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**Master Thesis**

**Constructing a positioning model in underground installations with use of mobile technologies.**

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keywords:  
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smartphone

**short summary:**

Document investigates position finding system model based on network of reference points using Bluetooth Smart technology and consumer grade smartphones as a system clients in underground environment.

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## **Streszczenie**

Celem pracy jest stworzenie modelu systemu ustalania pozycji w instalacji podziemnej z poziomu osobistych urządzeń mobilnych klasy smartphone. System jest dedykowany osobom znajdującym się wewnątrz tej instalacji. W pracy omówiono kwestie wymagań wydajnościowych, niezawodności i precyzji systemu ustalania pozycji. Na bazie analizy dostępnych rozwiązań została zaproponowana koncepcja modelu wykorzystująca kilka źródeł danych dostępnych w korytarzach poziemnych obejmującą konceptację nawigacji inercyjnej na bazie odczytów z sensorów urządzenia klasy smartphone oraz jej korekty na bazie odczytu mocy sygnału RSSI modułów radiowych w technologii Bluetooth Low Energy będących punktami odniesienia. W ramach pracy przeprowadzono próbną instalację zaproponowanego modelu w korytarzu dawnej kopalni węgla w Wałbrzychu i przeprowadzono testy.

## **Abstract**

The purpose of the work is to create a model of position finding system for underground installations accessible from the level of personal smartphone devices. The system is dedicated for people using consumer class smartphone inside installations. The paper discusses the issues of performance requirements, reliability and precision of the positioning system. Based on the analysis of available solutions, the concept of the model using several data sources available in the underground corridors has been proposed. This concept includes inertial navigation based on smartphone device sensorics and signals strength analysis of Bluetooth Low Energy radio modules that are used as reference points. As part of the work, a trial installation of the proposed model was carried out in the corridor of the former coal mine in Wałbrzych. The test results confirm the correctness of the assumptions stated in the requirements.

# **Chapter 1**

## **Goals and thesis scope**

The following document analyzes a position finding system architecture and reference implementation basing on consumer grade smartphone and a network of reference points using Bluetooth Low Energy technology in underground environment. Goal of the proposed solution is to determine current position of the smartphone in relation to the underground installation.

Thesis consists of the position finding problem oriented description of underground installations consisting of the definition of their elements, structure and purpose. There are discussed key challenges of the position finding problem in underground installations. There are discussed technologies that can be used in underground installations as well as methods and technologies that are applicable for consumer grade smartphones. As part of the work, there are presented currently known position finding solutions dedicated for smartphones and indoor environment. There are highlighted and evaluated factors of chosen method of position finding in context of their behaviour in underground environment. Resulting from these findings, a method of position finding in underground installations for use with consumer grade smartphones is proposed. The concept is supported by experiments performed in the real environment and working proof of concept implementation for the mobile device. Finally, future works on integration of the proposed solution with methods of dead reckoning, inertial navigation and other making use of smartphone sensorics are proposed. Further future applications include location and location based identification of objects in commercial construction where new "Building Information Modelling" (BIM) technology is used for planning and documentation of construction work sites.



## Chapter 2

# Underground environment description

Underground installations are specific environments in terms of their construction and related technical properties:

- their large scale,
- dimensions varying across the tunnels,
- weak light,
- environmental parameters like humidity, temperature and substances that make up the atmosphere,
- electromagnetic waves propagation,
- specific communication technologies,
- safety restrictions that limit electronic equipment that can be used.

They can be treated as a specific case of indoor environment. As there are already known solutions for position finding dedicated for indoor purposes, it is not possible in most cases to reuse them directly in underground installations due to difficult conditions prevailing there. For example solutions based on the radio waves are not suited to the specific, difficult to model propagation channel, due to the fact that signals are absorbed by earthen walls, bounce off uneven surfaces, and must pass equipment and other obstacles in corridors.

This chapter consists of description of underground installation structure and construction elements on example of room and pillar excavation type and commercial tunneling. There are explained activities connected to those installations, related use cases for the position finding system and potential benefits of using the system in safety and business aspect.

### 2.1. Underground installation characteristics

This section covers a short description of underground installations as the environment for the positioning system.

The term "Underground Installations" describes underground infrastructures such as tunnels, shafts, caves, halls etc which were excavated for reasons such as e.g. raw material production ("mining") or transportation (road, railroad tunnels), just to mention the most popular. The common phase in those installations is the phase of their

creation. There is a need to digg tunnel or shaft at first in order to reach buried ore deposits or just remove not needed rock. Tunnels and shafts are used in this phase to supply material needed to perform ore or coal excavation, for personell transportation and rock transportation to the surface. Mining installations are about continuous rock excavation process (creation phase) while the others, like designed for transporation, ends creation phase and moves to the phase of use and maintenance. Underground installations that can be described as a group of laneways (main and branch tunnels) and in case of mine: mining areas and mined-out areas.

All underground installations have in common that there is no reference objects like plants, horizon or sun. Corridors and chambers are almost identical, in particular if there is room-and-pillar extraction method used. For orientation special numbering is introduced in order to identify corridor and given meter of the corridor. Symbols are painted on the walls with reflective paint and are regurallly repainted. Dust combined from moisture deposit himself on a substrate, the walls and ceiling covering symbols describing the hallways. It worsens the orientation.

As the purpose of underground installation may be different, there are also different environmental characteristics such as dimensions, type of material (rock), amount of dust, frequency of use, what means of communication are placed into, what machines (if any) are being used inside. Along greater depths, the work conditions are decreasing. Underground installations can be affected also by water leaks, coal dust explosions and rock bursts [59]. That is why underground installations are prepared for such disasters as floods, fire, high/low pressure, presence of gas, big carbon monoxide (CO) level, or enormous amount of dust. Further risks are connected to people and material transportation. Poor light and narrow working space causes underground car accidents.

Underground mines, which are characterized by their tough working conditions and hazardous environments, require reliable underground installation-wide communication systems in order to prevent from accident if possible or provide means of early warning of possible disaster [2]. Besides safety purpose, both analog and digital communication is used in order to ensure smooth functioning of workings. For example it is possible to save the machine breakdown time thanks to immediate messages passing from the vicinity of underground working area to the surface for day-to-day normal operations.

With respect of the areas of the underground working activity there are different communication system used. Because of the differences between onground and underground signal propagation environment there are also different communication systems being in use. Underground installations, like mines, use proprietary solutions, which are not standardized worldwide but solve similar problems and fulfills similiar requirements [43][58]. Communication technology in underground installations use wired transmission media (twisted pair, coaxial, trolley, leaky feeders, and fiber optic cables), wireless and through-the-earth (very low frequency radio methods) transmissions. In most cases the communication solutions are based on wired technologies. Wireless communication techonologies are used in places that are inaccessible or in places affected by disaster where wired communication got broken. It is also heavily used for communication purposes with modern underground equipment such as self-propelled mining machines[39]. Wireless communication is installed also in underground installations where probability of disaser is low as an extension to wired technology. Commercial tunneling equip thier corridors with wireless communication technologies such as GSM and WiFi in

order to speed up communication between executives on tunnel construction site and on surface[2][16][45]. Tunneling is about digging a corridors for transportation purposes in difficult terrains such as mountains or below the water.

There is no standard position marking convention that are used across the underground installations. Details about shape, size and current deep and length of corridors are often treated as a company secret as well as their labels. Generally speaking underground installations are labeled with use of sector name, corridor name and a number of meters since beginning of the corridor. Position within given corridor can be labeled with use of corridor name and the meter, for example  $C1 - 25$ , where  $C1$  denotes corridor name and 25 denotes number of meters. Corridor/meter pairs for denoting the position are sufficient in case of an uncomplicated structure of corridors and shafts as well as in complex structured like in case of *room and pillar* layout. An example of a room and pillar corridors layout is presented on the figure 2.1.  $A1$  denotes transportation corridor. It can be used for all access to the production block by people, vehicles and machines.  $S1, S2, S3, \dots$  are corridor names within the production block. Entrance to the production block can be named with use of cardinal directions like south in case of the figure 2.1. Pillar dimensions may vary with respect of depth that works are being performed and the type of rock. Pillars can be 20 m – 40 m thick.

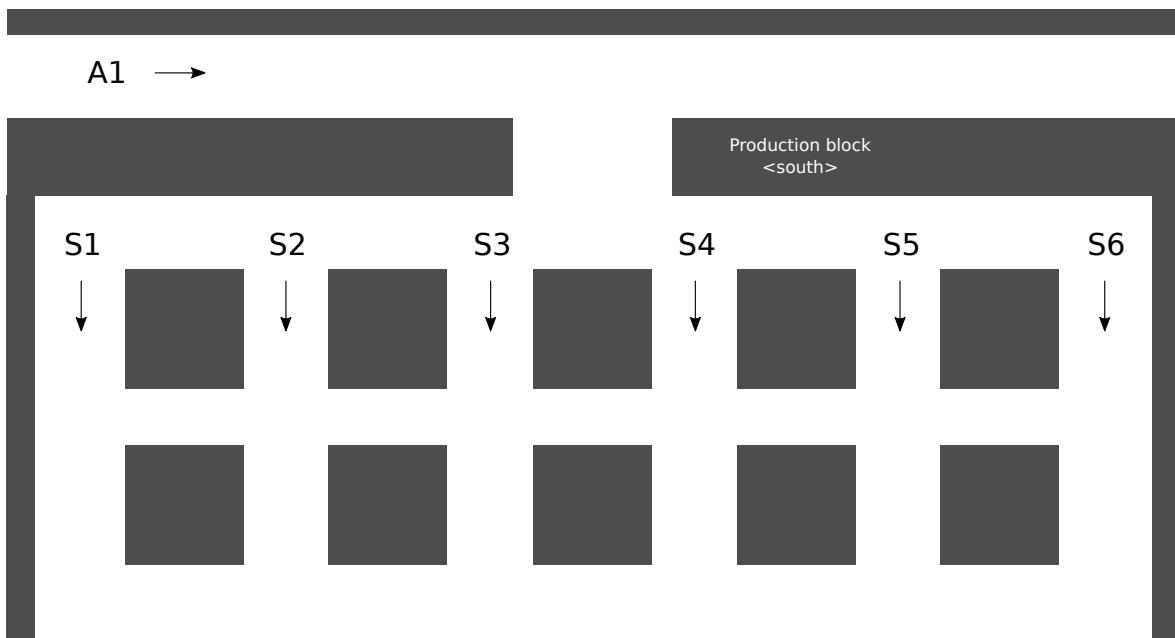


Figure 2.1. Example naming convention in room and pillar production block.

The layout of the corridors can also involve different levels. Figure 2.2 depicts an example of such layout. On each floor there are placed room and pillar production blocks. Naming convention for corridors are the same like in room and pillar case. The way down is also a kind of a corridor with a constant, steep angle ("ramp" in mining terminology). Device which is inside of such corridor can be located by the corridor name and the meter counted from the beginning on a top level.

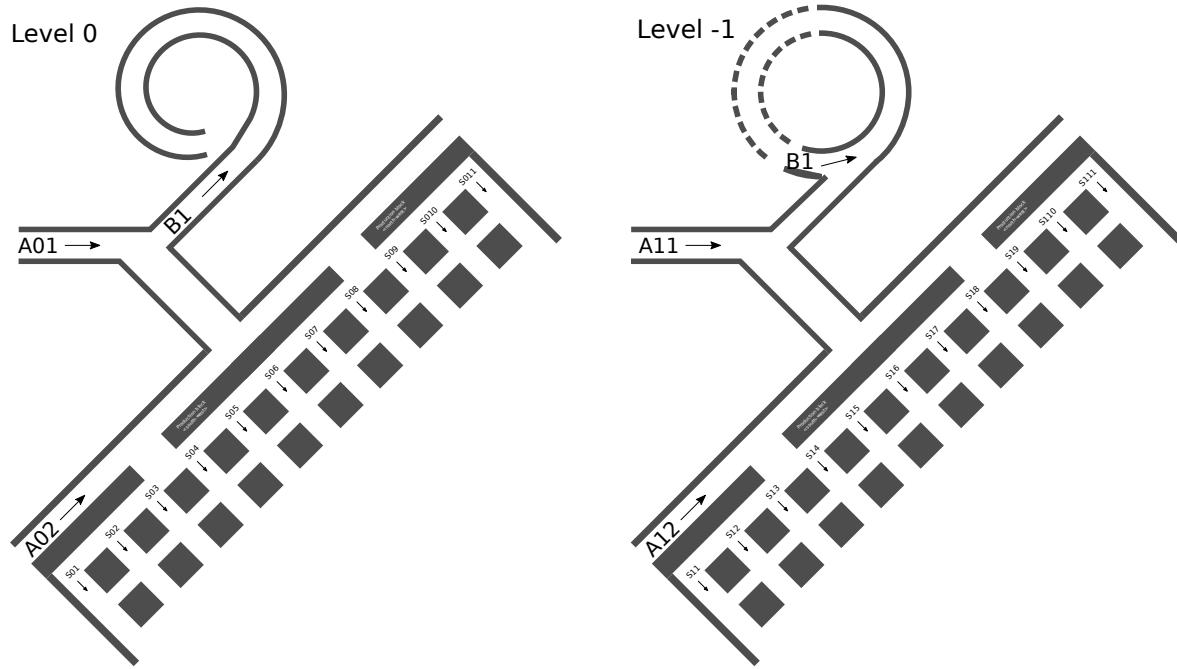


Figure 2.2. Multi-level corridors layout and example naming convention[39].

## 2.2. Hardware and environmental constraints

Underground installations differ from onground environment because of the limited space – mainly tunnels, shafts and crossections. It affects communication methods that can be used because of the different propagation parameters, limited use of electrical and electronical equipment because of hazardous environment which requires special equipment that is ignition–proove. Infrastructure inside tunnels must be suited for poor life conditions, working heavy machinery and possibly to be resistant to movements of the rock mass, ventilation ducts or water dam failures. Specific shape of the corridors and the materials used for walls and ceiling support causes wireless technologies behave differently than they were assumed to work in the onground conditions. That is why there is need to explicitly adjust existing technologies or even create new ones to make them useful for communication purposes in underground environment.

