

Getting Started With D-RATS

A Quick Start Guide

D-RATS is a free, easy to use, multi-platform program for data communications with D-STAR devices or through the Internet. The software can be run on Windows, MacOS and Linux/UNIX computers. D-RATS provides many functions including:

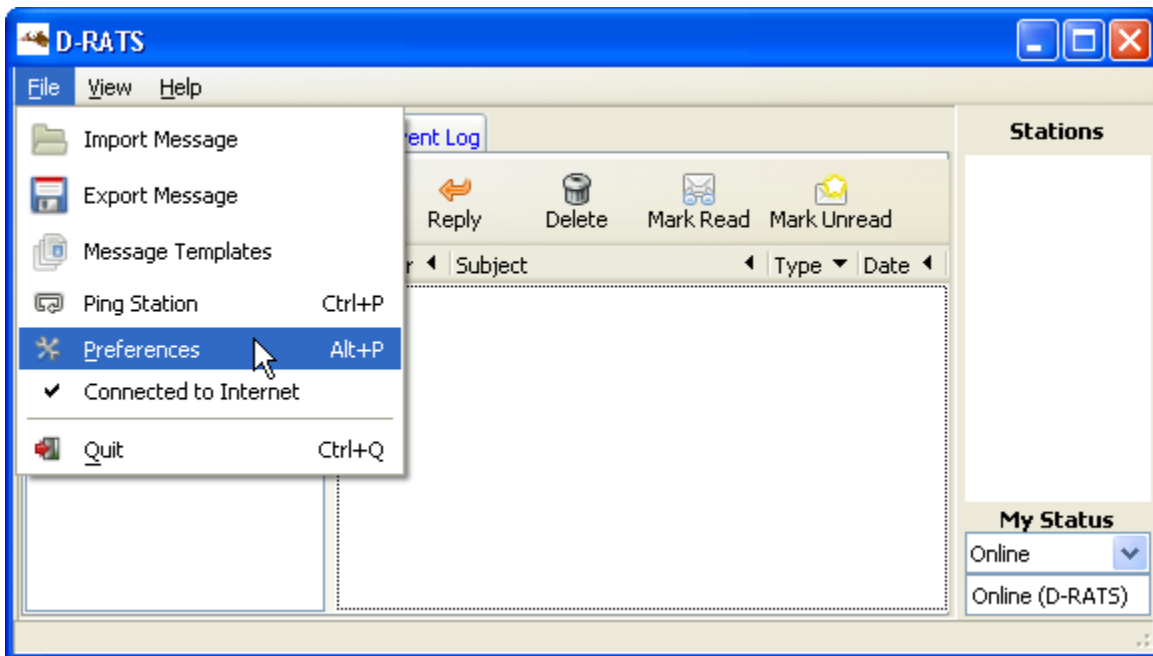
- Instant messaging style chat
- Addressable messaging with attachments to other online stations, SMTP email addresses, Winlink 2000 addresses
- Send forms (predefined forms included, define custom forms)
- Unattended file transfer (all file types)
- Position reporting with included maps
- Repeater proxy software links radio, Internet clients

Step 1 – Download and Install

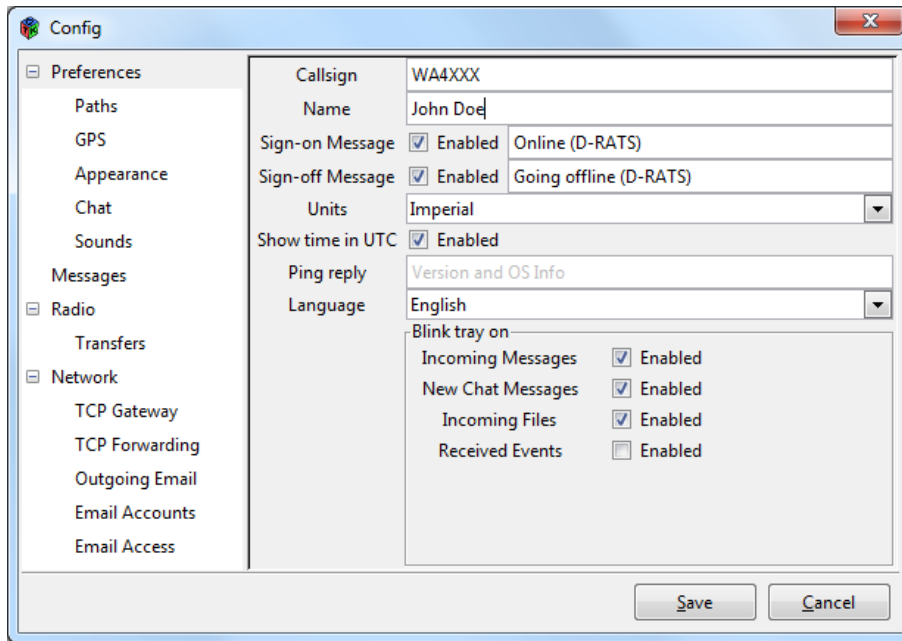
Download the latest version of D-RATS at <http://www.dstarinfo.com/drats.aspx> for your operating system and install to your computer. For Windows, there are two versions of D-RATS for 32 or 64-bit PCs and operating system. Download and unzip to the desired folder.

