piHPSDR User's Manual

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Chapter 1

Introduction

piHPSDR is a program that can operate with software defined radios (SDRs). As a graphical user interface, it uses the GTK-3 toolkit, while the actual signal processing is done by Warren Pratt's WDSP library. Thus, piHPSDR organizes the transfer of digitized radio frequency (RF) data between the radio hardware and the WDSP library, the transfer of audio data (either from a microphone or to a headphone), as well as the processing of user input (either by mouse/touch-screen, keyboard, or external "knobs and buttons"), and the graphical display of the RF data. piHPSDR is intended to run on different variants of Unix. It runs on all sorts of Linux systems, including a Raspberry Pi (hence the name piHPSDR), but equally well on Linux desktop or laptop computers, and on Apple Macintosh (Mac OSX) computers which have a Unix variant under the hood. The present author is not aware of piHPSDR running under the Windows operating system, although with environments such as MinGW, this should be possible.

Although piHPSDR can be operated entirely by using mouse and keyboard as input devices, many users prefer to have physical push-buttons and/or knobs or dials. To this end, piHPSDR can control push-buttons and rotary encoders connected to the GPIO (general purpose input/output) lines of a Raspberry Pi. At least two generations of such controllers have been put on the market by Apache labs, and I know of several projects where home-brewn controllers have successfully been made. As an alternative, MIDI devices can be used for user interaction. For desktop/laptop computers that do not have GPIO lines, MIDI offers an easy-to-use possibility of having push-bottons and dials that

control piHPSDR. Apart from homebrew projects in which a micro-controller such as an Arduino Micro controls the actual buttons/knobs and acts as a MIDI device to the computer to which it is connected via USB, there are low-cost so-called "DJ controllers" (DJ stands for disk jockey) from various brands which have successfully been used with piHPSDR. A third possibility to control piHPSDR is via a serial interface through CAT (computer aided transceiver) commands. The CAT model used by piHPSDR is based on the Kenwood TS-2000 command set with lots of PowerSDR extensions.

Using a touch-screen instead of a mouse offers the possiblity to put the actual radio hardware together with a Raspberry Pi running piHPSDR and an assortment of buttons/knobs into a single enclosure. This way, one can build an SDR radio which can be operated like a conventional analog one.

The piHPSDR program has been written by John Melton G0ORX/N6LYT. It is free software that is licensed under the GNU (free software foundation) general public license. Many other radio amateurs have contributed to the code. A lot of extensions and improvements have been added by myself, therefore this document refers to the version of piHPSDR that can be found on my github account `https://github.com/dl1ycf/pihpsdr`.

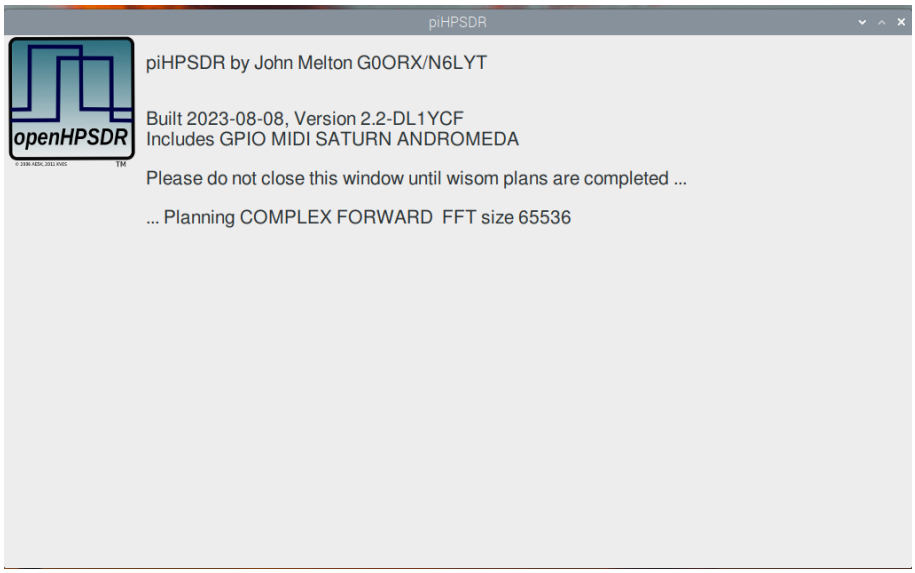
Because piHPSDR can be used on many different types of computers, and because operating systems change rather quickly over time, I generally do not recommend to have a ,,binary release" with files that you can just copy to your computer and then it runs. Instead, my personal recommendation is to build piHPSDR and WDSP from the sources, only this procedure guarantees compatibility of the final program with your operating system. A manual of how to compile piHPSDR from the sources is available separately, see `https://github.com/dl1ycf/pihpsdr-compile-from-sources`, so this will not be covered in the present manual. This manual starts with the first invocation of a freshly compiled piHPSDR.

Chapter 2

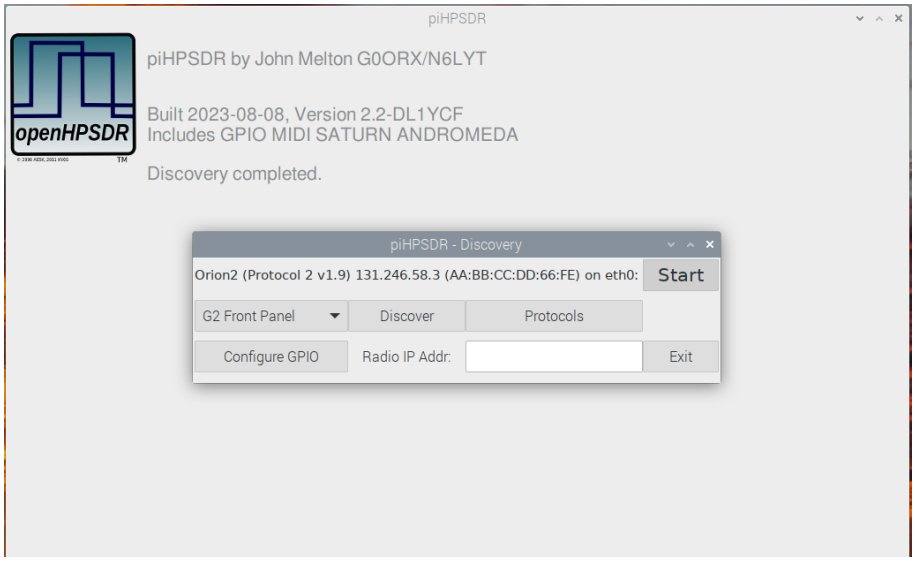
Starting piHPSDR for the first time

Let us assume you have an SDR (say, an ANAN-7000 or a HermesLite-II) powered up and connected to an antenna, and you have piHPSDR installed on a computer (say, a Raspberry Pi or an Apple Macintosh), the first thing to do is to establish a proper connection between the computer and the radio. Although advocated at many places, I do highly recommend against a WiFi connection. WiFi routers often use ,,optimizations" where they hold back data packets for a given client for a while, to be able to send a collection of them in a burst. While this certainly optimizes the through-put because it minimizes clear-channel arbritration events, such jitters are desastrous in SDR operation. The safest way of connecting the radio and the computer is to have a managed switch with a built-in DHCP server, and to connect both the computer and the radio with a suitable cable to the switch. If the computer has both a RJ45 jack for an ethernet cable, and a WiFi interface, my personal recommendation is to use WiFi to connect to the internet, and use a single ,,direct cable" plugged into the RJ45 jacks of the computer and of the radio. This is a little bit tricky since both the computer and the radio have to be set to a fixed IP address (e.g. computer: 192.168.1.50, radio: 192.168.1.51) with the same netmask. However, once this has been done, this is the safest connection with no perturbations from elsewhere.

If the piHPSDR program is started for the first time, it opens a window that looks like this



besides stating a version number and when piHPSDR was built, a list of optional features (to be activated at compile time) is stated, in this case, GPIO, MIDI, SATURN, and ANDROMEDA. These options indicate that the program has GPIO support (this is only possible on Raspberry Pi or similar single board computers), that is has support for MIDI devices, that it can run natively on the compute module of the latest G2 (generation two) SDRs from Apache labs, and that is has support for Laurence Barker's ANDROMEDA controller. What is important here that you have to wait. This only applies to the very first time you start piHPSDR. On CPUs with a rather simple instruction set (like the ARM processor in the Raspberry Pi, or the Apple Silicon processor in recent Macintosh computers), this "planning" step is quite fast, on CPUs with very complex instruction sets like the Intel x86 processors, this step can last up to 15 minutes. When the "wisdom plans" are completed, piHPSDR tries to detect a radio on the network. If everything went well with the network connection, you then see a screen with a ,,discovery menu"



At this point, you can start the radio by clicking the `Start` button, but let us first explain the purpose of the other buttons! Easiest to explain is the `Exit` button, this will simply terminate the program. Most likely, you may want to go into the `Protocols` menu sooner or later. By default, piHPSDR tries to discover the presence of a radio using all protocols known to piHPSDR. However, if you know that your radio, for example, uses Protocol 2, then trying to discover a Protocol-1 radio is just a waste of time. So if you know which types of radio you want to connect to, check these protocols. The available protocols are

`Protocol 1` This is the "original" HPSDR protocol.

`Protocol 2` This is the "new" HPSDR protocol.

`Saturn XDMA` This is used to talk to a Saturn FPGA through the internal XDMA interface. Only available if piHPSDR is compiled with the `SATURN` option.

`USB OZY` This is used to talk to a radio using the legacy USB OZY interface. Only available if piHPSDR is compiled with the `USBOZY` option.

`SoapySDR` This is used to talk to a radio through the SoapySDR library, for example to an AdalmPLUTO. Only available if piHPSDR is compiled with the `SOAPYSDR` option.

`STEMlab` This is used to connect to RedPitaya based SDRs through the WEB interface. Only available if piHPSDR is compiled with the `STEMLAB_DISCOVERY` option. Starting the radio using this protocol is a two-step process: first, the RedPitaya's WEB interface is located, and the `Start` button then starts the SDR app on the RedPitaya. Then, piHPSDR tries to connect to this SDR app and upon success offers a new `Start` button to start the radio. If the RedPitaya is exclusively used as a radio, it is recommended to auto-start the SDR app when the RedPitaya is powered up. In this case, the STEMlab protocol is not used, because the SDR app can be started through Protocol-2.

