Operations Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

After years of operation (and answering these questions), the following list of common questions has been assembled with a variety of answers. It is hoped that operators of HiSeasNet gear will look here first for answers or suggestions of things to try in troubleshooting scenarios. This document will be maintained to better share knowledge of all ship experiences with other operators. Please send any additional questions, commendations, additions, etc. to the HiSeasNet technical staff (<hiseasnet@ucsd.edu>) or post comments here in the wiki. Heck, feel free to add your own questions (with answers).

There is a separate collection of questions for scientists and other users at this FAQ.

The questions have been separated into the following categories (please feel free to add new ones):

- General
- Policy
- Equipment
- Troubleshooting

Recently updated questions

Recently Updated

As you and your team create content this area will fill up and display the latest updates.

Question Categories

General Questions

- What is this wiki thing all about?
- Why do VoIP phones sound so bad?
- How do I find my antenna's blackout zones?
- Can I stream video to shore?
- Are there any better coverage maps?

Policy Questions

- What do I do with a maintenance report?
- How much does HiSeasNet cost?
- Who do I talk to about joining HiSeasNet?
- Are there any mailing lists or discussion groups available?
- Is HiSeasNet staffed 24x7? 8x5?
- What happens during a maintenance visit?
- How do I get in touch with HiSeasNet people?
- How do I get a maintenance visit scheduled?
- How can I get more bandwidth during a cruise?
- How do I get the best response to my troubleshooting questions?

Equipment Questions

- What should my antenna do on power up?
- What are the N numbers?
- How do I swap my multiplexors?
- What is the difference between an SCPC and DVB carrier?
- What do the front panel lights on mean on the Teledyne modem?
- What is "DishScan" and how does it relate to other scanning modes?
- What is a Home Flag Offset? How do I adjust it?
- Why can I not talk to the Codan converter?
- What spares do you recommend having on board?
- What frequencies does HiSeasNet use?
- How do I get troubleshooting information from the antenna?
• How do I replace a level cage?
• How close can I safely get to the antenna when it is transmitting?
• Are the brakes on some SeaTel antennas sufficient to prevent damage?
• How does a blackout zone work?
• How do I adjust the tilt on my level cage?
• What does tracking mode do on the DAC?
• How do I free up sticky antenna bearings?
• Why does my Comtech CDM-570 modem not let me login?
• What spectrum analyzer do you recommend?
• Is it a DAC, a TAC, or an ACU?
• What is "Satellite Reference Mode"?
• How do I replace a PCU?
• How do I adjust my antenna trim values?
• How do I find my antenna's blackout zones?
• What does the Comtech error "AGC ALARM REDUCE COMPOSITE I P LVL" mean?
• What frequency should I be tracking on SatMex 5 (Ku-band)?
• Why is my air conditioner showing "ASF"?
• Why is my antenna pointed up and spinning around like a helicopter?
• How do I decode a "Pedestal Error"?
• Why do high elevation angles cause my antenna to track poorly?
• Why is my air conditioner showing "LPF"?

Troubleshooting Questions

• Why does my antenna track happily then spontaneously targets?
• How can I look at my transmit signal with a spectrum analyzer?
• When searching, why does my antenna zoom right past the satellite?
• I get a stronger EbNo a few degrees away from my last known azimuth or elevation. What is going on?
• The AGC is steady, but very low (around 200). What is going on?
• Why is my antenna controller’s threshold (THRS) value greater than the AGC?
• I have 4 green lights on my modem, but tracking is awful. What is going on?
• My AGC is at least a couple hundred counts below normal. What happened?
• What is ADMC data and why is it useful?
• Why does my DAC configuration spontaneously change?
• Why is antenna tracking working, but very sloppy?
• Why can I connect to some web pages but not others?
• When I enter the longitude of my satellite, the DAC finds another satellite or does not track well. What’s going on?
• Can I tweak my antenna alignment easily?
• What does the Comtech error "AGC ALARM REDUCE COMPOSITE I P LVL" mean?
• What frequency should I be tracking on SatMex 5 (Ku-band)?
• Why is my air conditioner showing "ASF"?
• What is a "Pedestal Error", and what can be done about it?
• Why is my antenna pointed up and spinning around like a helicopter?
• How do I decode a "Pedestal Error"?
• I have an error light and the error code on the right of the error screen reads 0008 or 0020. What does this mean?
• Why do high elevation angles cause my antenna to track poorly?
• Why is my air conditioner showing "LPF"?
• I have 4 green lights on my modem, but I cannot ping. What is going on?
Surely there is some answer that contradicts a manual or other source of information. Given the choice between believing the manual and believing these FAQs, it is probably best to believe a manual. These answers were written over time and many changes have been made to equipment during those times. It is entirely possible that the answer refers to older models or versions of firmware. There may also be some over simplification, too.