Step 2 – Set Preferences

Prior to using D-RATS there are several preferences that must be configured. These can be accessed by selecting File > Preferences:



A list of configurable item groups will appear in the left hand column. The following subsections describe the options contained in each group.

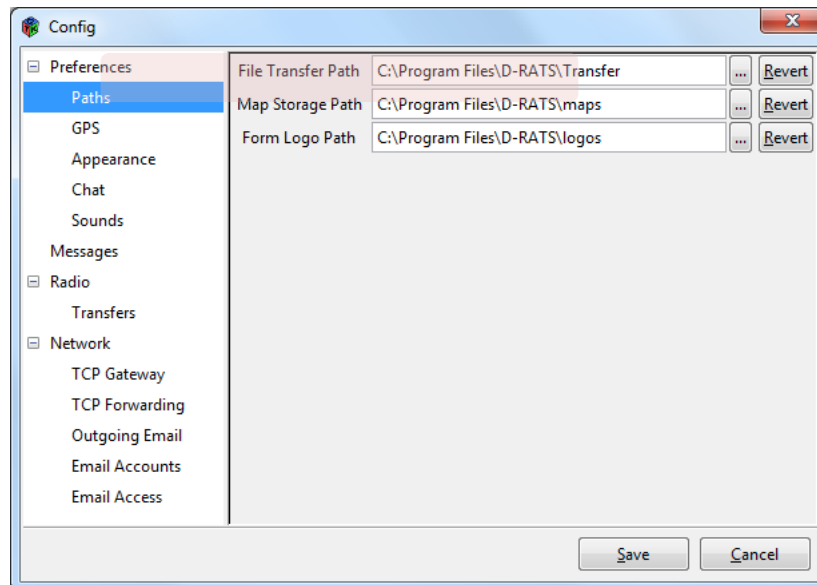


- **Callsign:** Normally, your FCC callsign is entered. Optionally, a tactical callsign may be used. The callsign will identify the station for chat, messaging and file transfer. When sending to this station the callsign entered above is used to address the station.
- **Name:** Enter your name or location (ex. EOC, Shelter 1)

For a quick start, leave all other information at its default value.

Step 3 – Set Paths

Under Paths, you may leave these at their default value or define a different folder. The important one is the **File Transfer Path**. This folder is used in File Transfers as your local location for remote stations to view and download your files. Files uploaded to your station are placed here.

