

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

With public health restrictions still in place across the Greater Sydney area, events at VK2WI Dural are currently suspended and the site is closed to visitors. You can still make contact via email, to office@arnsw.org.au, or by leaving a phone message with the office, on 02 9651 1490.

We have included updated details in the bulletin of events rescheduled or moved online; However, we recommend to check in with the local group net or websites, as restrictions continue to change at short notice.

Next Weekend is the 2021 RD contest, from 1pm on Saturday the 14th until 1pm on Sunday. This contest commemorates the Amateurs who died during World War II and is designed to encourage friendly participation and help improve the operating skills of participants. It is held on the weekend closest to the 15th August, the date on which hostilities ceased in the southwest Pacific area. The opening address will be relayed via VK2WI and automated relays, from 12:45pm on Saturday.

Later in this bulletin, we have a summary of on-air activities from Sydney and across the state. We would welcome any updates from club and groups especially regarding any new meeting and check in nets. You can email news@arnsw.org.au – we don't need full items, just the details of the activity and contacts. As always, we also welcome reports to follow up on the outcome of recent activities, which we can report to our listeners.

We 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.

Tonight we again 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.

[Play File: 14-E-ID1.wav]

WinterNet

With thanks to Bob VK2HH, we have been informed about a new net to encourage activity on the “top band” – that’s 160 metres.

The net is on Monday nights on 1860kHz, starting at 8pm and running as late as there is company. Net control is Steve VK2STG, in the Snowy Mountains, who is getting excellent signal reports using a home-made dipole and antenna tuner. As of last Monday night, there were 8 checkins to the net, and Steve would welcome more. The 160 metre band has some unique characteristics and challenges, so the net is a good opportunity to start experiencing it first-hand.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 30th of July to the 5th of August.
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	30 th	31 st	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
10cm Flux	76	76	75	75	76	71	74
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	6	6	4	15	13	5	3 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	3	5	1	13	6	1	0 estimated
T index	18	13	11	16	24	20	12

Solar activity was very low all week. Geomagnetic activity was at quiet levels from the 30th of July until the 1st of August, reaching minor Storm levels on the 2nd. The 3rd was at quiet to unsettled levels, before returning to quiet conditions on the 4th and 5th.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained near predicted monthly values, during local daylight hours, from the 30th of July to the 3rd of August; daytime frequencies were depressed 15% on the 4th and 5th. Frequencies during local night hours were enhanced up to 30% on the 30th of July, the 3rd and the 4th of August; otherwise remaining near predicted monthly values.

Now, the forecast for the 6th to the 12th of August;

Solar activity is expected to be low.

Geomagnetic activity may reach active levels on the 6th, otherwise expected to remain at quiet to unsettled levels.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should be 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 July, we had a;

Minimum of 72, Average of 82 and a Maximum of 95
With peak dates from the 1st to the 7th and the 20th to the 26th

So far for August, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 71, Average of 74 and a Maximum of 76
With peak dates from the 1st to the 3rd and the 9th to the 18th

And looking ahead to September, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 72, Average of 74 and a Maximum of 76
With peak dates from the 3rd to the 13th.

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 July 2021

Compiled with data courtesy of Space Weather Services

A total of 4 flares were observed this month; 3 M class and 1 X class flare. The 3rd of July saw three of those flares; an X1.5 – the strongest for the month – at 1429UTC, an M2.7 at 0717UTC, and an M1.0 flare at 1703UTC. An M1.5 flare was observed at 0509UTC on the 4th. These flare events were produced by the same solar region (AR2838) which rapidly emerged on the solar disk on 03 July near the north-west solar limb. Several coronal mass ejections were observed in association with this flare activity; however, none were Earth directed. Solar activity was at very low to low levels on other days of the month, with several coronal hole high-speed solar wind streams.

No significant geomagnetic disturbances were observed this month. The Australian regional geomagnetic field was at predominately quiet to unsettled levels. Isolated active periods were observed on 14 and 22 July due to coronal hole high-speed wind streams.

No significant Australian region ionospheric depressions were observed in July; the solar flares on the 3rd and 4th of July occurred mostly during local night hours, so did not cause significant fadeouts in the Australian region. Due to the impulsive nature of the M1 and M2 flares, very slight increase in absorption in the ionospheric E layer was observed, with a duration of around 5 minutes.

