

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

While the VK2WI Dural site is currently closed to visitors, you can still make contact via email, to [office@arnsw.org.au](mailto:office@arnsw.org.au), or by leaving a phone message with the office, on 02 9651 1490.

We wish to remind our listeners of some telephone services that are currently available if you have 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 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 events and activities over the holiday period. You can email [news@arnsw.org.au](mailto:news@arnsw.org.au) – we don't need full items, just the details of the activity and contacts; and, as always, we welcome reports to follow up on the outcome of recent activities.

Tonight, we again welcome listeners on the EchoLink "HAM" conference, and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network. Callbacks will also be taken after tonight's bulletin; our thanks to John VK3HJQ, and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network team, for making this relay available.

And a note from the News Editor following up on last week; one of the stores on the "60 Minutes" program last week discussed the search for the missing MH370 aircraft. The introduction to the story briefly mentioned amateur radio, including a cameo featuring Matt VK2BAI. Unfortunately, the story that went to air glossed over all of the technical details regarding the use of WSPR by the British aerospace engineer Richard Godfrey in his efforts to find the missing aircraft.

## Help wanted with special event

Further to last week's news, we mentioned that the West Australian VHF Group at Wireless Hill in Perth is looking for assistance from some Sydney amateurs.

The group will be operating the special event callsign VK80LAN during March, celebrating the 80-year anniversary of the one of the Avro Lancaster aircraft surviving from service during World War 2.

One of the few surviving pilots, Tony Adams, is 98 years old and lives near Killara on Sydney's North Shore. The West Australian VHF Group are seeking assistance from Amateurs in Sydney to help Tony participate in the activation.

There will be an opening ceremony on Tuesday night at 12UTC with three countries involved UK, Canada, and Australia on EchoLink node 9229. At the opening ceremony there will be a former pilot; there will also be some operation on Saturday as well as other times during March.

If you can provide any assistance, please contact Rob at the VHF Group in Perth, via email to: [robvk6frdm@iinet.net.au](mailto:robvk6frdm@iinet.net.au).

## **ARNSW Elections**

As previously announced, the Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio New South Wales is on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2022.

At the AGM, four of the nine directors will be retiring. At the close of nominations yesterday, four nominations had been received for four positions vacant; so no election of directors will be necessary this year.

*Peter VK2EMU  
Returning Officer*

## **Last Minute Ferry Call**

All amateurs are invited to take part in Waverley Amateur Radio Society's Sydney Harbour Ferry Contest, next Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of March.

This year's contest has been modified to encourage social distancing; operators can set up anywhere within sight of the harbour using hand-held VHF and UHF rigs only. Points will be awarded for simplex as well as repeater contacts with home operation also permitted. As always, the aim of this annual contest is to enjoy a fun day in the outdoors while testing your radio skills.

The contest will run from 10 am to 2 pm, divided into two two-hour "watches" and you can claim bonus points for contacts with the Waverley Club contest station VK2W. There will be awards for the most successful participants and certificates for all operators who submit a log.

For full details including downloadable logsheet, go to [vk2bv.org](http://vk2bv.org) or check the contest Facebook page by searching Sydney AR Ferry Contest.

So get those H/Ts and extra batteries charged up and have a go!

# Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of February;

This report issued on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	18 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	23 <sup>rd</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>
10cm Flux	93	96	93	98	95	96	92
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	5	6	8	11	13	4	6 observed
Australian Index (Aaus)	5	6	9	10	7	5	3 estimated
T index	70	57	55	57	69	57	52

Solar flare activity was very low on the 18<sup>th</sup>, low from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>, then very low from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Geomagnetic activity was quiet on the 18<sup>th</sup> becoming unsettled on the 19<sup>th</sup>, quiet to active on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, unsettled with isolated active periods on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, then quiet on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

F2 critical frequencies in Southern Australia, were mostly near predicted monthly values. Some enhancements were observed during local nights; 30% on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 20% on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 15% on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Now, the forecast for the 25<sup>th</sup> of February to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March;

Solar activity is expected to be very low to low, with a slight chance of an M class flare.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be quiet to unsettled with possible isolated active periods.

Maximum Usable Frequencies are likely to 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 January, we had a;

Minimum of 84, Average of 103 and a Maximum of 130  
With peak dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup>, and the 28<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup>.

