

VarAC Notification Extension with VarAC Bot

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PURPOSE: To provide additional insight into VarAC Bot by Sergio Dias, CR7AXH, which allows you to receive VarAC real-time alerts on the go through the Telegram instant messaging mobile app. Receive beacons, CQs, broadcasts, Vmails, and VMail relay notifications with SNR and related information. Alerts are sent ONLY to your private Telegram account. See <https://www.varac-hamradio.com/extensions>

Download and install Telegram

Telegram is a very popular messaging app particularly in Europe. The group for VarAC is called VarAC Community. This is where you can meet other VarACers, chat, explore, and support each other. The group invite link is: <https://t.me/+UduFxPTOXZlZyJlk>. There are currently about 1,500 members of this group.

Telegram is available on your mobile device in the appropriate store. It is free. It is also available for Windows at <https://desktop.telegram.org/>. **Download and install both.** You can actually do most everything on your phone. It's a bit easier if you do all the setup on the computer.

Take a minute and locate VarAC Community just to see what it's all about. You'll see conversations in

Download VarAC Bot

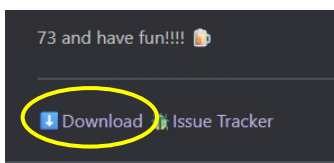
The website for VarAC Bot is <https://varacbot.bitbucket.io/>

The first thing we're going to need to do is download VarAC Bot.

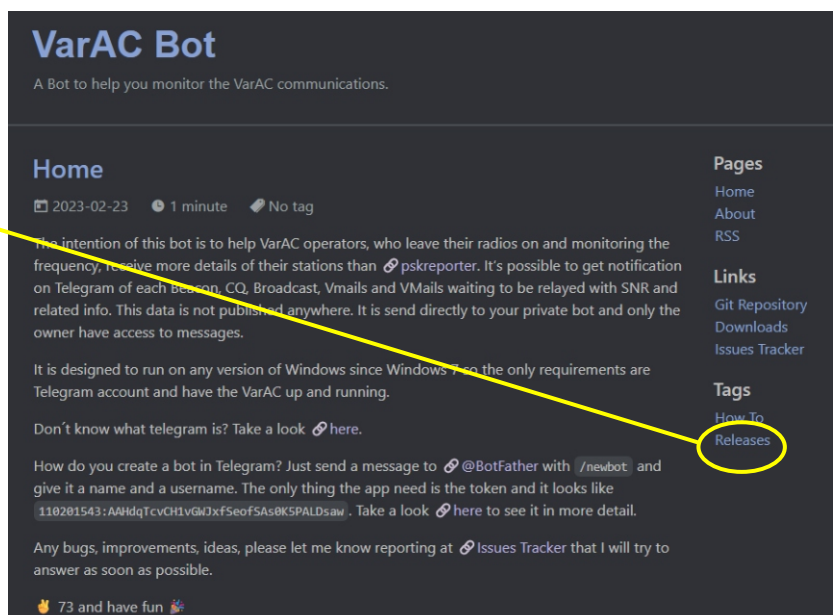
Click on Releases.

Click on the latest release which is currently V0.8.0.

Click on DOWNLOAD



Extract the zip file and copy the VarAC_Bot folder to any location on your computer (e.g., C:\VarAC_Bot)



Creating the Bot

Open Telegram using your Desktop:

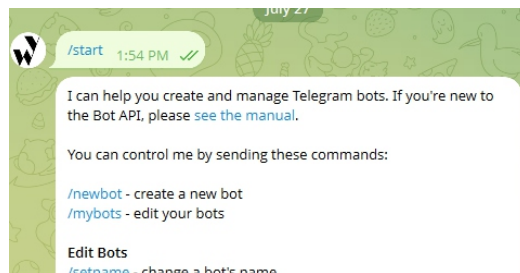
Launch the Telegram app on your computer.

Search for BotFather:

In the Telegram search bar (top of the app), type `@BotFather` and press enter. Select the official `@BotFather` account (look for the verified checkmark).

