Portable Radio Solutions

Scott Honaker, N7SS
Define the objectives

- Capabilities vs. size and weight
- Ease of deployment and use
- Robust design
  - Will it withstand rough handling/weather
- Clever/fun features
- Professional appearance and layout
Let’s look at the elements

- Radios and accessories
- Cases/enclosures
- Power supply and distribution
- Antenna systems
Radios and accessories

- VHF/UHF
- HF + antenna tuner
- TNC or sound card adapter
- D-STAR capability
- Laptop/netbook
- Coaxes, adapters, headset, pens/pencils, notepads, forms, manuals
Cases and enclosure options

- Pelican/Stormcases
- Portable music rack-style cases
- Ammo cans/ANVIS case
- Dry boxes
- Plastic tubs
- Toolboxes
- Video game cases
Pelican/StormCase

- Rugged Plastic
- Expensive
- Locking, Watertight
- Open on top

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Portable music rack cases

- From SKB, Gator, GRC, Eurolite, TKL, etc.
- 19” wide x ~2 inch “Rack Units”
- Rugged – Vinyl over wood or plastic
- Moderate price
- Available with shock mounting
- Rack rails available separately
Music cases

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Ammo can/ANVIS case

- Ammo cans are limited in size, heavy with uncomfortable handles
- Both are metal, rugged and gasketed
Drybox

- Gasketed plastic ammo can style
- Only a couple sizes
- Lightweight, rugged, limited mounting options
Plastic tubs

- Unlimited varieties/sizes
- Generally not as rugged or weatherproof
- Inexpensive
- Complicated mounting
Toolboxes

- Plastic boxes are tapered
- Metal provides simpler mounting
More Toolboxes

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Video game cases

- Storage for game and controllers
- Most are top-opening
- Softcases available
Tactical Cases

- TAC-COMM TRC-1
- iPortable Rack
More Cases
Power supplies

- Switching supplies are compact
- Available from Astron, Samlex, Alinco, Jetstream, Gamma Research and MFJ
- Can be noisy on HF
- Extras include meters, additional power outlets, adjustable voltage
Power Supplies
Power distribution

- West Mountain Radio Rigrunners are ideal
- Other Anderson Powerpole options
- Fuse blocks available (marine versions are best)
- Barrier strips can also be used (be aware of inadvertent contact – no insulation)
Powerpoles

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VHF/UHF Antennas

- Mag mount verticals
- Larsen BSA kit
- Small yagis/quads
- Mast material, guys, tripod, shims, bungee cords
HF Antennas

- Wire dipoles, windom or G5RV
- Buddipole with tripod, mast, guys
- Verticals - Superantennas MP-1, hamstick or screwdriver with ground radials