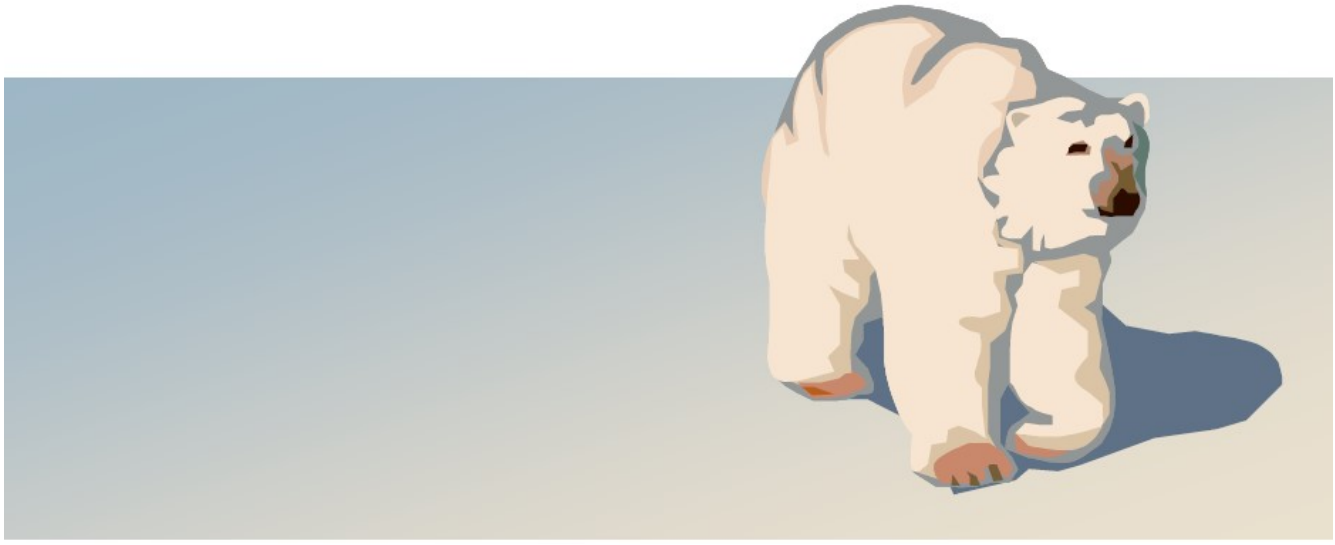
Configuration of Outpost Ver 3.2.0.c97

Ver. 1.6.1 04 Feb. 2023



Configuration of Outpost

Run Outpost to bring up the Station Identification Screen.

Note that as of V2.7, the startup Profile name is shown.

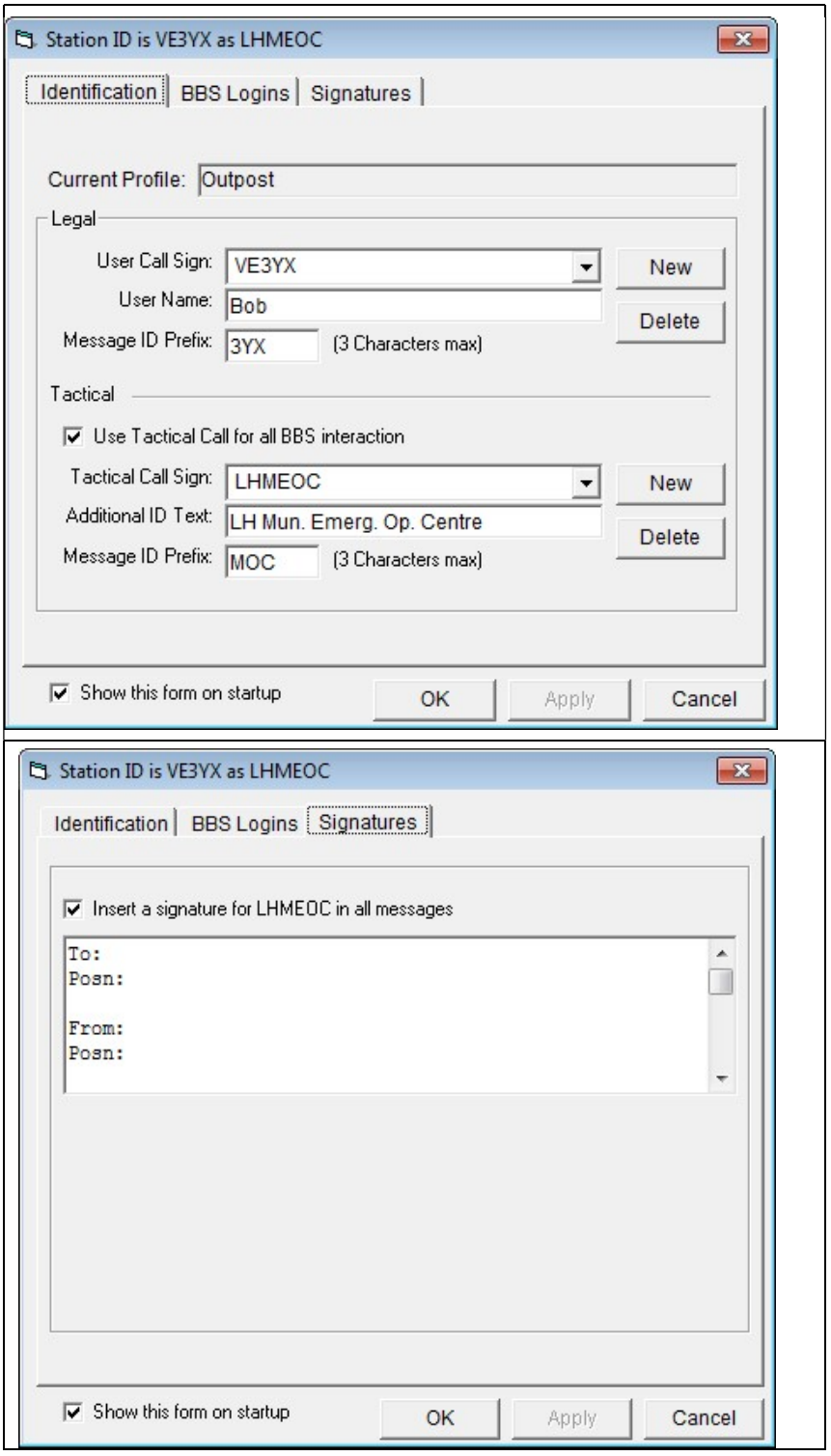
Under Legal, the User Call Sign and User Name should be modified to show the current operator. If the user's call sign is in the list on the computer, it can be selected from the drop down list by clicking on the arrow button.
If you are taking over from another operator, change the Legal info but keep the Tactical.

For now, we can ignore the BBS Logins tab.

Under Tactical , select Use Tactical Call, and set the Tactical Call Sign to reflect the current operating location from the list in *Appendix A*. It should be available in the drop down list for Tactical call signs. In this case for demo purposes, we are using the LHMEOC. Fill in the Additional ID Text, and set the Tactical ID to 3 characters for that location.
You can create any alphanumeric Tactical name as long as all the other stations know exactly what it is.

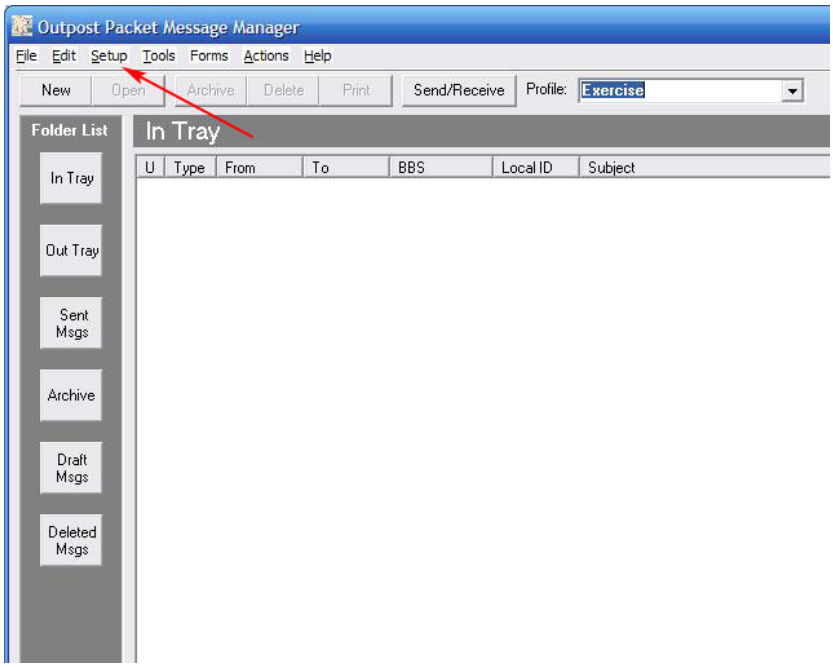
Select the Signatures tab and ensure that Insert a signature... is checked. The signature can be used as a message form as shown.

Select OK to continue to the Outpost Packet Message Manager.



