

Getting Started with RMS Express

Installing and Configuring RMS Express

- Download RMS Express from <http://www.winlink.org/RMSExpress>
- Run the installer and choose the destination folder – it is recommended to accept the default of C:\RMS Express as this will allow the automatic installation of ARES Templates.
- Run RMS Express and enter callsign, password, recovery email, grid square (CN87VO) and contact information
 - Consider selecting *Automatically install field-test (beta) versions of RMS Express*
 - This screen can be accessed at any time via the Files -> RMS Express Setup menu

Installing Forms

- Go to http://clallamares.org/packet_pactor.html#Templates and download the ICS forms
- The automatic unzip will place the files into your \Global Folders\Templates folder
- There is a TXT help file with form-specific instructions

Sending/Receiving a Simple Message

- Create new message by clicking *Message – New Message...* menu or *New Message* button
 - Enter destination Winlink address (just callsign) or standard email address
 - Type message and click *Post to Outbox*
- Once message is created and sitting in Outbox, choose session type (Telnet Winlink)
- Click *Open Session*
- Session window will open and click *Start*
 - The system will find a CMS server and send/receive all pending messages and disconnect
 - The Start button will turn bold again when complete
 - Close session Window
 - Read any new messages

Sending a Form Message – We do this for all ARES messages

- Create new message by clicking *Message – New Message...* menu or *New Message* button
 - Click *Select Template* and choose form
 - Enter data in form and press Submit button
 - Form should appear as text in message body and an XML attachment
 - Enter destination Winlink address (just callsign) or standard email address
 - Type message and click *Post to Outbox*
- Once message is created and sitting in Outbox, choose session type (Telnet Winlink)
- Click *Open Session*
- Session window will open and click *Start*
 - Close session Window
 - Read any new messages

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Receiving/Printing a Form

- Click *Open Session*
- Session window will open and click *Start*
 - Close session Window
- Read any new messages
 - Message window will open with text version of message
 - Default browser will open with form
- Print form from browser
- If you want to display/print form again, click attachment icon (paperclip) in message list

Adding Form Shortcuts

- Click *Message -> Set Favorite Templates...*
- Enter a short name to display
- Click *Browse...* to locate the input template (.TXT)
- Create new message and notice template name is now available as a button
- Simply click new button to use form in message

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Connecting and Configuring a TNC

There are three types of TNC solutions

1. Full featured TNC (Kantronics KPC-3+, AEA/Timewave, TNC-2, SCS, etc.)
2. KISS mode TNCs (TNC-X, Kenwood TM-D710/TH-D72, etc.)
3. Soundcard devices that emulate KISS TNCs (Signalink USB, RigBlaster, radios with USB audio)

Full featured TNCs offer a number of features beyond just the modem. They may support more modes than just AX.25 packet (Pactor), include a PBBS and mailbox, offer an APRS tracker feature and include the ability to support telemetry. The units can be quite sophisticated with large manuals. That also means they can be easily misconfigured which can be difficult to correct.

KISS mode TNCs are merely radio modems. The AX.25 packets must be created in the PC software and sent to the modem where they become audio tones fed to the radio. These are by far the simplest and most reliable devices. They are also generally fairly inexpensive.

Soundcard TNCs use the same hardware as other soundcard modes. There is no hardware modem. It uses the PC to generate the packets and the PC soundcard to generate the tones to send to the radio. Soundcard interfaces generally cost about as much as a KISS mode TNC but are “free” if you already own one for other modes. There are more variables when using these systems because all the Windows sound settings must be correctly adjusted (and kept that way) and it’s recommended to use a second (non system) sound device.

Soundcard TNCs do offer some performance advantages. Both UZ7HO and Direwolf can run at 1200 and 9600 baud (with appropriate cabling and good radio). Both offer better weak signal performance than standard hardware TNCs using the PC DSP. Newer modes like WINMOR can be supported.

- <http://uz7.ho.ua/packetradio.htm>
- <https://github.com/wb2osz/direwolf>

Connecting Physical TNC

- Connect TNC to radio (often requires custom cable – try MFJ)
- Connect TNC to PC (via USB, serial or USB-serial adapter)
- Power up TNC and install any necessary (USB) drivers
- Identify serial port in use (check Device Manager in Windows)
- Identify necessary baud rate (generally 1200 baud for KISS mode devices and higher for full TNC)

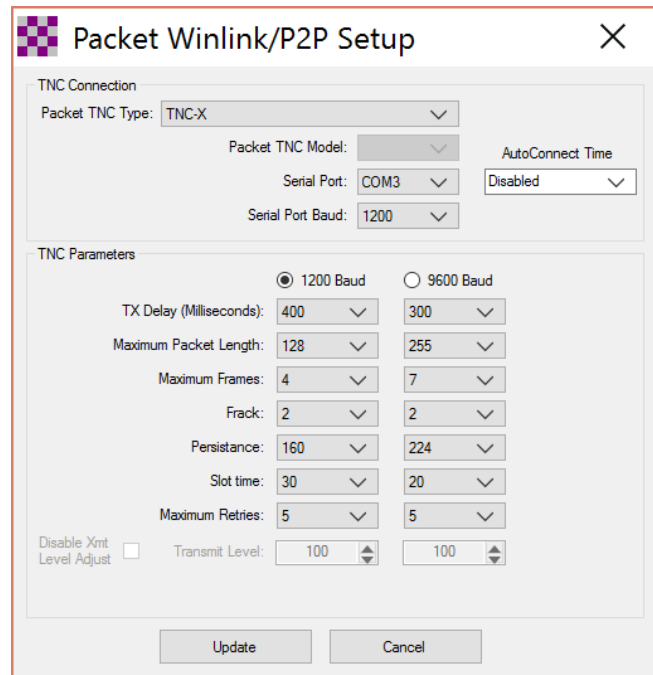
Connecting Soundcard TNC

- Connect sound interface to radio (often requires custom cable – try MFJ)
- Power up sound interface and install any necessary (USB) drivers
- Identify serial port in use (check Device Manager in Windows)
- Identify necessary baud rate (generally 1200 baud for 1200 baud packet)
- Make sure Windows audio levels are adjusted

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Configuring RMS Express to use physical TNC

- Select *Packet Winlink* session type
- Click *Setup*
- Enter TNC type and model (if appropriate)
- Select serial port in use
- Set baud rate
- Leave other defaults
- Performance can be improved if more accurate TX delay can be identified
- Click *Update*
- TNC should initialize
- If session window shows *Ready*, then configuration could/should be correct, otherwise verify settings



Sending a Message via Packet

- Select *Packet Winlink* session type
 - TNC should properly initialize
- Click *Channel Selection*
- Click *Update Table Via Internet*
- Identify desired station and set radio
- Double click desired station
 - Connection type should be *Direct* with appropriate station call sign
- Click *Start* to connect
 - Connection will close when complete
- Click *Exit* to close session window

