

OPERATING MANUAL



ALPHA 99 **HF LINEAR POWER AMPLIFIER**

**ALPHA
POWER**

ALPHA/POWER

by CrossLink, Inc. RF Power for Communications and Industry

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IMPORTANT

Critical precaution during installation of your Alpha 99!

While the cover is removed to install the power transformer, make sure that the tubes are properly installed as described in Section 2 below. Failure to do this may cause severe damage or destruction of both tubes. Such damage is not covered under warranty.

Section 1 INTRODUCTION

General Description of the ALPHA 99 Amplifier

The ALPHA 99 is a self-contained HF Linear power amplifier capable of continuous operation at 1500 watts peak power output on SSB, keyed CW, SSTV, RTTY, digital modes or FM, with no time limit. If periods of "continuous-key-down" carrier operation will exceed 5 minutes, or if the amplifier is to be operated from 50 Hz mains, the optional auxiliary cooling fan available from CrossLink must be installed to avoid possible damage not covered by the warranty.

As shipped, units delivered within the USA and its territories are manually tunable to cover all HF amateur bands from 1.8 to 18.168 MHz, with extensive out-of-band capability for operation on MARS, etc. Appropriately-licensed users may contact CrossLink on modifying domestic amplifiers to extend coverage to 29.7 MHz.

Specifications, ALPHA 99

Frequency Coverage: U.S. units only, amateur bands 1.8-18.168 MHz as shipped (see note above); export units, 1.8-29.7 MHz.

Power Output: 1500 watts peak all modes, including SSB, CW and continuous or modulated carrier. Carrier operation (e.g., A0, RTTY or FM) for more than 5 minutes at or near maximum rated power requires use of the auxiliary cooling fan accessory.

Drive Power: 50 to 60 watts nominal for rated output.

Power Gain: Nominally 14 dB, a power increase of 25 times.

Input Impedance: 50 ohms nominal, unbalanced; VSWR <1.5:1

Output Impedance: 50 ohms unbalanced.

Maximum Load VSWR: 2:1 at full rated power output.

VSWR Trip: Automatic standby when reflected power >250 watts.

Intermodulation Distortion: 36 dB below rated output.

Harmonic Output: <-55 dBc.

Tubes: Two Svetlana 4CX800A/GU74b ceramic-metal tetrodes.

Cooling: Full-cabinet, ducted forced air using cushion-mounted centrifugal blower.

Automatic Level Control (ALC): Negative from 0, adjustable.

Primary Power: 190-250 or 90-130 VAC nominal, 50-60 Hz, fused at 20 amperes.

Power Transformer: 3+ kVA with strip-wound Hipersil core.

Protective Functions: Grid and screen current limiting; trip to standby (automatic reset) for excessive VSWR or average plate current, RF arc, severe mistuning; AC off trip for HV fault; primary and step-start fuses; cover AC interlock and HV crowbar switches; AC inrush-current limiting (Step-start).

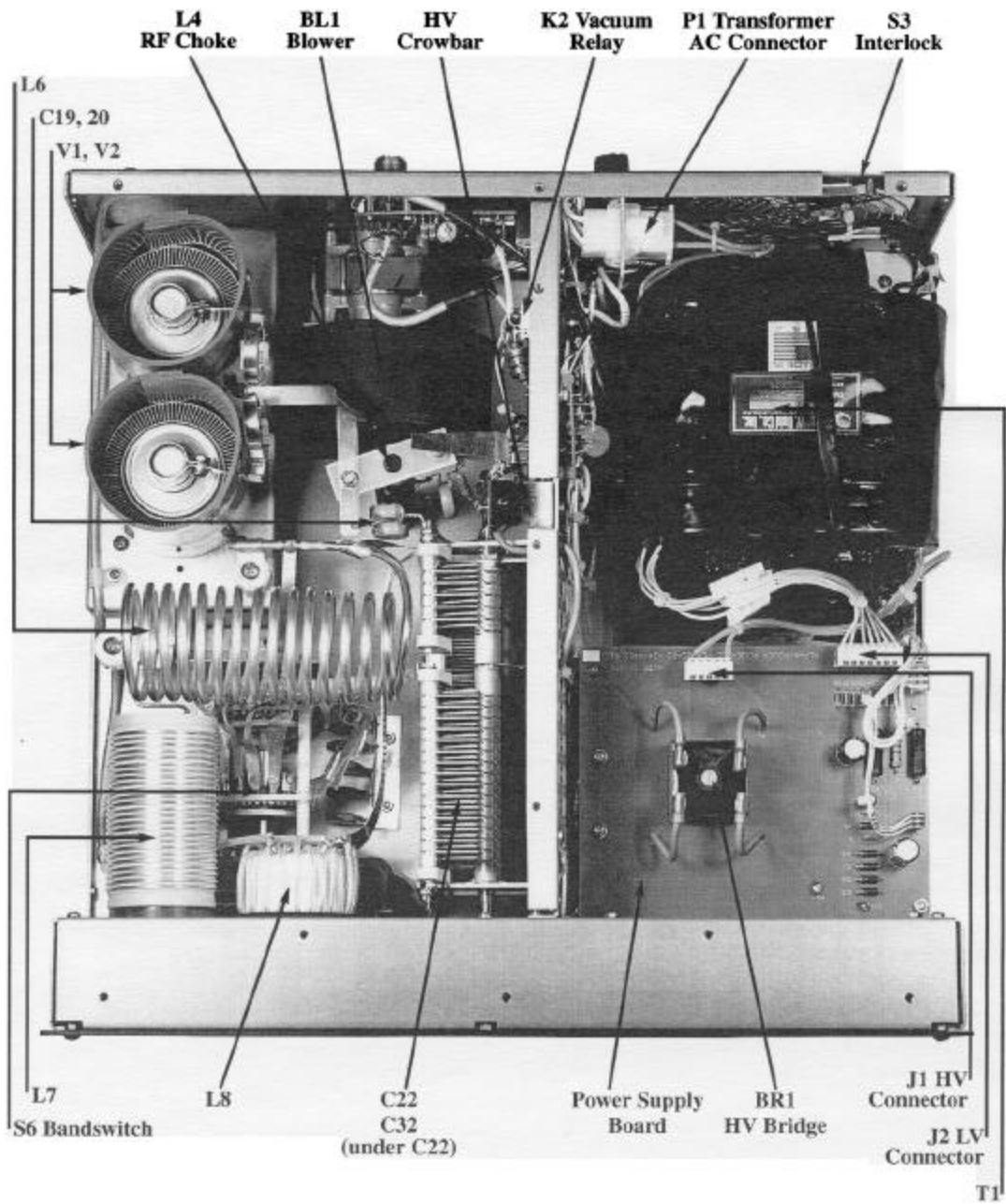
Status Indicators: STANDBY, WAIT (initial turn-on time delay), OPERATE and FAULT LEDs.