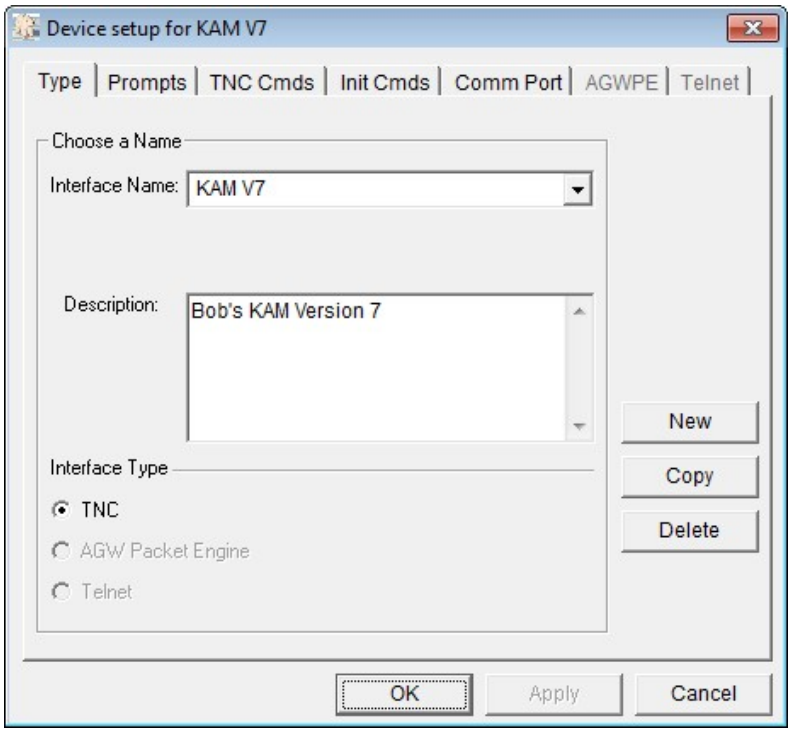
In the Outpost Packet Message Manager, click Setup to bring up the setup dropdown menu:
Select the 2nd option Interface... from that dropdown menu.

(Note the new Profile dropdown menu for selecting a profile.)



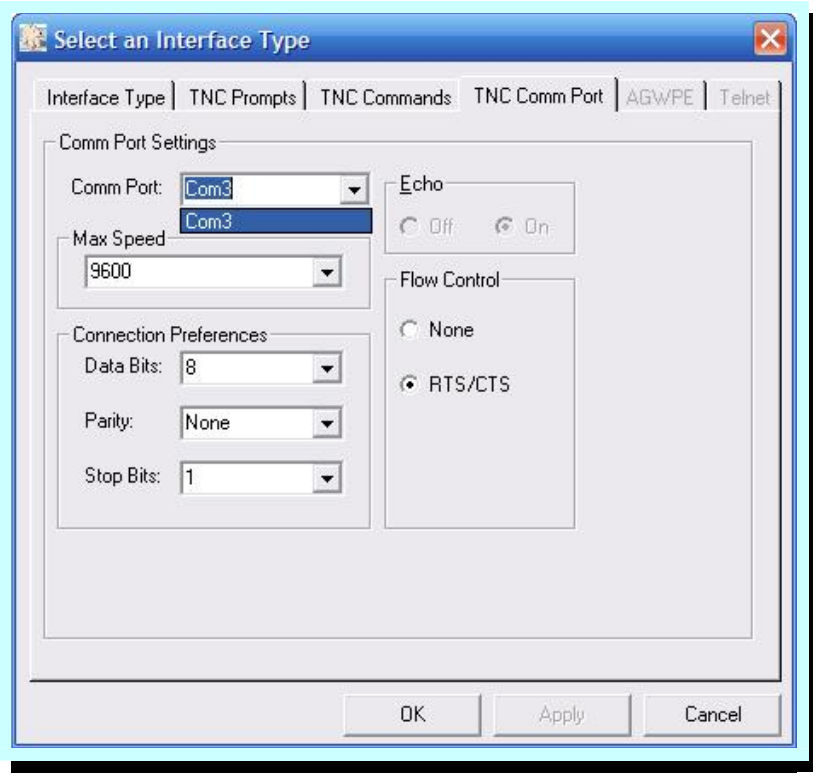
The following screen appears.
Review the information under the Type Tab. If the Interface Type is not shown as TNC, consult the installation guide for instructions on the use of configuration files at installation time.
The Interface Name and Description should reflect the hardware in use.
All of our portable packet stations use TNCs.

Select Apply to preserve any changes.



Select the Comm Port Tab. From the dropdown menu beside Comm Port select the port used. This may require some trial and error if you are not sure which port the TNC is connected to. Only active ports will be shown in the list.

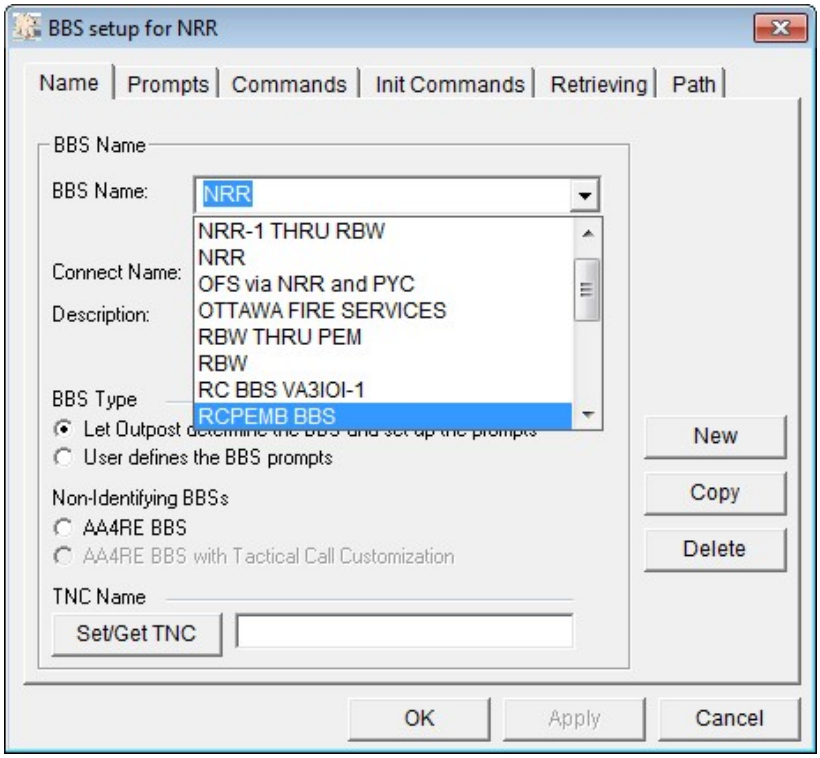
Select Apply to preserve any changes, then OK to continue.



Back in the Outpost Packet Message Manager, click Setup and click on BBS from that dropdown menu.

The following BBS setup screen will appear. Select the Name Tab. From the dropdown menu beside BBS Name, select the BBS you wish to use. If you can't reach the BBS directly, you may have to use a previously defined path or create a new path using nodes. (Next page.)

Select Let Outpost Determine the BBS and set up the prompts.

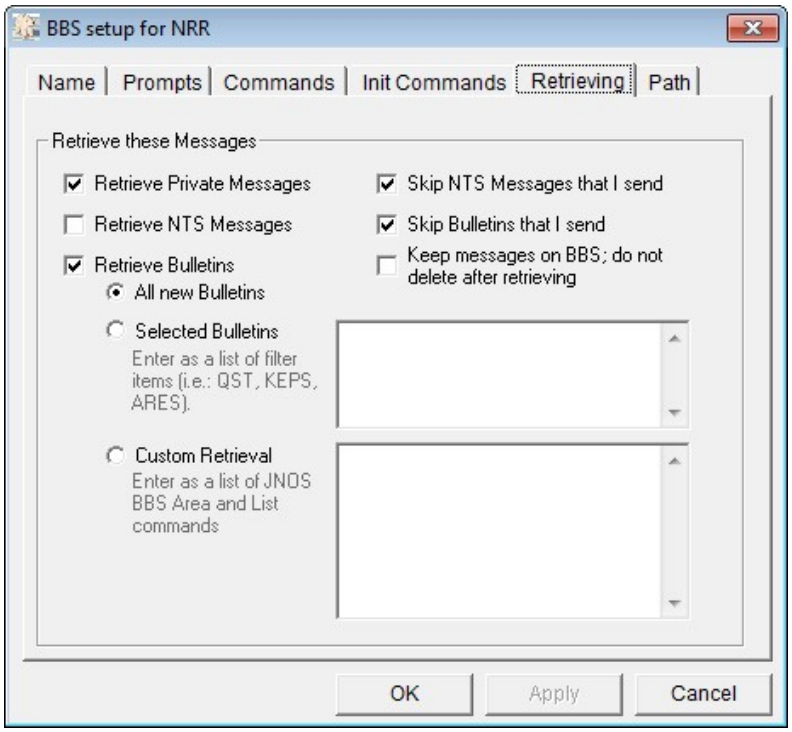


Click on the Retrieving tab.

Check the boxes for Retrieve Private, Retrieve Bulletins, Skip NTS and Skip Bulletins.