The wireless communication systems used on surface cannot be applied straight-away in underground mines due to high attenuation of radio waves in underground strata. Main elements that cause the task of communication and position finding in underground environment more difficult are[45]:

- uneven structure of the corridors: walls causes scattering and reflection phenomena as well as different rock types causes different signal attenuations. Complex corridors topology and complex geological structures affects both ease of installation and signal link quality (in case wireless technology),
- poor line of sight: direct LOS is an ideal case for radio waves propagation when there is no obstacle on the transmission path between transmitter and receiver. In case of long corridors but with limited dimensions, the direct path is narrow and is affected by the large number of diffractions. Such LOS is denied on each

- element that is located inside the propagation area including the vehicles, people and equipment,
- noise: rock excavation equipment introduces electromagnetic distortions during their work. Such distortions may affect radio waves as well as signals in communication wires,
  - tunnel as a Waveguide [22][16]: it is observed waveguide effect on electromagnetic waves at certain frequencies which makes the wireless technology less predictable in terms of coverage area. It means that propagation models that apply to the signal in normal environment can not be used directly in underground environment. That makes the position finding solutions known from indoor environment navigation solutions that bases on wireless communication technologies questionable in terms of their applicability,
  - gaseous environment: causes that electric and electronic must be suited to work in conditions where air composition is different than on surface, must be ignition safe and be aware of different radio wave propagation in different substances. Amount of dust present in the air also influences the radio propagation parameters,
  - warm conditions and humidity: it happens that humidity level can be high up to 90% – 98% depending on the excavation type, ventilation and depth below the surface. Temperature can be as high as 40 celsius degree.

Physics related to waves propagation in underground corridor are explained in details in section 3.1.2 – distance model based on the received radio signal strength on example of Bluetooth technology, and in section 3.1.3 – electromagnetic propagation model on example of communication between WSN nodes.

In that context there can be formed following general requirements for any system dedicated for underground installation[2]:

- must be explosion proof and intrinsically safe,
- should be suited to the ingress protection (IP) standards,
- must have durable housing,
- must be size suited,
- must be complete in terms of design including: power supply unit, cables, base stations, etc
- must be inexpensive, robust, easy to expand.

### 2.3. Positioning systems

The position finding problem can be categorised with respect of the nature of those problems related to the approaches for problem solution.

In order to perform categorisation there is need to introduce terms of node, anchor and user. Node is an element of a network or infrastructure, that can take active part in solving the problem of a localisation. An example of a node can be wireless device that is suited to be a part of Wireless Sensor Network (WSN). More details about WSN networks in section 3.1.3. Anchor is a node which position is already known. An anchor plays a role of a reference point that can be used for obtaining the position of nodes or users. User is a mobile entity that is not a part of a infrastructure but make use of it in order to obtain positioning information for himself.

Position finding problems are problems of:

- nodes localisation, where the main interest is to obtain position of entities that build up infrastructure,
- users localisation, where the main interest is to obtain position of mobile entities basing on the infrastructure,
- nodes and users localisation, where there is need to obtain positions of nodes and users at the same time.

Figure 2.3 introduces also a categorisation with respect of the fact that position of anchors and nodes are static or can change in time. As it is depicted, localisation of users problem crossects with the localisation of nodes problem in cases where nodes are a mobile entities. Localisation of users and nodes at the same time is a problem which is mainly related to the field of robotics where no information about the environment are provided at once. There are investigated solutions for that sort of problems, called Simultaneous Localisation and Configuration (SLAC) and Simultaneous Localisation and Mapping (SLAM) [5].

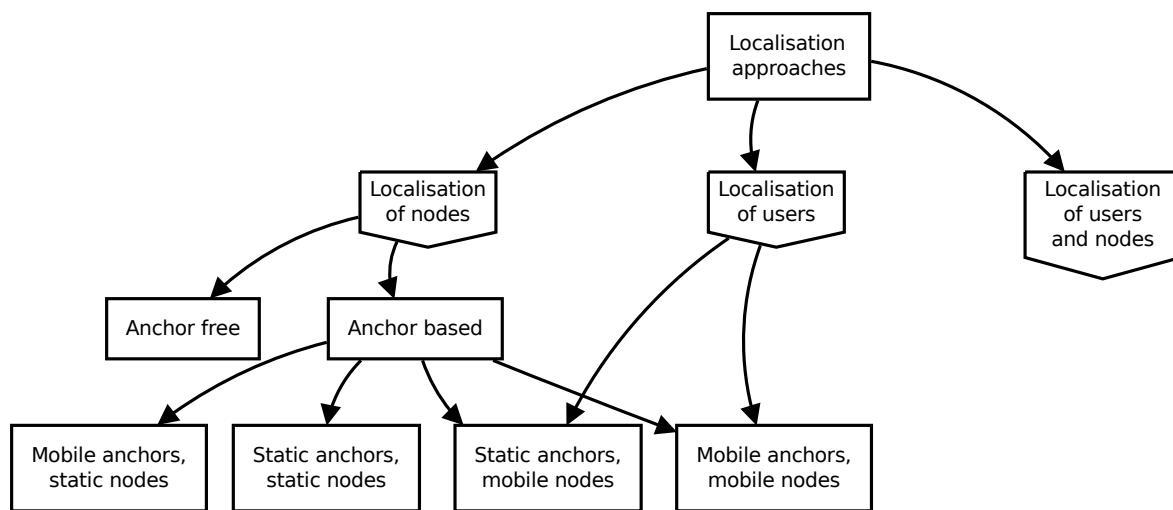


Figure 2.3. Categorisation of localization problems and related solution approaches[5].

This thesis exclusively addresses the problem of user localization. Solutions for that problem are described in details in chapter 3.

There is need to highlight the fact that purpose of gathering the position information can be different with respect of assumed application of that informations. There can be defined three main categories of positioning systems with respect of their main applications:

- positioning systems that are dedicated to acquire and transfer information about objects position to systems on surface,
- systems that are dedicated for on site usage to locate the device inside the underground installation,
- hybrid systems, that combine on site usage of positioning informations and their propagation to the systems on surface.

This paper investiages "on site usage" of the positioning information under assumption that there is no ready to use technology capable for data transmission nor sharing the position information in the target envioronment.

Position finding in underground installations is a problem that arrised along with the advance in the available technologies. There is big demand on the market of underground installations for such functionality, There two main applications of position finding solutions:

- workers safety,
- extension to the task management, monitoring, resource planning and distribution tools.

Any system, also position finding one, should be suited to actual demands and problems it supposed to address. In order to meet the requirements, there is a need to design a solution that will provide the desired functionality in the expected quality. Position finding systems are not necessary to be available everywhere inside the underground installation but mainly in places with bigger activity where machinery and people works. That means that position finding solution should be independent from the existing infrastrure and scalable in order to be extended to new places, along with the growing of installation. It also means that solution does not have to be maintained in places where there is no activity and such system is not needed.

### 2.3.1. Safety aspect

Protecting and rescueing people lifes are one of the most important challanges for the underground construction and mining industry since many years. In case of accident there is need to perform appropriate search and rescue actions immediatley as the survival rate decreases rapidly as time passes. As for underground construction and mining industry positioning systems are rather in research stage then in real use, executives doesn't know exact position af miners before accident and how many of them are trapped and how big is the scale of destruction. Currently used techniques for rescueing people after an accident requires to count people that came out to know how many people are trapped and then digg though the falled corridors and perform searching operations that rely on old low frequency technology like GLON. GLON is a polish old low frequency radio solution for finding signal emmited from miners lamp, allowing on detection from a few meters [54]. Personal safety equipment consists of oxygen masks enabling to survive 50 minutes, and lamps with GLON transmitter. In case of accident in copper mine "Rudna" in Poland that had a place on 29'th November, 2016 [53] rescue action started 20 minutes after rock mass movement. Part corridor with chamber for mobile machines and excavation got collapsed. After 1,5 hour it was discovered that there are trapped miners. Rescue team had to dig fallen rocks from both sides of corridor without knowledge where trapped miners are because steel elements from collapsed corridor housing influenced the GLON system measures. Positioning system with online underground monitoring would give immediate information who and were was in time of accident and speed up rescueing operations. Unfortunately there was no such system. Current safety regulations does not take new technology into account. Mines do not know where exactly their miners are, they know only the region.

Modern emergency systems for underground installations provide a set of functions that improves safety and minimise loss in case of accident. Besides the means of emergency situation prevention like predictions of mass movements or presence of gasses, lots of them provide functions that help coordinate miners if they are in the isolated areas to meet each other, guide them to the emergency equipment, exit points or safe areas and ensure that nobody was left in danger place [39]. All of those functions require good position finding solution in order to provide fast and reliable information even if connectivity is broken. Each communication system dedicated for underground installations cope with that problem involving wide spectrum of technologies in order to overcome limitations and increase robustness[58].

Positioning system can be used also by people working underground directly from their personal digital equipment[39] as a kind of navigation system which can help to evacuate from underground installation. It could provide information about their current position within mine and there would be given informations about dangerous areas and recommended escape paths in case of emergency.

Positioning systems dedicated to monitoring workers are called LAMPS – Location and Monitoring for Personal Safety systems [2].

### **2.3.2. Business aspect**

Another use case for positioning system is that stakeholders want to know where the equipment is placed, how much time it needs to do its operations, if there is some unplanned machine downtime. Delays in case of any underground operations are very costly. Resources monitoring can depict bottlenecks in machine operations, which may provide information on how to balance the workload in order to make operations smoother and more efficient. Data gathered by positioning systems can also be used in time and cost estimations. Mine stakeholders can see in real time what is the current distribution of equipment what enables them to perform real time coordination of ongoing process parts. In day to day operations information where are located operators and machines can increase production efficiency because of less time needed to spend on gathering information about machines position from reports[51]. The positioning systems are mainly used to deliver information to systems that operates above ground. Todays underground operations are partly automated with the aim towards full automation. The process of the operations is monitored and managed remotely from operation centers on surface. Supervisor and control of such operations are similar to that known on above ground process plants which are controlled by SCADA – Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition software systems [39].

Underground construction industry use automation technology heavily in nearly all aspects: safety, work automation, work and environment monitoring, internal and external communication, transport, maintaining ventilation, power or fresh water supply and others. Automated solutions are also used for example to control access to mine like entries for cars and mobile mine machines or for safety purpose to quickly cut off rooms where petrol oil are stored in case of accident or fire detection. Those automated systems can be configured and controlled from places they are mounted under ground or from central systems located above ground where central monitoring and work control take a place. Such centers collect informations distributed by systems and provide information about environmental parameters or work performance.

Devices and mobile machines that work underground are also connected to that system through means of onboard microcontrollers or computers and wireless network. Thanks to it it is possible to provide to central system work performance information or device health status that can be useful for service during periodical device checks or repairs. Positioning systems implementations may work together with these devices which allows underground operation executives to have a up to date map of current works and processes being in progress. Positioning information can be used also by mobile devices by themselves. An example of devices that make use positioning data are modern mobile machine gateways devices [39] which are kind of black-box devices for big mining machines like loaders. Those devices can use positioning information as a trigger for reports of work efficiency expressed in load - unload cycles (IREDES Performance Profile report)[36]. An example use case for positioning information by LHD (*Load Haul Dump* truck) can be as follows:

- assumption 1: computer is able to recognise loading and dumping points by data provided by positioning system,
- assumption 2: full cycle is defined as a task of carrying the material from load to dump points plus travel from dump to load point,
- assumption 3: computer accumulates data about machine speed, distance traveled, time, amount of load that is carried,
- use case: computer creates the report that summarizes machine's performance each full cycle detected.

Wide application are of the positioning information assisted along with the concept of "Building Information Modelling" (BIM) which is already used on building sites above ground and is currently being extended to cover underground mining and tunnel boring industry demands[27]. BIM is a concept of uniform storage and methods of informations exchange about physical parameters and functional aspects of the building. It is the source of information for different stakeholders as well as method of information integration and validation in context of their cross validation. BIM allows for simulation, errors detection on their early state, support resource planning and time and cost estimations. BIM can be used in all phases of construction including planning, development, verification and maintenance.

Nowadays there are available positioning systems for underground installations that can provide approximate localization of people or equipment. Representative examples are discussed in chapter 3.

## 2.4. Usage of smartphones in underground installations

Smartphones are handheld mobile devices which incorporates basic functionalities of a personal computer and a cell phone. With respect of the underground installation type usage of the regular smartphone devices can be prohibited because of the safety regulations (see section 2.2) like in case of coal mines in Europe[39]. There are available special versions of intrinsically safe smartphones dedicated for hazardous environments which actually contains same components [1]. It means that it is possible to use smartphones in any type of underground installation.

With respect of the type of the installation there are available different communication technologies. Tunnel boring industry is known from the fact of having all the

work site being connected to on ground terrestial network (GSM) and Internet connection through WiFi networking like in case of underground installation of Brenner Base Tunnel in Austria. Mining industry communicates with use of leaky feeder radio communication while data transmission are limited to fiber optics and rarely distributed WiFi access points [51]. This limits the smartphones communication abilities, making them not usefull as a regular cell phones. Despite lack of wireless communication smartphones can make use of their sensorics as well as radio modules in order to gather the information about the environment and make use of it in order to estimate it's position.

In order to make proposed position finding model applicable for underground installation it must be as generic or abstract to be applicable to environments with rich and advanced infrastructure as well as those with minimal means of communication.

## Chapter 3

# Position finding solutions for indoor environment

Underground installation is a specific case of an indoor environment. What is the characteristic for indoor environment is a large amount of signal diffractions and attenuations by various materials, weaker signals of terrestrial networks, global navigation satellite systems and a need of more precise positioning information than in open space. Underground installations are completely isolated from the wireless networks available on ground which is good because of lower radio noise. They are also limited in space what makes the diffraction happening as frequent as in ordinary indoor conditions. That arises the question whether solutions that are working for indoor environments could be also applicable to the underground conditions where radio technologies behaves differently because of rock, steel, concrete, a hexahedral[3][22] alike corridors shape and heavy machinery with powerfull motor engines that produce large amount of electromagnetic distortions.