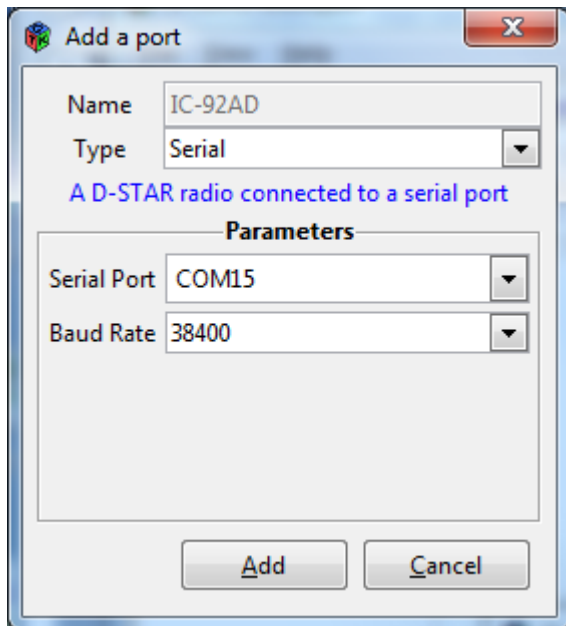
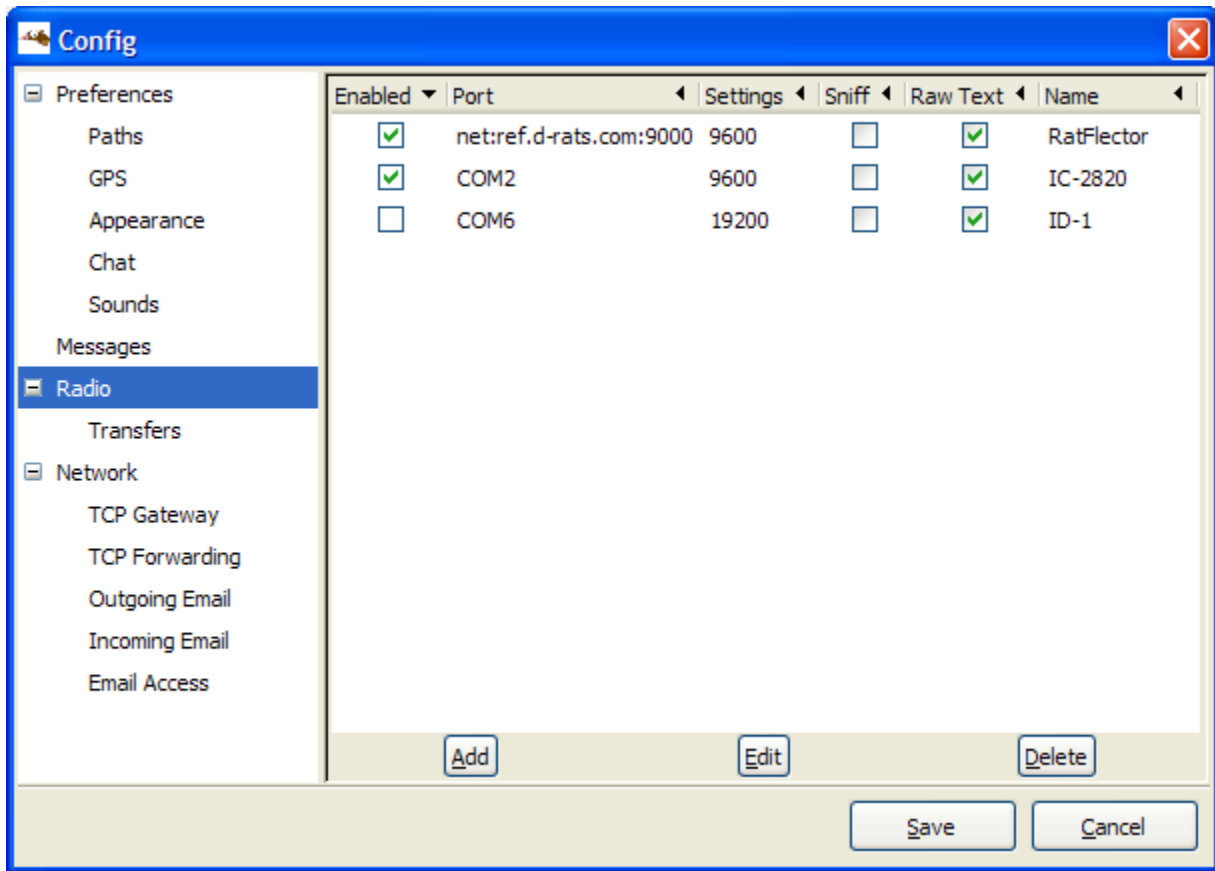


Step 4 – Define Radios

In this section, you will define the connections D-RATS will use to communicate. If connecting to a D-STAR radio, the GPS settings must be disabled in the menus of the radio. The table below provides the information for most Icom radios needed to define a radio in this section and set the menu selections.

Radio	Rate	Radio settings required for D-RATS functions	Updated 12/5/2014
ID-51 Plus, Anniversary Edition (Fast Data)	9600	Note: Fast Data only works with another ID-51A Plus or ID-5100A with firmware update) GPS>GPS SET>GPS Select>OFF, GPS>GPS TX Mode = OFF, GPS>GPS Auto TX = OFF, GPS>GPS Set>GPS Out = OFF, DV Set>DV Data TX = Auto, DV SET>DV Fast Data>Fast Data>ON, Function>CI-V>CI-V (Data Jack)>OFF	
ID-51 Plus, Anniversary Edition (Slow Data)	9600	GPS>GPS SET>GPS Select>OFF, GPS>GPS TX Mode = OFF, GPS>GPS Auto TX = OFF, GPS>GPS Set>GPS Out = OFF, DV Set>DV Data TX = Auto, DV SET>DV Fast Data>Fast Data>OFF, Function>CI-V>CI-V (Data Jack)>OFF	
ID-31A/51A (Standard Edition)	9600	GPS>GPS SET>GPS Select>OFF, GPS>GPS TX Mode = OFF, GPS>GPS Auto TX = OFF, GPS>GPS Set>GPS Out = OFF, DV Set>DV Data TX = Auto,	
ID-5100A	9600	Using a Data Cable: Function>Data Speed=9600, DV Set>DV Data TX=Auto,	
IC-7100A	9600	Using a USB Cable: GPS>GPS Select=OFF, GPS>GPS TX Mode=OFF, GPS>GPS Auto TX=OFF, Connectors>USB2/DATA1Function>USB2 Function=DV Data, Connectors>USB2/Data1 Function>GPS Out=OFF, Connectors>USB2/Data1 Function>DV Data/GPS Out Baud=9600 Using a Data Cable: GPS>GPS Select=OFF, GPS>GPS TX Mode=OFF, GPS>GPS Auto TX=OFF, Connectors>USB2/DATA1Function>Data1 Function=DV Data, Connectors>USB2/Data1 Function>GPS Out=OFF, Connectors>USB2/Data1 Function>DV Data/GPS Out Baud=9600	
IC-80AD	9600	DATATX = AUTO, GPS-TX = OFF, GPS.ATX = OFF	
IC-U82	9600	ATX = ATXON, SPD = SPD96	
IC-V82	9600	ATX = ATXON, SPD = SPD96	
IC-91AD	38400	DV DATA TX = AUTO, GPS TX = DISABLED, GPS AUTO TX = OFF	
IC-92AD	38400	DV DATA TX = AUTO, GPS TX = DISABLED, GPS AUTO TX = OFF	
IC-2200	9600	ATX = ATXON, SPD = SPD96	
IC-2820	9600	DV DATA TX = AUTO, GPS TX = DISABLED, GPS AUTO TX = OFF, UT123 must be installed	
ID-800H	9600	DVT = DVTAT, SPD = SPD96	
ID-880H	9600	DV Set>DATATX = AUTO, GPS>GPS-TX = OFF, GPS>GPS.ATX = OFF	
ID-1	19200	DV DATA TX = AUTO, Cannot use PC application	