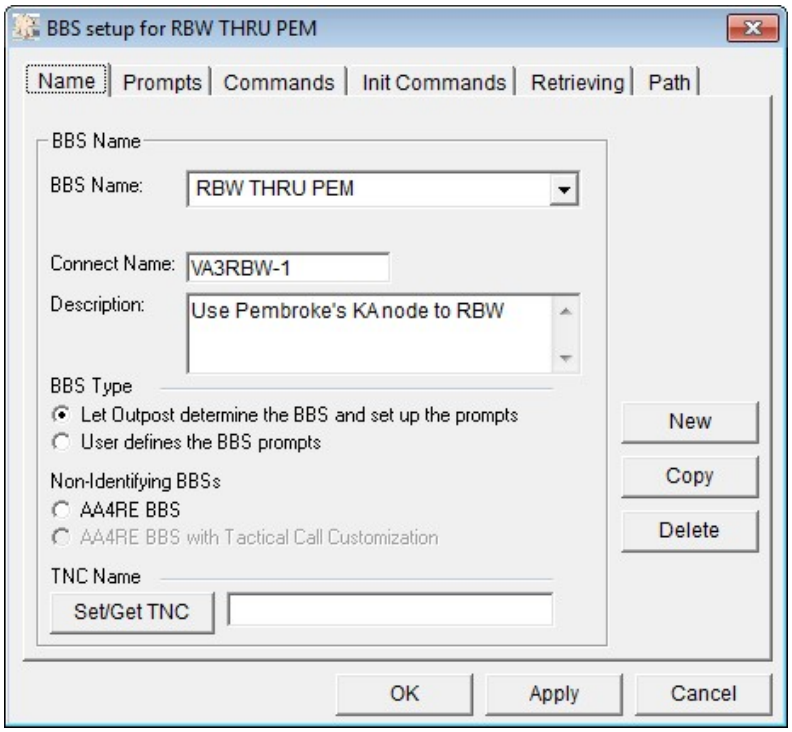
Select Apply to preserve any changes.

See Appendix C for additional info about BBSs.

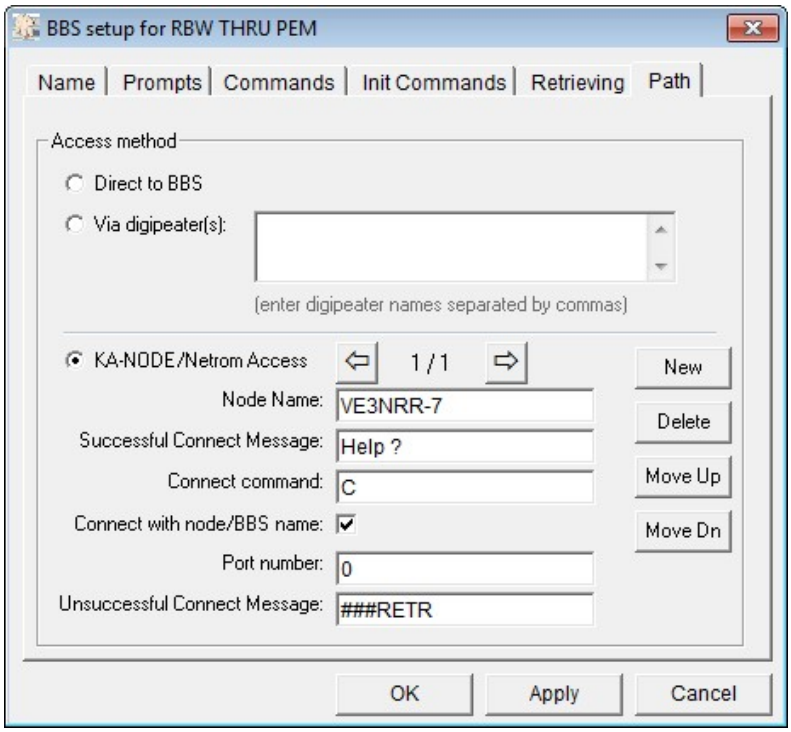


In some instances you may not be able to connect to a BBS directly and will have to connect Via node(s). In the example shown, VE3NRR-7 is being used for a node to allow a station to connect to the VA3RBW-1 BBS. This could be the situation for a station in Pembroke.

After filling in the Names, description and checking Let Outpost determine... under BBS Type, click on the Path tab.



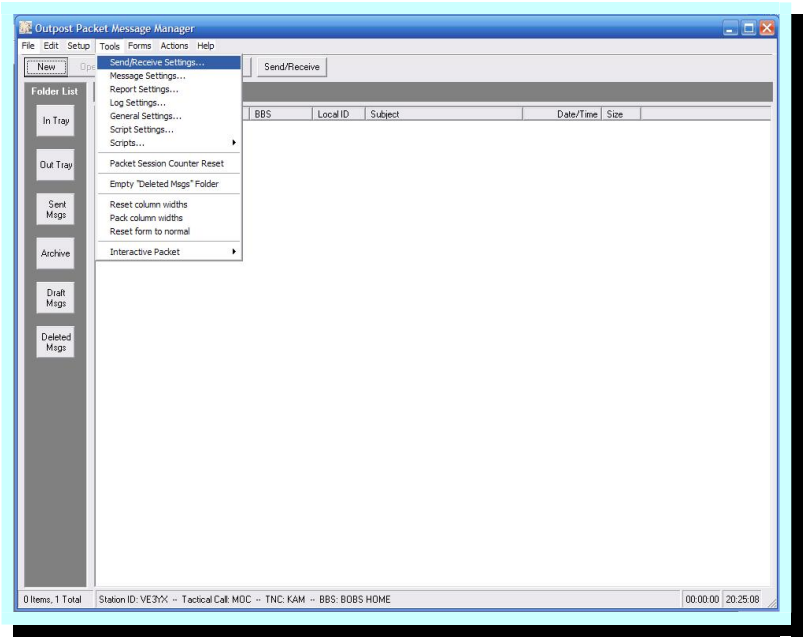
Here we are using the KA-node VE3NRR-7. Click on the KA-NODE button. Then click on New to show that the page is for node 1 of 1 1/1. The remaining fields are appropriate for a KA-node. If the node in use is not a KA type, then the remaining fields will have to be set differently. Type CTRL d to get the Outpost folders then open Docs and look for: Appnote-1702-node-setup.pdf. If internet is available: https://www.outpostpm.org/docs/Appnote-1702-node-setup.pdf



If it is necessary to use a 2nd node to reach the distant BBS, click on New again to get to the 2/2 page and fill out the info for the next node.

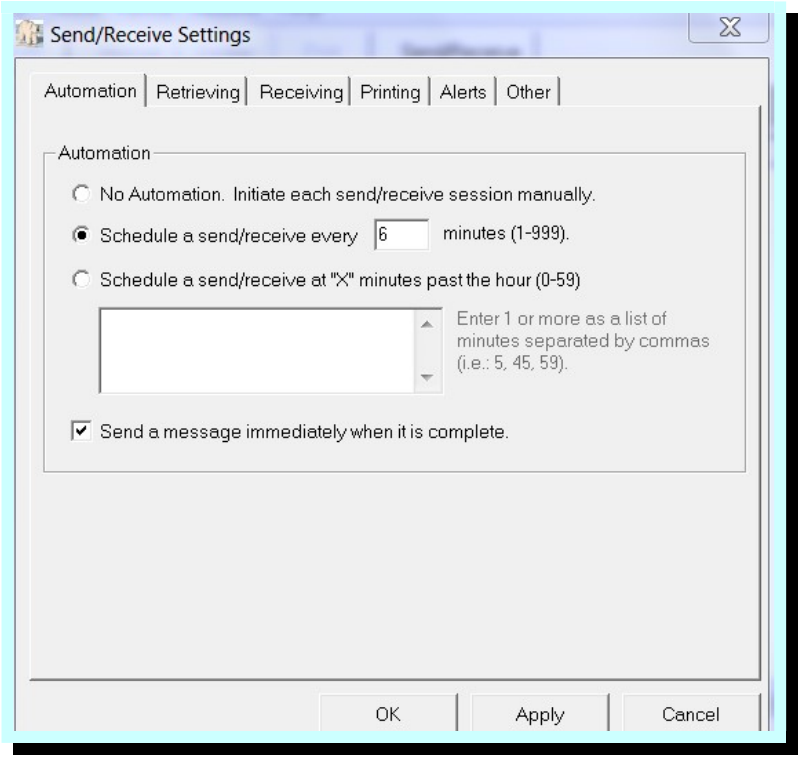
Click Apply, OK.

From the Outpost Packet Message Manager, select Tools, Send/Receive Settings.



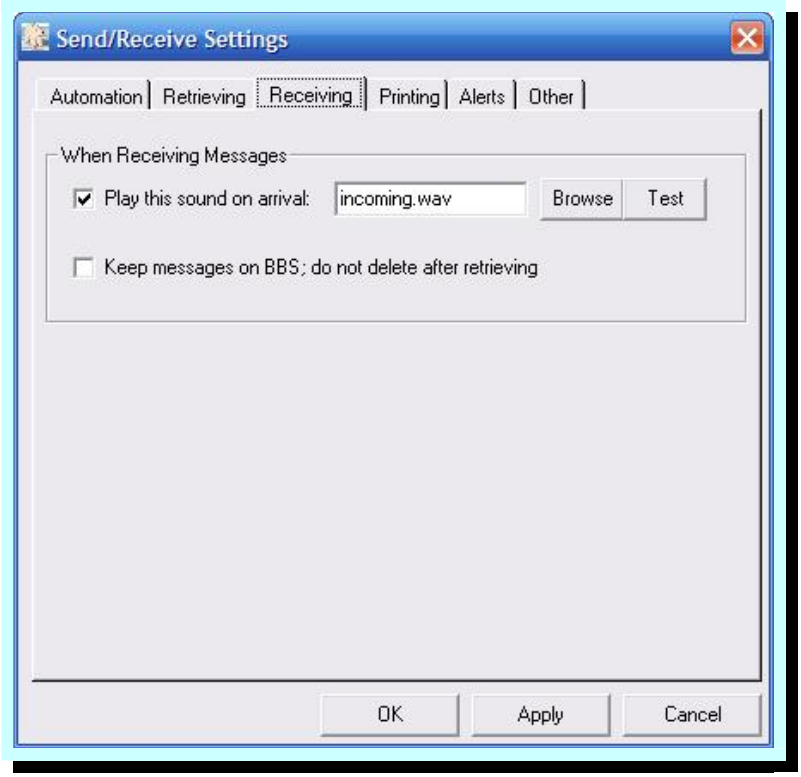
Under the Automation Tab, Schedule a send/receive event every 6 minutes. Select Send a message immediately when it is complete.