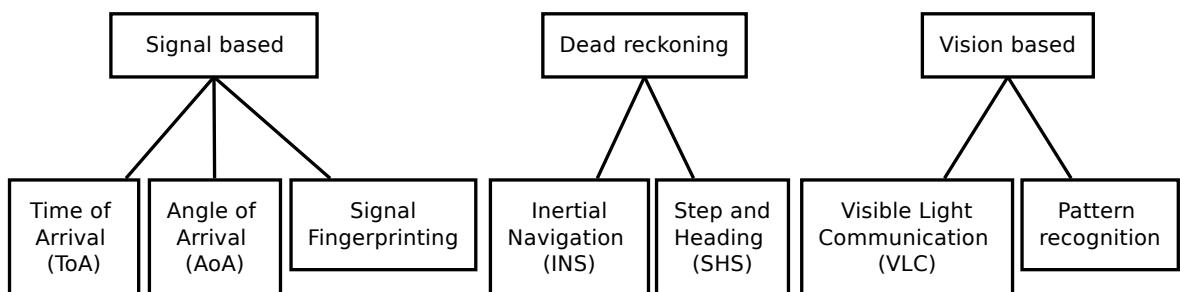


Figure 3.1. Position finding approaches classification for smartphones.[14]

Smartphone based indoor positioning approaches can be classified as shown on figure 3.1. Signal processing is one of the most common used technique for positioning in mobile devices. They are equiped with radio transceivers that works on different frequencies and in different technologies when each of them are characterized with physical parameters that can be measured by the device and reuse for positioning purpose. More sophisticated signal solutions include techniques that provides additional

data that can be used for positioning purpose like in case of Global Navigation Sattelite Systems (GNSS)[57]. Dead reckoning approach comes from the possibilty of measuring the physical state of the handheld device by a set of incorporated sensors such as accelerometer or gyroscepe. Vision based solutions take an advantage from having a camera being mounted on the device in order to run pattern recognition algorithms and map an acquired image to a particular position.

With respect of the necessity of data distribution accross the positioning system there are avilable different solution architectures. Approaches can be categorised in a following way:

- server – client: positioning system infrastructure is capable for estimating the position of the system user. End user can fetch information about it's position from the server.
- client – server: user of the system estimate his position himself and provide positioning information to the server,
- WSN and IoT approaches: user is treated as an extension of the positioning system infrastructure where infrastructure consists of a set of interconnected nodes that acquires the positioning related data and passes it through to the sink node while the user can listen to passing messages and interpret them,
- Peer-to-Peer: where user acquires available envioronmental data and passes it to the next user in range [21].

In this chapter there are reviewed successful approaches for indoor positioning including hardware devices and infrastructure related system architectures and algorithmic approaches that are suitable for smarpthonne devices, in order to provide an overview of the current state-of-the art.

### 3.1. Wireless communication technology based solutions

Wireless communication technologies are used for positioning purposes because of the fact that use electromagnetic waves which parameters are easily measureable, are open for extensions and suitable for hazardous and changing envioronments and finally they work without wires which can be broken during the works inside the underground installation. Another advatange is the low price of wireless communication modules and the wide application of various wireless communication technologies in computers and mobile devices such as smartphones.

This section introduces existing solutions for position finding that base on the wirreless technologies.

Commonly used techonologies for solving the problem of position finding in indoor environments are[30]:

- Bluetooth Low Energy,
- ZigBee,
- WiFi,
- Ultra-wideband (UWB).

Bluetooth, ZigBee and WiFi technologies are the common technologies used in Received Signal Strength (RSS) based positioning techniques.

As with the wireless communication technology based positioning, the common way of estimating the position is evaluation of received signal strength mesure obtained

during signal transmission from the wireless transmitter to the receiver. Value of that express the received signal strength is called RSSI (received signal strength indicator). RSSI denotes the power of received radio signal measured in dBm (decibel-miliwatts). A RSSI is actually the raw value that express the powerd inducted on the receivers antenna as a result of transmission. No additional sensors are required to take that measure. A RSSI value is available on most of wireless technologies as a part of diagnostic report serving as indicator how good the connection is. The higher the RSSI value then the higher the signal strength so transmitter is closer to the receiver. Such relation between the RSSI value and the distance is known under a various of models that tries to describe the propagation of electromagnetic radio waves with use of some staticic and probabilitic distribution [47]. Such models are needed because of calculus complexity while using actual physical model of the phenomena. In order to perform physical calculus there is need detailed description of the envioronment including every element that may influance the radio wave propagation. Calculus could include d'Alembert equation for signal power density on limited space which requires 6 variables concerning distance and time in 3 axis. Calculus should take into account presence of radio wave diffractions and attenuations on materials present in the indoor envioronment. As the propagation space is not ideal and the amount of elements influences the propagation is large such calculations are not being performed.

Example of statistically obtained model that descibes relation between received signal strength is *Log-distance path loss model*[47]:

$$RSSI = -10n \log_{10}\left(\frac{d}{d_0}\right) + A_0 \quad (3.1)$$

where  $d$  is the distance between the receiver and transmitter,  $A_0$  is a reference RSSI value measured at  $d_0$  distance from the transmitter,  $n$  is the signal propagation exponent. Taking the measure of RSSI ( $A_0$ ) at a distance of one meter from the signal source ( $d_0 = 1$ ) simplifies the equation. It is the common practise in Bluetooth beacon technology to attach additional information about reference  $A_0$  RSSI value measured at on meter into the broadcast messages of the beacon. An example of protocol that include that information in message header is *iBeacon* protocol developed by Apple [49].

The *Log-distance path loss model* states that the only variable that influence the RSSI value is the distance from the source. Such model has to regarded as a rough distance estimation as RSSI is not a stable measure, especially not in Multipath and waveguide environments like tunnels. Bluetooth technology operates on a 2,4GHz frequency which means that the wavelength of the signal is equal to 12,5 cm. Such short wavelength is prone to distortion such as multi-path reflections where signal bounce against objects and material attenuation what results in incorrect or noisy measurements[47]. Compare in this context the findings about WLAN in section 3.1.1.

### 3.1.1. Signal strength analysis and fingerprinting techniques

This section explains ideas behind Received Signal Strength analysis and finger-printing techniches used for position finding solutions. Ideas are explained on example of WiFi wireless communication technology.

WiFi network infrastructure is one of the available solutions that can be used as a source of information about current position of the device. The basic solution for positioning with use of this technology is about recognising wireless lan network access points by their SSID or physical address of network cards [29]. As there exists working position finding solution that base on that technology. Accuracy of the solution depends on the spacing of the accesspoints. Those solutions determine position by relation of received signal strength to the position of the nearest access points in range. In addition positioning information can be adjusted by making estimations about being "between" accesspoints by simultaneous analysis of two or more link parameters. So the worst case anticipation is accuracy equal to spacing of the accesspoints [39][51].

What is specific for radio waves attenuation at 2,4 GHz frequency is that their signal is present from relative large distances in mine in compare to the same devices signal range in the open space environment. What is also characteristic is that the signal strength, after its peak close to the WiFi transceiver antenna its going to stabilize in distance about 10m from source and then the signal strength is residing on similar level up to distance of around 300 meters from its source when it starts to heavily attenuate. [39].

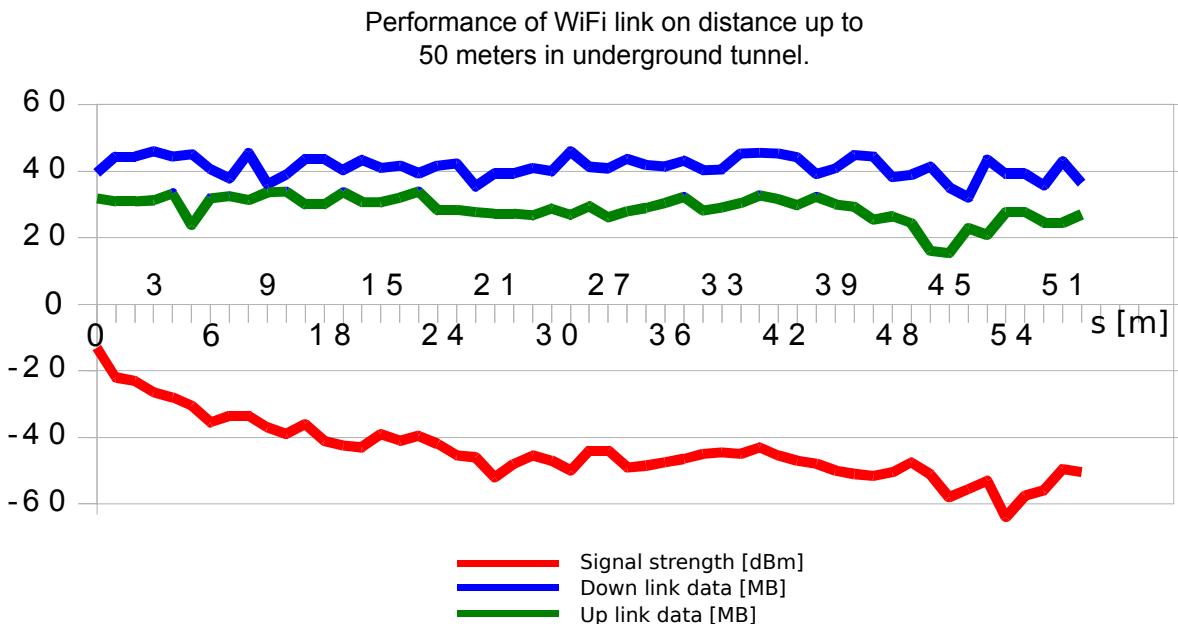


Figure 3.2. Wireless lan throughput and signal strength with respect of distance from the signal source (wireless access point) [39].

On figure 3.2 it is presented how wireless lan link parameters differs with respect of distance between client device and the network access point. Measures presented there are taken from 0 up to 50 meters from signal source. In case of this chart there were presented uplink and downlink throughput measured by amount of data gathered on each testing probe taken each meter distance from the signal source and the related signal strength expressed in dBm units. Values presented on the chart are medians of all gathered values and factors for given distance. The test was carried out in a straight underground tunnel in the biggest coal mine in Slovenia at Premogovnik

Velenje. Connection throughput between client and server remains nearly the same for distances in range from 0 up to 50 meters. Signal strength is presented in logarithmic unit dBm. Signal strength falls significantly in first 10 meters from 0 to  $-40\text{dBm}$ . After distance of 10m the value of signal strength is ranged in between  $-40\text{dBm}$  and  $-50\text{dBm}$  with small and not regular deviations. After 45 meters the value drops slightly below  $-50\text{dBm}$ .

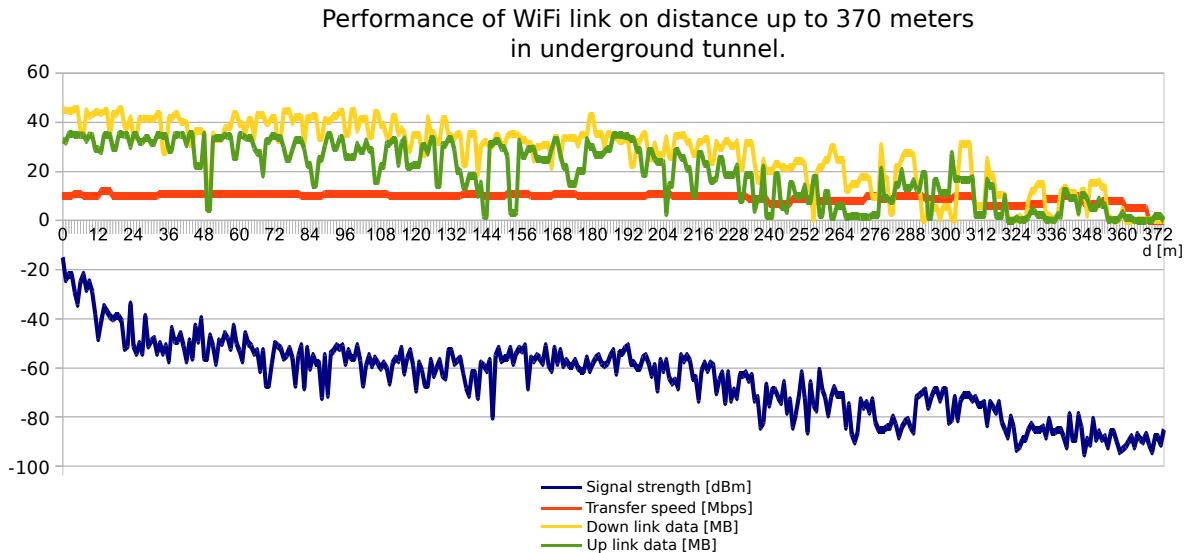


Figure 3.3. Wireless lan range [39].

The figure 3.3 presents tests results performed on longer distance. On distances from 50 up to 240 meters the parameters of the link are similar. Down link data remains at  $40\text{MB}$  and at  $38\text{MB}$  after 140 meters with drops to  $20\text{MB}$ . Up link data measurements are more unstable than in case of down link in terms of drops in delivered amount of data, but trend seems to be steady on range from 50 till 220 meters from access point. Then both data uplink and down link drops by  $10\text{MB}$ . The data rate between access point and client device remain similar from very beginning till distance around 370m where the signal is not strong enough to establish a connection.

Range of 10 meters from signal source can be easily determined from the values of the received signal strength because they are significantly bigger than signal strengths measured on bigger distances. On distances of  $10\text{m}-50\text{m}$  received signal strength oscillates between  $-40\text{dBm}$  and  $-60\text{dBm}$ , then between  $-50\text{dBm}$  and  $-80\text{dBm}$  on distances of  $50\text{m}-240\text{m}$ , then between  $-60\text{dBm}$  and  $-90\text{dBm}$  on distances of  $240\text{m}-320\text{m}$  and finally between  $-80\text{dBm}$  and  $-90\text{dBm}$  on longer distances.

Resulting from this typical data, a precise straight forward solution by using WLAN signal strength for underground positioning is not possible: One attenuation value (y-axes) can be assigned to too many distances from an accesspoint (values on x-axes).

Basing on the observations of the received signal strength values there can be identified following range zones[39]:

1. near field zone:  $0\text{m} - 40\text{m}$  distance from signal source where wave attenuation curve is similar to that in free field distribution,

2. coverage zone:  $40m - 200m$  distance from signals source where can be identified symptoms of waveguide propagation and signal strength remain to be around  $-50dBm$ ,
3. monitoring zone: distances since  $200m$  from signals source where signal starts to vary from  $-75dBm$  up to  $-85dBm$  and becomes to be unusable for communication purpose but client and access point are visible for each other,
4. out-of-range zone: where signal is too low and both client and access point are not visible for each other.

