

## Operating , QSLs and More

Most of my HF operating at this time is on either FT-8 or FT-4 using an ICOM IC-7300. Also do some SSB and AM. I prefer FT-4 over FT-8. Other than the obvious of being faster than FT-8 in some cases I think FT-4 is better. The most popular HF band at this time for FT-4 seems to be 20 meters followed by 15 and 40 meters. I don't have 80 or 160 meters working here so I can't comment on these bands.

I don't have proper antennas for 30, 17 and 12 meters but use a 40 meter inverted V through and MFJ tuner. I think this antenna works better on 12 meters than on 40 meters. On 6 meters I use a dipole and have had success with it during the "E" season. For 20, 15 and 10 meters I use a Mosley TA33jr tri-band beam.

For contact conformation I use EQSL. Don't have anything against LOTW but thought EQSL is good enough plus it gives you QSL's to look at. Some people seem to have issues with using EQSL but I don't.

I find that I get a number of EQSL's from stations that I don't find in the log. Not sure why this is. Don't know how other stations log their contacts. Maybe if they just exchange call signs it's good enough for them. For FT-8/FT-4 I normally log the contact when the WSJT software considers it's a completed contact. I always check my log to confirm any EQSL that is in question.

I am not sure of the percentage of EQSL's I get back. I am guessing 20 to 30%. The Japanese returns may be better than that.

I started to look for entities (countries) when I went from a paper log to a computer log in 2013. As of February 2021 I have 170 entities logged and 110 confirmed. Recently I downloaded some of the EQSL awards that I have "earned". Some are not that difficult to get for us in North America for example eNAmerna. I am not all that impressed how they do some of their awards. eWAS and eDX100 are obvious but for example eCanada is not. Canada has 10 provinces and 3 territories. You can get an eCanada award by confirming 10 provinces and territories for example 9 provinces and 1 territory. You can get an endorsement for all 13. I have all 13. The same applies for some other awards. I think they could have made it more difficult in some cases.





February 12, 2021

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