Select Apply to preserve any changes.



Under the Receiving Tab, select Play this sound on arrival: incoming.wav.

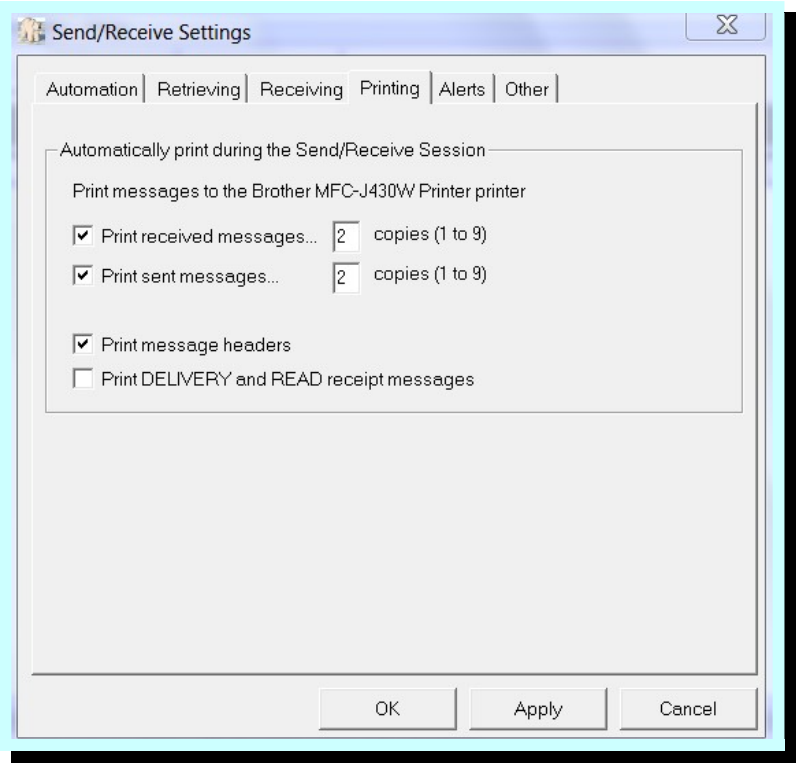
Select Apply to preserve any changes.



If there is a printer attached, under the Printing tab, select Print received message (2) and Print send messages (2). Select Print message headers.

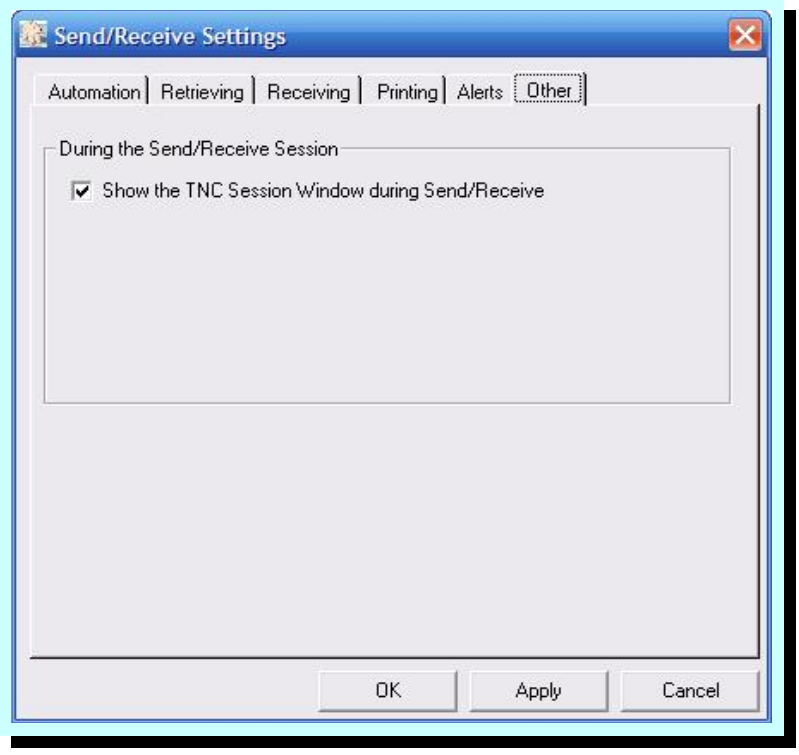
One copy goes to centre staff.
One copy is for our records.

Select Apply to preserve any changes.

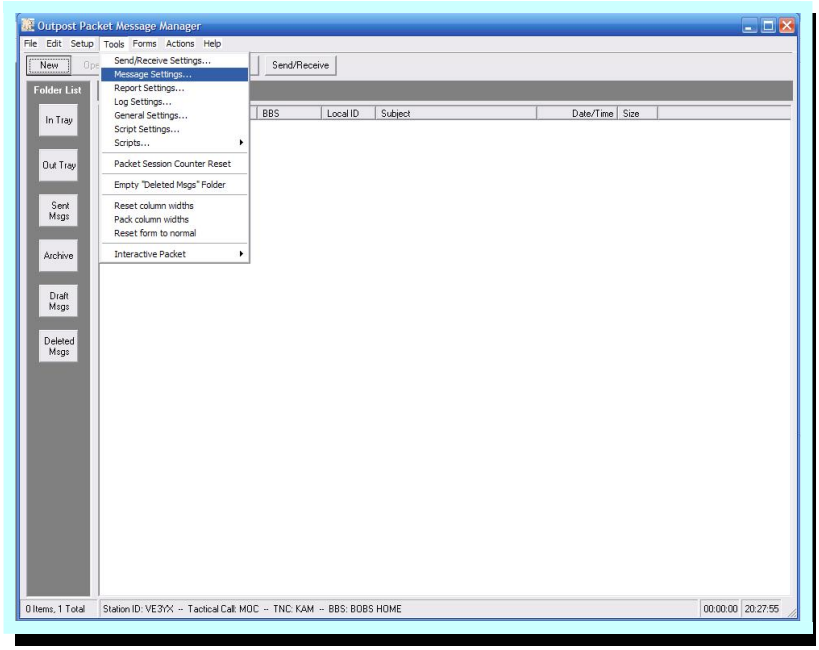


Under the Other tab, select Show the TNC Session Window during Send/Receive.

Select Apply to preserve any changes.



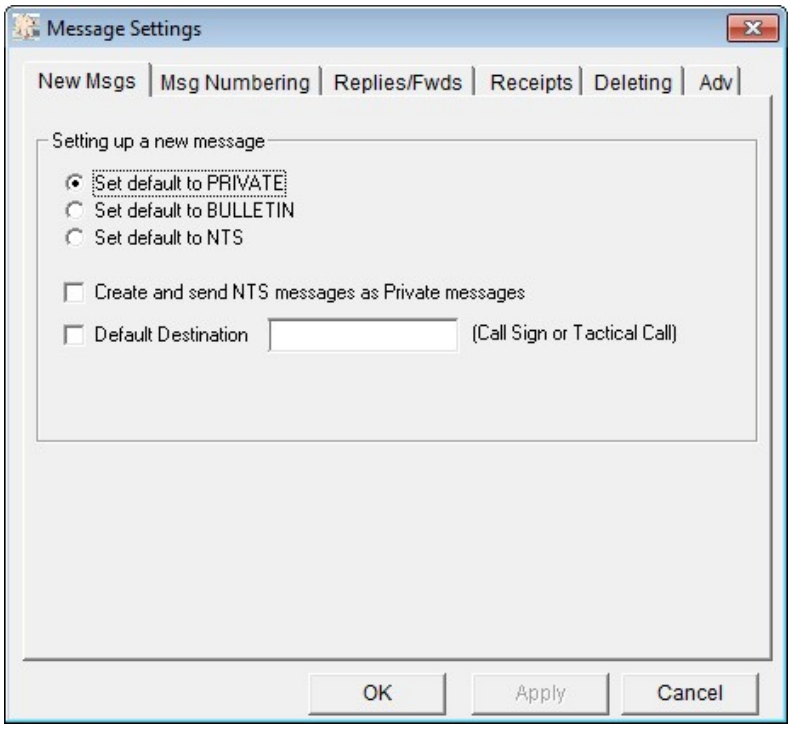
From the Outpost Packet Message Manager select Tools, Message Settings.



Under the New Messages tab, select Set default to PRIVATE.

