

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

There is a training weekend at VK2WI, 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 their assistance in running this weekend. Enquires about training and assessments can be sent to our education team by email, to [education@arnsw.org.au](mailto:education@arnsw.org.au).

The March Edition of ARNSW newsletter, *All Access*, was emailed out during the week. Besides the typographical error about the AGM; which starts at 11am on the 17<sup>th</sup> of April; there is a note about the HF Operations Group.

The Group had only just begun regular operations last year, when the whole global health pandemic, suspended many regular activities and left us all with a lot of uncertainty. With restrictions easing across NSW and the rollout of checkin systems – including here at Dural – we are looking to re-open Club station VK2AWI. Activities are generally scheduled for Monday afternoons, continuing into the evening, if you are interested, please email [HFgroup@arnsw.org.au](mailto:HFgroup@arnsw.org.au). We will continue to provide updates on this, and other operations as they resume, here on VK2WI News.

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.

Later in the 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.

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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## **A note from our Secretary.**

The 2021 Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio NSW is coming up on Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup> of April. Notice of meeting and financial reports were sent out during the week; via post for members without email, and electronically to everyone else.

Our Secretary, Eric VK2VE, has noticed that about 30 email addresses have bounced back. If you were expecting to received your AGM documentation via email, please contact [membership@arnsw.org.au](mailto:membership@arnsw.org.au) with your current details so that we can update them and resend the material. Postal deliveries may still take some time; Australia Post is advising that mail delivery to some locations is still affected by recent adverse weather and current restrictions.

The AGM will start at 11am on Saturday – not at 3pm as mentioned in *All Access* – and will be a hybrid meeting; in person here at VK2WI Dural, online via Zoom, and teleconference. Details on attendance options are in the notice of meeting. We hope to see you there, online or in person.

If you are unable to attend and wish to appoint a proxy, the form is at the back of the AGM booklet. Proxies must reach the office at least 48 hours prior to the meeting; that's 11am on Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> of April. Please ensure your appointed proxy will be attending the meeting; if you are not sure, you can always appoint the chair of the meeting.

*73 from Eric VK2VE  
Secretary ARNSW.*

# Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 26<sup>th</sup> of March to the 1<sup>st</sup> of April.  
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	26 <sup>th</sup>	27 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>	29 <sup>th</sup>	30 <sup>th</sup>	31 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
10cm Flux	80	80	75	74	80	74	78
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	11	7	4	3	4	7	8 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	7	3	3	0	1	5	5 estimated
T index	21	14	12	14	11	20	7

Solar activity was very low all week.

Geomagnetic activity was at quiet to unsettled levels from the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>, quiet on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, quiet with unsettled periods on the 31<sup>st</sup>, then quiet again on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained mostly near predicted monthly values. Conditions were 15% depressed during local daylight hours on the 28<sup>th</sup>, 15% enhanced during local night on the 31<sup>st</sup>; and 15% depressed during the day, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

Now, the forecast for the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of April;

Solar activity is expected to be very low to low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with the chance of active periods on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should be near predicted monthly values with the chance of some mild depressions.

*Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.*

## Solar Flux Index update

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

Having finished March, we saw a;

Minimum of 71, Average of 78 and a Maximum of 84  
With peak dates from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup>; and the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>.

As we start April, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 71, Average of 74 and a Maximum of 76  
With peak dates from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup>; and the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>.

And looking ahead to May, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 72, Average of 73, and a Maximum of 76  
With peak dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<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 2m52s*

*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.

## **ARRL DX news**

MALDIVES; Mats, SM6LRR is active as 8Q7MS until April 10. Activity is holiday style on 40 to 15 metres using mostly CW with some SSB.

BOLIVIA; Antonio, EA5RM is active as CP1XRM until April 27, while working as a Solidaridad Medica and Radioamateurs Without Frontiers NGO volunteer. Activity is in his spare time on 160 to 10 metres using SSB and some digital modes.

GERMANY; Members of DARC's Special Event Station Team are active as DA21WARD until June 30 to mark World Amateur Radio Day.

SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS; Lee, DS4NMJ is active as DT8A from King George Island. Lately he has been active on 40 metres using FT8 between 0400 and 0415UTC. He is there until December 31.