`Autostart` This is a very useful option. It indicates that if exactly one radio has been found, it is automatically started. So in normal operation, when starting piHPSDR subsequently, and all settings are still valid, the radio is started without user intervention. If this option is activated and one radio is present, you will not see this menu, so in order to make further changes here, you have to disconnect the radio from the ethernet cable, start piHPSDR until you see this menu, and reconnect the radio.

Sometimes piHPSDR needs to know the IP address of the radio. This is, for example, the case for the `STEMlab` discovery described above. In such a case the IP address in numerical form (xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx) can be entered in the box with the label `Radio IP Addr:`. If a legal IP address is contained in this box, protocol-1 and protocol-2 discoveries will also send, in addition to a broadcast discovery packet, such a packet to the IP address specified. This way one can connect to radios which are not on the same subnet as the computer, in principle you can connect to any radio on the world provided it is on the internet. However, the original HPSDR standard states that a broadcast packet must be used, so several radios won't reply. On the other hand, there are some radios such as a RedPitaya or a HermesLite-II which allow being discovered by such a routed packet.

The `Discover` button re-starts the discovery process. This is useful if the radio has been powered up too late and was not yet ready when piHPSDR was started. Simply press `Discover` to give another try.

The `Configure GPIO` button opens a menu that currently has no function, so it is not described here.

The combo-box (pop-down menu) to the left of the `Discover` button lets you choose which type of GPIO controller you have attached to the computer. This menu is only available if piHPSDR has been compiled with the `GPIO` option, which is not the case on desktop/laptop computers. The menu lets you choose between

`No Controller`	Choose this if no GPIO controller is wired to your Raspberry Pi.
`Contoller1`	Choose this if you have a "version 1" piHPSDR controller.
`Controller2 V1`	This option is valid for some early prototypes of the "version 2" controller.
`Controller2 V2`	Choose this if you have a "version 2" piHPSDR controller.
`G2 Front Panel`	Choose this if you have an ANAN G2 radio with a built-in controller.

Attention. Be sure to choose a controller only if such a controller is actually connected to your Raspberry Pi. If you choose, for example, a controller which uses an I2C expander for the switches, but no I2C interface is present on your Raspberry Pi, the program my hang when trying to open the I2C connection.

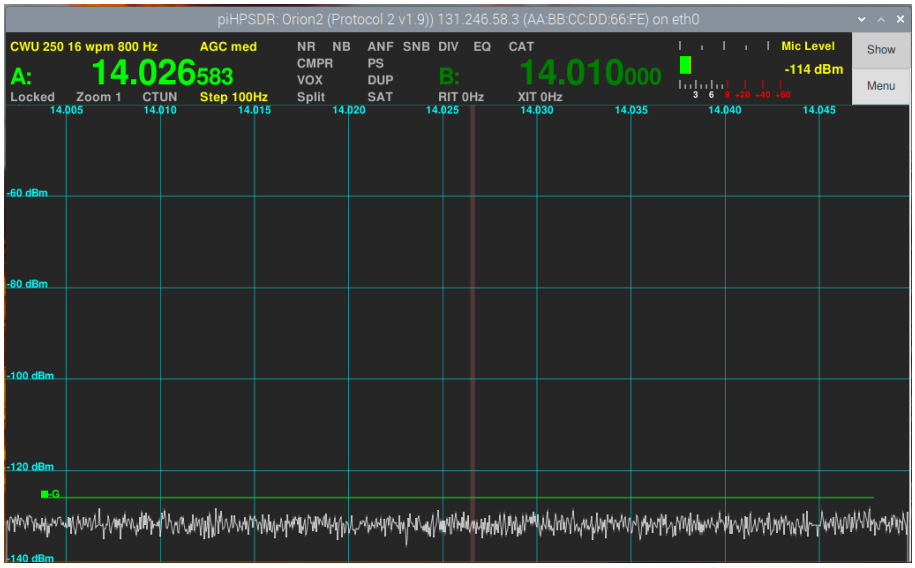
All settings (protocols, controller, IP address) made in this menu are stored in the global (radio-indepentend) settings and are restored when piHPSDR is started the next time.

If all went well, a radio could be discovered and you hit the `Start` button, you should see the following

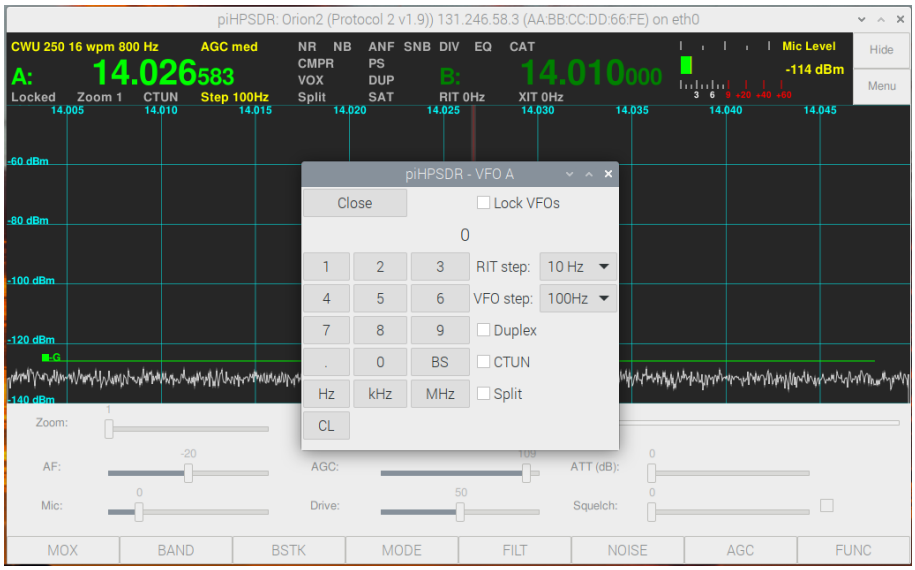
The bottom of the window looks different (more controls) if you have chosen `No Controller` in the preceeding menu. You see two receiver panels stacked vertically, both of them having a spectrum display and a waterfall area. At the top, just below the window title, you have the VFO bar which contains information on the frequencies of the two VFOs A and B, as well as lots of further information, to be explained later. At the top right, there are two buttons `Hide` and `Menu` which will be explained in the next chapter. To the left of these two buttons, there is the meter bar which by default is a digital S-meter. At this point, you have started piHPSDR successfully for the first time.

