



SLATE CHAT

ATAK Plugin — User Guide

IRC & XMPP Messaging for ATAK



SlateChat

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1. Overview

Slate Chat is an ATAK plugin that lets your team send and receive text messages over a chat server directly from the ATAK map screen. It supports two kinds of chat servers:

- IRC — Internet Relay Chat
- XMPP — Extensible Messaging and Presence Protocol

You only need to set this up once per device. After that, Slate Chat will remember your last connection settings and reconnect with a single tap.

2. Opening Slate Chat

1. From the ATAK map screen, open the toolbar/side menu where your plugins are listed.
2. Tap the Slate Chat icon.
3. The Slate Chat window will slide open. If this is your first time using it, the connection settings panel will already be visible at the top.

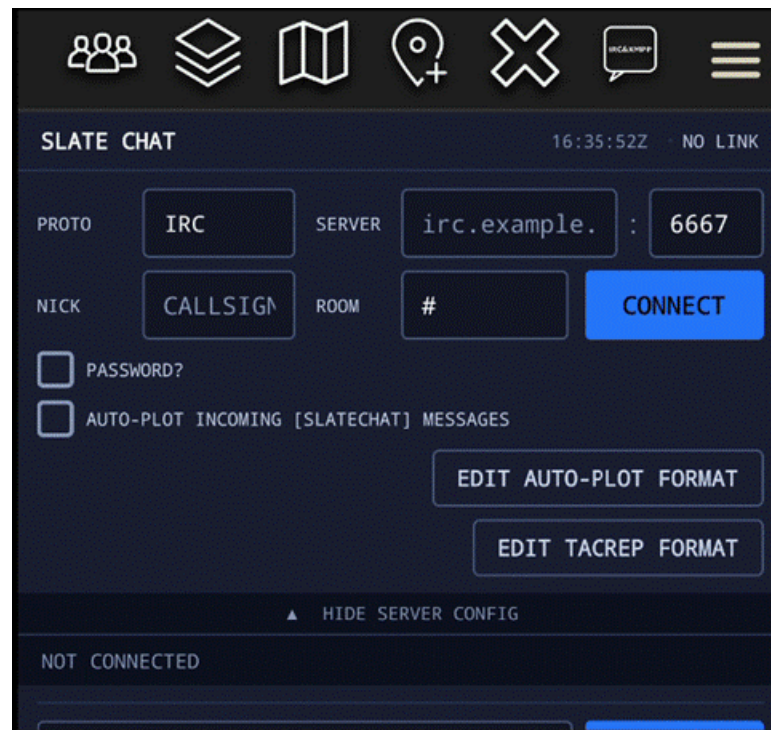


Figure 1: The Server Config panel

3. Connecting to a Server

At the top of the Slate Chat window is the Server Config panel. If it isn't visible, tap the "SHOW SERVER CONFIG" bar to expand it.

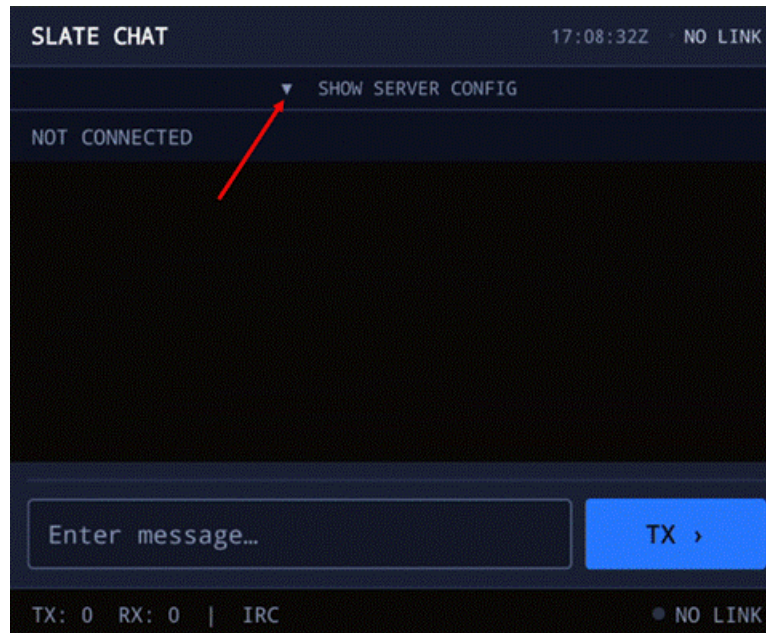


Figure 2: The Server Config panel, expanded

3.1 Choose a Protocol

Use the PROTO dropdown to choose IRC or XMPP, depending on which type of server your organization uses. If you're not sure which one to pick, check with whoever manages your chat server.

