

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

While no events are 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.

The ARNSW Education team is planning to resume training weekends with the first scheduled weekend for the year, on March 14th and 15th. As current arrangements require significant forward planning, please register with the team by email to education@arnsw.org.au to receive updates and further details.

Later in this bulletin we have a summary of on-air activities from Sydney and across the state. You can let us know what is happening in your area by email; to news@arnsw.org.au – we don't need full items, just the details of the activity and contacts. We would also welcome reports on the outcome of recent group activities, which we can report to our listeners.

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 services are available 24 hours a day; and are a free call from most telephone services.

Once again this week, we welcome listeners on the EchoLink "HAM" conference, and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network. Callbacks will also be taken tonight on the network after the bulletin. Our thanks to John VK3HJQ and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network team, for making this relay available to VK2WI News.

Let's Play Amateur Radio!

As we mentioned in last week's bulletins, the Wyong Field Day, originally scheduled for next Sunday the 28th, has been postponed.

But, the Amateur Radio Repeater Group were looking forward to taking part in the planned fox hunt events... so, they have decided to run one anyway.

On Sunday the 28th, the group will have a Fox hunt, BYO BBQ and some Amateur Radio demonstrations.

The hunt starts at 8:30am, Next Sunday the 28th, along the M5 Corridor, between Crossroads and Campbelltown.

To register to attend the hunt, or take part in the demonstrations, email info@arrg.club as soon as you can.

It's still a great day to get out and play Amateur Radio.

You can find more information at the group's website, www.arrg.club.

ARNSW Elections

The next Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio New South Wales is on Saturday the 17th of April 2021.

At this AGM, five of the nine current directors will be retiring. Nominations will soon be open for eligible members who wish to nominate to be a director, for the years 2021 and 2022. Each elected director serves a two-year term – until the AGM in 2023.

Nominations are available on the website, or from the office.

Nominations close at midday on Saturday 6th of March 2021.

Peter VK2EMU
Returning Officer

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 12th to the 18th of February.
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	12 th	13 th	14 th	15 th	16 th	17 th	18 th
10cm Flux	72	71	71	70	71	72	71
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	4	10	3	3	11	6	5 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	3	8	2	3	9	5	1 estimated
T index	-2	+13	+7	-3	+21	-6	+1

Solar activity was very low all week.

Geomagnetic activity was quiet on the 5th, quiet to unsettled on the 13th and quiet again on the 14th and 15th. The 16th again reached quiet to unsettled levels, before returning to quiet conditions on the 17th and 18th.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained near predicted monthly values, except for a few periods of depressions during local daylight hours; 15% during on the 12th and 17th; and depression of 20% during local day on the 18th.

Now, the forecast for the 19th to the 25th of February;

Solar activity is expected to be very low to low.

Geomagnetic activity may reach active levels with possible minor storm on the 21st, with quiet to unsettled conditions otherwise.

Maximum Usable Frequencies may be briefly depressed after local dawn on 21st, with further Mild to moderate MUF depressions possible on the 21st and 22nd. Near predicted conditions are expected on other days.

Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.

Solar Flux Index update

Here are the updated Solar Flux Index (SFI) figures for this week.

Having finished January, we saw a;

Minimum of 73, Average of 76, and a Maximum of 82
With peak dates from the 1st to the 7th; and the 17th to the 26th

So far for February, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 72, and a Maximum of 76
With peak dates from the 1st to the 12th.

And looking ahead to March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 73, and a Maximum of 76
With peak dates from the 8th to the 11th; and the 24th to the 26th.

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?

Tonight, 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 2m12s

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.

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ARRL DX news

Starting with stations on air especially for this weekend's ARRL International DX CW contest;

HAITI; Bill, KO7SS will be active as HH2AA from Obleon as a Single Op/Low Power/Assisted entry.

INDONESIA; Yohanes, YB2DX will be active as a Single Op/All Band entry.

MARTINIQUE; FM5BH will be active as a Single Op/All Band/High Power entry.

NEW ZEALAND; A group of operators will be active as ZL3X as a Multi-2 entry.

PARAGUAY; Manu, ZP9MCE plans to be active on 80 metres.

TUNISIA; Ash, KF5EYY plans to be active as 3V8SS as a Single Op/All Band/Low Power entry.

TURKS AND CAICOS; Jim, K4QPL plans to be active as VP5M.

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS; Dan, K8RF will be active as NP2J as a Single Band entry on 160 metres.

.. and in other DX activity this week;

MONACO; Mireille, F4FRL and Patrice, F5RBB will be active as home calls/3A from February 24th until March 2nd. Activity will be on 40 and 20 metres using SSB and various digital modes.

CROATIA; Members of the Croatian Flora Fauna ARC are active with special event call 9A10FF throughout 2021, to celebrate the club's 10th anniversary.

ZAMBIA; Brad, 9J2RS is currently active on 20, 17 and 15 metres.

MOZAMBIQUE; Bruno, CS7AMN is active as C91BVA from Maputo. Activity is on the HF bands using SSB and various digital modes.