Chapter 3

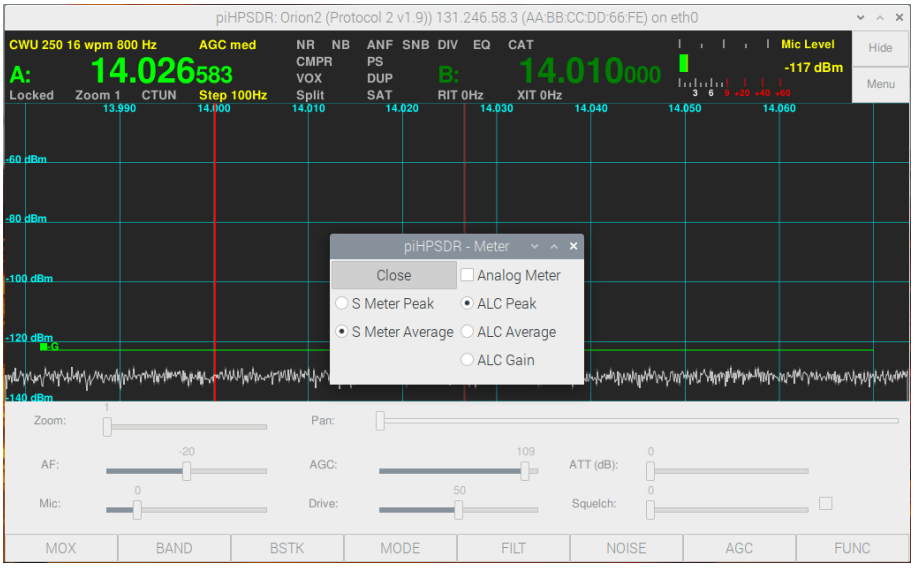
Main window and toolbar



3.1 The VFO menu

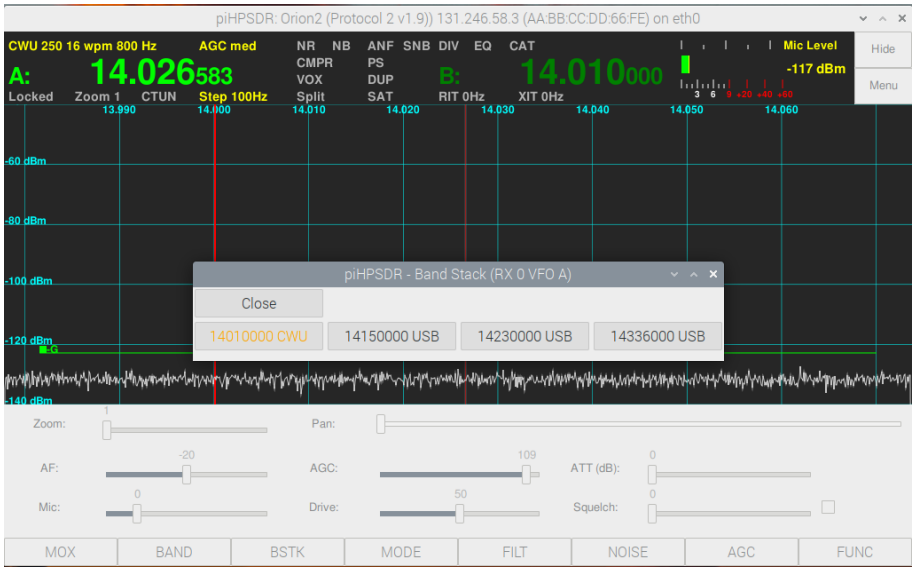


3.2 The Meter menu

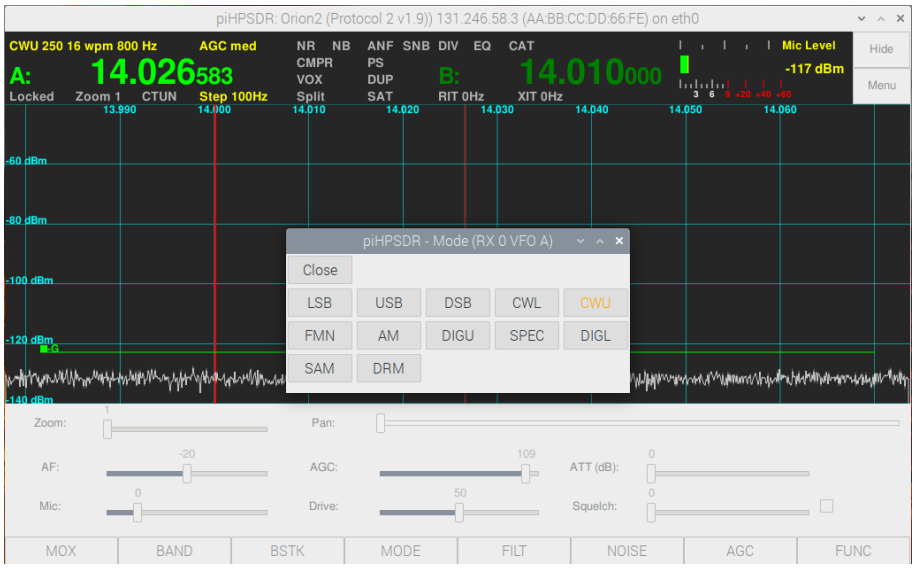


3.3 The Band menu

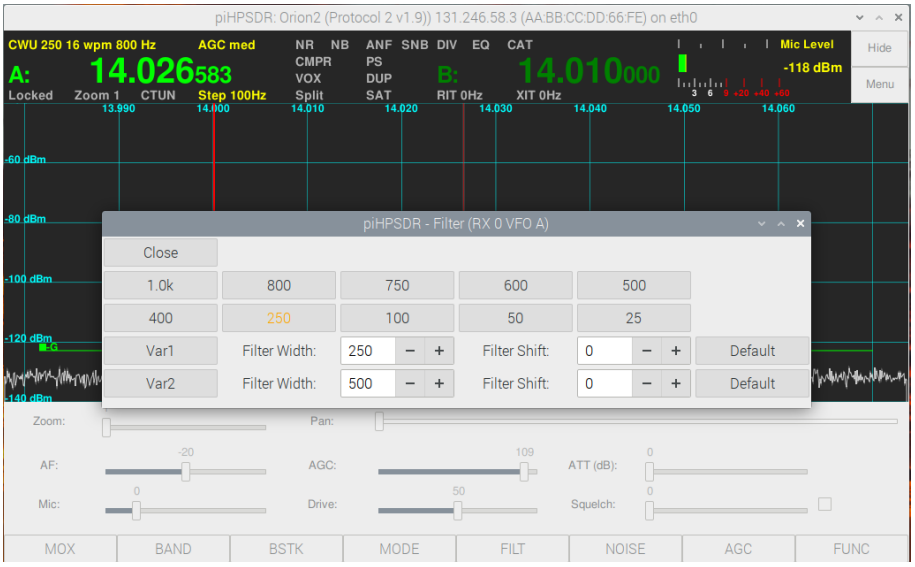
3.4 The Bandstack menu



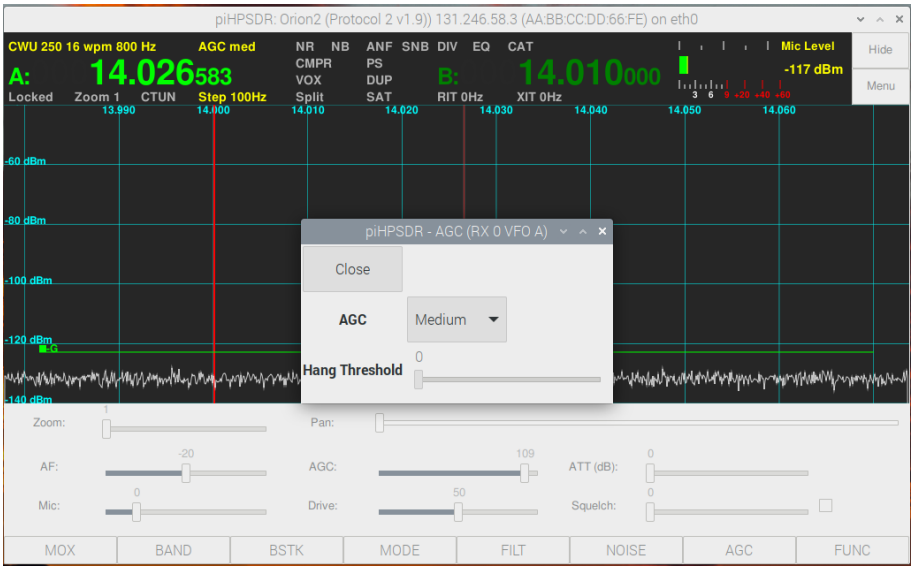
3.5 The Mode menu



3.6 The Filter menu

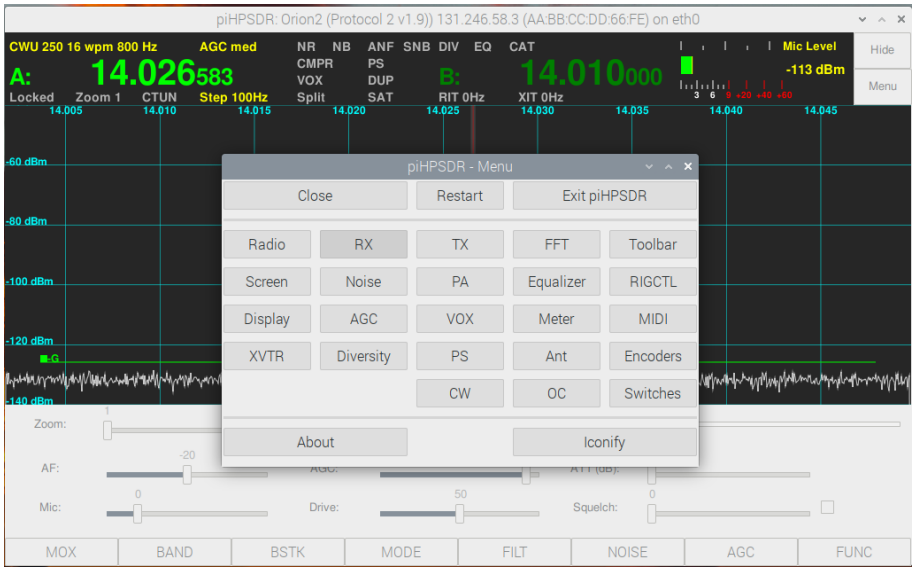


3.7 The AGC menu



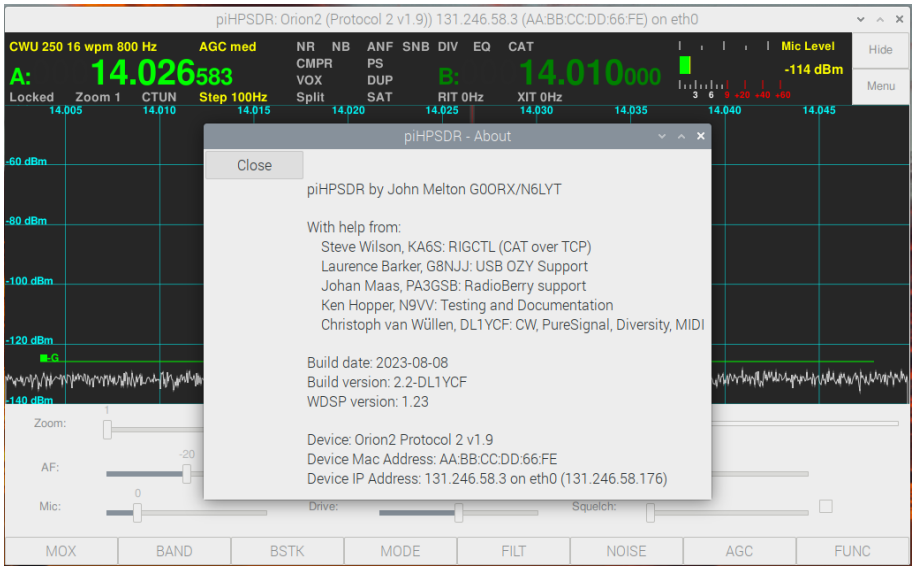
Chapter 4

The Main Menu: introduction



4.1 The Exit Menu

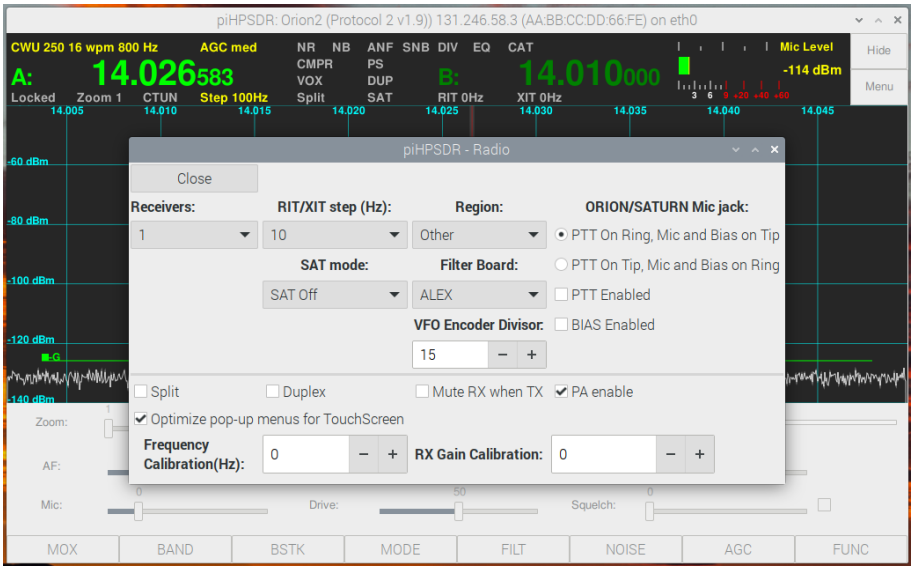