To use D-RATS with a D-STAR radio, it must be defined in the Radio section of the Preferences as below.

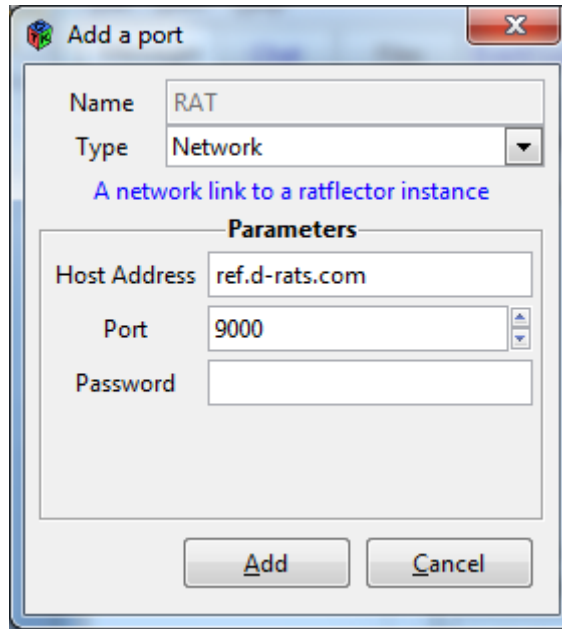


From the Config > Radio screen, click “Add” and select Type as Serial if connection to the radio with a serial cable. This is the normal connection type for a radio. Select the Serial Port that your data cable connects to on the computer. If you are using a USB to Serial adapter or a serial cable with a USB connection, you must locate the COM port number. In Windows, select START, Control Panel, System and Device Manager. Under Ports, you will see the COM Port assigned. The Baud Rate is dependent on the radio settings. The default baud rate is shown in the table above for each radio. You may add a Name to add a unique name to this radio. Click Add to save the configuration.

On the Config > Radio screen, ensure that the box is checked for the radio you have defined and wish to use. **You should only have one box checked at a time.**

To connect to the Internet (without a D-STAR radio), you will define and use a Repeater Proxy also known as a Ratflector. These are used to connect D-RATS Internet users together and may also connect to a D-STAR radio to link RF users as well. The Ratflector you use is determined by the D-RATS Administrators in your area. A default Ratflector is usually defined in D-RATS, but you may configure one just as you configure a radio.

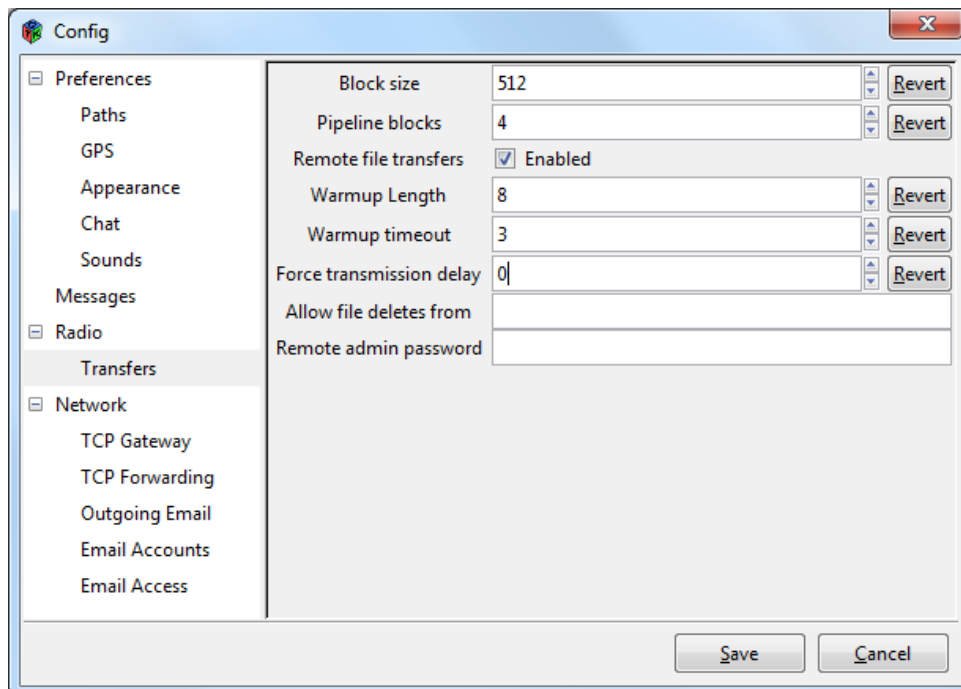
From the Config > Radio screen, click Add and select Network. Under Host, add the address of the Ratflector you intend to use. Port 9000 is the default port used by most ratflectors. gaares.ratflector.com is the Georgia ARES ratflector. Other ratflectors can be found at <http://dstarinfo.com/drats.aspx>.