AUSTRALIA; Members of the Pride Radio Group are active as VI2021PRIDE until March 7 during Sydney Mardi Gras.

PUERTO RICO, KP4. A group of operators are active as NP4DX on 80 to 10 metres using CW. This includes being a Multi/Single/Low Power entry in the ARRL International DX CW contest, and in the WLOTA as LH-2802.

ARUBA; John, W2GD is active as P44W until February 23rd, on all bands as time permits with a focus on the ARRL International DX CW contest.

BRAZIL; Members of the Grupo Escoteiro Marechal Rondon are active as ZW2I from Comprida Island, IOTA SA-024, and the Rio Claro Lighthouse, LH BRA-135, until February 22 during the American Lighthouses Weekend. QSL via operators' instructions.

BENIN; Johannes, ZS6JSI is active as ZS6JSI/TY until June; Activity is mobile on 80, 40 and 20 metres using SSB and FT8.

ROMANIA; Members of the Sport Club Pandurii Tirgu-Jiu are active on the HF bands, with special call YP145B from Tirgu-Jiu until March 3rd. Activity celebrate the 145th anniversary of the birth of the great sculptor, Constantin Brancusi.

CAYMAN ISLANDS; Bruce, K0BJ will be active as ZF2BJ from Savannah, Grand Cayman, IOTA NA-016, until March 5. Activity will be on the HF bands with a focus on the WARC bands and CW.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The ARRL International DX CW Contest, 13th American Lighthouses Weekend, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC CW Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed Test, Russian PSK World Wide Contest, RTTYOPS Weekend Sprint, Feld Hell Sprint, FISTS Sunday Sprint and the Run for the Bacon QRP CW Contest will certainly keep contesters very busy this weekend.

The QCX CW Challenge and OK1WC Memorial are scheduled for February 22. The RTTYOPS Weeksprint and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest are scheduled for February 23.

The CWops Mini-CWT Test, UKEICC 80-Metre CW Contest, Phone Fray, SKCC Sprint and QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for February 24.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW, is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association.

WICEN is providing support for Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events. New South Wales events started this morning, in the Illawarra. Later NSW walks are planned for the Hunter on the 21st of March, with Sydney events in May. These events are ideal for new WICEN members to get hands-on experience in emergency communications. The interstate events will be supported by WICEN ACT, WICEN Victoria and WICEN South Australia.

WICEN weekly voice nets are on Sunday evenings; the main net is at 6pm with a secondary net using DMR voice, at 6:30pm. There is digital net using WINLINK and JS8CALL on Monday evenings.

Members can find details on their VRA calendar invites. Members are advised to regularly check their vrarecue.org email address.

WICEN NSW is on Facebook; along with an informal, national WICEN page.

WICEN ACT is part of the Canberra Region Amateur Radio Club. Their website includes WICEN and general Club information; its at www.crarc.org.au.

WICEN Victoria has a weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz. More details on the website at vic.wicen.org.au.

[OEM link: <https://www.emtraining.nsw.gov.au/> Messaging software at: <http://js8call.com/> and <http://winlink.org/>]

Club News

We start this week, with news from the HARAOA radio club.

The club is planning a DXpedition for early November 2021, to Willis Island, VK9W, for about 11 days.

Situated about 450km east of Cairns in the Coral Sea, Willis Island is in the top most-wanted DXpedition sites in the world.

If you're interested in this exciting adventure and enjoy working with experienced DX operators; you can send an expression of interest and a request for further information, to Tommy VK2IR via email; vk2ir@vk2ir.com.

Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the Club will be the monthly general meeting on Saturday the 6th of March, in the SES Building, Port Macquarie. The meeting will be held in accordance with the club's COVID-19 Safety Plan. The Committee continues to closely monitor the public health situation to ensure that activities comply with restrictions, which may change at short notice.

The club's 2021 50th Anniversary calendar has proven to be very popular, and a few copies are still available.

Now is the time to plan to attend the Club's 2021 annual Field Day. It is on Saturday and Sunday the 12th and 13th of June, during the Queen's Birthday long weekend. Please plan and book accommodation early, as the Port Macquarie area is certain to be even more popular than usual this year.

There are two club nets each week; the mid-week net starts at 7:30pm on Thursday nights, and the weekend net starts at 9am 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 January 2021 web edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales" is now online, and past issues can be viewed 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.*

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Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

A reminder about the Club's "Mayham" event, on Sunday the 30th of May 2021 at Wyong Race Course. For those are looking to attend, be a trader or exhibitor, please email the team at mayham@ccarc.org.au. For the latest news and information regarding this event, please check out the club's website and social media, as well as updates in future VK2WI bulletins.

Club newsletter *Smoke Signals*, continues to deliver some great content, with Henrick VK2FTDR having taken on the role as Editor. Members are encouraged to take a look each month and provide feedback. Henrick is also on the prowl for content; big or small, the club would love to hear what you have been up to radio/electronics related... or even just so inclined. Even just a few sentences and a photo.

The next education, training and examination session at the Clubrooms is on the 27th and 28th of March. If you are interested in obtaining your licence or upgrading; contact the club's education facilitator Karen VK2AKB, at education@ccarc.org.au.

