GET GOING GUIDE

HFConverse **HFC to HFC**

Extra features when both stations run HFConverse

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Any PACTOR program can work an HFConverse station. When the other station runs HFConverse too, you get a few extras: you can see that they use HFConverse, exchange QSL cards, send each other messages that are kept, and move to a new frequency together with one button.

> **Golden rule:** these features need HFConverse at both ends. Look at the **HFC** tag at the top of the window during a link: **green** means the other station is confirmed as HFConverse.

Before you start

1. **Your callsign is set.** Settings ▸ Station.
2. **HFC is connected to the modem**, and you're on the **PACTOR** screen (**Mode ▸ PACTOR**). These features work over a PACTOR link.
3. **For QSL cards:** your card is uploaded in **Settings ▸ Logging & QSL ▸ My QSL Card**.
4. **For messages:** nothing to set up. Both stations need HFConverse 0.1.1.0 or later. Messages live in **Mail ▸ HFC-Sync…**, and work whichever screen you're on. If your modem mailbox is on, leave **direct mode** off (see *Good to know*).
5. **For QSY:** you're **On the Air** (**Station ▸ On the Air ▸ Go on the air**), and so is the other station. HFC needs an internet connection for this.
6. **Radio control helps.** With CAT set up, HFC sets the frequency for you. Without it, you set the radio by hand.

Is the other station using HFConverse?

At the start of each PACTOR link, HFConverse sends one short line, `[HFC MSG]` (`MSG` says it takes messages; HFConverse 0.1.0.9 and earlier send `[HFC]`). Another HFConverse hides it and shows the **HFC** tag next to **OTA** at the top:

Tag	Means
Green	Their line arrived: confirmed HFConverse. QSL cards and QSY work, and messages too when they run 0.1.1.0 or later.
Amber	They're on the On the Air list, so probably HFConverse, but nothing has arrived yet.
Grey	Not known yet.

Received also shows a note such as *[G4QRS is using HFConverse - QSL cards can be exchanged]*. Other programs just print the line, which does no harm.

Exchanging QSL cards

1. During the link, press **Send Image…** beside Compose. The image window opens.

2. Press **Send my QSL Card**. Your card goes out at its own small size (about 8 KB), tagged with your callsign.
3. The other station's HFConverse opens its image window by itself, shows the card arriving, and files it in its album.

A card sent to you goes straight into **QSL ▸ QSL Album…**, with the sender's callsign and the date. **Send my QSL Card** is greyed out until the HFC tag is green, and its tooltip says why.

Pictures work with any PACTOR station that can receive them: **Choose Image…**, check the size and time shown, then **Send**. PACTOR is slow, so keep pictures small.

Sending messages (HFC-Sync)

A QSO is gone once the link ends. A **message** is kept: a subject, the text, and attachments if you want them, like a short e-mail. It lands in the other station's **Mail ▸ HFC-Sync** window, and their HFConverse confirms that it has it. You can write it at any time; it waits in your **Outbox** until you're next linked with that station, and goes out only when you say so.

Messages go **directly** to the station you're linked with. There's no mailbox and no internet in between: the message travels over your PACTOR link, and stays on the two computers.

The HFC-Sync window

Open it with **Mail ▸ HFC-Sync…**. It looks like a small mail program:

- **Folders** on the left: **Inbox** (messages you've received), **Outbox** (waiting to go) and **Sent**, each with how many it holds.
- **The list** in the middle: one line per message, with its status.
- **The message** on the right, with its attachments and a **Save…** button for each.
- **The toolbar**: **Compose**, **Reply**, **Forward**, **Address book**, **Delete**, **Retry** (for a message that wasn't delivered), and **Send to G4QRS** while you're linked with a station that has messages waiting.

The menu shows how many messages you haven't read yet: **Mail ▸ HFC-Sync… (1 new)**.

Writing a message

1. In **Mail ▸ HFC-Sync…**, press **Compose**.
2. **To**: the callsign of the station it's for. With a link up, it already shows the station you're linked with. The **To…** button opens your address book, and the box suggests stations from it as you type part of a callsign or a name. For several stations, separate the callsigns with `;`: `G4QRS;GW0XYZ`.
3. Type a **Subject** and the text. Umlauts and other accented letters arrive as you typed them.
4. **Attach…** adds a file, if you want one.
5. Under the text, the window shows the size on the air and roughly how long it takes, for example *2.1 KB on the air - approximately 1 min 26 s at P2, approximately 5 s at P4*. A message can hold up to 100 KB, text and attachments together.
6. Press **Put in Outbox**. The message waits there until you're linked with that station.

To several stations it's still one message: it goes to each when you're linked with them, and stays in the Outbox, *Delivered 1 of 2*, until they all have it. In the reading pane each callsign in **To** has the same colours as the light below, for that station.

