ATAK

FOBS

Plug-in Version: 0.7
ATAK 5.8.0
10 November 2026



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Overview

FOBS, Field Observation Survey, captures a perimeter or an area and turns it into an ordinary ATAK drawing shape with area and perimeter. Walk it with the phone in hand, trace it on the map, pick up a shape or a KML already there, or pull it out of ATAK's Track History. Split what came out wrong, join the pieces into one line, close the line into an area.

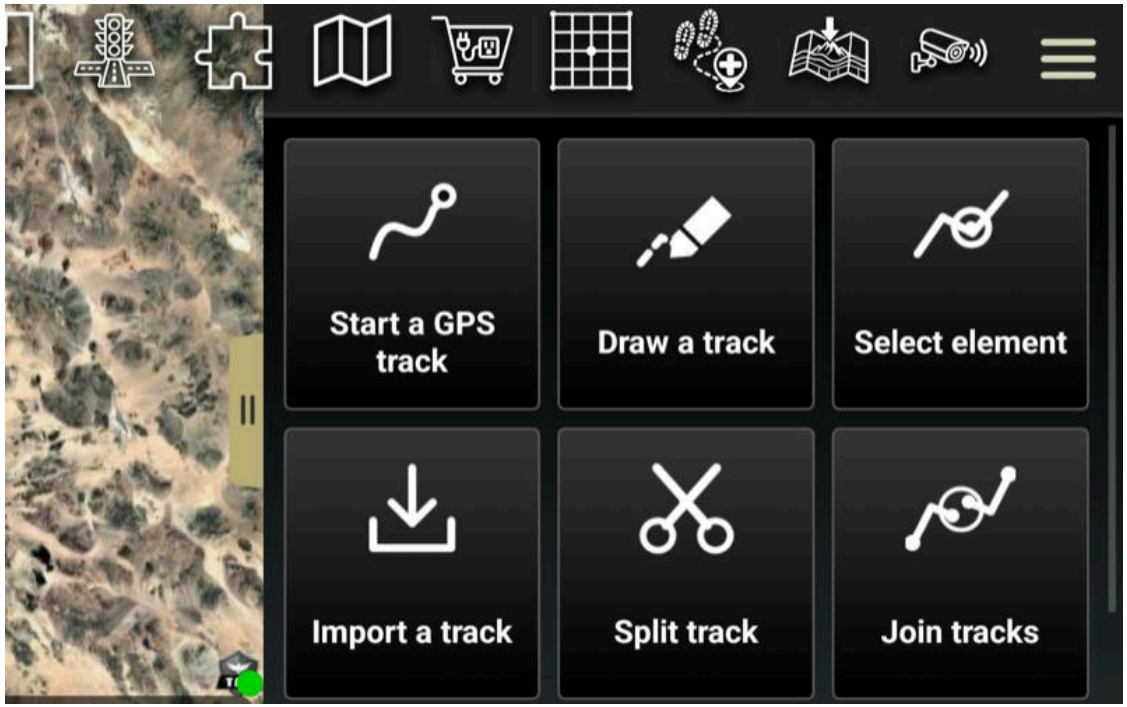
Everything it makes is a normal ATAK drawing: it shows in the details panel, shares over the mesh, edits with ATAK's vertex editor and deletes like any other shape. Nothing has to be created first. Tap the icon and pick a tile.



Optionally, a walked track goes live to a Data Sync feed on a connected TAK Server, and grows on every subscriber's map as it is walked.

The boot print on ATAK's toolbar opens FOBS.

The pane

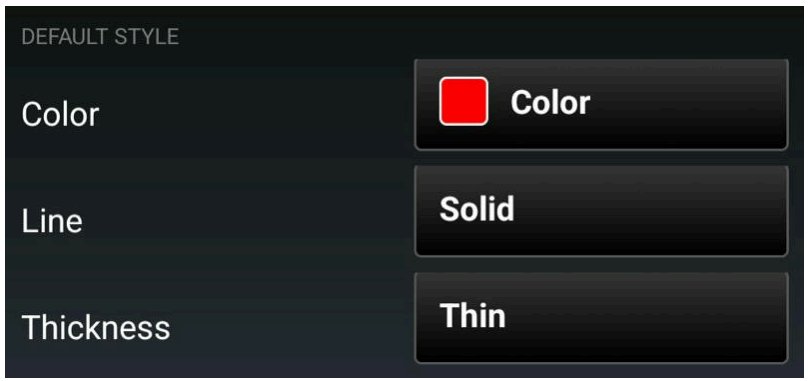


Six tiles in a pane beside the map. The map stays live, so you can zoom to where you are working before you start.

Start a GPS track, **Draw a track**, **Select element**, **Import a track**, **Split track**, **Join tracks**. Each one is described on its own page.

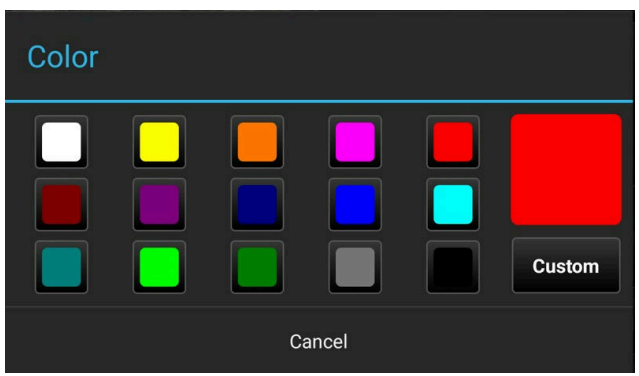
Tap the boot print again to close the pane.

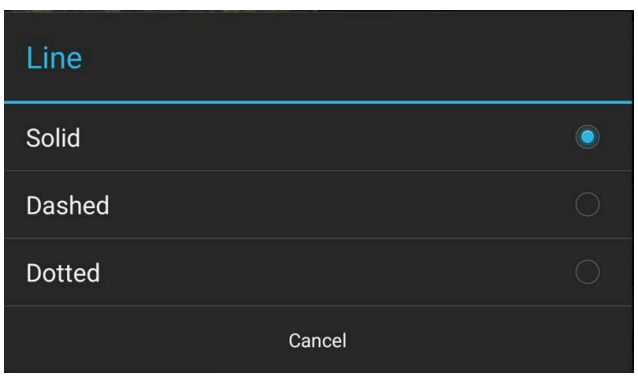
Default Style

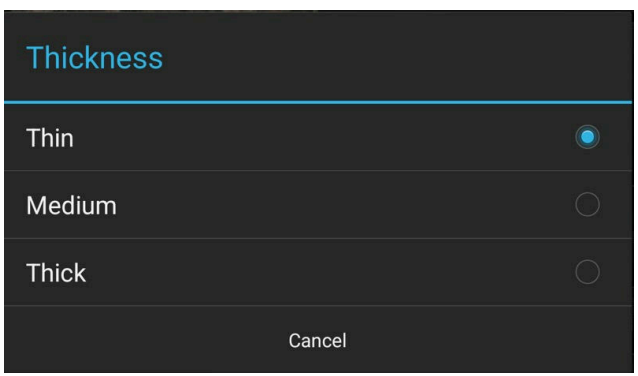


Below the tiles, the style every new track starts with: **Color**, **Line** (solid, dashed, dotted) and **Thickness** (thin, medium, thick).

