GET GOING GUIDE

HFConverse **AMTOR**

PACTOR's older cousin: a connected link, called by SELCALL

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AMTOR works like PACTOR: a connected, error-corrected link where the modem takes turns for you. Instead of a full callsign, you call a station by its four-letter **SELCALL**.

> **Golden rule:** if you're ever unsure whether you're still transmitting, press the red **Stop TX (DD)** button.

Before you start

Get these right once and every mode just works.

1. **Your callsign is set.** Settings ▸ Station. Without it, Send CQ stays greyed out.
2. **HFC is connected to the modem.** The Terminal shows the modem's `cmd:` prompt. The Mode menu only works while you're connected.
3. **Radio control works, if you have it.** Type a frequency and press **Set Frequency**: the radio should move. No CAT? Set the frequency on the radio by hand.
4. **The radio is in USB or USB-Data** (DIGU), with the audio level that already works for your modem.
5. **Open the screen from the Mode menu: Mode ▸ AMTOR**.

For AMTOR also check:

- **Your modem has AMTOR.** The P4 Dragon and DR-9400 don't, so the menu item is greyed out on those.
- **Your radio switches fast enough.** AMTOR gives each station only a fraction of a second to change between transmit and receive. Some recent radios that work PACTOR well are too slow. If AMTOR links never start or keep repeating while PACTOR works, this is the likely cause.
- **Your SELCALL:** the first letter of your callsign plus the last three. GW0XYZ = **GXYZ**, G4QRS = **GQRS**. Tell people, or put it in your CQ (the AMTOR CQ macro does).

The screen

From top to bottom:

Part	What it is
Their side	Their callsign (or *Waiting for a station*) and their text, full width.
Your side	What you've sent. Text still waiting to go out shows greyed at the foot.
Working line	**Working**, **Name**, **Selcall**, **Call** and **Stop call (DD)**.
Compose	Where you type.
Beside Compose	**Clear Queue**, **Log QSO…**, **Capture** and **Close**.
Action row	**Send CQ**, **Auto CQ**, **FEC**, **Stop TX (DD)**, **Over**, **Changeover**, **End QSO (QRT)**.
Status strip	The modem state, the **Listen** button, and whose turn it is.

AMTOR keeps its own **Favorites** list, separate from PACTOR's, and has a plain dial frequency (no CF box).

Making a call

1. Set the frequency.
2. Put their callsign in **Working**. The **Selcall** box fills itself in; if theirs is different, type over it.
3. Press **Call**.
4. No answer? Press **Stop call (DD)**.
5. When the link comes up, type your greeting and press **Ctrl+Enter**.

Calling CQ

1. Press **Send CQ** for one call, or **Auto CQ** for several separate calls. AMTOR CQs go out as an FEC broadcast that anyone can read, with your SELCALL in the text.
2. **Stop TX (DD)** ends it at once.
3. Wait. A station that calls your SELCALL connects automatically.

Taking a call

- With the AMTOR screen open, the modem **answers by itself** when someone calls your SELCALL. Their text appears on their side.
- The modem only reports a SELCALL, so their callsign isn't filled in for you. Select it in their text, right-click, **Add selection to working callsign**.

Sending a broadcast (FEC)

FEC is AMTOR's open broadcast: anyone listening can read it, and nobody has to connect. It's like Unproto on the PACTOR screen.

1. Press **FEC**. It lights up and the transmitter keys.
2. Type a line in Compose and press **Enter**. It goes out at once. Repeat for each line.

3. Finished? Press **FEC** again. The modem sends what it still holds, then goes back to listening.
4. In a hurry? Press **Stop TX (DD)**.

FEC only starts when you're not in a call or a link. **Call**, **Send CQ** and **Auto CQ** are greyed out while it's on.

The conversation

Key (in Compose)	What it does
Enter	**Send**. While the link is yours it goes out at once; otherwise it waits in the queue.
Shift+Enter	A new line.
Ctrl+Enter	**Over**: sends your queue and hands the link over.
Ctrl+Y	**Changeover** when it's your turn; **Break in** while they're sending.
F1–F12	Your macros.

- AMTOR's own changeover signal does the hand-over, so HFC sends no `btu … de …` line and you don't need to type `+?`.
- AMTOR's character set has no `>`; HFC leaves it out for you.
- **Live** sends each word as you press Space. You can still correct the word you're typing.

Ending and logging

1. Press **End QSO (QRT)** and confirm. Your queue and `73 G4QRS de GW0XYZ sk` go out, then the link closes.
2. The **Worked Station** window opens, filled in. Check it and press **Log QSO**.
3. **Close** puts the modem back to its `cmd:` prompt.

Listening to NAVTEX

NAVTEX is the maritime weather and navigation-warning service. It's sent the same way as AMTOR FEC, so the modem decodes it while the AMTOR or PACTOR screen is open, with no button to press. It's on air around the clock, which makes 518 kHz a good first test that your radio, modem and HFC work together.

Service	Set the dial to
518 kHz, international, in English	516.5 kHz, USB-Data
490 kHz, national, often in the local language	488.5 kHz, USB-Data

Messages start with `ZCZC` and end with `NNNN`. Reception is usually best at night. Save both channels as AMTOR favorites.

Quick reference

I want to…	Do this
Call a station	Working (Selcall fills in) + **Call**
Call CQ	**Send CQ** or **Auto CQ**
Be called	Keep the screen open; the modem answers
Broadcast to anyone	**FEC** on, type, **FEC** off
Send my over	**Ctrl+Enter**
Break in	**Ctrl+Y**
Stop at once	**Stop TX (DD)**
Finish	**End QSO (QRT)**
Log it	The log window opens by itself

When things go wrong

What you see	Try this
AMTOR greyed out in the Mode menu	Not connected to the modem, or it's a P4 Dragon or DR-9400 (no AMTOR).
Send CQ greyed out	Set your callsign in Settings ▸ Station. Hover over the button to see why.
A call never connects	Check the frequency and their SELCALL. Stop with **Stop call (DD)**.
Links fail to start or keep repeating	Your radio's transmit/receive switching is probably too slow for AMTOR.
Nobody answers your SELCALL	Make sure they know it: it's in your AMTOR CQ macro.
NAVTEX prints nothing	Check the dial is 1.5 kHz below the centre frequency, in USB-Data.
The modem won't leave AMTOR	Type `PT` in the **cmd:** box.

Issue history

Issue	Date	Changes
3	October 2026	NAVTEX on 518 kHz as a first test of your set-up.
2	October 2026	Clear Queue, Log QSO…, Capture and Close moved beside Compose.
1	October 2026	First issue.

More detail on every screen and setting is in the HFConverse User Manual. mw0gbq.hamserve.uk · HFConverse is not affiliated with SCS.