

La vie en télétravail dans le sud

Durant tout le voyage vers le Sud a partir de Septembre 2021, il n'y a que lors de la traversée Norfolk vers Antigua que je n'ai pu télétravailler.

It was October 28th of 2021 when we arrived in Hampton on our boat Impermanence and drop the anchor in front of the marina in preparation for the rallye. Since leaving home port in Quebec city, Canada on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, I've always telework three days per week, using sometime 2 cellular at once. This was ok till we arrived in Antigua. Then I discovered the value of a good Internet, only Flow in Antigua is capable of low latency communications essential to Teams meetings. Only Orange in Guadeloupe, St-Martin, St-Barthelemy can provide the same. Not Digicel.

Since we left the boat for summer in Antigua, I was to embark on the same cellular arrangement on my arrival in Antigua on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Then Eureka ! I read in a news that the Starlink RV service was just released in St-Martin Guadeloupe and Martinique and soon to be in 2023 Antigua, Dominica and others. Already in beautiful Freeman's bay in Antigua struggling with part cellular, part wi-fi to telework... I ordered an RV kit (value 599 US with monthly fee of 135 US) and had it ship to my Four Star Cargo Miami address forwarder. I love to receive boxes at the dinghy dock, its like Christmas.



I set sail to St-Martin were it's the least costly and easy way to get a package from continent and last week I had the pleasure of high speed, low latency, unlimited internet. My work colleague didn't believe me ! Of course it was experimental at this point with the antenna installed on the cockpit table but I was convinced and decided to install permanently.



The important number is not on the display, it's the "jitter". (jitter is the variation in time delay between when a signal is transmitted and when it's received over a network connection) that define your quality. You need 3 Mbps for an HD movie in Netflix and same 3Mbps for a decent video conversation in Teams/Zoom/Bluejeans/Messenger. But if you want HD (720P) video broadcast you need 5 Mbps. Anytime the less jitter the better the appearance.

A few things to know if you are tempted about having high speed/low latency internet on the boat. Which to my opinion, you don't need except if you're teleworking or if you're a TV serie binge consumer – cellular data can do the job.

- RV signal is deprioritized vs other regular users in a defined country/space. What does that mean? Nothing if you are the only user in St Martin (which I guess I am) but if there are many others it could mean less bandwidth.
- Real marine service offshore is not available yet at a decent price, Space X need to launch more satellites and someone should come up with an IP68 stabilized antenna.
- This antenna is electronically directed (phased array tuned) toward Starlink satellites. At anchor I thought I would have problem but no, its working fine.<
- Seems that 12 miles away from any island the signal is cut – with the RV mode. You're not supposed to be 12 miles away in the ocean in a RV.
- Starlink is an ampere hog. The antenna + router consume about 75 watt which is about 5 ampere load. As boaters you know that we count every amp. But hey what do you expect ! You have to broadcast yourself to the orbiting satellites 400 miles away. Its not with a 2 watt walky talkie. So you need power to transmit and receive. Its about 5 amp but it end up being a good 50 amp hour every day for having internet 8 to 10pm (solar panel production from 10 to 4pm).

- Starlink claim that you can pause the payment anytime.
- A masts mount, ordered separately is a good investment
- You can get rid of the Starlink router, and several did (search on internet) but you will have to replace the router by another router and a specialized POE 48 volt provider. It can be done but not trivial. As for me I prefer to let the inverter take care of this for the moment

So convinced as I am, I decided to permanently install the antenna. I got rid of the wind generator that from two seasons experience in the trade wind is not worth the noise. And installed the Starlink antenna at the top. Can you find it looking forward into the deep space of the sky ?



I would be happy to help any Salty Dawgs with their understanding of Starlink and/or their needs for having internet inboard.

(and what do I do as a jpaid job under the tropics sun ? Am an IT professional specialized in technology and telecommunication)

You can reach me at [chatam43@gmail.com](mailto:chatam43@gmail.com)

Salutations !

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