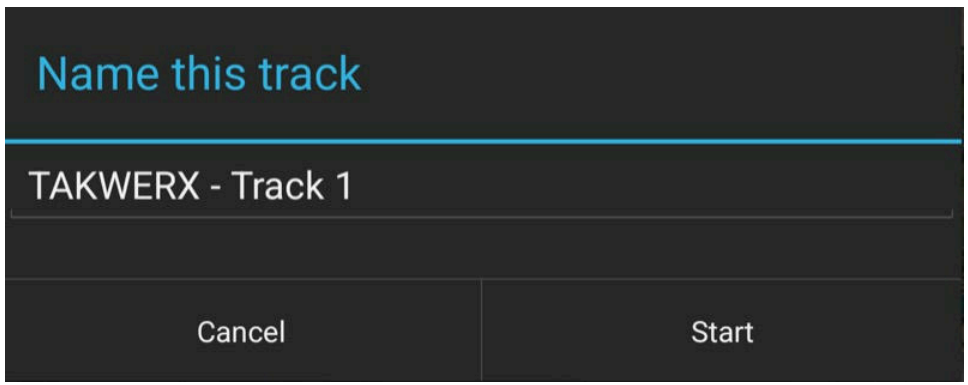
Color opens ATAK's own palette. A track keeps the style it was made with; a change here applies to the next one.

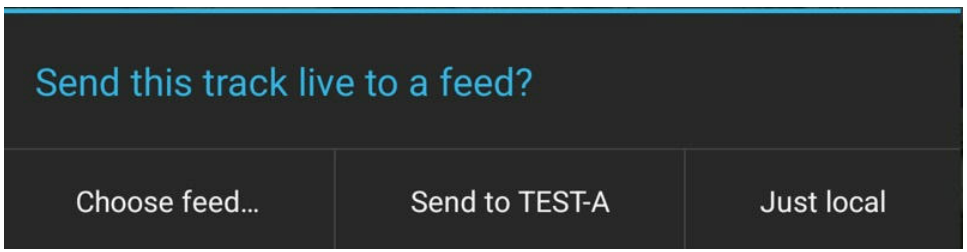






Start a GPS track



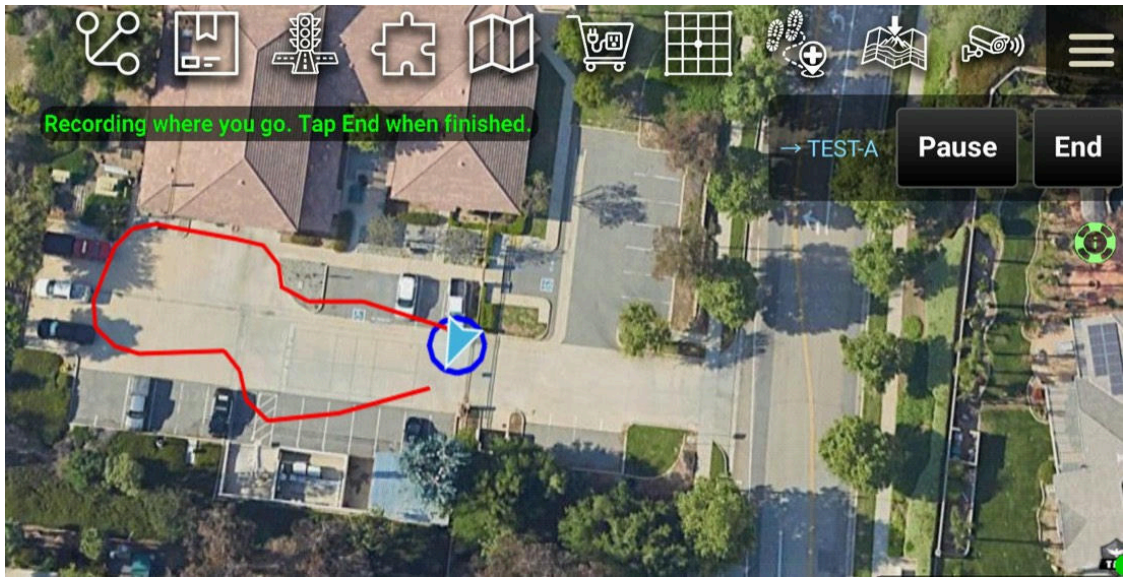


With a TAK Server connected, FOBS asks whether to send the track live to a Data Sync feed. **Just local** keeps it on the device. See *Live to a feed*.

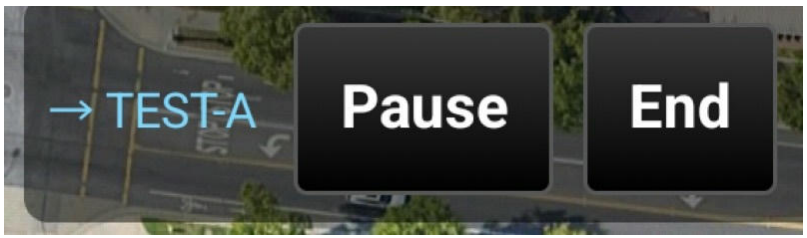
Name it. The default is your callsign and the next track number.

Then walk. Every fix that passes the filter is added to the line: reported accuracy better than 25 m, no impossible jumps, at least 2 m from the last one. Standing still adds nothing.

Recording

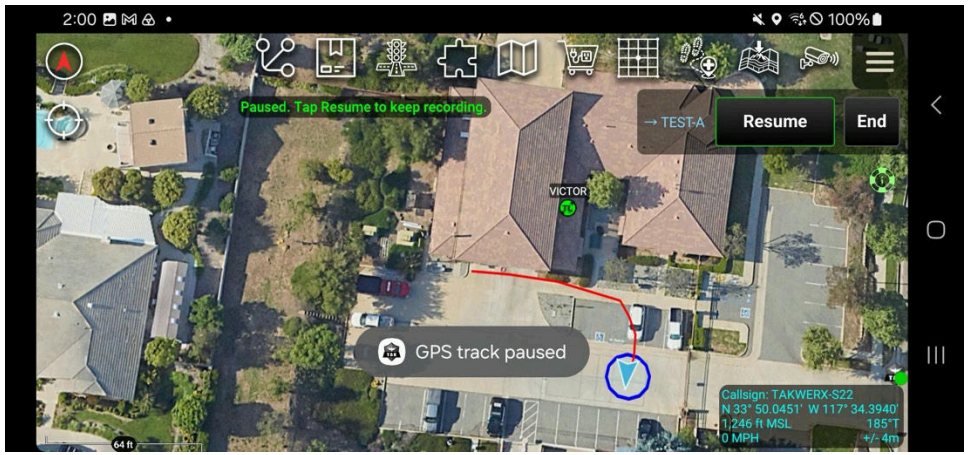


The bar shows the feed the track is going to, then **Pause** and **End**. If the filter has refused fixes for poor accuracy or an impossible jump, a count of them appears there too. Standing still is not counted.