Click Add to save your configuration. On the Config > Radio screen, ensure that the box is checked for the radio you have defined and wish to use.

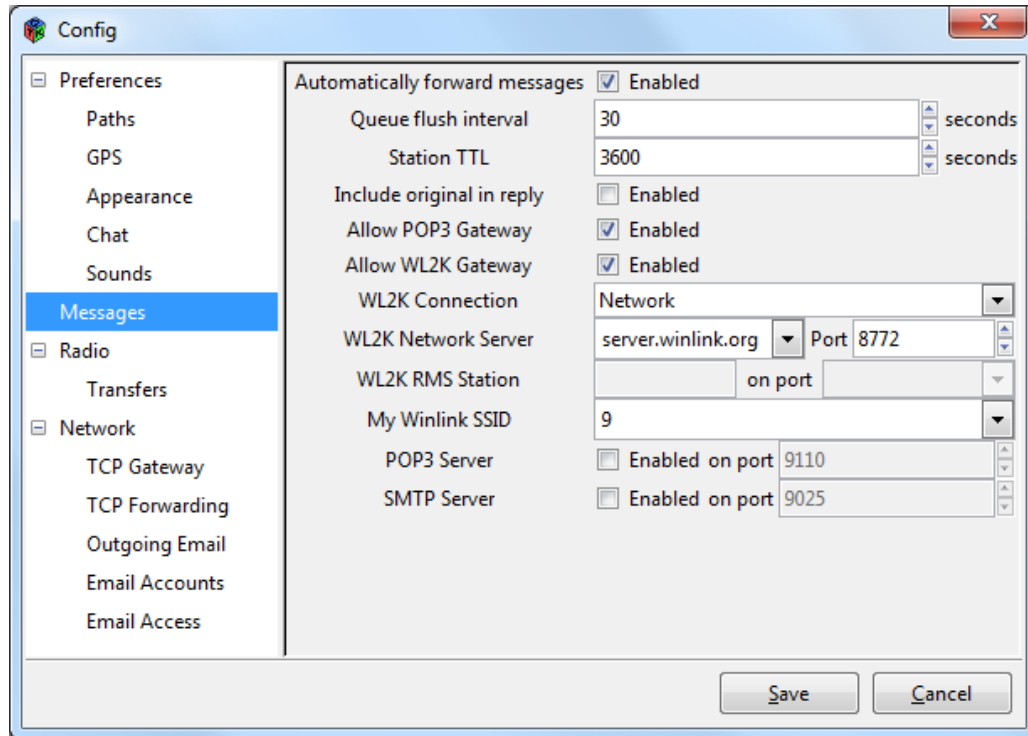
Step 5 – Transfers

This section defines the parameters used for communicating between D-RATS stations. Under Block Size, the larger the value, the more efficient the transfer is on a good connection. On a bad connection, setting this to be smaller reduces the amount of data that must be re-sent in the event of a bit of corruption. Normally, the default value of 512 is good. Normally the default values for the other settings are good for most situations. Make sure the “Remote file transfers” box is checked.