A first approach for Wireless LAN based positioniong system is to assume that client is present in area of an underground installation if it is inside a coverage zone of one Wireless LAN access point. A client can be registered by the Access Point software until he leaves the coverage zone. As the coverage zone is about  $200m$  distance from Access Point then total accuracy of this solution is about  $400m$  under assumption of having only one Access Point.

A second approach assumes an improvement of the positioning accuracy by signal strength interpretation and recognizing if the client is in the near field zone. This approach is easy to be implemented as signal strength values in the near field zone differs from values from the rest of zones due to the unique relation between attenuation and distance following a regular attenuation curve. Such solutions are implemented in mines in Germany [39] and in Swedish Boliden's mines [51].

### 3.1.2. Positioning with Beacons and Bluetooth technology

Beacons are transmitters that use Bluetooth low energy technology in order to send out small chunks of informations. They are designed to be small and energy efficient in order to allow them to be independent from external power source. The main application of beacons are indoor positioning systems.

Common indoor positioning system architecture uses beacons as a set of reference points building up the static infrastructure of the environment. Beacons works as a kind of landmarks. A user position can be determined as a funtion of received signal strength vales of signals sent by beacons. Beacons can also be mobile. They can be attached to the non static (mobile) objects. Then the responsibility of position estimation lies on the infrastructure that gathers the signals. Sensing infrastructure can be static or mobile [5]. Those possibilities directly addesses the main position finding problems (refer to the section 2.3).

The Bluetooth technology was developed and is maintained by the Bluetooth Special Interest Group (Bluetooth SIG) which is the standard organisation capable for licensing the Bluetooth technologies and trademarks to the manufacturers. Bluetooth technology operates on frequencies from  $2,4GHz$  to  $2,4835GHz$  which was devided into into 80 channels. In order to adapt transmission channel to the current load on given frequencies, Bluetooth implements a mechanism called *Adaptive Frequency Hopping* which allows to change channels being in use during the transmission without interrupting it. Subsequent Bluetooth technologies are aimed to ensure bigger data transfer, lower energy use and increase the transmission security. Since version 4.0 if Bluetooth standard there is availablable special protocol that is optimised for lower power consumption. This protocol is called *Bluetooth Low Energy* while the whole Bluetooth 4.0 standard including classic and high speed protocols is called *Bluetooth*

*Smart*. Since version 5.0 of the standard the set of the protocols are called just *Bluetooth 5*. Currently, the market is dominated with Beacons that use Bluetooth Low Energy protocol in version 4.0 that is why thesis exclusively focuses on this version of protocol.

The Bluetooth technology is as set of profiles. Each version of the technology contain definitions of profiles that are up to date to that version and optionally are reverse compatible with older ones. Each profile describes what communication protocols and data format it uses. The protocols available for the profiles are also defined by the Bluetooth technology. The Bluetooth Low Energy protocol uses the *Generic Attribute Profile (GATT)* which is a set of services that can be used within the transaction between devices. Service is a name for collection of characteristics that express the state of the device. Bluetooth defines 59 services within the GATT such as TPS (Tx Power Service), IPS (Indoor Positioning Service) or HRS (Heart Rate Service). Services are identified by their UUID number which must be unique. Despite the defined service, there is a possibility to create own services. Characteristics are defined with given format type, properties and security permissions. Such format types are available as signed or unsigned integer ranging between 1 and 8 bytes, float, string or a structure. Allowed properties of the characteristics describe if the value within the characteristic can be read (*read* property), changed (*write* property), required acknowledgement (*indicate* property) or being in use just for notification purposes (*notify* property). There is a possibility to add custom properties as well. Security permissions as part of the characteristic definition are about stating if a given property can be executed with or without an authentication. For example Measurement Interval characteristic of the Health Thermometer Service is defined with Read, Indicate and Write properties and security permissions stating that there is not required any authentication for reading but it is needed for writing.

Broadcast messages are a way how Bluetooth Low Energy devices communicate with themselves. It is called *advertisement mode*. In order to distinguish different types of those messages (aka *advertisement frames*) there were introduced distinct frame formats. On the market of Beacons there are two major protocols that defines Beacons devices behavior, including broadcast frame format. The first – *iBeacon* – was developed by Apple and the second – *Eddystone* – was developed by Google. Those broadcast messages formats are the basis for creating "Ranges" definitions. Usage of ranges are explained further in section 3.3.2. In case of *iBeacon*, an advertisement frame consists of 29 bytes. The first 9 bytes are the constant preamble, defined by the *iBeacon* protocol. The first 3 bytes are standard Bluetooth Low Energy Flags. The next 6 bytes consist of value that described the packet type (in case of *iBeacon* the value represent *Custom Manufacturer Packet* type), manufacturer ID (constant value that represents Apple), subtype that indicates *iBeacon* compatible device and number of bytes that are attached to the *iBeacon* advertisement frame. The *iBeacon* specific data consists of *Proximity UUID* field which must be unique across different users, *Major* and *Minor* fields that gives the user possibility to differentiate Beacons that he own and the *Signal Power* field which denotes received signal strength observed at distance of 1m from the Beacon transmitter. The *Signal Power* value is commonly used to compute distance between receiver and transmitter using the *Log-distance path loss model*. Then the *Signal Power* is assumed to be value of  $A_0$  variable within equation 3.1, where the  $d_0 = 1$ . That is why the model can be simplified and distance can

cumputed quickly just after receiving the advertisement frame by issuing the following equation:

$$d = 10^{\frac{RSSI - A_0}{-10n}} \quad (3.2)$$

where  $RSSI$  is a measure obtained during receiving process and  $n$  is a constance.

The *Eddystone* protocol introduce three types of advertisement frames. They differ from the *iBeacon* by introducing separate frame types for

- passing encrypted identification data,
- passing information about Beacon state, aka telemetric frame,
- passing address of a web site related to the Beacon.

There are available general concepts for positioning systems based on Bluetooth technology dedicated for underground environment, but their concepts were not verified in real environment [51][30] or are not applicable to be used by smartphones[19].

### 3.1.3. WSN based position finding systems

There are proposals of position finding and tracking based on the Internet of Things (IOT) solutions [32, 59]. The idea is to create means of wireless communication to locate miners. It is proposed to use network a large number of interconnected wireless nodes (Wireless Sensor Network, WSN) that read signals from tag devices (for example RFID passive tags) carried by miners. Wireless nodes are directly connected one or more nodes laying in the range of their wireless communication module. They form together an ad hoc, multi-hop, self-organizing network of nodes that is able to transfer data, reorganise its structure in case of malfunction of one of the nodes and allow to configure nodes remotely due to the implemented wireless communication technology and dedicated routing protocol. A network of nodes can be easily expanded by adding new nodes. Due to the fact that the communication is wireless, nodes can be placed also in dangerous or new areas where wired network devices are not allowed or the related infrastructure doesn't exist. Accuracy of the positioning information obtained by the network is dependent on the number of nodes inside the network. Their placement should guarantee possibility to receive the identification information emitted by the devices carried by miners.

WSN based positioning systems are designed to serve such functionalities as querying miner information, locating miner, tracking miner and managing tag and reader. It is proposed to use this system along with other monitoring systems that measure safety parameters in a underground installation [59]. This positioning system is dedicated to be used by production monitoring, production scheduling and emergency rescue mine departments located on surface.

Technologies that are recommended for wireless communication between WSN nodes are Bluetooth Low Energy, ZigBee (IEEE 802.15.4 based) or WiFi (IEEE 802.11).

ZigBee technology is the most popular in WSN's as it supports variety of communication modes, contains out-of-box solutions for network topology management and supports low energy solutions like sleep modes [26]. The ZigBee protocol which is dedicated for ZigBee technology uses energy and computational efficient solutions for data collision avoidance which includes CSMA/CA techniques and time division concept [59, 41]. There are three main topologies forced by ZigBee technology that

can be used in the WSN network: star topology, tree topology and mesh topology. Star topology limits the network to have all nodes directly connected to a sink. Tree topology enables multihop functionalities but limits network flexibility in terms of adopting routes in case of failure (however it does not support redundant connections between nodes). Mesh topology requires to store routing tables in each node but provides means of redundancy in terms of routing what makes the WSN network reliable and fault resistant [41]. That is why mesh topology is recommended for WSN based position finding systems.

The figure 3.4 presents proposal of positioning system architecture. Wireless Sensor Network nodes are divided into three groups with respect of their role in the system. There are distinguished:

- routing nodes – that gather information from sensor nodes and transfer it through network of routing nodes to server via sink node [59],
- sensor nodes – their main purpose is to extend the range of sensing the identification information from miners. Sensor nodes have limited possibilities for routing the data,
- sink nodes – they act as an interface between the core network installation and the WSN.

Due to the fact that WSN nodes are limited in energy supply, systems that base on that technology need to be designed with aware of energy management and fault management. The idea of routing node deployment along the tunnel in two symmetrical lines comes from the need of link redundancy between nodes. In case of failure of one of the routing nodes, information from sensors can be passed out through the other routing nodes in range.

In order to limit power consumption of sensor nodes they were designed as Reduced Function Devices (RFD). These nodes do not take part within information passing (routing) process. Sensor nodes are designed in purpose of reading signals from miners equipment (for example RFID tags) and to send the information to the nearest routing node. During the installation phase, sensor nodes are switched to network setup mode. Aim of a network setup mode is to detect the nearest routing node and adjust the transmission power to the value needed for communication with this routing node only. It reduces the network module power consumtion and signal interference with neighboring nodes. Network setup mode can be described as a sequential procedure:

- sensor node broadcast the testing signal to all of the nodes,
- nodes that were able to reiceve the signal, send responce with value of Received Signal Strength Indication (RSSI)
- sensor node limit its sending power according to the responses.

Network of wireless connected nodes needs must provide features that will ease its maintenance. As the network consists of many nodes, where the number of nodes can be changed during operation, there is need to implement actions that will allow them to organize their topology automatically. Network should be able to work and maintain communication with remote services despite failure of some nodes. There are available solutions that allow a network to adapt quickly to the changing environment [28], but in case of statically placed network elements the environment is not changing heavily.

Routing nodes store information about nodes that are used for network purposes

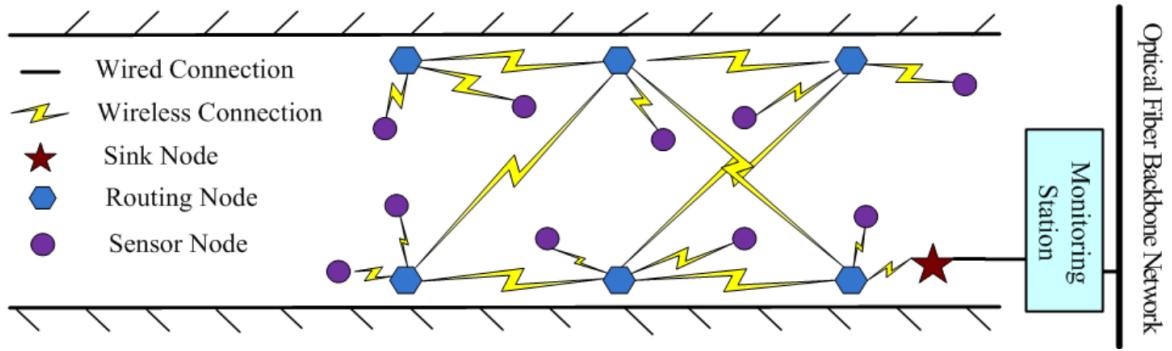


Figure 3.4. Wireless Network Sensor topology in underground corridor example [59].

in the routing tables. Routing tables may consist of nodes within the radio range. Proposed routing protocol for underground installations suggest to maintain 3 entries in the routing table[59]:

- parent route – points to the parent node,
- minimum route – points to the best node in terms of the most energy efficient way to the sink node,
- backup route – points to the second to the best routing node.

Each entry consists of elements such as: number of hops (routing nodes from itself to the sink node), value expressing link quality of the last communication, flag that describe the role of the entry (parent, minimum, backup route). Routing tables and interconnections between nodes are created during network installation process. The idea is that the sink node that is directly connected to external communication medium creates at first a 1-node WSN. The rest of nodes organize themselves in manner that nodes broadcasts their physical and network addresses. Basing on information gathered during installation they are able to determine their position in the network, obtain network address, assign routing table entries and obtain hop number. The network topology can be build up and maintain after WSN installation process [26]. Nodes are able to pass information to sink node that contains it's routing tables. Thanks to that sink node is able to recreate network topology and then pass the information to the external server. In order to maintain the network there are implemented status messages that contain information about changes in nodes routing tables. They are usually passed through the WSN along with data from periodic sensor readings.

Wireless Sensor Nodes are equiped with batteries that makes them independent from external power source. In order to save the energy and in order to prolong the battery nodes works in energy efficient modes. In these modes the nodes are turned into a sleep mode for certain time. They wake up in order to perform tag readings and transfer the data to the external resources. In order to synchronize their operation, in each cycle the sink node broadcasts initial message which is used to synchronize all attached nodes. Power level of node batteries are monitored. The nodes can send information about their power level as a response for appropriate request. There can be implemented special routines inside a node that can cause sending the information about the low battery level in emergency mode, without any request from the sink node.

Crucial for the positioning system is to determine accurately exact position of given reader node inside the underground installations. Without exact position information about the reader placement all positioning data obtained from them is not useful. Solution for this problem in WSN positioning systems are solved by manual configuration. Each node have it's own identification number that is a part of it's initial configuration. This number is attached to their housing making them identifiable directly during the installation or maintenance work in tunnel. Mostly, the deployment of nodes is regular, so the position in the tunnel can be determined by the placement. In case of sudden failure of some node it is possible to determinate which of the node is broken by it's ID information, and check were the node is placed. The WSN network should have the possibility to report failures of its nodes. That is why WSN positioning systems are equipped with a failure detection and reporting mechanism. Parent nodes like routing nodes against reader nodes, checks if child nodes responds to the requests. In case of having no response from given node for a given amount of subsequent requests the parent node issues a status request command to the child node and waits a given amount of time. If the child node answers it is assumed that the given child node is working correctly. In case of no response from the child node, the parent node sends information about failure to the external service. If the reader nodes are connected to the parent node with no routing options then a different policy for parent node must be applied. If the child node does not receive an acknowledgement (ACK) frame from it's parent for a given amount of time the node increases it's sending power and retransmits it's data again. If there is no result of increasing the power then the node goes into network setup mode and scans channels to rejoin the network.

