

Nittany ARC Station Guide

Rick Gilmore W3TM

Table of contents

1. Preface	1
1.1. About	1
2. Logistics	3
2.1. Location	3
2.2. Keys	3
2.3. Arrival procedures	3
I. Stations	7
3. NARC-1	11
3.1. Overview	11
3.1.1. Equipment summary	12
3.1.2. Connection scheme	13
3.1.3. Software summary	13
3.2. IC-7610 operating guide	14
3.2.1. Icom manuals	14
3.2.2. Starting up	15
3.2.3. Basic controls	19
3.2.4. Settings	23
3.3. Phone operations	24
3.3.1. On the PC	24
3.3.2. On the IC-7610	25
3.3.3. On KPA1500	27

Table of contents

3.4. Digital mode operations	27
3.4.1. Fldigi suite	28
3.4.2. WSJT-X	32
3.5. CW operations	38
4. NARC-2	39
4.1. Overview	39
4.1.1. Equipment summary	39
4.1.2. Connection scheme	40
4.1.3. Software summary	41
4.2. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver	42
4.2.1. Manuals	43
4.2.2. Connect and power-up	43
4.2.3. Basic controls	46
5. NARC-3	47
5.1. Overview	47
5.1.1. Equipment summary	47
5.1.2. Software summary	47
5.2. Icom IC-718	48
5.2.1. Connect equipment and power-up	48
5.2.2. Basic controls	50
5.2.3. More information	50
6. NARC-4 Packet/APRS	51
6.1. Packet station	51
6.2. APRS station	51
II. Rigs	53
7. Icom IC-7610	57
7.1. IC-7610 operating guide	57
7.1.1. Icom manuals	57

Table of contents

7.1.2. Starting up	58
7.1.3. Basic controls	62
7.1.4. Settings	67
7.2. Phone operations	67
7.2.1. On the PC	67
7.2.2. On the IC-7610	68
7.2.3. On KPA1500	70
7.3. Digital mode operations	70
7.3.1.Fldigi suite	71
7.3.2. WSJT-X	75
7.4. CW operations	81
8. FlexRadio Flex 6400M	83
8.1. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver	84
8.1.1. Manuals	85
8.1.2. Connect and power-up	85
8.1.3. Basic controls	88
9. Icom IC-718	89
9.1. Icom IC-718	89
9.1.1. Connect equipment and power-up	89
9.1.2. Basic controls	91
9.1.3. More information	91
10. Kenwood TM-D710	93
10.1. Overview	93
10.2. Manuals	93
10.3. Operating instructions	94

Table of contents

III. Other resources	95
11. Antennas	97
11.1. Towers	97
11.1.1. 60 foot tower	97
11.1.2. 100 foot tower	97
11.1.3. 80 foot tower	100
11.1.4. 60 foot tower	100
11.2. Antennas by band	100
11.2.1. 10, 12, 15, 17, 20m	100
11.2.2. 40 m	103
11.2.3. 80m	103
11.2.4. 160m	103
11.2.5. VHF/UHF	104
11.3. Future plans	104
11.4. Antenna use	104
12. Wifi & internet	107
12.1. Background	107
12.2. Connecting to wifi	107
12.3. Connecting to the internet via an Ethernet cable	107
13. Remote operations	111
13.1. Overview	111
13.2. Remote access to NARC-1	111
13.2.1. Shutting down	116
13.3. Remote access to NARC2	116
13.3.1. Access directly via SmartSDR	116
13.3.2. Access via NARC-2 computer	123
14. Test Suite	125
14.1. Power-up	125
14.2. Phone operations	125

Table of contents

14.3. Logging programs	126
14.3.1. Amateur Contact Log (N3FJP)	126
14.3.2. N1MM+	126
14.4. Digital mode operations	126
14.4.1. WSJT-X	126
14.4.2. JTAlert, https://hamapps.com/JTAlert/	127
14.4.3. JS8Call	127
14.4.4. Fldigi, http://www.w1hkj.com/	128
14.4.5. Winlink Express/VARA	129
14.4.6. VarAC	129
14.4.7. YONIQ (SSTV)	129
14.5. KPA1500 Amplifier	130
14.6. Win4IcomSuite	130
15. Software	131
15.1. Remote control	131
15.2. Logging	131
15.3. Digital modes	131

1. Preface

1.1. About

Welcome to the Nittany Amateur Radio Club's (NARC) station guide. The radio station is one of the best benefits of joining the club.

Rick Gilmore W3TM manages the station with the help of Mike Coslo N3LI, Eric Prescott W3EDP, and Woody Brem K3YV. Mark Wharton K0LO provides computer networking support.

This site provides information about how to gain access to the mountaintop station and how to use the equipment.

The mountaintop station has been a focal point of activity for the club. We operated Field Day 2023 from the station, and we have held W3M special event operations, Pennsylvania QSO Party activities, and other contesting events.

2. Logistics

2.1. Location

The station is located in the Rothrock State Forest. The club pays a nominal fee to rent the property. The location on top of a mountain means that our HF antennas have excellent take-off angles, especially to the north and north-northwest.

2.2. Keys

Members who wish to access the station must get two keys from W3TM. One key opens the padlock that secures the yellow access road gate. This key also opens the portable toilet. A second key opens the station door.

W3TM prefers to give new members an in-person tour of the station. So, please schedule that tour at your convenience. You'll receive your keys during the tour.

2.3. Arrival procedures

Here is the sequence we prefer all members use when accessing the moun-taintop station.

2. Logistics

- Unlock the yellow gate. Use the small key to unlock the padlock. The larger key opens the clubhouse itself. Take the padlock and locking bolt with you to the shack.
- Close the gate and replace the lock bar, but do not re-lock the gate.
- If you know that others will be joining you soon, you may leave the gate open, but make sure to park cross-wise, blocking the path to the shack. This ensures that no other driver can inadvertently drive past you and get locked behind the gate when you leave.



Figure 2.1.: NARC Clubhouse looking North

- Unlock door of the shack using the larger of the two keys. There is

2.3. Arrival procedures

one lock above the door handle. Turn the key to the left (counter-clockwise) to unlock the door.

- There are light switches on the left just inside the door.
- Put the padlock and locking bar on the desk near the door.
- Turn up the heat, if needed.
 - Go to the breaker box near the southeast corner of the shack (on your right as you enter the shack). By default, we leave breakers 7-14 – the baseboard and north wall 240 V heaters – **off**, and the remainder on. There is a label on the breaker panel to remind you.
 - Turn breakers 7-14 **on** by pushing the breaker lever to the left to align with the others.
- The porta potty key is on a hook to the right of the door. **Note:** The small key that opens the State Forest gate also opens the porta potty.
 - The toilet is serviced periodically. If it needs to be serviced, please let Rick W3TM know. The porta potty is on the South side of the shack.
- Please text W3TM K3ROG (814-777-3298), Eric W3EDP (814-867-3393), or Mike N3LI (814-404-3991) when you leave. Please report any issues that need to be addressed.

Part I.

Stations

The club maintains two full power HF + 6m stations (NARC-1 and NARC-2), plus a 100 W HF + 6m station (NARC-3). In addition, the mountain-top radio station has a dual band VHF/UHF FM radio for monitoring the 146.86 MHz W3YA and 146.76 MHz W3GA repeaters. We have a packet station and bulletin board operating on 145.030 MHz, and the club supports a full-time APRS digipeater active on 144.390 MHz as W3YA-1.

3. NARC-1

3.1. Overview

NARC-1 is the first HF station on your left as you enter the station.

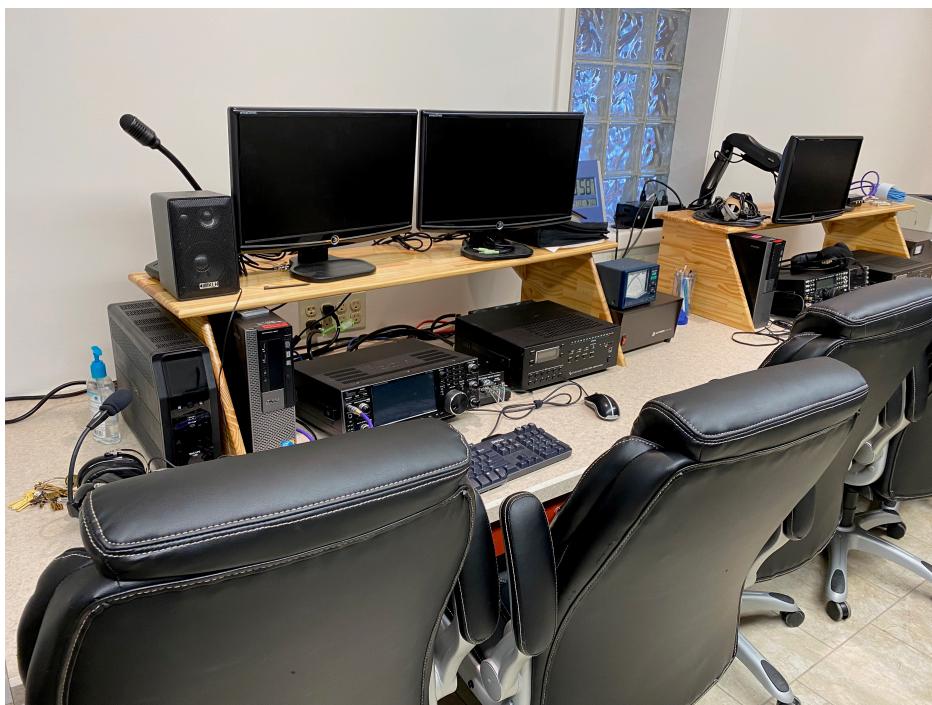


Figure 3.1.: NARC-1 operating position

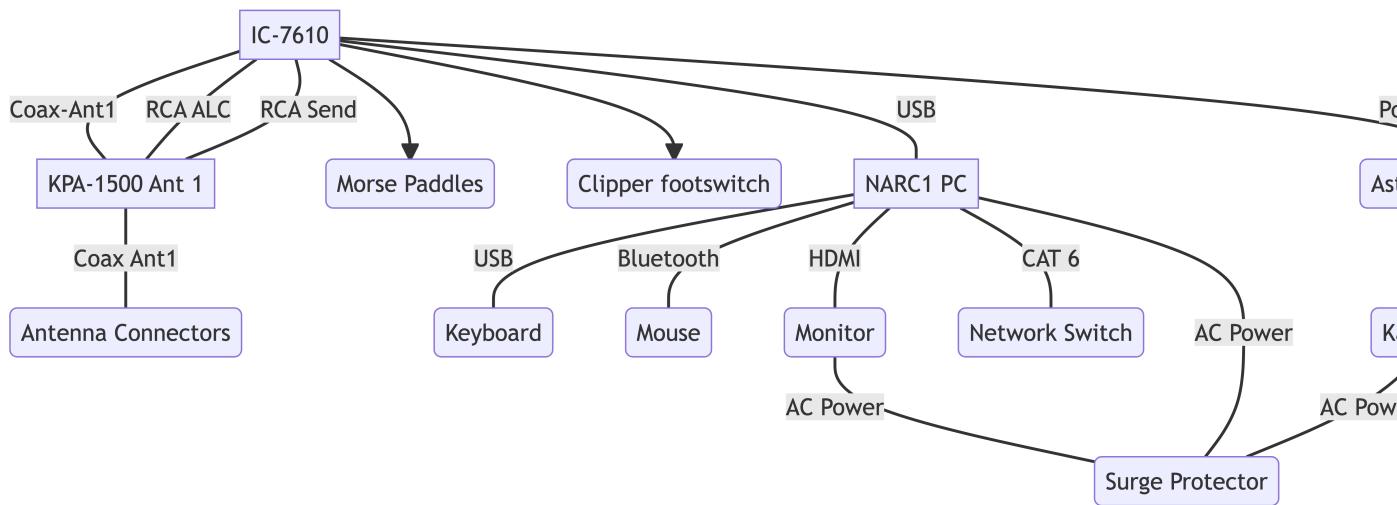
3. NARC-1

3.1.1. Equipment summary

- Icom IC-7610 (HF + 6m) transceiver
 - Astron RS-35A power supply
- Icom SM-50 desk mic
- Clipper PTT footswitch
- Heil Pro-7 headset
- Nifty mini-manual and other manuals
- Check the right side of the operating position and the drawer under the radio.
- Dell PC, dual monitor set-up
- Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier
 - Elecraft power supply

3.1. Overview

3.1.2. Connection scheme



3.1.3. Software summary

- Windows 10
- Digital modes
 - WSTJ-X 2.5.4
 - JTAlert 2.50.0
 - JS8Call 2.2.2
 - fldigi suite
 - Winlink Express 1.7.11.0

3. NARC-1

- * VARA HF 4.7.7 (registered to W3YA)
- VarAC 6.6.13
- Yoniq (SSTV)
- Remote control
 - Win4Icom
- Logging
 - N1MM
 - Amateur Contact Log (ACLog) 7.0.9 by N3FJP (registered to W3YA)

3.2. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 3.2.: Icom IC-7610

This transceiver is currently connected to the NARC1 station computer.