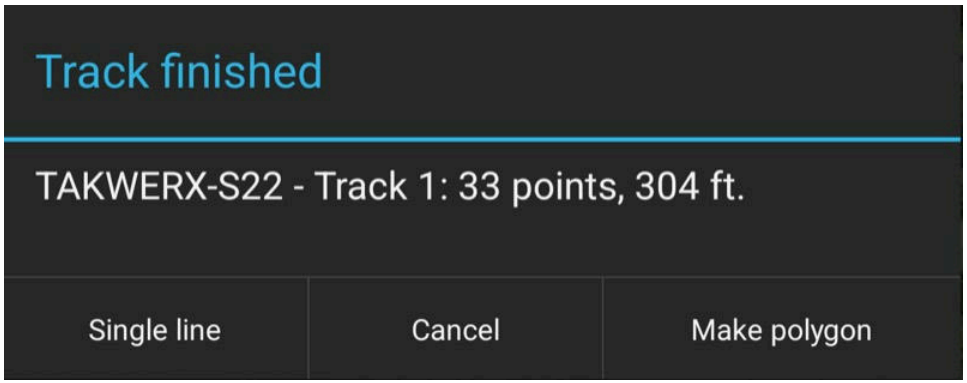


The line grows behind you. It is saved every fifteen seconds and re-sent to the feed on every save.

Pause, and End

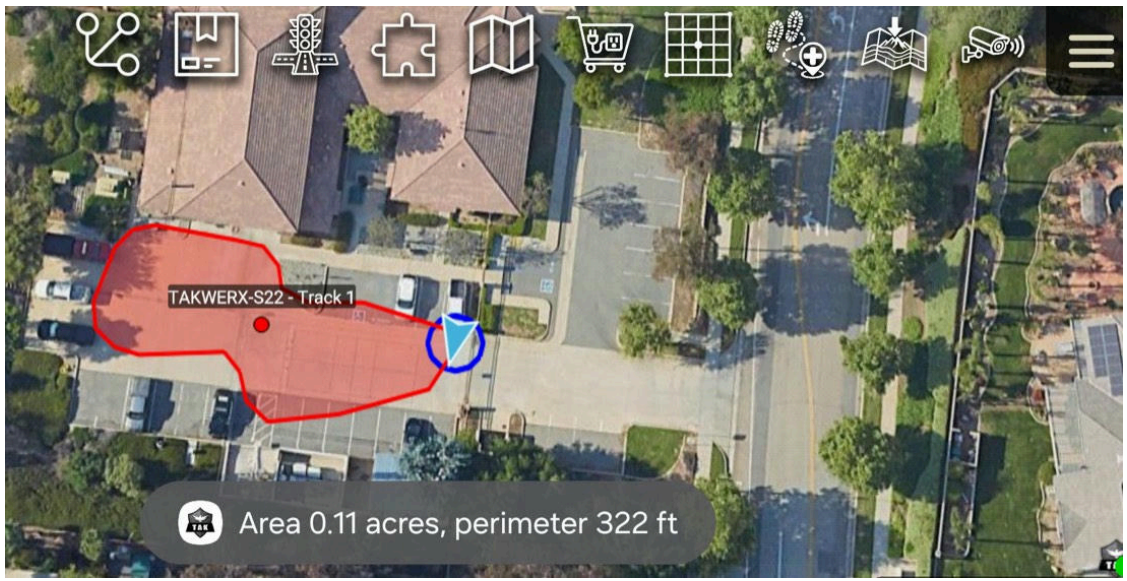


Pause when you leave the line to look at something. Nothing is recorded until **Resume**, and the gap is drawn straight.



End shows the count and length and asks: **Make polygon**, **Single line**, or **Cancel** to keep recording.

The result

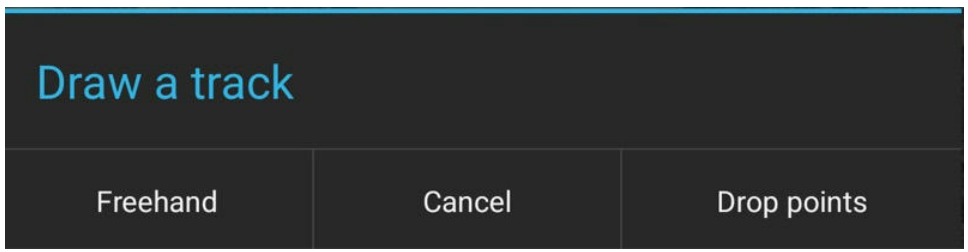


Make polygon closes the line back to its start and fills it. Area and perimeter are shown in ATAK's own units, the ones set in ATAK's preferences, and again any time in the shape's details.

Single line keeps it open, to be joined to other legs later.

A polygon is the same map item as the line it came from, so a subscriber watching the feed sees the line become an area.

Draw a track

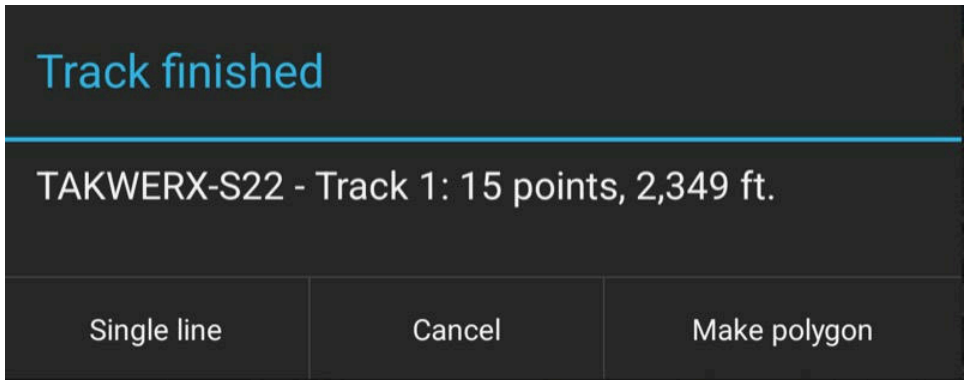


Two ways to draw: **Drop points** or **Freehand**.



Drop points: tap along a road, a ridge, the edge of a field. **Undo** takes the last point back. The first point wears a green ring; tapping it closes the line into an area on the spot.