During operation, the position information of mobile devices acquired by the nodes and transferred to the acquisition server is a combination of three values:

- ID of a node,
- ID of acquired miner identification data (for example RFID tag id),
- signal power of this RFID tag,
- timestamp.

Miner position can be expressed in two dimensional space (x, y). This is performed by the algorithm searching the database for three nodes which acquired the signal from a given tag with the biggest power. Then the algorithm uses the free space electromagnetic waves propagation model (3.3) to compute the distance between node and tag.

$$P_{ri} = \frac{P_t \cdot G_t \cdot G_{ri} \cdot \lambda^2}{4\pi D_i^2} \quad (3.3)$$

The parameters  $P_t$  (signal power generated by tag),  $G_t$  (tag antenna gain),  $G_{ri}$  (node reader antenna gain) and  $\lambda$  (electromagnetic wave length) are constant and known. The parameter  $P_{ri}$  (received signal power on reader's input) is the only variable in the equation that is needed to compute the distance from tag to reader. Maximum likelihood estimation method that base on data from three nodes and their values of received signal power from a given tag produces the relative position of the given tag in (x, y) coordinates. The suggested implementation [32] assumes that nodes look for miners identification signals (for example RFID tags) each 10 minutes.

### 3.2. Other solutions

Position finding solutions use also other means of sensing the environmental parameters than those making use of wireless communication technologies modules. Potential positioning approaches for underground installations include:

- Passive RFID,
- Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU),
- Magnetic Field strength pattern matching [34],
- Very-low frequency (VLF) electromagnetic waves,
- Visible Light Communication (VLC).

In the underground installations image processing (aka *computer vision*) solutions for positioning systems and solutions concerning pattern recognition (like *activity-based navigation* [38], concept of reading 2D bar codes serving as environmental anchors – reference points [35] or methods for detecting small tabletop objects with use of *RGB-D* sensors [27]) are not investigated due to the poor visibility, lack of patterns that can identify current position admittedly as well as the fact that painted signs are quickly covered by the dust making them difficult to read.

#### 3.2.1. Radio Frequency Identification tags

The RFID technology makes use of electromagnetic field phenomena for simple data transmission. Passive RFID tags are powered by readers through electromagnetic field; they do not use batteries or wired external supply. In order to acquire information from a passive tag, the RFID readers have to propagate electromagnetic waves. The tags accumulate the power from the electromagnetic field in a capacitor. When the tag has accumulated enough power, it transmits the response with the tag's data to the reader and goes to sleep for a given time. Reader get signal from tag and perform filtering and decoding operations on it in order to get tag's data. There are also available variants of active RFID tags which use its own power supply. An important difference in application of passive or active RFID is the fact that active RFID's can be received by readers in a wide area while passive RFID's only respond after being initiated by energy in a very narrow field comparable to a reflective light barrier. This field is determined by the distance of the reader from the tag and the horizontal opening characteristics of the reader's directional antenna used.

RFID technology is used in underground installations in certain locations to serve as check points. In this manner are monitored underground trains or dispatch of materials is being monitored. Passive RFID modules are installed on containers or mobile machines like trains. Those modules can be read by passive RFID readers that are connected to the mine network via dedicated control unit like a Mining Infrastructure Computer by Mintronics[39]. This control unit is responsible for RFID reader configuration and translation of its readings into a standarized positioning information format. It also extends data from the RFID reader with its unique name or coordinates which determine the position of a reader in a model of the underground mine. Long range passive RFID's operate on the 868 MHz band (Europe). A reader certified for use in underground coal mining using an 8dBi antenna is able to detect passive RFID tags at a range of up to 3 meters[39].



Figure 3.5. Passive RFID reader module by Minetronics[39].



Figure 3.6. Passive RFID tag in use on a container[39].

There are known sucessfull implementations of positioning system which use RFID as a supplementary data. The RFID modules serves as static anchors [15][33].

### 3.2.2. Visible Light Based positioning system

Visible Light Communication (VLC) is a method for using visible spectrum of electromagnetic waves for exchanging the data. Communication system requires source of the light and light sensor which is able to detect light modulations. In case of simple signal modulations like PWM, camera of a smartphone – complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) image sensor can be also used effectively for receiving modulated data. Source of light in these systems are LEDs. LED is a semiconductor device that can be easily controllable by logical unit. LEDs are characterised with low latency during changing their state from on to off and vice versa. It was measured that rising and falling edges during switching the state are about 4s long [31]. Usage of these kind of medium for wireless communication purposes was already standarized by IEEE 802.15.7.

Advantage of VLC is that LED technology is commonly used as a light source in buildings and outdoors. If LED will be prepared for its unique ID transmission or transmission of its position expressed in 3D diamensions then the VLC system can be used as a positioning system with static anchors working as a beacons. Such positioning systems are called visible light positioning systems (VLP). All of them consists from three main components:

- light beaconing, which assigns special factor to the light source making it unique and distinguishable among others for the receiver,
- distance estimation, which can be obtained by taking the measure of a received signal strength and a signal strength based distance model,
- localization, which provides actual information about the position of a receiver. This can be obtain with use of trilateration, multirateration techniques or methods like angle of arrival.

Simple light sensor is the source of the received light information that is not aware

about the light source relative position or angle but gives only the signal strength measure. CMOS sensor provide more information about acquired image because output consist of a two-dimentional map of sinal strengths. In this case it is possible to make use of an optic phisical laws in order to get relative position of a beacon. When there are three or more light transmitters available then it is possible to obtain receiver position in 3-D coordinates.

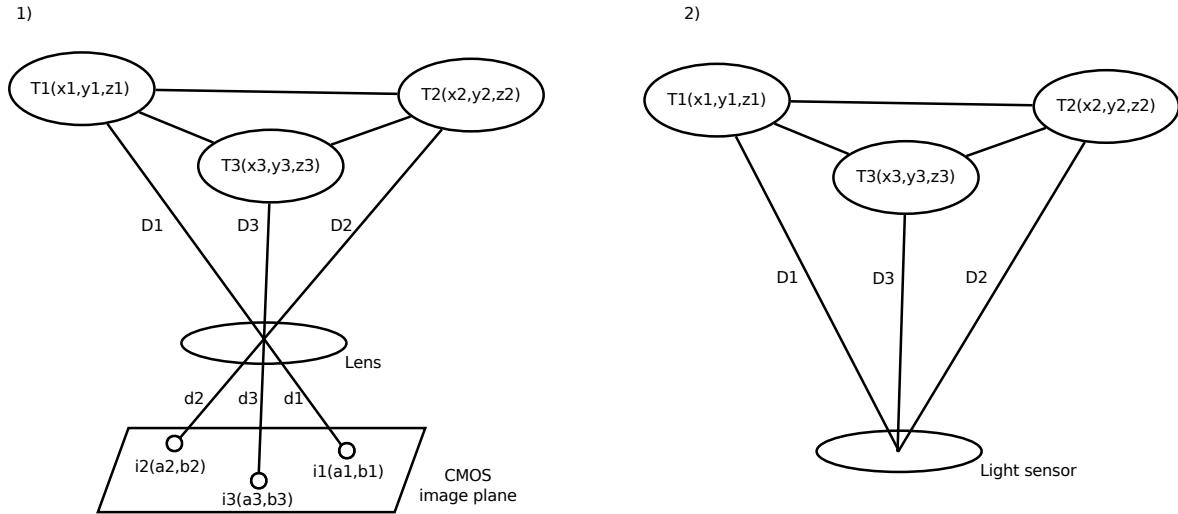


Figure 3.7. Visible Light Positioning system principles. Diagram 1) presents concept of positioning system that make use of CMOS sensor [42]. Diagram 2) presents concept of positioning system that make use of simple received signal strength measures and related distance model [31].

There are investigated various modulation methods that tries to tackle with natural difficulties connected with visible light frequencies. Main of them are sun, ambient and fluorescent light interferences with the carrier frequency and specular reflections [42]. As a modulation schemes there are being in use on-off keying, variable pulse-position modulation, color shift keying, binary frequency shift keying, channel hopping and pulse width modulation.

There is known a university project *GoIn* [4] that develop a concept of combining all of the sensorics available on the smartphone device in order to make accurate positioning solution for indoor environments.

### 3.3. Applicability of smartphones in position finding solutions

Todays smartphone class mobile device contains set of sensorics that can be used as a base for interial positioning system. In underground oprations industry this idea is not the newest as there were tryies of this technology implementations inside hand-held devices for people working underground with use of semiconductor based MEMS gyroscopes [39]. Such devices were connected to the underground wireless network through access points which was responsible for transferring positioning information to the central systems above ground.

Smartphone class devices contains set of components that are treated as common in the industry. There is no strict definition what components should or should not the smartphone class mobile device contain as there is a strong competition in the market offering those devices in various configurations, shapes and features. This thesis exclusively focuses on devices that are compliant with Android operating system, especially version 7.0 which is currently (in the middle of 2018), the most popular operating system on the market. [18]. Android operating system forces hardware manufacturers to equip devices with at least a minimal set of components needed for the system normal operation and give recommendations of optional components that are natively supported by the system[18]. In this section there will be investigated only those technologies that are available for the basic handheld mobile device with Android 7.0.

Smartphone class mobile devices are treated in the engineering industry as a powerful tool set helping the workers with their maintenance work on site and as a handy platform for wide scale of business oriented applications for task management and reporting. Factors that attract potential users of such smartphone based solutions are mainly connected with the price of those devices, ease of use, well described and supported programming frameworks and IDE, ready to use libraries, solved main power management and security issues, ease of maintenance, modularity, scalability, support for the most popular data exchange technologies, ease of extending the functionality by adding the support for external, wireless equipment. Smartphones that are available in the market are also equipped with the sensorics that allow the users to detect, record and recognise the physical movements or orientation changes. It extends the positioning functionality making it more robust and accurate[9][35].

### 3.3.1. Mobile device sensorics

There is no limitation in extending smartphones with internal sensorics. According to the Android 7.0 Compatibility Definition Document[18] there is no such sensoric that must be mounted and implemented into the Android system in order to be compatible with the operating system. It is also stated that device can contain as many various sensorics as producer wish under condition of having a compliant software implementation that deals with the sensorics. Although Android compatibility definition recognises some of them and recommends to be installed on the device. There are also technical requirements given under the sensorics recommendation in case of presence of such on the device.

In sake of simplicity Android defines all of components providing external information to the device as sensors. Thus components such as GPS signal receiver or a processed and filtered sensor fusion outcome like in case of rotation vector (fusion of accelerometer and gyroscope data) are recognised as different kinds of sensors. Such abstract definition comes from the Sensor Stack which is the part of Android framework.

Sensorics mentioned in the compatibility definition are:

- Accelerometer,
- Magnetometer,
- GPS,
- Gyroscope,
- Barometer,

- Thermometer,
- Photometer,
- Proximity Sensor,
- Fingerprint Sensor,
- 6-DOF Pose Sensor.

All of components listed above, except fignerprint sensor, thermometer and photometer, can be used within the position finding system in order to give extra information about current physical state of the device. Compatibility definition guarantee some quality parameters of sensorics mounted in the mobile phone.

3-axis accelerometer can be used to detect movement changes. It provides the information how big the change was in terms of force that the device was affected. Thanks to the information there can be identified if user made a step or to compute the speed of the user in some mean of transport like a robust car by computing integral function over time from detected acceleration. It is required from that sensor to rapport events at least at 100 Hz frequency (recommended minimum frequency is 200 Hz), to detect forces in range of frefall case up to forces at value of four times the gravity (4g) or more on any axis, minimal outcome resolution is 12-bits (recommended minimum is 16-bits), should allow for online calibration and calibration parameters persistance, be temperature componsated and have a standard deviation no grated than  $0.05 \frac{m}{s^2}$ . Document defines also the maximum accepted amount of power that the sensor can consume during its operation - not more than 4 mW (recommended values are bellow 2 mW during the operation and bellow 0.5 mW when the device is in static condition).

3-axis magnetometer (aka compass) provides the data concerning detected values of the magnetic field. Data available from the operating system level are expressed are in micro-Tesla( $\mu T$ ). Sensor must be able to measure between  $-900 \mu T$  and  $+900 \mu T$  on each axis before saturating with the resolution of  $0.6 \mu T$  (recommended  $0.2 \mu T$  or denser). Magnetometer have to compensate hard iron and soft iron effects where hard iron offset have to be less than  $700 \mu T$ . That value forces the producers to place the sensor in as far from current-induced and magnet-induced magnetic fields like speaker. Sensor installation have to support online calibration and compensation methods and store the parameters in persistent memory. It is required from the magnetometer to report at minimum frequency of 10 Hz (recommended 50 Hz).

GPS/GNSS receiver is not required component for a smartphone with Android 7.0 operating system. If the sensor is mounted then it is required to match set of time, reliability and accuracy requirements like:

- Fast time to first fix requirement - sensor have to determine its position within maximum 10 secods,
- Accuracy and responsiveness requirement - position have to be determined at least 95% of the time under condition of acceleration up to  $1 \frac{m}{s^2}$ , within 20m and speed  $0.5 \frac{m}{s}$ .
- Robustness requitement - have to be allowed to track at least 8 satelites from one constellation simultaneusely (recommended 24 GPS satelites at the time and one from other global positioning satelite system like Glonass, Beidou or Galileo).

It is assumed that the outcome of GPS "sensor" can be supported by the information issued from the Internet such as information about current sattelites position and can be based on some assised or predicted GPS technique.

Gyroscope is an angular change sensor. If installed on the device it must be able to measure up to 1000 degree change per second, report at frequency not less than 100 Hz (recommended 200 Hz), provide information of 12-bit resolution (16-bits are recommended), be self calibrating and compensating during its work, march variance requirement defined as  $1e^7 \frac{rad^2}{s^2}$  per 1 Hz.

Barometer is an ambient air pressure sensor. It available is must report its measures at 5 Hz frequency, be temperature compensated and have "adequate precision" for altitude estimation.

Proximity sensor gives the proximity information of an object in the same direction as the screen. The required accuracy is at least 1-bit meaning that proximity sensor produces simple outcome that is interpreted as boolean value expressed state whether the user is close to the devices screen or not.