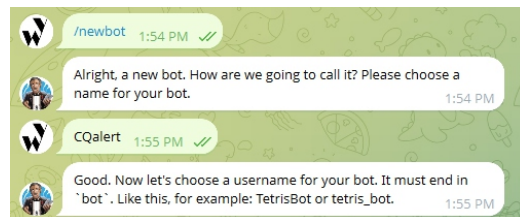
Start a Chat:

Click on `@BotFather` to open the chat. If it's your first time, send the command `/start` to initiate the conversation. BotFather will respond with a list of available commands.



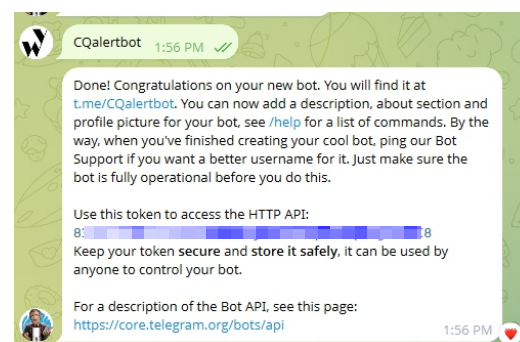
Send a Message to Create a Bot:

To create a new bot (required for VarAC Bot setup), send the command: `/newbot`



You can call your bot anything you like. I called mine CQalert.

Now enter a username. I used CQalertbot . The username must end in 'bot.'

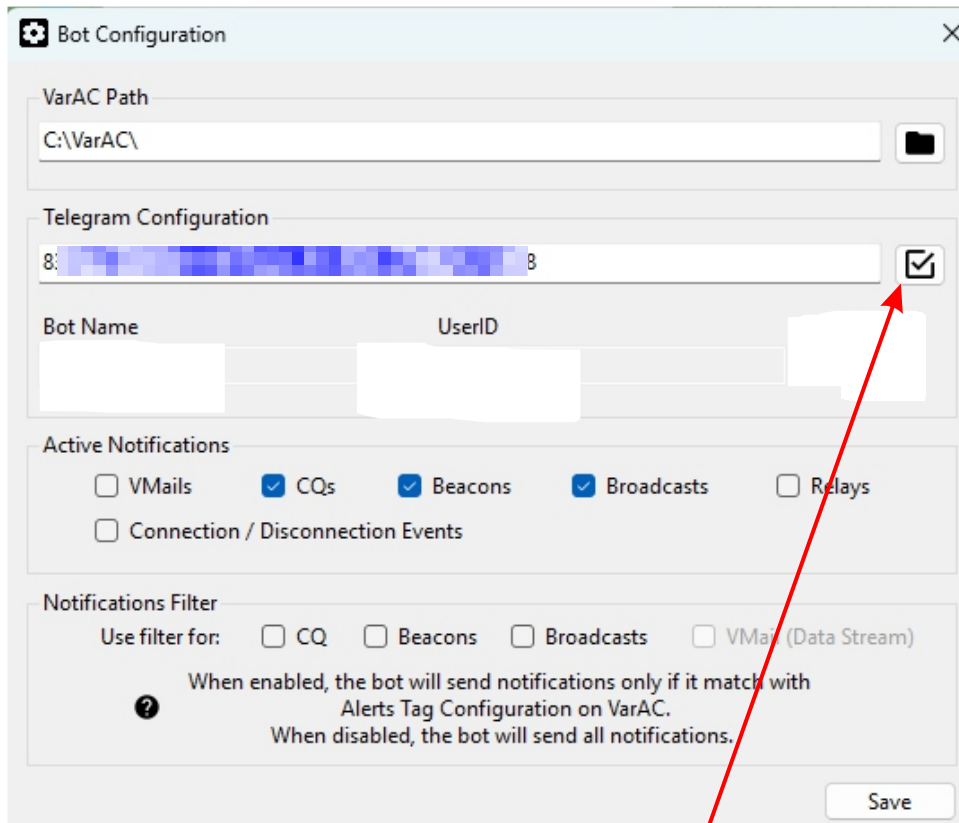


Copy/paste the Token somewhere so you'll have it when you need it to paste it into the VarAC Bot in a minute.

Configure the Bot

Run the VarAC Bot executable (e.g., VarAC_Bot.exe) from the extracted folder.

