

## Silent Key.

It is with regret that we begin this week, with news of a silent key.

The St George Amateur Radio Society have advised of the passing of their friend and fellow club member Don Edwards, VK2NV, last Monday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, in hospital after a short illness.

He is survived by his wife Fay, children Karen, Julie and Mark and numerous grandchildren.

Don was a taxi driver and well acquainted with two-way radios when he got his amateur licence in the 1980's. Before long, he found a passion for Morse Code, and spent the next few decades with a key and a paddle, becoming one of the best operators on the bands.

Don was a member of the St. George Amateur Radio Society for many years and will be sadly missed for his friendly nature and his encouragement of other amateurs to embrace CW.

A service is planned for 11am on Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, at the South Chapel of the Eastern Suburbs Crematorium – also known as Botany Cemetery – 12 Military Road, Matraville. A reception is planned to follow in the function room on site. To assist the family, if you intend to attend the funeral, please register via email to [vk2ckp@wia.org.au](mailto:vk2ckp@wia.org.au).

Please pause with us now, while we remember Don.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Don Edwards VK2NV.

*Advised by Peter VK2EMU  
on behalf of the St George Amateur Radio Society.*

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## **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](mailto:office@arnsw.org.au), or by phone message to 02 9651 1490.

The first training weekend for ARNSW Education, will now take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April. We would like to thank the members of the Waverley Amateur Radio Society education group for stepping in to assist, while our education co-ordinator Bob VK2TG is recovering from a broken ankle; and we wish Bob, a quick recovery. Bookings close tomorrow; as we have to allow time for assessment material to be ordered from AMC. Please contact our education team by email to [education@arnsw.org.au](mailto:education@arnsw.org.au).

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](mailto: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.

Last Thursday the 11<sup>th</sup> of March, saw the 111<sup>th</sup> anniversary of organized Amateur Radio in Australia. Starting with a meeting of radio experimenters in Sydney in 1910, who were seeking a better deal from the authorities, originated Amateur Radio New South Wales; effectively the oldest radio club in Australia, and in turn making the WIA, the world's oldest national Amateur Radio society.

# Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of March.  
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>
10cm Flux	73	77	78	80	84	79	78
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	5	11	7	5	2	2	4 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	2	12	5	4	1	0	2 estimated
T index	8	9	1	5	5	7	15

Solar activity was very low from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup>, low on the 9<sup>th</sup>, then low again on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.

Geomagnetic activity started out on the 5<sup>th</sup> before becoming active on the 6<sup>th</sup>, with SWS magnetometer data recording a weak impulse of 9 nanoTesla, at 0315UTC. Quiet to unsettled conditions followed on the 7<sup>th</sup>, before returning to quiet levels from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>, with the 11<sup>th</sup> remaining mostly quiet.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained near predicted monthly values, except for depressions of 15% on the 7<sup>th</sup>, and 15% during local night on the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Now, the forecast for the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of March;

Solar activity is expected to be very low.

Geomagnetic activity is likely to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with active conditions possible from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Maximum Usable Frequencies are likely to be mildly depressed on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, otherwise 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 February, we saw a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 74, and a Maximum of 81  
With peak dates from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>.

So far for March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 71, Average of 78 and a Maximum of 84  
With peak dates from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup>; and the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup>.

And looking ahead to April, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 75, and a Maximum of 81  
With peak dates from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup>; and the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 24<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>]



## 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 2m27s*

*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.

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## **ARRL DX news**

ZAMBIA; Bodo, HB9EWU plans to be active as 9J2BG while spending one year on a humanitarian mission at the St. Paul's Mission General Hospital in Kashikishi. Activity will be in his spare time on 20 metres.

BOTSWANA; Operators Vasily, R7AL, Leo, UI8J, Vlad, R9LR and Mike, RU3UR will be active as A25RU from Gaborone from March 15 to 26. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres, using CW, SSB, and FT8 in DXpedition mode, with four stations active. This also includes activity on Satellite QO-100.

GUADELOUPE; Philippe, F1DUZ will be active as FG4KH from March 16 to April 1. This includes an entry in the upcoming CQ Worldwide WPX SSB contest.

ECUADOR; Rick, NE8Z is active as HC1MD/2 from the Santa Elena province until May 15. Activity is on 40 to 6 metres using CW, SSB, FT8 and FT4.

MINAMI TORISHIMA; Take, JG8NQJ will be active as JG8NQJ/JD1 while on work assignment at the weather station there. Activity is in his spare time on the HF bands using CW. He is there for about three months.

LITHUANIA; Special event stations LY31A and LY11LY are active until March 31 to celebrate the 31st anniversary of the Act of the Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania.

AUSTRIA; Members of the VIC Amateur Radio Contest DX Club are active as C7A during March.

