# SUNCQ Protocol

## Description

This document defines the Stellenbosch University Node Control for Qubes (SUNCQ) protocol. It lays out the commands to communicate with a Stellenbosch University PocketQube Ground Station via a TNC. A TNC (Terminal Node Controller) is a serial interface system which allows for control over a ground station or radio. The TNC is often a microcontroller on the ground station itself. This protocol defines the messages to and from the TNC and the computer (referred to as the host). It was authored by Gary Allen, a 2023 E&E student.

## Commands

The following lists all commands from TNC to host and vica-versa. The command reservations are:

* 0x00 to 0x2F Host-to-TNC DO commands
* 0x30 to 0x5F Host-to-TNC SET commands
* 0x60 to 0x7F Host-to-TNC GET commands
* 0x80 to 0x9F TNC-to-Host STATUS replies
* 0xA0 to 0xCF TNC-to-Host DATA replies
* 0xD0 to 0xFE Reserved
* 0xFF Invalid

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Name** | **Function** | **Payload** | **Bytes** | **Comments** |
| 0x00 | RESET | Reset the system | - | 0 |  |
| 0x01 | CALIBRATE | Calibrate the system | - | 0 | Full calibration e.g. ground station and all sub-systems |
| 0x02 | RETURN\_TO\_START | Return the system to its starting state. | - | 0 | The starting state is post-calibration. |
| 0x03 | RETURN\_TO\_STOW | Return the system to its stow state. |  |  | The stow state is pre-calibration. Typically used before system shutdown |
| 0x30 | SET\_TNC\_MODE | Enter a certain mode | See *TNC\_MODE* | 1 |  |
| 0x31 | SET\_TRACK\_MODE | Set tracking mode | See *TRACK\_MODE* | 1 |  |
| 0x32 | SET\_PATH\_DATA | Upload flight path data | CSV file. See *Flight Path Data.* | Any | The payload length is provided as the first 8 bytes. |
| 0x33 | SET\_POINT\_DIRECTION | Set the direction that the mount should point at |  |  | Only applicable when no tracking mode is selected |
| 0x60 | GET\_SIGNAL\_RSSI | Get RSSI of the signal | - | 0 |  |
| 0x61 | GET\_LOCATION | Get location of the ground station | Lat;Lng;Alt (f32;f32;f32) | 12 |  |
| 0x80 | TNC\_STATUS | Sent by the TNC to either acknowledge a frame sent by the host, or to alert the host of an error or bad status. | See *STATUS\_CODE.* | 1 | Status 0x00 is used as an “ACK” command. |
| 0x81 | TNC\_MESSAGE | Sent by the TNC to communicate a String message to the host. | char[] | Any | A newline character terminates the message |
| 0xA0 | SIGNAL\_RSSI | Response to *GET\_SIGNAL\_RSSI* | float | 4 |  |
| 0xD0-0xFE | RESERVED | Reserved |  |  | Reserved for future use |
| 0XFF | INVALID | Invalid |  |  | An invalid command that can be used internally but never sent |

## Details

#### TNC\_MODE

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| --- | --- |
| **Value** | **Description** |
| 0x00 | Normal mode |
| 0x01 | KISS mode. This mode is exited using the KISS 0xFF command. |

#### TRACK\_MODE

The tracking mode is a combination flag i.e. multiple bits can be ORed together to specify that the payload must be tracked using multiple methods at once.

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| **Value** | **Description** |
| 0x00 | No tracking. Mount can be moved by setting the pointing vector. |
| 0x01 | Use uploaded GPS data |
| 0x02 | Use received GPS data (from payload) |
| 0x04 | Use signal strength, but only for an initial scan |
| 0x08 | Use signal strength, with dynamic conical scanning |

#### STATUS\_CODE

The following is a list of status codes that might be sent from the TNC to the host:

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| --- | --- |
| **Value** | **Description** |
| 0x00 | Acknowledge |
| 0x01 | Payload tracking unsuccessful/payload lost |

#### Flight path data

Flight path data can be uploaded in the form of a little-endian binary stream (i.e. each field should be least significant byte first). The first field is a 2-byte number indicating the number of flight path instances to follow. Then, the fields below should be provided. Such a file can be generated by predicting a flight path at <https://predict.sondehub.org/> , generating a CSV file, and then using the data to generated a binary stream. In the current implementation, only 200 entries are catered for – if longer flights are needed, then multiple streams should be set from the host intermittently. Time should be in Unix time (seconds since Epoch).

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| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Type** |
| Time | uint64 |
| Latitude | float32 |
| Longitude | float32 |
| Altitude | float32 |