

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

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.

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.

The September 2020 edition of the ARNSW Newsletter, *All Access*, has been sent out to those on the email list; it can also be found at the link on the ARNSW website front page.

Coming up next weekend is JOTA and JOTI 2020; Jamboree on the Air – Jamboree on the Internet, is an international event supported across the Worldwide Scouting Movement, this year running from the 16th to the 18th of October. It is a tradition of JOTA/JOTI to have an opening address to welcome participants to the international weekend; subject to availability, VK2WI will broadcast this address across the news network, and on our web stream, at 1pm local time on Saturday.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of 2nd to the 8th of October.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
10cm flux	72	72	71	72	72	71	72
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	6	5	3	7	6	4	4 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	5	3	2	10	4	6	2 estimated
T index	-21	-16	-10	-7	-13	-11	-14

Solar activity was very low all week.

Geomagnetic activity was at quiet to unsettled levels on the 2nd, quiet on the 3rd and 4th, quiet to active on the 5th; quiet again on the 6th; quiet to unsettled on the 7th, and quiet again on the 8th.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian remained near predicted monthly values, unfortunately with less of the enhanced conditions seen in recent weeks; enhancement of 20% was observed during the local night hours of the 4th and the 5th.

Now, the forecast for the 9th to the 15th of October;

Solar activity is expected to be very low to low.

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

Maximum Usable Frequencies should remain 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

So far for October, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 72, 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 71, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates from the 1st to the 2nd; and the 16th to the 25th.

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>]

Space Weather Summary for September 2020

Compiled with data courtesy of Space Weather Services

Solar activity was mostly at very low levels throughout the month, with no M or X class flares observed. Northern hemisphere region 2773 was the only spotted region and was magnetically simple.

Some low-level solar activity occurred on September 26, when region 2773 produced a C1 flare at 0038 UTC. There were some minor CMEs during September, but none were Earth directed. Coronal holes caused moderate enhancements to the solar wind and some sustained mild southward periods of the north-south IMF on the 1st to the 2nd, and the 24th to the 30th of September. The solar wind speed associated with this activity peaked at 637km/s on the 1st of September, and 670 km/s on the 29th.

The geomagnetic field in the Australian region was mostly quiet. Unsettled levels occurred on the 1st the the 2nd, and again from the 23rd to the 30th of September in response to coronal hole wind streams, resulting in some active periods on the 1st, and from the 23rd to the 28th. The Australian region A-index reached a maximum value of 16 on the 28th.

Global geomagnetic activity, in comparison to the Australian region, was stronger; with a maximum Kp of 6 on the 27th September and an Ap of 31 on the 28th of September. An aurora watch was issued on the 27th of September.

In the solar and geophysical report each week, we talk about the maximum usable frequencies both observed in the report period, and in the forecast for the next week. This is based on observations of foF2, which is the maximum frequency reflected vertically by the ionosphere. While a vertical propagation path in itself may not seem particularly useful; the data serves as a reference, from which estimates of frequencies for any oblique circuit can be made.

The foF2 is the most important parameter describing the state of the ionosphere at a particular location. Along with the T-index, foF2 is a key indicator of ionospheric conditions.

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-FCAL148.wav]

Duration 1m42s

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

Out: "...Onno vk6flab stroke qrp"

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.

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

ARRL DX news

MALAWI; Don, K6ZO is active as 7Q6M until mid-December while working at the Embangweni Mission Hospital in Northern Malawi. He is active in his spare time.

WEST MALAYSIA; Yoshida, JE1SCJ is active as 9M4DXX from Penang Island, IOTA AS-015, until the end of December 2020. He operates FT8 on the weekends.

BOTSWANA; Leon, A25SL is usually active on 20 metres SSB around 1700 to 1830UTC.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES; Phil, G4VAJ is licensed as A65IJ and will soon be active from Dubai.

ST. VINCENT; Mac, 8P5AB will be active as J88/8P5AB until December 3. Activity will be on the HF bands using FT8 and various digital modes on the VHF bands.

MINAMI TORISHIMA; Take, JG8NQJ is active as JG8NQJ/JD1 from Minami Torishima, IOTA OC-073, until mid-January 2021. He is active in his spare time on 40 and 30 metres using CW.

SVALBARD; Operators LA7XK, LA6VM and LA9DL are active as JW7XK, JW6VM, and JW9DL, respectively, until October 12. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes. This includes being active as JW5X in the Scandinavian Activity SSB Contest. In addition, a group of operators are active as JW4O until October 12. Activity is on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres, and they are also active in the Scandinavian Activity SSB Contest.

JAN MAYEN; Erik, LA2US will be active as JX2US from Olonkin City until March 2021.

AUSTRIA; Members of the VIC Amateur Radio Contest are active with special call sign 4U75A from Vienna until December 31 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. Activity is on 80, 40, 20 and 15 metres using CW and SSB.