The light beside each message in the Outbox and Sent: **blue** not sent yet, **amber** sent and waiting for the receipt, **green** delivered, **red** not delivered; **green and amber in turn** when a

message to several stations has reached some of them. Hover over it for the detail.

Reply and **Forward** work as in any mail program: select a message, press the button, and Compose opens with To and Subject filled in.

Signature: type yours in **Settings ▸ HFC-Sync ▸ Signature**, and new messages, replies and forwards start with it. Keep it short: it goes with every message.

> **Keep it small.** A message without attachments goes as plain text, which PACTOR compresses, so a few lines go much faster (both stations need HFConverse 0.1.4.0 or later; before that it was several times longer). A page of text takes well under a minute at PACTOR-2. A photo straight from a phone is far too big: make it small first, or send it as a picture with **Send Image…**.

The address book

Address book in the toolbar keeps the stations you write to: callsign, name and a note.

- **Add** a station: type the callsign, name and note, then press **Add**. If HFConverse knows the name from your QSOs, it fills it in for you.
- **Change** one: select it, change it, press **Save**. **New** clears the boxes for another station; **Delete** removes the selected one.
- **Write** (or a double-click) starts a message to the selected station.
- Reading a message from a station that isn't in the book yet? **Add to address book** appears next to *From*.

The address book is kept with your other settings, so **Settings ▸ Back up** saves it.

Sending it: an example

G4QRS has a message for GW0XYZ in the Outbox. Later they're in a PACTOR QSO.

G4QRS (the sender)

1. The link comes up and the HFC tag turns green. A strip appears above Received: *1 HFC-Sync message for GW0XYZ in your Outbox*, with **Send now** and **Open**. HFConverse also tells GW0XYZ's HFConverse that a message is waiting.
2. Tell GW0XYZ on air that a message is coming, then press **Send now**. Nothing goes out until you do.
3. The message goes out with a progress strip, like a picture. Carry on with the QSO when it's done.
4. When GW0XYZ next has the link, their HFConverse sends a receipt. Received notes *[Message "Sked tomorrow" delivered to GW0XYZ]*, and the message shows as **Delivered** in **Sent**.

GW0XYZ (the receiver)

1. Once the link is up, Received notes *[G4QRS has 1 HFC-Sync message for you - it comes when G4QRS presses Send]*, so you know one is coming. If G4QRS forgets, ask.
2. Nothing to do. HFConverse stores the message in the **Inbox**, plays a short sound and notes it in Received: *[Message from G4QRS: "Sked tomorrow" - in Mail > HFC-Sync]*.
3. At your next over, HFConverse sends the receipt by itself.
4. Read it in **Mail ▸ HFC-Sync…** whenever you like, during the QSO or after it.

Both stations can have messages for each other: each sends theirs when they have the link. Several messages go one at a time, and a picture and a message never go out at once.

Where a message has got to

The list shows each message's status:

Status	Means
Waiting to be sent	In the Outbox, for the next link with that station.
Sending	On its way now.
Sent over HF - waiting for the receipt	The other station's modem has all of it. Their HFConverse confirms at their next over.
Delivered (date and time, UTC)	Their HFConverse has stored it.
Not delivered	It arrived damaged twice. Select it in the Outbox and press **Retry**.

