

**Date:** May 31, 2010

**Subject:** Packet Network Update

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

This Packet Network Notice contains important information which affects your ability to access and use the county packet backbone. This update covers the following topics:

- Hardware Upgrade at W6XSC-1
- New Outpost/PacFORMS Combined Installer
- Network-wide Bulletins
- Migration of weekly packet check-ins
- Schedule summary
- Action items
- Questions / Comments / Concerns

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

### **Hardware and Software Upgrade at W6XSC-1**

On Monday morning, June 7<sup>th</sup>, the PC and the 440 radio will be upgraded on the W6XSC-1 BBS. The new hardware is a 12VDC powered machine which can run on battery power for a sustained period of time. The software configuration for W6XSC-1 will be updated to enable new functionality, such as bulletins (described below). The 440 radio will also be upgraded to prepare for 9600 backbone operations.

The upgrade will begin early in the morning on Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. Since the BBS will be down during the upgrade, we will take the time to rearrange the equipment rack for optimal serviceability. The entire operation is expected to take most of the day. An notice will be posted to the scc-packet Yahoo group when the upgrade is completed.

### **New Outpost/PacFORMS Combined Installer**

On Monday evening, June 7<sup>th</sup>, a new, county-standard, combined installer will be available for Outpost and PacFORMS. A link to the installer will be posted to the packet page of the county web site (<http://www.scc-ares-races.org/packet.html>) after the W6XSC-1 upgrade is completed. The installer is separate from the standard Outpost installer so it will not impact any customization you may have done to make Outpost work with other BBSs.

The new, combined installer accomplishes the following:

- Installs an updated version of Outpost which includes several improvements for working with our JNOS BBS network. The Outpost installation is placed in a different directory - "C:\Program

Files\SCCo Packet.” This avoids any conflicts with other installations of Outpost. Users can have both installations on the same machine. The county-standard version is what we expect everyone to use for accessing the county backbone.

- Installs optimized BBS configuration files for the county backbone BBS nodes.
- Installs optimized TNC configuration files for several popular TNCs, including: Kantronics KPC-3, Kantronics KPC-3+, Timewave PK-96, and Kenwood TM-D710.
- Installs PacFORMS. As with prior installations of PacFORMS, there are two versions of the installer. The public version of the combined installer includes the three public PacFORMS: the 213 Message Form, the Logistics Request form, and the City Scan/Flash Report form. The private version of the combined installer is available to ECs in the usual password-protected section of the website and includes the other forms which have always been distributed privately to ECs.

All SCCo ARES/RACES packet users should download and install the SCCo combined installer. You will need to enter your Identification info as usual (call sign, name, tactical call, if any) and select your TNC and designated BBS. BBS assignments can be found on the county website packet page at <http://www.scc-ares-races.org/packet.html>. Click on the link for Packet Frequency and BBS Info. Please do not adjust or customize any of the TNC or BBS settings since they are optimized for the county packet network.

Individuals who also use packet on other systems can also install the standard version of Outpost from the Outpost website. But, the SCCo version should always be used when accessing the county packet network to insure optimized use of the frequency.

## Network-wide Bulletins

On June 7<sup>th</sup>, a new feature will be available: network-wide bulletins. Bulletins can be used for distributing information to all users without having to know who to send the message to. There will be two official bulletin areas: “perm” and “30days”. The “perm” area will hold bulletins of a permanent or semi-permanent nature. Examples include standard procedures for accessing and using the network. The “30days” area will hold bulletins of a temporary nature. Bulletins posted to this area will expire and be automatically removed after 30 days. Examples include weekly packet check-in totals and bulletins for drills and public service events.

When you install the new combined Outpost/PacFORMS installer, the configuration includes these bulletin areas. As you use Outpost, you will see your system checking the bulletin areas each time you connect to the network. For now, we ask that you NOT post any bulletins. We will provide more info about using this feature in the near future.

## Migration of Weekly Packet Check-ins

Beginning Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, the weekly Monday night and Tuesday night packet check-ins will move to the county packet network. Individual users will log into their designated BBS using their FCC call sign. Individual users should use the same BBS that is assigned to their city or agency. Cities EOCs and agencies can log in using their assigned tactical calls. BBS assignments can be found on the county website packet page at <http://www.scc-ares-races.org/packet.html>. Click on the link for Packet Frequency and BBS Info. The check-in message will be addressed to SNYEOC and text or PacFORMS messages can be used. The check-in totals will be published as a bulletin to the "30days" area.

More information about the migration of weekly packet check-ins will follow in the near future.

## Schedule Summary

Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>:

- Upgrades to W6XSC-1. The node will be down most of the day.
- New combined Outpost/PacFORMS installer available after W6XSC-1 upgrades completed.

Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup>:

- Weekly packet check-ins move to county backbone.

## Action Items

1. Mark your calendars for the W6XSC-1 upgrade on June 7th. Watch for a follow-up/completed notice on the scc-packet Yahoo group later that day.
2. After the upgrade on June 7<sup>th</sup>, download and install the new combined installer for Outpost and PacFORMS from the county website. Use the Setup menu to configure your identification, select your assigned BBS, and select the TNC appropriate to your situation. The installer, BBS frequencies and BBS assignment information can all be found on the packet page of the county website: <http://www.scc-ares-races.org/packet.html>.
3. Mark your calendars for the June 21<sup>st</sup> move of weekly packet check-ins to the county backbone.

## 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