3.2.1. Icom manuals

Here are links to the IC-7610 manuals:

3.2. IC-7610 operating guide

- Basic manual
- Advanced manual

3.2.2. Starting up

- The IC-7610/NARC1 is located closest to the main door off the porch.

3.2.2.1. Connect equipment and power-up

 Note

We have been experimenting with remote control of some station operations, including powering on the rig power supplies. As a result, the next set of actions may or may not be required.

1. Connect to the power mains.

- Power cables are located between the wooden shelf and the east wall.
- Plug the large 240 V cable (green tag) for the amplifier power supply into the 240 V wall outlet.
- Plug the smaller 120 V cable for the Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) into the 120 V wall outlet.

2. Connect the radio to a suitable antenna.

 Warning

Before you power up the radio, connect it to a suitable antenna.

3. NARC-1

The antenna connections are located on the north wall, near the repeater cabinet. Choose the PL-259 connector with the yellow IC-7610 tag. Plug the cable from the radio into the cable connector for one of the antennas, for example, one of the triband Yagis for 10-20 m.



Figure 3.3.: Antenna connections

 Warning

Please do not remove the N/PL-259 connectors from the antenna feedlines.

3. Power up the UPS by pushing the front button. The green power light should illuminate.

3.2. IC-7610 operating guide

4. Power up the Astron RS-35A power supply that powers the IC-7610/NARC1. The power supply is located to the right of the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier.



Figure 3.4.: Astron RS-35A power supply

5. Power up the IC-7610/NARC1 by pressing and briefly holding the power button.
6. Power up the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier

The IC-7610/NARC1 is connected to the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier. The power supply for the KPA1500 is under the desk on a small footstool. Check that the KPA1500 power supply is on. If necessary, power-up the power supply by hitting the power switch on the upper rear left side of the power supply. When the amplifier power switch is on, you will see 3 green lights: AC on, High V supply, Low V supply. Power up the KPA1500 by

3. NARC-1



Figure 3.5.: IC-7610 power switch

pressing the **on** switch on the lower right hand side of the KPA1500 front panel.

i Note

If you are not operating with more than 100 W or do not need the KPA1500's built in antenna tuner, then leave the KPA1500 powered off.

3.2.2.2. Log-in to the computer

1. Power up the PC by pressing the power button on the right rear panel.
2. Log-in using the appropriate password

The IC-7610/NARC1 is connected via USB2 to the NARC1 PC. Open your logging program of choice. NARC has licenses for N1MM and N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log.

3.2. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 3.6.: KPA1500 Power Switch

To operate digital modes (e.g., FT8/FT4, JS8Call, fldigi), open those programs. See instructions for operating these modes in separate sections below.

3.2.3. Basic controls

- Audio levels for the two VFOs are controlled via separate knobs on the left side of the front panel.
- You may switch operating bands in one of two ways:
 - Buttons located on the right side of the front panel
 - Pressing the frequency on the touch screen.
- Switch operating modes by pressing the mode button on the touch panel.

This opens a window where you can choose the mode of operation. - Hit the arrow button to close the window and save your choice.

3. NARC-1



Figure 3.7.: IC-7610 audio gain controls



Figure 3.8.: IC-7610 band change controls

3.2. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 3.9.: IC-7610 mode change control

- Turn digital noise reduction on or off by pressing the NR button on the left side of the front panel. When NR is on, the NR button will be illuminated.
 - To adjust the amount of noise reduction, press and hold the NR button to open a window on the upper right corner of the touch panel display.
 - Turn the MULTI key to adjust the level of noise reduction.
 - Close the NR window by pressing the MULTI key or by pressing the NR button.
- Adjust preamplifier (P.AMP) settings, automatic gain control (AGC), Intercept Point (IP+), VOX, and compression (COMP) settings by pressing the corresponding button on the left side of the touch/display screen.
- Adjust touch/display screen settings via the MENU1/MENU2 buttons at the bottom of the touch/display screen.
- Select receive filter settings via the FILTER button on the right side of the front panel, below the TWIN PBT knob.

3. NARC-1



Figure 3.10.: IC-7610 left panel controls



Figure 3.11.: IC-7610 bottom menu touch screen buttons

3.2. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 3.12.: IC-7610 filter control

- Set RF power by pressing the MULTI button to open a window on the display/touch screen. Press the RF POWER panel to select it, and adjust the output power by turning the MULTI knob.



Figure 3.13.: IC-7610 multifunction control

3.2.4. Settings

The rig and computer settings are tested on a regular basis, approximately monthly. If you would like to help W3TM test the rigs or improve and

3. NARC-1

update the documentation, let him know.

Warning

Please do not change any software or rig settings without:

1. Contacting W3TM 814-777-3298 first OR
2. Documenting your changes in detail

The following setting parameters are provided for reference:

- A single USB A/B cable connects the rig to the PC.
- COM3 is used for most CAT control. The IC-7610 creates a second COM port that is currently unused.
- 8-N-1 at 38400 baud is used for serial control.
- Audio in/out are via USB Audio CODEC. The ICOM driver has been installed.

3.3. Phone operations

3.3.1. On the PC

You do not need to use the PC to operate phone, but you may want to use the PC for logging.

1. Power up the NARC-1 PC by pressing the power button on the front panel.
2. Log-in using the appropriate password

Open your logging program of choice. NARC has licenses for N1MM and N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log.

3.3. Phone operations

3.3.1.1. N1MM



Warning

Please do not update N1MM without asking Mike N3LI, Rick W3TM, or Eric W3EDP first.

3.3.1.2. Amateur Contact Log (N3FJP)

You may need to download the specific log for the contest you want to work. The club has paid N3FJP for a license under the W3YA callsign. Ask W3TM for information about the license codes for contests that are not already installed.

1. Open Amateur Contact Log (most recent version installed is 7.0.9)
2. Confirm that the program tracks frequency & mode.

3.3.2. On the IC-7610

1. Confirm the rig is in SSB mode.

To change the mode, press the mode indicator on the touch screen to open a window to toggle the mode (USB/LSB).

Remember, the convention is to use LSB below 10 MHz except for 60 m.

2. Set your receive bandwidth by pressing the FILTER button located on the right side of the front panel.

You may adjust the filter settings by pressing and holding the filter button on the right side of the rig control panel. Press and hold the FILTER button on to save and apply the filter settings.

3. NARC-1



Figure 3.14.: IC-7610 mode control



2. Check audio output levels.
3. Set desired RF power output using MULTI knob.

3.4. Digital mode operations



Press and hold the MULTI button to open a window on the touch/display screen. Press the RF POWER panel and rotate the MULTI button to set RF power.

3.3.3. On KPA1500

1. For < 100W output, set amplifier to STBY mode (yellow light) by pressing MODE button to toggle between STBY and OPER.

For higher power output, follow these instructions for tuning the KPA1500 amplifier.

2. Confirm ANT1 is output (press ANTENNA to toggle).
3. Confirm ATU is IN (not BYP) by pressing and holding ATU TUNE button.

3.4. Digital mode operations

The setup for each digital mode is slightly different, so we have created separate sections to describe those operations.

3. NARC-1

3.4.1. Fldigi suite

As of 2023-12-19, the installed version of fldigi is 4.1.26.

3.4.1.1. On the PC

1. Open fldigi. (Icon is on desktop.)

Fldigi is configured to use the flrig program to interface between the radio and the computer. Flrig should open automatically a few seconds after fldigi opens. If flrig shows the current VFO frequency and so does fldigi, the two devices are talking to one another.

2. Confirm Settings

It's not essential to confirm the settings each time you start up, but doing so will make sure that you are able to operate without difficulty.

In flrig, open the Config menu and select Setup > Transceiver. This opens a separate window.

*Rig: IC-7610 Ser Port: COM3 Baud: 38400 (Stop bits): 1 PTT via CAT:
checked CI-V adr: 0x98*

You may now close the Configuration window by pressing the CLOSE button or close window (X) button.

3. Check receive operations

- Turn to a known PSK31 frequency, for example, 14.070 MHz in the 20 m band.
- From the fldigi Op Mode menu, select PSK > BPSK-31

If all is well, you should see decodes in the left hand window and signals in the waterfall below.

3.4. Digital mode operations

4. Configure your operational settings.

- From the Configure menu, select UI > Operator to open a window.
- Under the Operator tab set Station Callsign, Operator Callsign, Operator Name, Antenna, Station QTH, Station Locator and other items.

3.4.1.2. On the IC-7610

1. Confirm rig is in USB Data 2 (USB-D2) mode.



Figure 3.15.: IC-7610 mode select button

To change the mode, press the mode indicator on the touch screen to open a window to toggle the mode (USB/LSB) to USB. Unless you are sure that your digital mode uses LSB, select USB. Press and hold the DATA button to switch between D1, D2, and D3 data mode connectors. D2 is configured for use via USB.

2. Set your bandwidth to filter 1 (wide) by pressing the FILTER button located on the right side of the front panel.

3. NARC-1



Figure 3.16.: IC-7610 filter control

You may adjust the filter settings by pressing and holding the filter button on the right side of the rig control panel. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to save and apply the filter settings.

3. Set other settings

The following settings can be changed via buttons on the left side of the touch/display screen.



Figure 3.17.: IC-7610 left panel controls

3.4. Digital mode operations

- Preamp (*P.AMP*) off

Press the P.AMP button to cycle through the settings (OFF, P.AMP 1, P.AMP 2)

- Attenuator (*ATT*) off

Press the ATT button to cycle through the attenuator settings (OFF, 6 dB, 12 dB, 18 dB)

- IP+ off

Press the IP+ button to select ON or OFF

- Turn Automatic Gain Control (*AGC*) off

Press and hold the AGC button on the display/touch screen. This opens a panel. Under the SSB column, select the SLOW setting. Adjust the AGC level downward until the indicator says OFF. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to enter the setting.

- *VOX* off
- Noise reduction (*NR*) off

Press the NR button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

- Noise blanker (*NB*) off

Press the NB button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

4. Set desired RF power output using MULTI knob.

Press and hold the MULTI button to open a window on the touch/display screen. Press the RF POWER panel and rotate the MULTI button to set RF power.

3. NARC-1



Figure 3.18.: IC-7610 MULTI knob

i Note

Generally speaking, 40-50 W RF output is more than sufficient for successful operation using fldigi-supported modes.

3.4.1.3. On KPA1500

It's possible to use the amplifier for fldigi-supported modes, but we do not recommend it. These modes involve high duty cycles and put a lot of stress on the amplifier.

3.4.2. WSJT-X

The current installed version as of 2023-12-19 is v2.5.4.

3.4.2.1. On the PC

1. Open WSJT-X (Icon is on desktop.)

3.4. Digital mode operations

WSTJ-X opens to the same operating frequency as the rig is on when you start.

2. Confirm Settings

It's not essential to confirm the settings each time you start up, but doing so will make sure that you are able to operate without difficulty.

- a. Open the Configurations menu and select a configurations set. **Standard Ops** is a good place to start.
- b. Open Settings from the File menu

General tab:

Set My Call to your personal callsign unless you have permission to use the club callsign (W3YA). Set any Display or Behavior settings per your personal preferences.

Radio tab:

Change these at your own risk.