NOTE: Switching between IRC and XMPP automatically updates the PORT field to that protocol's common default (6667 for IRC, 5222 for XMPP), and adjusts the ROOM field's "#" prefix as needed. You can still type over these if your server uses something different.

3.2 Fill in the Connection Fields

The fields you'll need to fill in are:

- **SERVER** — the address of your chat server. This may be a web address (e.g. chat.example.com) or an IP address (e.g. 192.168.1.50).
- **PORT** — the network port used to connect. Common defaults are 6667 for IRC and 5222 for XMPP, but your server may use a different one.
- **NICK** — your callsign or username. This is the name other people in the chat will see.

- ROOM — the name of the channel or chat room to join (see section 3.3 for details on this field for XMPP).

NOTE: Slate Chat automatically remembers the last server, port, nickname, and room you used, so you typically only need to fill these in once.

3.3 The ROOM Field for XMPP

For XMPP servers, chat rooms usually live on a separate address than the main server. If you simply type a room name (for example, testing), Slate Chat will automatically try the common default and connect to testing@conference.<your server address>.

If your organization's server uses a different room address, type the full address instead, for example: testing@rooms.example.com. Your administrator can tell you which format to use.

3.4 Password (Optional)

If your account requires a password, tap the PASSWORD? checkbox to reveal a password field, then enter your password there. This applies to both IRC and XMPP servers. The checkbox and field work the same way regardless of which protocol you've selected.

The screenshot shows the 'SLATE CHAT' interface with the following fields and options:

- PROTO:** A dropdown menu set to 'IRC'.
- SERVER:** A text field containing '192.168.1.1' followed by a port separator ':' and a text field containing '6667'.
- NICK:** A text field containing 'KS'.
- ROOM:** A text field containing '#slated'.
- CONNECT:** A blue button.
- PASSWORD?:** A checkbox that is checked, followed by a text field containing 'password'.
- AUTO-PLOT INCOMING [SLATECHAT] MESSAGES:** An unchecked checkbox.
- EDIT AUTO-PLOT FORMAT:** A button.
- EDIT TACREP FORMAT:** A button.
- HIDE SERVER CONFIG:** A toggle switch currently in the 'off' position.
- NOT CONNECTED:** A status indicator at the bottom.

Figure 3: Entering server details, nickname, room, and password

3.5 Connect

Once all fields are filled in, tap CONNECT. The colored dot at the top of the window will show your connection status:

- Gray — not connected.
- Amber — connecting.
- Green — connected and ready to chat.

A short status message will also appear (for example, "Connected — joined testing") confirming you're in.