Metering: Dedicated, full-time LED bargraphs display forward and reflected rf power; grid current LEDs; LED bargraph selectable among plate voltage, plate current, and tune-up functions.

Size: 7.5" H x 17" W x 16.5" D (19x43x39cm) excluding controls, feet, and connectors.

Weight: 66lb. (30kg) net, 75lb (34kg) ship; two cartons.

NOTE: CrossLink reserves the right to change design and/or specifications without prior notice or obligation.



The following clarification applies to the ALPHA 99 manual when the amplifier is wired for 110V operation. Please attach to page 5 for future reference.

Page 5, AC Primary Connections & Amplifier Grounding.

The single asterisked note should read;

* The blower wires are the 2 black wires marked "4" and "X", (4 to terminal 4, X to 2,3, or 7 per table)

Optional external muffin fan has 2 black wires, one is connected with blower wire 4 and the other to the same terminal as blower wire X (2,3, or 7 per table)

Section 2

PREPARING THE ALPHA 99 FOR OPERATION

Transformer Installation (See Figures 2-4)

Remove the amplifier top cover to install the transformer. Only one possible transformer orientation allows mating all its connectors without straining leads. Lift the transformer high enough to clear the right side chassis lip and move it sideways into the chassis. **USE CAUTION! PROCEED SLOWLY** to avoid damaging wires or components. From underneath, insert the supplied bolts with washers through the clearance holes in the chassis and into the nuts in the transformer base. **CAUTION!** Mate transformer connectors carefully and gently to insure that all connector pins engage correctly and fully.

Inspection of Tubes & Chimneys

While the top cover is removed, make sure tubes are firmly seated in their sockets, rubber exhaust chimneys are fully and correctly installed, and anode connectors are tightly clamped to tubes.

The silicone rubber chimneys installed on the 4CX800A/GU74b tubes are absolutely essential parts of the cooling system. Make sure the chimneys are straight and fully installed so that the bottom of each chimney is firmly against the tube deck and completely covers the airflow openings in the deck. Tube cooling air must exit only through the tube anode fins; it must not be allowed to escape outside them. Failure to ensure proper cooling airflow may result in tube damage or destruction which is not covered under warranty.

AC Primary Connections & Amplifier Grounding

Primary voltage taps are selected at the terminal strip numbered "1" to "7" and located on the mains board mounted on the chassis center divider, left of the transformer. Connect the two wires labeled "A" and "B" for the line voltage to be used, as shown in the following table. The two short jumper wires supplied are not used on 190-250V, but must be connected as shown for operation on 90-130V mains.

PRIMARY	"A" Terminal	"B" Terminal	Blower*	Jumpers
230-250V	4 **	2**	4 & 2**	Not used
210-230V	4	3	4 & 3	for 190 - 250V
190-210V	5	3	4 & 3	operation
110-130V	4	6	4 & 7	1 - 2, 6 - 7
90-110V	5	6	4 & 7	1 - 3, 6 - 7

* The blower wires are the 2 unmarked black wires on terminals 4 & 2.

** Factory settings.

NOTE: If you intend to operate the amplifier on any of the 90 - 130V settings, the two lower fuses on the rear panel (2 amp) will have to be changed to 5 amp to allow for the increased in-rush current.

NOTE: Do not operate amplifier without all cover screws installed. Do not operate amplifier without a good RF ground connection on the rear panel ground terminal.

