to 12. The primary reason for this activity is to operate in the upcoming Scandinavian Activity SSB contest.

CURACAO; Operators Angelo, PJ2AFM, Carlo, PJ2CF and Sergio, PJ2SM will be active with special call sign PJ2C on October 10 to celebrate the 10th anniversary for the new start for the islands of the Netherlands Antilles. Activity will be on 20 metres using SSB, and if conditions require it, 20 and 17 metres FT8.

SURINAME; Yudel, CO7XY is now active as PZ2YT from Nickerie. Activity of late has been on 20 metres using SSB.

NIGER; Adrien, F4IHM is active as 5U4IHM while on a mission in Niamey. He is active using slow CW on 40 and 20 metres.

DODECANESE; Wolf, DL3DRN is active as SV5/DL3DRN from Kolymbia, Rhodes, IOTA EU-001, until October 14. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and RTTY.

TURKEY; Members of the Tango Alpha Ham Radio Club will be active with special event call sign TC6EKM until October 7, to celebrate the Liberation of Istanbul on October 6, 1923. Activity will be on the HF bands using various digital modes.

UKRAINE; Special event station EN100LT is active until the end of March 2021 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Kharkiv Theatre for Children and Youth.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, Portable Operations Challenge, TRC DX Contest, Oceania DX Phone Contest, German Telegraphy Contest, Russian World Wide Digital Contest, IARU Region 1 UHF/Microwaves Contest, YLRL DX/NA YL Anniversary Contest, California QSO Party, International HELL-Contest, RTTYOPS Weekend Sprint, FISTS Fall Slow Speed Sprint, SKCC CW QSO Party, RSGB DX Contest and the UBA ON SSB Contest will keep contesters busy this weekend.

The K1USN Slow Speed CW Test and RSGB 80-Metre Autumn CW Series are scheduled for October 5.

The RTTYOPS Weeksprint, ARS Spartan CW Sprint and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest are scheduled for October 6.

The VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, UKEICC 80-Metre SSB Contest, 432MHz Fall Sprint, Phone Fray and CWops Mini-CWT CW Test are scheduled for October 7.

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

WICEN News

WICEN NSW is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association. Due to COVID-19, administrative and training functions have been moved on-air or online. Volunteers are still wanted to assist with tasks such as repeater and APRS management, and asset management.

The Volunteer Memorial Day 2020 is at Mrs Macquarie's Chair in the Domain, at 11am next Sunday the 11th of October. In-person attendance is via invitation only, but the event will also be streamed online.

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

All repeaters at Chatswood are now fully operational.

Members have been experimenting with JS8CALL to pass short text messages on Monday evenings, supported by a Google Meeting. Details are on the calendar in the VRA email system. Members are also encouraged to take advantage of the free courses offered by Office of Emergency Management.

The WICEN website, at nsw.wicen.org.au; includes membership information, Covid19 safety 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. The Brookvale Horse Enduro which was planned for October the 11th, has been cancelled. The LCCC Monaro Stages Rally is on the 31st, with WUCEN providing equipment and advice; and the BMSC "National Capital Rally" is planned for November 28 and 29. For more information, including recordings of recent Club presentations and licence training courses, visit the website at crarc.org.au or check out the CRARC Facebook page.

WICEN Victoria has a weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz. The Baw-Baw Extreme, has been rescheduled for April 2021. More details on the website, vic.wicen.org.au.

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

Club News

We start this week with news from the Amateur Radio Repeater Group.

The Group has introduced a weekly check-in net for Australian and New Zealand amateurs, every Friday using Winlink.

Winlink is a system for sending messages over Amateur Radio, and can operate over HF, VHF and UHF. There are gateways in Australia along both the east and west coast, for HF and VHF.

The aim of the net is to allow users to test their station, test the bands and see how you go week from week making different gateways.

The net check-ins are open all day on Fridays. Checkins follow a standard format to allow collection of the statistics and data which is then published on the group's website.

Checkins are regularly received from across Australia and New Zealand, including from Neil, formerly VK4KNA and now M0KNC - who checks in weekly via the QO-100, Geostationary Satellite over Europe.

For more information on how to join the net, and useful links on Winlink, visit the group's website at www.arrg.club.

[checkin information; <https://arrg.club/?p=139>]

Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

The October Monthly General Meeting which would normally have been held yesterday, the 3rd of October, was cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation. The October Committee Meeting took place yesterday and the minutes will be emailed to members to keep them up to date with club affairs.

In response to risks arising from the current public health situation, the Club's Committee has reluctantly suspended in person activities, including monthly general meetings and Friday night get-togethers. However, club business continues, with individual Committee members working on the many tasks which still need to be completed.