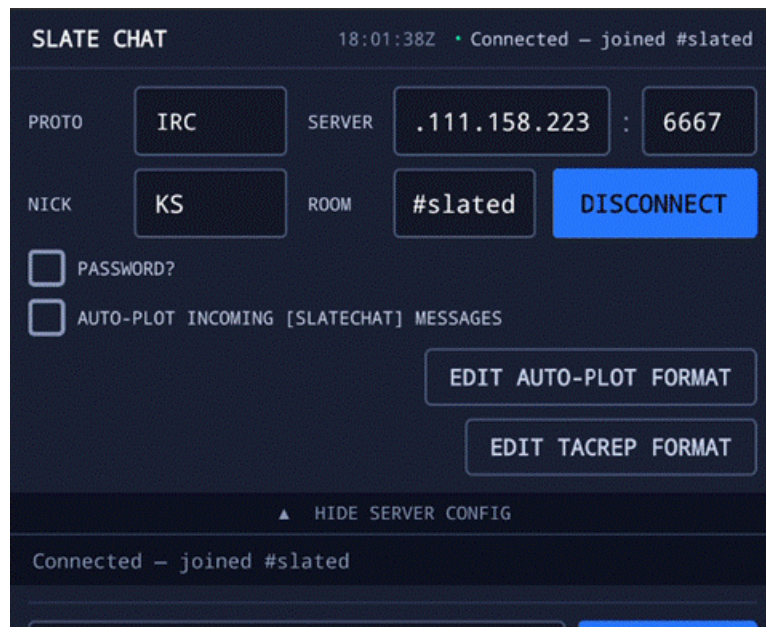


Figure 4: Successful connection, showing the green status indicator

4. Sending and Receiving Messages

1. Type your message in the text box at the bottom of the window.
2. Tap TX (or press Send/Enter) to send it.
3. Incoming messages from other participants will appear automatically in the message list, along with the sender's name and the time it was received (UTC).

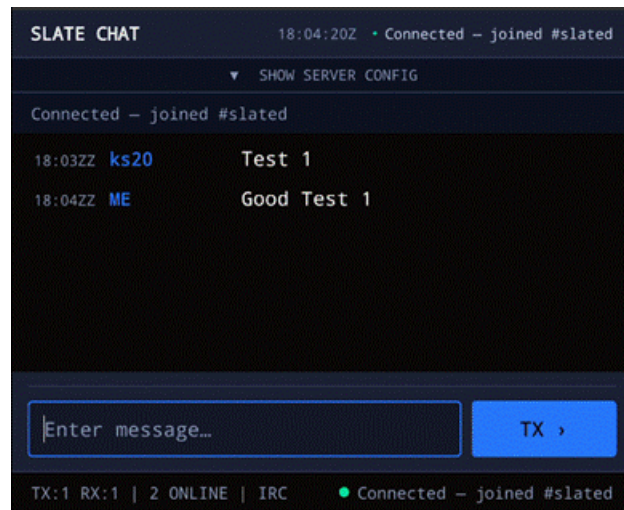


Figure 5: The message list showing sent and received messages

The bottom strip of the window always shows a quick summary: how many messages you've sent (TX) and received (RX), how many people are currently in the room, and which protocol you're using.

4.1 Viewing Who's Online

1. Tap anywhere on that bottom strip to see a list of everyone currently in the room

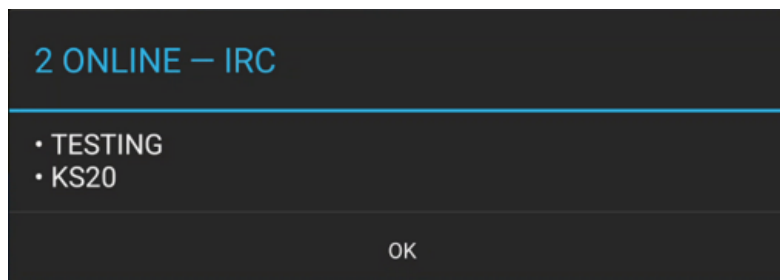


Figure 6: View of who is currently online

5. Notifications for New Messages

If you receive a message while the Slate Chat window is closed, you'll still be alerted. A small red badge with a number will appear on the Slate Chat toolbar icon, showing how many unread messages are waiting for you.



Figure 7: The unread-message badge on the Slate Chat toolbar icon

The badge clears automatically as soon as you open the Slate Chat window again.

6. Sending TACREP Reports from the Map (Optional)

Slate Chat can send a formatted text report straight from a map marker into the chat, so the rest of your team sees a consistent, readable summary instead of a manually typing out your TACREP each time.

6.1 Sending a Report

1. On the ATAK map, tap the marker or point you want to report.
2. From the radial menu that appears, choose the Slate Chat send option.
3. A preview of the report appears. Review it, then tap SEND to post it to your current chat room.