Pose sensor with 6 degrees of freedom (6-DOF) is an optional sensor that can be implemented in the Android compatible software. Sensor provides information about himself as part of the environment in perspective of end point of manipulator with 3 kinematic pairs, each with rotation possibilities. The method and related hardware is not discussed within the operating system compliance definition. The only restriction stated to the sensor is that it have to be more accurate than rotation vector sensor. Basic implementation can make use of camera or depth sensor to compute the output value. Output is a quaternion that express the rotation and a translation expressed in SI units. Sensor is used in virtual reality applications.

Android compliant definition strongly recommends the providers to provide implementations of 'composite sensors' such as step detector, significant motion detector, gravity, linear acceleration, rotation vector. These measures are an effect of digital processing of data from single sensor like accelerometer in case of step detector or a sensor fusioning basing on multiple sensors like on magnetometer and gyroscope in case of rotation vector and accelerometer and magnetometer in case of geomagnetic rotation vector. The operating system recognise already filtered and processed data directly an outcome from an composite sensor which is actually a form of abstraction that hides the details of data processing.

Management of sensorics have to be implemented in a compliant manner in order to allow the operating system to interact with those sensorics. All of the sensor outcome are yet processed, normalized and expressed in a defined way like in case of an accelerometer and magnetometer where output is expressed within the "Android sensor coordinate system" format.

### **3.3.2. Abilities and limitations of smartphone class mobile device in context of available positioning methods**

In sake of generalization this paper investigate case of regular consumer grade smartphone which are devices with a common setup compliant with Android 7.0 operating system. No specialized devices are taken into consideration.

Wireless technology is a common way for exchanging the data between the handheld mobile device and the environment. There are available GPS, Bluetooth, WiFi and terrestrial networks(GSM related) technologies. In case of underground each of these technologies has to be installed explicitly because below the ground none of these signals are available. GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) signal receiver is not

usefull under the ground as there is no signal from sattelites available. There are tryies to make use of that technology by re-sending the acquired GNSS positioning data from sattelites in indoor environment by a set of transmitters that mimic sattelites [56] but it cannot be applied to the consumer grade smartphone as the Android applications have access to already processed pseudorange data into sattelite positions. Such solution is called Glonal Navigation Satelite System based indoor positioning system (GNSS-IPS)[57]. Approach where transmitters places on ground fake sattelite signal is known as pseudolite. In case of indoor environment positioning data acquired from sattelites are drifted due to the fact of non-line-of-sight that is why position obtained indoor is called as pseudo-position. There are known tryies of using this approach in order to obtain positioning data but there is not known any sucessful implementation in underground environment.

Terrestrial networks, like GSM, can be also used as a source of positioning information but it requires some modification in order to shortcome problems with high variance of the signal. There is no possibility to do modification on that level to the Android software on devices available on the market nevertheless some prototype installations of extended terrestial network by positioning information were done and sucessful [11][37].

Smartphone class devices are equiped with cameras. Images that captured by the cameras can be used for positioning purposes. There are known solutions that make use of visible light [42] that recognise source of light like LED which are called LED beacons and compute the position basing on the angle-of-arrival (AOA) algotithm.

Thanks to the presence of inertial sensors such as accelerometers and gyroscopes there are known implementations inertial navigation. Pedestrian Dead Recokoning (PDR) is based on the measures from the accelerometer which allows for step detection and an estimation of a step length [13] [12] [14]. There are also developed probabilitic based methods for inertial odometry which aim to be more accurate and robust than PDR [48]. There are investigated various filtering and calibration methods for accelerometer and gyroscope outputs, dedicated to the smartphone class devices making use of Allan variance algorithm, Levenberg-Marquardt algorithm and Runge-Kutta Integration method [40][52]. Other approaches develops the recognition patterns that allows for distiction between transportation mean being in used. Such approaches were used for example in case of prototype navigation application in Chicago, London and Cologne subway [50] or inertial navigation for bikes [46]. There are known solutions for interial navigation improvement by aligning the outcome to the landmarks or map information [30].

Positioning techniques that invole following devices are not useful or cannot be connected to the mobile devices:

- laser scanner as long as it requires stable position for doing the environmental mapping and recognition and it needs to explicitly be extended to some wireless communication module,
- ultrasonic sensor as long as it requires stable position in order to measure signal travel time correctly and needs means of computational resources in order to process the raw data and send them thorugh some wireless connection to the mobile phone.

Smartphones provides support for Beacons - simple Bluetooth Low Energy devices.

There are available libraries that allows monitoring of Bluetooth devices. There are available two modes for searching for Beacons: region monitoring and ranging. Region monitoring is an energy efficient way for searching for Beacons. It allows for long delays between consequent listening periods (like 10 seconds), turning receiver into sleep mode, and background service being active while the positioning application is turned off. In case where positioning application is turned off, the background service inform user that his smartphone found himself in the range of given Beacon region and run the positioning application. Such functionality is often implemented by shopping malls official applications allowing for location aware push-messages. Such advertising technique is called *geofencing* [10]. Region monitoring gives a rough information whether there is or there is not any Beacon device being in range. On the other hand, ranging gives details about all devices being in range with details such as RSSI, name, and other, protocol dependent data. Ranging use more receiver power as listening time is bigger (like 1 second) and there are smaller time intervals between consequent listening sessions (like 10 milliseconds). As it was explained in section 3.1.2, Beacons communicate their presence by sending broadcast messages called advertisement frames. With respect of the type of protocol being used there are available different formats for advertisement frames known as beacon layouts. Layout denotes the constraints that characterise given advertisement frame as well as variables and fields that are being included into frame.

### 3.4. Positioning model requirements

Positioning system as such have to match requirements related to the reliability and robustness, accuracy, power efficiency, installation and maintenance effort and safety. As the smartphone device is also a part of the solution then proposed positioning system must be able to interact with this device.

Provided positioning solution should allow users to make use of it within the ordinary works as well as in case of an accident. The minimum time that the positioning system should work without any external power supply is 72 hours. That value comes from a term of *golden 72 hours* which relates to the period of time after the accident, after which survival rate decreases rapidly [30]. System should work also in case when part of its infrastructure is not working properly like in case of an accident where some corridors can be destroyed including the positioning system infrastructure.

Ease of maintenance in terms of semi-automated methods for detecting the pitfalls or failures and possibility to fix broken positioning infrastructure without necessity of involving specialised engineers should be matched. Such requirement can be met for example by simplicity of the positioning system infrastructure or automated configuration methods that makes the infrastructure self-organising itself. Infrastructure should be also scalable as underground installations are likely to be extended during the excavation process. Infrastructure should be open for software and internal modules updates and extensions of already mounted devices. That allows the positioning system to be further developed.

Power efficiency is an requirement that causes the system to be more likely independent from the on-site power supply. Infrastructure can have own power source and set of methods that limits power consumption of its devices. Infrastructure can be also

extended by some power harvesting methods such as thermoelectric or piezoelectric generators.

Smartphone must provide energy-efficient solution for exchanging the data with positioning system while there are no battery charging points in underground installations. Smartphone with positioning extension activated should be able to work at least for 8 hours and possibly 72 hours with a limited use of a positioning extension. 8 hours is the regular worker shift time in underground mines. Solution must be applicable for different models of smartphones.

Solution must be easy to use for the user. In particular it should be integrated into the user smartphone in such a way that the user will not have to handle it in a specific way in order to use the positioning system. For example solution must be suited to work while the users smartphone is kept in his pocket as well as hold by the user in hand in front of him. Solution must be suited to provide positioning information when the user is not moving as well as he is walking. There should be assumed walking pace as  $5 \frac{km}{h}$ . Possibilities to adopt the solution to work with the higher speed of the user or, for example, users riding inside the vehicles are in plus.

Solution must be able to provide positioning information in real time manner. Under assumption that user of the system will be walking inside underground installation, there is need to ensure position update frequency of at least one per second. Position of the users should be provided with maximum drift of 10 meters.

Safety purpose of position finding system is very important for many countries [30]. European Union encourages to search for a good solution for the miners localization, which, in one of the postulates of its set of recommendations for the coal and steel sector ('Personnel Tracking' task). There are solutions for underground localisation but they allows only to approximate miner's position (error can be range from 300 m (range of a single radio receiver) to the distance to the next transmitter).

Underground position finding system must be compatible with mobile devices of smartphone class. Special mobile devices that were prepared to work in bad conditions like in coal or salt mines differs mainly with their housing in compare their non-commercial, personal-use equivalents. This assumption limits the range of available technologies that can be used in order to provide means of communication between mobile device and the enviornment.

Position finding system bases on idea of interaction between mobile device and the undeground envioronment. In case of the nessesity of extension that enviornment by elecronic devices that will provide positioning data or means of connection with mine network there is need to state that such devices must be safe. Safety regulations in this matter differs with respect of the type of underground installation, the regional, country, or even association of countries [39]. The goal of this paper is not to provide solution that will be adjusted to each installation type or safety regulation, but to investigate possibilities and propose state of the art solution. As the enviornmental restrictions for devices and related infrastructure that can be needed for given solution there will be assumed general rules that are being in use in commercial tunneling [39].

Requirements summary stated for a positioning system and related infrastructure:

- Reliability / robustness
  - must be able to work wihout external supply for at least 72 hours,
  - must be able to work even in case where part of infstratructure is not available.

- Installation and maintenance
  - semi-automated methods for monitoring the positioning system status,
  - support for positioning infrastructure reperation by avoiding manual system reconfiguration,
  - solution should be scalable in order to extend positioning system along with the grow of underground installation,
  - infrastructure devices should be open for software and internal modules updates and extensions.
- Power efficiency
  - Possibly self powered.
- Accuracy related
  - responsiveness: position update with frequency least one per second,
  - position error less or equal to 10m.
- Smartphone related
  - positioning system must be compliant with technologies supported by customer grade smartphone device,
  - smartphone should be able to work continuously for the 8 hours with activated positioning module.
  - recommended smartphone life time is 72 hours with limited power consumption and use of positioning module.
  - solution applicable for different smartphone models.
- Usability
  - Solution must allow the user to be able to use the solution without forcing him to handle his smartphone in a special way.
  - Suited for the walking man.
  - infrastructure components must be size suited to the proposed mounting placement,
- Safety
  - must be explosion proof and intrinsically safe,
  - should be suited to the ingress protection (IP) standards,
  - must have durable housing.



## **Chapter 4**

# **Mobile technology based positioning model**

This chapter introduces concept of positioning model for position finding problem in underground installation. Porposal consist of underground environment characteristics evaluation in context of chosen method of acquiring the information about the surroundings needed for estimating the current position as well as the concept of static configuration of the underground installation layout, reference points installation and maintenance, interaction between smartphone and the environment, chosen technologies.

### **4.1. Position finding techonology selection**

As proposed model is a generic solution for positioning inside underground installation there was assumed strict underground environment with the smallest set available technological infrastructure and safety limitations. Decisions regarding model specifics were obtained as a result of prototype solution tests in real envirionment. Tests are described in chapter 5.

Position in underground installation is a pair of a label of a current corridor and a current meter counted from corridor start. Model assume that position is expressed by that pair, so output of the model is not expressed 2D or 3D coordinate system but in more abstract, installation dependent way. Proposed model make use of the Bluetooth Low energy technology in order to limit impact of difficult electromagnetic propagation conditions (see sections 2.2 and 3.1). It is assumed that smartphone will use build in Bluetooth radio modules in order to monitor presence of beacons and range their signal strength in order to estimate distance from them. Raference installtion consists of Bluetooth beacons placed 10m each in areas where position finding solution is needed. Assumed accuracy of the proposed model is about 5m with possibilities to be more accurate through extensions to positioning algorithm. Bluetooth transmitters are equiped with batteries allowing them to work containuesly for at leat 2 years – approximate time demanded for positioning solution being in use in given installation area. Beacons broadcasts their name at frequency of 2Hz and transmitter power level adjusted to cover the area of at least 10m but not more than 20m from their placement. Beacons can attach optional informations to their advertisement messages

if needed. Placement of beacons are given in advance in a configuration file. Each entry in configuration file consists of name of the beacon and his position expressed as a pair of corridor name and meter. "Blind" mode where none of apriori configuration is provided is also possible, when beacons sends aditional information about their placement (pair of corridor id and meter). Model do not investigate communication possibilities of a smartphone and beacons, smartphone and external network facilities or connections between other smartphones. Positioning model assumes that each user takes a part in system maintenance by verifying the signal presence of the beacons given in the configuration file and reporting installation errors. Placement of the reference points should be planned in advance and beacons configuration should be applied to them before their installation on site. Installation consist of placement verification by engineer and mounting.

Smartphone devices are equiped with sensorics which can be used to correct the position estimation accuracy. This thesis exclusively focuses on sensing the environment and "static anchors" giving the possibility to synchronize position estimate of the model implementation with actual environment.

## 4.2. Solution architecture

General solution architecture for the prototype positioning system is presented on the figure 4.1. Solution consists of:

- reference system installation based on beacon devices,
- smartphone device with Bluetooth receiver and inertial sensorics (at least accelerometer),
- application for smartphone that process and combines the data from the environment and internal sensorics.

It is assumed that reference points infractructure is mounted in a way that each beacon is denoted in configuration file consisting of a list of beacons with placement position assigned. It is possible to make application more robust and underground installation site undependent while position information can be provided by reference points themselves. This proposal rely on already defined beacon positionis as this approach allows each end-user application to work as a maintenance tool that is able to detect problems of the infrastructure including beacon failures. Proposal system does not include such maintenance feature but it may be an addon into the next release.

The core positioning information is gathered from the reference points. They have constat position and they are the most corelated with the physical layout of underground installation. Having only this information it is possible to obtain positioning information as accurate as distance between subsequent beacons mounted on site. In order to make the position more accurate than in case of aligning the smartphone position to the position of the nearest beacon, there can be involved distance model that will allow for distance aproximation basing on the received signal strength value. As the signal strength in a tunnel varies heavily there was no such model found or defined yet (refer to the section 3.1.2). Although there was proposed a solution that make positioning solution more accurate.