Rig: **Icom IC-7610** CAT Control: **COM3** Baud Rate: **38400** Data Bits: **8 bits** Stop Bits: **none** Handshake: **none** Force Control Lines: **unset**

PTT method: **CAT** (port should be COM3) Mode: **Data/pkt** Split operation: **Rig or Fake It**

You may want to check/confirm that rig control is working by pushing the Test CAT button in this panel. If the button turns green, then the rig and computer are communicating.

You may also want to check that PTT is working. Adjusted the rig's power output to a low level (1-5 W) before testing. On the IC-7610, press the MULTI button, touch the RF Power panel on the touch screen, and turn the MULTI button to set desired output power.

3. NARC-1

Press the **Test** PTT button and observe whether the transmitter keys up. If so, all is well.

Audio tab:

Input: USB Audio Codec Output: USB Audio Codec

Reporting tab

You may want to set the Op Call to your own callsign.

Advanced tab:

Check or uncheck **Special Operating Activity** per situation, for example ARRL Field Day or the NA VHF Contest.

You may now close the **Settings** window by pressing the OK button.

Switch to the desired mode (e.g., FT8) from the **Mode** menu. Select the desired operating band and default frequency from the dropdown menu on the lower left side of the main WSJT-X application panel.

3. Check computer clock accuracy

Open a browser; visit <https://time.is>

If your time synch is within .5s of the correct time, you may proceed.

If you are decoding signals in the waterfall, then all is well.

3.4.2.2. On the IC-7610

1. Confirm rig is in USB Data 2 (USB-D2) mode.

To change the mode, press the mode indicator on the touch screen to open a window to toggle the mode (USB/LSB) to USB. Unless you are sure that your digital mode uses LSB, select USB. Press and hold the DATA button to switch between D1, D2, and D3 data mode connectors. D2 is configured for use via USB.

3.4. Digital mode operations



Figure 3.19.: IC-7610 mode select button

2. Set your bandwidth to filter 1 (wide) by pressing the FILTER button located on the right side of the front panel.



Figure 3.20.: IC-7610 filter control

You may adjust the filter settings by pressing and holding the filter button on the right side of the rig control panel. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to save and apply the filter settings.

3. Set other settings

3. NARC-1



Figure 3.21.: IC-7610 left panel controls

The following settings can be changed via buttons on the left side of the touch/display screen.

i Note

The following settings let the software do the heavy-lifting.

- Preamp (P.AMP) **off**

Press the P.AMP button to cycle through the settings (OFF, P.AMP 1, P.AMP 2)

- Attenuator (ATT): **off**

Press the ATT button to cycle through the attenuator settings (OFF, 6 dB, 12 dB, 18 dB)

- IP+: **off**

Press the IP+ button to select ON or OFF

- Automatic Gain Control (AGC): **off**

3.4. Digital mode operations

Press and hold the AGC button on the display/touch screen. This opens a panel. Under the SSB column, select the SLOW setting. Adjust the AGC level downward until the indicator says OFF. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to enter the setting.

- VOX: off
- Noise reduction (NR): off

Press the NR button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

- Noise blanker (NB) off

Press the NB button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

4. Set desired RF power output using MULTI knob.



Figure 3.22.: IC-7610 MULTI knob

Press and hold the MULTI button to open a window on the touch/display screen. Press the RF POWER panel and rotate the MULTI button to set RF power.

3. NARC-1

Remember, WSJT-X is a weak signal mode. Less than 50 W is plenty, especially if you are using one of our “gain” antennas (Yagis).

3.4.2.3. On KPA1500

It’s possible to use the amplifier for fldigi-supported modes, but we do not recommend it. These modes involve high duty cycles and put a lot of stress on the amplifier.

3.4.2.4. Operating hints

1. Make sure that your audio input level is not too high.

There are several ways to adjust this: - Adjust the RF/SQL button on the rig - Adjust the mic levels on the PC (open the Audio control panel)

3.5. CW operations

i Note

Coming soon!

4. NARC-2

4.1. Overview

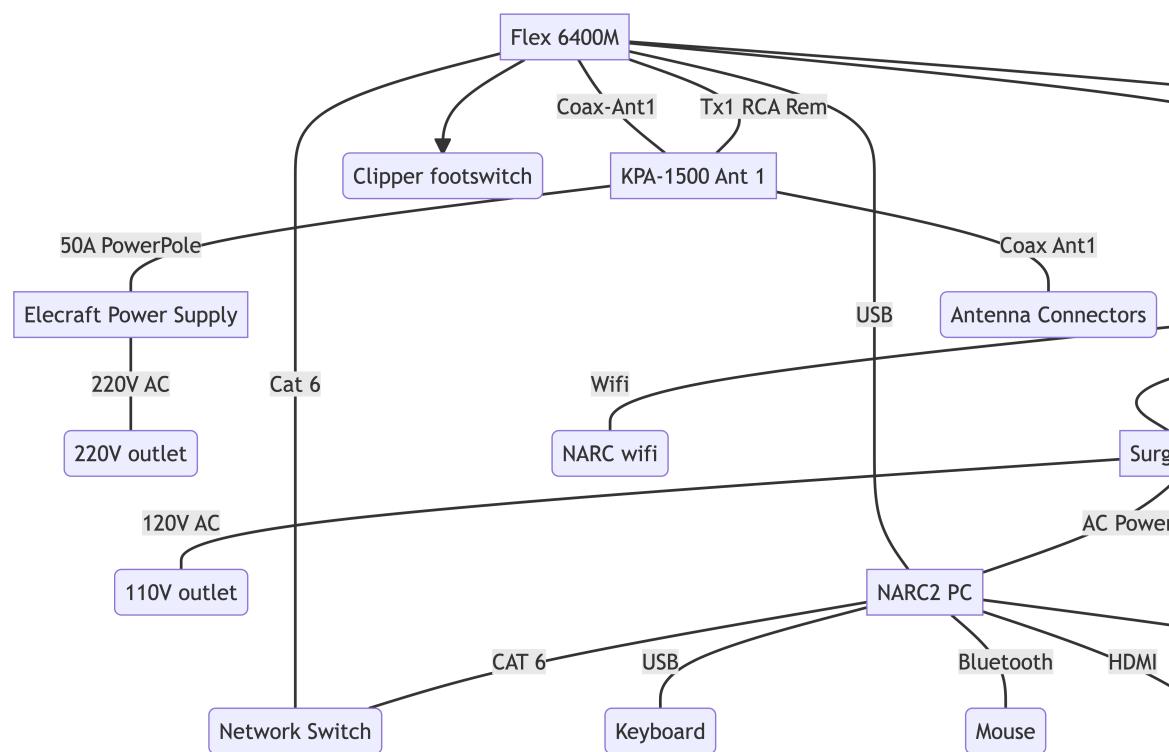
NARC 2 is the second HF station on your left as you enter the station.

4.1.1. Equipment summary

- FlexRadio Flex 6400M (HF + 6m) transceiver
 - Astron RS-35A power supply
- Clipper PTT footswitch
- Dell PC, dual monitor set-up
- Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier
 - Elecraft power supply

4. NARC-2

4.1.2. Connection scheme



4.1. Overview

4.1.3. Software summary

- Windows 10
- Digital modes
 - WSTJ-X
 - JS8Call
 - fldigi suite
 - VarAC
- Logging
 - N1MM
 - Amateur Contact Log (ACLog) by N3FJP

4. NARC-2

4.2. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver



This transceiver is currently connected to the NARC-2 computer.

4.2. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver

4.2.1. Manuals

Here are links to some useful FlexRadio manuals:

- SmartSDR software user guide
- Flex-6400M user guide

4.2.2. Connect and power-up

1. Connect the Flex 6400M to an antenna.

Before you power up the radio, connect it to a suitable antenna. The antenna connections are located on the north wall, near the repeater cabinet. Choose the PL-259 connector with the yellow FlexRadio tag. Plug the cable from the radio into the cable connector for one of the antennas, for example, one of the triband Yagis for 10-20 m. **Please do not remove the N/PL-259 connectors from the antenna feedlines.**

i Note

We have been experimenting with remote control of some station operations, including powering on the rig power supplies. As a result, the next set of actions may or may not be required.

2. Connect radio to the power mains.

- Power cables are located between the wooden shelf and the east wall.
- Plug the large 240 V cable (green tag) for the amplifier power supply into the 240 V wall outlet.
- Plug the smaller 120 V cable for the Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) into the 120 V wall outlet.

4. NARC-2

3. Power up the UPS by pushing the front button. The green power light should illuminate.

i Note

Check to see if the Astron RS-35A power supply is on before carrying out the next step.

4. Power-up the Astron RS-35A power supply that powers the Flex 6400M/NARC2. The power supply is located to the right of the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier.



Figure 4.1.: Astron RS-35A power supply

5. Power up the Flex/NARC-2 by pressing and briefly holding the power button.

4.2. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver

i Note

If you do not plan to use the amplifier or the built-in antenna tuner, you may skip step 6.

6. Power up the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier

The Flex/NARC-2 is connected to the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier. The power supply for the KPA1500 is under the desk on a small footstool. Check that the KPA1500 power supply is on. If necessary, power-up the power supply by hitting the power switch on the upper rear left side of the power supply. When the amplifier power switch is on, you will see 3 green lights: AC on, High V supply, Low V supply. Power up the KPA1500 by pressing the on switch on the lower right hand side of the KPA1500 front panel.



Figure 4.2.: KPA1500 Power Switch

4.2.2.1. Log-in to the computer

1. Power up the PC by pressing the power button on the right rear of the computer/display.

4. NARC-2

2. Log-in using the appropriate password.

The Flex 6400M is connected via USB to the NARC-2 PC.

Open your logging program of choice. NARC has licenses for N1MM and N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log.

To operate digital modes (e.g., FT8/FT4, JS8Call, fldigi), open those programs. See instructions for operating these modes in separate documents.

4.2.3. Basic controls

5. NARC-3

5.1. Overview

NARC-3 is the HF station on the far (north) wall of the station. It is located to the right of NARC-2, and immediately to the left of the packet station.

5.1.1. Equipment summary

- Icom IC-718 (HF + 6m) transceiver
 - Astron RS-35A power supply
- Dell PC, dual monitor set-up

5.1.2. Software summary

- Windows 10
- Digital modes
 - WSTJ-X
 - JS8Call
 - fldigi suite
 - VarAC
- Logging

5. NARC-3

- N1MM
- Amateur Contact Log (ACLog) by N3FJP

5.2. Icom IC-718



This transceiver is currently connected to the NARC-3 computer.

5.2.1. Connect equipment and power-up

1. Connect to the power mains.
2. Connect the radio to a suitable antenna.

 Warning

Before you power up the radio, connect it to a suitable antenna. The antenna connections are located on the north

wall, near the repeater cabinet.

Choose the PL-259 connector with the yellow FlexRadio tag. Plug the cable from the radio into the cable connector for one of the antennas, for example, one of the triband Yagis for 10-20 m.

 Warning

Please do not remove the N/PL-259 connectors from the antenna feedlines.

3. Power up the UPS by pushing the front button. The green power light should illuminate.
4. Power up the Astron RS-35A power supply that powers the IC-718/NARC3.
5. Power up the IC-718.
6. Power up the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier

5.2.1.1. Log-in to the computer

1. Power up the PC by pressing the power button on the right rear panel.
2. Log-in using the appropriate password

The IC-718 is connected via USB2 to the NARC-3 PC.

To operate digital modes (e.g., FT8/FT4, JS8Call, fldigi), open those programs. See instructions for operating these modes in separate documents.

5. NARC-3

5.2.2. Basic controls

5.2.2.1. Audio levels

5.2.2.2. Filter settings

5.2.2.3. Operating modes

5.2.2.4. Bands

5.2.2.5. RF Power

5.2.3. More information

Here's a helpful video from KB9VBR's YouTube channel.

6. NARC-4 Packet/APRS

6.1. Packet station

The packet station is located along the North wall of the shack near the HF antenna feedlines.

- Icom IC-2710 Dual Band Transceiver set to 145.030 MHz
- HP Computer
- Astron power supply

6.2. APRS station

The station and TNC are located in the cabinet near the back door of the shack.

