

In the suite of WSJT programs there is JT65a, originally designed for moon bounce communications but now used as well for terrestrial communications at VERY low powers and very small and inefficient antenna. I have worked KC2QII/KH6 in Honolulu with a piece of wire dangled out of his hotel room window on 40m with 30watts.

There is also a very recent development, also by K1JT, called WSPR.

You can download all this stuff from:

www.physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/

If you go to: www.chris.org/cgi-bin/jt65talk you can see the guys setting up the skeds and generally proving feedback on terrestrial paths. There are direct links as well to similar pages for EME and Meteor Scatter communications.

As I explained, WSJT modes are not "chat" modes - the messages are very stylized in order to provide maximum intelligibility at low received signal strengths. For the "Chat" modes, of course the oldest is RTTY but the newer ones like Olivia, PSK31 and MFSK16 all provide good "conversational" modes at low powers and strengths down to about -15dB.

I use free software called "MultiPSK" and this can be downloaded free from:

www.f6cte.free.fr/index_anglais.htm

It has a bewildering number of modes and enough knobs and push buttons on it to keep any self respecting radio amateur happy for weeks.

The aging demographics of our amateur radio operators is evident in the move to town houses and cluster type accommodation. This precludes the use of big antenna, places demands on low power in recognition of TVI issues and finally simply the small size of these accommodation units dictates that having the OM bawling "CQ 20" on one side of the postage stamp sized living room will not go down well with the XYL trying to watch "7de Laan" on the other. Hence the remarkable rise in the use of digital modes with which you can communicate round the world with low power, inefficient antennas and the only sound that of the tapping keyboard.