4.2 The About Menu



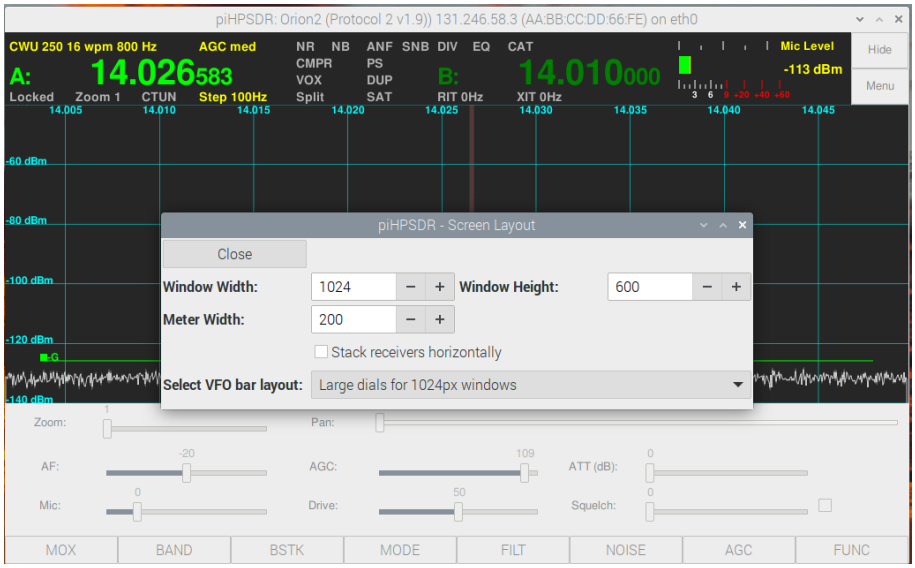
Chapter 5

The Main Menu: Radio-related menus

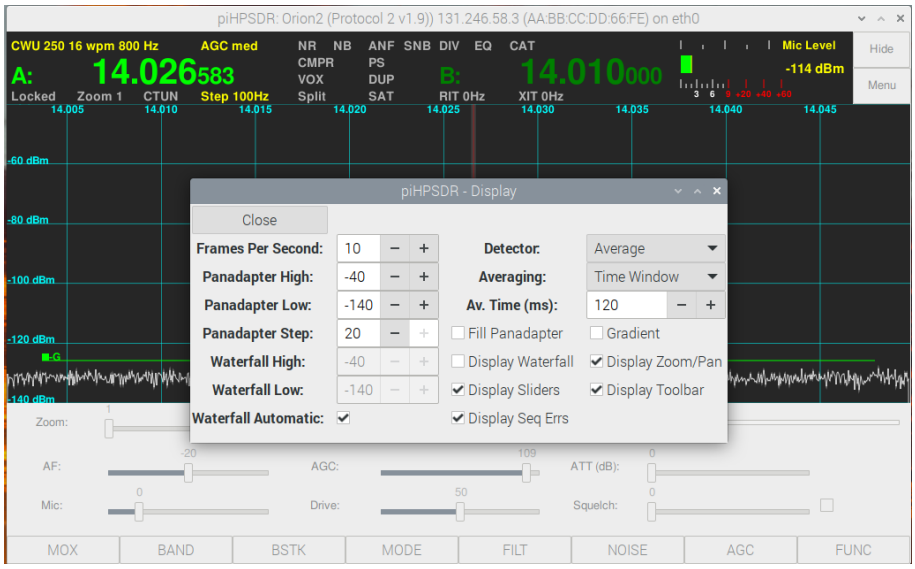
5.1 The Radio Menu



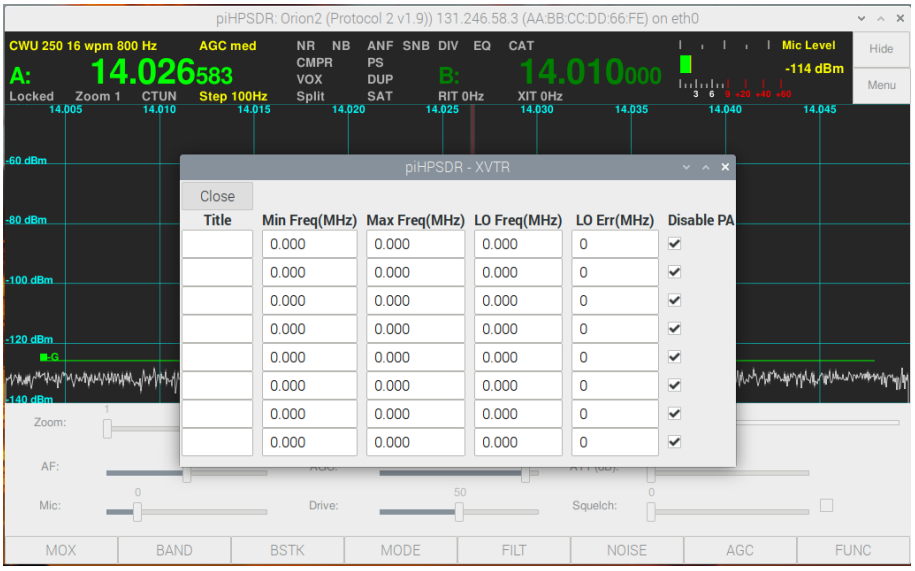
5.2 The Screen Menu



5.3 The Display Menu



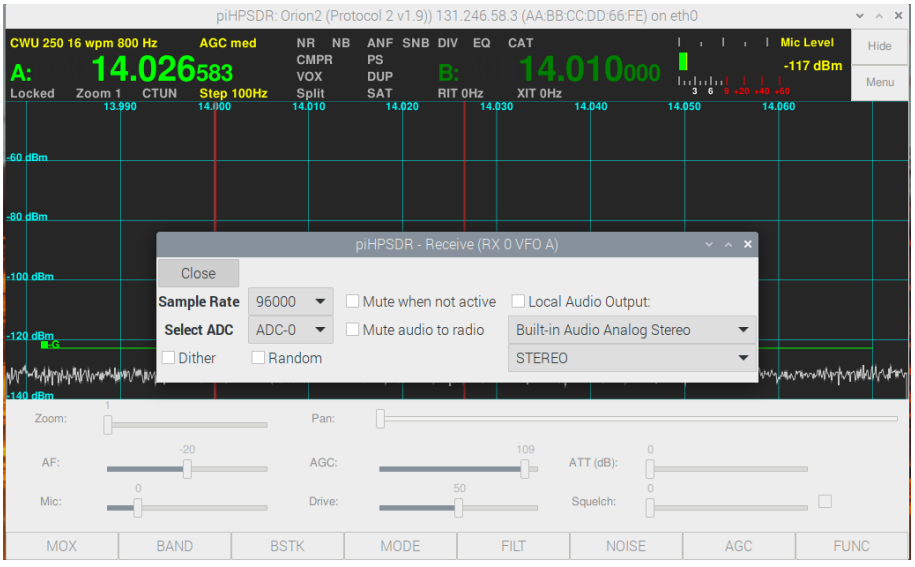
5.4 The XVTR Menu



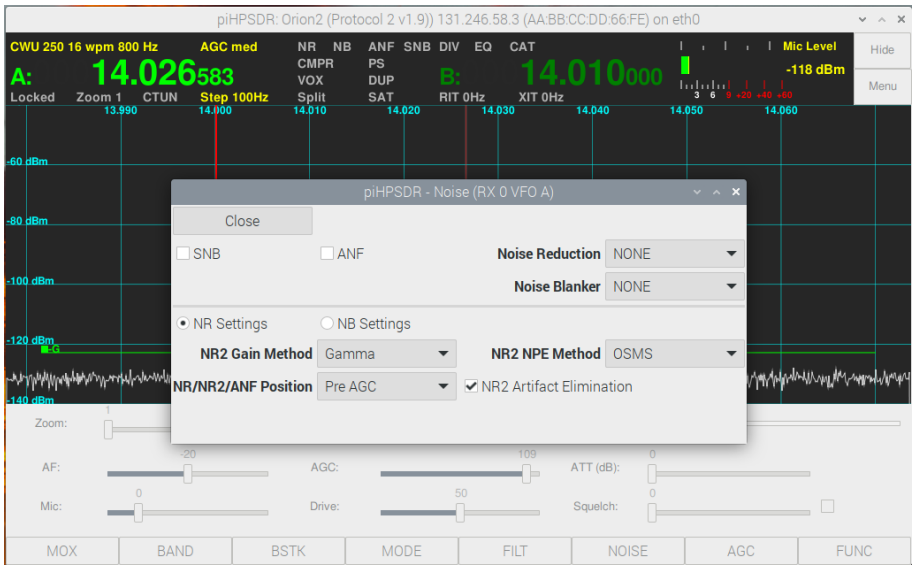
Chapter 6

The Main Menu: RX-related menus

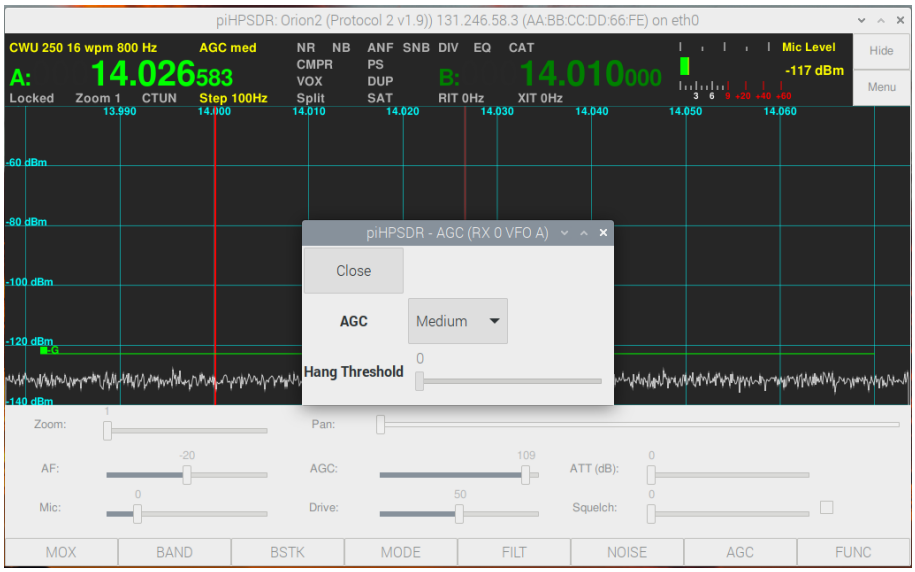
6.1 The RX Menu



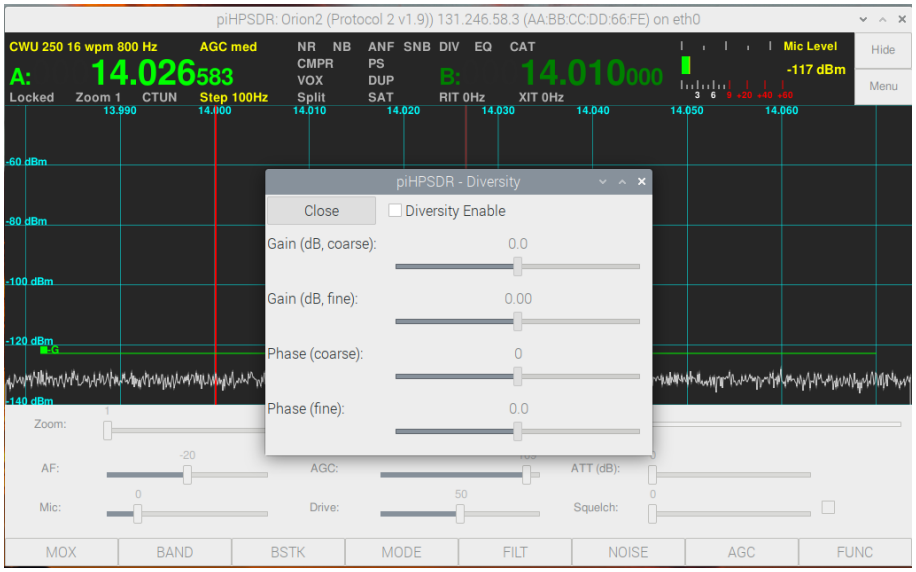
6.2 The Noise Menu



6.3 The AGC Menu



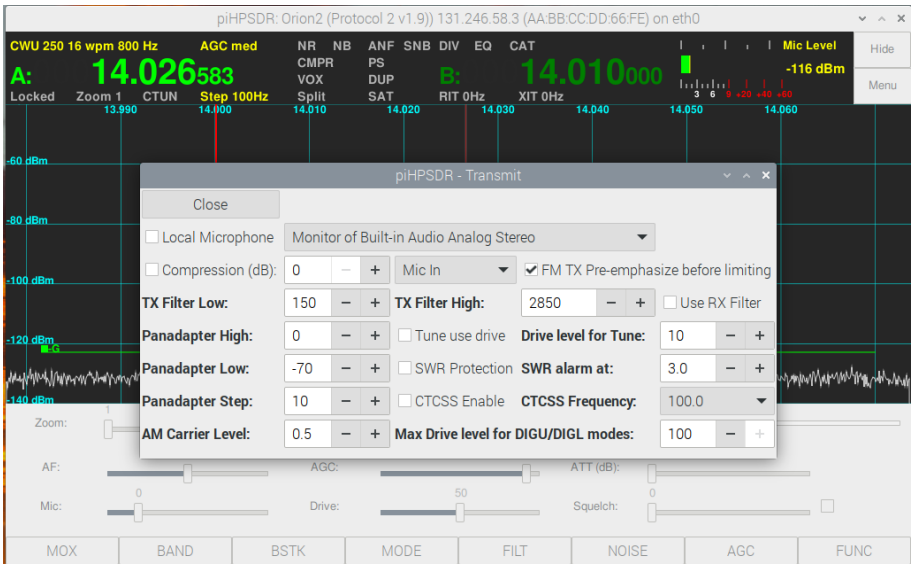
