

I've been a ham for over 50 years using the call K3NDM. I have used and still use voice, Morse, and some digital modes. I operate causally fixed, contests, and occasionally mobile, both land and maritime mobile. And over the years, I've noticed that spectrum space has come at more of a premium as various new modes have carved out space to operate. I've also seen periods of deliberate interference, particularly during contests.

Modes like Pactor 2, 3, and 4 require wider bandwidth then can be easily accommodated during high to medium use periods further exacerbating the problems on the bands. This is truest particularly on 40 meters. The demand for the higher speed modems/waveforms with their wider bandwidth are being pushed for only a small percentage of the amateur community while negatively impacting the rest of the community. All of this conflict is so that a few operators can transmit video and moderately large files on HF. And, this impacts more than just the U.S. as HF propagates internationally.

Lastly, ham radio has always understood that all transmissions could not use masking encryption to prevent monitoring. This will not be the case with the SCS developed modes PACTOR 2, 3, or 4. In fact, I was under the impression that ham radio was exempt from the privacy provisions of the secrecy of communications provisions. The argument that during stress periods ham radio will supply almost immediate communications is probably true. However, that will be short lived until more robust methods are stood up. For instance, the National Guard would be deployed supplanting the need for ham radio after just a few days at the most. Why, then, would ham radio need to be able to operate with high speed modes that can inter-operate with them. This should be also true in times when FEMA supported assets are brought to bear. Those pushing wide band modes are arguing that the prevention of these modes disallows pushing the state-of-the-art progression of communications. I would need to ask where did the modes that operate below the noise like FT8 come from?