

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 first training weekend for ARNSW Education, will now take place on the 10th and 11th of April. We would like to thank the members of the Waverley Amateur Radio Society education group for stepping in to assist in running this weekend. Enquires about training and assessments can be sent to our education team by email, to 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 – 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.

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Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 12th to the 18th of March.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	12 th	13 th	14 th	15 th	16 th	17 th	18 th
10cm Flux	77	81	78	75	79	78	73
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	9	13	17	5	2	2	6 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	11	12	13	4	1	3	2 estimated
T index	29	-3	+13	-3	+1	8	10

Solar activity was very low all week.

Geomagnetic activity started out quiet to unsettled on the 12th, becoming quiet to active on the 12th and 14th before returning to quiet levels again from 15th to the 18th.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained mostly near predicted monthly values, but with some periods of depressions. Depression of 20% was observed during the night of the 12th; 20% during the day and 15% on the night of the 13th; 25% during the day and 20% on the night of the 15th; and depression of 20% during the local night of the 16th.

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

Solar activity is expected to be very low.

Geomagnetic activity may reach active levels on the 20th and 21st with a possibility of a G1 minor storm. Quiet to unsettled conditions are expected otherwise.

Maximum Usable Frequencies are likely to be mildly to moderately depressed on the 20th and 21st, 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 21st to the 28th.

So far for March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 75 and a Maximum of 84
With peak dates from the 5th to the 15th; and the 28th to the 30th.

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 3rd to the 7th; and the 18th to the 24th.

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 2m9s

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

BOTSWANA; Operators Vasily, R7AL, Leo, UI8J, Vlad, R9LR and Mike, RU3UR are active as A25RU from Gaborone until March 26. Activity is 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.

BAHAMAS; Steve, KG4LJB is active as C6AJB from Eleuthera Island, IOTA NA-001, until March 27. Activity is on 80 to 15 metres using some SSB, but mostly FT8 and FT4.

MADEIRA ISLANDS; Helmut, DF7EE will be active as CT9/DF7EE from March 23 to 31. This includes being active as either CQ3W or CR3W in the upcoming CQ Worldwide WPX SSB contest.

SPAIN; Special event station EH3DWN is active until April 1 to commemorate World Down Syndrome Day which is on March 21.

GUADELOUPE; Philippe, F1DUZ is active as FG4KH until April 1. This includes an entry in the upcoming CQ Worldwide WPX SSB contest.

SAINT MARTIN; Janusz, SP9FIH will be active as TO1K from Saint Martin from March 22 to April 5. Activity will be on the HF bands.

WALES; John, MW1CFN will be active as GB1004FTS from Anglesey Island, IOTA EU-005, from March 25 to April 8 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Air Force's Number 4 Flying Training School, that opened on the 1st of April 1921. Activity will be on the HF bands, including 6 and 2 metres, using SSB and various digital modes.

ARUBA; John, KK9A will be active as P40A from March 24 to 28. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres using CW and SSB and includes an entry in the upcoming CQ Worldwide WPX SSB contest.

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

BRAZIL; Special event stations ZZ5FLORIPA and ZZ5FLN are active until March 23rd, to celebrate the 348th anniversary of Florianopolis.

MALI; Jeff, TZ4AM has been active using CW on 40 metres around 0145UTC.

COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS; Station VK9CE is active until March 23. Activity is holiday style on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and FT8. Some activity on 6 metres is possible depending on conditions.

PITCAIRN ISLAND; Meralda, VP6MW has been active on 20 metres SSB around 1520UTC and 17 metres SSB around 1640UTC.

INDONESIA; A group of operators will be active as 7D5RI from Rupert Island, IOTA OC-245, from March 26 to 28. Activity will be on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and FT8.

NICARAGUA; Myron, KN6GHM will be active as H7/KN6GHM from Guanacastillo from March 22 to 30. Activity will be holiday style on 80 to 10 metres using SSB. He and Trevis, YN7ZTR will be active as YN1YN in the upcoming CQ Worldwide WPX SSB contest with two stations.

KOSOVO; Driton, Z61DX has been active on 20 metres using CW around 1500UTC.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, BARTG HF RTTY Contest, Russian DX Contest, AGCW VHF/UHF Contest, Virginia QSO Party, Feld Hell Sprint, UBA Spring SSB Contest, Run for the Bacon QRP CW Contest, OK1WC Memorial and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest are all on over this weekend.

The RTTYOPS Weeksprint is scheduled for March 23.

The SKCC CW Sprint, CWops Mini-CWT Test, Phone Fray and QRP CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for March 24.