Near the end of February, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 93, Average of 111 and a Maximum of 130  
With peak dates from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup>

And looking ahead to March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 98, Average of 106 and a Maximum of 115  
With peak dates from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup>, and the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</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 2m05s*

*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**

SRI LANKA; Operators DK7DR and DC0KK will be active as 4S7DRG and 4S7KKG, respectively, from the former Deutsche Welle shortwave broadcast relay station near Trincomalee from March 2 to 9. Activity will be on 40 to 15 metres with a focus on SSB and FT8.

MALAWI; Don, K6ZO is active as 7Q6M while working at the Embangweni Mission Hospital. Activity is in his spare time. This includes being an entry in the CQ Worldwide 160 Metre SSB and upcoming ARRL International DX SSB contests.

MALDIVES; Operators Karel, OK2WM and Vlad, OK2WX are active as 8Q7WM and 8Q7WX, respectively, from Innahura Island, IOTA AS-013, until March 8. Activity is on 160, 80, and 40 metres using CW and SSB.

NEPAL; Robert, 9N7AA has been active using FT8 on 30 metres around 1230UTC and 17 metres around 1300UTC.

CAPE VERDE; Oliver, DJ5QS is active as D4CW and D44DX from Santa Maria village on Sal Island, IOTA AF-086, until March 2. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres using CW and SSB.

CANARY ISLANDS; Philippe, EA4NF will be active as EA8/EA4NF from Hierro Island, IOTA AF-004, from March 4 to 6. Activity will be on the FM and Linear LEO satellites from very rare Grid Squares IL07 and IL17.

GUADELOUPE; Philippe, F1DUZ is active as FG4KH until March 15. Activity is on the HF bands. This includes being active in the REF SSB and upcoming ARRL International SSB DX contests.

ST. LUCIA; A group of operators will be active as J68HZ from March 1 to 7. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres. This includes being active in the upcoming ARRL International SSB DX contest.

ST. VINCENT; Brian, GW4DVB is active as J88PI from Bequia Island, IOTA NA-025, until March 8. Activity is on 40 to 6 metres using SSB, SSTV, and FT8.

BELGIUM; Members of the Radio Club Belge de l'Est are active with special event call sign OR100RCBE during all of 2022 to celebrate the club's founding in 1922.

CURACAO; Andreas, DK5ON will be active as PJ2/DK5ON from March 1 to 17. Activity will be on 160 to 6 metres using CW, SSB, FT8, and FT4. This includes being active in the upcoming ARRL International SSB DX and Russian DX contests.

SINT MAARTEN; Tom, AA9A will be active as PJ7AA until March 26. Activity will be on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB, FT8, and FT4.

BRAZIL; Special event station ZZ165IBI is active during the month of March to commemorate the founding of the city of Ibiuna, 165 years ago.

ANTIGUA; Bud, AA3B will be active as V26K from March 3 to 10, on HF bands using CW. This includes being active as a Single Op/High Power/All Band/Unlimited entry in the upcoming ARRL International SSB DX contest.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The CQ Worldwide 160-Metre SSB Contest, North American RTTY QSO Party, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC CW Sprint Ladder, REF SSB Contest, FTn DX Contest, UBA DX CW Contest, South Carolina QSO Party, NA Collegiate RTTY Championship, High Speed Club CW Contest and the North Carolina QSO Party will certainly keep contesters busy this weekend.

The K1USN Slow Speed Test, QCX CW Challenge, OK1WC CW Memorial, RSGB FT4 Contest, Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest, RTTYOPS Weeksprint, AGCW 80-Metre YL-CW Party, Phone Weekly Test, A1Club AWT, CWops Test, VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, Mini-Test CW 40, Mini-Test CW 80, UKEICC 80-Metre SSB Contest and AWA John Rollins Memorial DX CW Contest are all on from February 28 to March 6.

## WICEN News

WICEN NSW conducted its first training exercise for the year, last Sunday. The exercise consisted of a wide distribution of about 20 stations from Port Macquarie in the north to Canberra in the south. The purpose of the exercise was to simulate the loss of phone and internet communications by establishing a wide area HF network and pass formal messages to the net control station. The exercise was deemed a success by the participants, and it is hoped that similar exercises could be run at least annually.

Last Sunday also saw WICEN NSW provide communications support for Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog in the Illawarra. The event took place along the picturesque waterfront of Wollongong, from Lang Park to Stuart Park. A highband VHF repeater was deployed on Flagstaff Hill to cover the event for both WICEN personnel and Memory Walk staff.

