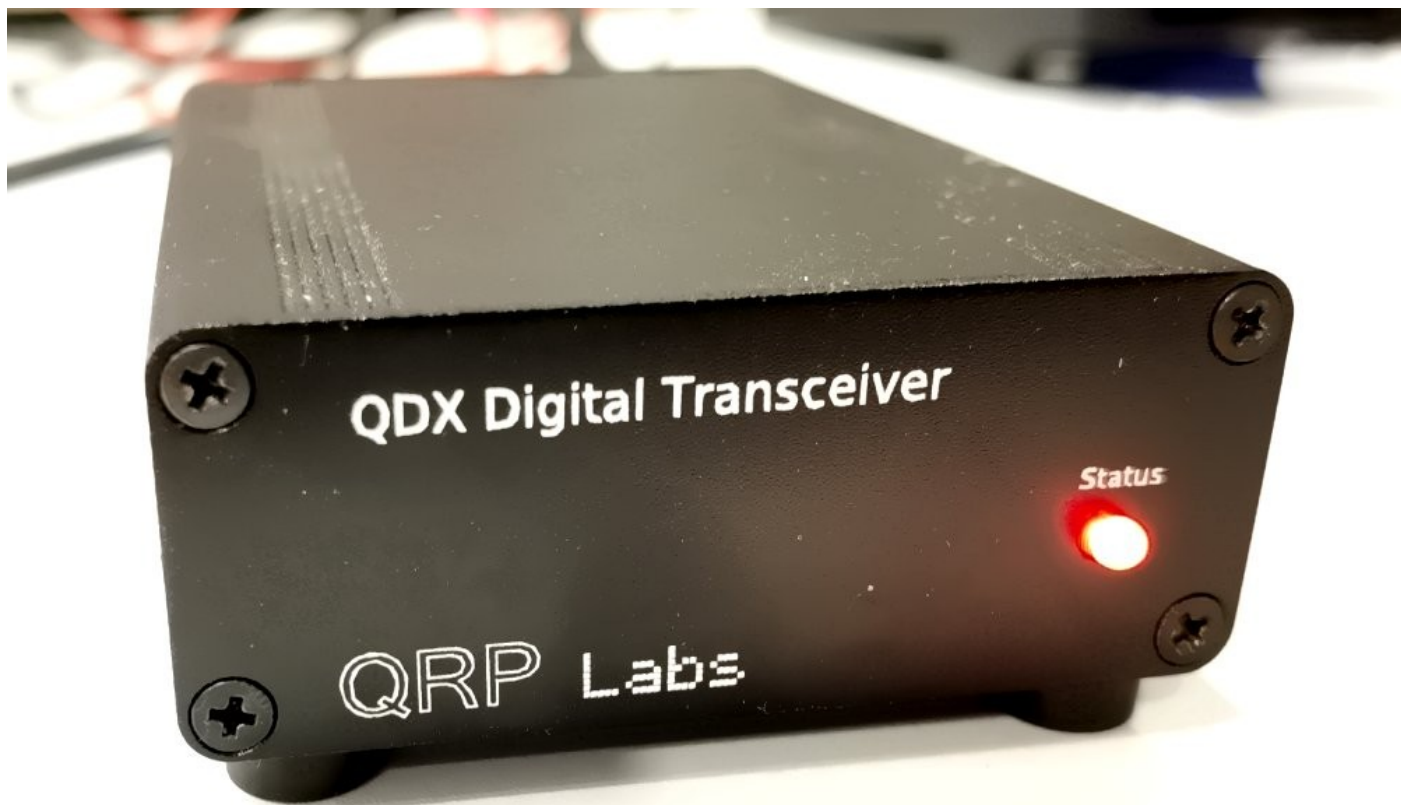


## QDX-M: QRP Labs Digital Xcvr - Monoband 630m-specific assembly notes

--- PCB Rev 5M ---



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## 1. Introduction

This manual is supplementary to the main assembly manual and describes specific instructions pertaining to the 630m version of the transceiver. Read the main assembly manual first.