In the absence of in-person 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. The site contains a wealth of Amateur Radio items in addition to the club information. The September 2020 web edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales", is now available, and past issues are available on the website as well. The September issue of Oxtales includes the list of office holders elected at the recent virtual AGM. 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's HF Operating night on Tuesday the 29th of September, was a great success. Brad VK2NMZ opened the clubrooms just after 5:30pm. The club's youngest member, Adrian was able to make his very first contact on the radio. Despite large amounts of QRM, the club advertised an 80 metre Frequency and numerous stations were quick to the task of jumping on air. Operating under the Club callsign VK2AFY, Adrian was able to experience his first HF pile up with multiple operators across VK lining up to speak to him. Given the success of the evening, the club will be looking at hosting this monthly on an ongoing basis.

The Club's next training and assessment weekend has been rescheduled, to Saturday the 21st and Sunday the 22nd of November. If you are interested in obtaining or upgrading your Amateur licence, contact the Club's education facilitator, Karen VK2AKB. Booking information is on the website, at; ccarc.org.au/education.

Another Outdoor activity day is planned for Saturday the 17th of October; coinciding with the JOTA weekend. The location is Kincumba Mountain Reserve located on Island View Drive, Kincumber. If you are interested in attending, please contact the club directly.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week was facilitated by Myles VK2ASS; topic for the evening was "*General chit-chat and what was your furthest contact via RF*". We thank Myles for helping out at the last minute to host the net, it is greatly appreciated. The Club's Morning tea net continues daily, and the Club thanks Bob VK2AOR for his continued dedicated efforts in hosting the net; which continues to receive check-ins from both local and international stations. Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, 146.725MHz with a 91.5Hz sub audible tone.

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 - and give the club a "like" to follow for updates.

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

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Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The next meeting of the Society is on Tuesday, the 13th of October. 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 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 and secretary, Keith VK2KQB, will be hosting a Trivia night. The trivia questions will be radio-related, with some great prizes on offer for winners. Keith ran a trivia night last year and it was a lot of fun for everyone and he is planning to increase the fun in an effort to overcome the downbeat mood from the current virus situation.

The night will conclude with coffee, tea and cake in the venue's large foyer, 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, and the society is also on Facebook. The website again; 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 13th of October; at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, Springhill Road, Wollongong.

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

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 which 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. The site currently requires Adobe Flash Player to run, but Internet Explorer is known to work well. 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.*

Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club

The Club will run a licence training and assessment weekend on the 10th and 11th of October at the Clubhouse, 4 Moore Street, Glenbrook, face-to-face, under Covid-Safe conditions.

Training for foundation licensees will take place on Saturday, with Assessment for all licence grades planned for Sunday; exams are available for Standard or Advanced theory, regulations and practical components of amateur radio proficiency.

Details of the syllabus, exam fees, and other information, can be found on the AMC website. For more information, or to book for the licence weekend; contact the Blue Mountains ARC Secretary, Irene VK2VAN – her email address is secretary@bmarc.org.

The Club has a fundraiser event planned for Saturday the 17th of October, if you would like to assist, contact Irene VK2VAN by email to secretary@bmarc.org.

The Club has two on air nets each week; the 80 metre net Starts at 8pm on Tuesday evenings, on 3543 kHz. On Wednesday night from 8pm, there is a net on the club's 2 metre repeater on 147.050MHz with a 123Hz tone for access, and on the 6 metre repeater on 53.875MHz.

More information about the club can be found on the website, at www.bmarc.org.

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

[AMC information <https://www.amc.edu.au/industry/amateur-radio>]

St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society continues with monthly gatherings on line; the next is this coming Wednesday the 7th of October, starting at 7:30pm.

For this gathering there will be no formal technical presentation however we are inviting members and guest to 'Show and Tell' their ham radio related activities during the past 6 months of lockdowns and working from home.

The society's weekly net on the Heathcote 2 metre repeater continues on Thursday evenings at 8pm. The Heathcote repeater VK2RLE on 146.8MHz is accessible from most areas of Sydney and requires no sub tone.

VK2WI News bulletins are relayed via the Society's Repeater VK2RDX at Mt. Bindo west of Sydney, between Lithgow and Jenolan Caves. Work is planned for this weekend. The repeater's performance has been suffering in the last few months, but a new antenna and a new lower loss feedline will hopefully bring this repeater back to it's former glory. VK2RDX is on 146.65MHz and also does not require any sub tone for access.

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

The Club has currently 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 Club is currently investigating a return to in-person meetings at the Mt Colah Community Centre, which will require attendees to book with the Secretary.

In any case, the next meeting is on Tuesday the 13th of October, starting at 8pm.

On air nets are supplemented by Jitsi video conferencing; not only adding the "show" to the "Show & Tell" segments, but also allowing participation in the meeting by out-of-area members. Jitsi is open source, and available via a web browser, an App, or by dialling in from any 'phone.

The Club's website has more details on current 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.*

[Play ID File: 8-OP ID4.wav]

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; next is on Thursday, 29th of October.

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.