ENGLAND; Members of the RSGB Contest Club are active with special event callsigns G5WS and G6ZZ to commemorate the Transatlantic Tests conducted 100 years ago.

THAILAND; Jorge, AB6WP is active as HS0ZOK from Phuket Island, IOTA AS-053. Activity is on 20 to 10 metres using mostly SSB and some CW.

MINAMI TORISHIMA; Take, JG8NQJ is active as JG8NQJ/JD1 while on work assignment at the weather station there. Activity is in his spare time on 40, 30 and 17 metres using CW. He is there for about three months.

SVALBARD; Station JW1I is now active on Bear Island, IOTA EU-027, at the Bear Island Norwegian Meteorological Station and is there until May 15. Recent activity has been on 20 metres using SSB.

BULGARIA ; Special event station LZ200GSR is active until April 30 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Georgi Sava Rakovski, a prominent figure in the revolutionary movement for the liberation of Bulgaria.

CZECH REPUBLIC; Members of the Radioclub Chrudim are active as OL75KCR from Chrudim until December 31, celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Radioclub Chrudim.

DENMARK; Special event stations OZ75MAY and OZ75BO are active until April 11 to commemorate the liberation of Bornholm 75 years ago. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

NETHERLANDS; Ruud, PG1R is active as PG96WARD during April to mark the World Amateur Radio Day and the IARU's 96th anniversary.

ANTARCTICA; Paul, VK2PAD is currently active as VK0PD until November while on work assignment on Casey Station, IOTA AN-016. Activity is on 40 and 20 metres in his spare time.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The North American SSB Sprint Contest, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, PODXS 070 Club PSK 31 Flavors Contest, Louisiana QSO Party, Mississippi QSO Party, Florida State Parks on the Air, SP DX Contest and the EA RTTY Contest are all on over this weekend.

The OK1WC Memorial, 144 MHz Spring Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test and DARC Easter Contest are scheduled for April 5.

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

The RSGB FT4 Contest Series, UKEICC 80-Metre SSB Contest, VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, CWops Mini-CWT Test and Phone Fray are scheduled for April 7.

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## WICEN News

Coming WICEN activities include Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events; in Penrith on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May and at Leichhardt Oval, Lilyfield, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May. Volunteers are still needed for both events, which 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 a great introduction for newer WICEN members, and 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 Kurrajong 70cm repeater. Please check the WICEN website for details.

Please note, the Berowra 70 cm repeater is temporarily off-air.

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).

Membership renewal notices have been sent to member's VRA email. If you have not received your renewal, please contact [wicen.treasurer@vrarescue.org](mailto:wicen.treasurer@vrarescue.org).

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 April general meeting of the Club is planned for 2pm on Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup>, at the SES Building in Port Macquarie. Note that this is the second Saturday of the month, as the first was Easter Saturday. The SES building is still in use this weekend with the clean up after the recent severe flooding. If the building is still in use next weekend the meeting will have to be postponed. If this is likely then members will be advised by email later this week with as much notice as possible. The meeting will be held in accordance with the club's COVID-19 Safety Plan.

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 newly published March 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.*

## Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The next meeting of the Society is on Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of April. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm; directly after 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, on the southern side of the Wollongong CBD; after turning off Springhill Road into the main entrance, 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 April meeting, IARS member Simon VK2KU will be presenting and discussing his HF Noise Filter project. Simon has been working on the noise reduction performance and the circuit board design for many months now. The performance of the prototypes has been outstanding, dramatically removing the local urban noise prevalent on the lower HF bands. Simon is planning on organising a production run of the circuit boards and will be taking orders on the night as well. So, if you're interested in lowering your HF noise level, come along for what will be a most interesting presentation.

The night concludes with coffee, tea and cake in the venue's large foyer, where you can also relax on the very comfortable lounges, while of course maintaining the ever-changing physical distancing requirements.

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, including details on upcoming Amateur Radio training and examination activities, on the web at [iars.org.au](http://iars.org.au), and the society is also on Facebook. The website again; [iars.org.au](http://iars.org.au).