MF and LF transceivers present specific challenges to the designer. Large inductances are required, which require either large number of turns on toroids or higher permeability cores; the latter however, suffer increasing risk of saturation as the frequency decreases, making it difficult to obtain sufficient spectral purity.

The constructor must be aware that the assembly of the MF and LF QDX-M variants is more challenging than at HF, and follow these instructions carefully.

## 2. Capacitors and inductors

The following table lists the capacitors and inductors specific to the 630m QDX-M:

Component	Value
C7	6,800pF (code "682")
C11	820pF (code "821")
C14	Two 6,800pF in parallel (code "682")
C20	6,800pF (code "682")
C28	1,200pF (code "122")
	2,200pF capacitor across each Drain-Source (two C's not on main schematic), (code "222")
L4	T50-6 (yellow) with 58 turns
L10	T50-6 (yellow) with 63 turns
L12	FT37-43 (black) with 18 turns
L14	FT37-43 (black) with 10 turns (same as HF versions)
T1	BN61-202 WTST binocular with 9:9 turns
T2	Two FT37-43 (black) with 15 turns trifilar

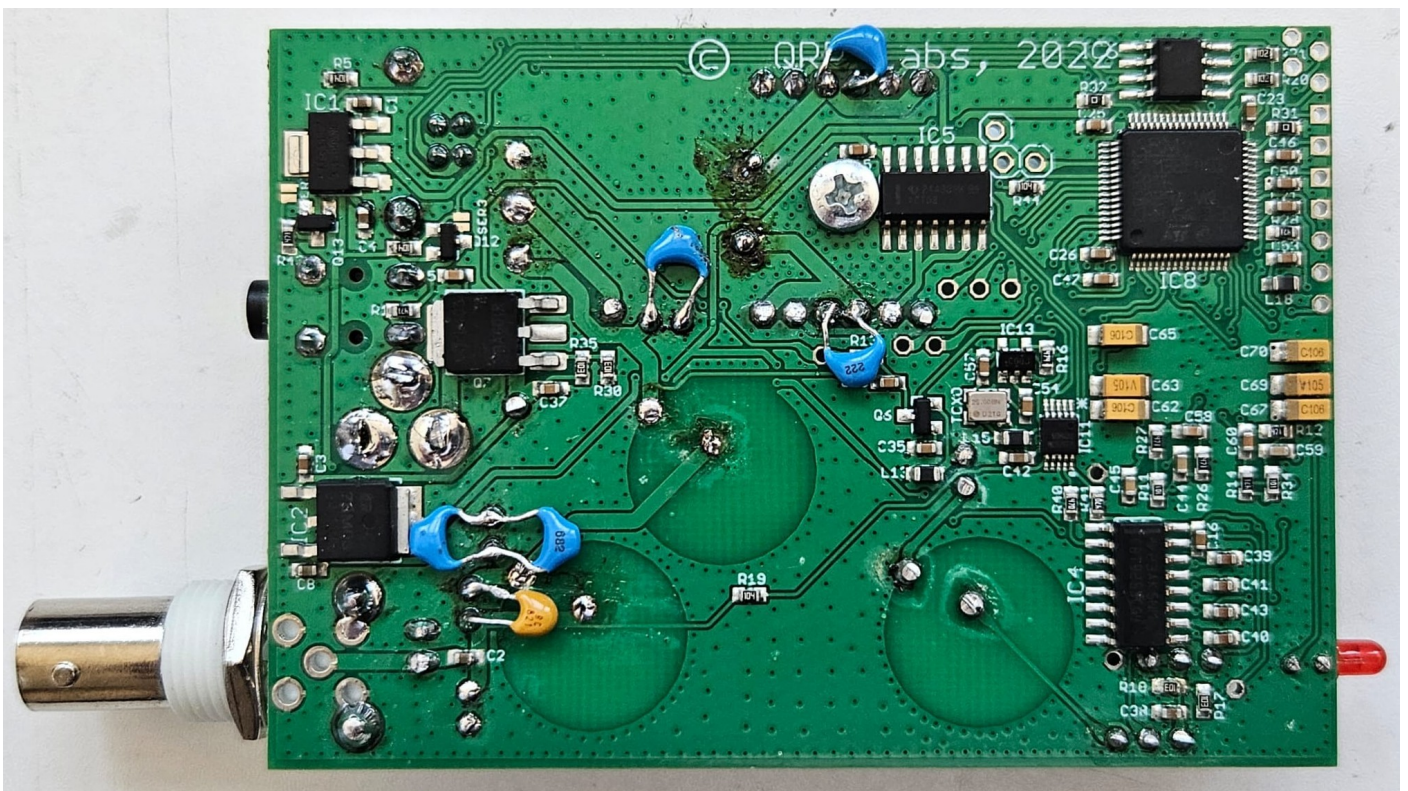


## Capacitors

Start with the installation of the capacitors since there are the smallest components. Note that some of the capacitors are made up of two or more capacitors in parallel. It is recommended to install one in the PCB in the normal way (insert component from the top, solder, then clip excess lead length); and the remaining parallel capacitor(s) on the underside of the board.

In doing so, the constructor must exercise good care to avoid short-circuits, solder blobs or dry solder joints. Inspect all work with a jeweller's loupe or other optical magnification, after soldering on each capacitor. It's recommended to have the capacitor ID labels facing upwards so you can easily check your work later. Capacitor leads should be kept short and tidy. There is not much clearance to the bottom of the enclosure, so capacitors need to be installed lying flat on the board surface. Take care to clip the wires and solder cleanly, to avoid the possibility of any leads accidentally shorting against the enclosure floor when the PCB is mounted inside the enclosure.

The following picture shows the underside of a 630m QDX-M board with the extra parallel capacitors installed.



## Inductors

Next proceed with the installation of the simple inductors. L4, L10, L12 and L14 are ordinary single winding inductors. There are quite a few turns on them, take care to count the turns carefully. Each time the wire passes through the central hole of the toroid counts as one turn.

