

YAESU FT-980 BATTERIES

I've owned a Yaesu FT-980 HF transceiver for about 4-1/2 years, and it has given me good service. Within the past six months, however, I noticed that sometimes when I turned on the transceiver, it would come up with garbage in the digital display, and the radio was inoperative. At first, cycling the power off and back on would restore normal operation. As time went on, the problem got worse and worse. Finally, it got to the point where the radio would have to "warm up" for 10 to 30 minutes before cycling power would produce normal operation.

Through investigation, I discovered that power to the CPU was okay. I also found that forcing a reset on the 80C85 IC returned the radio to normal operation. Unfortunately, it seemed that every time I really went to investigate the problem and got the covers off the transceiver, the problem would disappear. At last, just as I was ready to send the transceiver back to Yaesu for servicing, I noticed that whenever I removed the bottom cover, the radio would come up running. When the bottom cover was installed, the transceiver required "warming up" before it would work properly. Then I realized that when I removed the bottom cover, I also disconnected the CPU's memory backup battery! I replaced the two AA cells, and the transceiver at once resumed normal operation.

A voltmeter connected across the battery pack I removed read 0.9 V. Apparently, with a low voltage supplied by the backup battery, the CPU reads garbage from the memory on power up, and gets its pointers confused. With the battery removed (bottom cover off), the CPU works okay because it recognizes that the battery is missing and resorts to calling up its default memory parameters. With good batteries present, the CPU recognizes that it should read data from the battery backed-up memory. My recommendations: Change your Yaesu FT-980 memory backup battery about every three years, and you'll avoid experiencing this sort of problem with the rig. (Thanks, Joe Mehafeey, K4IHP, 6950 Hunter's Knoll, Atlanta, GA 30328 and QST MAGAZINE)