So... what is a solar flare? It's a temporary brightening of the chromosphere – the second-most outer layer of the sun. Besides visible light, flares emit energy in other parts of the radio spectrum, and X-rays. Solar Flares are measured and categorised by the energy of the X-ray signal, as measured by GOES spacecraft.

Classifications are A, B, C, M and X class – each is ten times the strength of the one below it. A and B class flares have little influence on the overall amount of solar flux. C class flares don't have much effect on earth, rarely causing a slight geomagnetic disturbance. M class flares can cause changes in the ionosphere, and may result in shortwave fadeouts on lower frequencies, on the side of the earth facing the sun at that time. X class are the most powerful flares and can cause major ionospheric disturbance and fadeout across the whole HF spectrum, on the side of the earth facing the sun.

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.

[Play File: 15-FCAL162.wav]

Duration 2m16s

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

TAIWAN; Kenichi, JP1RIW is active as BX30ARL until the end of 2021 to mark the 30th anniversary of the Chinese Taipei Amateur Radio League.

MOROCCO; Bruno, IW5BBV is active as CN2BBV from various locations until August 30. Activity is on 40 and 20 metres using SSB.

AZORES; Look for Giovanni, IZ2DPX to be active as CT8/IZ2DPX from Terceira Island, IOTA EU-175, from August 14 to 19. Activity will be on all HF bands using SSB and various digital modes.

SOUTH COOK ISLANDS; Bruce, ZL1AAO is active as E51AAO from Atiu, IOTA OC-083, until August 9, and then from Rarotonga, IOTA OC-013, until August 19. Activity is on 40 and 20 metres using SSB.

ESTONIA; Sergei, ES1LL/0 and Andrei, ES4AW/0 are active from Muhu, Saaremaa, and Hiiumaa Islands, all IOTA EU-034, until August 8.

ECUADOR; Members of the Ecuador DX Club will be active as HD1O this weekend to commemorate Ecuador's First Cry for Independence from Spain that took place on August 10, 1809.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC; Max, HB9TUZ is active as HI9/HB9TUZ from Las Terrans during August. He is active on 40 to 10 metres using SSB.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA; Special event station HL76V is active during August in celebration of Liberation Day which is held on August 15.

THAILAND; Special event station HS18IARU is active until September 30 to celebrate the 18th IARU Region 3 Conference in Bangkok.

SAUDI ARABIA; Members of the Saudi Association of Radio Amateurs are active with special call sign HZ8FTDMC until August 15 while part of the FT8DMC Activity Days.

PERU; Alex, DD5ZZ is active as OA7/DD5ZZ from Cusco until September 17. Activity is on 40 to 10 metres using SSB, FT8 and FT4, and possibly CW.

CORSICA Frans, DJ0TP is active as TK/DJ0TP until August 14. Activity is holiday style on the HF bands.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS; Mario, I2HBW is active as VP5MA until the end of October.

FALKLAND ISLANDS; Matthew, M0ZMS is active as VP8ZMS until late August while active at the RAF station at Mount Pleasant. Activity is on the HF bands using various digital modes, CW, and some SSB.

MEXICO; Special event station 6E0D is active during August to commemorate 500 years since the fall of Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec Empire.

NICARAGUA; Rafael, NN3RP is active as YN2RP until August 12. Activity is on 40, 20 and 10 metres using CW, SSB and FT8. This may include some satellite activity as well.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The ARRL 222 MHz and Up Distance Contest, QRP 20-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, Batavia FT8 Contest, 10-10 International SSB Summer Contest, SKCC Weekend CW Sprintathon, European HF Championship, NRRL MGM Weekend Contest, FISTS Saturday Sprint, North American CW QSO Party, 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest will certainly keep contesters busy this weekend.

The RTTYOPS Weeksprint is scheduled for August 10.

The VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, CWops Mini-CWT Test, MMonVHF/DUBUS 144 MHz Meteorscatter Sprint Contest, Phone Fray and NAQCC CW Sprint are scheduled for August 11.

WICEN News

The Shahzada Horse Enduro Ride at St Albans has been cancelled for this year; It is hoped it will return bigger and better, next year.

The Watagan State Forest Ride has been rescheduled for the 11th and 12th of September.

This year's WICEN NSW Annual General Meeting will be held at 2:30pm on Saturday the 18th of September, at ARNSW Dural. It will move online if there are any COVID-19 restrictions.