Power Cord Connections WARNING!

To avoid the hazard of a potentially fatal electric shock and/or severe damage to the ALPHA 99 and other equipment, always use an AC plug which is appropriate for the primary mains voltage, current rating and configuration. NEVER use 120V-type plugs and power receptacles for 190-250V circuits. ALWAYS use grounding type AC connectors which conform to local codes and ensure that the green wire in the 99 power cable is wired only to the AC mains safety ground (or to neutral, as may be necessary with a 240V circuit configured 120V-N-120V without a separate ground, commonly found in the US).

The green conductor in the power cord is wired to the ALPHA 99 chassis. It MUST be connected only to the power source safety ground or neutral. The black and white power cord wires connect to the two "hot" wires of the AC source; either wire may be connected to either side of the line. For best results use a dedicated 200-240V branch circuit of #10 AWG copper wire or equivalent, rated at 20A, to feed the amplifier.

Important information concerning operation from 90-130V mains

Electrical power equipment will draw twice as much primary current from 120V mains as from 240V mains. Therefore, operating the ALPHA 99 on a typical 120V/20A household circuit without exceeding the 20A circuit rating will limit maximum peak power output to about 600-1000 watts. Maximum possible RF output power for any particular primary AC voltage and current capacity may be estimated as:

$$P_o \text{ max} = (V_{\text{line}} \times I_{\text{line}}) / 2.3.$$

For example, if the 99 operates from a circuit which is capable of delivering 115V AC at a maximum current of 20A, with no other loads connected to the circuit, maximum peak RF output possible without tripping the 20A breaker (or fuse) is approximately:

$$P_o \text{ max} = (115V \times 20A) / 2.3 = 2300/2.3 = 1000 \text{ watts.}$$

If the same circuit also supplies a transceiver drawing peak line current of 5A and a lamp drawing 1A, only 20-5-1 = 14A is available for the amplifier and maximum possible output is about:

$$P_o \text{ max} = (115V \times 14A) / 2.3 = 1610/2.3 = 700W.$$

RF Grounding

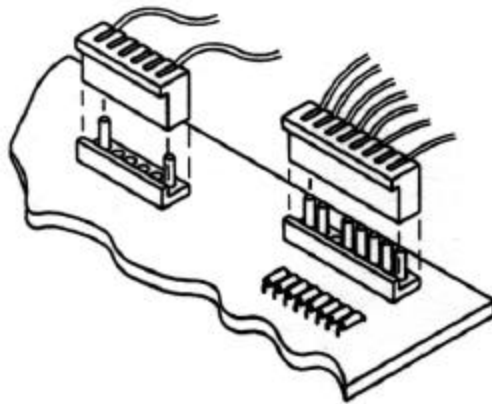
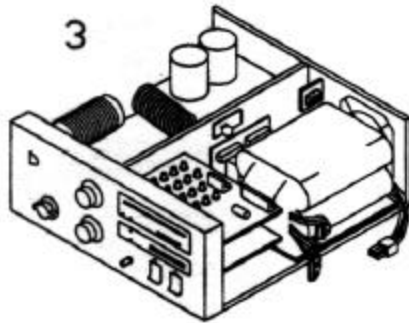
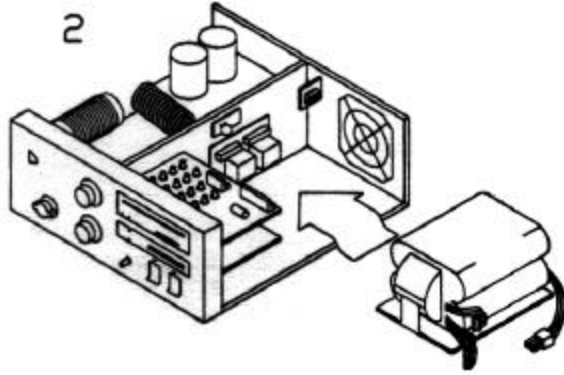
A ground stud with wing nut is provided on the rear of the chassis. Connection should be made from this stud to a good RF earth ground, such as a copper water pipe or driven rod, via heavy copper braid or strap. CAUTION: When using any high power amplifier, failure to connect ALL station equipment to a good common ground may allow RF feedback to leak into the transceiver and cause severe signal distortion.

Replacing the Amplifier Cover

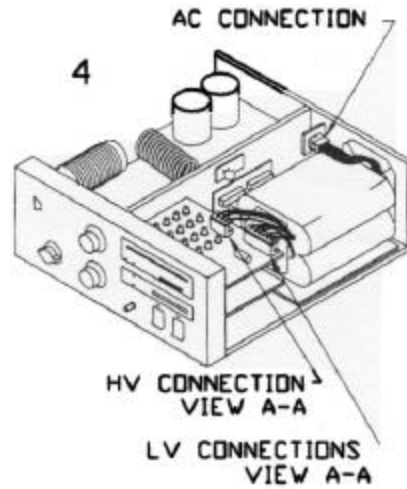
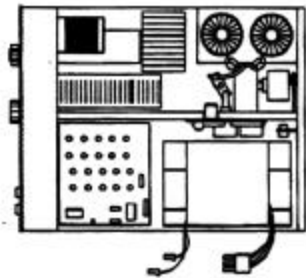
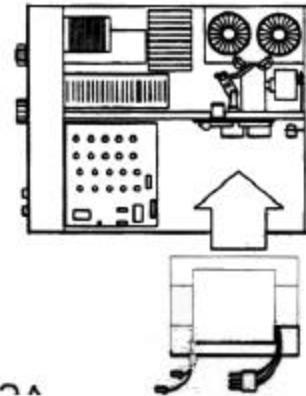
Use only the 6-32 screws supplied with the amplifier and do not tighten any of the screws until all are started.