Drop points, then End

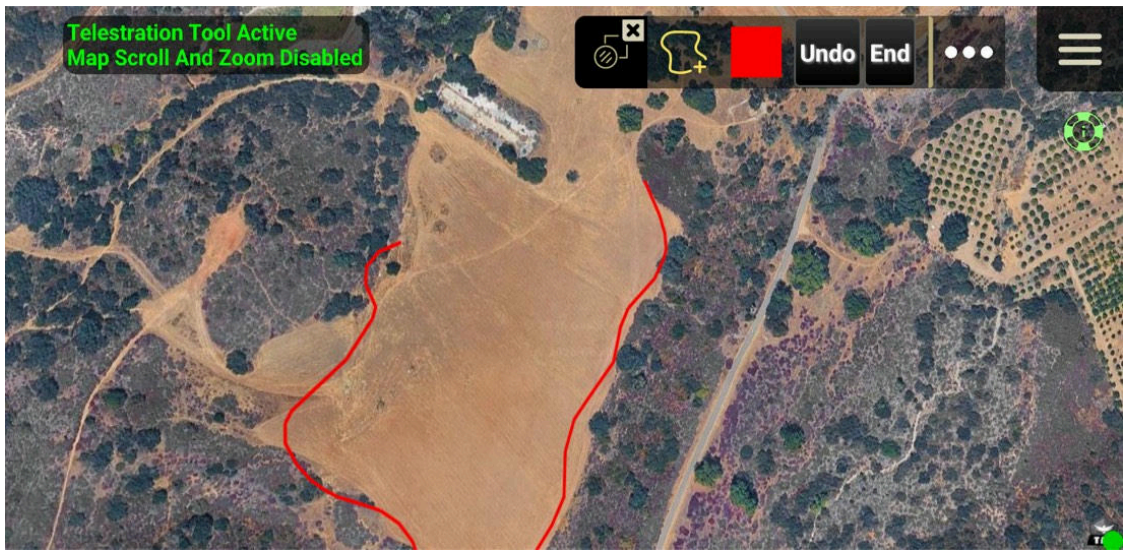


End asks the same question a walk does: line or polygon.



Fifteen points around a field, made into an area.

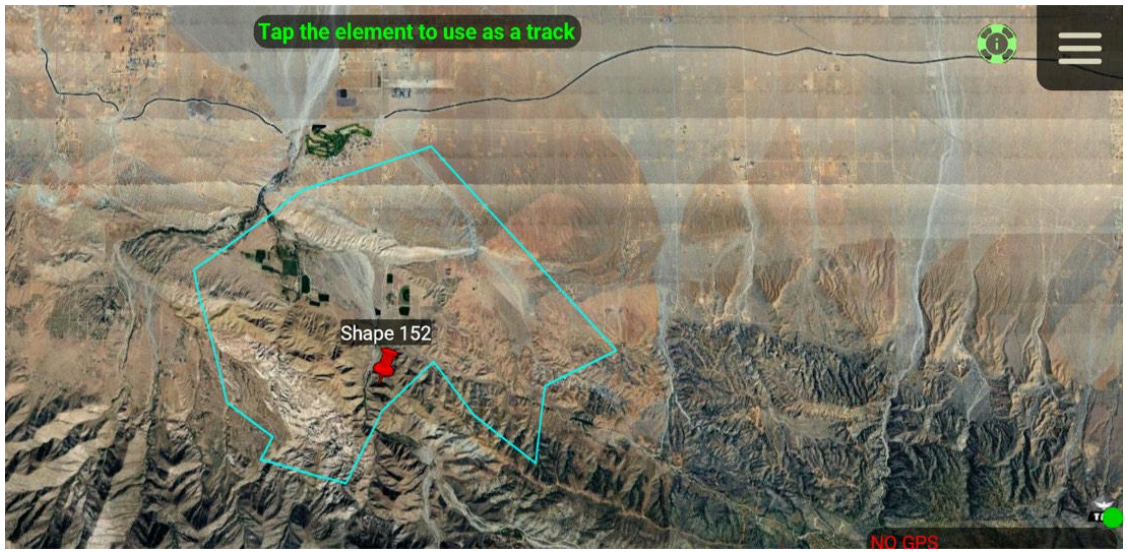
Freehand



Freehand opens ATAK's own telestration tool in your color. Draw the stroke with a finger; the map does not move while the tool is active.

Tap **End** on the telestration bar and the stroke becomes a FOBS track, with the same line-or-polygon question.

Select element



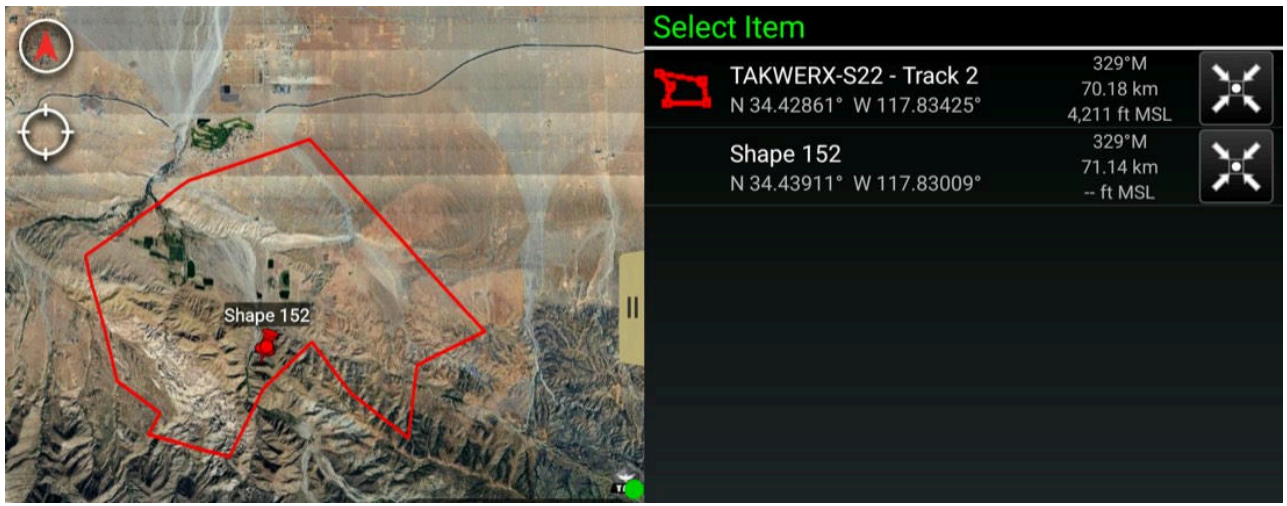
Turns a shape already on the map into a FOBS track: a line or polygon from an imported KML, a freeform line or polygon, a route, a rectangle, a circle, a telestration.

Tap the tile, then tap the shape. Name it. A closed shape becomes an area at once; an open line asks line or polygon.

Before and after

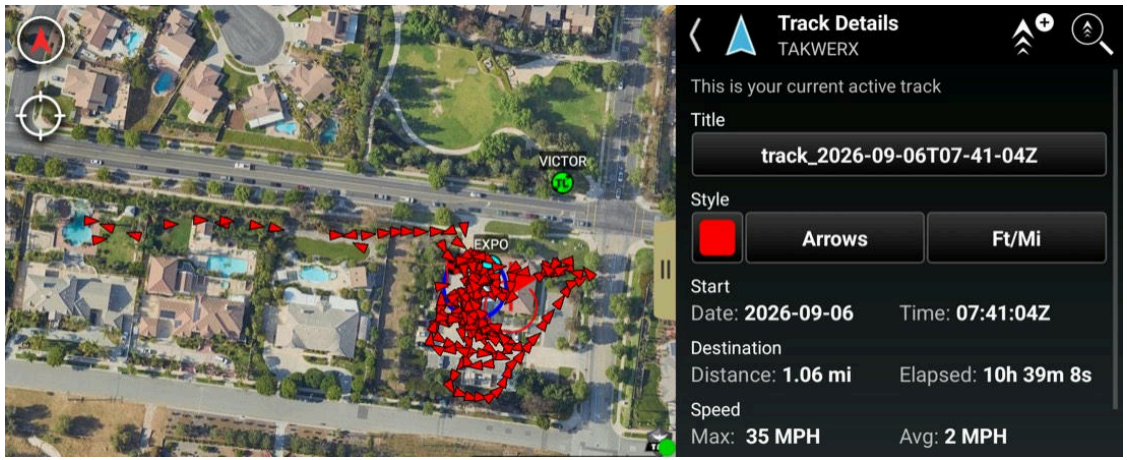


A KML boundary on the map, in blue.