Step 6– Messages

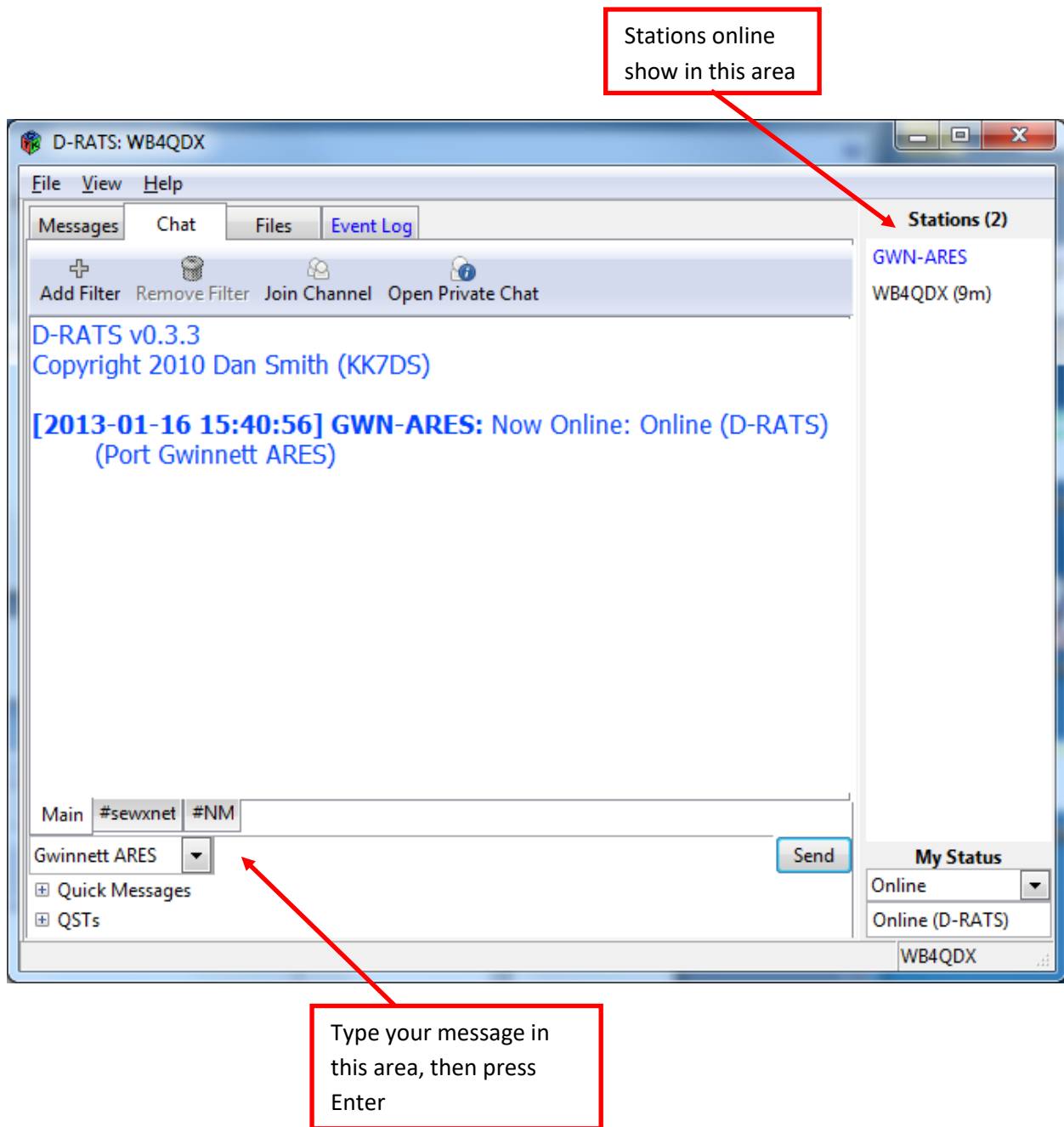
This section defines how messages are handled in D-RATS. The settings below are suggested. For the “My Winlink SSID” setting, any valid SSID may be used.