6.4 The Diversity Menu



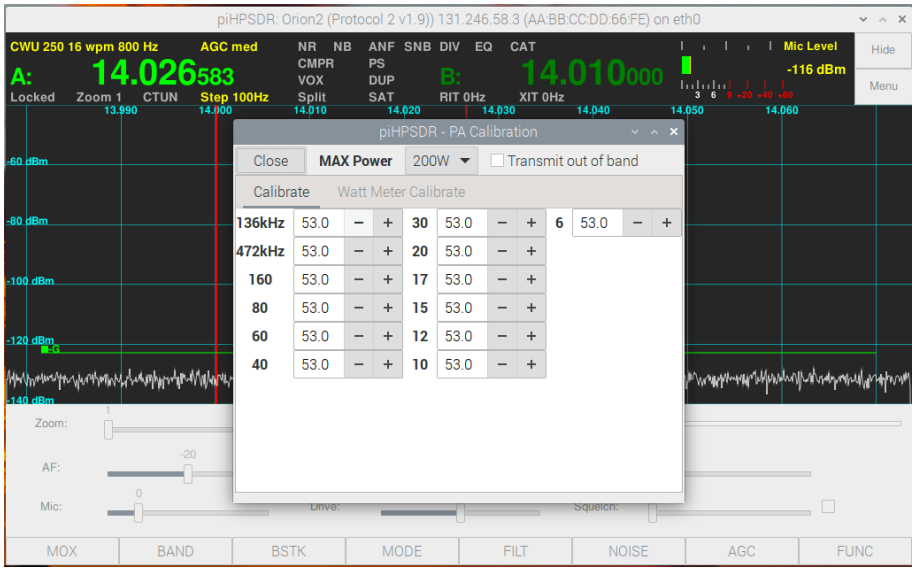
Chapter 7

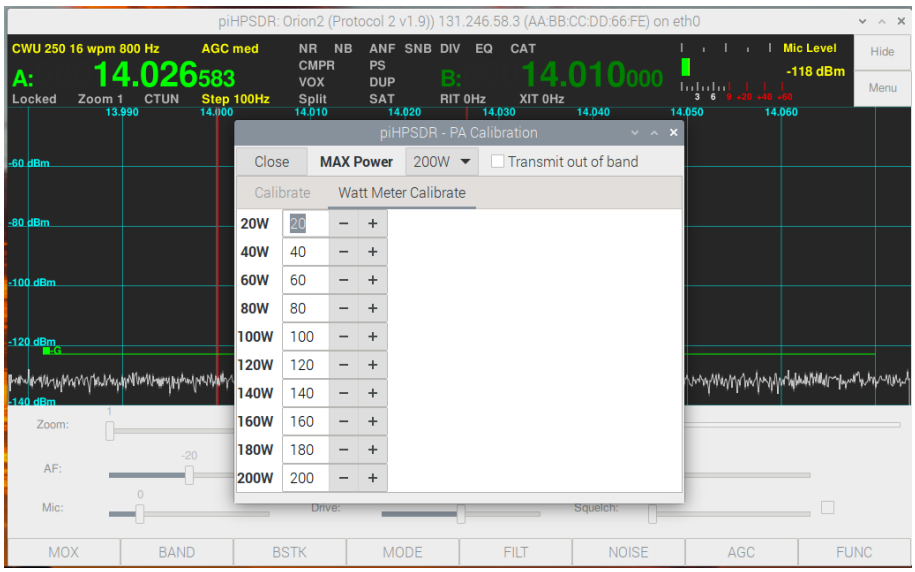
The Main Menu: TX-related menus

7.1 The TX Menu

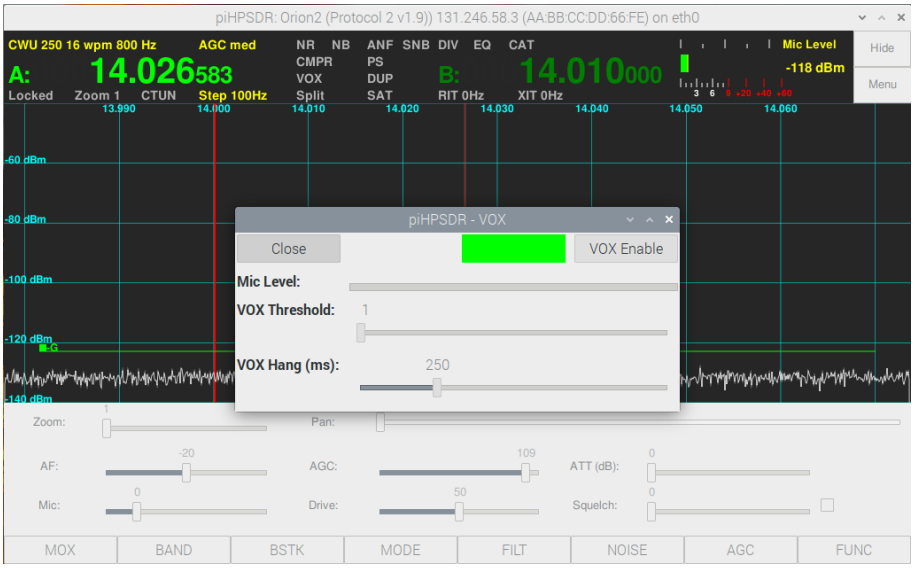


7.2 The PA Menu

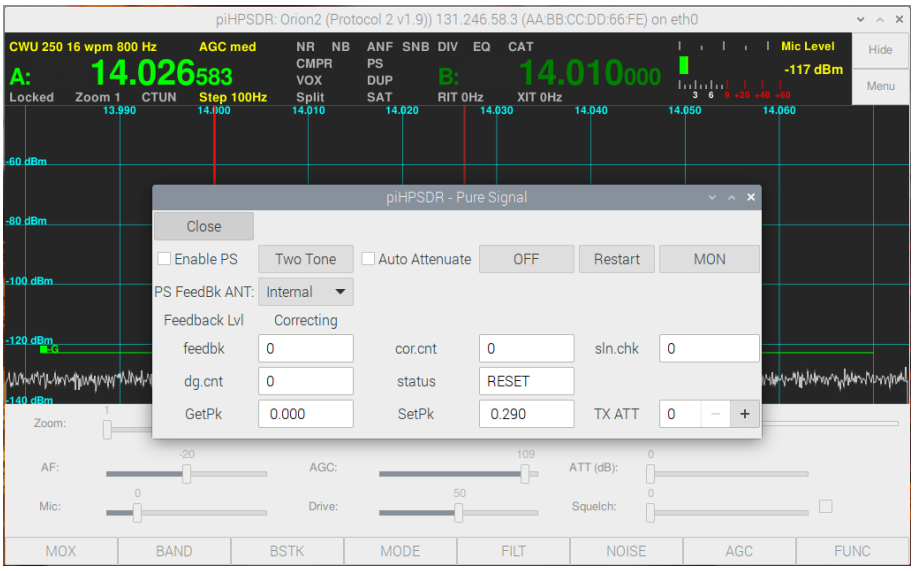




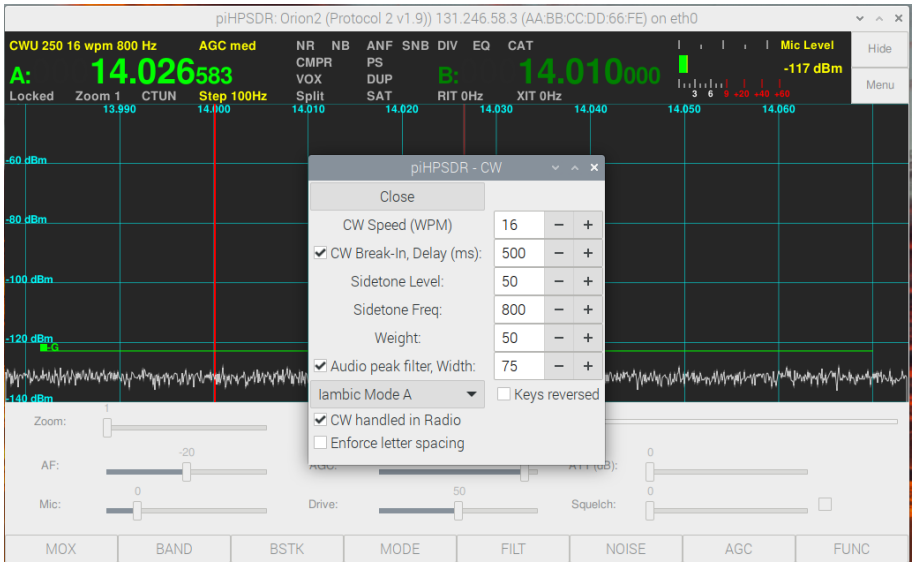
7.3 The VOX Menu



7.4 The PS (PureSignal) Menu



7.5 The CW Menu

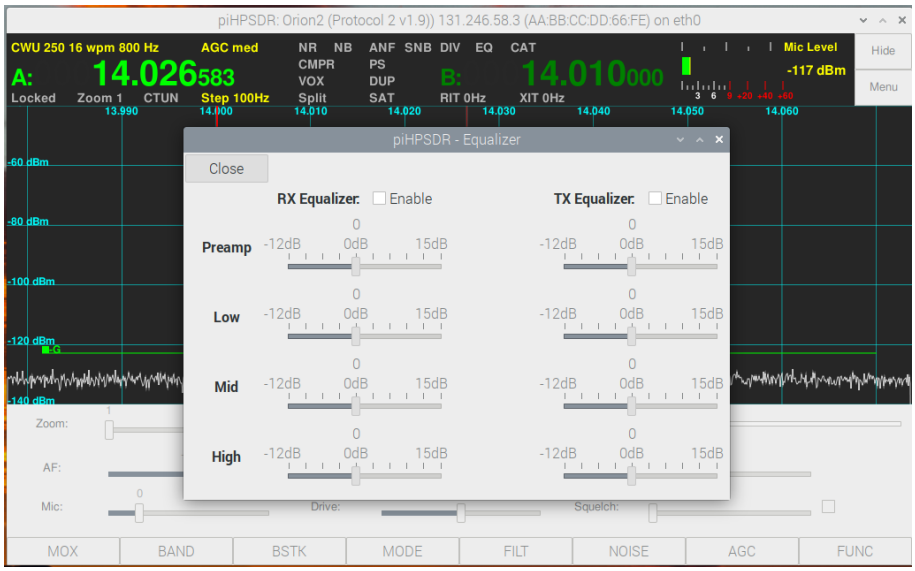


Chapter 8

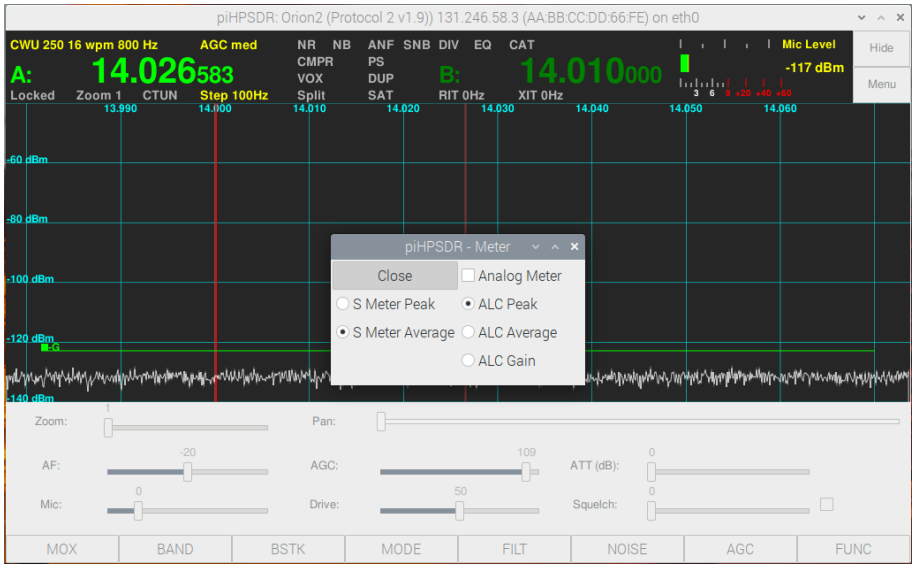
The Main Menu: menus for RX and TX

8.1 The FFT Menu

8.2 The Equalizer Menu

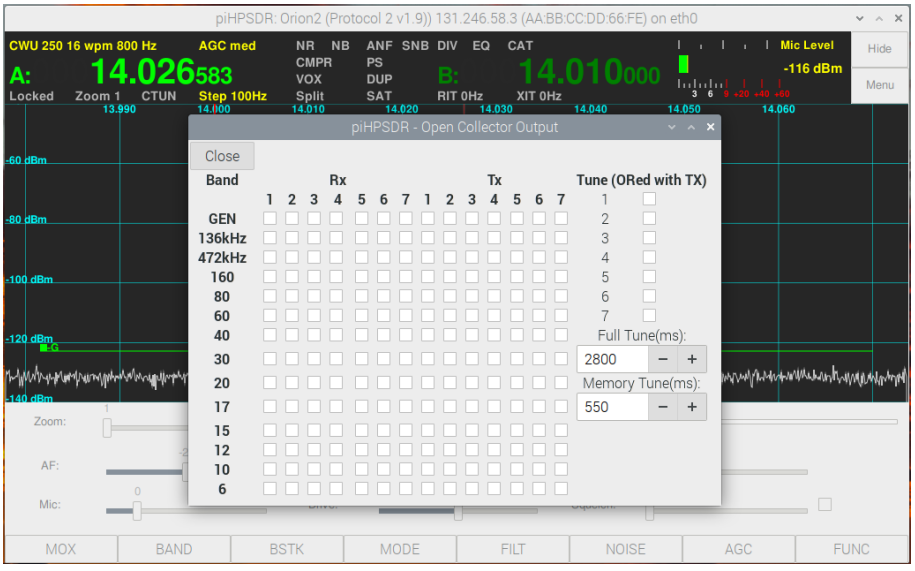


