

Pskmail Conference 24-SEP 2011 at Eersel

DRAFT Minutes of Meeting

1 Participants

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2 Project Status in Punch Lines

- Great breakthrough: Modems for the various modes can be integrated into the client. After all modes have been implemented the client will work without fldigi which is a big plus for the users. The new client (jpskmail 2.0) will have a new modem screen called "DSP".
- Throughput: About three DIN A4 pages of text per minute at a bandwidth of 500 Hz !
- Scanning and summoning: Summoning is a new feature which allows selective frequency change and decreases congestion. The server comes to the client's frequency to handle traffic (see details).
- Mode selection: The user selectable number of modes can be reduced. This allows the user to adapt the system to lessons learned about regional HF propagation. As people tend to forget to set the default mode the button "Fixed list" will be replaced by "Apply". In case that nothing was set the "OK" button will be greyed out.
- Default channel mode: A clear statement is required such as PSK250 for the US and PSK500R for the rest of the world.
- Services: Popular is the use of zyGrib for weather maps. Interest was indicated to also handle Automatic Identification (AIS) data. HF telnet is less used but could be useful for remote control of station features such as rotor position. Earthquake and tsunami warnings were not perceived as vital because official regional centres provide this data. Which other information services could be of interest ?
- Ping: "Ping" which is replied by any server has been enhanced by "Inquire" to receive a reply from a specific server.
- Within the user database the mail record the passwords are now encrypted.
- Android pskmail: VK2ETA works on porting the client. The raw PSK modems already have been ported. After implementation of the Reed Solomon Identifier (see details)

THOR and PSK robust modes will follow.

3 Results

3.1 Release Policy

- In principle a six months release policy was anticipated as useful.
- For validation a vote through the mailing list will be carried out
- Final decision is up to Rein and Per (the Democrats).

3.2 Frequency Plan

- Within each HAM band two frequencies should be assigned: APRS calling frequency and a service frequency for traffic.
- Participants are requested to observe the HAM bands and report low QRM frequencies to per@crusefalk.se . Based on the participants input Per will extend the draft frequency plan
- “Summoning” - a new function - is applied. “Summoning” allows selective frequency change: The server will come to the summoning frequency to handle traffic.
- Participants are requested to advertise “Summoning” to other pskmail users
- Automatic disconnect after 30 minutes for stations running idle was agreed

Draft Frequency Plan			
Band	Calling Frequency	Service Frequency	Remarks
80 m	3589 kHz	summoning	
40 m			
30 m	10148 kHz	10147 kHz or summoning	World-wide
20 m	14111 kHz	summoning	
17 m	18108 kHz	summoning	
15m	21118 kHz	summoning	
12 m			
10 m			

3.3 pskmail Monitor

Roberto reported constraints with paths and settings of the apache web server which differ not only between different Linux distributions but also between different releases of the same distribution. As a way out Roberto will test the light weight server “nginx” from <http://nginx.net/> . Another option would be to create HTML code from a PHP program and place the files in the document tree of the web server.

3.4 HAMNET

The Home Amateur Multi Media Network (HAMNET) as a purely TCP/IP based radio network was brought to the attention of the participants. Outlined by an example from North Germany this rapidly growing 5.7 GHz network could be utilised by pskmail. The technology itself in for instance emergency situations allows to create a local network attached to pskmail.

3.5 Todo list and Priorities

1. Client with built in java modems (Rein)
2. Porting RSID, PSKxxxR and THOR to Java (John)
3. Forwarding of mail between servers – also solves the French request to separate HAM radio from Internet (Rein)
4. Big Ear Pacific (Rein)
5. Connection to chart plotters – NMEA conversion required
6. Sending subsets of AIS data stream – filter criteria required
7. Porting the server to java by using the client as a base? (longterm)
8. APRS object editor – low priority

For curiosity Per will do a test run of the pskmail server on Windows using a combination of tools such as Gnu tools for windows. Remark: Initial tests show that the server does indeed run on windows but more work is needed with a new installer and removing of hardcoded unix paths in the server itself.

3.6 Public Relations

- The “pskmail philosophy” needs to be highlighted in any communications and distinguished from other systems such as winlink etc.
- Bimonthly invitation to a Skype conference – Per
- Notes to be taken during the conference – Arno volunteers
- Participants are requested to email names and addresses of periodicals, specialized monthlies, editorial boards of HAM radio magazines or any other media that could carry information about the pskmail project to df3ds@tech-inter.com . Based on this input Arno will create a press mailing list and feed it with project news on a bimonthly basis
- Per is running a series of presentations to sailing clubs

- Joerg works on advertising pskmail to the German TRANS-OCEAN registered society

3.7 Streamlining Communication Channels

As too many non pskmail related support requests - such as problems with the operation systems ... in particular Linux - end up with the developers it was decided:

Priorities of support channels		
Priority	Channel	Remarks
1	Mailing list	
2	Facebook	Main purpose of using facebook is to increase the projects' visibility. On facebook participants are requested to divert people with a support request to the mailing list

4 Details

- For the energy budget Rein introduced the dimension milliwattseconds per character [mWs/char] .
- Introducing FEC and interleaver turns PSK into robust modes
- Frequency accuracy problems was observed in MFSK multi tone decoding. The solution to this type of poblem is to use THOR modes.
- The Reed Solomon Identifier (RSID) developed by Patrick Lyndecker (F6CTE) will be implemented in java. This is a precondition for the Android port (see Project Status)
- Hangup of rigcat in fldigi seems to have disappeared. With the integration of the modems this hangup will be a subject of the past. There are still other problems with fldigi though...

5 Next Conference

The next conference will be held in September 2012 at Wachtum / Loeningen (JO32us), Germany. Arno will contact the group for further arrangements.