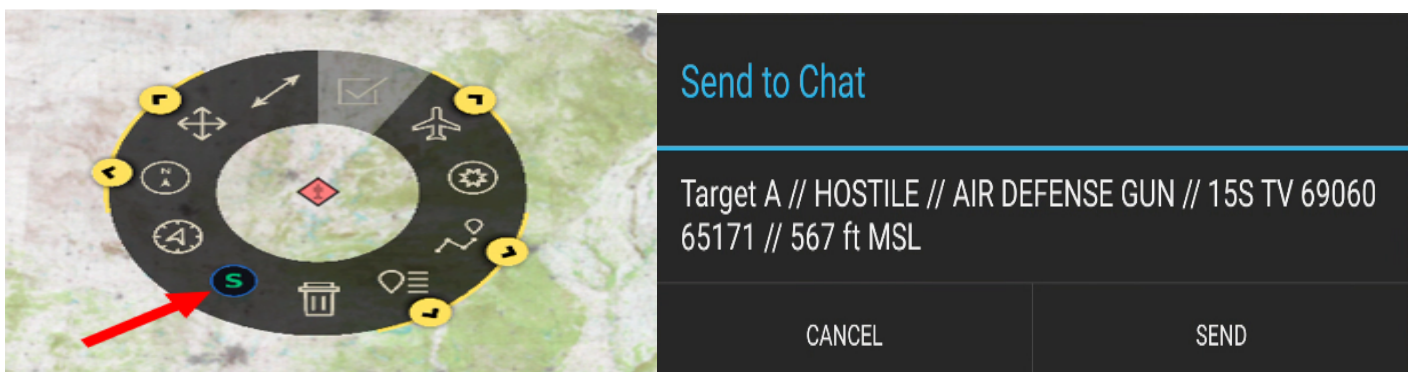


Figure 8: Sending a TACREP from a map marker's menu

6.2 Report Format

By default, a sent report reads something like this:

```
ALPHA-1 // 33MUM1234567890 // hostile // 150 // spotted movement
```

You can customize this format under "EDIT TACREP FORMAT" in the Server Config panel, using placeholders such as callsign, identity, grid, elevation, remarks, type, latitude, and longitude. Parts of the format wrapped in square brackets are left out automatically if that piece of information isn't available for a given marker.

NOTE: This is the reverse of the Auto-Plot feature below: TACREP sends a report from the map into chat, while Auto-Plot reads a report from chat and places it on the map.

6.3 Report Formats (Presets)

Different situations call for different report layouts, so Slate Chat keeps a set of named formats you can switch between. Tap EDIT TACREP FORMAT in the Server Config panel to open the format editor.

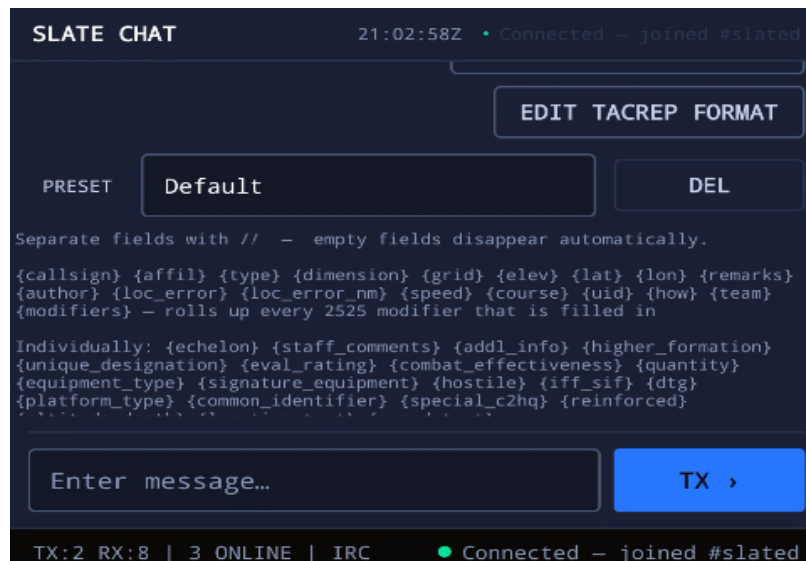


Figure 9: TACREP Formats

Two formats are built in and always available:

- Default — a readable general-purpose report, shown above.
- TRAX.TRACK — a fixed-field format for TRAX track reporting.

Use the PRESET dropdown at the top of the editor to switch between formats. Whichever one is selected is the format used when you send a report.