The same boundary as a FOBS area, in the default style. The KML is untouched underneath; both show when you tap the spot.

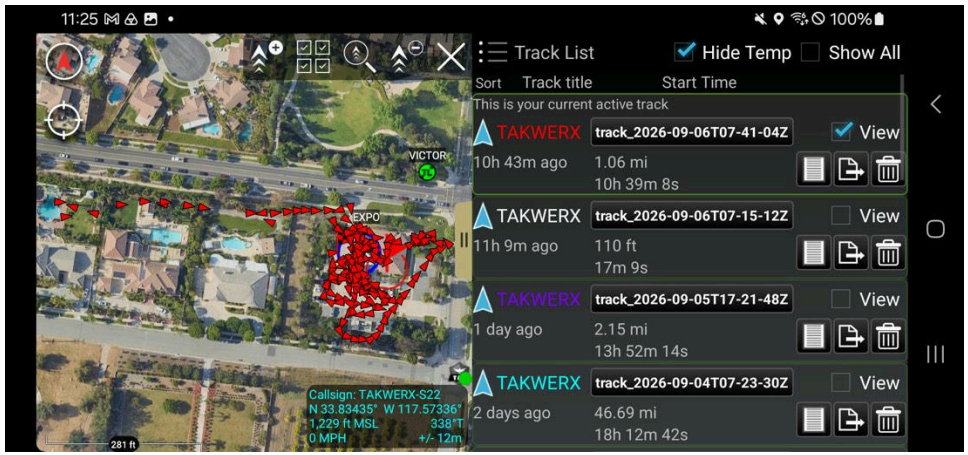
Import a track



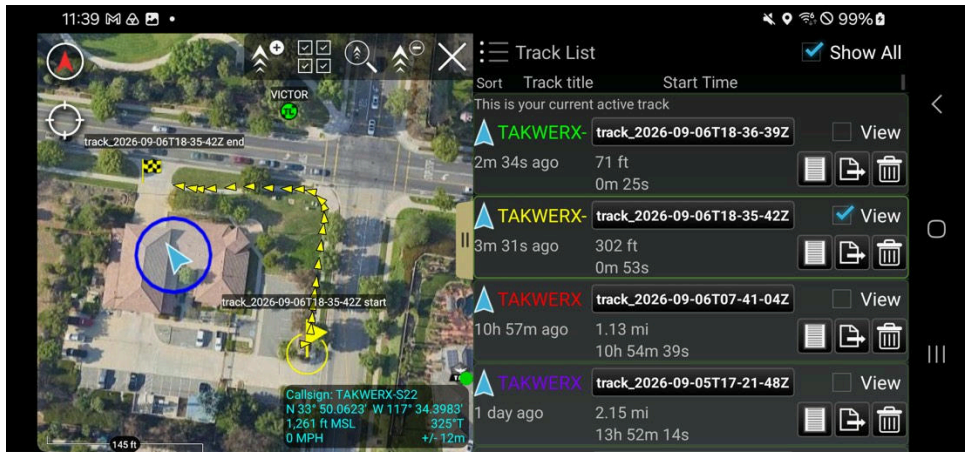
Import opens ATAK's own **Track History**, which knows every track this device has logged and, with a server connected, every user's tracks on the server.

It opens on the current active track. The list icon at the top shows all of them; the search icon asks the server.

Find the track

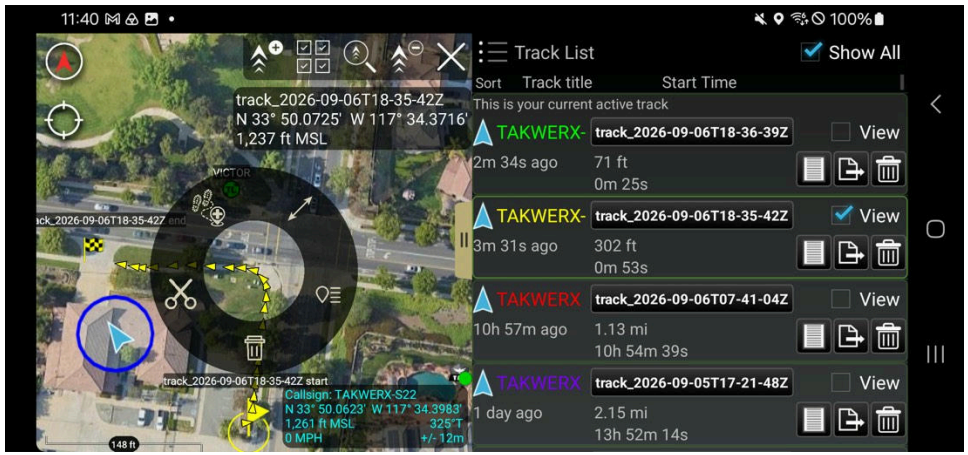


The track list. Tick **View** on a track and it is drawn on the map. **Hide Temp** hides short tracks; untick it, or tick **Show All**, to see a short one.

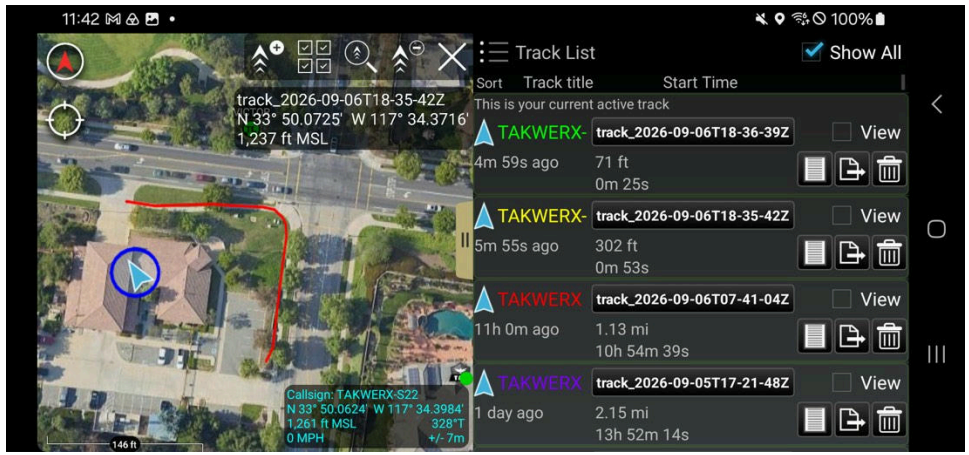


A track ticked and drawn. Close Track History with the X once it is showing.