Blower

Remove blower motor shipping hardware from rear chassis wall. Save the two 10-32 bolts, fiber washers, and rubber shim; reinstall this hardware whenever the chassis is transported. NOTE: For heavy-duty use or 50 Hz operation, the optional auxiliary fan must be installed.



VIEW A-A
HIGH AND LOW VOLTAGE BOARD CONNECTIONS



**FIGURES 2-4
ALPHA 99
TRANSFORMER
INSTALLATION**

Section 3

AMPLIFIER/STATION INTERCONNECTIONS

(See fig. 5)

Coaxial Cable Types & Connectors

Connect the transceiver RF output to the ALPHA 99 RF INPUT with 50 ohm coaxial cable- RG-58C/U or equivalent. A 6 ft. cable is supplied for this purpose.

Coaxial cable from the 99 RF OUTPUT to antenna should be RG-8A/U, RG-213/U, or equivalent high quality type with a PL-259 UHF-type plug on the amplifier end. RG8X cable is not recommended.

T/R Control Cable

The 99 has a full break-in vacuum relay QSK system requiring only the normal interconnection when used with a modern QSK transceiver. The 99 requires a contact closure (short circuit) on transmit from its RELAY jack center pin to chassis. This function is supplied by the transceiver, usually from a dedicated relay that is normally open in receive and closed in transmit. Shielded wire should be used for the T/R control cable. The 99 end must be fitted with a common phono (RCA-type) plug and the other end with a connector suitable for the transceiver.

The T/R relay contact must close before application of RF drive. 99 protection circuitry prevents "hot-switching" with RF drive applied. Modern transceivers have the proper time delay between keyup and the start of the transmitted signal to allow the 99 to follow the CW keying. If a T/R timing problem is suspected, connect the CW keyer to the RELAY jack on the 99, and connect a cable from KEY OUT on the 99 to the keying input of the transmitter.

ALC

The use of external ALC is not normally needed or recommended when the ALPHA 99 is used with modern transceivers. However, the 99 does generate a negative-going ALC control voltage that can be fed back to most transceivers if required, to minimize the possibility of overdriving the amplifier. This external ALC voltage is available at the 99's rear panel ALC jack via a common phono connector. 99 grid current exceeding about 1mA will initiate ALC and light the green GRID LED. About 5-10mA yields full ALC output-nominally -10 Vdc - and the red GRID LED lights. If the exciter requires a lower ALC voltage, the 99 ALC potentiometer may be set accordingly. While driving the amplifier, adjust the ALC pot to limit maximum transceiver output as desired. We recommend contacting CrossLink customer service before attempting to use external ALC with the 99.