6.4 Creating Your Own Format

1. Open EDIT TACREP FORMAT.
2. In the PRESET dropdown, choose "+ NEW".
3. Type a name for your format in the NAME field (for example, H TACREP).
4. Edit the format text below to taste.
 - 1) If a marker has no information for a field, that field disappears from the report automatically — including any label you wrote next to it. You don't need to do anything special for optional fields.
 - 2) You can also add your own wording anywhere. Text that isn't in curly braces is printed exactly as you typed it:

`SPOTREP // {callsign} // Grid: {grid} // {remarks}`

5. Tap SAVE. Your new format is added to the dropdown and becomes the active one.

NOTE: For formats where every field must always appear , where position matters — write a field as {name| -} instead. It prints a dash when there's no information, keeping the field count constant.

To change an existing format, select it from the dropdown, edit the text, and tap SAVE. To remove one, select it and tap DEL. The two built-in formats cannot be deleted, and RESET restores whichever built-in format is selected to its original text.

NOTE: Formats are saved on this device only. If you reinstall ATAK or move to a new device, any formats you created will need to be entered again.

6.5 Available Fields

These are the fields you can use in a format. The same list is shown inside the format editor, so you always have it on hand while editing. Any field with no information on a given marker is simply left out of that report.

Basic information

Field	What it shows	Example
{callsign}	The marker's name, as shown on the map	<i>R.14.202411</i>
{affil}	Standard identity	<i>HOSTILE</i>
{type}	What the marker represents, in plain language	<i>ANTITANK GUN</i>
{dimension}	Where it operates	<i>Ground</i>
{grid}	MGRS grid reference	<i>14T MT 12345 67890</i>
{elev}	Height above sea level	<i>1869 ft MSL</i>
{lat} {lon}	Latitude and longitude, if you prefer these to a grid	<i>47.32898 / -101.78570</i>
{remarks}	Free-text notes entered on the marker in ATAK	<i>Spotted at first light</i>
{author}	Who created the marker	<i>VENOM</i>
{loc_error}	How accurate the location is	<i>15 m</i>
{loc_error_nm}	The same accuracy in nautical miles	<i>0.008 nm</i>
{speed}	Speed, for markers that are actually tracking movement	<i>45 MPH</i>
{course}	Direction of travel, same markers as above	<i>270 deg</i>
{uid}	The marker's unique ID — useful for other systems, not for people	<i>9c1afc1f-12f0-4ae7...</i>

{team}	Team color, on markers representing TAK users	<i>Cyan</i>
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Symbol modifiers

These come from the extra fields ATAK shows when you tick "show modifiers" on a marker's detail screen. Which ones are available depends on the kind of symbol — a unit offers different fields than a piece of equipment.

NOTE: Rather than listing these one by one, you can just use {modifiers}. It gathers every modifier that has been filled in, labels each one, and leaves out the rest — so one field covers them all.

Field	What it shows	Example
{modifiers}	Every modifier below that has been filled in, rolled into one list	<i>Quantity: 2 // Staff Comments: 1</i>
{echelon}	Unit size	<i>Section</i>
{unique_designation}	Unit name or track number	<i>2/7 CAV</i>
{higher_formation}	Parent command	<i>3 BDE</i>
{quantity}	How many items	<i>2</i>
{equipment_type}	Type of equipment	<i>T-80</i>
{combat_effectiveness}	Condition or capability	<i>80%</i>
{eval_rating}	Source reliability and credibility, spelled out	<i>Usually reliable / probably true</i>
{staff_comments}	Staff comments	<i>Dug in</i>
{addl_info}	Additional information	<i>Two revetments</i>
{dtg}	Date-time group	<i>142035ZAUG2026</i>
{iff_sif}	IFF/SIF codes	<i>M3: 1873</i>

{signature_equipment}	Detectable electronic signature	!
{common_identifier}	Common name	<i>Hawk</i>
{platform_type}	Platform type	—
{reinforced}	Reinforced or reduced	(+)
{altitude_depth}	Altitude or depth	<i>FL220</i>
{location_text}	Location as entered on the symbol	—
{speed_text}	Speed as entered on the symbol	—

7. Auto-Plotting Locations from Chat (Optional)

Slate Chat can automatically read specially formatted messages and place a corresponding marker on the ATAK map. This is useful for quickly sharing a location and details over chat without switching tools.

7.1 Turning It On

Check the "AUTO-PLOT INCOMING [SLATECHAT] MESSAGES" box in the Server Config panel to enable this feature.

