

JS8msg

JS8msg was inspired by the flmsg program found in the NBEMS suite of programs. The idea is to have an external program to JS8call which can create an EMCOMM form, like the ICS-213, save a copy locally and transmit the same form using JS8call as the RF link. While JS8msg was designed to work with JS8call, JS8msg can be used without JS8call running. Thus you could create a form offline and save the form for transmission later.

Why use JS8call instead of fldigi for EMCOMM? While fldigi has a great number of modems (operating modes), it lacks the ability to work well below the noise level. Being based on the FT8 protocol, JS8call can track signals below -15 db, the lowest signal level for CW, down to -28 db below the noise level with the trade-off being the speed of transmission.

JS8msg does not inhibit any of the existing functionality built into JS8call. JS8msg enhances JS8call by adding EMCOMM form support much like the way flmsg enhances fldigi for EMCOMM support.

Installation of JS8msg:

Instructions can be found in the JS8msg/Doc/INSTALL document.

Setting up of the radio transceiver is detailed in the JS8call Guide Document.

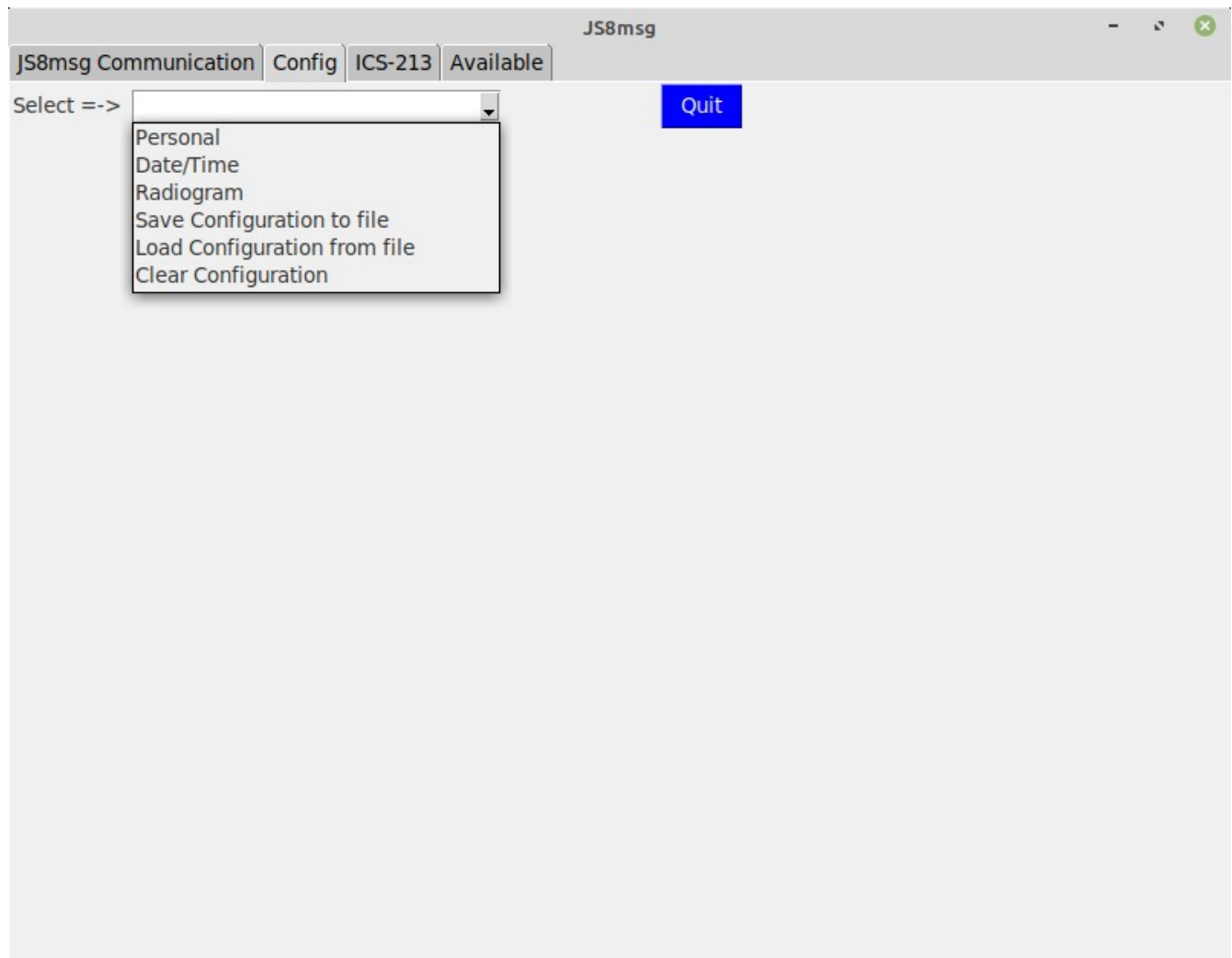
Gui of JS8msg:

After starting JS8msg, you will see this screen:



JS8msg uses a notebook style of GUI with each function in a different tab. The Communications tab takes care of interfacing the GUI with JS8call.