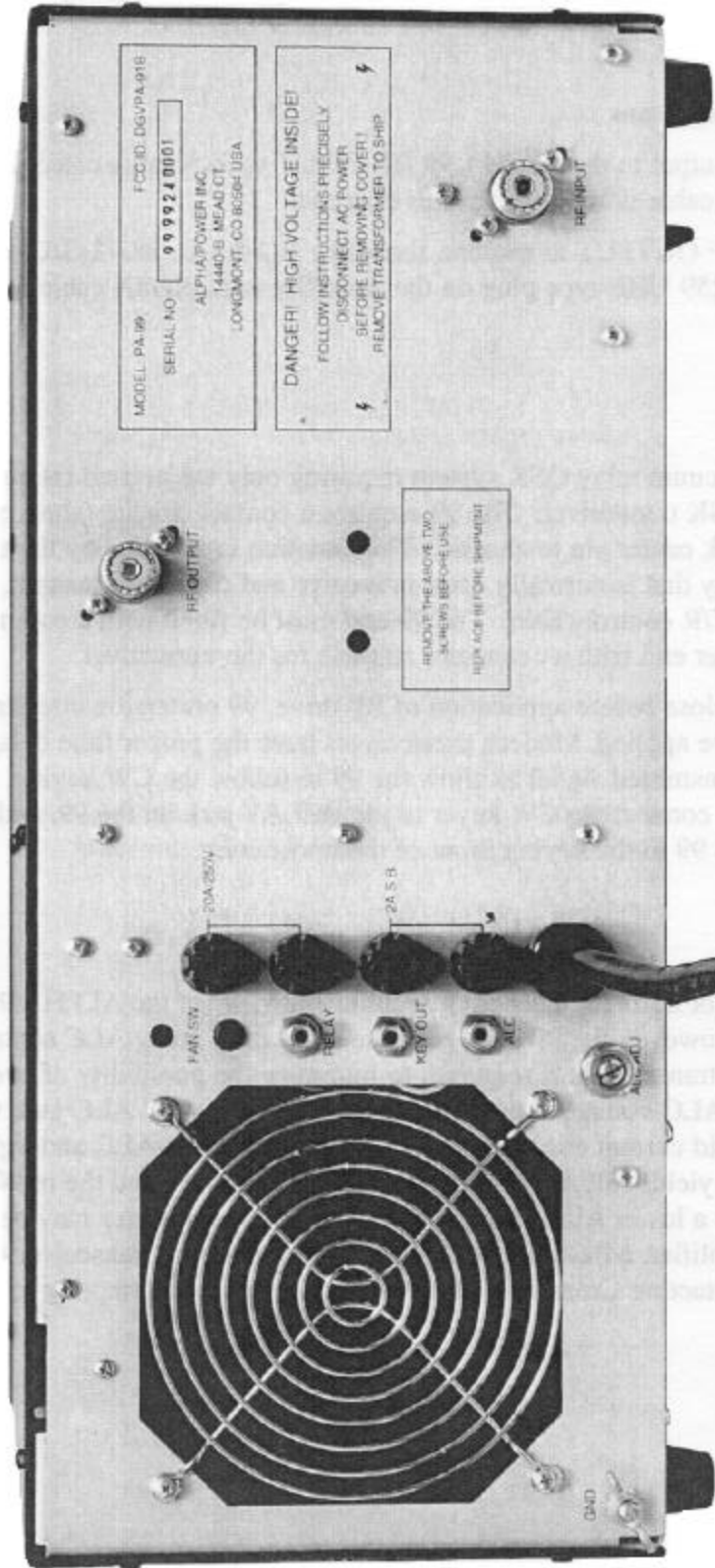


FIGURE 5
ALPHA 99 REAR PANEL

Section 4

OPERATION

4.1 Control Functions (See front cover photo)

BAND - Use to select amateur band desired (in MHz).

TUNE - Sets output tank circuit to resonance. Higher frequencies tend to tune toward the “0” end of the dial scale, while lower frequencies tend to tune further toward the “100” end.

LOAD - Sets amplifier plate loading and determines the power level at which best efficiency and linearity are achieved. In general, loading is heavier at greater scale settings. Higher frequencies tend to load more toward the “100” end of the dial scale and lower frequencies toward the “0” end.

POWER - Press ON to apply primary AC power to the amplifier or to reset power if the plate overcurrent relay has tripped. Press OFF to remove primary AC power.

OPR/STBY - OPeRate places the amplifier in-line. With the 99 off, in STandBY, or in warm-up with the WAIT LED lighted, the amplifier is bypassed and the exciter is connected directly to the antenna.

Metering LEDs & Bargraphs - Separate bargraphs provide instantaneous full-time display of peak values.

RF OUTPUT and REFLECTED POWER: Red and green “GRID” LEDs indicate, respectively, that normal peak drive has been reached and the onset of overdrive and flattopping.

A switch-selected bargraph monitors three additional functions:

TUNE: Permits a simple and safe tune-up procedure to be performed at low output power. See section 4.2 below.

IP: Plate current, 1.5 amperes full scale (approximately 75 mA per segment).

HV: Plate voltage, 3000 VDC full scale (150 V per segment).

4.2 Tune-up

Objective

The objective of tune-up is to adjust the amplifier (and the drive applied to it) to obtain optimum efficiency and linearity at the desired output power.

Any linear amplifier must be adjusted for optimum efficiency and linearity at a specific power level. If operation at higher power is then attempted without appropriate readjustment, the result will be flattopping, “splatter,” and (usually) excessive amplifier grid current. If operated at a much lower power level than it has been adjusted for, the amplifier’s efficiency decreases considerably.

Grid Current

The ALPHA 99 operates in Class AB2 when delivering maximum output power consistent with excellent linearity. A small amount of grid current flows and the green GRID MIN LED lights as drive approaches the optimum level. The green GRID LED should flicker on some SSB voice peaks, and light under CW/SSTV/RTTY carrier conditions. As overdrive approaches, grid

current increases rapidly and the red GRID MAX LED lights. At maximum output and efficiency, the red LED lights dimly; full illumination of the red LED indicates overdrive and must be avoided. If the red LED lights before the desired value of plate current and/or power output is reached, readjust amplifier loading before continuing. On SSB, optimum output consistent with good linearity occurs when the green GRID LED lights on most voice peaks and the red LED flickers dimly only on the highest peaks.

Excessive grid current results from overdrive and/or inadequate loading. The solution is to reduce drive, and/or increase amplifier loading. The 99's 4CX800A/GU74b tubes are well protected and these adjustments tend to be less critical than in many other amplifiers.

ALC

The 99 grid current limiting circuits provide substantial tube protection against possible damage. The ALC voltage generated by the 99 cannot control the amplifier itself and is not applied internally. If ALC control is required, a connection must be made from the 99 to the transceiver ALC input. (See Sections 3 and 4.4)

Tune-up Procedure

NOTE: The forward and reflected power LED bargraphs and GRID LEDs are peak-responding.