Remember when installing the inductors that the most common fault is a failure to adequately remove the enamel insulation on the wire. The insulation could be scraped off, burned off with a lighter, or burned off with a blob of solder on your iron, but it MUST be removed at the joint so that a good electrical connection can be formed. It is recommended to check each joint after installation of each toroid, both with a loupe and also with a DMM to check that there is continuity across the toroid. Which means touching the DMM (in continuity beeper mode or resistance mode) probes on the solder blobs at each end of the toroid, or even better, another point nearby

connected by a PCB trace. Take care not to simply touch the DMM probe on the end of the copper wire itself, which will not check your soldering!

## **Trifilar transformer T2**

T2 is made of 15 turns trifilar wound. T2 in the 630m version differs in that two FT37-43 (black) toroids are held together and the transformer is wound on them as a single double-thickness toroid. Please refer to the main QDX-M for the construction, installation and testing of this component – but remember that there are TWO FT37-43 held together, and 15 turns (not 10 as in the document).

## **Power transformer T1**

To construct the power transformer T1, you need the document “PA transformer manual” which you may download from the main QDX-M web page <http://qrp-labs.com/qdxm>. However **the transformer for the 630m version has some differences compared to the manual, so read the following paragraphs carefully.**

For the 630m version of the QDX-M you must use the WTST “Weird Twisted Sisters Transformer” type described in section 3 of the manual. Do not use a simple conventional wound transformer and do not use the “RWTST” transformer. Although the WTST transformer is stated to be designed for a 9V operated QDX-M, in fact the efficiency of the 630m QDX-M is so high that it can be operated at higher voltages and powers. The section below provides performance data in this regard.

In the transformer manual, the WTST type has a turns ratio of 3:3. As in all current QRP Labs kits, 0.3mm wire is used for the transformer. But at 630m to ensure adequate inductance without causing core saturation, a larger number of turns is required. The two lengths of wire should therefore be longer, we recommend 66 and 70 cm respectively.

### **The turns ratio for the 630m transformer must be 9:9.**

Take care not to nick or scratch the wire enamel which could cause shorts inside the transformer. The edges of the binocular core holes are sometimes quite sharp and using a large drill bit to gently de-burr the holes by hand twisting, is often a good idea.