The W3YA-1 digipeater operates on 144.390 MHz. Here is link to data about the stations recently heard by W3YA-1, according to APRS.fi site.

6. NARC-4 Packet/APRS



Figure 6.1.: IC-2710 Packet Transceiver

Part II.

Rigs

The next chapters describe the three main HF+6m rigs the club supports:
the Icom IC-7610, FlexRadio Flex-6400M, and the Icom IC-718.

7. Icom IC-7610

7.1. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 7.1.: Icom IC-7610

This transceiver is currently connected to the NARC1 station computer.

7.1.1. Icom manuals

Here are links to the IC-7610 manuals:

- Basic manual
- Advanced manual

7. Icom IC-7610

7.1.2. Starting up

- The IC-7610/NARC1 is located closest to the main door off the porch.

7.1.2.1. Connect equipment and power-up

Note

We have been experimenting with remote control of some station operations, including powering on the rig power supplies. As a result, the next set of actions may or may not be required.

1. Connect to the power mains.
 - Power cables are located between the wooden shelf and the east wall.
 - Plug the large 240 V cable (green tag) for the amplifier power supply into the 240 V wall outlet.
 - Plug the smaller 120 V cable for the Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) into the 120 V wall outlet.
2. Connect the radio to a suitable antenna.

Warning

Before you power up the radio, connect it to a suitable antenna.

The antenna connections are located on the north wall, near the repeater cabinet. Choose the PL-259 connector with the yellow IC-7610 tag. Plug the cable from the radio into the cable connector for one of the antennas, for example, one of the triband Yagis for 10-20 m.

7.1. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 7.2.: Antenna connections

7. Icom IC-7610

Warning

Please do not remove the N/PL-259 connectors from the antenna feedlines.

3. Power up the UPS by pushing the front button. The green power light should illuminate.
4. Power up the Astron RS-35A power supply that powers the IC-7610/NARC1. The power supply is located to the right of the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier.



Figure 7.3.: Astron RS-35A power supply

5. Power up the IC-7610/NARC1 by pressing and briefly holding the power button.
6. Power up the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier

7.1. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 7.4.: IC-7610 power switch

The IC-7610/NARC1 is connected to the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier. The power supply for the KPA1500 is under the desk on a small footstool. Check that the KPA1500 power supply is on. If necessary, power-up the power supply by hitting the power switch on the upper rear left side of the power supply. When the amplifier power switch is on, you will see 3 green lights: AC on, High V supply, Low V supply. Power up the KPA1500 by pressing the on switch on the lower right hand side of the KPA1500 front panel.

i Note

If you are not operating with more than 100 W or do not need the KPA1500's built in antenna tuner, then leave the KPA1500 powered off.

7.1.2.2. Log-in to the computer

1. Power up the PC by pressing the power button on the right rear panel.
2. Log-in using the appropriate password

7. Icom IC-7610



Figure 7.5.: KPA1500 Power Switch

The IC-7610/NARC1 is connected via USB2 to the NARC1 PC. Open your logging program of choice. NARC has licenses for N1MM and N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log.

To operate digital modes (e.g., FT8/FT4, JS8Call, fldigi), open those programs. See instructions for operating these modes in separate sections below.

7.1.3. Basic controls

- Audio levels for the two VFOs are controlled via separate knobs on the left side of the front panel.
- You may switch operating bands in one of two ways:
 - Buttons located on the right side of the front panel
 - Pressing the frequency on the touch screen.
- Switch operating modes by pressing the mode button on the touch panel.

7.1. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 7.6.: IC-7610 audio gain controls



Figure 7.7.: IC-7610 band change controls

7. Icom IC-7610



Figure 7.8.: IC-7610 mode change control

This opens a window where you can choose the mode of operation. - Hit the arrow button to close the window and save your choice.

- Turn digital noise reduction on or off by pressing the NR button on the left side of the front panel. When NR is on, the NR button will be illuminated.
 - To adjust the amount of noise reduction, press and hold the NR button to open a window on the upper right corner of the touch panel display.
 - Turn the MULTI key to adjust the level of noise reduction.
 - Close the NR window by pressing the MULTI key or by pressing the NR button.
- Adjust preamplifier (P. AMP) settings, automatic gain control (AGC), Intercept Point (IP+), VOX, and compression (COMP) settings by pressing the corresponding button on the left side of the touch/display screen.
- Adjust touch/display screen settings via the MENU1/MENU2 buttons at the bottom of the touch/display screen.

7.1. IC-7610 operating guide



Figure 7.9.: IC-7610 left panel controls



Figure 7.10.: IC-7610 bottom menu touch screen buttons

7. Icom IC-7610

- Select receive filter settings via the FILTER button on the right side of the front panel, below the TWIN PBT knob.



Figure 7.11.: IC-7610 filter control

- Set RF power by pressing the MULTI button to open a window on the display/touch screen. Press the RF POWER panel to select it, and adjust the output power by turning the MULTI knob.



Figure 7.12.: IC-7610 multifunction control

7.2. Phone operations

7.1.4. Settings

The rig and computer settings are tested on a regular basis, approximately monthly. If you would like to help W3TM test the rigs or improve and update the documentation, let him know.

Warning

Please do not change any software or rig settings without:

1. Contacting W3TM 814-777-3298 first OR
2. Documenting your changes in detail

The following setting parameters are provided for reference:

- A single USB A/B cable connects the rig to the PC.
- COM3 is used for most CAT control. The IC-7610 creates a second COM port that is currently unused.
- 8-N-1 at 38400 baud is used for serial control.
- Audio in/out are via USB Audio CODEC. The ICOM driver has been installed.

7.2. Phone operations

7.2.1. On the PC

You do not need to use the PC to operate phone, but you may want to use the PC for logging.

1. Power up the NARC-1 PC by pressing the power button on the front panel.
2. Log-in using the appropriate password

7. Icom IC-7610

Open your logging program of choice. NARC has licenses for N1MM and N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log.

7.2.1.1. N1MM



Warning

Please do not update N1MM without asking Mike N3LI, Rick W3TM, or Eric W3EDP first.

7.2.1.2. Amateur Contact Log (N3FJP)

You may need to download the specific log for the contest you want to work. The club has paid N3FJP for a license under the W3YA callsign. Ask W3TM for information about the license codes for contests that are not already installed.

1. Open Amateur Contact Log (most recent version installed is 7.0.9)
2. Confirm that the program tracks frequency & mode.

7.2.2. On the IC-7610

1. Confirm the rig is in SSB mode.

To change the mode, press the mode indicator on the touch screen to open a window to toggle the mode (USB/LSB).

Remember, the convention is to use LSB below 10 MHz except for 60 m.

2. Set your receive bandwidth by pressing the FILTER button located on the right side of the front panel.

7.2. Phone operations



Figure 7.13.: IC-7610 mode control

You may adjust the filter settings by pressing and holding the filter button on the right side of the rig control panel. Press and hold the FILTER button on to save and apply the filter settings.



2. Check audio output levels.
3. Set desired RF power output using MULTI knob.

7. Icom IC-7610



Press and hold the MULTI button to open a window on the touch/display screen. Press the RF POWER panel and rotate the MULTI button to set RF power.

7.2.3. On KPA1500

1. For < 100W output, set amplifier to STBY mode (yellow light) by pressing MODE button to toggle between STBY and OPER.

For higher power output, follow these instructions for tuning the KPA1500 amplifier.

2. Confirm ANT1 is output (press ANTENNA to toggle).
3. Confirm ATU is IN (not BYP) by pressing and holding ATU TUNE button.

7.3. Digital mode operations

The setup for each digital mode is slightly different, so we have created separate sections to describe those operations.

7.3. Digital mode operations

7.3.1. Fldigi suite

As of 2023-12-19, the installed version of fldigi is 4.1.26.

7.3.1.1. On the PC

1. Open fldigi. (Icon is on desktop.)

Fldigi is configured to use the flrig program to interface between the radio and the computer. Flrig should open automatically a few seconds after fldigi opens. If flrig shows the current VFO frequency and so does fldigi, the two devices are talking to one another.

2. Confirm Settings

It's not essential to confirm the settings each time you start up, but doing so will make sure that you are able to operate without difficulty.

In flrig, open the Config menu and select Setup > Transceiver. This opens a separate window.

*Rig: IC-7610 Ser Port: COM3 Baud: 38400 (Stop bits): 1 PTT via CAT:
checked CI-V adr: 0x98*

You may now close the Configuration window by pressing the CLOSE button or close window (X) button.

3. Check receive operations

- Turn to a known PSK31 frequency, for example, 14.070 MHz in the 20 m band.
- From the fldigi Op Mode menu, select PSK > BPSK-31

If all is well, you should see decodes in the left hand window and signals in the waterfall below.

7. Icom IC-7610

4. Configure your operational settings.
 - From the Configure menu, select UI > Operator to open a window.
 - Under the Operator tab set Station Callsign, Operator Callsign, Operator Name, Antenna, Station QTH, Station Locator and other items.

7.3.1.2. On the IC-7610

1. Confirm rig is in USB Data 2 (USB-D2) mode.



Figure 7.14.: IC-7610 mode select button

To change the mode, press the mode indicator on the touch screen to open a window to toggle the mode (USB/LSB) to USB. Unless you are sure that your digital mode uses LSB, select USB. Press and hold the DATA button to switch between D1, D2, and D3 data mode connectors. D2 is configured for use via USB.

2. Set your bandwidth to filter 1 (wide) by pressing the FILTER button located on the right side of the front panel.

7.3. Digital mode operations



Figure 7.15.: IC-7610 filter control

You may adjust the filter settings by pressing and holding the filter button on the right side of the rig control panel. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to save and apply the filter settings.

3. Set other settings

The following settings can be changed via buttons on the left side of the touch/display screen.



Figure 7.16.: IC-7610 left panel controls

7. Icom IC-7610

- Preamp (*P.AMP*) off

Press the P.AMP button to cycle through the settings (OFF, P.AMP 1, P.AMP 2)

- Attenuator (*ATT*) off

Press the ATT button to cycle through the attenuator settings (OFF, 6 dB, 12 dB, 18 dB)

- IP+ off

Press the IP+ button to select ON or OFF

- Turn Automatic Gain Control (*AGC*) off

Press and hold the AGC button on the display/touch screen. This opens a panel. Under the SSB column, select the SLOW setting. Adjust the AGC level downward until the indicator says OFF. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to enter the setting.

- *VOX* off
- Noise reduction (*NR*) off

Press the NR button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

- Noise blanker (*NB*) off

Press the NB button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

4. Set desired RF power output using MULTI knob.

Press and hold the MULTI button to open a window on the touch/display screen. Press the RF POWER panel and rotate the MULTI button to set RF power.

7.3. Digital mode operations



Figure 7.17.: IC-7610 MULTI knob

i Note

Generally speaking, 40-50 W RF output is more than sufficient for successful operation using fldigi-supported modes.

7.3.1.3. On KPA1500

It's possible to use the amplifier for fldigi-supported modes, but we do not recommend it. These modes involve high duty cycles and put a lot of stress on the amplifier.

7.3.2. WSJT-X

The current installed version as of 2023-12-19 is v2.5.4.

7.3.2.1. On the PC

1. Open WSJT-X (Icon is on desktop.)

7. Icom IC-7610

WSTJ-X opens to the same operating frequency as the rig is on when you start.

2. Confirm Settings

It's not essential to confirm the settings each time you start up, but doing so will make sure that you are able to operate without difficulty.

- a. Open the Configurations menu and select a configurations set. **Standard Ops** is a good place to start.
- b. Open Settings from the File menu

General tab:

Set My Call to your personal callsign unless you have permission to use the club callsign (W3YA). Set any Display or Behavior settings per your personal preferences.

Radio tab:

Change these at your own risk.

Rig: **Icom IC-7610** CAT Control: **COM3** Baud Rate: **38400** Data Bits: **8 bits** Stop Bits: **none** Handshake: **none** Force Control Lines: **unset**

PTT method: **CAT** (port should be COM3) Mode: **Data/pkt** Split operation: **Rig or Fake It**

You may want to check/confirm that rig control is working by pushing the Test CAT button in this panel. If the button turns green, then the rig and computer are communicating.