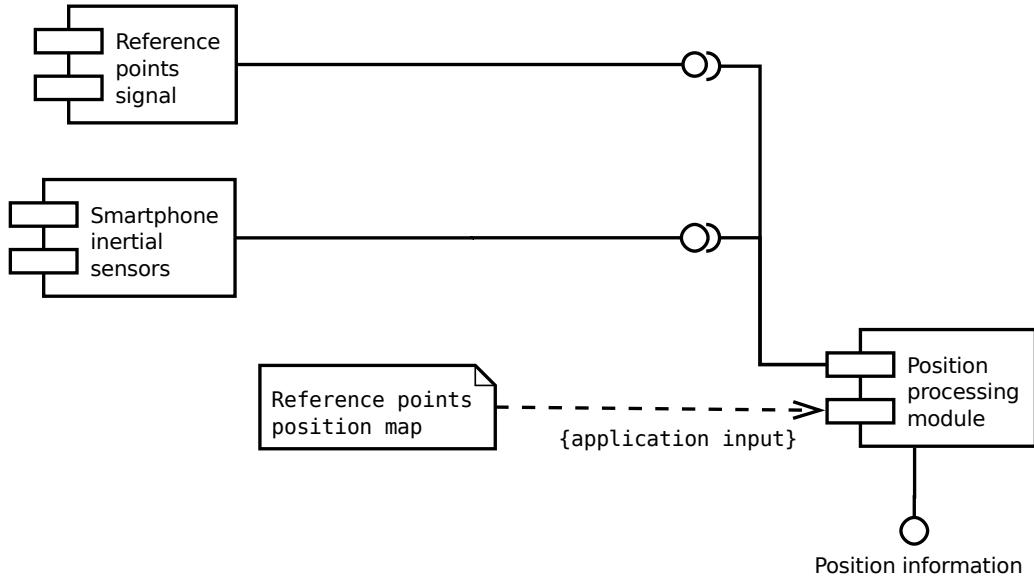


Figure 4.1. General solution architecture. Position processing module gathers data from smartphone sensorics, data and acquired signal parameters from reference points and serves current position as an output.

In order to maintain ability of determining the position by measuring received signal strength from beacons and provide long battery life of the beacon in the same time there were following beacon transmission parameters assumed:

- beacon will send his advertisement frame once per second,
- beacon will be set up with  $-16dBm$  transmitter power or equivalent that ensure beacon coverage of  $20m$  in underground environment,
- beacons will be placed in  $10m$  distances between each other,
- beacons which advertisement messages were received with more than  $-85dBm$  RSSI are assumed to be *immediate* to the smartphone, those with more than  $-95dBm$  RSSI are assumed to be *near* to the smartphone, rest are assumed to be placed *far*,
- if there was found at least one *immediate* beacon then current smartphone position is assumed to be same as the beacon with the highest RSSI value.
- if there are two or more *near*-placed beacons and if there was found similar ( $+/-2dBm$ ) RSSI values among them, the current smartphone position is assumed to be in a half way between beacons with these similar RSSI values.

Due to the fact that received signal strength has significantly bigger values within the area of  $0m - 2,5m$  from the transmitter then this distance was classified as *immediate*. RSSI values observed in *immediate* range were bigger than  $-85dBm$ . RSSI values lower than  $-95dBm$  are treated as a noise thus frames that were acquired with such RSSI value or lower are classified as *far* and are placed in  $20m$  or more from the smartphone receiver. Signals with RSSI between  $-85dBm - -95dBm$  are assumed

that were sent by beacons which are classified as *near*, placed in range  $2,5m - 20m$  from smartphone.

In proposed solution each beacon is placed in  $10m$  gaps. Each beacon is configured to cover distance of maximum  $20m$  but minimum of  $10m$ . Such assumptions causes redundancy where in the perfect scenario user that is staying *immediate* to the beacon is acquiring signals also from two other *near* beacons. In case when one of the beacons is not working there is still possibility to align current user position to the place where faulty beacon is mounted. That is possible due to the assumption that if smartphone detect two beacons that are *near* and received signal strength of their advertisement frames are similar then smartphone is in the middle of the beacons. Similar signal strength means that the difference between each of them is less than  $2dBm$  what is equal to  $1,25m$  according to *Log-distance path loss model*.

Output of the inertial sensorics can produce misleading position information. For example basing on the accelerometer data only it may turn out that the user have changed direction of the movement while he is still moving forward. It may effect with worsen the positioning information instead of making the position more accurate.

Figure 4.2 presents the concept of the received signal strength based positioning solution for smartphones. As application of the distance models on the RSS values are questionable in underground installation environment, the proposed solution relies on predefined values expressing the distance class rather than on approximated distances based on exact received signal strength analysis. Values used for the positioning system were computed from results obtained during the underground tests. Proposed algorithm for position approximation use three predefined values:

1. FAR threshold - RSS value that describes minimum RSS that can be taken into consideration during approximate position evaluation. Beacon that send signals with lower RSS than defined by "FAR" is categorised as "far beacon" and signal is treated as a noise,
2. IMMEDIATE threshold - RSS value that describes minimum RSS that comes from the beacon located "immediate" to the smartphone. Signals with bigger RSS value indicates that beacon that emitted those signals is an "immediate beacon". Signals with smaller RSS, but larger than defined by FAR threshold, indicates that beacon that emitted those signals is a "near beacon",
3. DIFF value - maximum accepted difference between obtained RSS values from signals sent by "near beacons" that allows to approximate the smartphone position in the middle of those "near beacons".

In simple case, where smartphone is away from corridor crossections, position finding algorithm is aware of two positioning scenarios: smartphone is close ("immediate") to the beacon and smartphone is in between two near beacons. In order to determine current scenario, algorithm computes RSS of all signals received and categories them with respect of their values into two sets: "immediate" and "near". If there were found "immediate" classified beacons then algorithm set current smartphone position to the position of the "immediate" beacon with the biggest RSS value. In case where there are no "immediate" beacons but there were found at least two "near" beacons then the difference between their RSS values are evaluated. If difference is lower than DIFF value then the smartphone position is considered as in the middle of related beacons.

Is is possible that smartphone device is near the corridor crossection. In that case

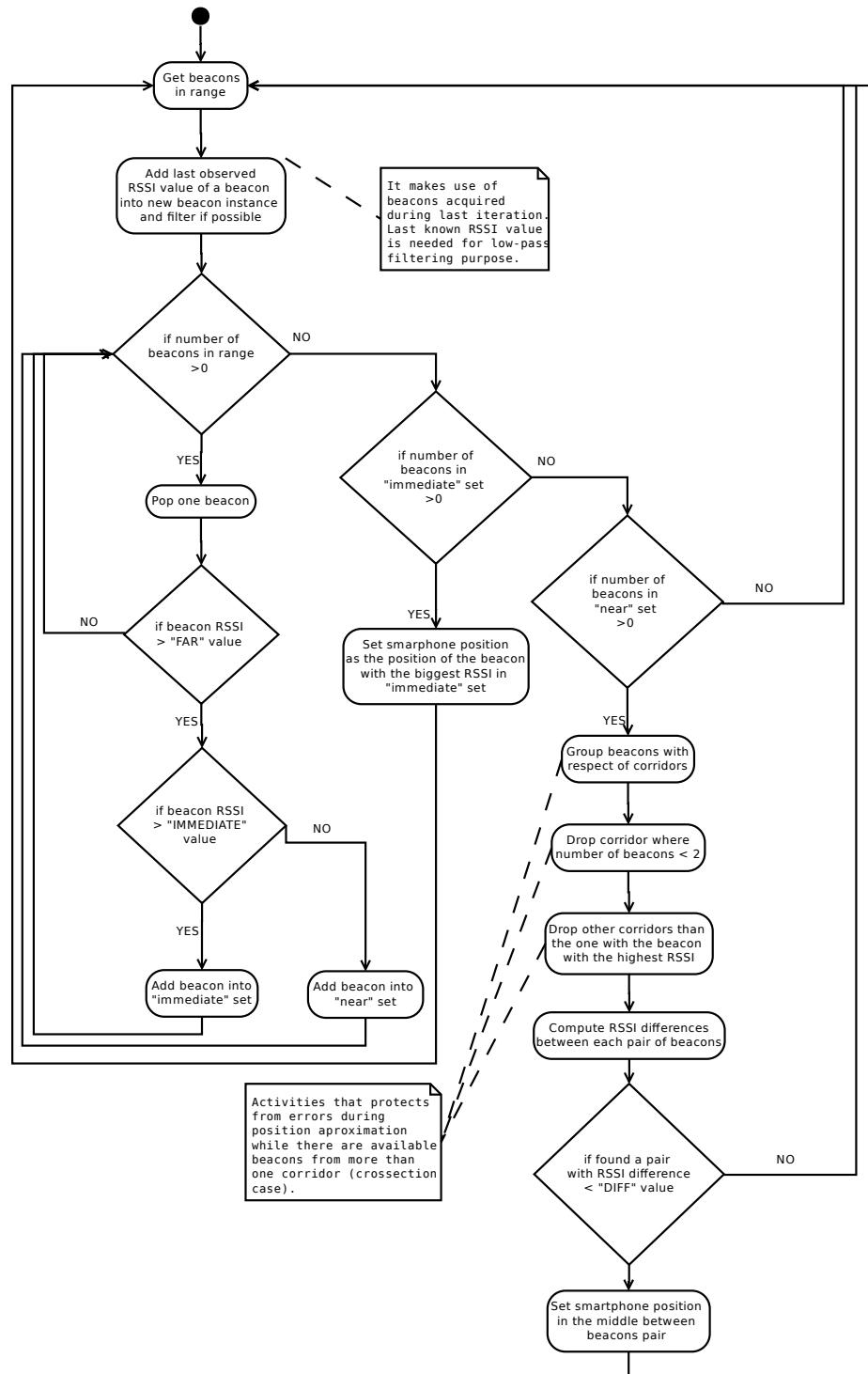


Figure 4.2. Proposed position aligning method based on the received signal strengths from reference points.

it is smartphone receive signals from beacons located in two or even more corridors (like in case of crossections in room-and-pillar production block – see figure 2.1). In such situation there is need to adjust algorithm to make use from informations from beacons labeled with different corridors names and meters related to the given corridors. Proposed solution is about finding the immediate beacon first. If there is no such beacon then RSS values from all "near" beacons are evaluated in order to check if there is possibility to estimate smartphone position as position in the middle of two nearby beacons. For that purpose beacons are grouped into sets that represents corridors they belong to. Sets with only one beacon are removed. Within all remaining sets algorithm look for a pair of similiar RSS values (difference must be smaller than DIFF threshold). If such pair was found then smartphone position is estimated as a position in the middle of beacons that emmits signals from pair.

### **4.3. External solution infrastructure**

Reference points infrastructure is a vital part of the proposed positioning system. In order to provide realiable reference information there is need ensure that installation is easily maintable, infrastructure parts are in good condition and were placed in defined way with accordance to the position, orientation and mounting recommendations. For this purpose installation step was defined as it is shown on figure 4.3. Prior to the works on site it is suggested to plan where beacons will be placed in the installation. Outcome of this plan should be a list of beacons names and the positions expressed in pairs of corridor name and a meter counted from the beginning of the corridor. Also a map with marked places where beacons will be mounted would be a good addon that will help the installation engineer with his works. Then each beacon should be labeled in accordance to the plan and configured with the name from label and recommended transmitting power. Such preparation will shorten installation time and will avoid potential problems with missconfiguration.

Beacons choisen as the hardware equipment are ready to use modules that consists of the microcontroller which implemented Bluetooth stack, power supply management and radio module with antenna. As most of the market use Bluetooth 4.0 and 4.1 technology, chosen beacons are Bluetooth 4.0 beacons. There is no difference between those two versions of technology in case of desired beacon functionality – broadcasting the advertisement messages without encryption nor other restrictions. As the beacon signal are available only on site, often hundreds of meters bellow the surface, there is no purpose of making the signal messages complicated. Newer technology of Bluetooth 5 is fully backward compatible so devices with such modules will also be able to make use of beacons in Bluetooth 4.0 technology.

Beacon modules are easily available on market. Cheap modules can cost about 7\$. Proposed positioning model does not force to use given model of the beacons but the beacons configuration must match following criteria:

- transmitter power setting must be adjusted in such a manner that signals will reach distance of 10m from them but not more than 20m. It saves some energy and limits amount of noise inside the tunnel,

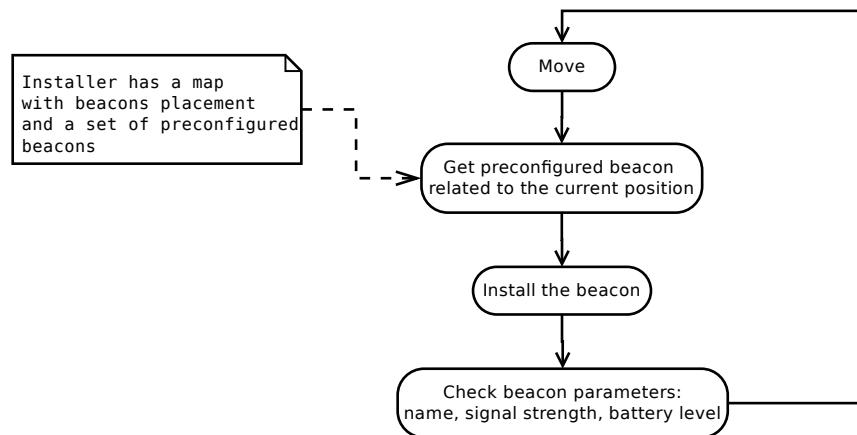


Figure 4.3. Infrastructure installation procedure.

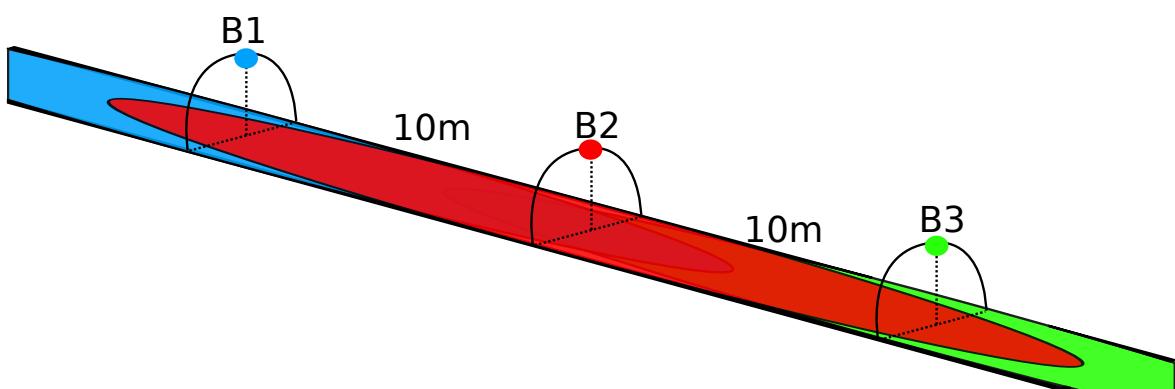


Figure 4.4. Example of reference beacons B1, B2, B3 placement in corridor. Red field denotes approximate signal range of the B2 beacon – more than 10m but less than 20m.