7.2 Message Format

Incoming messages that follow this pattern will be automatically plotted:

```
[SLATECHAT] callsign // grid // identity // elevation // remarks
```

Only the callsign and grid reference are required — identity, elevation, and remarks are optional. You can tailor this format under "EDIT AUTO-PLOT FORMAT" in the Server Config panel.

Markers created this way automatically note who sent the chat message, so anyone viewing the marker's details on the map can see it was reported via chat and by whom.

NOTE: The callsign is what identifies a marker. Sending another message with the same callsign moves the existing marker to the new location instead of creating a second one — useful for reporting an updated position. To plot a separate marker, use a different callsign.

7.3 Using Multiple Prefixes

Slate Chat can watch for more than one prefix at a time — useful if different teams or channels use their own tag (for example, one team using [SLATECHAT] and another using [TEAM1]). Under "EDIT AUTO-PLOT FORMAT," enter each prefix separated by a comma in the PREFIX field:

```
[SLATECHAT], [TEAM1], [TEAM2] callsign // grid // identity // elevation // remarks
```

Any incoming message that starts with one of the listed prefixes will be auto-plotted, using the same format described above. You can list as many prefixes as you need.

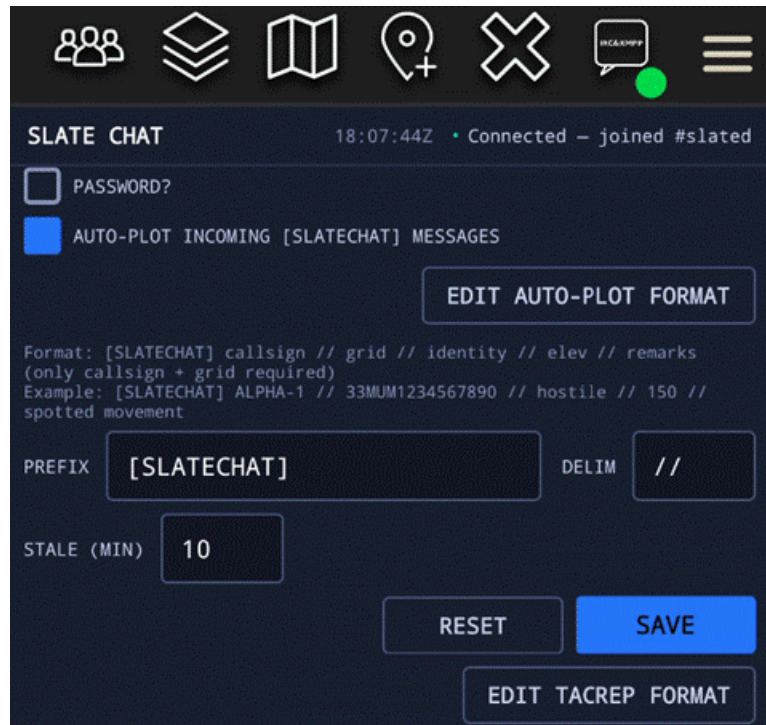


Figure 10: A location automatically plotted on the map from a chat message

8. Disconnecting

To leave the chat, tap the DISCONNECT button (the same button used to connect — its label changes automatically once you're connected).

9. Troubleshooting

Issue	What to do
"Fill in server, port, and nick first"	One of the required fields is empty. Double-check SERVER, PORT, and NICK are all filled in.
"Port must be a number"	The PORT field contains something other than digits. Re-enter it using only numbers.
Connection fails immediately	Confirm the server address and port with your administrator, and check that your device has network access to that server.
Stuck on "connecting..." or repeatedly retrying	The server may be unreachable or temporarily down. Confirm with your administrator, and check your network connection.
Can't log in / password rejected	Confirm your username and password with your administrator. Make sure Caps Lock isn't on.
Room/channel won't join	For XMPP, confirm the room address format with your administrator (see section 3.3).
No sound/badge for new messages	Confirm the Slate Chat window is fully closed (not just in the background) — the badge only appears when the window isn't open.

10. Getting Help

If you run into an issue not covered in this guide, contact info@slateintegrations.com

NOTE: This guide covers everyday use of Slate Chat. Server setup and administration are handled separately by your organization's IT/communications team.