You may also want to check that PTT is working. Adjusted the rig's power output to a low level (1-5 W) before testing. On the IC-7610, press the MULTI button, touch the RF Power panel on the touch screen, and turn the MULTI button to set desired output power.

7.3. Digital mode operations

Press the **Test PTT** button and observe whether the transmitter keys up. If so, all is well.

Audio tab:

Input: USB Audio Codec Output: USB Audio Codec

Reporting tab

You may want to set the Op Call to your own callsign.

Advanced tab:

Check or uncheck **Special Operating Activity** per situation, for example ARRL Field Day or the NA VHF Contest.

You may now close the **Settings** window by pressing the OK button.

Switch to the desired mode (e.g., FT8) from the **Mode** menu. Select the desired operating band and default frequency from the dropdown menu on the lower left side of the main WSJT-X application panel.

3. Check computer clock accuracy

Open a browser; visit <https://time.is>

If your time synch is within .5s of the correct time, you may proceed.

If you are decoding signals in the waterfall, then all is well.

7.3.2.2. On the IC-7610

1. Confirm rig is in USB Data 2 (USB-D2) mode.

To change the mode, press the mode indicator on the touch screen to open a window to toggle the mode (USB/LSB) to USB. Unless you are sure that your digital mode uses LSB, select USB. Press and hold the DATA button to switch between D1, D2, and D3 data mode connectors. D2 is configured for use via USB.

7. Icom IC-7610



Figure 7.18.: IC-7610 mode select button

2. Set your bandwidth to filter 1 (wide) by pressing the FILTER button located on the right side of the front panel.



Figure 7.19.: IC-7610 filter control

You may adjust the filter settings by pressing and holding the filter button on the right side of the rig control panel. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to save and apply the filter settings.

3. Set other settings

7.3. Digital mode operations



Figure 7.20.: IC-7610 left panel controls

The following settings can be changed via buttons on the left side of the touch/display screen.

i Note

The following settings let the software do the heavy-lifting.

- Preamp (P.AMP) **off**

Press the P.AMP button to cycle through the settings (OFF, P.AMP 1, P.AMP 2)

- Attenuator (ATT): **off**

Press the ATT button to cycle through the attenuator settings (OFF, 6 dB, 12 dB, 18 dB)

- IP+: **off**

Press the IP+ button to select ON or OFF

- Automatic Gain Control (AGC): **off**

7. Icom IC-7610

Press and hold the AGC button on the display/touch screen. This opens a panel. Under the SSB column, select the SLOW setting. Adjust the AGC level downward until the indicator says OFF. Press the arrow/return button on the display/touch screen to enter the setting.

- VOX: off
- Noise reduction (NR): off

Press the NR button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

- Noise blanker (NB) off

Press the NB button on the left side of the front panel to turn off the illuminator.

4. Set desired RF power output using MULTI knob.



Figure 7.21.: IC-7610 MULTI knob

Press and hold the MULTI button to open a window on the touch/display screen. Press the RF POWER panel and rotate the MULTI button to set RF power.

7.4. CW operations

Remember, WSJT-X is a weak signal mode. Less than 50 W is plenty, especially if you are using one of our “gain” antennas (Yagis).

7.3.2.3. On KPA1500

It’s possible to use the amplifier for fldigi-supported modes, but we do not recommend it. These modes involve high duty cycles and put a lot of stress on the amplifier.

7.3.2.4. Operating hints

1. Make sure that your audio input level is not too high.

There are several ways to adjust this: - Adjust the RF/SQL button on the rig - Adjust the mic levels on the PC (open the Audio control panel)

7.4. CW operations

i Note

Coming soon!

8. FlexRadio Flex 6400M

8. FlexRadio Flex 6400M

8.1. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver



This transceiver is currently connected to the NARC-2 computer.

8.1. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver

8.1.1. Manuals

Here are links to some useful FlexRadio manuals:

- SmartSDR software user guide
- Flex-6400M user guide

8.1.2. Connect and power-up

1. Connect the Flex 6400M to an antenna.

Before you power up the radio, connect it to a suitable antenna. The antenna connections are located on the north wall, near the repeater cabinet. Choose the PL-259 connector with the yellow FlexRadio tag. Plug the cable from the radio into the cable connector for one of the antennas, for example, one of the triband Yagis for 10-20 m. **Please do not remove the N/PL-259 connectors from the antenna feedlines.**

i Note

We have been experimenting with remote control of some station operations, including powering on the rig power supplies. As a result, the next set of actions may or may not be required.

2. Connect radio to the power mains.

- Power cables are located between the wooden shelf and the east wall.
- Plug the large 240 V cable (green tag) for the amplifier power supply into the 240 V wall outlet.
- Plug the smaller 120 V cable for the Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) into the 120 V wall outlet.

8. FlexRadio Flex 6400M

3. Power up the UPS by pushing the front button. The green power light should illuminate.

i Note

Check to see if the Astron RS-35A power supply is on before carrying out the next step.

4. Power-up the Astron RS-35A power supply that powers the Flex 6400M/NARC2. The power supply is located to the right of the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier.



Figure 8.1.: Astron RS-35A power supply

5. Power up the Flex/NARC-2 by pressing and briefly holding the power button.

8.1. Flex 6400M HF Transceiver

i Note

If you do not plan to use the amplifier or the built-in antenna tuner, you may skip step 6.

6. Power up the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier

The Flex/NARC-2 is connected to the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier. The power supply for the KPA1500 is under the desk on a small footstool. Check that the KPA1500 power supply is on. If necessary, power-up the power supply by hitting the power switch on the upper rear left side of the power supply. When the amplifier power switch is on, you will see 3 green lights: AC on, High V supply, Low V supply. Power up the KPA1500 by pressing the on switch on the lower right hand side of the KPA1500 front panel.



Figure 8.2.: KPA1500 Power Switch

8.1.2.1. Log-in to the computer

1. Power up the PC by pressing the power button on the right rear of the computer/display.

8. FlexRadio Flex 6400M

2. Log-in using the appropriate password.

The Flex 6400M is connected via USB to the NARC-2 PC.

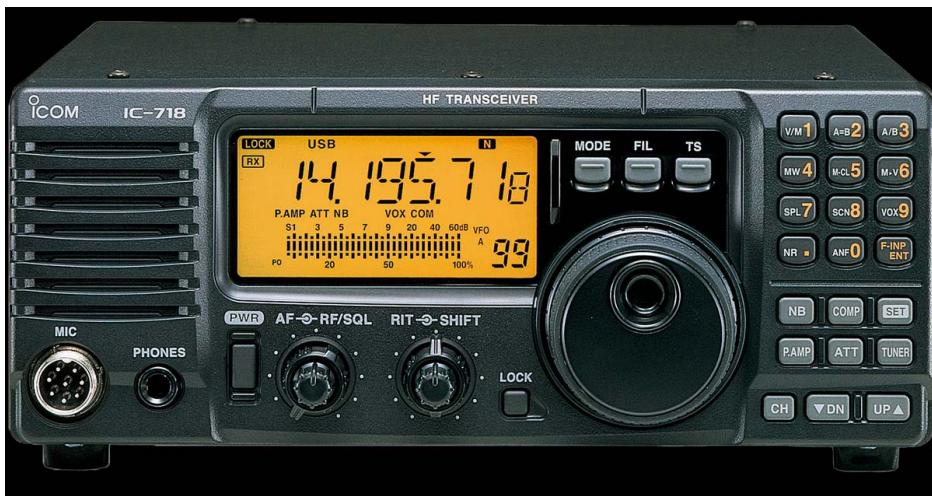
Open your logging program of choice. NARC has licenses for N1MM and N3FJP's Amateur Contact Log.

To operate digital modes (e.g., FT8/FT4, JS8Call, fldigi), open those programs. See instructions for operating these modes in separate documents.

8.1.3. Basic controls

9. Icom IC-718

9.1. Icom IC-718



This transceiver is currently connected to the NARC-3 computer.

9.1.1. Connect equipment and power-up

1. Connect to the power mains.
2. Connect the radio to a suitable antenna.

9. Icom IC-718

Warning

Before you power up the radio, connect it to a suitable antenna. The antenna connections are located on the north wall, near the repeater cabinet.

Choose the PL-259 connector with the yellow FlexRadio tag. Plug the cable from the radio into the cable connector for one of the antennas, for example, one of the triband Yagis for 10-20 m.

Warning

Please do not remove the N/PL-259 connectors from the antenna feedlines.

3. Power up the UPS by pushing the front button. The green power light should illuminate.
4. Power up the Astron RS-35A power supply that powers the IC-718/NARC3.
5. Power up the IC-718.
6. Power up the Elecraft KPA1500 amplifier

9.1.1.1. Log-in to the computer

1. Power up the PC by pressing the power button on the right rear panel.
2. Log-in using the appropriate password

The IC-718 is connected via USB2 to the NARC-3 PC.

9.1. Icom IC-718

To operate digital modes (e.g., FT8/FT4, JS8Call, fldigi), open those programs. See instructions for operating these modes in separate documents.

9.1.2. Basic controls

9.1.2.1. Audio levels

9.1.2.2. Filter settings

9.1.2.3. Operating modes

9.1.2.4. Bands

9.1.2.5. RF Power

9.1.3. More information

Here's a helpful video from KB9VBR's YouTube channel.

10. Kenwood TM-D710

10.1. Overview

The Kenwood TM-D710 is available for members who want to monitor the 146.86 and 146.76 repeaters while they are at the clubhouse.

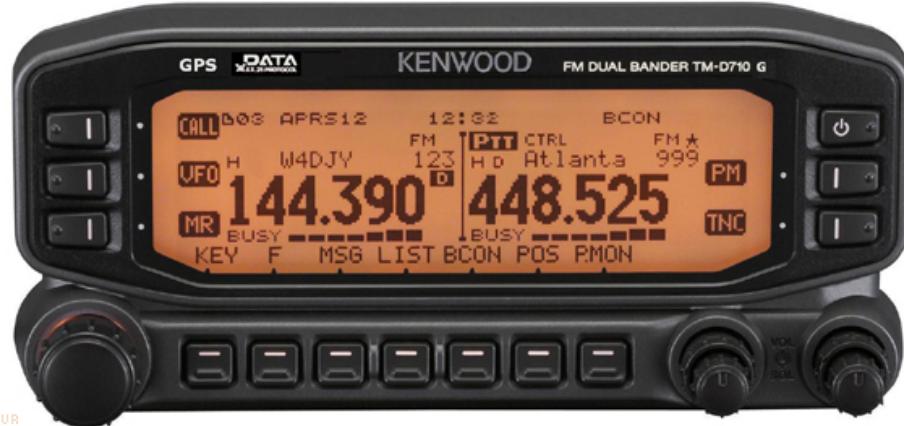


Figure 10.1.: Kenwood TM-D710

10.2. Manuals

- Basic manual
- APRS manual

10. Kenwood TM-D710

10.3. Operating instructions

The radio is located along the north wall, above the NARC-4 packet station.

1. Press the power button on upper right corner of the radio.
2. Adjust the audio gain for either the left or right VFO via the small “inner” knobs.
3. Select the operating band by pressing and holding the lower left or right small buttons.
4. When you leave the shack, please power-down the rig. Press and hold the power button in the upper right.

Part III.

Other resources

11. Antennas

The mountaintop station has many antennas from which to choose. This page describes them.

11.1. Towers

With the help of K3ARL's team from Centre Communications, the club maintains four towers.