FINLAND; Members of the SSAB Raahe ARC are active as special event station OF60RR from Pattijoki until March 1, 2022 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the start of the construction of the steel mill Rautaruukki in May 1961.

ST. MAARTEN; Tom, AA9A is active as PJ7AA until March 27. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and FT8.

SEYCHELLES; Ravi, S79VU has been active on 20 metres using FT8 around 0200UTC.

EUROPEAN RUSSIA; Special event stations R1934G, R108M, RG61PP and R1961G are active until April 30 from the Smolensk Oblast, to commemorate the 87th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's birth and the 60th anniversary of his historic 108-minute first flight.

ASIATIC RUSSIA; Look for RI0Q to be active from Bol'shoy Begichev Island, IOTA AS-152, beginning possibly March 17; the start date may depend on weather conditions.

UZBEKISTAN; Bazarov, UK8FAV has been active using FT4 on 20 metres around 0200UTC.

COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS; Look for VK9CE to be active from March 16 to 23. Activity will be holiday style on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and FT8. They may also be active on 6 metres depending on conditions.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The Stew Perry Topband Challenge, North American RTTY Sprint, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC CW Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, YB DX RTTY Contest, SARL VHF/UHF Analogue Contest, SARL Field Day Contest, RSGB Commonwealth Contest, SKCC Weekend CW Sprintathon, F9AA SSB Cup, South America 10 Metre Contest, The DIG QSO SSB Party, AGCW QRP CW Contest, EA PSK63 Contest, QCWA QSO Party, TESLA Memorial HF CW Contest, UBA Spring 2-Metre Contest, FIRAC HF Contest and the Classic Phone Exchange, will certainly keep contesters busy during this weekend.

The OK1WC Memorial, Bucharest Digital Contest, RSGB FT4 Contest Series, 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint and K1USN Slow Speed CW Test are scheduled for March 15.

The RTTYOPS Weeksprint, CLARA Chatter Party and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest are scheduled for March 16.

The CWops Mini-CWT Test, Phone Fray and QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for March 17.



## WICEN News

Coming WICEN activities include Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events; in Hunter Valley on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March, Penrith on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May and at Leichhardt Oval, Lilyfield, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May. These events are an ideal training ground in emergency communications for WICEN members.

The Glow Worm Tunnel Marathon is held in and around Newnes and the Wolgon Valley area in the Blue Mountains, on the weekend of the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of June.

Training for this event will be held in the Newnes area, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April, in the form of an on-site radio survey. This is ideal training for members who have not undertaken a challenging exercise before.

WICEN weekly voice nets are on Sunday evenings, starting at 6pm. Digital messaging sessions continue Monday evenings from 8pm, using WINLINK and JS8CALL.

WICEN NSW, is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association. The website is at [nsw.wicen.org.au](http://nsw.wicen.org.au).

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](http://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](http://vic.wicen.org.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](mailto:vk2ir@vk2ir.com).

## Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

The next Friday night get-together for the Club, is planned for 7pm on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, at the SES Building in Port Macquarie, 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 50<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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 March 2021 issue is in preparation and will be published soon. 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 a car boot sale for Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> of March. Its in the Club grounds, 6a York Street Teralba, starting at 8am, with physical distancing in place.

You can set up a stall at no charge; but bring your own table. There will also be a BBQ and hot and cold drinks available.

All are welcome. For more information, contact the club on 0478228983.

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

*Barrie VK2QG*  
*President, Westlakes Amateur Radio Club*

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## Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

A reminder about “Mayham”, on Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 at Wyong Race Course. For those who have attend previous Wyong Field Days, this event will be very similar, but with a new name and new date. If you are looking to attend, be a trader or exhibitor, please email the team at [mayham@ccarc.org.au](mailto:mayham@ccarc.org.au). For the latest news and information regarding this event, please check out the website [www.mayham.org.au](http://www.mayham.org.au), social media, as well as updates in future VK2WI bulletins.

The Club newsletter, *Smoke Signals*, was emailed to members earlier in the week. Thanks to editor, Henrick VK2FTDR. Members are encouraged to take a look and provide feedback. Henrick is also on the prowl for content; big or small, even just a few sentences and a photo.

The next education, training and examination session at the Clubrooms is on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:education@ccarc.org.au).

Club members will also be at the Westlakes Amateur Radio Club car boot sale on Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> of March, with a van load of items available for purchase. The club would like to thank Westlakes ARC for putting on the event.

The Club’s Thursday evening net this week was hosted by Alan VK2MG with a discussion about the upcoming John Moyle Memorial Field day and will you be participating? A number of stations showed their interest with some club members heading out to bushlands camping for the weekend to make best use of the low noise environment. Thank you to Alan for facilitating the net.