Bring it in

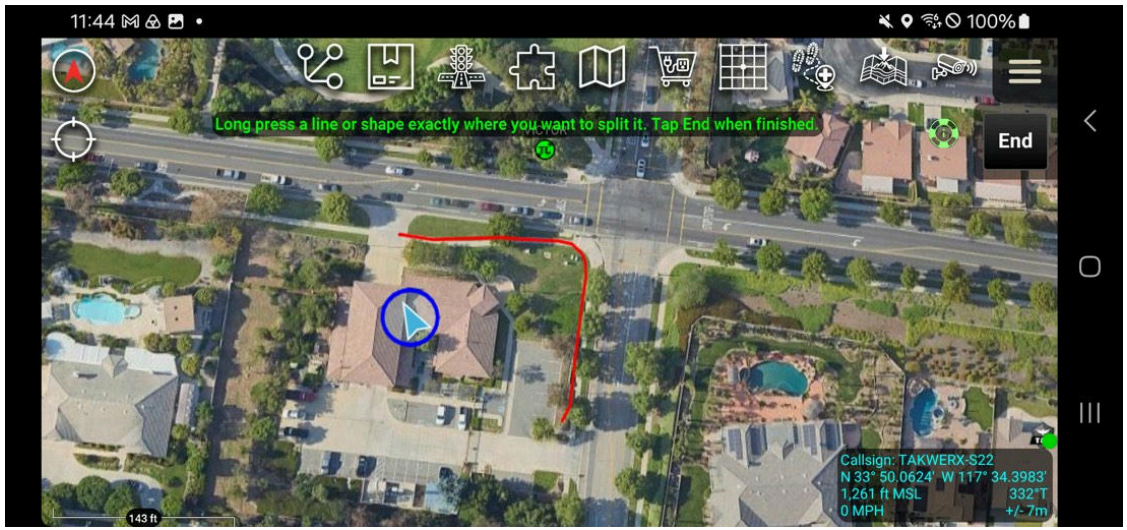


Tap the track's line on the map. Its radial menu has a boot print: that is the import. Name it; line or polygon.



The imported FOBS track in red, with the Track History line turned off. The fixes were cleaned to the same standard as a live walk.

Split track

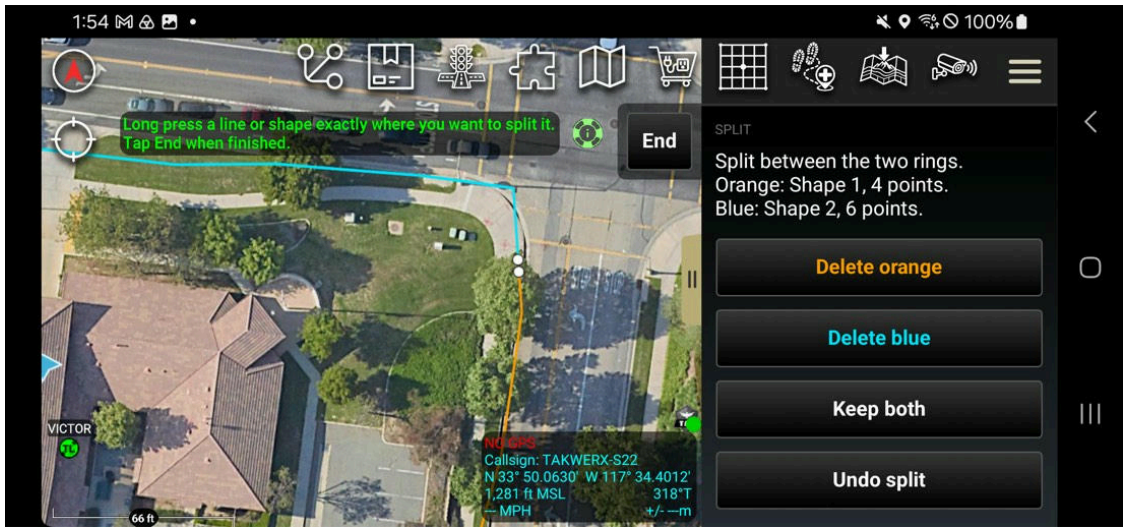


Split takes any line or closed shape on the map, not only FOBS tracks.

Long press the line exactly where you want it broken, holding still for half a second. A tiny gap comes out where you pressed.

The scissors on any line's radial menu start Split locked to that line.

What a split leaves



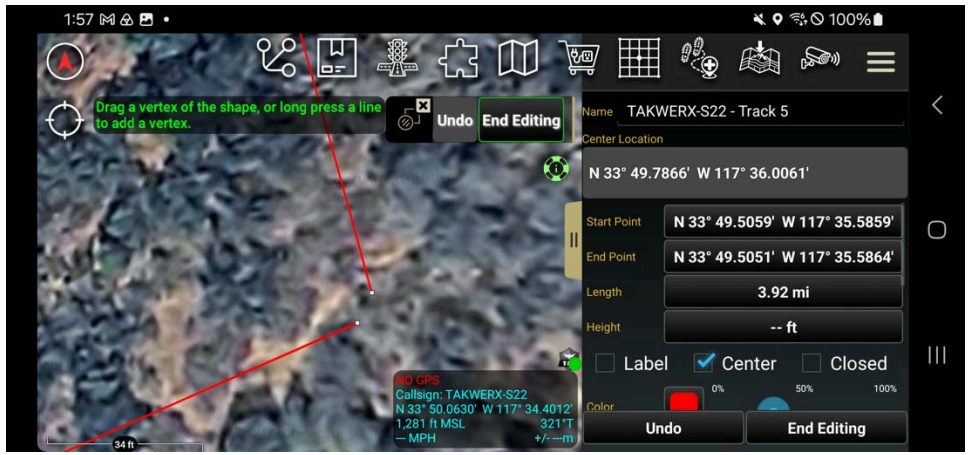
A **line** becomes two lines. They show **orange** and **blue**, with rings at the gap and a pane beside the map: **Delete orange**, **Delete blue**, **Keep both**, or **Undo split**, which puts the original line back.

Use it to cut a drive off the front of a walked track, or to drop the leg where the GPS wandered.

Then the editor

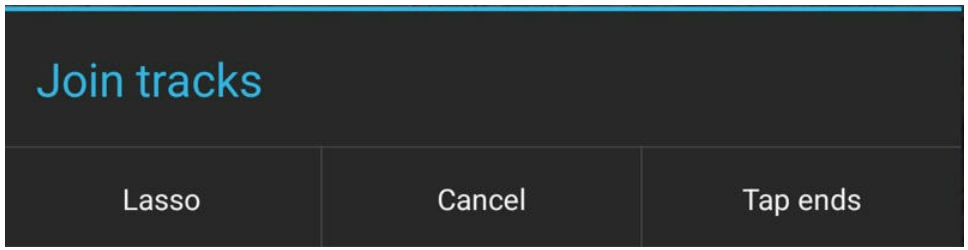


The result opens in ATAK's vertex editor, so the point that was wrong can be moved right away. The map stays where you were when you pressed.



