

Tactical Addresses

Paclink AGW (and future Paclink versions) provides a gateway between a number of user email clients (such as MS Outlook, MS Outlook Express, Eudora, Netscape, and other mail programs) and the WL2K system. The initial installation of Paclink dictates that a proper radio callsign be assigned for communications with WL2K and this call by default also becomes the account name for a mail client. The email account is required and cannot be deleted.

Paclink may be configured to accommodate any number of additional mail clients in addition to the default. These clients will typically have account names that are not radio callsigns. We call these account names 'tactical addresses' since they are used to route messages through the WL2K system.

In order to accommodate the dynamic routing features of WL2K tactical addresses are limited to certain formats that distinguish tactical addresses from radio callsigns. A tactical address may consist of alpha characters only or else of alpha characters, followed by a dash, followed by alphanumeric characters. A name may not exceed 12 characters. Valid examples: MLBShelter, RedCross-123, Police-99A. Invalid examples: W1ABC, K3DEF-1, (radio call signs)."

How is a tactical address created?

First of all Paclink must be installed and the Paclink POP3/SMTP Postoffice configured with the radio callsign that is used to communication with WL2K. In addition, at least while setting up tactical addresses Paclink needs access to Internet.

Before going further let's clear up some terminology. A tactical address, an email user name, and an email account name are all names for the same thing. Don't let the different names confuse you.

When adding a tactical address you are actually creating an email account. Open the Paclink POP3/SMTP Postoffice windows and click on 'Accounts'. Type in the tactical

address (account name) and a password for accessing mail addresses to that tactical address.

Click on the 'Add New Account' button. Upon clicking this button Paclink accesses the master WL2K database and registers the tactical address or, if the address is already in use, rejects your choice and advises you that the address is in use. You may also use this dialog box to delete a tactical address you have created or to change the password.

Once you add a new account the 'Add or Update the Account to Outlook Express' button will be activated. If you click on this button the Outlook Express email client on the local computer will be preset for that account name used. This will not configure Outlook Express on any remote computer or for any other email client program.

It is also possible to create a new tactical address in an emergency when no Internet connection is available. In that case the address will only be recognized within the range of the local PMBO. The WL2K network administrator can add it to the master WL2K database manually for global coverage. Plan ahead - don't wait until Internet is down to start configuration of your Paclink installation!

How are tactical addresses routed?

The full Internet address for a tactical address is **<tactical address>@winlink.org**. The **@winlink.org** must be included when sending a message to a tactical address from any email client. When using AirMail or other direct radio client the **@winlink.org** is optional and it is best not to include it.

Once a tactical address is created it is important that at least one message be sent from that address even if it is to a non-existent Internet address. The passage of a message from a tactical address client (or any other user for that matter) establishes the return route for return messages. Routing is always dynamic within WL2K and routing is always based where a given tactical address or radio callsign has been seen by the system. Routing has a time-to-live of typically about three months. It is message flow that keeps the routing system alive. Use it or lose it.

Can I change the radio callsign for a Paclink site?

Yes, but as soon as the callsign is changed each and every client using that Paclink site must send a message through the WL2K system to reestablish message routing. If this is not done messages will be misrouted to the old callsign.

Can a tactical address be used with more than one Paclink site?

No. If you want to move a tactical address from one site to another it must first be deleted from where it is in use and reentered at the new site. Once the address is reentered a message must be sent from that address to establish routing.

Can a tactical address be used with other than a Paclink gateway into WL2K?

Not presently. Since a tactical address is not a valid radio callsign it cannot be use for a direct radio connection. Paclink is the only current software that provides legal radio link with a tactical address user.