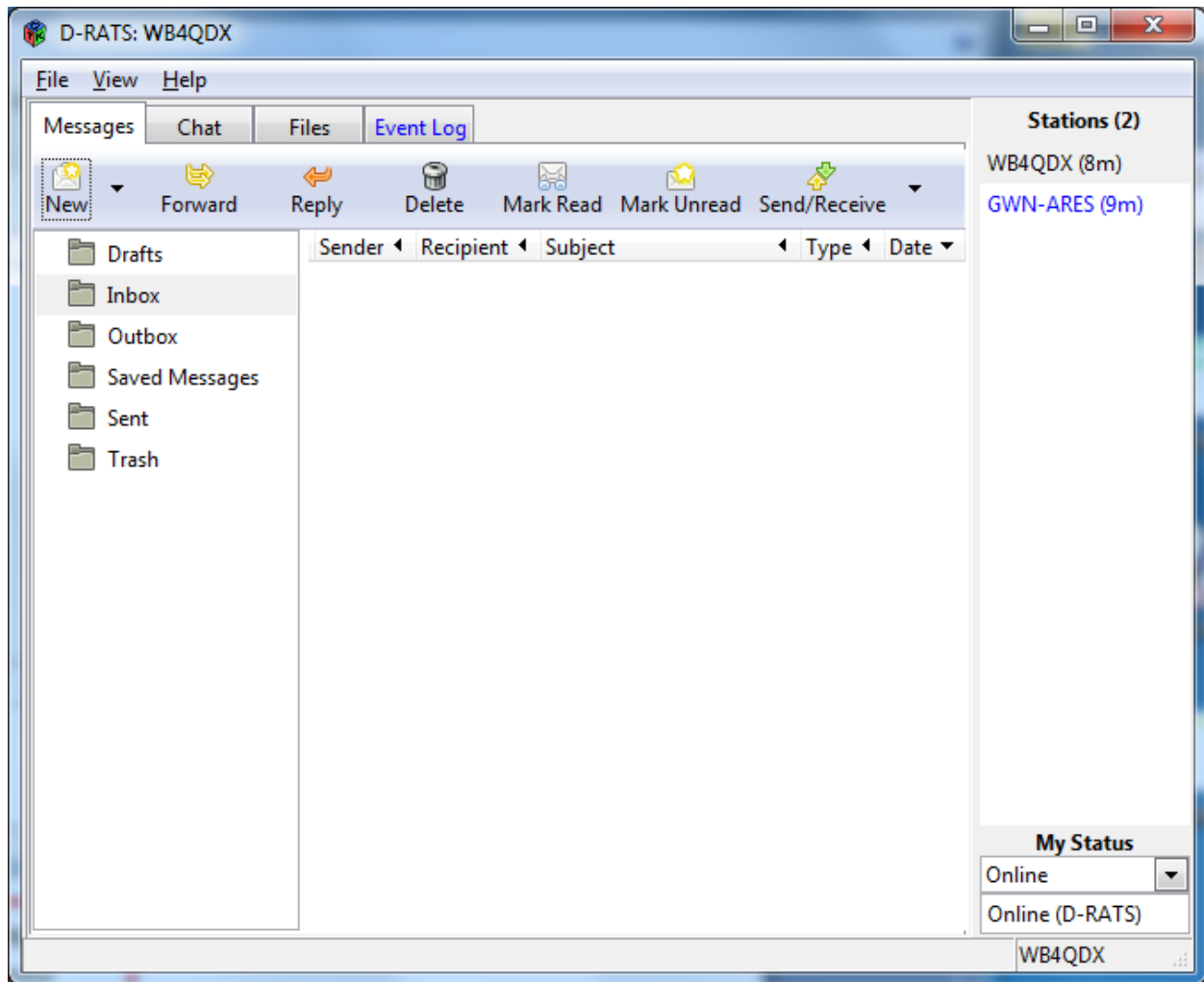
NOW LET'S USE D-RATS

Upon opening D-RATS, you will see four tabs across the top of the screen (Messages, Chat, Files and Event Log). Whenever there is activity in any of the modes, the program border will flash and the tab with activity will turn blue.

Let's start with Chat. Select the Chat tab. You may expand the screen size by grabbing a corner with your mouse and dragging to the desired size. If you selected the Georgia Ratreflector (gaares.d-rats.com) under Radios, a list of online stations will appear on the right side of the screen under Stations. If none appear, with you mouse inside the area, right-click and select Ping all Stations. You should see a list as stations reply to your ping. You can chat with the online stations by typing your message in the area near the bottom of the screen as shown below.



Next, let's send a message to another station. Click on the Messages tab at the top. The Messages tab looks like many email clients with a familiar Inbox, Outbox, etc., and New, Forward, Reply, etc.



To send a regular message to another station, click New and either Memo or Email. Type in the Destination callsign. Remember, this can either be the actual callsign or a tactical callsign. To ensure the correct destination, ping all stations as in Chat and use the station name exactly as it appears. If the desired station is not online, you must still use the exact destination callsign, but the message will not leave your Outbox until the stations is online.

Type a subject and your desired message and click Send. After a short delay, you message will begin to send as seen on the staus line at the very bottom of the main screen.

Email Message

Save Send Send via Print

Email Message

Routing Information

Source Callsign WB4QDX

Destination Callsign KF4PWI-1

Subject Message from EOC

Message

Additional cots needed for 25 new arrivals. Send as soon as possible.

Attachments

Path

To send a form such as an ICS-213, select New and the desired form from the list. A standard ICS-213 form is included with D-RATS. Fill in the information and select Send. Only the contents of the form will be transmitted for efficiency and the form will be populated on the receiving end.

The receiving station can click Print to view the form as it actually appears for delivery to the recipient.