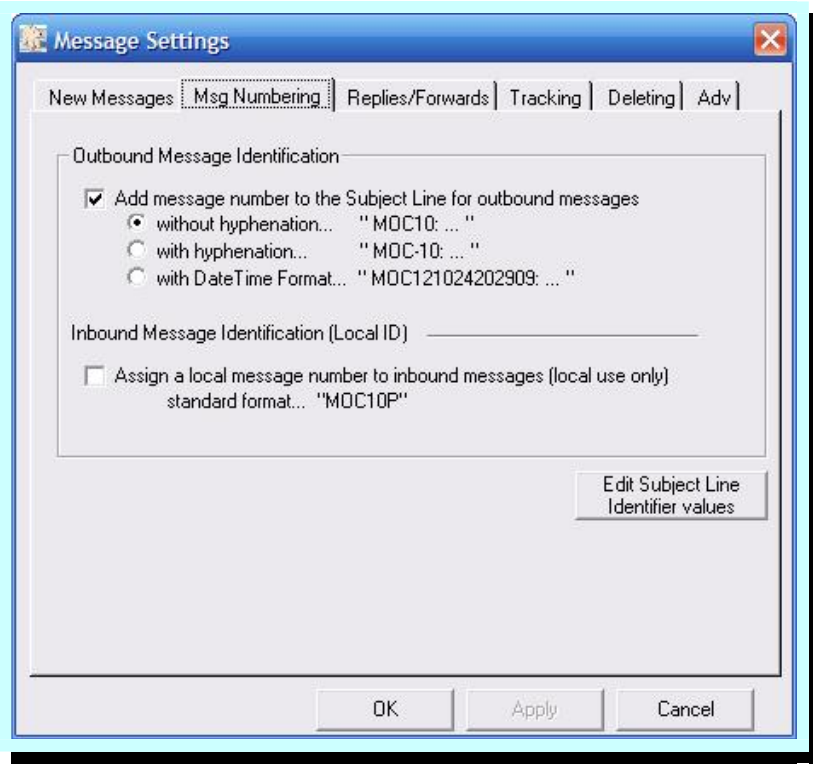
Select Apply to preserve any changes.

See Appendix D for new notes about signatures.



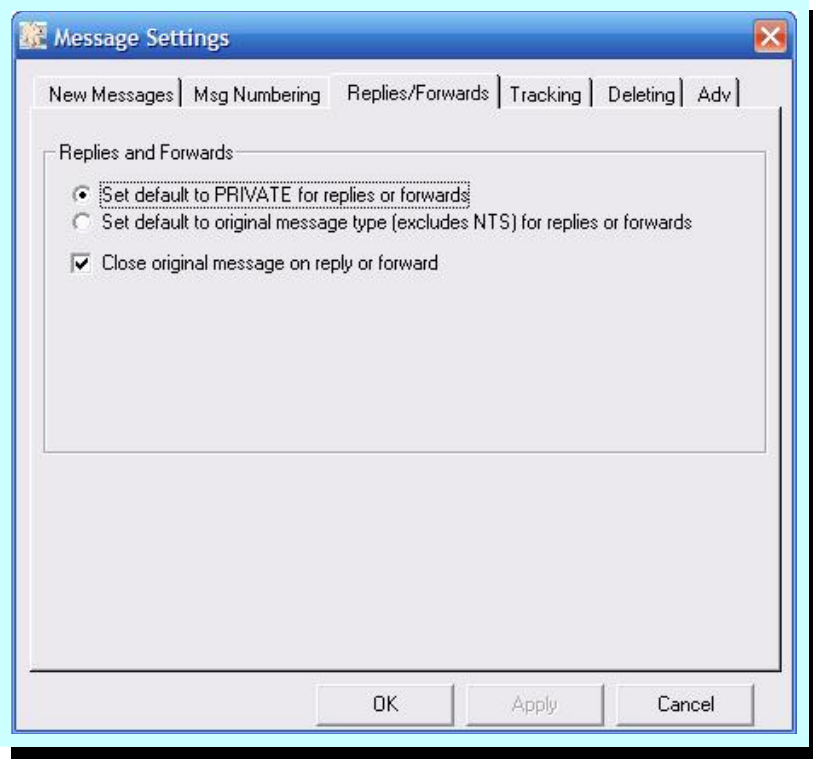
Under Msg Numbering tab, select Add message number... and without hyphenation.

Select Apply to preserve any changes.



Under Replies/Forwards tab select Set default to Private for replies or forwards and Close original message on reply or forward.

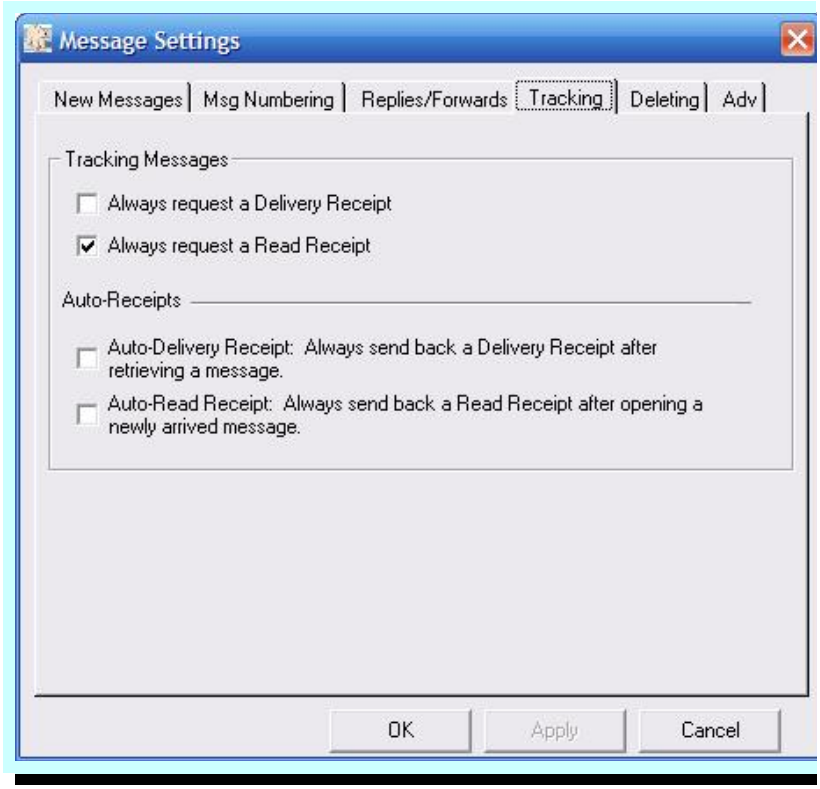
Select Apply to preserve any changes.



Under Tracking tab, select Always request a Read Receipt.

Select Apply to preserve any changes. Click OK if the station is not going to be used for ICS-213 Messages.

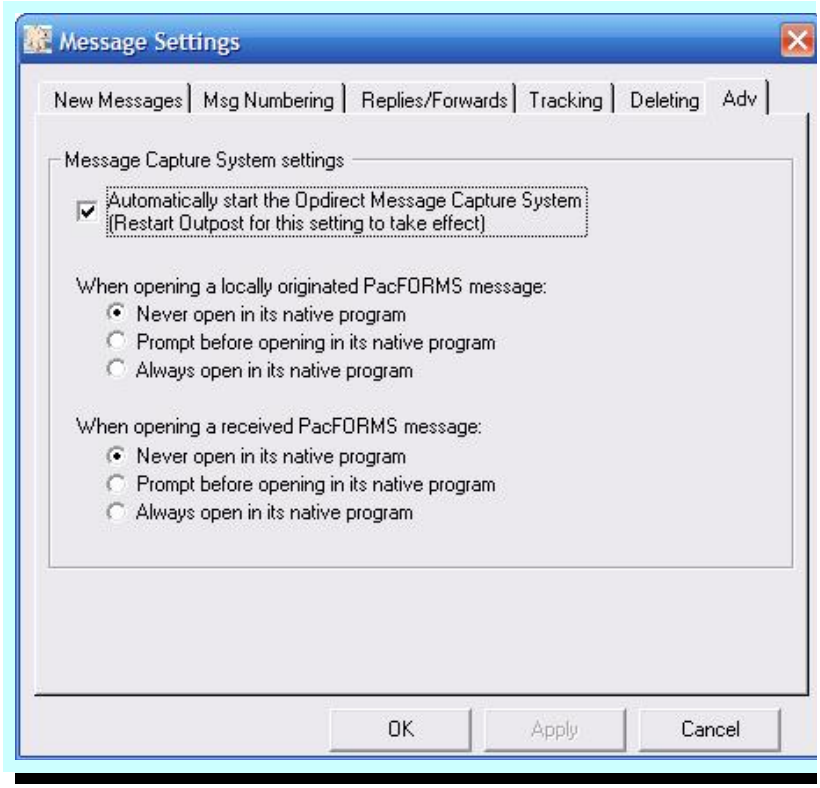
Note that for Outpost to recognize that a message has been read and to send a Read Receipt, the message must be opened in a window. i.e.
Double click on the message in the In Tray window.



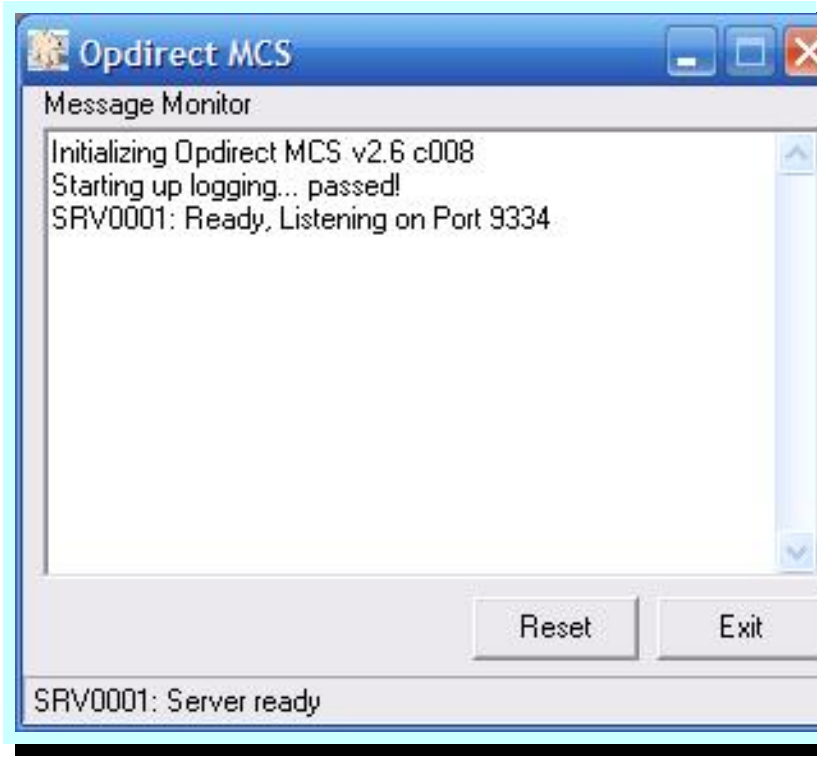
If this station is going to be used for ICS-213 messages:

Under Adv tab, select Automatically start the Opdirect... and Never open in its native program in the two places it appears.