Steps 1 to 5 of the WTST section describe winding 1.5 turns of twisted wire onto the binocular core - which becomes 3:3 turns with one winding center tapped, since the “wire” is actually two wires twisted together. In the case of the 630m QDX-M transformer, having 9:9 turns, you should continue this process until you get to 4.5 turns (9 total).

The remaining procedure for the transformer is the same as the rest of the WTST instructions, and refer to the main QDX-M manual for the installation and testing of the PA transformer; these instructions apply equally to the 630m QDX-M PA transformer.

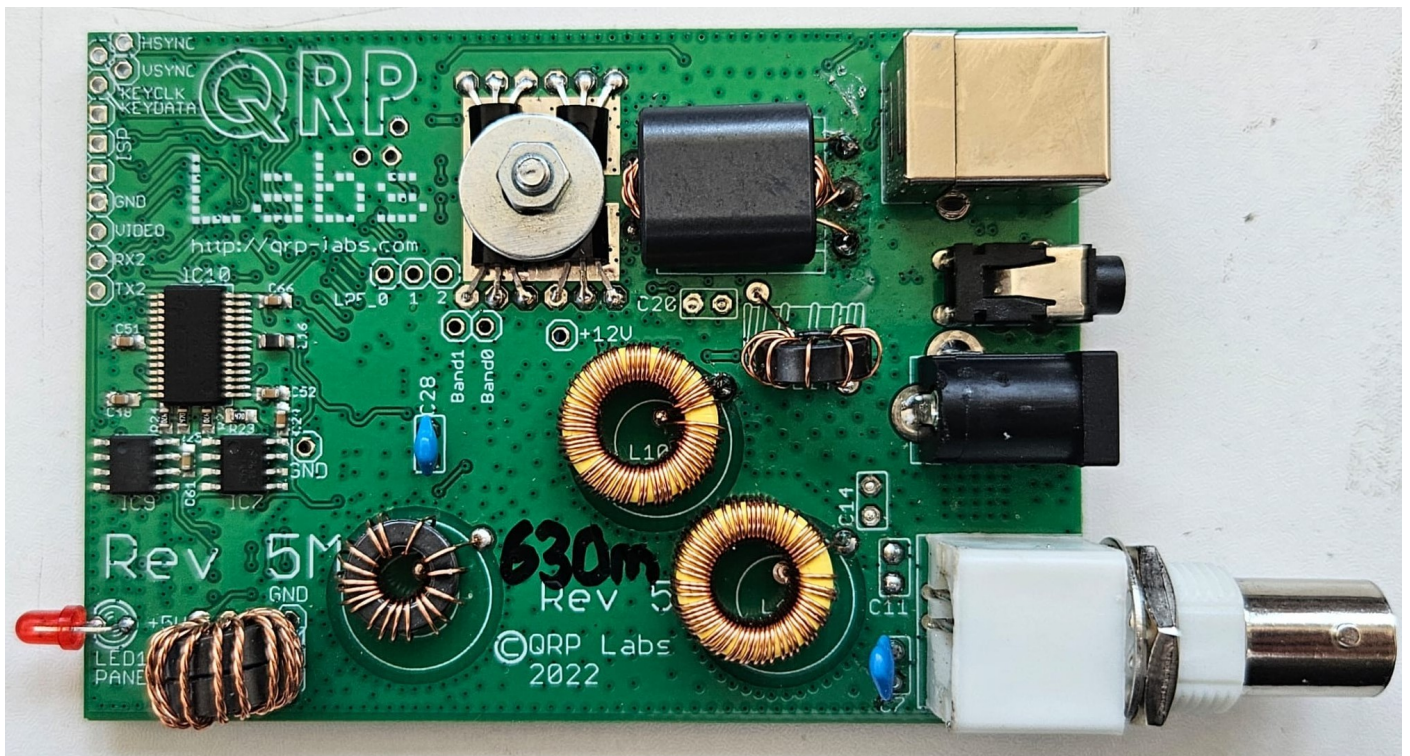
To re-iterate:

1. The 630m QDX-M transformer must be a WTST type.
2. It is the same as the HF transformers except that it has a 9:9 turns ratio (instead of 3:3 for the HF transformer).
3. Remaining assembly, installation and testing is the same as the PA transformer manual and main QDX-M assembly manual.