ICS-213 Form

Save Send Send via Print

ICS-213 Form

Routing Information

Source Callsign WB4QDX

Destination Callsign

Incident Name

Time 16:27

Date Jan 16, 2013

To

ICS Position

Sender

ICS Position

Subject

Message

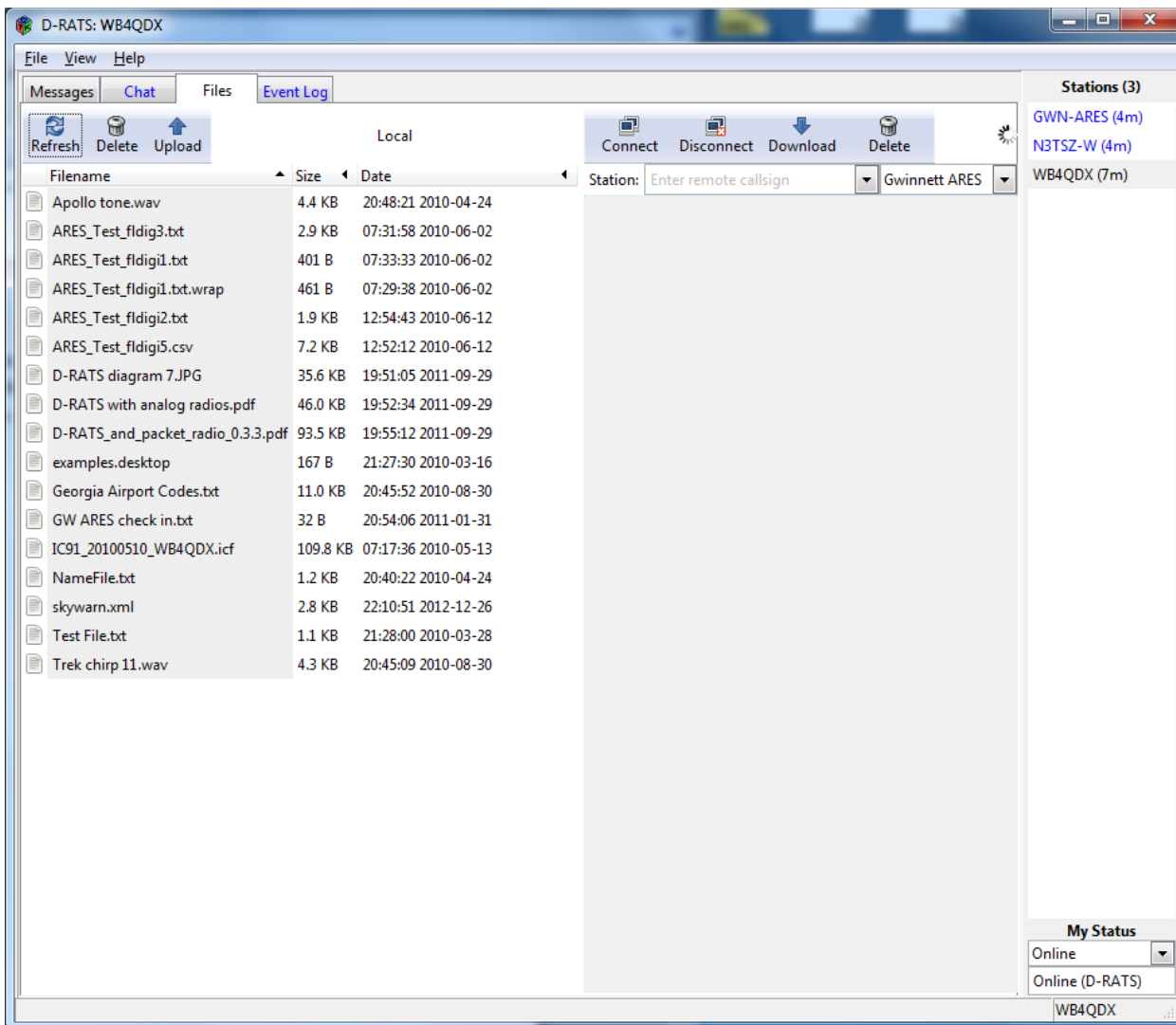
Attachments

Path

To open messages or forms received, click on Inbox and click on the desired message to open.

Our final Quick Start function is File Transfer. Click on Files to begin. The left half of the screen shows any files on your local computer in the folder you defined in the initial configuration for file transfers. Files that are transferred to your station from a distant station will be stored there as well. **A station must be online to send or receive files.**

To upload a file to a distant station, first connect to that station. If there callsign/name shows on the right side of the screen under Stations, you may select them in the Station drop down box and click Connect. The station will show connected on the status line at the bottom of the screen when connected. If there are files in the remote station's folder, you will see a list of files on the right half of the screen. Select the file you wish to upload to the distant station, by highlighting it on the left side and click Upload. The file transfer will begin and progress will be shown on the status line at the bottom.



To download a file from a distant station, again make sure you are connected to that station. Click on the file on the right side of the screen highlighting the file and click Download. Again, the file transfer progress will be shown at the bottom of the screen. Be sure to Disconnect from the distant station when you are finished transferring files.

The Event Log tab provides a convenient log of all activities and provides a date and timestamp for each activity.

These are the basic functions of D-RATS. There are other functions and features that can be used. For more information on the latest D-RATS features and development, join the D-RATS group at <http://groups.io/g/d-rats>.