Select Apply to preserve any changes
and OK to close the window.



When the Opdirect Message System is set to automatically start (as configured in the previous step), this message with appear when Outpost is restarted and Opdirect will appear in the task bar.

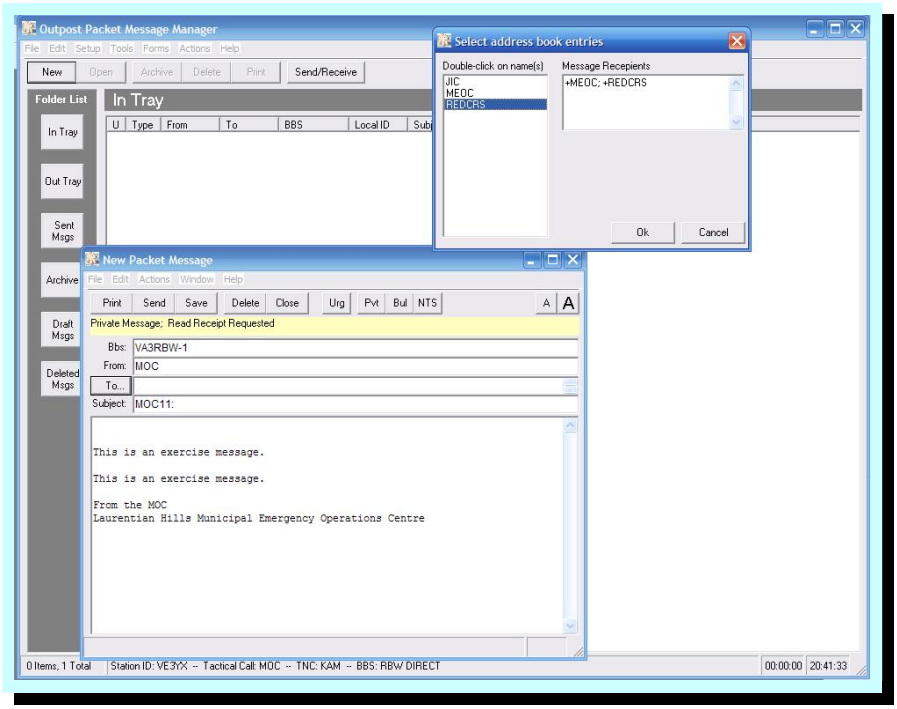


Sending an Outpost Message

Under the Outpost Packet Message Manager, select New to create a new Packet Message, or if you have a message form linked to a function key such as F5, type the key to bring up a New Message window with the form.

See Appendix D about message forms.

The New Packet Message window appears, with fields BBS and From completed, with the signature text in the message field. By default, the message will be private (Pvt). If you want to create an urgent message, which will appear in red, select Urg at the top of the New Packet Message window. To send a bulletin, select Bul. In the case of Bul, you can simply use your own tactical call in the To field. See Appendix B for instructions on deleting a bulletin from the BBS.



Note the To is highlighted. Click on To to bring up the Select address book entries window. **Double click** on one or more addresses to select message destination.

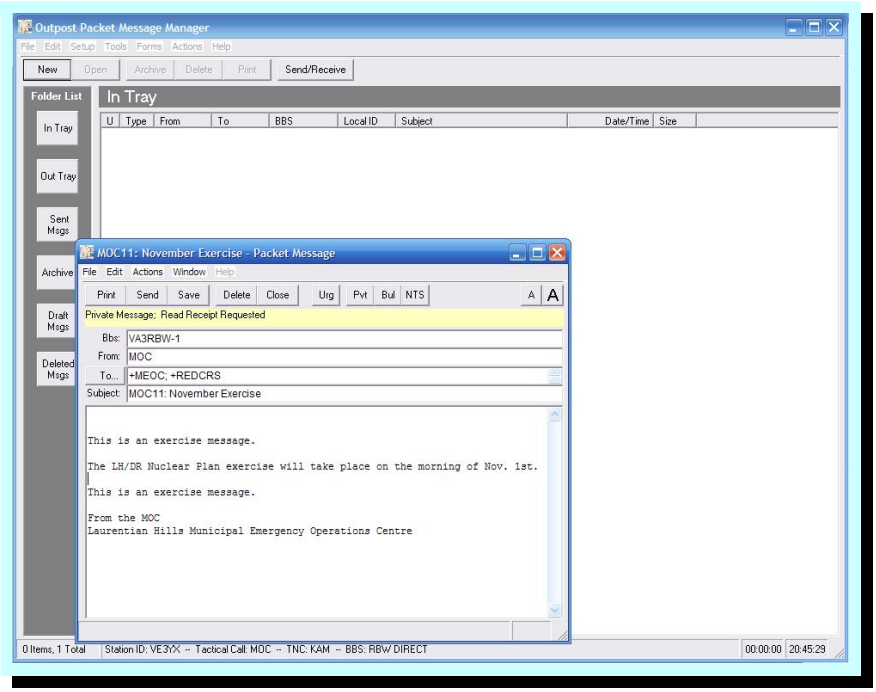
Fill in the subject field and the message text between the exercise notifications.

Select Send to put the message in the Out Tray.

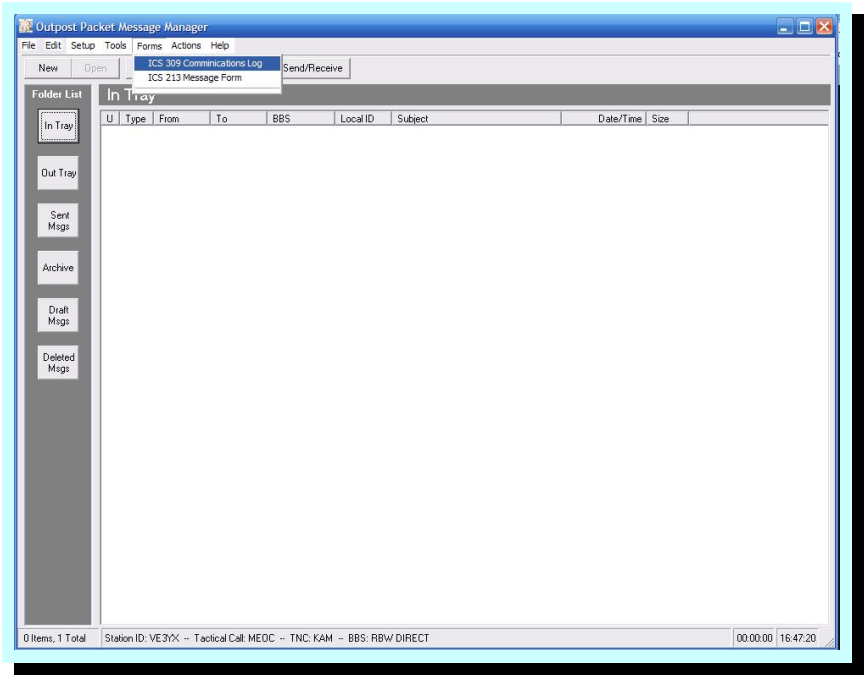
The message will go immediately, because we have configured Outpost to send when the message is complete. (*refer page 7, bottom screen*)

(Outpost will also check for incoming messages on the BBS)

The TNC session window will show the progress of the send.
Also two copies of the outgoing message will be printed.



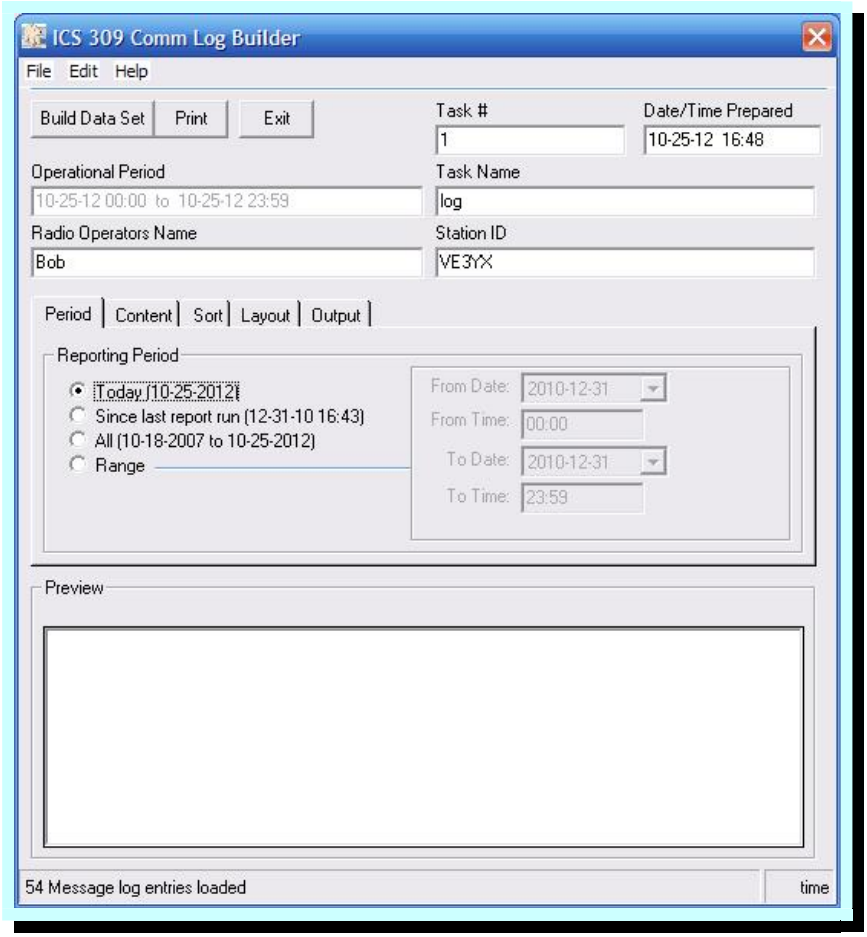
At the end of the exercise or at the end of day, in the Outpost Packet Message Manager, select Forms and then ICS 309 Communications Log.