## Other components

Continue with the remainder of the assembly as per the main QDX-M manual (connectors, LED, transistors). Below is an example result:



## 3 Configuration

The main QDX-M manual describes jumper configurations to select the band. This is not yet set up in the QDX firmware so you need to connect a terminal emulator and configure the 630m QDX-M manually. Refer to the main QDX operating manual for instructions on how to connect a terminal emulator to your QDX-M, running on a PC connected to your QDX-M with an appropriate USB cable.

You also need to make sure you are running the latest firmware version. The firmware version is displayed at the top of the terminal emulator screen. Please refer to the main QDX page <http://qrp-labs.com/qdx> to download the latest firmware if necessary, following the firmware update procedure described in the operating manual.

The Band Configuration screen must be edited for proper operation of the 630m QDX-M.

In the following screenshot, the 630m QDX-M Band Configuration screen had originally been populated by default as an 80-20m 5-band QDX. To configure your QDX-M for 630m, edit the leftmost column to match the data below (the column headed "630"). It will initially be headed "80" and you should delete the 80 and type 630. Similarly, delete the Frequency min, Frequency center, Frequency max., Sweep start and Sweep step cells and re-enter them as per the column in the image below.

```

/dev/ttyACM1 - PuTTY
QDX v1_10
QRP Labs, 2023

+---Band configuration-----+
|
| Band name (m)      630      60      40      30      20      0
| Audio gain (dB)   54       54     54     54     54     0
| Frequency min.    400000  4000000 6000000 7500000 10500000 0
| Frequency center  475700  5357000 7074000 10136000 14074000 0
| Frequency max.    600000  6000000 7500000 10500000 14500000 0
| Sweep start       420000  4000000 5000000 8000000 11000000 0
| Sweep step        7000    50000   50000   50000   100000   0
| BPF number (0-3)  0        1        1        2        3        0
| LPF number (0-2)  0        1        1        2        2        0
| PIN fwd bias (mA) 30       30      30      30      30      30
| Transmit          ENABLED  DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED
| TX PTT +5V       DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED
| TX PTT grounded  DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED
| RX PTT +5V       DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED
| RX PTT grounded  DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED DISABLED
|
+---Ctrl-Q = Quit-----+

```

The BPF number, LPF number and PIN fwd bias cells have no meaning for the QDX-M because it is single band and there is no band switching. So you can ignore those. It is a very good idea to set the “Transmit” cells for all the other listed bands to “DISABLED” to prevent any accidental mishaps trying to transmit at incorrect frequencies into the 630m Low Pass Filter of your QDX-M.

You also need to visit the main “Configuration” screen and edit the “Default frequency” cell to 475700.

After this, power down your QDX-M and re-boot it, then re-connect the terminal emulator.

## 4 Adjustments and performance evaluation

Always test the transmitter first. A 9V supply should suffice to produce approximately 5W output. Use the “Transmitter test” screen and press the ‘T’ key on your keyboard to transmit.

Measurements of one 630m QDX-M here produced:

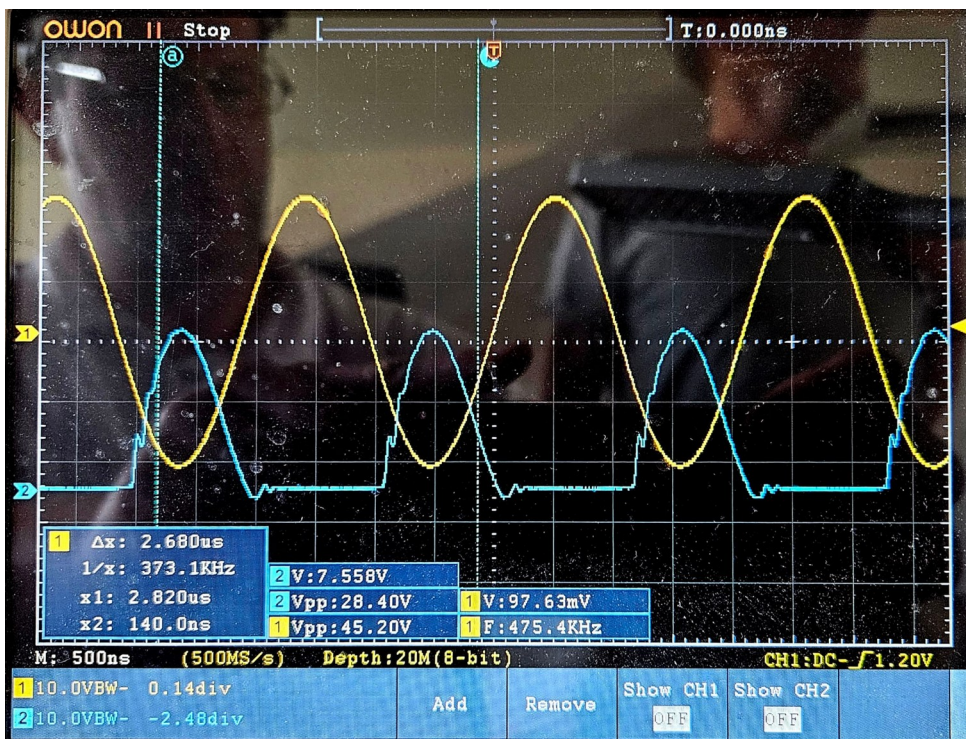
Supply voltage	TX current	Power output	2 <sup>nd</sup> harmonic	3 <sup>rd</sup> harmonic
8.16 V	706 mA	5.1 W	-46.95 dBc	-61.67 dBc
8.87 V	771 mA	6.1 W	-46.95 dBc	-60.95 dBc
9.95 V	850 mA	7.5 W	-45.02 dBc	-58.15 dBc
11.04 V	950 mA	9.1 W	-44.10 dBc	-56.12 dBc
12.00 V	1043 mA	10.6 W	-43.62 dBc	-54.80 dBc

The efficiency of the power amplifier is extremely high. Normally we would not recommend using a QDX-M at more than 5W output; however in this case you could probably experiment with higher