11.1.1. 60 foot tower

- 4 element Mosley triband (10, 15, 20m + WARC bands - 12 and 17m) Yagi
- 40m dipole

11.1.2. 100 foot tower

- VHF 4 element vertical orientation Yagi + rotator
- 2 VHF fixed direction vertical orientation 6 element Yagis (W3YA system)
- VHF 2m vertical polarization
- 20m dipole

11. Antennas

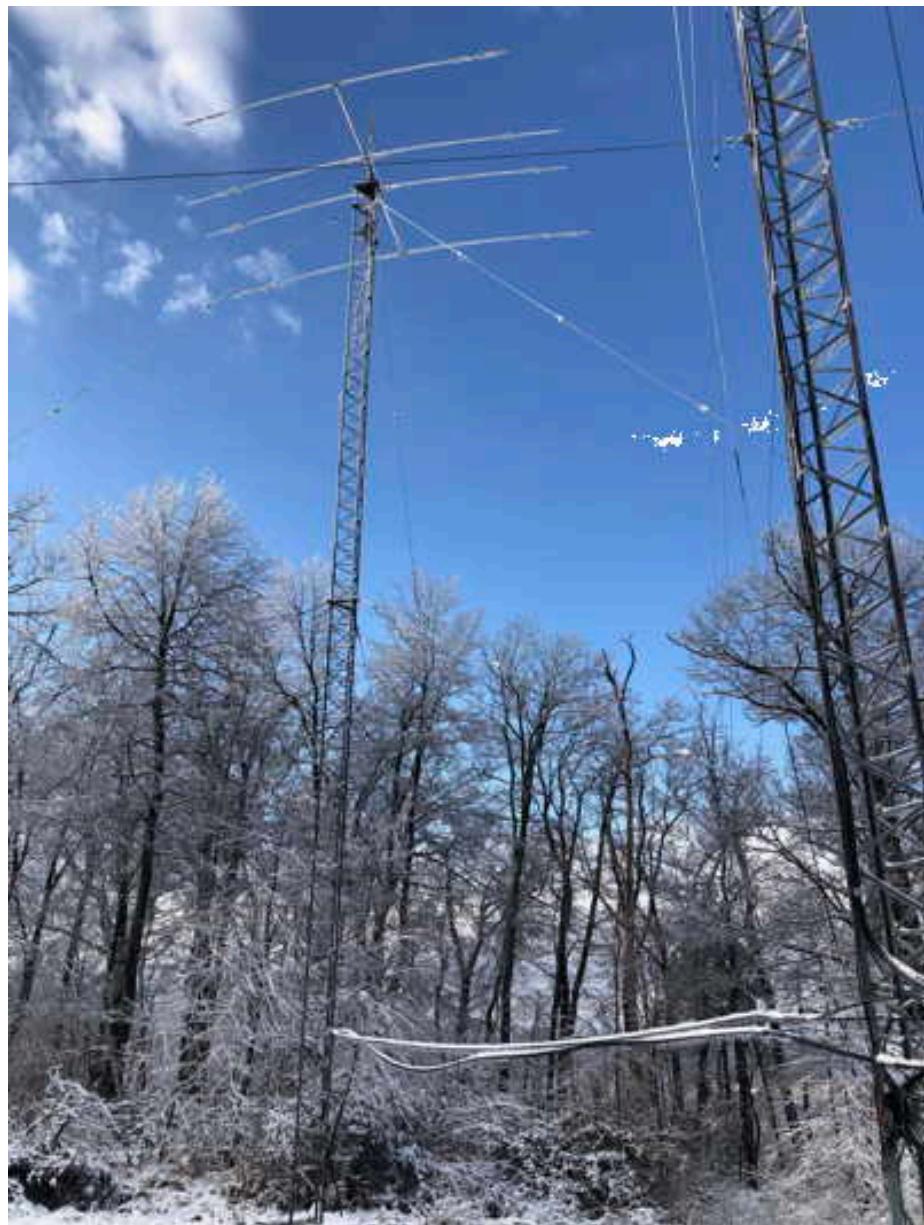


Figure 11.1.: 60 foot tower

11.1. Towers



Figure 11.2.: 100 foot tower

11. Antennas

11.1.3. 80 foot tower

- 4 element triband (10, 15, 20m + WARC) Yagi
 - Rotor
- ~~160m dipole~~
- 40m dipole

11.1.4. 60 foot tower

- VHF vertical
- 80m dipole oriented N/S

11.2. Antennas by band

11.2.1. 10, 12, 15, 17, 20m

- 4 element triband (10, 15, 20m + WARC bands - 12 and 17m) Yagi
(on 60 foot tower)
 - Yaesu rotator (new in 2023)
 - Green Heron rotator controller (new in 2023)
- 4 element Mosley Classic triband (10, 15, 20m + WARC bands - 12 and 17m) Yagi (on 80 foot tower) (new in 2023)
 - Yaesu rotator (new in 2023)
 - Green Heron rotator controller (new in 2023)

11.2. Antennas by band



Figure 11.3.: 80 foot tower

11. Antennas



Figure 11.4.: 60 foot tower

11.2. Antennas by band

11.2.2. 40 m

- Dipole (on 100 foot tower)
 - Current out of service.
- Dipole (on 80 foot tower)

i Note

The 40m dipole on the 100 foot tower has been replaced with a 20m dipole. A replacement 40m/80m fan dipole has been ordered. We hope to install the dipole soon.

11.2.3. 80m

- Dipole, CW cut, on 60 foot tower.
- Dipole, Phone (75m) on other 60 foot tower.

11.2.4. 160m

- Dipole on 80' north tower.

i Note

The 160m dipole is out of service. A replacement has been acquired. The club hopes to install the replacement in Fall 2023.

11. Antennas

11.2.5. VHF/UHF

- The club has acquired a 6m yagi for future installation on the 100 foot tower.
- The K3YV UHF repeater has its transmit and receive antenna on the 60 foot tower.
- The club does not have resonant antennas for 30 or 60m.

11.3. Future plans

- The club has plans to replace some of our 40m and 80m single band dipoles with 40m/80m fan dipoles. Those antennas are on-hand, but have not yet been installed.
- The club has acquired a 6m Yagi. We plan to install that antenna on the 100 foot tower at a future date.
- There is a vertically polarized 2m Yagi on top of the 100 foot tower. The 6m antenna may replace the 2m antenna, or we may service or replace the 2m antenna.
- There has been some discussion about installing an HF receive antenna, and about building or installing antennas for 60m and 30m.

11.4. Antenna use

- Confirm that it is impossible for your transceiver to transmit while you are connecting your transceiver's (color-tagged) feedline to one of the antenna connectors.
- Switch antennas manually by connecting your radio feedline from array of antenna connectors on the north wall.
- When you leave the shack, disconnect the transceiver feedline from the antenna you were using.

11.4. Antenna use



Figure 11.5.: Antenna connections in clubhouse interior

12. Wifi & internet

12.1. Background

Thanks to the work of Mark K0LO and Eric Brooks N3EB (SK), the clubhouse got internet service in the fall of 2020.

12.2. Connecting to wifi

The wifi is for club members only. The ssid is **NARC Members**.

Ask Mike N3LI, Rick W3TM, or Eric W3EDP for the password.

12.3. Connecting to the internet via an Ethernet cable

The TP Link bridge/router has ethernet ports you may plug in to.

i Note

TODO: Add a photo of the bridge/router here.

TODO: We might also consider having some ethernet cables connected to the bridge/router.

12. WiFi & internet



Figure 12.1.: The Ubiquiti wifi router

12.3. Connecting to the internet via an Ethernet cable

Note that NARC1, NARC2, and NARC3 use ports 1, 3, and 5. Please leave these connections alone. The system runs a DHCP server, so you should be able to plug in your computer and acquire an IP address after a few moments.

13. Remote operations

13.1. Overview

Since the winter of 2022-23, several club members have been experimenting with remote operations at the mountaintop. The experiments have been conducted during the time of the year when lightning is not a meaningful risk, essentially December through February.

13.2. Remote access to NARC-1

The steps are as follows:

1. Connect to the VPN.
2. Power up the radio via the Kasa app or the NARC Node Red server.
3. Connect to the radio

W3TM uses the SDR-Control application. It works on MacOS and iOS (both iPhone and iPad) and has an interface similar to the MacOS and iOS SmartSDR application for FlexRadios (see below). The following screenshots depict SDR-Control operations from a Mac.

When the application opens, the following screen appears.

Clicking on the panel opens a window with available radios.

Clicking on the “NARC1-IC-7610” line connects to the radio.