BEFORE INITIAL TUNE-UP, MAKE SURE A SUITABLE ANTENNA OR 50 OHM DUMMY LOAD IS CONNECTED TO THE 99. Leave the amplifier off or in standby and apply exciter power to make a forward vs. reflected power check. If reflected power is less than ten percent of forward power, the VSWR is lower than 2:1 and it is safe to proceed with tuneup.

1. Turning on the amplifier.

- Place the OPR-STBY switch in STBY (standby).
- Rotate the multimeter selector switch to HV.
- Depress POWER/ON.

If any of the following does NOT occur, depress POWER/OFF switch immediately and investigate before proceeding:

- The blower starts (note air exhausting above tubes).
- The multimeter bargraph automatically displays HV; it should indicate approximately 2.8 KV.
- The WAIT LED is lighted

IMPORTANT: EXHAUST AIR MUST BE DETECTABLE FROM THE TOP VENTS: If it is not, **TURN OFF** the amplifier immediately and verify that the exhaust chimneys are properly positioned over the tubes. When the warm up delay is complete (about 150 seconds), the WAIT LED will extinguish. The ALPHA 99 is now "ready".

2. Tuning Up for Operation at 1,500 Watts RF Output

- 1) Preset BAND, TUNE, and LOAD controls to the nominal positions given in TABLE I, below.

TABLE I - Preliminary Tuneup Settings

<u>Band</u>	<u>Frequency (MHz)</u>	<u>Tune</u>	<u>Load</u>
1.8	1.8	65	19
1.8	2.0	23	69
3.5	3.5	76	43
3.5	3.75	67	63
3.5	4.0	59	77
7	7.15	39	36
10	10.13	15	27
14	14.2	55	43
18	18.1	35	58
21	21.2	29	68
24	24.9	55	64
28	28.0	27	71
28	28.6	23	73
28	29.7	10	79

NOTE: Final TUNE and LOAD settings will vary with the operating frequency, antenna characteristics, and power level.

- 2) Reduce transceiver carrier output control to ZERO.
- 3) Press OPR (operate) on OPR-STBY switch. OPR LED should light.
- 4) Select TUNE function of the multimeter bargraph.

IF AT ANY TIME IN THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE THE AMPLIFIER FAILS TO RESPOND AS DESCRIBED, REMOVE DRIVE IMMEDIATELY!

- 5) Switch transceiver to CW and increase its carrier output to approximately 15 watts (99 output approx. 300-500 watts).

NOTE! If more than about 25 W drive is applied while the 99 is substantially mistuned, the 99 will switch to STBY. If the amplifier is returned to receive (key-up) it will automatically reset to OPR in about 4 seconds.

- 6) Adjust TUNE control to deflect the TUNE LED maximum leftward.
- 7) Adjust LOAD control to place the illuminated TUNE LED below the "V" mark on the TUNE scale.
- 8) Repeat steps 6 and 7 above.
- 9) Increase excitation until 99 output is about 1500 watts.
- 10) Repeat steps 6 and 7 at least twice.
- 11) Touch up TUNE for maximum power output.

The ALPHA 99 is now correctly tuned to deliver 1500 watts RF output on SSB, CW, FSK, SSTV and FM. The TUNE LED normally fluctuates during modulation or keying. Illumination of the first red LED on the RF OUTPUT bargraph indicates output has exceeded 1500 watts.

To operate at reduced power in any mode, simply decrease drive (i.e., transceiver power output).

4.3 Reflected Power Protection

While operating, check the bargraph to ensure that reflected power remains below about 165 watts peak (2:1 VSWR when amplifier output is 1,500 watts). Fluctuating reflected power may indicate a problem in the feedline or antenna. If reflected power exceeds 250 watts the 99 will automatically switch to standby. The FAULT LED will illuminate, indicating that the 99 protection system has tripped it to STBY. Such faults reset automatically if the transceiver is returned to receive for approximately 4 seconds.

4.4 Automatic Level Control (ALC)

If external ALC is used, amplifier grid current peaks greater than approximately 3mA will initiate ALC. At grid current of 5-10 mA, ALC output is nominally -10V. If the transceiver requires less ALC voltage, adjust the rear panel ALC potentiometer counterclockwise until smooth ALC action results. Increase the exciter RF output until the red GRID LED just illuminates on voice peaks.

A VOM can be used to measure ALC voltage while the pot is adjusted for suitable peak ALC voltage. Many Kenwood and Yaesu transceivers work well with -8 and -10 VDC maximum. Icom transceivers generally require lower peak voltage, typically -2 to -3 VDC.

Section 5

OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE NOTES

TUBES - The 4CX800A/GU74b tubes used in the ALPHA 99 are very rugged and normally operate with a large margin of safety. They should provide outstanding service for many years if not damaged by abuse - especially overdrive or blockage of cooling airflow. Allow at least twelve inches (31 cm) unobstructed clearance around the air intake and exhaust areas. Stacking equipment is not recommended.