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 70cm repeater is currently off air.

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.

Club News

We start this week, with news from the Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

With public health restrictions currently in force, the Clubrooms are currently closed until at least Saturday the 28th of August.

The Club's final general meeting prior to the AGM, was held yesterday online, via Google Meet. The clubs executive team provided their final reports and discussed the milestones the club has achieved over the past several years, along with future goals in the pipeline for the new committee to follow through with.

The Club's AGM will also be held online via Google Meet, on Saturday the 21st of August at 1pm. The current executive team will not be standing again this year and nominations forms have been distributed to club members via E-mail. Signed and scanned copies of committee nomination must be received no later than noon on Wednesday the 18th of August.

The club would like to thank Bob VK2AOR and Dave VK2KFU, who continue the clubs daily Morning Tea net. With stay-at-home orders expanding to now include the Hunter region, it is a terrific way to get to know your fellow operators. This week the club would like to give a shout out to Laura VK2LLJ from the Newcastle Region who has dropped in to say hello every day. A massive thanks go out to Bob and Dave for running these nets, you will be sure to learn a little piece of history each day.

A reminder that the club's Brand Meister DMR repeater is currently offline due to an unknown power related fault. The team have not yet been able to fully locate the cause of the issue and are hoping to investigate further once travel restrictions ease. EchoLink and IRLP facilities are also currently offline due to hardware failure.

Alan VK2MG hosted a brief Thursday Evening 2-meter net with only a handful of stations quickly visiting. Discussions ranged from configuring new DMR Radios to the history of Dairy Farms at Menangle in Sydney. Cheers Alan for running the net!

Club nets are held on the VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, 146.725Mhz with a 91.5hz sub audible tone.

The club is looking for more operators to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the RAAF at the end of August; only 2 stations have registered so far. This is a great opportunity to get out on the bands and share in celebrating this momentous occasion – note that operation does not have to be from the clubrooms, it can be portable or at other locations. If you are interested in participating, please contact the Club directly.

Did you know the club has a YouTube channel? It contains lecture information from previous events as well as numerous technical videos covering a range of topics.

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.

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Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the club is the AGM, which has now been rescheduled for 2pm on Saturday the 4th of September. The September general meeting will follow immediately after. The August General meeting has been cancelled, and minutes of the August Committee Meeting will be emailed to members to keep them abreast of club affairs. The Committee continues to closely monitor public health directives, to ensure that club activities comply with restrictions which may change at short notice.

Candidates for the Foundation, Standard and Advanced Licences should contact the club via PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444 as soon as possible; Assessments for the Advanced, Standard and Foundation licences will be run once sufficient candidates have registered, and public health regulations permit.

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. Members and visitors are encouraged to participate in the club on air nets as often as possible.

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 newly published July 2021 web edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales" is now online, and past issues can be viewed on the website as well. This bumper edition includes a full report on the club Field Day weekend, and an informative article on DMR.

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 planned this coming Tuesday the 10th of August. Meetings are normally held at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, but with the current travel restrictions, this month's meeting will again be over-the-air.

The meeting will commence at 7:30pm on the VK2RMP 6850 and VK2RUW 6675 repeaters, as well as via EchoLink connecting to VK2MT-R. Check-ins will be taken first, followed by the usual Club business and then there will be some interesting presentations by various Society Members.

This meeting was also planned to be the AGM, but given the difficulty in holding an AGM during this lockdown, combined with the fact that all of the Society's current Committee and Executive were happy to continue for another 12 months, there will be no election for positions this year.

In the meantime, apart from the over-the-air meeting this coming Tuesday evening, the Society has two other Nets, something that lockdowns don't prevent!

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; the usual frequency is 3666kHz, plus or minus for other usage. It usually starts at 8:30pm, but as there is a meeting this coming Tuesday night, it will be an informal chit-chat get together afterwards.

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, 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, on the air at 7.30pm on Tuesday the 10th of August; via the 2m repeaters of VK2RMP 6850 and VK2RUW 6675, EchoLink VK2MT-R. So, get your cuppa ready and radio tuned, starting at 7:30pm.

*Submitted by Rob VK2MT
Publicity Officer for the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society.*

Sydney ATV Group

The Blue Mountains ATV repeater at Lawson transmits high definition TV on 445.50MHz, with analogue and digital inputs on 23cm. Reception is possible over the Sydney Metro area, or via the British Amateur TV Club streaming web site; select the VK2 callsign and the HTML5 option. You can also text to say that you're watching.