13. Remote operations

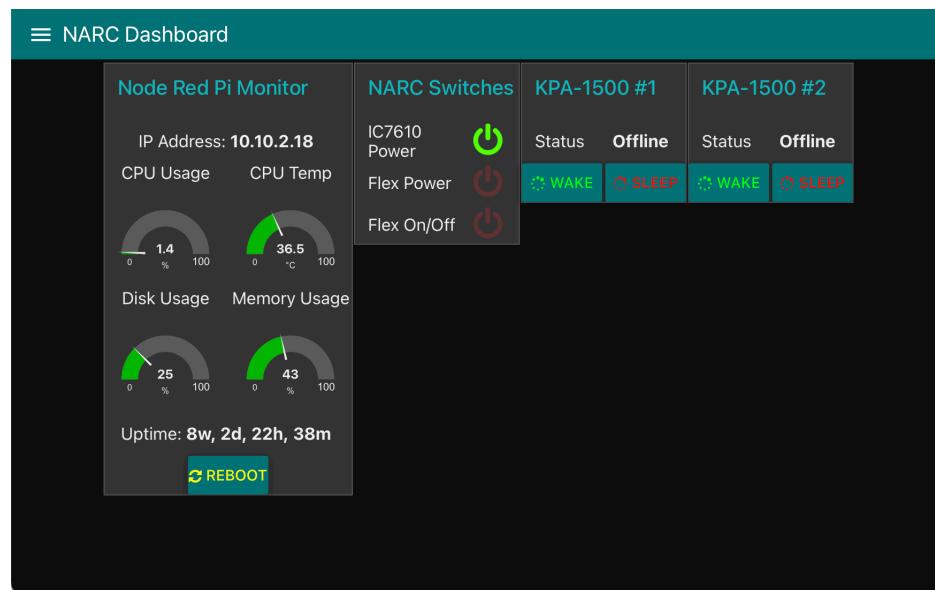


Figure 13.1.: NodeRed Dashboard

13.2. Remote access to NARC-1

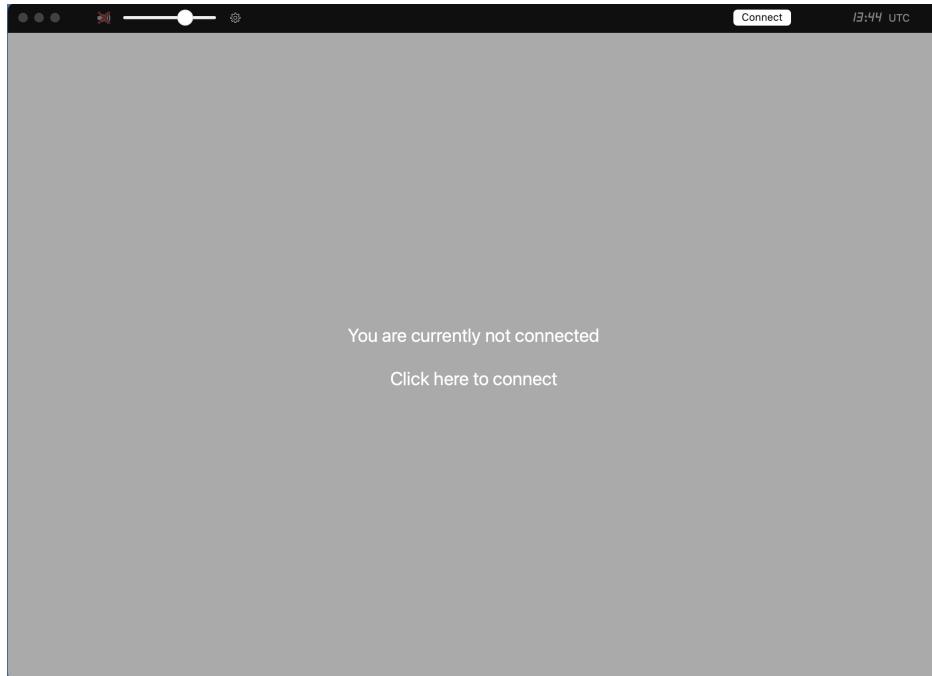


Figure 13.2.: SDR-Control connection screen

13. Remote operations

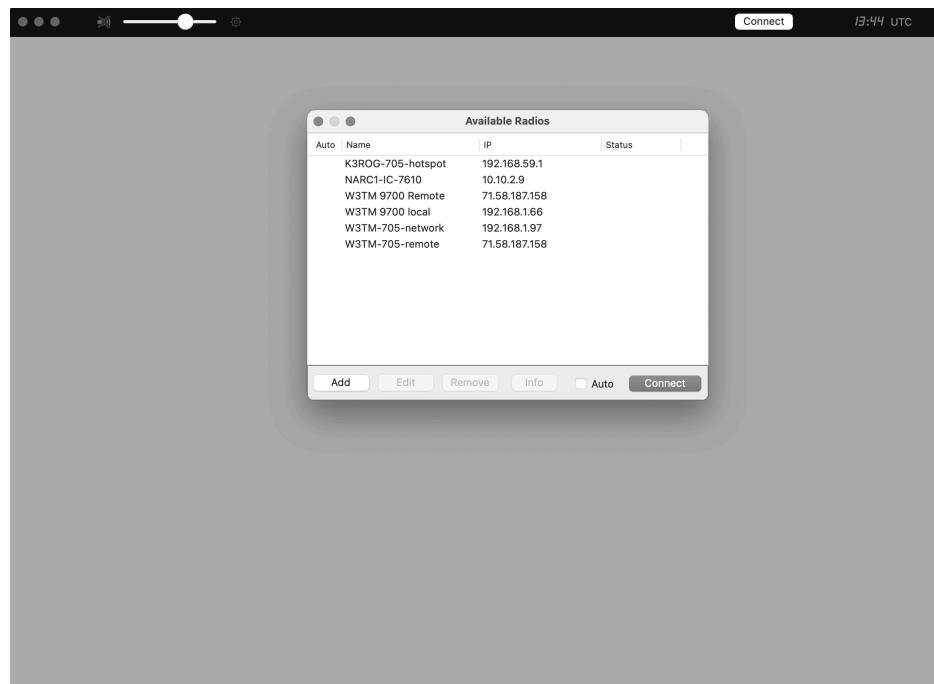


Figure 13.3.: SDR-Control available radios

13.2. Remote access to NARC-1

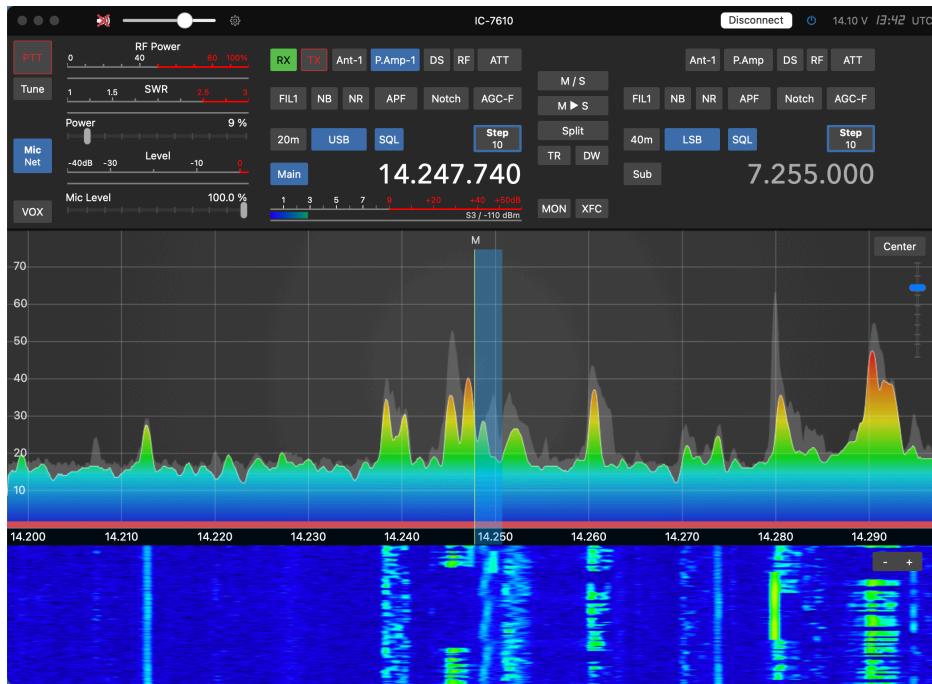


Figure 13.4.: SDR-Control screen of remote access to NARC-1 IC-7610

13. Remote operations

13.2.1. Shutting down

The steps to shut down are as follows:

1. Press the white “Disconnect” button in the upper panel.
2. Disconnect from the NARC VPN.

13.3. Remote access to NARC2

There are two ways to access the NARC-2/Flex 6400M station. One way involves use of the SmartSDR application to connect to the radio directly. The other way involves accessing the NARC-2 PC and using the local copy of SmartSDR.

13.3.1. Access directly via SmartSDR

The (paid) MacOS and iOS SmartSDR applications written by Marcus Roskosch and the (free) Windows-only SmartSDR application provided by FlexRadio can be used to connect to the Flex 6400M using SmartLink.

The steps to access the Flex 6400M are as follows.

1. Connect to the VPN
2. Power up the radio via the NARC Node Red server (<https://10.10.2.18:1880/ui>).

The ‘Flex Power’ button powers up the Astron power supply. ‘Flex On/Off’ button powers up the radio.

3. Disconnect from the VPN

13.3. Remote access to NARC2

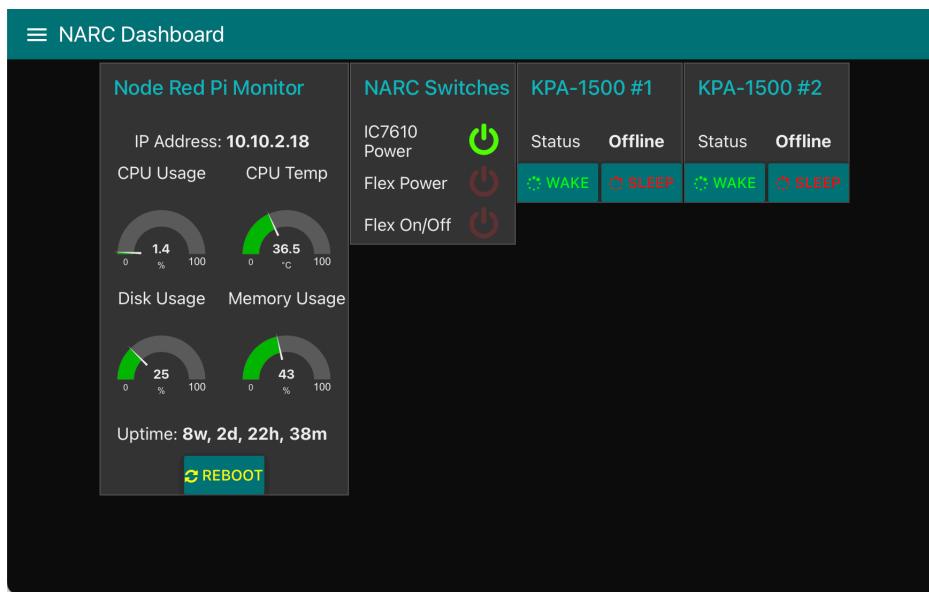


Figure 13.5.: NodeRed Dashboard

13. Remote operations

13.3.1.1. On iOS or MacOS SmartSDR

1. Open SmartSDR

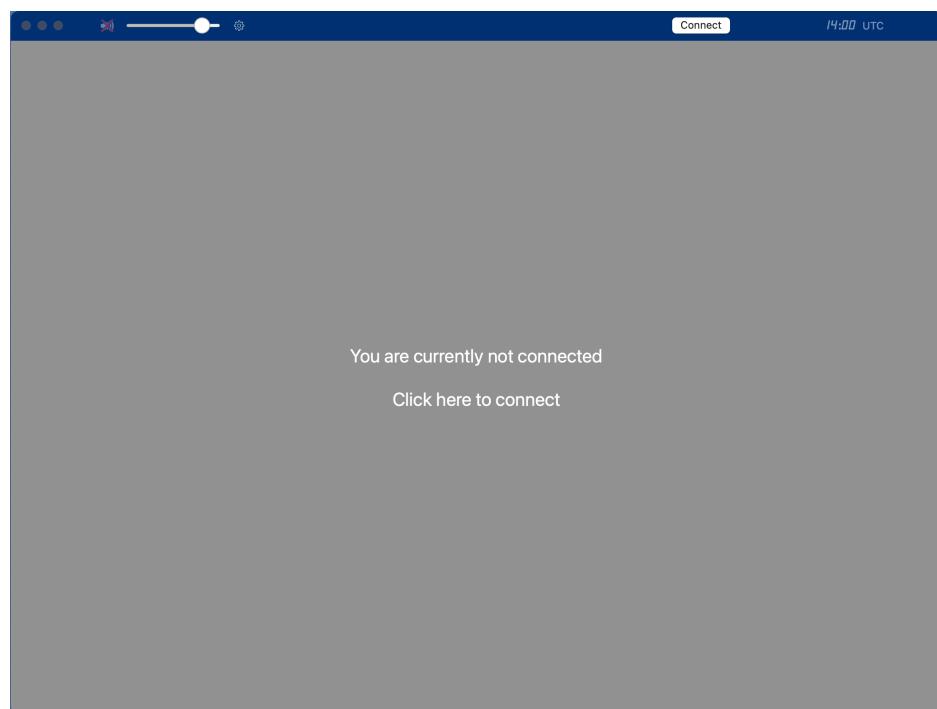
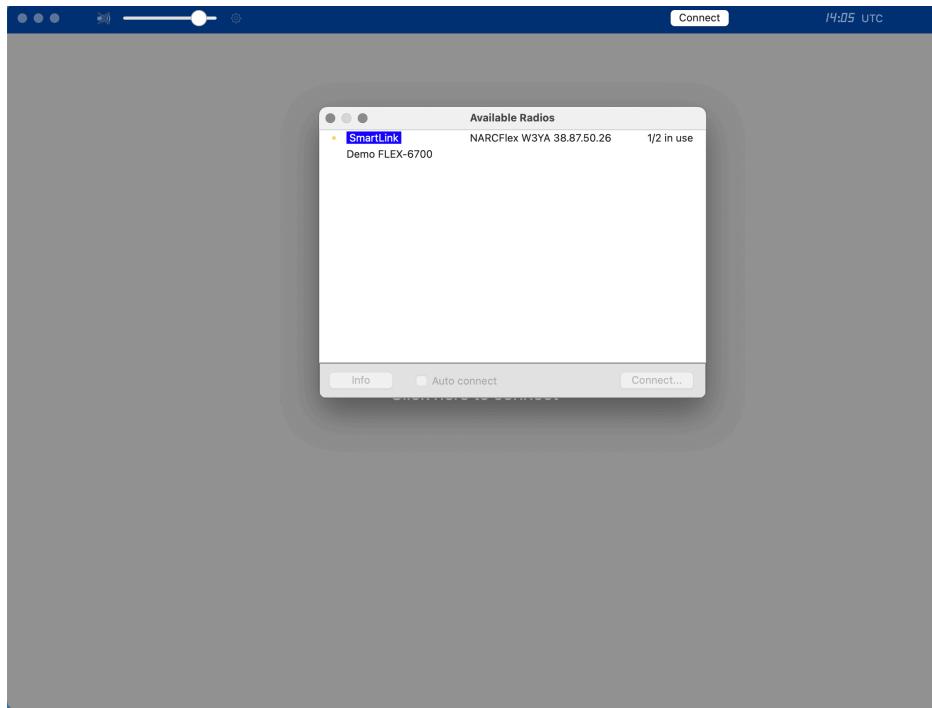


Figure 13.6.: Connection screen from SmartSDR for MacOS

Click on the main window to open a list of available radios.

13.3. Remote access to NARC2



Note the blue “SmartLink” indicator and the NARCFlex radio. Click on the “SmartLink” line and press the “Connect...” button.

After a few moments, the following window may appear.

Press the “Connect” button.

After a moment or two, the radio control panel appears.