Adrian VK2ABS hosted a successful Slow Scan Television net last Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> of March on the VK2RAG WICEN 2 metre repeater. Several Stations checked in including Geoff VK2FGSE, Chris VK2CJB, Alan VK2MG and Brad VK2NMZ. Adrian is looking at re-visiting the structure and how often the net is run and would love to hear your feedback, please reach out to the club directly with suggestions or feedback at [ccarc@ccarc.org.au](mailto:ccarc@ccarc.org.au), the next net is scheduled for Friday the 26<sup>th</sup> of March.

Bob VK2AOR and Dave VK2KFU continue with 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; from something that started out small, the net has now successfully been running for 12 months; a great achievement.

Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, 146.725MHz with a 91.5Hz sub audible tone. EchoLink access is via the CCARCNSW conference server, and IRLP on node 9509.

Club members Brad VK2NMZ and Jaye VK2FOMG activated special event callsign VK100AF last Monday and Tuesday using FT8 and achieved over 100 unique contacts. Next week, they will be activating special event station callsign VI100AF on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, utilising SSB; so, keep an ear out!

The club looking for more operators to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RAAF, operating 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](http://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**

Standard and Advanced licence upgrade courses continue at 7:30pm every Tuesday evening, run by Jan VK2FEB. Foundation or Standard Licence holders are encouraged to come these very informative courses. A gold coin donation is requested, to go towards the tea and coffee served during the night. An exam will be scheduled toward the end of the school year.

The clubhouse is now open every first and third Saturday from 10am, providing an opportunity for visitors to seek assistance with personal projects, take part in maintenance of clubhouse facilities or just to say hello over a cup of tea and biscuits. The next drop-in day for March will on Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup>.

The John Moyle Field Day is on the weekend of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of March. This year, unless there is an expression of interest, the club will not be setting up a field station. Members are encouraged to listen for contestants and participate from home; rules for the contest can be found on the WIA website.

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.*

## Waverley Amateur Radio Society

With the John Moyle Field day coming up next weekend, this week will be the last opportunity to put the finishing touches to the club's plans to return to Tooraweenah, after having to cancel last year.

With the clubhouse still unavailable for in person meetings, the next meeting of the Society, this coming Wednesday, March 17th, will once again be on Zoom. An email will be sent out to members with the Zoom invitation for those who don't already have it in their calendar. The main topic for discussion will be the expedition. There has also been a fair amount of contest activity at the Robertson site with several club members involved; see the website for details and some photos.

Working bee Tuesdays are still being held on Wednesdays, so those involved can meet in the Club Rose Bay bistro for lunch, which isn't open on a Tuesday. They are generally there from about midday to 2:30 or 3 pm. The next project day will be on Saturday April 3<sup>rd</sup> on Zoom, commencing at 1:30 pm through to 4 or 5 pm.

Shack nights continue via Zoom on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month; the next one is the 7<sup>th</sup> of April. The Morse code group meets on the first Sunday of each month, the meeting is scheduled for April the 4<sup>th</sup>. The digital special interest group usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month. The next one is scheduled for April the 12<sup>th</sup> from 7:30pm on Zoom.

The first foundation weekend for 2021 was planned for February, but with the clubhouse unavailable it couldn't go ahead. The society is assisting with the ARNSW weekend on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April; contact ARNSW Education for details.

The Society's weekly net is from 8pm on Monday night, on the VK2RBV repeater. It is usually run by Richard VK2XRC or Bob VK2NRC. Some interesting discussions take place on these nets.

There is full information about the Waverley Amateur Radio Society, and its history, on the website, [vk2bv.org](http://vk2bv.org). You can purchase kits, pay membership or get in touch using the contact form on the website.

*73 from Eric VK2VE  
Broadcast Publicity Officer.*



## Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the club will be on Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. At the meeting there will be a presentation by Terry VK2JTP, on EchoLink. Terry has been involved with EchoLink, which was written by Johnathan Taylor K1RFD, for over 20 years processing callsign validation, registration and queries for amateurs around the world.

Members and interested Amateurs are encouraged to attend this presentation to find out the full history EchoLink and the current changes to EchoLink. The meeting starts at 8pm at the Mt Colah Community Centre near the northern end of Pierre Close.

International Marconi Day this year is on the UTC day of the 24<sup>th</sup> of April, and on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> HADARC will activate the only Australian station, VK2IMD. This station marks the reception of the first direct message from the UK to Australia, sent from north-west Wales, to Fisk's home in Wahroonga, by Marconi.

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](http://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 2 metre repeater, VK2RNS on 147.250 MHz, is now connected to Allstarlink and is available on EchoLink.

The Club's three regular nets continue each week. Monday's net starts at 8pm on the VK2RNS 2 metre repeater. 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** 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 23<sup>rd</sup> at Mt Colah.

**Manly-Warringah** Meetings return every Wednesday from 7:30pm.