A **closed shape** opens into one line, starting and ending at the gap. The polygon is gone; the line can be split again or joined.

Join tracks

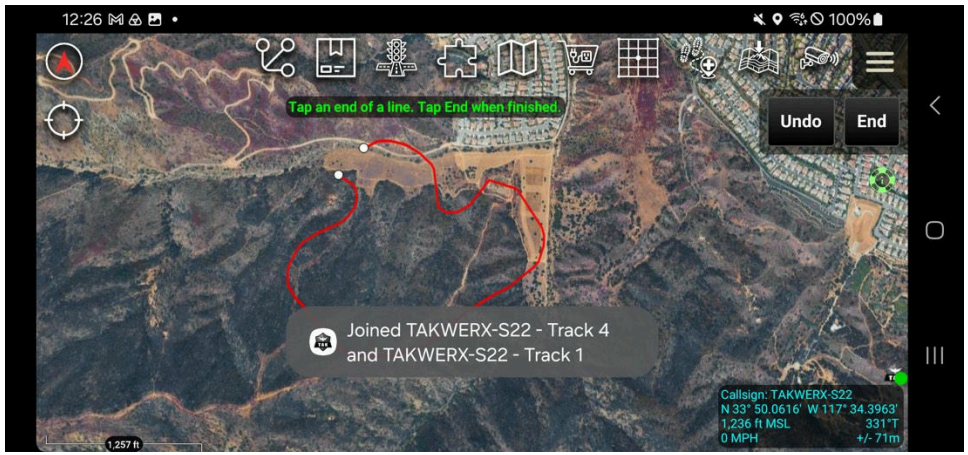


Two ways to join: **Tap ends** or **Lasso**. Both take any open line on the map.

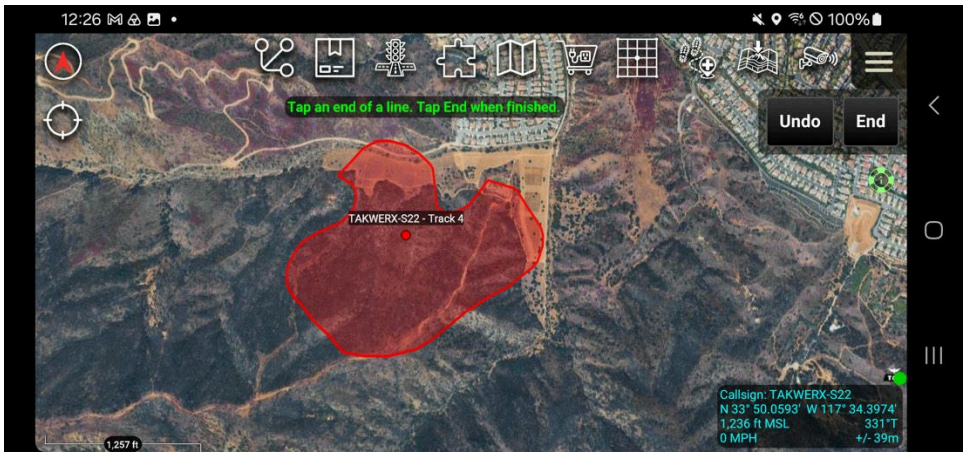


Tap ends: every open line grows a marker at each end. Tap an end on one line; it turns green. Then tap an end on another.

Joined, and closed



Those two ends are connected and the two lines become one, in the first line's name and style. **Undo** puts the last two back.

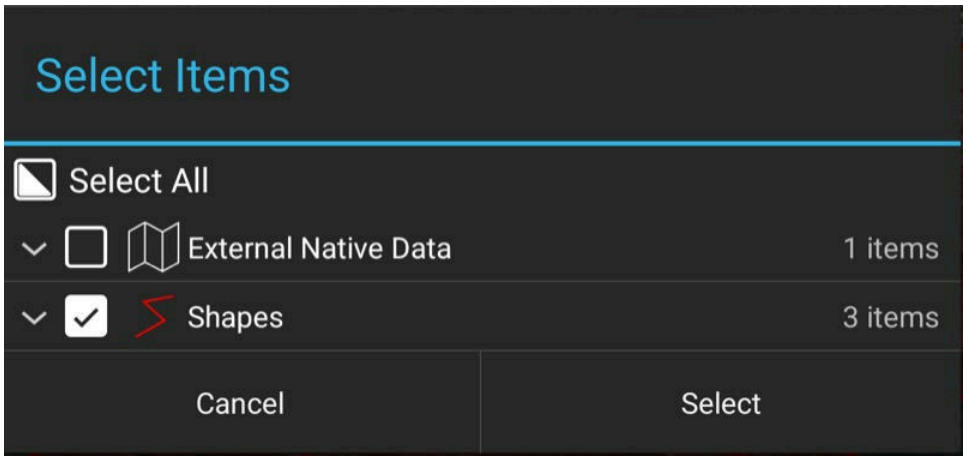


Tap both ends of the same line and it closes into an area.

Lasso

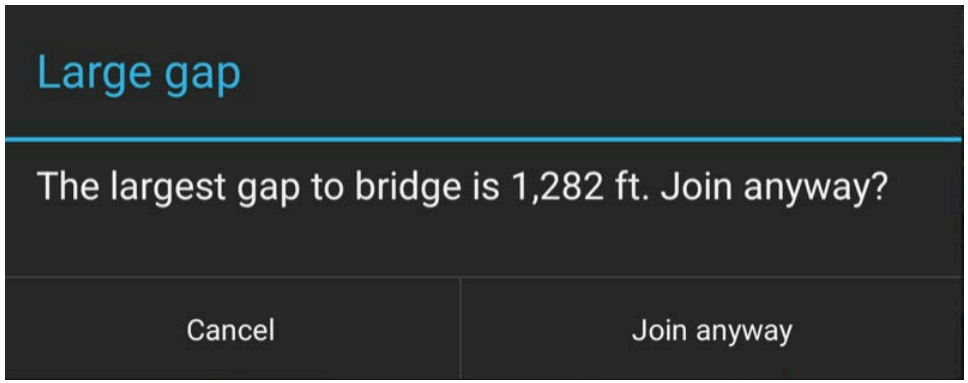


Lasso opens ATAK's lasso. Drag a loop around the lines to join.



ATAK asks what to take from inside the loop. **Shapes** is the one you want.

Chained into an area

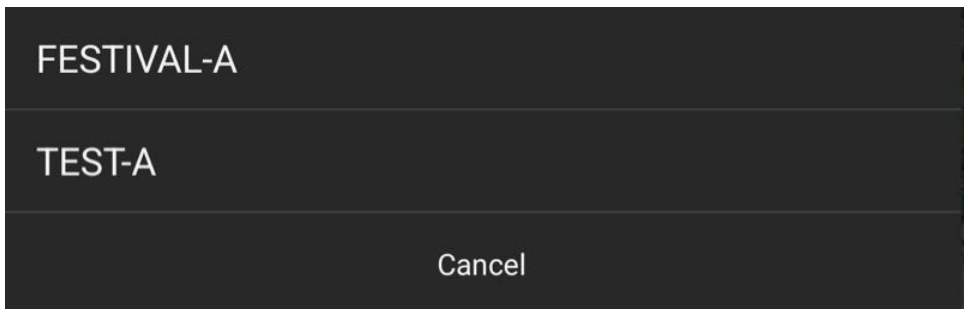


The lines are chained nearest end to nearest end, starting from the longest, and closed. If the largest gap that would be bridged is long, it asks first.