To conclude, all listeners are invited to attend the next meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society– its at 7.30pm on Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, Springhill Road, Wollongong.

*Submitted by Rob VK2MT*

*Publicity Officer for the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society.*

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## Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

A reminder that “Mayham” is coming up on Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 at Wyong Racecourse. Also, on Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup>, there will be both pedestrian and mobile fox hunts.

If you are looking to attend, be a trader or exhibitor, email the team at [mayham@ccarc.org.au](mailto:mayham@ccarc.org.au). For the latest news and information regarding this event, you can check the website [www.mayham.org.au](http://www.mayham.org.au), as well as updates in future VK2WI bulletins.

The next training and assessment weekend at the Club is on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of May; training will be at the clubrooms on Saturday, with examinations at Mayham on Sunday. 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).

The Club is making a change to repeater operations, to conserve power coming into the winter months. Between the hours of 10pm and 6am EST, VK2RAG repeaters on 23cm, 6 Meter, 70cm 438.075 MHz including link to Rylstone, MMDVM 438.875 MHz and 2 metre packet will be switched off. The operation of the VK2RAG 2 metre 146.725 MHz and WICEN repeaters, is not affected. The club’s repeater committee will monitor operations and will revisit these changes in the in the future.

A recent Social media Post, Craig VK3CRG provided some inspiring thoughts regarding his recent contact with club member Adrian, VK2ABS. “A *polite, clever, articulate young man, new to the hobby, he’s exactly the sort we need to keep the hobby alive for the decades to come.*” The club’s executive team are incredibly proud of Adrian and for the members who have taken Adrian under their wing to provide guidance.

Adrian hosts a fortnightly Slow Scan Television net every second Friday on the VK2RAG WICEN 2 Meter Repeater. The next net is scheduled for Friday the 9th of April. If you have any feedback or suggestions regarding this net, please reach out to the club directly at [ccarc@ccarc.org.au](mailto:ccarc@ccarc.org.au).

This week, the Club's Thursday evening net this week was hosted by Alan VK2MG, with a discussion on the Easter long weekend, are you getting out and about? There was a mixed bag, with some staying home and others strapping everything but the kitchen sink to their vehicle. Thanks to Alan for hosting the net.

Bob VK2AOR and Dave VK2KFU continue the clubs daily Morning Tea net; whilst check-ins have reduced a little as many people are returning to the workplace, the net is still well attended. A huge thanks to Bob and Dave for running these nets, it sure brightens up everyone's day. Did you know the net has been running for over 12 months now?

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.

The club is looking for more operators to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RAAF. This is a great opportunity to get out on the bands and share in celebrating this momentous occasion, 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

The next Foundation Licence training weekend is next weekend, the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April. For more information, you can contact the education team via email to [education@bmarc.org](mailto:education@bmarc.org).

Standard and Advanced licence upgrade courses have moved to Wednesday evenings, still at 7:30pm, at the clubhouse. 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 [www.bmarc.org](http://www.bmarc.org).

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

## St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society continues with virtual gatherings; the next is planned this Wednesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April. Login details are on the society's website.

Greg VK2GSB has been looking into small form factor SDRs and stumbled across the HackRF One, an open source transceiver project designed for experimentation. Although not a dongle, the HackRF One is a reasonably small form factor radio that connects to a computer via USB. It doesn't come with any software, as one of the project's aims is for it to help experimenters learn about radio. Greg thought that sounded like a perfect Amateur Radio project and dived in.

At the April gathering, Greg will provide an overview of the HackRF One SDR and how to get it up and running. In addition to this, Greg will also provide some results of his experiments using the powerful Raspberry Pi 4 in place of a PC. Spoiler alert - some assembly was required.

Further information about The St George Amateur Radio Society can be found on the website, at [sgars.org](http://sgars.org), or follow us on Facebook.

*Peter VK2EMU*

*Publicity Officer for the St George Amateur Radio Society.*



## Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next mid-meeting of the club will be an informal dinner on Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, at Magpies' Club, opposite Waitara Station.

The next general meeting, on April 27<sup>th</sup> will be back at Mt Colah Community Centre, starting at 8pm.

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 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.

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