True Grit is a military inspired obstacle course race; it's the weekend of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of March. WICEN NSW will be providing safety communications support to the event which will be held at Dargle Farm, Lower Portland. WICEN is looking for a small number of volunteers; If you are interested, contact Nic VK2KXN at [nicholas.mclean@vrarescue.org](mailto:nicholas.mclean@vrarescue.org).

Hunter WICEN will be providing communications for the Watagan Horse Enduro on the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May. If you would like to participate, please contact Dan VK2GG at [daniel.joyce@vrarescue.org](mailto:daniel.joyce@vrarescue.org).

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 website for details.

WICEN NSW, is a communications support squad of VRA Rescue NSW. For more information on upcoming events, or how to join, visit the website at [nsw.wicen.org.au](http://nsw.wicen.org.au).

For information about other WICEN groups; WICEN ACT is part of the Canberra Region Amateur Radio Club. Their website includes WICEN and general Club information and can be found at [www.crarc.org.au](http://www.crarc.org.au). WICEN Victoria has a weekly net on Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz. More details on the web at [vic.wicen.org.au](http://vic.wicen.org.au).

## Club News

We start this week, with news from the Urunga Radio Convention.

The Urunga Radio Convention returns at Easter this year, after the past two Conventions were cancelled due to COVID-19.

As always, there will be displays, quizzes and raffles, trade items and disposals for sale, the Saturday night dinner, plus the all-important fox hunt programme. Entry fees will be ten dollars to cover the whole weekend.

The venue remains the same at the Senior Citizens Hall in Urunga, in the picturesque Bellingen Shire.

Mark the Convention weekend in your diaries: Saturday the 16th and Sunday the 17th of April 2022. More details will be available in the coming weeks.

*Submitted by Kevin VK2CKD*

## Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

The next general meeting is planned for 2pm on Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, at the SES building in Port Macquarie. The inconvenience caused by recent cancellations is regretted, however the Committee continues to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation to ensure that future activities comply with restrictions and circumstances which may change at short notice.

Now is the time to plan to attend the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club's annual field day on Saturday and Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of June, during the Queen's Birthday Long Weekend. The Field Day will be at the spacious Wauchope Showground Hall, with the Field Day Dinner at Port Macquarie Golf Club on Saturday night.

Candidates for the Foundation, Standard and Advanced Licences can contact the club via PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444. Assessments for the Advanced, Standard and Foundation licences will run once sufficient candidates have registered their interest and public health restrictions 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 with a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone for access. Access to VK2RPM is available via EchoLink for those outside the repeater coverage area. 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](http://orarc.org). The site contains a wealth of Amateur Radio items in addition to the club information. The January 2022 web edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales" is now online, and past issues can be viewed on the website as well. You can also find the Club on Facebook; just search for Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

*Advised by Henry VK2ZHE  
For the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.*

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## Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

The Clubrooms are currently open , subject to public health orders. Members please note; next week's meeting is a Special General Meeting, to consider changes to the Club's Constitution. Additionally, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March there will be a special general meeting to consider changes to standing orders. Details have been emailed to members, please make yourselves familiar with them.

The Club's field day, Mayham, is scheduled for Sunday the 1<sup>st</sup> of May. Expressions of interest are still open for lectures; please contact Col VK2ZCO by email, to [ccarc@ccarc.org.au](mailto:ccarc@ccarc.org.au) for information. EFTPOS will be available at the gate. Examinations will be held for both Australian and US qualifications.

On the weekend of March 12, the club will be hosting training and examinations; there will also be an outing of some description for members.

The Club's Morning Tea is on at 10am daily and after the VK2WI News on Sunday mornings. The Thursday night net starts at 8pm. Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2m repeater – 146.725 MHz with 91.5Hz tone, and on EchoLink HAM and CCARC conferences.

The Fortnightly SSTV net is hosted by Adrian VK2ABS, the Club's youngest member. The net consists of 2 to 3 rounds, predominately in Scottie-2 mode. The net has seen a large amount of participation from members, and Adrian would love to see you drop in. The next net is on Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, on the club's WICEN repeater – 147.125 MHz with a 91.5 Hz tone. All are welcome to watch or participate.

SSTV and Weekly nets are also video streamed live to the club's Facebook page, and recordings of past nets can be found, in the "Videos" section.

You can find out more about the CCARC on the web at [ccarc.org.au](http://ccarc.org.au); via phone on 02 43402500 or on social media by searching for Central Coast Amateur Radio Club; remember to "like" to follow for updates.