13. Remote operations

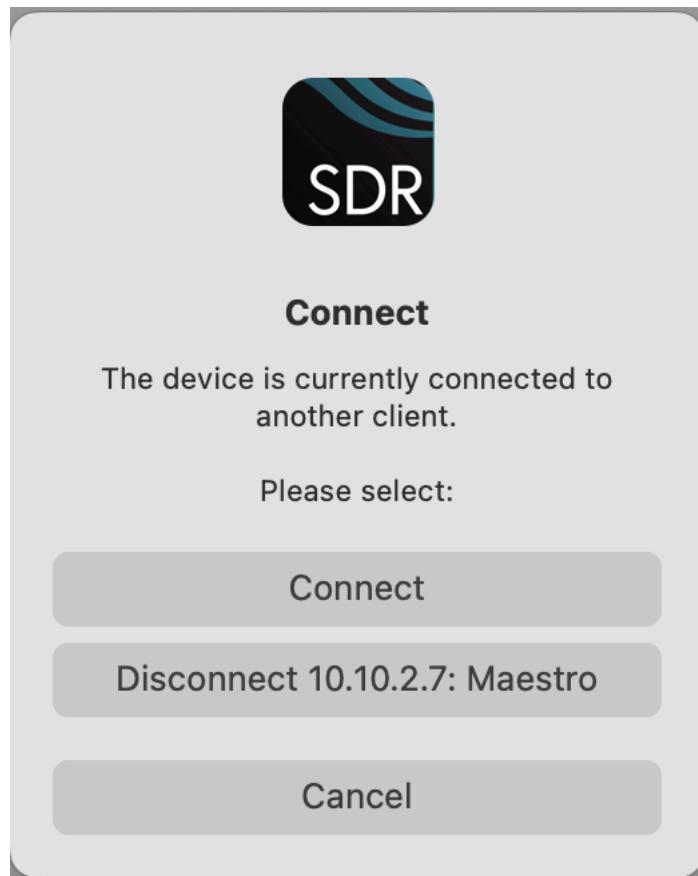
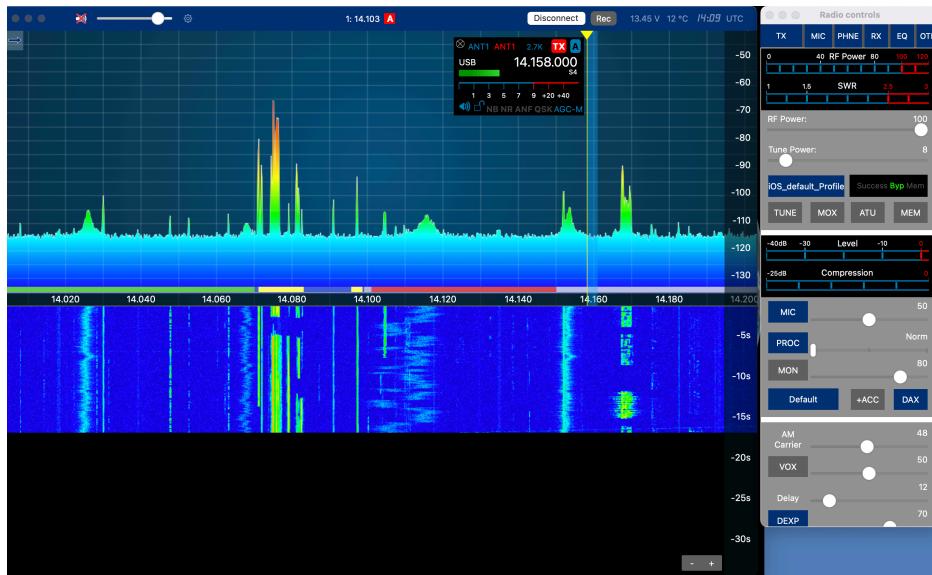


Figure 13.7.: Window to connect to Flex 6400M as a second client or disconnect the local Maestro client

13.3. Remote access to NARC2



Shutting down

The steps to shut down are as follows:

1. Press the white “Disconnect” button in the upper panel of SmartSDR.
2. Connect to the NARC VPN.
3. Power down via the NARC Node Red server (<https://10.10.2.18:1880/ui>).

Power-down the Flex first: Press “Flex On/Off”.

Wait about 15 seconds.

Then power-down the power supply by pressing “Flex Power”.

4. Disconnect from the NARC VPN.

13. Remote operations

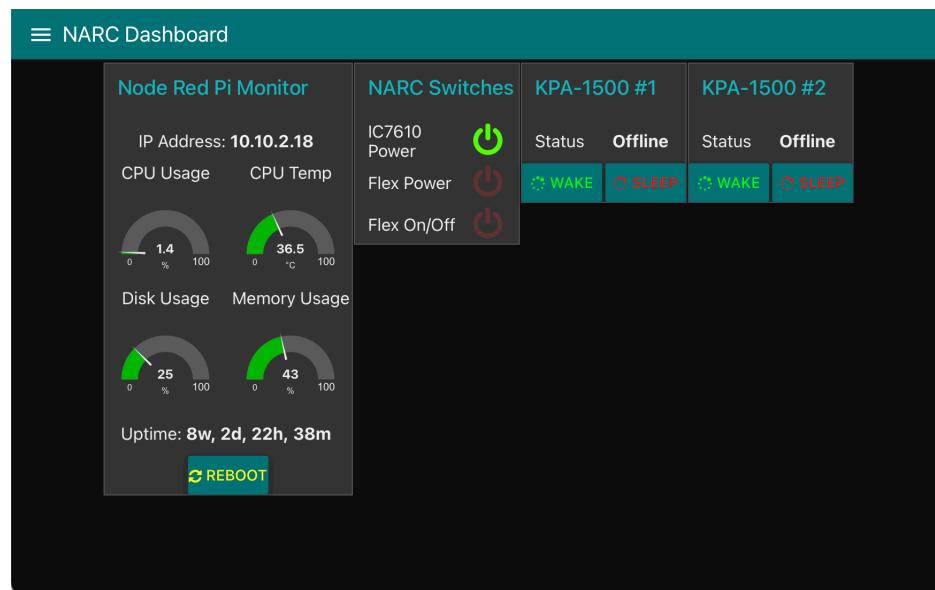


Figure 13.8.: NodeRed Dashboard

13.3. Remote access to NARC2

13.3.2. Access via NARC-2 computer



Note

TODO: Complete this section

14. Test Suite

This chapter describes the suite of tests that we use to make sure that our stations remain in good operating condition.

14.1. Power-up

- Connect rig to a suitable antenna or dummy load
- Power-up the Astron power supply
- Power-up the rig
- Log-on to the computer using the appropriate user name and password

14.2. Phone operations

- Set power to 100 W or less
- Call CQ or answer a CQ
 - On the IC-7610, use Icom SM-30 desk mic with embedded push-to-talk (PTT) switch or the footswitch
 - On the Flex 6400-M, use the Yaesu mic or headset with the footswitch for PTT.

14. Test Suite

14.3. Logging programs

14.3.1. Amateur Contact Log (N3FJP)

- Check <https://www.n3fjp.com/> to determine latest version of software.
- Download and install if there is an update.
- Open Amateur Contact Log; a shortcut is on the PC desktop
- Confirm that version (last 7.0.9)
- Confirm that ACL tracks of frequency changes & mode changes
- Close application

14.3.2. N1MM+

- Start-up N1MM+; update if prompted
- Confirm latest version is _____ (latest 1.0.10151)
- Confirm that N1MM+ follows frequency changes.
- Close N1MM+.

14.4. Digital mode operations

14.4.1. WSJT-X

- Open WSJT-X
- Confirm that version (last 2.5.4)
- Select W3YA configuration
- Test WSJT-X receive
- Switch to suitable band for antenna from within WSTJ-X application
- Confirm that rig follows software band change
- Turn RF power to 10 W

14.4. Digital mode operations

- Test WSJT-X CQ transmit
 - Click Enable Tx button
 - Permit 3 xmit cycles
 - If no one responds to CQ, check <https://pskreporter.info>
- If not checking JTAlert, Close WSJT-X

14.4.2. JTAlert, <https://hamapps.com/JTAlert/>

- Check application site, update as needed.
- Open JTAlert
- Confirm version is _____ (last 2.62.0)
- Confirm that received CQs appear in green in JTAlert window
- Test xmit from JTAlert
 - Click on green CQ button to initiate QSO
- Close JTAlert

i Note

TODO: More complete steps

14.4.3. JS8Call

- Open JS8Call
- Confirm version (last 2.2.0)
- Select W3YA configuration
- Test JS8Call receive
- Switch to suitable band for antenna (most JS8Call activity is on 40 m)
- Confirm rig follows software band change
- Confirm RF power is 10 W

14. Test Suite

- Test JS8Call heartbeat transmit

 Note

TODO: Complete steps

- If stations respond to heartbeat, all is well.
- Check pskreporter.info to confirm: W3YA _____ was/_____ was not heard.
- Close JS8Call

14.4.4. Fldigi, <http://www.w1hkj.com/>

- Check site and update fldigi, flrig, or other applications, as needed
- Open fldigi
- Confirm version is _____ (last 4.1.26)
- On IC-7610, confirm that flrig opens and shows current operating frequency

 Operating parameters for IC-7610:

Rig: IC-7610 COM3 Baud: 38400 Stop bits: 1 stop bit CI-V: 0x98

 Operating parameters for Flex-6400M

TODO: Add these.

- 7.070 MHz is a watering hole for PSK31 activity on 40m. You might look there to test receive and transmit.
- Check transmit
 - Create test message (e.g., “de w3ya w3ya testing testing”)
 - Transmit message

14.4. Digital mode operations

- Wait 1-2 mins and check pskreporter.info: W3YA _____ was/_____ was not heard.
- Close flrig and fldigi.

14.4.5. Winlink Express/VARA

Open Winlink Express Update forms and software if prompted Confirm Winlink (not forms) version is _____ (latest 1.7.12) Select Telnet Winlink session and open session, then start the session to retrieve any messages. If connection succeeds, send test message to W3TM@winlink.org. Select Vara HF Winlink session If prompted, update VARA HF Download Install (as administrator) Confirm VARA HF version is _____ (latest 4.8.1) Select an HF target station When the channel is clear, start the session Close Winlink Express/VARA

14.4.6. VarAC

Open VarAC Confirm that VARA HF opens along with VarAC window. Confirm verson is _____ (latest 6.6.13) Use VarAC window to confirm that rig follows band/freq changes. Test transmit Confirm rig RF power is 10 W Transmit beacon Wait 1-2 mins then check pskreporter.info: W3YA _____ was/_____ was not heard

14.4.7. YONIQ (SSTV)

- Open YONIQ
- Tune to SSTV frequency (e.g., 14.230 MHz)

14. Test Suite

Note

TODO: Finish test suite

14.5. KPA1500 Amplifier

Power on amplifier Test ATU Rig to 10% power (~10W). Press MULTI knob (press RF POWER and rotate MULTI knob to read HF 10%) Rig mode to RTTY (touch mode on touchscreen, select RTTY) Amp in standby mode (short press on MODE/PF1) button until yellow STDBY indicator illuminates Amp to ATU mode (short press on ATU TUNE button) Transmit (press TRANSMIT on rig or PTT on mic to send RF) When ATU cycle ends (after a few seconds), Press TRANSMIT again to end test transmission. Test amplification Amp to operate (short press on OPER/STDBY) Transmit (press TRANSMIT or PTT on mic) on rig ~10 W drive should generate about 4-500 W out) Press TRANSMIT again to end test transmission Amplifier back to stand-by (short press on MODE/PF1) Power down amplifier Return rig to SSB mode (press mode indicator on touch screen, select SSB)

14.6. Win4IcomSuite

- Open Win4Icom
- Confirm that version is _____ (last 1.4.5.4)
- Confirm program tracks frequency and mode
- Close Win4Icom

15. Software

This page documents some of the software we have installed on the NARC computers.

15.1. Remote control

- SmartSDR, v3.7.4
- Win4Icom, v

15.2. Logging

- Amateur Contact Log (N3FJP), v7.0.9
- N1MM Plus

15.3. Digital modes

- fldigi W1HJK suite
 - flrig
 - flmsg
 - flamp
 - flwrap
- WSTJ-X

15. Software

- JTAlert
- JS8Call
- Winlink
 - VARA
 - * VARA FM
 - * VARA HF
- VarAC
- MMSTV-YONIQ