Never allow key-down plate current to exceed 1.5 amperes for more than one or two seconds. If you do and a plate current trip occurs, it will automatically reset in about 4 seconds if the amplifier is returned to receive (key-up). Never allow the red GRID LED to stay brightly illuminated for more than a second.

Frequent on-off AC power cycling may shorten tube life. It's better to leave equipment in stand-by for several hours than to cycle power repeatedly on-off-on-off over the same period.

INTERLOCKS — The ALPHA 99 is equipped with a cover interlock switch intended to remove primary power from the amplifier, and a crowbar to short-circuit the high voltage to chassis whenever the cover is lifted. These interlocks are designed to protect against dangerous electric shock resulting from accidental contact with potentially lethal voltages inside the amplifier.

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING! WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

ALWAYS DISCONNECT THE AC LINE CORD FROM THE POWER SOURCE BEFORE REMOVING THE TOP COVER FROM THE 99 FOR ANY REASON!

Cover interlocks are intended only as back-up protection against accidents. Never depend on them! Always disconnect the power cord from the AC mains before removing the cover! Interlock switches should never be disabled for any reason except by a skilled and experienced technician.

FUSES — Never replace any fuse with one of a different type or greater current rating. Blowing of one or both primary line fuses indicates that the maximum safe average power capability of the amplifier has been substantially exceeded or that an equipment failure has occurred. **USE ONLY 20 AMP, 250 VOLT RATED FUSES.**

Slow-blow fuses F3 and F4, located above the primary line fuses, may prevent damage to the step-start resistors and HV rectifiers in the event of abnormal turn-on conditions or HV faults. If the AC interlock is defeated and primary power is applied while the HV crowbar is closed, the step-start fuses normally will blow.

DAMAGE RESULTING FROM USE OF A FUSE OF INCORRECT SIZE OR TYPE WILL NOT BE COVERED UNDER WARRANTY AND MAY VOID THE WARRANTY.

PLATE OVERCURRENT RELAY — This relay will quickly turn off the amplifier in the event of grossly excessive plate current or fault in the high voltage circuitry. The relay will not prevent tube or other damage due to either short or long term overdrive or improper tuning. It is the operator's responsibility to ensure safe tuning, drive, and general operating conditions. Should the overcurrent relay trip and remove AC power from the amplifier, determine and correct the cause of the trip before turning the 99 on again.

IDLING PLATE CURRENT AND ELECTRONIC BIAS CONTROL (EBS)

Idling plate current of the ALPHA 99 is approximately 350 to 400 mA during transmission. A detector senses RF drive, and reduces plate current to 30-50 mA during pauses in speech and key-up intervals, thus substantially reducing average power supply loading, heat generation, and wasted energy.

ARC & MISTUNING PROTECTION

ALPHA/POWER's exclusive circuit senses the beginning of any RF arc in, for example, a TUNE or LOAD variable capacitor and automatically switches the 99 to standby within a few milliseconds. This system has virtually eliminated RF arc damage in current ALPHA amplifiers. The system similarly detects severe mis-tuning of the 99, and if drive exceeds about 25 watts switches the amplifier to standby. The 25 watt input trip threshold permits safe tuneup at low power levels using the TUNE indicator, without aggravating and unnecessary trip-outs.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE - The amplifier interior, particularly high voltage areas, should be cleaned with a vacuum cleaner and a soft bristle brush frequently enough to prevent visible accumulation of dust. In extremely dusty conditions it may be advisable to secure a thin air filter of the type used for window air conditioners across the air intake on the rear panel. The ALPHA accessory cooling fan also should be installed to insure adequate cooling airflow.

There are no user-accessible lubrication points in the amplifier. Do not apply oil or grease to any of the components. The exterior of the ALPHA 99 may be cleaned with a mild household liquid detergent such as Formula 409 or Fantastik. Do not use chemical solvents, as these may severely damage the front panel or cabinet finish. Never use an abrasive cleaner.

Section 6

TROUBLESHOOTING HINTS

- A) 99 will not turn on; nothing happens when ON switch is pushed.
 - 1) External AC wiring, fuse or circuit breaker may be open.
 - 2) Amplifier cover not in place; cover safety interlock open.
 - 3) Fuse F1-F4 open or missing; check fuses with an ohmmeter.
 - 4) Step-start resistor R4 or R5 open.
- B) Amplifier turns on but no HV is indicated by the multimeter LED bargraph.
 - 1) Multimeter selector switch in wrong position, e.g., Ip.
 - 2) Possible HV circuit fault.
 - 3) HV sampling resistor in power supply damaged.
 - 4) Transformer plugged into power supply incorrectly.
- C) Amplifier turns on but no multimeter indications; other LED bargraphs are operative.
 - 1) Low voltage power supply problem.
 - 2) Defect or damage on control board.
- D) Amplifier turns on but time delay will not complete; WAIT LED does not turn off.
 - 1) Defect or damage in timing circuitry on control board.
- E) Amplifier turns on, time delay completes but amplifier will not transmit.
 - 1) Open T/R control line from transceiver to RELAY jack.
- F) Amplifier transmits but red GRID LED often lights.
 - 1) Amplifier overdriven or underloaded; reduce transceiver output and /or increase amplifier loading.
 - 2) Load VSWR (reflected power) exceeds 200W.
 - 3) Exciter output poorly controlled. External ALC may help.
- G) Amplifier operates but green GRID LED will not light and plate current is low; transceiver does not seem to be able to drive amplifier to its rated RF output power level.
 - 1) External ALC control voltage to transceiver excessive (see section 4.4, Automatic Level Control).
 - 2) Input rf load resistor or bias circuitry damaged.
 - 3) Possible damaged or defective tube(s).
- H) Receive signals disappear or are severely attenuated when switching from STBY to OPR.
 - 1) RELAY (T/R) control cable from transceiver is shorted.
 - 2) Transceiver locked in transmit
- I) Plate current indicated when amplifier is in STBY or receive.
 - 1) 4CX800A/GU74b tube heater-to-cathode leakage or short.
 - 2) Tube bias supply or T/R bias switch faulty.