The Config tab with the pull down menu:



The Config tab gathers all the common configuration data like the personal data, Date and Time formats. The Radiogram has not been implemented. You can save, load and clear the configuration data.

The ICS-213 Originator tab with pull down menu:

The screenshot shows a software window titled "JS8msg" with a tabbed interface. The "ICS-213" tab is selected. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Top Bar:** Contains tabs for "JS8msg Communication", "Config", "ICS-213", and "Available".
- Left Panel:** Labeled "Orig" (highlighted in green). It contains fields for "Inc:", "To:", "Fm:", and "Sub:", each with a corresponding colored input box (light blue for "Inc:", "Fm:", and "Sub.:", light yellow for "To:").
- Right Panel:** Contains a "Select ==>" dropdown menu, a "Date: 2021-" field, and a "09 UTC" field. A pull-down menu is open from the "Select ==>" dropdown, showing options: "Save File", "Load File", "Clear Form", and "Update".
- Bottom Section:** Labeled "Message" on the left. It features a large green rectangular area for message input. Below this area are "Appr." and "Pos." labels followed by light blue input boxes.
- Buttons:** A "Quit" button is located in the top right corner.

Since there is a possibility of the form needing to be completed other than at the site of the incident, the Originator portion of the ICS-213 is split from the Responder portion.

The ICS-213 Responder tab with pull down menu:

The screenshot shows the 'JS8msg' application window with the 'ICS-213' tab selected. The interface includes a top menu bar with 'JS8msg Communication', 'Config', 'ICS-213', and 'Available'. Below this is a toolbar with buttons for 'Resp' (highlighted in red), 'Go to Originator Mode', 'Get Date & Time', 'Select ==>', and 'Quit' (blue). A dropdown menu is open from the 'Select ==>' button, showing options: 'Save File', 'Clear Form', and 'Update'. The main area is a large yellow rectangle. To the left of this rectangle is the label 'Reply:'. Below the yellow rectangle are two input fields: 'Name:' and 'Pos.:'. The 'Date: 2021-' and '9 UTC' labels are visible on the right side of the interface.

The incomplete ICS-213 can be loaded and then the Responder portion can be filled out and saved.

The JS8msg Communication tab with the pull down menu:



Workflow of JS8msg:

At a first time use of JS8msg, click the Config tab and fill out the Personal and Date/Time information. Then save it. Unless the data needs to be modified, this initial use will be the last one.

If you need to fill out a ICS-213, then click on the ICS-213 tab and fill out the Originator. If an incomplete ICS-213 was received, load the form and change to the Responder mode. Then complete the form and save it.

Switching to the JS8msg Communication tab, use the pull down menu to load a form for transmitting. A copy of the contents will be placed in the large Text area. First click on the “Update Callsigns” button to refresh the list of callsigns. If the intended callsign is not listed, go to JS8call and right click on the right panel and select “Add New Station or Group”. Add the intended destination callsign. Come back to JS8msg and Update the callsigns.

Click on a callsign in the callsigns list on the left of the GUI to select it and then click the yellow button below the list. A confirmation text will appear.

From the pull down list, either select “Send TX Message” to transmit the message immediately or select “Store Message to Inbox” to save it in JS8call for the intended callsign to retrieve at a later time.

In JS8call, the intended callsign can send your station a “QUERY MSGS” text to retrieve any messages addressed to themselves.

From the JS8msg pull down list, select “Get messages from Inbox”. JS8msg will retrieve a list of all messages currently stored in your JS8call Inbox. To fetch one of the messages, click on the message in the list and click the green button below. If the message is an EMCOMM message, the message will be displayed in a web browser. Then the message can be printed or saved from the browser.. If the message is a plain text message, it will be displayed in the large Text area.

And the normal text messages can still be sent via JS8call.

The need for speed:

The FT8 protocol, normal speed, is not the swiftest means of sending the EMCOMM messages. If the propagation permits, try using “Fast” or Turbo” speeds between stations.

Finally, JS8msg is a copyrighted program written by Thomas Kocourek, N4FWD, and is released under the GPL V3 license. A copy of the GPL license is included in the Doc and Bin directories.