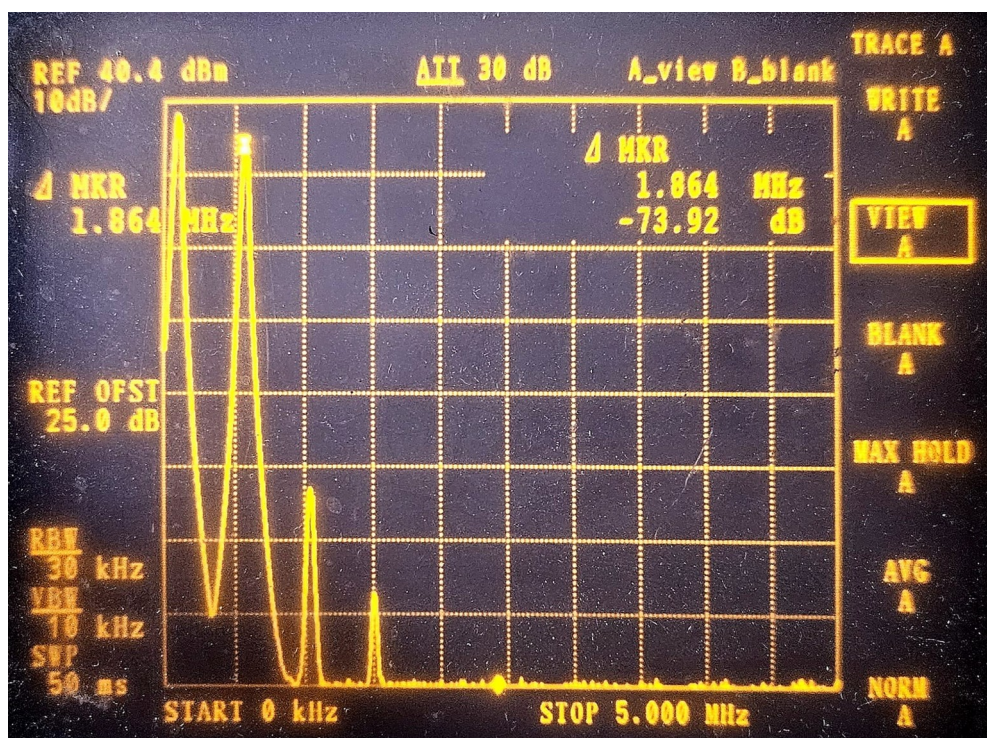


supply voltages, without damaging the RF power transistors. A good indication of whether the PA transistors are under stress is to observe the current consumption during transmit. At 10V supply for example, we measured 850 mA on transmit. If, during a prolonged key-down, this current starts to drop, this indicates the PA transistors are getting very hot, which is changing their operating characteristics, and they are under stress.

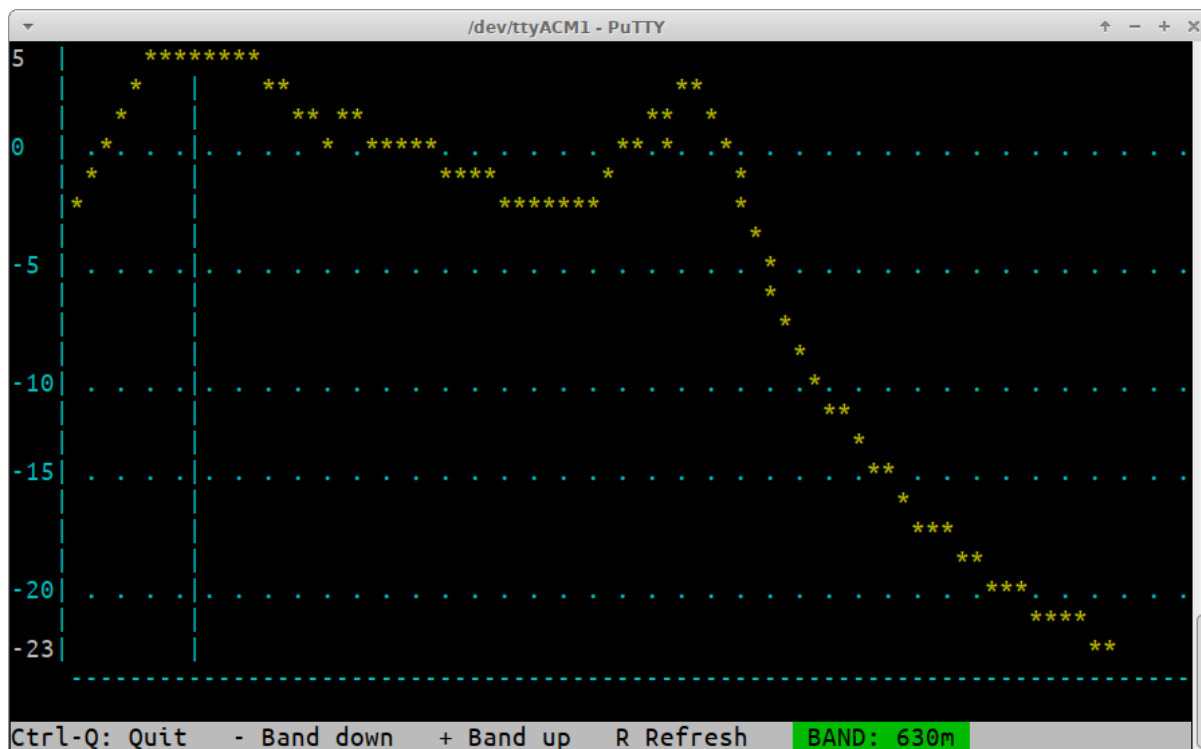
The oscilloscope photograph below shows, for the 8.16V supply case, the 5.1W RF output (top line, yellow, sinewave shape) and the voltage at one of the transistor drains (blue line). The drain waveform is quite close to an ideal Class-E waveform which also explains the high efficiency observed.