- On the first run, a window will prompt you to specify your VarAC installation directory (where VarAC.exe is located). In my case that's C:\VarAC\ . You can click the folder to navigate to it.



DON'T ENTER THE BOT TOKEN IN THE TELEGRAM CONFIGURATION JUST YET.

Select actions for which you'd like to be notified. YOU CAN CHANGE THEM LATER. For the Active Notifications, I'd suggest selecting Beacons as well to start. You can turn them off in a few minutes, if you like. However, we want to get a few notifications early on so you can confirm everything is working.

See the VarAC Users' Manual for information on Alert Tags Configuration in VarAC for using the Notifications Filter. For the moment, leave them all deselected.

Now enter the Telegram bot token obtained from @BotFather.

Click the "Validate" button to connect the bot to your Telegram account.

When you press the validate button, you'll see this QR Code and also a link.



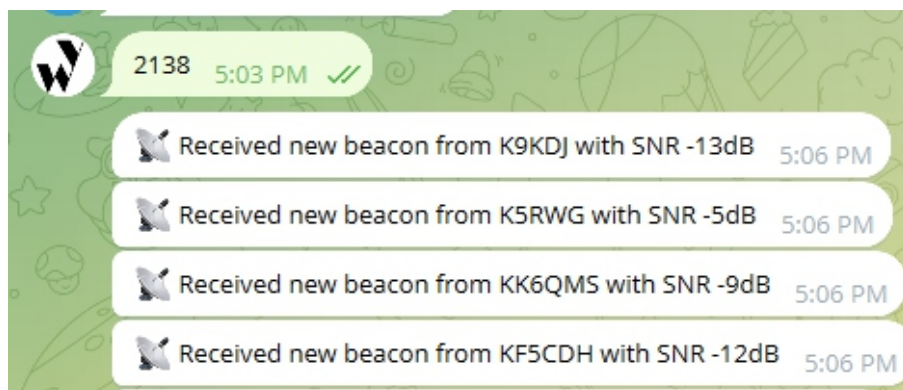
Read the QR Code with your mobile device or click the link below. This will take you to the Bot you created in Telegram. In my instance, CQalertbot.

Type in the PIN on the Write a Message line and press return.

Go the Bot Configuration screen and press Save. If the configuration will not save and close, you've done something wrong or missed a step.

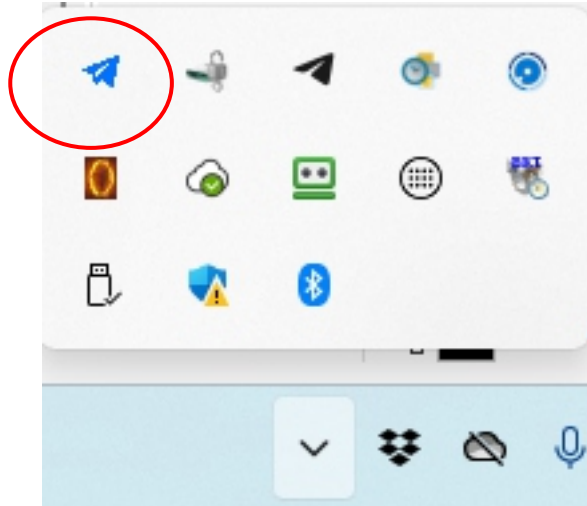
Make sure VarAC is running and you're receiving beacons.

You should start to receive notifications in Telegram. On your mobile device, make sure you turn on notifications for Telegram if you want them to pop-up.



Changing Settings

VarAC Bot is running in your System Tray.



Right click on the icon and then Settings to bring back the Bot Configuration screen so you can turn off Beacons or make any other changes. Press Save when done.

Bot Configuration

VarAC Path
C:\VarAC\

Telegram Configuration
8: [redacted] 8

Bot Name
CQalertbot

UserID
8419632073

Active Notifications
☐ VMails ☒ CQs ☐ Beacons ☒ Broadcasts ☐ Relays
☐ Connection / Disconnection Events

Notifications Filter
Use filter for: ☐ CQ ☐ Beacons ☐ Broadcasts ☐ VMail (Data Stream)
When enabled, the bot will send notifications only if it match with Alerts Tag Configuration on VarAC.
When disabled, the bot will send all notifications.

Save