DENMARK; Special event station OZ100MILL will be active from October 15 to December 15 to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the unification in 1920 of Southern Jutland with Denmark. Activity is on all HF bands using CW, SSB, RTTY and other digital modes.

SWEDEN; Palle, SA0BYP and Johan, SA3BYC will be active as SI9AM during the Scandinavian Activity SSB contest.

MARSHALL ISLANDS; Randy, KX4QD is active as V7/KX4QD from Kwajalein and is active on 40 and 20 metres using FT8 normally after 0600UTC.

CAMBODIA; Tad, XU7AKU is usually active on 40 metres using CW around 1230 to 1430UTC.

MACAO; Leong, XX9ET is usually active on 17 metres using FT8 from 1130 to 1330UTC.

REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO; Wolf DM2AUJ, Guenter DL2AWG, Peter DL3APO, Rainer DL2AMD, Werner DJ9KH and Franz DL9GFB, will be active as Z66DX from October 15 to 28. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and FT8 with three stations active.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; Will certainly keep contesters very busy, with events including the ARRL EME Contest, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, Makrothen RTTY Contest, QRP ARCI Fall CW QSO Party, 10-10 International 10-10 Day Sprint, Oceania DX CW Contest, SKCC Weekend CW Sprintathon, Scandinavian Activity SSB Contest, FISTS Fall Unlimited CW Sprint, South Dakota QSO Party, PODXS 070 Club 160-Metre Great Pumpkin Sprint, UBA ON 80-Metre Contest and UBA ON 6-Metre Contest.

The 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint and K1USN Slow Speed CW Test are scheduled for October 12. The RTTYOPS Weeksprint and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest are scheduled for October 13.

The VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, RSGB 80-Metre Autumn Data Series, AGCW Semi-Automatic Key Evening, NAQCC CW Sprint, CWops Mini-CWT Test and Phone Fray are scheduled for October 14.

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.

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.

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 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 Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

While the October Monthly General Meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation, the committee still took place and minutes have been emailed to members, to keep them up to date with club affairs. Club business continues, with individual Committee members working on the many tasks which still need to be completed.

In response to risks arising from the current public health situation, the Club's Committee has reluctantly suspended all in person activities, including monthly general meetings and Friday night get-togethers. This includes the participation of club station VK2BOR, in next weekend's JOTA for 2020. This is the first year since its founding, that that the club has been unable to run a JOTA station, but it is not possible to maintain physical distancing during such a hands-on activity.

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.*

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Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

Following on from the news last week, of the success of the Club's inaugural HF Operating night on Tuesday the 29th of September; we are pleased to announce the next evening is planned, for Tuesday the 27th of October. Clubroom doors open from about 5:30pm for a 6pm start; if you are interested in attending, please contact the club directly.

At last week's monthly general meeting, the Club welcomed James VK2TER as a member of the club. James had taken a break from Amateur Radio for several years and is just getting back into it again. Welcome James!

The Club's next training and assessment weekend is planned for 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.

The club has an Outdoor activity day 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 so they have an idea of numbers; please note that the reserve has a public carpark, so spaces are limited.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week was facilitated by Brad VK2NMZ; topic for the evening was *"The most interesting place and the most interesting advertisement you have seen relating to Amateur Radio"*. There were some great references to movies, TV shows and the talk of operating portable in a park and having members of the public approach you; with curiosity being the best advertising you could have.

Today marks day 192 of the Morning tea net on VK2RAG, and the Club would like to acknowledge the dedication of Bob VK2AOR, for his continued efforts in hosting the net; which continues to receive check-ins from both local and international stations. Most recently, net check-ins have included station in Japan and Germany; and if you have checked into the morning tea net either via the local repeater or EchoLink, the club would like to hear from you.

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.

Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The next meeting of the Society is on this 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.

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 upcoming meeting, IARS Member and secretary, Keith VK2KQB, will be hosting a Trivia night. 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 help 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; all while 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, VK2RMP on 6850 or VK2RUW on 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.*

St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society operates the VK2RDX 2m FM repeater at Mt Bindo west of Sydney, between Lithgow and Jenolan Caves.

Last Sunday the 4th of October, a team of members from St George Amateur Radio Society made a visit to the site in the western Blue Mountains, to upgrade the main 2m antenna installation.

Initial reports indicate an improvement to the overall performance of the repeater, which covers both into large parts of Sydney, as well as the Blue mountains and West. The repeater transmits on 146.65MHz with a minus 600 kHz offset and no subaudible tone required.

Interested amateur radio operators are asked to assist with signal and location reports; either by calling back after this VK2WI News Broadcast, or by email to VK2RDX@sgars.org. Please include your callsign and location.

Further information about The St George Amateur Radio Society can be found on the website, at www.sgars.org or follow us on Facebook.

*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. This will be discussed on the next net 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 up to date details on current club activities and arrangements for meetings, 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. 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.