*73 Alan VK2MG  
Publicity Officer, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.*

## Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The next meeting of the Society is planned for Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm, directly following the Society's Committee Meeting which starts at 6:30pm. Attendees are most welcome to arrive from 6.30 onwards to enjoy a pre-meeting chat and cuppa in the foyer.

Meetings are at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, on the southern side of the Wollongong CBD. After turning off Springhill Road into the BlueScope main entrance road, attendees then turn immediately right before the security gates, following the large signs towards the Visitors Centre.

The last meeting had to be held over the air on the Society's repeater systems, as the normal meeting place had to do a full Covid clean around the meeting date. The March meeting returns to the Visitor's Centre with a presentation by IARS Members Mal VK2DXM and Shane VK2HCO on SDR – Software Defined Radio. They have been experimenting with various SDRs, from \$10 USB dongles through to expensive full-blown rigs. If you are interested in this subject or are looking at purchasing a SDR dongle or radio, come along to the BlueScope Visitor's Centre for an informative and enjoyable evening. Following the presentation there will be the usual tea, coffee, biscuits, and cake.

The Society has two 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 from out of town via EchoLink, VK2BGL-R. The second weekly Net is on 80 metres on Tuesday evenings, except for meeting nights, at 8:30pm; the usual frequency is 3666kHz, plus or minus for other usage.

You can find out more about the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society, including details on 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, at 7.30pm on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, at the BlueScope Steel Visitor Centre in Wollongong.

*Advised by Rob VK2MT  
President of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society.*

## Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club

The Club continues into 2022 with additional activities at the Clubrooms, 4 Moore Street Glenbrook.

A foundation licence weekend was earlier in the month; it was attended by an eclectic mix of people from the Sydney University Rocketry club, a former member of the army and people from other walks of life.

The Clubrooms will reopen every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month from 10am. Members are welcome to drop by and work on any projects, test any equipment or catch up with any other members or visitors they haven't seen in a while. Several workshops have also been planned as well.

The Club has two on air nets 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.

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.*

## **Amateur Radio Repeater Group**

The is planning an amateur radio examination session on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March at Appin. Deadline for registrations is this coming Tuesday, the 1<sup>st</sup> of March so that exam papers can be received in time.

For more information or to register, contact the group by email to [info@arrg.club](mailto:info@arrg.club).

## St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society's monthly gatherings continue online, with the next on Wednesday the 2nd of March, at 7:30pm.

The Society looks forward to a time when they can resume in-person meetings, which will also be streamed for those who still wish to avoid in-person interaction, as well as for country-based members.

The Society will be active in John Moyle Memorial Field Day, on the weekend of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of March.

Then on the weekend of the 14th & 15th May, the society will be holding the Don Edwards Memorial Slow Morse Contest on 80m and 40m. For the two weeks prior to this contest, the Society will be holding practice Morse sessions every evening on 80m. More details to follow.

So, the next meeting of the St. George Amateur Radio Society will start at 7:30pm, this coming Wednesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March. More information, including login details, can be found on the society's website at [sgars.org](http://sgars.org).

*73 Peter VK2EMU  
Publicity Officer*

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## Activities on the air

**Lightning Net** 8pm Mondays on 1860kHz, Net control Steve VK2STG.

**Snowy Mountains ARC** net 7:30pm Saturday on Southeast network; VK2RFS 146.75MHz, VK2RSE 147.375, VK3RDH 146.625, and EchoLink.

**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 the VK2RGL Repeater, 147.1MHz with 91.5Hz tone, EchoLink VK2RGL-R.

**Westlakes** 80 metre nets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 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 146.9.

**Central Coast ARC** Morning tea at 10am daily – after news on Sundays; Thursday nights 8pm; VK2RAG 146.725MHz with 91.5Hz tone and EchoLink. Next SSTV net February 18.

**Amateur Radio Central West Group** lunchtime net 1pm daily; evening net Monday and Friday at 8pm, VK2RCW. HF net 8pm Wednesday 3653kHz.

**Illawarra ARS** Nets Saturday 9:30am on VK2RMP 146.850 and VK2RUW on 146.675; Tuesday 8:30pm, 3666kHz.

**Blue Mountains ARC** Nets on VK2RBM, 147.050MHz with 123Hz tone; Wednesdays from 8pm; Tuesdays from 8pm on 3543kHz.

**Waverley ARS** net 8pm Monday VK2RBV, 438.1125MHz. Activities online and on air; see website. Sydney Harbour & Ferry Contest 6<sup>th</sup> March.

**Sydney ATV Group** net 7:30pm Monday on 445.5MHz from Lawson.

**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.