

The Regional Training Team's (RTT's) Tips and Tricks

Signal Strength with the Iridium Modem

When fielding a remote RFID site, Local Area Network (LAN) connectivity may not be available. In this case, you will have to use the Iridium (satellite) modem. Technically referred to as the A3LA-IG, it is an L-Band transceiver manufactured by Motorola.

To get the best possible satellite connectivity with the Iridium modem, keep in mind that nearby buildings and trees are not your friend.



In order to initiate and maintain a connection with the Iridium satellite, a clear, unobstructed view from horizon to horizon is best. Why? Unlike the Global Positioning System (GPS), whose satellites are in a high geosynchronous orbit (always in the same position above the earth), low orbiting Iridium satellites are not. Having a clear, unobstructed view of the horizon will ensure your modem's antenna will always be able to "see" a satellite.

Your Iridium modem will most likely be supplied with a "hockey puck-type" antenna as seen in Portable Deployment Kits (PDKs). Older Early Entry Deployment Support Kits (EEDSKs) were shipped with a "stick" antenna. Either way, remember that nearby buildings and trees are still not your friends!

Fortunately, the handy Iridium Signal Strength application is there to help. Located on the desktop of your PDK's laptop computer, it will clearly indicate when you have the best possible signal strength.



There are 2 versions of the software—either is fine. Both visually indicate reception bars, not unlike what you see on your cell phone. The key here is to have *constant 4 or 5 bars*. Give it at least a full minute of monitoring before deciding to relocate your antenna.

For detailed instructions on connecting and configuring your Iridium modem, visit the user training section of the **RF-ITV Tracking Portal**:

https://national.rfitv.army.mil/Tutorial/Presentation/PDK_Overview_and_Setup/index.html



RF-ITV Global Help Desk (GHD)

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The RFID GHD should be contacted before any attempt to reach an FSE in your area.

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