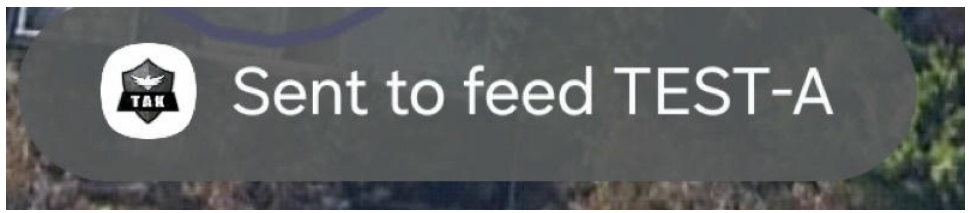


Three legs, walked by three people, become one area.

Live to a feed

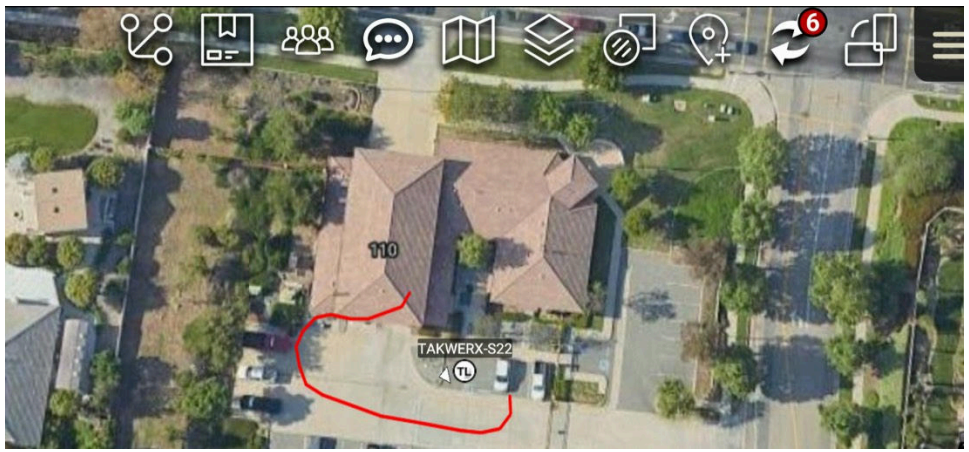


Choose feed lists the server's Data Sync feeds. After the first use a third button offers the last feed by name. Password-protected feeds are listed but not supported in this version.

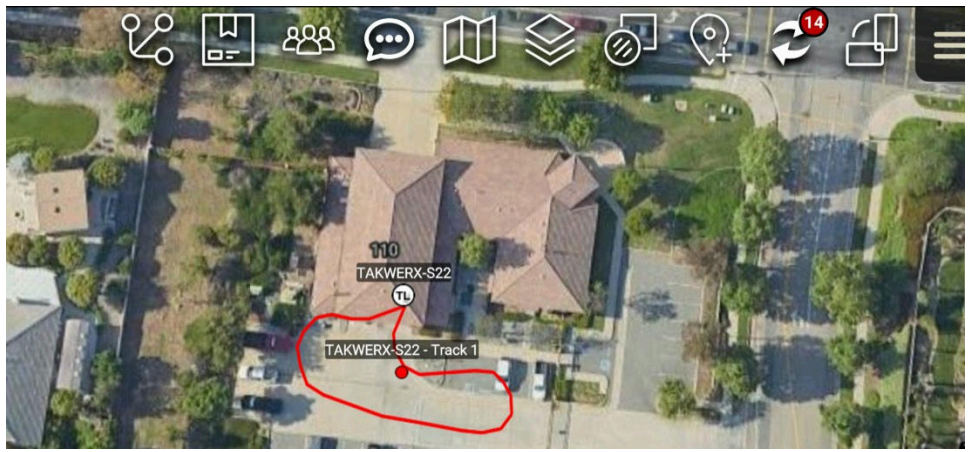


The first save puts the track into the feed; every save after that updates it. Make polygon at End and the same feed item becomes the area.

What a subscriber sees



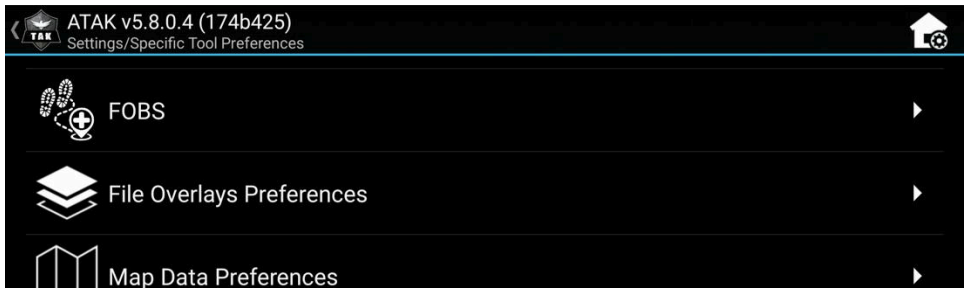
On another device subscribed to the feed, the line grows as it is walked. The Data Sync badge counts the saves.



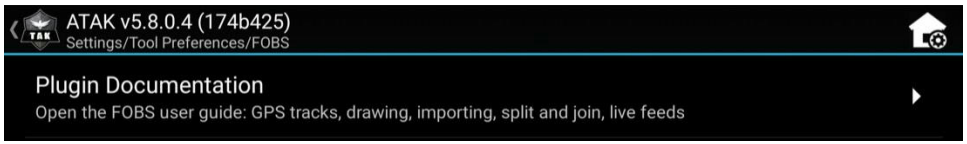
Make polygon, and the area arrives.

Split, join and lasso keep the feed membership on their result and take the pieces they consumed out of the feed. Deleting a track with the radial menu does not touch the feed. If Data Sync is also on the recording device it may ask once whether to publish the change; the answer is a Data Sync setting.

This guide, on the device



ATAK's **Settings** → **Tool Preferences** lists FOBS with the other tools.



Plugin Documentation opens this guide, so it is on the device with you and needs no network.

What it needs

- **GPS** for a live track. The filter drops fixes reported worse than 25 m, faster than 45 m/s, or under 2 m from the last. It never smooths: the line is the walk you took, to the accuracy of the phone.
- **Nothing else** without a server. No account, no key, no network; it works in airplane mode.
- **A TAK Server**, only when you choose a feed. It uses the connections ATAK already holds to that server: the streaming CoT connection to send the track, and the REST API to list feeds, subscribe, and add or remove the track. Importing from the server's track history goes through ATAK's own Track History.
- **Units** follow ATAK's preferences. Distances, areas and perimeters are shown the way the rest of ATAK shows them.