In the ICS 309 Comm Log Builder window, select Reporting Period Today.
Select Build Data Set at the upper left of the window.

Select Print to print the resulting data set.

<u>At the end of the event, our records will include this data set printout, and our copies of all sent and received messages. This documentation should be handed to the EC.</u>



Appendix A

Centre Name	Tactical Call Sign	Tactical ID (for message #s)
Municipal Emerg. Operation Centre	LHMEOC	MOC
LH/DR NP Joint Information Centre	LHJIC	JIC
LH/DR NP Joint Traffic Control Centre	LHJTCC	JTC
Red Cross Pembroke	RCPEMB	RDP
Red Cross Ottawa	RCOTWA	RCO
LH/DR NP Reception Centre	DRRECP	REC
LH/DR NP Evacuation Centre	DREVAC	EVA
Laurentian Valley EOC	LVEOC	LVE
Petawawa EOC	PETEOC	PTE
Deep River EOC	DREOC	DRE
Renfrew County	RNCNTY	RNC
Pembroke EOC	PEMEOC	PME
Pembroke Command Centre	PEMCMD	PMC

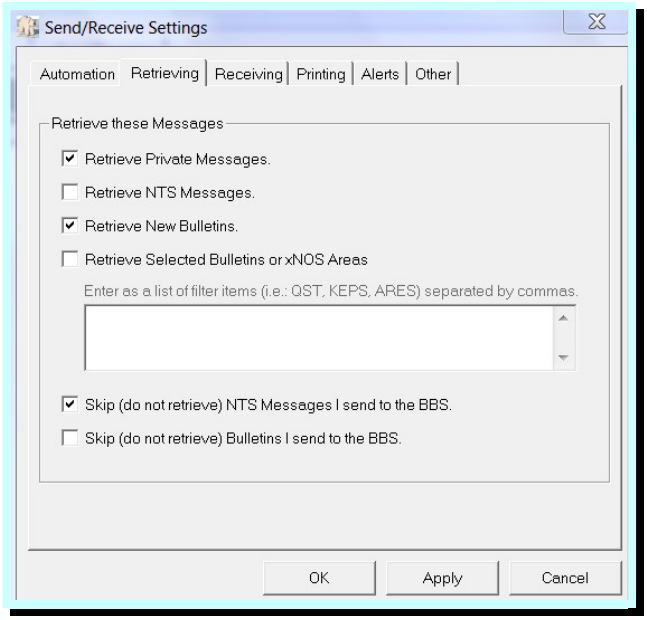
Appendix B

Deleting a Bulletin you have sent

A bulletin can only be deleted by the sender. To delete a bulletin you must select Tools, Send/Receive Settings, Retrieving from the Outpost Packet Message Manager.

Uncheck Skip(do not retrieve) Bulletins I send to the BBS.

Select Apply to save changes made and OK to exit the screen.

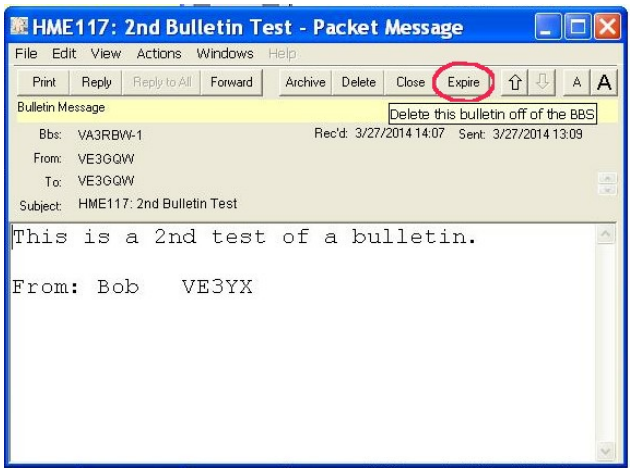


Select Send/Receive to deliver the Bulletin you wish to delete.

When the Bulletin message is delivered, select Expire on the Bulletin.

After deleting the Bulletin, you may want to change the Retrieving Settings back.

Follow with a Send/Receive to execute the delete command on the BBS.



Appendix C

Additional info on BBSs

VA3RBW and VE3NRR use the KPC3 plus for their TNCs. The big advantage of this TNC is that it is the only TNC that allows multiple connects at once. This means that when Outpost connects to RBW or NRR's TNC to send or receive messages, and someone else is already connected, Outpost won't receive a "Busy" response causing it to disconnect and wait for the next Send/Receive session to try again. That would cause a serious slowdown in the message rate.

RBW is designated as the primary BBS while NRR is the secondary for the DR/LH Nuclear Emerg. Plan. A script has been written that will do a Send/Receive with both BBSs, but it shouldn't normally be necessary.

Some of our packet stations are using are KAMs, others are KPC3+. If RBW or NRR was not available for some reason, we can switch to a different station for the central BBS. It would be best to use a station that has a KPC3+, but if the alternate BBS is on a station using a KAM we would then have to deal with the "Busy" issue. The preferred alternate station would be one of the KPC3+s.

In order to access a different BBS, the Setup, BBS, window has to be accessed and the BBS selected from the drop down menu. If that BBS is not directly accessible from your station, you will have to set up a Path using some station you can get to as a node or Digi to bridge the gap.
For complete info on setting up node access, see the Application Note:
http://www.outpostpm.org/docs/Appnote-1702-node-setup.pdf

Appendix D

Additional info on Signatures

In order to encourage better formatting of messages, the signature can contain the headers for the parts of the message. The operator whose call sign appears on the Ident screen is responsible for creating the signature for his call sign. (See page 10, bottom). Here is a suggestion for a signature:

To:
Posn:

From:
Posn:

Time of Origin:

Message:

This is an exercise.

This is an exercise.

Authorized by:

To: and From: is a person's name and Posn: is their job title and perhaps physical location.
The Time of Origin: is the time shown on the originator's message form if there is one.
The message text is placed between the "This is an exercise." lines, assuming it is an exercise.
The Signature: would likely not be the originator's. In some sites such as EOCs, the centre manager vets the messages and signs them before passing to the radio ops. The signature would be the name of the manager.

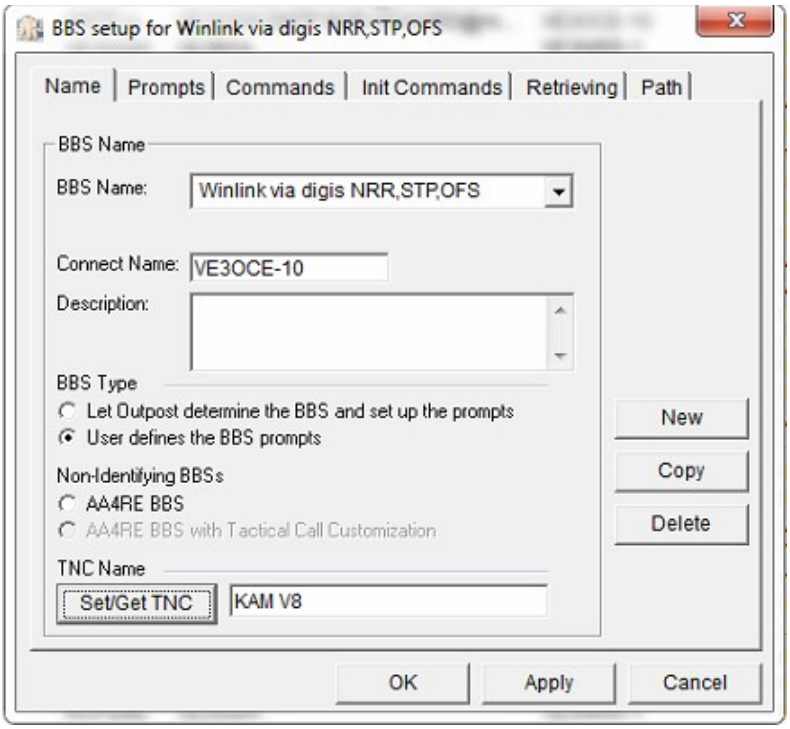
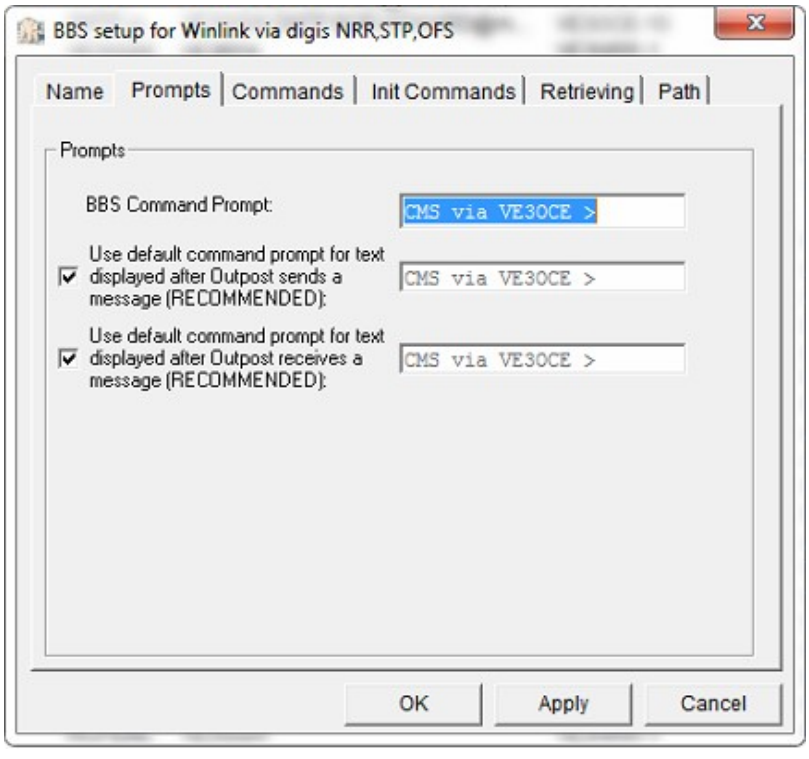
A separate signature is stored by Outpost for every call sign that has been entered on the Ident page. They could be created in advance or made the responsibility of each operator when they put their call on the ident page for the first time.