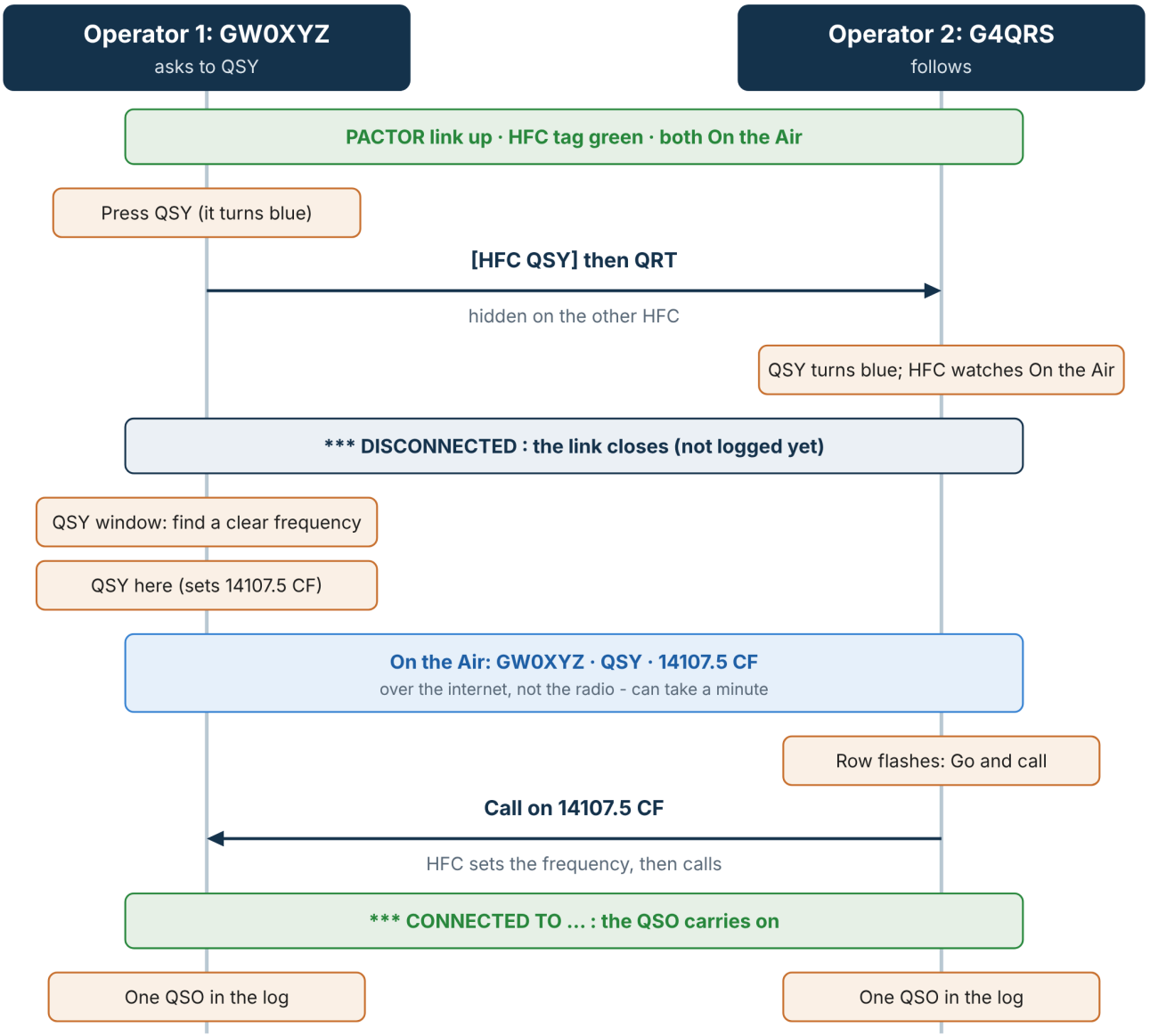
If the link ends while a message is going out, it goes back to the Outbox with the reason and is offered again next time. A message that arrives damaged is asked for again automatically, once. If the same message arrives twice, it's stored only once.

Good to know

- **Only your own link.** You receive messages sent to you on your link. A message passing between two other stations while you listen shows in Received as one line, *[HFC-Sync message from G4QRS on another station's link - not shown]*.
- **Portable calls are fine.** A message to G4QRS goes to G4QRS/P too.
- **Your messages stay on your computer**, in a protected file in HFConverse's data folder that only HFConverse can read or change. **Settings ▸ Back up** always includes them.
- **Send to G4QRS greyed out?** A line under the toolbar says why. Most often the other station's HFC line hasn't arrived yet: it comes when they first have the link, so hand over once. It also stays grey when nothing in the Outbox is for them.
- **Messages waiting for you** are announced only between stations with HFConverse 0.1.4.0 or later. You still can't collect them yourself: the other station sends them.
- **Any screen.** HFConverse sends its HFC line and takes messages even if you're on the Terminal or another screen when the station connects. **Send to G4QRS** in the HFC-Sync window works from any screen; the strip with **Send now** is on the PACTOR screen.
- **Modem mailbox in direct mode?** If your modem mailbox is on with **Let callers type mailbox commands without //** ticked (**Settings ▸ Modem Mailbox**), a station that connects reaches the mailbox, not HFConverse, and messages to you can't arrive. The HFC-Sync window warns you in an amber line. Untick direct mode; the mailbox itself can stay on.
- **Two station profiles?** Both share one set of messages and one address book, like the QSO log: a message waits for its station whichever radio the link is on, and one received in either profile shows in both.
- **Messages aren't private.** Like everything on the amateur bands, anyone listening with the right software could read them. Don't send anything you wouldn't say on air.

Moving to a new frequency together (HFC QSY)

The frequency is getting busy, or you want to leave a meeting frequency free. **QSY** closes the link, lets one of you pick a clear frequency, and tells the other station's HFConverse where you've gone through **On the Air**. Agree the QSY on air first.



QSY sits next to **Read From Radio**. It works when the link is up, the HFC tag is green, and you're both On the Air. When it's greyed out, its tooltip says what's missing.

