

Date: May 10, 2010

Subject: Packet Network Update

Attention: All ECs, AECs, MACs and other Santa Clara County Packet Users

This Packet Network Notice is intended as the introductory notice to make you aware of several upcoming enhancements to the Santa Clara Packet network. These enhancements are described briefly below so that users have as much advance notice as possible for all changes. Subsequent Packet Network Notices will provide more specifics as each change is rolled out. The topics covered in this notice are:

- 220 Frequency Change at W6XSC-1
- Updated Documentation – Standard TNC Parameter Settings
- Updated Documentation – Standard Outpost Configuration Instructions
- New Feature – Bulletins
- New Feature – Automated Acknowledgements
- New Feature – Integrated Outpost and PacFORMS Installer
- Upgraded hardware at W6XSC-1
- Future Plans
- Action Items

Please read this information thoroughly and pass along to any packet users in your local area.

220 Frequency Change at W6XSC-1

The frequency used to access the W6XSC-1 BBS on 1.25 meters will change on Monday, May 24th, from 223.660 MHz to 223.620 MHz. The new frequency has been noted on the Packet Frequencies List for several months (<http://www.scc-ares-races.org/freqs/packet-freqs.html>). We now have the equipment needed to retune the associated cavity filter. All cities that access the W6XSC-1 BBS on 220 will need to adjust their radios to the new frequency after the change is made at the BBS. Stay tuned for additional reminder notices which will provide more detail and a final notice which will announce when the change has been completed.

Updated Documentation – Standard TNC Parameter Settings

The “Standard TNC Parameter Settings” document has been updated to reflect the new recommendation of setting all key TNC parameters with the Outpost TNC command file option. These settings can reduce packet traffic and delay by up to 80%. Everyone is requested to implement these changes as soon as possible in their EOCs and on their personal packet stations. The reorganized and

easier-to-read document reflects input received from several users. It can be found on the Packet page of the county web site: <http://www.scc-ares-races.org/packet.html>.

Updated Documentation – Standard Outpost Configuration Instructions

The “Standard Outpost Configuration Instructions” document will be updated in the coming weeks to enable use of several new features (listed below) as they are deployed. This document is also found on the Packet page of the county web site: <http://www.scc-ares-races.org/packet.html>. Look for more information in a future Packet Network Notice.

New Feature - Bulletins

The JNOS BBS software supports multiple bulletin areas and we will soon implement two bulletin areas. One area will be for permanent bulletins, such as standard BBS procedures. The other area will be for temporary bulletins, such as the Monday and Tuesday night check-in listings, or instructions for a drill or public service event. Implementation will involve configuration changes on the BBSs to enable the feature, as well as changes to the Outpost configuration to make use of the feature. We are currently targeting early June for this roll-out. Look for more information in a future Packet Network Notice.

New Feature – Automated Acknowledgements

We will begin using the new Auto-Delivery Receipt feature in Outpost to acknowledge received packet messages. When this feature is enabled, Outpost will automatically generate an acknowledgement as each message is retrieved from the BBS. The acknowledgement is sent during the next Send/Receive session. This tells the sending party that the message has made it all the way through the network to the recipient’s Outpost station. This eliminates the need to use the message net to acknowledge receipt of packet messages. Look for more info in a future Packet Network Notice.

New Feature – Integrated Outpost and PacFORMS Installer

A new installer is under development which will provide a single, integrated install of Outpost and PacFORMS. The installer will also pre-configure several important settings such as TNC settings and other standard county settings for accessing the new features described above. The goal is to have the installer ready prior to the upcoming Packet class on June 12. This will allow the class attendees to learn using the new installer. Look for more info in a future Packet Network Notice.

Upgraded Hardware at W6XSC-1

The W6XSC-1 BBS will be upgraded to a new hardware platform which runs on 12VDC and uses substantially less power than most off-the-shelf PCs. A bank of batteries will be added, which should provide at least a couple of days of run time for the BBS. The 440 radio will also be upgraded. All of the

new hardware is being tested and “burned in” to reduce the chance of infant mortality. The hardware update, currently targeted for early June, is being planned to minimize downtime. There will be no change to how users access the system. We are currently targeting early June for this roll-out. Look for more info in a future Packet Network Notice.

Future Plans

Work continues on the additional BBS nodes. Permission to use several sites has been secured and testing is underway. You will continue to see occasional messages about backbone testing as we move forward.

Action Items

1. Mark your calendars for the W6XSC-1 upcoming 220 frequency change on May 24th.
2. Download, read and implement the “Standard TNC Parameter Settings” from the packet page on the county website.
3. Stay tuned for additional Packet Network Notices to follow over the next few weeks

Questions / Comments / Concerns

That’s all for this update. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, it is likely that someone else does, too. So it would be helpful if you direct them to the scc-packet Yahoo group. That way, everyone can see the answer.

Michael - N6MEF

Santa Clara County ARES/RACES Packet Committee