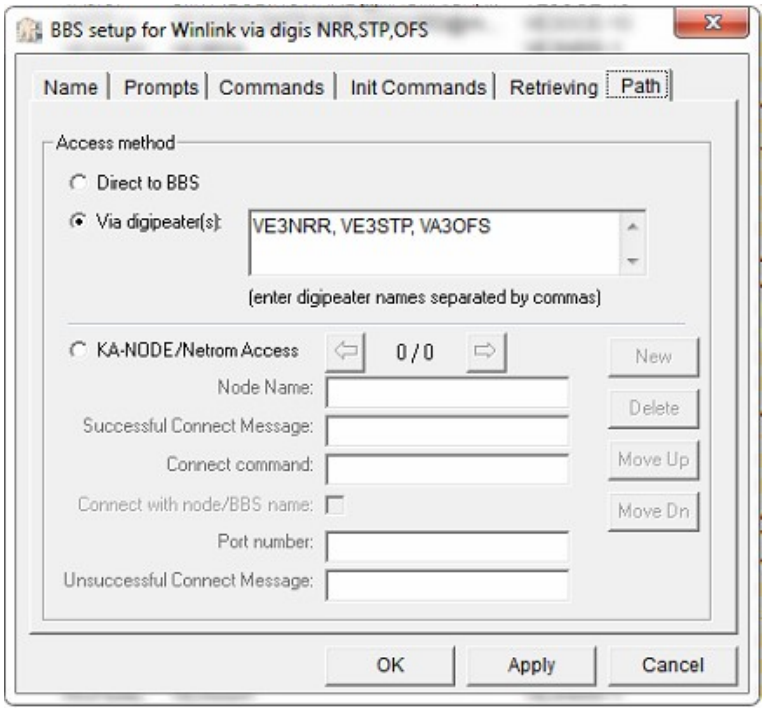
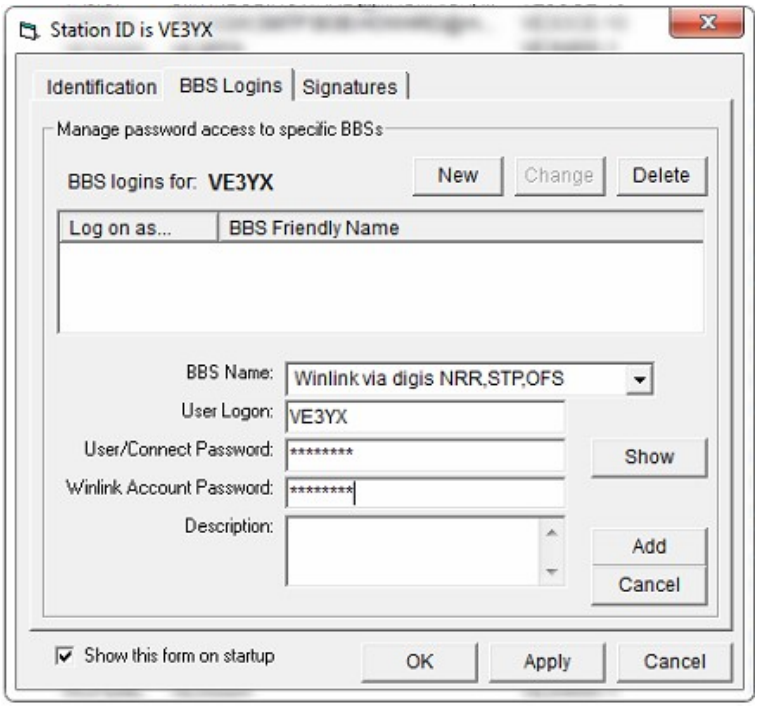
For messages that don't require such a formal format, just delete the entries when they appear on the NEW message form.

Appendix E

Set Up a BBS for Winlink Access by Outpost

Mar, 2019

Click on Setup, BBS and select the New tab. Enter the name you want to use for this BBS. Enter the connect name for the Winlink RMS. The description is optional. Under BBS Type, select User defines ... Set the TNC Name.	
Under the Prompts tab, enter the RMS prompt. It must be exact. Note the space between OCE and >. For a normal RMS, use the defaults under the Commands and Init Commands tabs. Set Retrieving to Private Messages only.	

Under the Path tab: if you cannot reach the RMS directly, you must use digipeaters. You cannot use nodes here. Enter the digi call signs separated by commas. Click on Apply.	
Under Setup, Station ID, select the BBS Logins tab. Click on New and select the BBS you just defined in the drop down list by BBS Name. The user call sign should already be shown. ***See the important note below. Enter the Winlink password in both fields. Click Apply.	

To send or retrieve messages, the call sign and password must be for a Winlink user that has used Winlink by radio within the last 400 days.
If a new or expired call sign is used, it invokes a lengthy registration process which should be completed well before an exercise or event.

Message Forms

Another method to encourage better formatting of messages, we could use message forms. Filling in the form is less intuitive than the signature method. If the operator is not familiar with filling in forms, it may be better to use the signature method. Here is a suggested form:

MSG # <M>

To: =
Posn: =

From: =
Posn: =

Time of Origin: =
Message Typed: <t>

Message Text:

This is an exercise message.

=

This is an exercise message.

Authorized by: =

From the <tacloc>

The form is created with a text editor such as Notepad or Textpad. Note that by including a space after the : for fields that will have entries after the : eliminates the need to start the entry with a space.

The text file is saved with a filename like Message1.txt to the Reports subdirectory of the Outpost data directory. <CTRL> d will bring up an explorer window at the Outpost data directory.

In Outpost, under Tools, Report Settings, under the Variables tab, put some description of the tactical location in the Tactical Location field. This text will replace <tacloc> in the message. Note that this is the window where you can set the next message number as a global variable.

Next, click on the Reports tab, and for the F5 field, browse to the message file. Click OK and you are done - almost.
From the main screen select Tools, Message Settings, New Messages tab and remove the signature or just uncheck Insert a signature etc.

Now from the Outpost main screen, if you type F5, a New Packet Message widow will appear with the cursor at the top " = " sign (highlighted) prompt.
Type the info for that field (backspace for errors), then mouse left click or [Ctrl] [Tab] and the cursor will move to the next field. Finish the fields, select No on the End of Message window, then click on To to set the address and then type in a subject. After all of the " = " prompts have been "satisfied", the mouse can then be used to navigate around the message to make any changes necessary.
If while filling in the prompts, the mouse is clicked outside the main message part of the window, the form filling will be cancelled. It can be re-started under File**,** Process a Report.

Note that the message # now appears at the top of the message text.

To: and From: is a person's name.

Posn: is their job title and perhaps physical location.

The Time of Origin: is the time shown on the originator's message form if there is one.

The message text is placed between the "This is an exercise." lines, assuming it is an exercise.

Authorized by: In some sites such as EOCs, the centre manager vets the messages and signs them before passing to the radio ops. Authorized by: would be the name of the manager.

Change History

Date	Change
Oct 31, 2012	Draft 1.0 created YA and RH
Oct 31, 2012	Draft 1.1 - Bulletin and Urgent Messages described and Appendix B added YA
Nov 02 2012	Added notes about Call Sign and signature
Nov 02 2012	Corrections to bulletin deletions, appendix B
Nov 21 2012	Added Appendix C; notes about BBSs
Mar 10 2013	Added info about Profiles – introduced with V 2.7
May 20 2013	Added info about NRR's KPC3+, and the use of nodes. Now 1.3
Oct 17 2013	Corrected Path NRR's node. Added note about read receipts. Now Ver. 1.4
Mar 27 2014	Added Appendix D – Message form in signature or Forms
Jun 13 2017	Edited to match Ver. 3.2.0.c97. Now Ver. 1.5
Mar 23 2019	Added Appendix E - BBS for Winlink. Now Ver. 1.6
Feb 04 2023	Minor corrections. Now Ver. 1.6.1