

Yaesu FT-990 – ROM Versions differencies

----- Original Message -----

From: DL6MBI

To: FT990@yahooogroups.co.uk

Sent: Wednesday, February 01, 2012 9:00 PM

Subject: AW: [FT990] Software Versions

Hi Doc,

Early FT-990 are supplied with the ROM version 1.2. The ROM was upgraded by Yaesu later to version 1.3. The main difference is that when the transceiver is polled from the computer software only the desired data are transferred to the computer with 1.3. With early version 1.2 installed the FT-990 transmitted a huge complete data set after any computer request to the computer even when only e.g. the frequency was questioned. Such data transfer can last many seconds to minutes with the early 1.2. During those transmissions the transceiver switched to something like a standby mode. Yaesu recognized this only after the market release of the FT-990. The Version 1.3 was then an upgrade for the FT-990 which allows the computer software to question the transceiver only for specific data and not for the complete data set. Early FT-990 control units were called back from customers to the factory for an upgrade by Yaesu. But not all customers for any reasons did this. So there still are FT-990 offered at ebay or other sources with ROM 1.2 installed. If you can't deal with 1.2 you should ask for the 1.3 before you buy one.

As far as I know the upgrade is not necessary if you do not intend to use the CAT capabilities of the radio. The transceiver works fine even with 1.2 installed.

The upgrade makes it possible then to use the FT-990 with most CAT software available on the market, although the data transfer rate remains slow at 4800 Bd. Some powerful software is available as freeware like DXLab which I recommend to FT-990 users. DXLab works fine even with 4800 Bd rate. DXLab offers a 1.2 setup, too, which allows remote control of the transceiver from the computer even when only the ROM 1.2 version is installed, although the transceiver cannot be polled for any information. For example, the frequency cannot be read out from the transceiver but the frequency can be set from the computer. With 1.3 installed the software runs with no restrictions.

Later serial numbers has the 1.3 already installed. If you own such a radio which can be tested via the transceivers monte carlo self test procedure no upgrade is necessary. To display the ROM version, push numeric keypad keys 1 and 3 as powering up and wait until the self test has finished. The ROM version is displayed at the end of the self test procedure.

Unfortunately – if your FT-990 eventually has the older 1.2 installed it cannot be upgraded by any simple software transfer since the microcontroller chip has the firmware burned unerasable into the ROM (microcontroller is a Mitsubishi 37700 type). Therefore the only way to upgrade the FT-990 from 1.2 to 1.3 firmware is to change the microcontroller physically. The microcontroller has a 80 pin QFP case. The newer micro with 1.3 on it is still available from Yaesu (UK), although it has become expensive over the years (85 GBP plus extra costs e.g. tax, shipping...).

73's

Rolf