8.3 The Meter Menu



8.4 The Ant (Antenna) Menu

8.5 The OC (OpenCollector) Menu



Chapter 9

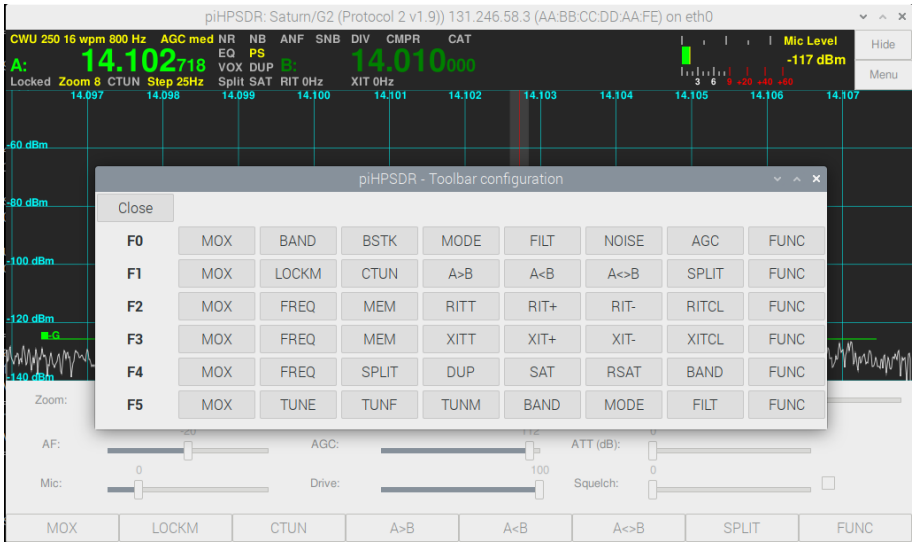
The Main Menu: controlling piHPSDR

In this chapter, the customization of the toolbar (at the bottom of the piHPSDR window), as well as how to configure GPIO and MIDI controllers, is described. Furthermore, in this chapter we discuss the RIGCTL menu which allows controlling piHPSDR by some external program such as a logbook or contest program, via standardized CAT commands that can be sent to piHPSDR either over a serial line or via TCP.

