Setting up Winlink on RF

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1 Sending messages with Winlink by RF

1.1 Introduction

Within the Winlink world, there are two things that are worth discussing:

1. CMS: Winlink Common Message Servers. The CMS is the Winlink email server that is situated in the Amazon Web Service (AWS) cloud. When you connect by Telnet, you are connecting directly to Common Message Servers.

2. RMS: Radio Mail Server. An RMS Gateway is a station that is connected via the internet to the Common Message Server. Client stations, like Outpost, can connect by RF to an RMS station.

When we think about local disasters, they usually include some element of an impact to the communications infrastructure. This implies that the internet, including telnet access to a Winlink CMS, might not be available. But what if there was a station “just over the hill” from us that was not impacted and we could reach them by radio? This is where Winlink RMS stations could come in.

As the definition above implies, an RMS station is a Winlink access point that you can get to by radio. It behaves like a BBS with similar commands and response. The big difference is that Winlink requires a Winlink account password.

Fortunately, you already have a Winlink account and password. If you also have a radio and TNC, the final thing you need is the station call and frequency of a local RMS station. Fortunately, Winlink provides a way to see who’s out there.
To find a local RMS station, go to https://www.winlink.org/, click on Tools, then RMS List, and then select Packet to narrow down the list to AX.25 Packet stations only.

Next, click on the column header Grid Square once or twice to sort the list in ascending order, and look for stations in the CM87xx to CM97xx range; these cover south bay area.

For the sake of this example, assume that I can reach an RMS station in San Jose on 145.630. The connect call is K2RDX-10.

OK… lets set this up!

1.2 Set up Outpost

1.2.1 Create a new Outpost Profile
1. From Outpost, Setup > Profiles. Then select New…
2. When prompted, enter a profile name, like “Winlink_RMS”. Press OK when done.
3. This is now the currently selected profile.

1.2.2 Select a serial interface
4. From Outpost, Setup > Interface
5. Select whatever TNC Interface you use.
6. Verify or set the Com Port.
7. Press OK when done.

1.2.3 Set up the BBS
8. From Outpost, Setup > BBS
10. Enter a friendly name: Winlink_K2RDX
11. Enter the Connect Name: K2RDX-10
12. Optionally enter a brief description. This is a good place to list the frequency of this BBS.
13. When done, Press OK.

1.2.4 Set up your Station ID
14. From Outpost, Setup > Station ID
15. Set the call sign for which you have a Winlink Account.
16. Press Apply.

1.2.5 Set up your BBS login
1. From Outpost, Setup > Station ID.
2. Select the BBS Logins tab.
4. From the BBS Name dropdown, select the BBS name that you just configured above.
5. Because you are NOT using Telnet, leave the User/Connect Password blank.
6. In the Winlink Account Password field, enter your Winlink password. The form now looks like this (press Show/Hide to see the password).
7. Press OK to save.

1.3 Sending a test message... to yourself (round-trip)

ACTIVITY
1. Create a test message addressed to yourself. You can make this as simple as you want, as long as all fields are filled in.
   a. From Outpost, press New
   b. Note that the BBS: and From: fields are automatically filled in.
   c. In the To: field, enter your call sign.
   d. In the Subject: field, add a subject, such as “Round trip message”. Add this after the Message ID.
   e. In the Message Body field, enter a brief text message.
   f. Press the Send button when done.
2. Press Send/Receive to send your message.
3. If it was not retrieved during this session, press Send/Receive again.
4. Verify your message is received.
5. Similar to the messages sent using Telnet, feel free to try a variety of messages.