



RTC-TH EmComm Intro: GERC-AI Summary



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Community-based environmental education for the self-sufficiency and sustainability of small rural family farms

ชุมชนตามสิ่งแวดล้อมศึกษาเพื่อการพึ่งตัวเองและยั่งยืนชนบทขนาดเล็กครอบครัวฟาร์ม

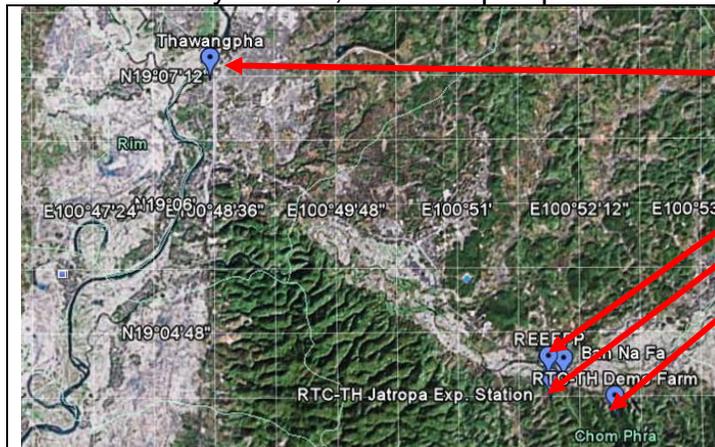
You may post questions / comments to the Discussion area of our website

A general overview of the RTC-TH EmComm effort is available on the RTC-TH Tech website in the GERC-AI Section. The circumstances are quite different from the situation in Glendora. The challenges of operating in a Thailand can be daunting.

In addition to my facing a very steep learning curve with the radio technology, there are few Thai Hams fluent in English. My Thai is virtually non-existent at this point. I struggled for 20 years to get “baby” Chinese non-proficiency and will probably struggle with Thai until I die. But that doesn’t mean I can’t make a contribution.

We also struggle with a paucity of places to get very basic materials. For example, I was trying to find screws, washers, and nuts to attach a SO239 chassis connector. The shop owner produced a large plastic basket filled with assorted screws, bolts, etc. He poured them on an old newspaper and began to help me shift through the assortment to find 4 some things that might fit. Some consider me the perpetual optimist, but No, I wasn’t really hoping to find 4 that matched. OK, so now you get the idea that finding something like an HRO is not likely in my neck of the woods.

This is our “backyard” (see the diagram below). We are based in northern Thailand (about 19 N 100 E). We have a location in town near the Thawangpha District Offices and Police station. Not bad EmComm neighbors, right? We have 3 alternative operating positions in Na Fa village (about 12 km / 7.4 mi from our town site): Ban Na Fa Elementary School, our hill top experimental farm and our demo farm.



The RTC-TH EmComm operating sites are:

- our town station site near the Thawangpha District Offices and District Police Station
- Ban Na Fa Elementary School
- Our hilltop experimental farm station site
- Our demonstration farm station site

In the event the Nan River floods the Thawangpha area, we are prepared to relocate to sites in the Nam Yang Valley which are less prone to flooding.

Rural Training Center-Thailand: Emergency Communications

Unlike GERC, the RTC-TH EmComm program has only 1 license operator. So it can be a rather lonely feeling at times. This is self-sufficiency up front and personal. Thank goodness for the internet! And now, thank goodness for GERC-AI!

Meet Sparky and Sam: Sparky is an all electric vehicle. Sam is the companion trailer. Both were made by CFEE (Clean Fuel Energy Enterprise Co Ltd.) a Thai company in the Bangkok area. Initially this was to be a demonstration alternative energy vehicle. (In the long run, we aim to produce our own electricity using a renewable bio-fuel grown on the farm.) Logic dictated an EmComm role for Sparky and Sam.

Some of you participating in GERC Field Days have undoubtedly grunted and groaned lifting and lugging wet cell batteries to set up your rigs. Well, I didn't relish the idea of being a lone operator struggling with all this stuff. So with Sparky (who sports 8 batteries + an optional spare) and Sam (with 2 batteries + 1 optional spare), I can ride my batteries to a field day!



Sparky and Sam, newly delivered prior to the installation of any RTC-TH EmComm gear (~Oct 2009)

Sparky “the Batt-mobile” got his name by a combination of reasons. I wanted a catchy cutesy name for him. He was born with a spark of inspiration. Sparks or Sparky I recall was a common nickname for comic book radio operators. The “Batt-mobile” addendum came directly from the fact he had 8 deep cycle wet cell batteries onboard.

Sam “the Volts-wagon” came about by my affinity to the name Samantha. From the Aramaic and English origins, Samantha means “the listener.” For EmComm, the name is significant as the typical duty cycle is 4:1...listening 4 minutes for each minute of transmitting. The “Volts-wagon” was appended for the 2 batteries carried by Sam, and also connects to my fond memories of my first car, a Volkswagen.

Mark has suggested keep GERC Hams updated on the progress of outfitting Sparky and Sam for their EmComm roles. So watch the GERC-AI Section of the GERC website for announcements. Full detailed update reports will be posted to the RTC-TH Tech website in the GERC-AI Section.