- J) Distorted SSB signal; possible severe television interference.
 - 1) Excessive RF drive from transceiver and/or insufficient amplifier loading.
 - 2) Coaxial connector, coax feedline, antenna feedpoint balun, tuner, or antenna trap arcing on voice peaks.
 - 3) RF feedback from antenna into transceiver via the transceiver power cord, microphone or key cable, or other unshielded station patch cables.
 - 4) Poor station RF ground.
- K) Low frequency audio hum on transmitted signal.
 - 1) Defective microphone cord (especially, broken ground lead).
 - 2) Dynamic (magnetic) microphone located within about two feet of 99 power transformer. All dynamic microphones pick up some magnetically-coupled hum from the external field of nearby power transformers. In cases where objectionable hum is experienced while using the 99 and popular microphones such as the Heil series, the problem usually can be resolved by keeping the microphone at least 18 to 24 inches from the front of the amplifier and ensuring that transceiver mike gain, speech processing, and internal drive (ALC) levels are not adjusted to exceed 10 dB. In rare cases it may be necessary to use a ceramic or condenser type microphone.

Section 7

ALPHA 99 DESIGN AND CIRCUIT OVERVIEW

RF Amplifier Section (See Figure 6, 13)

Two 4CX800A/GU74b tubes are employed in a grounded-cathode, grid-driven circuit. Excellent linearity is achieved by operating the tubes as tetrodes with normal control grid (G1), screen grid (G2), and plate (anode) DC voltages. Drive voltage required under these conditions is low enough to permit using an untuned input loaded by non-inductive 50 ohm resistor R1. A simple network (C7, C8, K2, L1 in Figure 13) compensates for tube and wiring reactances on the highest-frequency bands, yielding extremely low input VSWR across the entire HF range.

RF negative feedback provided by un-bypassed cathode resistors R4 and R13 stabilizes amplifier power gain at the desired level of about 14 dB and further enhances linearity. Protection of tubes and other components against damage due to internal tube flash-over is provided by a gas-discharge surge suppressor, GT1, connected from the screen grids to ground, as well as D1 and R3 on the screen/filament board.

The Alpha 99 RF output network is a conventional pi-L except that plate RF choke L4 is switched by a relay to optimize performance across all nine 1.8-29.7 MHz amateur bands. Two-section TUNE and LOAD capacitors C22 and C32 are switched to provide an “electrical vernier” for smooth, easy and accurately-resettable tuneup “by the numbers” on all bands.

Power Supplies (Figures 6, 9, 12)

Transformer T1 supplies all raw AC voltages required. Step-start resistors R4 and R5 in series with the primary of T1 limit inrush current to a safe level and are shorted out by relay K2 shortly after turn-on. **NOTE:** For heavy-duty use or 50 Hz operation, the optional auxiliary fan must be installed.

The high voltage full-wave bridge rectifier (Figure 9) consists of a molded block HV rectifier assembly. Bridge D1-D4 provides rectified DC for the screen grids, while D5-D8 and associated components make up the regulated bias supply.

Figure 12 shows HV filter capacitor bank C2-C10 and the monitoring points for HV and IP. K1 is the plate overcurrent relay. MOSFET Q12 and associated components provide regulated screen grid voltage for the tubes and also limit maximum screen current to a safe value. Q12 is mounted on the rear of the 99 front subpanel for heat sinking.

Control Circuits (Figure 7)

Control and monitoring circuits are grouped on the Control Board, which is physically located on the front of the 99 subpanel. Generally, monitoring and protective functions are clustered on page 1 of the schematic; warm-up, status indicators, and keying/switching functions are on page 2.

Front Panel Displays (Figure 8)

The Display Board, located on the rear side of the 99 front panel, incorporates all indicator LEDs and their associated driver chips. The RF forward (output) power bargraph is at top right, reflected power bargraph center right, multimeter bottom right, and the individual indicator LEDs at bottom left.

Output RF Wattmeter Detector Board - See Figure 14.

Multimeter Selector Switch Wiring - See Figure 11.

Switch Matrix Board - See Figure 10.

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- (2) *Eimac* power tubes are warranted by their manufacturer; API will assist owners in securing warranty service if requested.
Svetlana power tubes are warranted by API for one year from date of original purchase.
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