WICEN News

Coming WICEN activities include Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events; in Penrith on the 9th of May and at Leichhardt Oval, Lilyfield, on the 23rd 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 18th to the 20th of June.

Training for this event will be held in the Newnes area, on the 11th of April, in the form of an on-site radio survey. This is ideal training for members who are looking for a more technically challenging exercise.

WICEN weekly voice nets are on Sunday evenings, starting at 6pm, on either the Chatswood 2 metre repeater, or the Berowra & Kurrajong 70cm repeaters. 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.

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.

[Messaging software at: <http://js8call.com/> and <http://winlink.org/>]

Club News

We start this week, with news from the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

The April general meeting of the Club is planned for 2pm on Saturday the 10th, 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 Friday night get together that had been planned for Friday the 19th March was cancelled at short notice. The SES and the Emergency Operations Centre were utilizing the building for the response to the major storm and flooding events in Port Macquarie and surrounding areas, which are continuing this weekend.

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 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 next car boot sale is on next weekend, on Saturday the 27th 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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Hunter Radio Group

The first Monthly Meeting of the Group for 2021 was on Thursday the 11th of March, at the School of Electronics Hunter TAFE at Tighes Hill, Newcastle. This was also the group's AGM for 2021.

At the AGM, the following office bearers were elected;

President; Len VK2ZFD

Vice President; Lee VK2KAL

Secretary/Treasurer; Rodney VK2CN

Repeater and Beacon Officer; Greg VK2HT

EchoLink Officer; Grahame VK2FA

Committee member; Chris VK2CJB.

The next Monthly Meeting will be on the 8th of April at the Hunter TAFE, Tighes Hill, Newcastle, starting at 7pm.

The Group conducts a weekly net on the Group's VHF Repeater, on 146.9MHz. The net is on Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm.

Rodney VK2CN

Secretary, Hunter Radio Group.

Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

A reminder about “Mayham”, on Sunday the 30th of May 2021 at Wyong Race Course. If you are looking to attend, be a trader or exhibitor, email the team at mayham@ccarc.org.au. For the latest news and information regarding this event, you can check the website www.mayham.org.au, as well as updates in future VK2WI bulletins.

Last Saturday at the clubrooms, Brad VK2NMZ dragged along his ever-growing portable operations kit to look at ideas on refining and simplifying the setup. We're sure all SOTA operators have gone through the stage of a small bag to now needing a hiking back-pack to hold the array of antennas and batteries for their “go-kit”... So, the question to listeners today is “what amateur radio rabbit hole have you discovered?” The club would love to hear your thoughts!

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.

Club members will also be at the Westlakes Amateur Radio Club car boot sale on Saturday the 27th of March, with a van load of items available for purchase.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week was hosted by Alan VK2MG with discussion about “creative antennas and what have you made radiate?” options ranged from disused powerlines, Metal Slinkys and even a large gumtree! Brad also spoke about the upcoming John Moyle Memorial Field Day weekend and the likelihood of some members heading out camping for the event, however, with the current weather conditions it seems that activities may have instead retreated to the warm and dry shack...

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; from something that started out small, the net has now successfully been running for over 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.

Speaking of EchoLink; there has been a recent software update, after a 14-year break; you can find out more by visiting www.echolink.org.

The next SSTV net hosted by Adrian VK2ABS, is planned for Friday the 26th of March, on the VK2RAG WICEN 2 metre repeater 147.125MHz. Adrian would welcome any feedback on the structure and timing of the nets; you can email the club at ccarc@ccarc.org.au.

Club members Brad VK2NMZ and Jaye VK2FOMG activated special event callsign VI100AF last Friday and Saturday, using SSB on the HF bands. The club is looking for more operators to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the RAAF, in June 2021 for a weekend activation. This is a great opportunity to get out on the bands and share in celebrating this momentous occasion. 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

This weekend, the scouts under the direction of BMARC member Robin VK2HRG, ran a John Moyle Field Day station at the Glossodia Scout Hall. The scout participants are Bethany, Stuart and Zarin, who all hold their foundation licence from a course ran in 2019. Irene VK2VAN and Jan VK2FEB visited on Saturday. The club would like to thank National JOTA coordinator Brett Nicholas VK2BNN for his continued support of amateur radio and scouting.

Standard and Advanced licence upgrade courses have moved to Wednesday evenings, still at 7:30pm. 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.

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.*

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the club is this Tuesday the 23rd 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 of EchoLink and recent updates. 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 24th of April, and on the 24th and 25th 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. 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 23rd at Mt Colah.

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