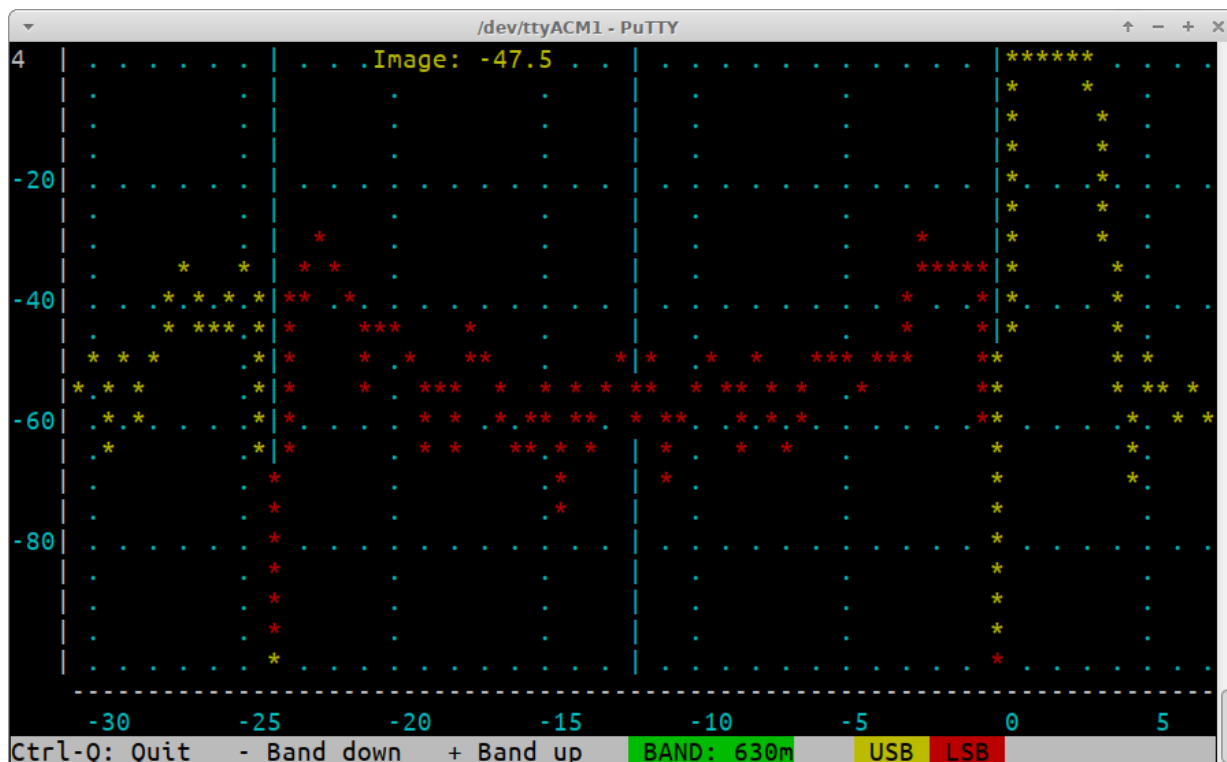
This photograph shows the spectrum analyzer result (8.16V supply, 5.1W output):



For testing the Receiver section, use the RF Sweep tool in the terminal. Use the + - keys to go up a band (though other bands are not enabled) then go back to 630m; this is because the first RF sweep in the tool has a firmware bug which causes inaccurate results. There should be a peak somewhere near the band center frequency (indicated by the vertical dashed line) as shown below. It isn't terribly critical if the peak occurs a bit to the right or left of this.



You also should run the Image sweep, to check the image rejection of the receiver. The results should be something like below. There will be quite a lot of variation in the image measurement but if you have an image rejection very low, such as -3, -4, -5dB etc., that will probably indicate a winding issue or installation issue with the T2 trifilar transformer, or perhaps a defective multiplexer IC in the quadrature sampling detector.





The remainder of the assembly and operating procedures are the same as for the regular HF QDX-M transceivers, please refer to the normal manuals for these.

### Acknowledgments

I am very grateful to Ross EX0AA who worked together with me on this low frequency QDX-M, Ross has done a lot of field testing, filter design and QDX-M builds to develop the final design.

## 5. Document Revision History

1.00	29-Sep-2025	First version version
1.01	20-Nov-2025	Fixed formatting error