Operator 1: the one who presses QSY

1. Press **QSY**. It turns blue. HFC sends `[HFC QSY]` and closes the link.
2. In the **QSY** window, find a clear frequency: tune the radio, or type the frequency and press **Set Frequency**. Listen first: **Channel** shows **BUSY** while the modem hears a signal.
3. Press **QSY here**. HFC sets the frequency and shows you On the Air as **QSY** there.
4. Wait for the call. It can take a minute, because the frequency travels over the internet.

Operator 2: the other station

1. Your **QSY** button turns blue and the link closes. Stay on the PACTOR screen: HFC checks On the Air every 15 seconds.

2. When operator 1 shows as **QSY**, you hear the On the Air sound, their row flashes blue, and HFC asks *Go there and call?*
3. Press **Go and call**: HFC sets the frequency and calls. **Not yet**: double-click the flashing row when you're ready.

When the link comes up again, the QSO carries on and both QSY buttons go grey. The log gets **one** QSO, from its first start, on the new frequency.

Cancelling

- Click the blue **QSY** button to cancel. Operator 1 goes back to the old frequency, and On the Air shows **QSY cancelled**, so the other station stops waiting.
- No call within 5 minutes: operator 1 is asked whether to go back or keep waiting. Operator 2 stops waiting after 5 minutes without a new frequency.
- Both pressed QSY at once? HFC lets one of you pick the frequency and the other follow.

Quick reference

To	Do this
See if they run HFConverse	Look at the HFC tag at the top: green = yes
Send your QSL card	**Send Image… ▸ Send my QSL Card**
See cards you've received	**QSL ▸ QSL Album…**
Write a message	**Mail ▸ HFC-Sync… ▸ Compose ▸ Put in Outbox**
Send waiting messages	During the link: **Send now** in the strip above Received
Read messages	**Mail ▸ HFC-Sync… ▸ Inbox**
Keep a station's details	**Address book** in the HFC-Sync toolbar
Send a message again	Select it in the Outbox ▸ **Retry**
Move frequency together	**QSY** ▸ pick a frequency ▸ **QSY here**
Follow the other station	**Go and call**, or double-click the flashing row
Cancel a QSY	Click the blue **QSY** button

When things go wrong

What you see	What to do
The HFC tag stays grey or amber	The other station isn't running HFConverse, or an older version. QSL cards need HFConverse 0.1.0.8 or later, QSY 0.1.0.9 or later, messages 0.1.1.0 or later.
Send my QSL Card is greyed out	No link, or the HFC tag isn't green yet. Upload your card first in Settings ▸ Logging & QSL.
No *HFC-Sync message … in your Outbox* strip	The HFC tag isn't green yet, the other station runs HFConverse older than 0.1.1.0, or the message's To isn't the station you're linked with.
The tag stays grey with a station you know runs HFConverse 0.1.1.0	Their HFC line didn't reach them, or theirs didn't reach you. Before 0.1.2.0, HFConverse only sent it with the PACTOR screen open when the link came up: both of you should update.
The other station gets *error* back when it connects	Your modem mailbox is in direct mode, so the mailbox answers instead of HFConverse. Untick direct mode in Settings ▸ Modem Mailbox.
Send to G4QRS is greyed out	Read the line under the HFC-Sync toolbar. Usually the other station's HFC line hasn't arrived: hand over once.
A message stays at *Sent over HF - waiting for the receipt*	The receipt comes at the other station's next over. If the link ended first, they most likely have it: ask them.
A message shows *Not delivered*	It arrived damaged twice, usually on a poor path. Select it in the Outbox and press **Retry**, or try when the path is better.
The size says it's too big	A message can hold up to 100 KB. Make attachments smaller, or leave them out.
QSY is greyed out	Hover over it: you or the other station may not be On the Air.
Nothing happens after QSY here	Check you're still On the Air. Operator 2's HFC checks every 15 seconds: give it a minute.
The radio didn't move	No radio control: set the frequency by hand. Received says which dial frequency.
No call on the new frequency	Wait, or cancel: you go back to the old frequency, where the other station waits.

Issue history

Issue	Date	Changes
6	November 2026	Messages are kept in a protected file, always included in **Settings ▸ Back up**.
7	November 2026	A message can go to several stations (`;` between the callsigns). A coloured light shows where each message has got to. A signature.
5	November 2026	HFC Messages is now called HFC-Sync: **Mail ▸ HFC-Sync…**. The HFC-Sync window says why **Send to** is greyed out, the other station is told when you have messages for them, and messages without attachments go as plain text, much faster (Dave G4AON).
4	November 2026	The modem mailbox's settings are now in Settings ▸ Modem Mailbox.
3	November 2026	Messages and the address book are shared by both station profiles. Messages work on any screen; the modem mailbox's direct mode stops them.
2	November 2026	New: sending messages (HFC Messages) and the address book. The HFC line is now `[HFC MSG]`.
1	November 2026	First issue: the HFC tag, QSL cards, HFC QSY.

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