There are two nets; Thursday afternoon starting at 2:30pm, and Monday nights from 7pm.

We regularly have technical talks, show our latest projects, general interest videos and much more.

Give us a call during net times on the Lawson repeater, 147.325 MHz with positive offset, with reports, questions or help with receiving Amateur Television. Why not join in and find out more about this fascinating and fast-growing aspect of digital amateur radio.

*Advised by John VK2ATU
on behalf of the Sydney ATV Group.*

Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club

During the lockdown, the Club continues with on air nets and online meetings.

The education courses are continuing via Zoom, on Wednesday nights at 6pm. An online club meeting was held on Friday 6th August as a way for members to meet the new BMARC committee as well as to catch up. Another online meeting is planned for Friday 3rd September with a guest presentation from Darren Spoor on the topic of Energy transition towards Renewals.

Organisation for JOTA is currently underway. While we are currently planning for in-person activity, additional on-air and online options are also being investigated should the current lockdown situation extend into October. If you would like to be part of the BMARC JOTA committee, please contact James VK2GOH. At this time, the club would also like to thank the outgoing JOTA coordinator, Ron VK2OTC, for his efforts in the past.

On air nets continue each week; the 80-metre net Starts at 8pm on Tuesday evenings, on 3543 kHz. On Wednesday night from 8pm, there is a net on the club's 2 metre repeater on 147.050MHz with a 123Hz tone for access, and on the 6-metre repeater on 53.875MHz. No access tone is needed for the 6-metre repeater. There is also now a Sunday Afternoon net from 3pm to 4pm, on the 2-metre repeater.

More information about the club can be found on the website, at www.bmarc.org.

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

St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society's VK2RDX repeater lives up to its callsign....

On Friday evening the 6th of August, contacts were made through the VK2RDX 2m FM repeater with VK4FAAF Shaun from Toowoomba.

The VK2RDX repeater is located at Mt Bindo about 150 kms west of Sydney. Operators reported the signal from Toowoomba was noise free into the repeater – a distance on over 700km.

The VK2RDX 2m FM repeater operates on 146.650 MHz with a minus 600 kHz offset. The repeater is sponsored by The St George Amateur Radio Society and maintained by members and friends, who we thank for their ongoing efforts.

More information about SGARS repeaters can be found on the society's website <https://sgars.org>.

*73 de Peter VK2EMU
Publicity officer*

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting is an informal mid-monthly meeting on Tuesday the 10th of August, starting at 8pm. This will be online using Jitsi Meet, and on the 2 metre repeater. Members and visitors can join the Jitsi meeting online, using a web browser, on a smartphone app, or even from a landline phone.

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. These nets may be supplemented with Jitsi as well.

The Club's website has up to date details on club activities, getting setup for Jitsi Meet, 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.

*Submitted by Julian VK2YJS
HADARC Publicity Officer.*

[Jitsi Meet details:
Phone: 08 7150 1136 and enter 3145759306#
Web: <https://meet.jit.si/HADARC>]

[Play ID File: 18-E-ID4.wav]

Activities on the air

WinterNet Mondays 8pm on 1860kHz, Net Control Steve VK2STG.

Oxley Region ARC nets 7:30pm Thursday, 9am Sunday, VK2RPM 146.7Mhz with 91.5Hz tone.

Great Lakes Radio Club weekly net 7pm Monday on VK2RGL, 147.1MHz.

Westlakes 80 metre nets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; 9:30am on 3565kHz, 2m nets on 146.775MHz, see website for details.

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; SSTV net every second Friday on 147.125MHz.

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 – Meeting net this Tuesday 7:30pm, Saturday 9:30am on VK2RMP 146.850 and VK2RUW on 146.675. Tuesday 8:30pm, 3666kHz.

Blue Mountains ARC nets 8pm Tuesday on 3543kHz, 8pm Wednesday on VK2RBM, 147.050MHz and 53.875MHz. 2m Net Sundays 3pm.

Manly-Warringah Radio Society meeting net 8pm Wednesdays VK2RMB 146.875MHz.

Waverley ARS net 8pm Monday on VK2RBV, 438.1125MHz. Activities online and on air, 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.