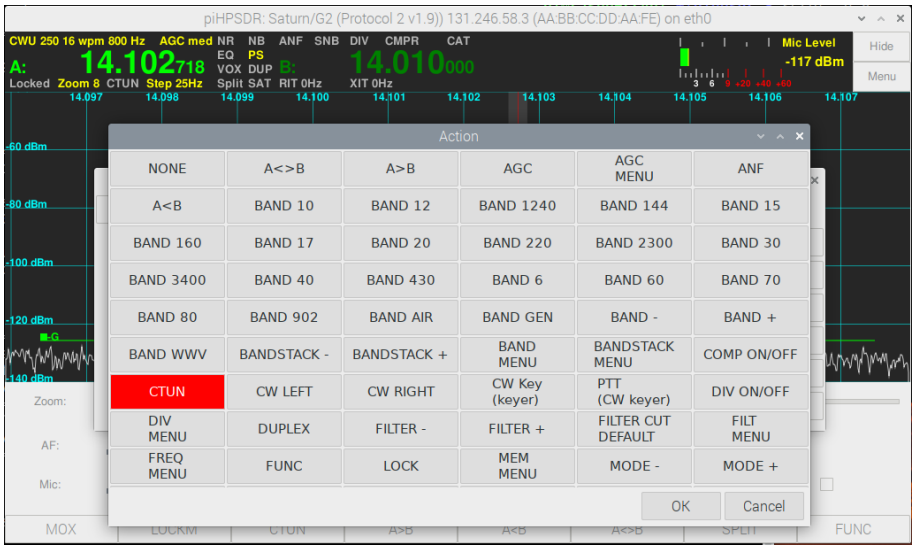
Note for Controller1 owners: The eight switches (push-buttons) of the controller, that a positioned below the screen, are bound to the eight toolbar buttons on the screen. Therefore, there is no "Switches" menu for this controller, and the switches are implicitly configured via the Toolbar menu.

9.1 The Toolbar Menu

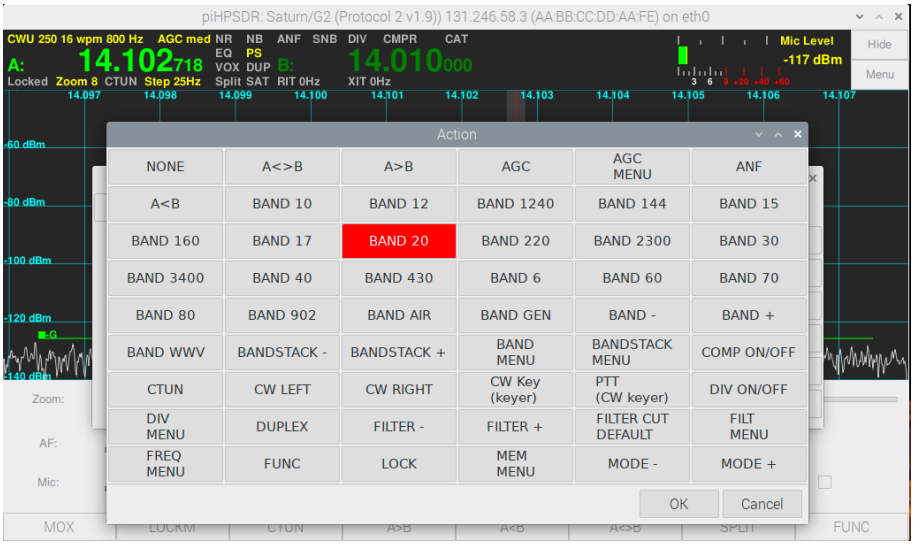
We start with the "Toolbar" menu, that can be found at the top of the rightmost column in the main menu. The toolbar consists of eight buttons that can be assigned to a set of eight functions. There are six such sets, and pressing the FUNC button cycles through these six sets. If you click the Toolbar button, a menu pops up and you see the following:



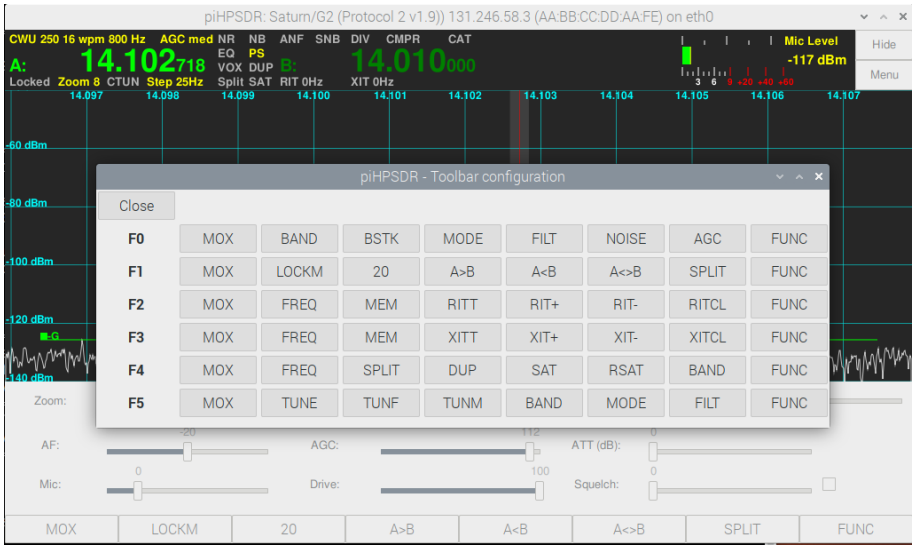
The six lines denoted `F0` through `F5` indicate the six different sets. If you look closely, you will discover that the set `F1` is the one that is currently active, since the labels in this line exactly match the labels in the toolbar. In this menu, the possible actions (that can be bound to a button) are written with the short text (see Chapter 10), since this is the text that is printed on the toolbar buttons. If one now clicks (just an example) the `CTUN` button in the line `F1`, an ,,action dialog" pops up that looks as follows:



The current action selected (`CTUN`) is high-lighted. Lists of possible actions can be rather long, so it might be necessary that you have to scroll up or down in such an action dialog until you have found what you were looking for. Now (again just an example) the button `Band 20` has been clicked in the action dialog, such that it gets high-lighted:



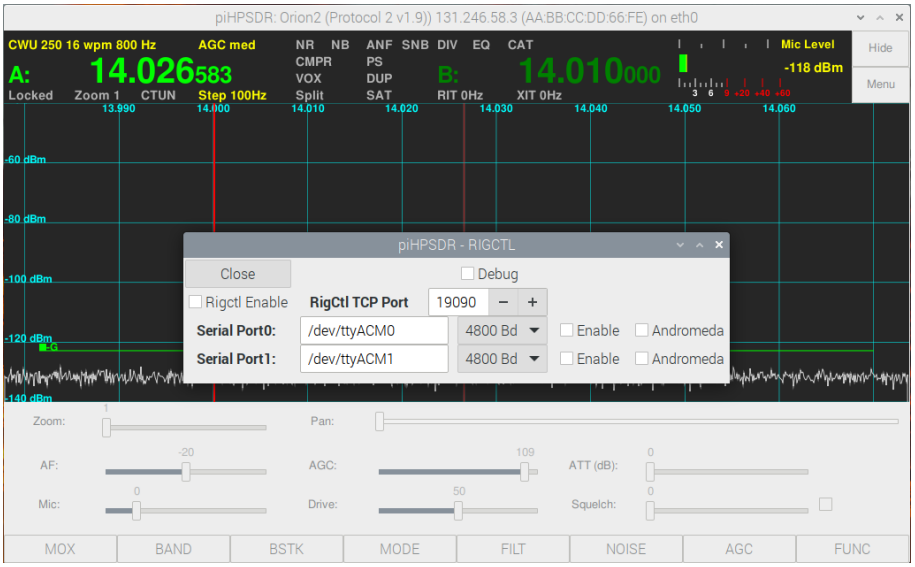
If one now closes the action dialog by clicking the `OK` button, the third button in the `F1` line of the toolbar menu has changed, it now gives the short text (`20`) of the action, which will switch the active receiver to the 20m band (see the explanation of all the actions in chapter 10).



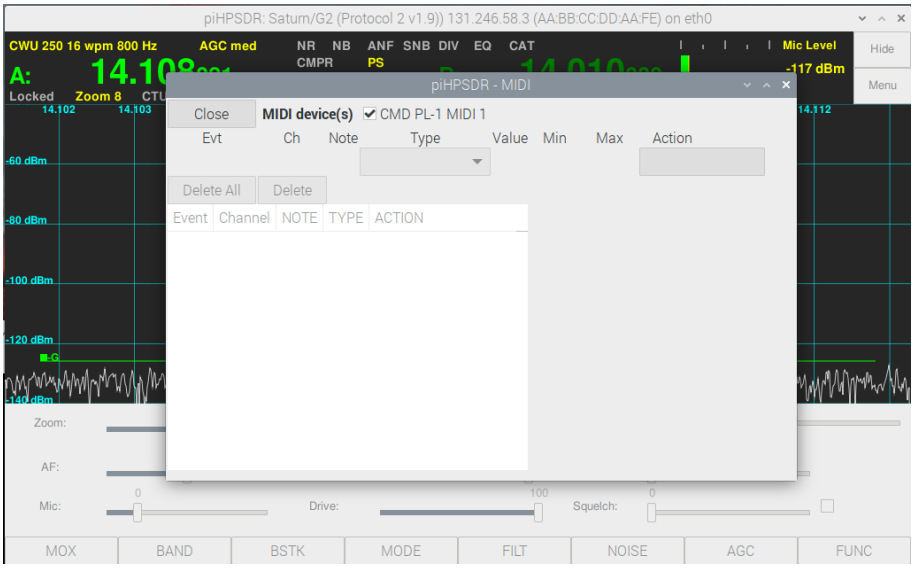
You also see that the toolbar has changed, now reading `20` on the third button from the left. Note that you can likewise change the functions of the toolbar sets that are currently not active, for example, we can change the behaviour of a toolbar button in set `F5`, no matter whether this set is currently active or not. Note futher that nothing happens if you press the `FUNC` buttons in the toolbar menu, since the rightmost button is hard-wired to that function. This is so because if in one set, you do not have the `FUNC` functions at hand, you are trapped and can no longer cycle through the sets.