The Club will be at the Westlakes Amateur Radio Club car boot sale on Saturday the 27th of March, with many items available for purchase.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week was hosted by Brad VK2NMZ, on the topic of "*Shortwave listening; do you do it?*". Jaye VK2FOMG mentioned he is interested in doing a Shortwave radio receiver shoot out with his ever-growing collection of receivers. Ray VK2HJW spoke of Radio New Zealand and DRM shortwave.

Bob VK2AOR and Dave VK2KFU continue the clubs Morning Tea net, with check-ins still coming in strong. A huge thanks go out to Bob and Dave for running the nets, it's greatly appreciated.

Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, 146.725MHz with a 91.5Hz sub audible tone. Currently EchoLink and IRLP are not available due to a hardware failure, but the team is working on it. Infrastructure upgrades are underway at the repeater site and during this time, digital repeater services may be spotty; however, afterwards the services will be much more stable with the upgraded equipment.

Club President Jaye VK2FOMG has provided in excess of 1000Ah worth of batteries for use at the repeater site, providing significant improvement to available off-grid storage. This will be sure to help keep the lights on at the repeater site during the winter months. Thank you, Jaye.

The club looking for some operators to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the RAAF. This is a great opportunity to get out on the bands and share in celebrating this momentous occasion portable or otherwise. If you are interested in participating, please contact the Club directly.

You can find out more about the CCARC on the web at ccarc.org.au; or on social media by searching for Central Coast Amateur Radio Club. Remember to give the club a “like” to follow for updates.

Brad VK2NMZ

Vice-President and Publicity, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club

The Club has commenced a Standard and Advanced licence upgrade courses, run by Jan VK2FEB. It is on every Tuesday night during the school term, from 7pm until 9pm. Anyone with their Foundation Licence who wishes to upgrade to a Standard or Advanced Licence is encouraged to come along to these regular, free educational events. A gold coin donation is requested, to go towards the tea and coffee served during the night.

The clubhouse is now open every second Saturday, providing an opportunity for members to work on personal projects, assist with the maintenance of clubhouse facilities or just have a general chit chat. Visitors are also welcome to drop in and introduce themselves.

On air nets continue weekly; on 80 metres from 8pm Tuesday evenings, on 3543 kHz, on Wednesday night from 8pm, on the club's 2 metre repeater on 147.050MHz with a 123Hz tone for access, and on the 6 metre repeater, 53.875MHz.

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.*

St George Amateur Radio Society

The next gathering of the Society is on Wednesday the 3rd of March. This will be a virtual gathering, with log in details available on the society's website closer to the event.

At this gathering, there will be a brief update on the society's activities and then a presentation by Society president, Cameron VK2CKP.

The ACMA have entered a public consultation period proposing a new licensing regime for the amateur radio service in Australia. Cameron, VK2CKP, will present the options available, some opinions and answer questions and clarifications.

And finally, don't forget the Society's annual summer 2 metre contest is on now, running through until the 28th of February.

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 new postal address for the club, is; PO Box 707 Cherrybrook NSW 2126. General enquires by email can be made to; hadarc@hadarc.org.au, or by the contact form on the website.

This coming Tuesday the 23rd of February is the first meeting back at Mt Colah for 2021. It will feature a presentation on the NanoVNAs by Steven VK2AAV; these devices allow assessment and adjustment of antennas, cables, filters, and other RF components; with display options including the Smith Chart.

The meeting starts at 8pm, at the Mt Colah Community Centre near the northern end of Pierre Close; that is, across Pierre Close (not the highway) from Mt Colah Railway Station.

The Club's website has up to date details on club activities, plus contact information and the Covid Safety plan; 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.

International Marconi Day this year is on the UTC day of the 24th of April, and on the 24th and 25th HADARC will activate the Australian station, VK2IMD.

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.

The Club's 2 metre repeater, VK2RNS on 147.250 MHz, can be accessed on Allstarlink Node 41646, and on EchoLink VK2RNS-R.

Nets are supplemented with Jitsi, an open source audio and video conferencing system. Out-of-town members and visitors are most welcome to participate in any nets via Jitsi or linked repeaters.

*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 VK2AWX News 7:30pm Monday, on 146.9Mhz and 438.025MHz. Meeting net Wednesday 7:30pm on 146.9MHz.

Central Coast ARC net Thursday night on VK2RAG 146.725Mhz, 91.5Hz; also Echolink *CCARCNSW*.

Amateur Radio Central West Group afternoon tea net 4pm daily; Monday and Friday night net at 8pm, on VK2RCW. HF net 8pm Wednesday 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 and 53.875MHz.

WICEN nets 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 Thursdays on VK2RFG, 438.65MHz with - 7MHz offset and 91.5Hz tone required, also on Echolink.

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

HADARC Monday night 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz, Wednesday from 8pm on 3608.5kHz, Friday 9am on 7106kHz. Meeting 23rd at Mt Colah.

Manly-Warringah Meetings return every Wednesday from 7:30pm, net Wednesdays 8pm on 146.875MHz.