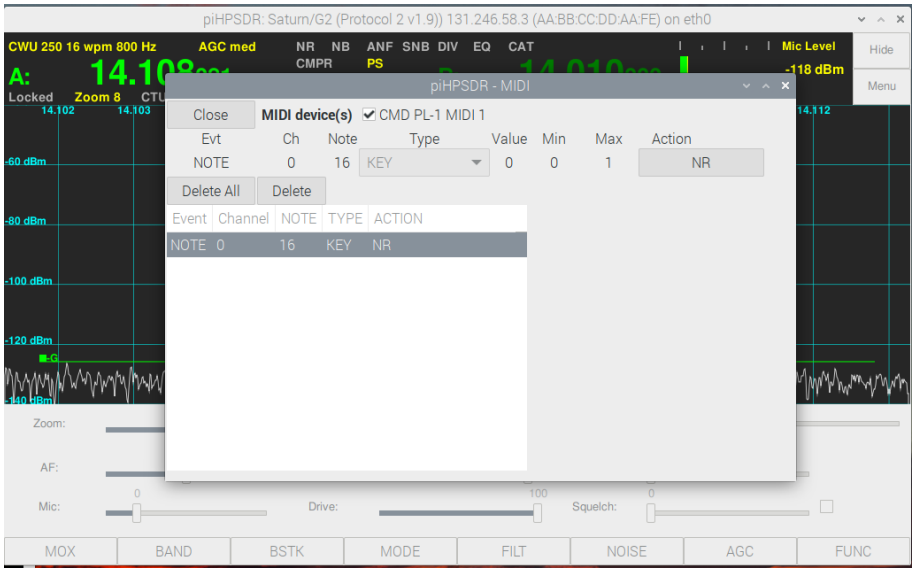
Assigning actions to buttons, as done here in the ,,action dialog" also works, exactly as described here, in the MIDI, the Encoders, and the Switches menus.

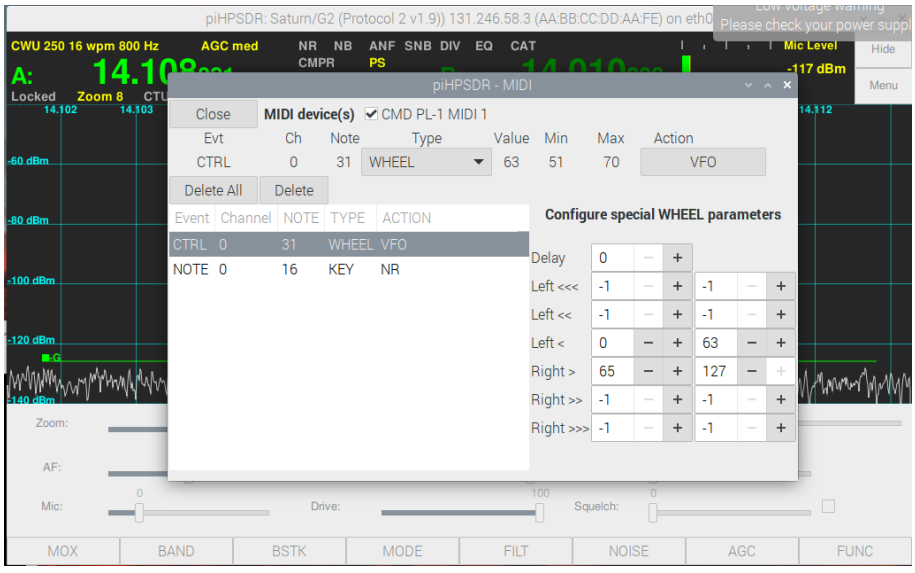
9.2 The RIGCTL Menu



9.3 The MIDI Menu

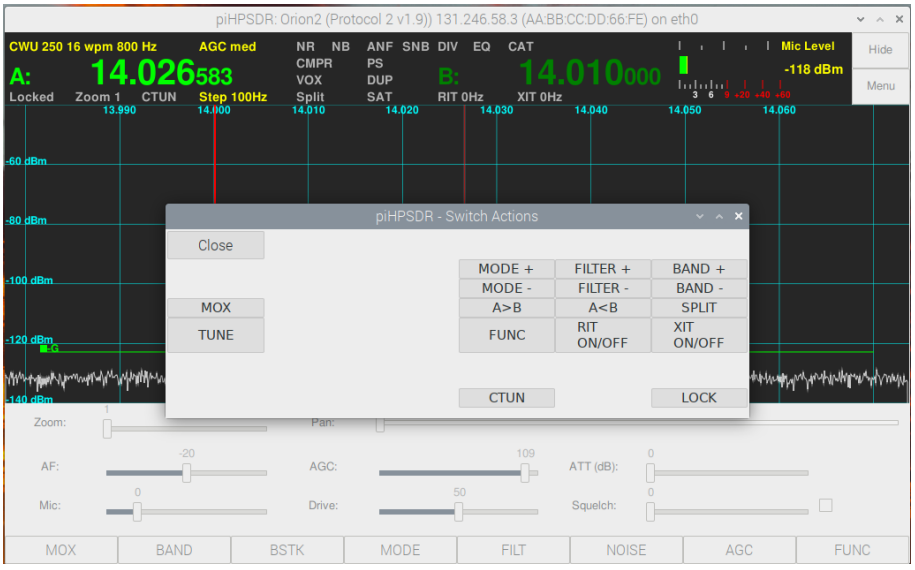



piHPSDR: Saturn/G2 (Protocol 2 v1.9)) 131.246.58.3 (AA:BB:CC:DD:AA:FE) on eth0
CWU 250 16 wpm 800 Hz
AGC med
NR NB ANF SNB DIV EQ CAT
CMPR PS
Mic Level
-118 dBm
Hide
Menu
A:
Locked
Zoom 8
piHPSDR - MIDI
Close
MIDI device(s)
CMD PL-1 MIDI 1
Evt Ch Note Type Value Min Max Action
NOTE 0 16 KEY 0 0 1 NR
Delete All
Delete
Event Channel NOTE TYPE ACTION
NOTE 0 16 KEY NR
Zoom:
AF:
Mic:
Drive:
Squelch:
MOX
BAND
BSTK
MODE
FILT
NOISE
AGC
FUNC


piHPSDR: Saturn/G2 (Protocol 2 v1.9)) 131.246.58.3 (AA:BB:CC:DD:AA:FE) on eth0
Please check your power supp
CWU 250 16 wpm 800 Hz
AGC med
NR NB ANF SNB DIV EQ CAT
CMPR PS
Mic Level
-117 dBm
Hide
Menu
A:
Locked
Zoom 8
piHPSDR - MIDI
Close
MIDI device(s)
CMD PL-1 MIDI 1
Evt Ch Note Type Value Min Max Action
CTRL 0 31 WHEEL 63 51 70 VFO
Delete All
Delete
Event Channel NOTE TYPE ACTION
CTRL 0 31 WHEEL VFO
NOTE 0 16 KEY NR
Configure special WHEEL parameters
Delay 0
Left <<< -1 -1
Left << -1 -1
Left < 0 63
Right > 65 127
Right >> -1 -1
Right >>> -1 -1
Zoom:
AF:
Mic:
Drive:
Squelch:
MOX
BAND
BSTK
MODE
FILT
NOISE
AGC
FUNC

9.4 The Encoders Menu

9.5 The Switches Menu



Chapter 10

List of piHPSDR ,,Actions"

In this chapter, we give a list of ,,actions" implemented in the piHPSDR program. These actions can be assigned to toolbar buttons on the screen, or pushbuttons/encoders of a GPIO-connected or MIDI controller. Not all actions can be assigned to all control elements. Changing the AF volume, for example, can only be assigned to a knob which you can turn, while switching RIT on/off can only be assigned to a button that you can push. For each action in the following table, there is a long and a short string assigned. The long string will be used when there is enough space, while the short string is used for small buttons and to store actions in preference files (therefore the short strings never contain a blank character or a line break). Then, for each action we give the type of control element allowed for this action as a combination of the letters B, P, E, which stand for

`B` "Button": A button in the toolbar, or a push-button or switch on a GPIO or MIDI connected console

`P` "Potentiometer": A potentiometer or a slider on a MIDI connected console

`E` "Encoder": A rotary encoder on a GPIO or MIDI connected console

The main difference between a "potentiometer" and an "encoder" is, that the former has a min and max position, while an encoder can be turned in either direction without stopping. This means that a potentiometer reports a value between min and max, while an encoder reports an increment,

that is, whether it has been turned clock wise or counter clock wise. The existing GPIO consoles do not have potentiometers (most likely because of the lack of analog inputs), but many MIDI consoles do have, and Arduino-based MIDI controllers might have it because there analog inputs to read out potentiometers are available.

To give an example, controlling the TX drive can be down both with a slider and with an encoder. While for a slider/potentiometer, the values from min to max are simple mapped to the TX drive values from 0 to 100, the signals from an encoder will just increase or decrease the value until one of a limits has been reached.

In the following, the actions are alphabetically sorted by their long name, with the "empty" action listed first.

NONE	NONE	BPE
This is an action which does nothing. It can be assigned to buttons or encoders that are often accidentally operated. Some MIDI consoles, for example, report a button press event if the VFO knob is touched, and this we want to ignore.		

A<>B	A<>B	B
Swap VFOs A and B. This will not only swap the frequencies, but also all other settings associated with that VFO, such as mode, filter, CTUN, and RIT settings.		

A>B	A>B	B
Copy VFO A to VFO B.		

AF GAIN	AFGAIN	PE
Change the AF gain (headphone volume).		