- beacon transmit advertisement message at frequency of  $2\text{Hz}$ . It is enough to detect beacon signal when user maintain walking speed of  $5\frac{\text{km}}{\text{h}}$ , and update the current position each second, maintaining the minimum accuracy of  $5\text{m}$ ,
- battery must be suited to work containeously for 2 years,
- beacons have to be placed  $10\text{m}$  each in order to make the positioning solution more accurate and maintain good signal quality on limited coverage from beacon mounting place,
- beacons have to mounted on ceiling in vertical antenna direction as the experiments shows such configuration most efficient in terms of signal quality and range,
- beacons transmits their unique name.

#### 4.4. Data processing and analysis

Proposed positioning system depends on inputs from the smartphone's wireless receiver. Raw data cannot be used directly by the positioning algorithm because of different nature of those signals and presence of high dirfts and noise levels that affects wireless transmission. In order to make signal useful there is need to apply filtering that will normalize the outcome of particular information source and possibly improve position estimation.

There were investiaged four filtering methods:

- Kalman filter [6],
- Low-pass filter,
- RSSI smoothing approach [24],
- Median filter.

All filteres were applied to example signal strength waveform. Results are presented on the figure 4.5.

Median filter is a non-linear moving  $N$ -order filter.  $N$  denotes number of frames within the sliding window what is directly proportional to the delay it introduces to the reslut. Aim of this filter is to obtain slow changing estimate of received signal strength curve. As the goal is to provide energy-efficient solution, the number of signal that are sent by the beacons are limited in order to save energy. It was assumed that beacons will send signal two times per second. The value can be increased or decreased with respect of the experimentally obtained responsiveness of the positioning system and power consumption of beacons. For evaluation purposes  $N = 4$ . As it can be observed, median filter (purple curve) doesnt filter the RSS drop at about 30'th probe, but filtered most of the fluctuations around 80'th probe. It is not accepted for a filtering function to introduce such big delay without possibility to filter fluctuations like around 30'th signal probe.

Smoothing RSSI approach [24] is a filtering method that introduces a *weighted value* parameter  $\alpha$  which can be any value from range  $0 - 1$ . Equation that express the method is as follows:

$$RSSI_{smooth} = \alpha \cdot RSSI_n + (1 - \alpha) \cdot RSSI_{n-1} \quad (4.1)$$

For evaluation purposes  $\alpha$  parameter was set to 0.25. Curve obtained with use of that method was distinguished on figure 4.5 with blue color. It was observed that

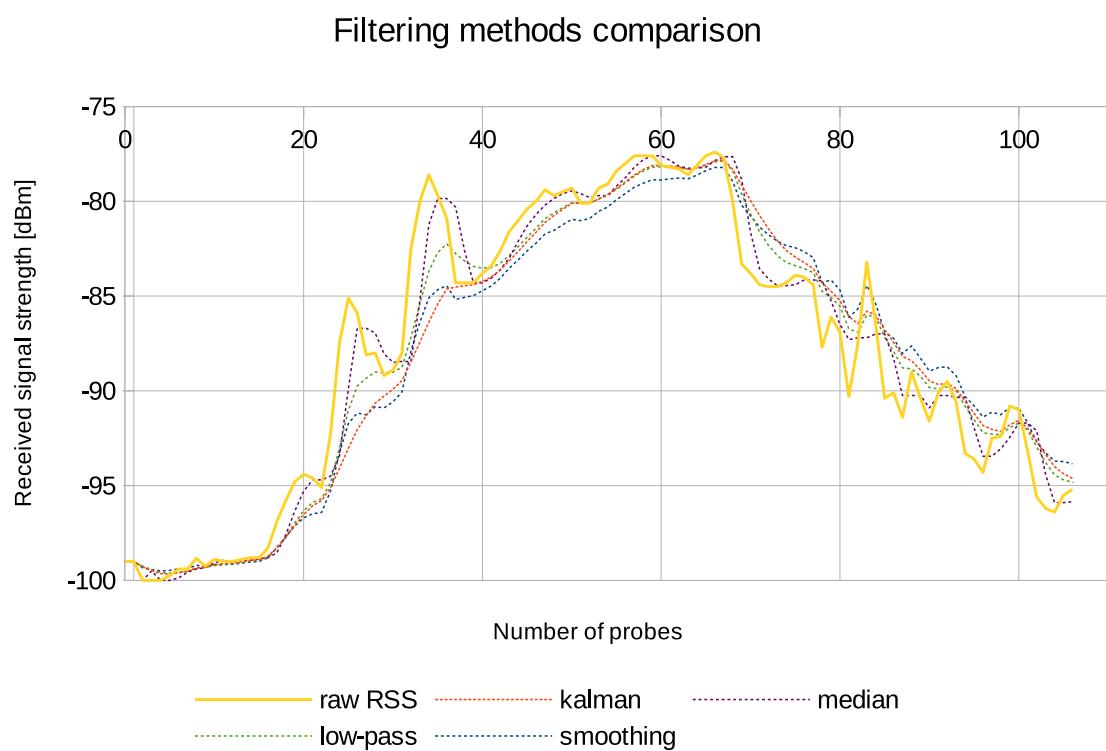


Figure 4.5. Porposed position aligning method based on the received signal strengths from reference points.

this method introduces a delay of around 4 frames after the actual signal. Another observation is that the estimation slower than median filter reacts on the increasing and decreasing slopes of original signal: when the original curve goes up then estimate values are always below the original slope, when the curve goes down then estimate values are always above the original slope.

Low-pass filter is commonly used for removing short term variance from the signal. It is widely used in indoor navigation applications, mainly for inertial navigation and sensoric data analysis [17][20][8][23][44]. This approach uses cut-off parameter  $\alpha$ , similar to one from smoothing approach.

$$RSSI_{low-pass} = RSSI_n + \alpha \cdot (RSSI_{n-1} - RSSI_n) \quad (4.2)$$

For evaluation purposes  $\alpha$  parameter was set to 0.25. Low-pass filter introduce smaller delay than in case of smooth and median filters, about 2–3 frames. It filtered the signal drop around 30'th signal probe and fluctuations around 80'th probe. On figure 4.6 there are presented filtering results with use of different custom extensions to the filtering method.

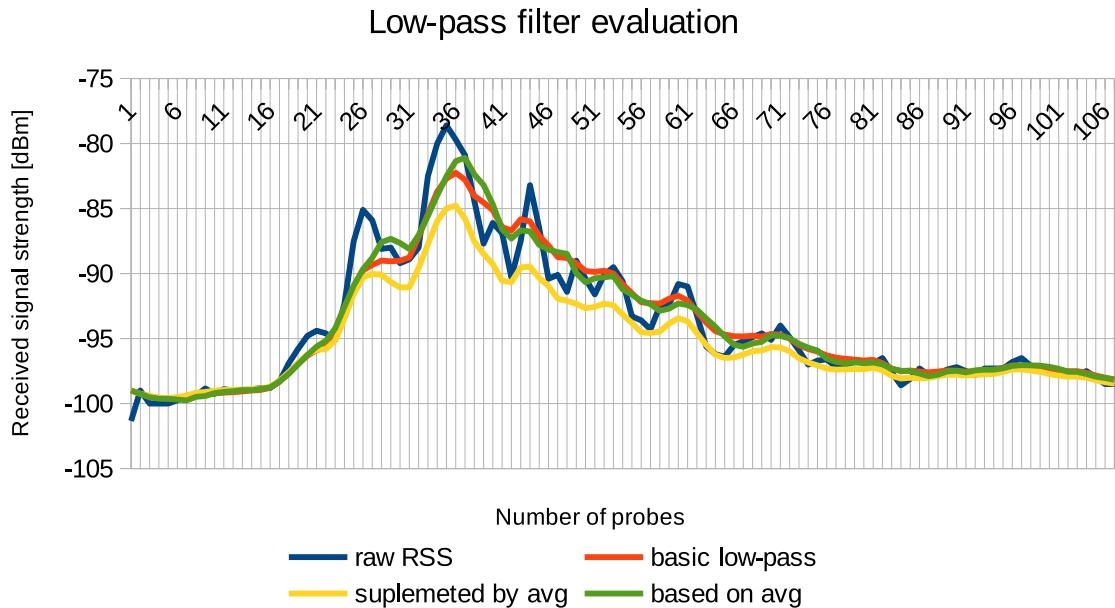


Figure 4.6. Proposed position aligning method based on the received signal strengths from reference points.

Custom variations of low-pass filter are a try of adjusting the responsiveness of the filter and it's fluctuation filtering capabilities. On figure are presented following concepts: low-pass filter based on average and low-pass filter supplemented by average. Following equations describe each of them:

$$RSSI_{low-pass_{avg}} = AVG(RSSI_{n-3} : RSSI_n) + \alpha \cdot (RSSI_{n-1} - RSSI_n) \quad (4.3)$$

$$RSSI_{low-pass_a b} = RSSI_n + \alpha \cdot (RSSI_{n-1} - AVG(RSSI_{n-3} : RSSI_n)) \quad (4.4)$$

AVG is an average function over window that consists of 4 frames.

Kalman filter is an extended filter that allows for sensor fusioning by defining obser- vation and transition models, and controls. It is widely used for sensor fusion of inertial navigation purposes[14], also for smartphones [46][55][33] and Bluetooth technology [10][5][7][19]. Simplified Kalman filter assumes that beacons (signal transmitters) are not moving and do not change it's state though consequitive RSS readings (transition model is expressed by identity matrices). There was recently proposed extended Kalman filter for RSS signal filtering[6]. Simplified version of a filter can be described as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} C_n &= P_{n-1} + PN \\ M_n &= |RSSI_n - RSSIk_{n-1}|^P \cdot N + E \\ G_n &= \frac{C_n}{C_n \cdot M_n} \\ P_n &= \max\{PN, C_n - (G_n \cdot C_n)\} \\ RSSIk_n &= RSSIk_{n-1} + G_n \cdot (RSSI_n - RSSIk_{n-1}) \end{aligned} \quad (4.5)$$

Symbols used in equation 4.5:

- $RSSIk_n$  – prediction for the the  $n$ 'th signal probe (RSS),
- $G_n$  – Kalman gain for the  $n$ 'th signal probe,
- $RSSI_n$  – real measurement of  $n$ 'th signal probe,
- $C_n$  – certainty of  $n$ 'th signal measurement,
- $P_n$  – prediction certainty of  $n$ 'th signal probe,
- $M_n$  – measurement noise for  $n$ 'th signal probe,
- $P$  – measurement expotential constraint,
- $N$  – measurement noise factor constraint,
- $E$  – measurement noise epsilon constraint,
- $PN$  – prediction process noise constraint.

Figure 4.7 presents Kalman filter applied on RSS values recorded experimenal ses- sion. With respect of chosen filter constraints it is possible to increase or decrease filter responsiveness. Increasing responsiveness cause filter faster response to changes but make it more sensitive for longer term fluctuations like in case one between 26 and 36 probe. Within this range red curve introduces delay of 3 frames but does not filter the fluctuation, while yellow curve filter the fluctuation with the same delay of 3 frames, but predicted value is about  $5dBm$  lower than registered pick. Missconfigured Kalman filter overact on changes and introduces new fluctuations like it is presented on the figure 4.8.

Values of signals strength should not be used directly as an input for because models are sensitive on the provided signal strengths. That is why filtering techniques are needed in order to make the signal free from random changes and more robust in terms of environmental distortions. There are known other filtering approaches dedicated for RSS like Gaussian filter, distance weighted filter or propagation model training [25] – their applicability for underground environment will be evaluated in future works.

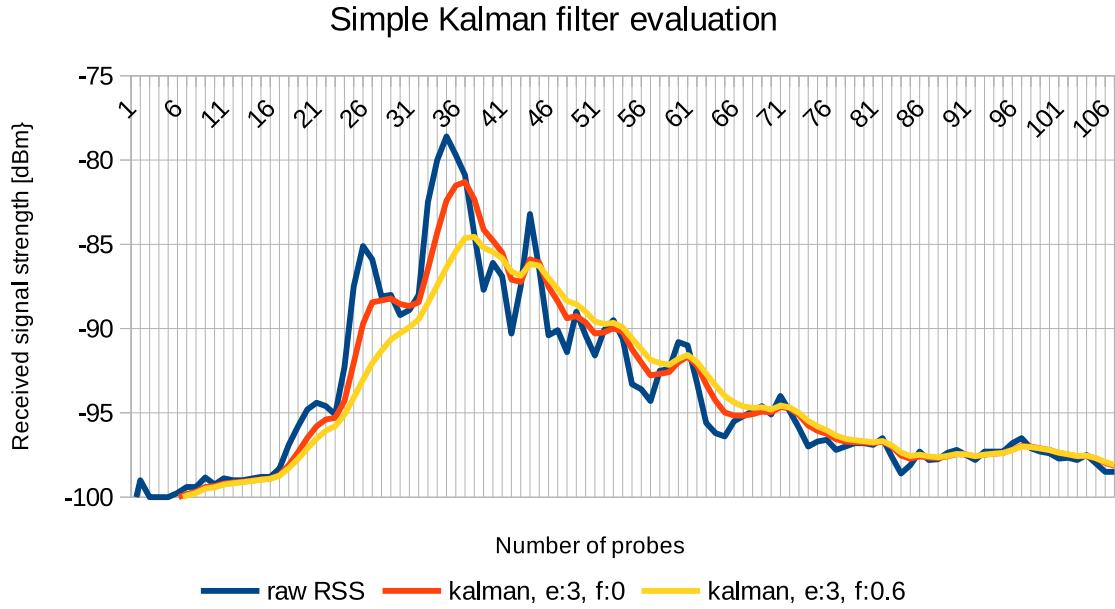


Figure 4.7. Application of Kalman filter. Red curve represent Kalman filter with  $E = 3$  noise constraint and  $P = 0$  exponential constraint while yellow curve represent Kalman filter with  $E = 3$  noise constraint and  $P = 0.6$  exponential constraint.

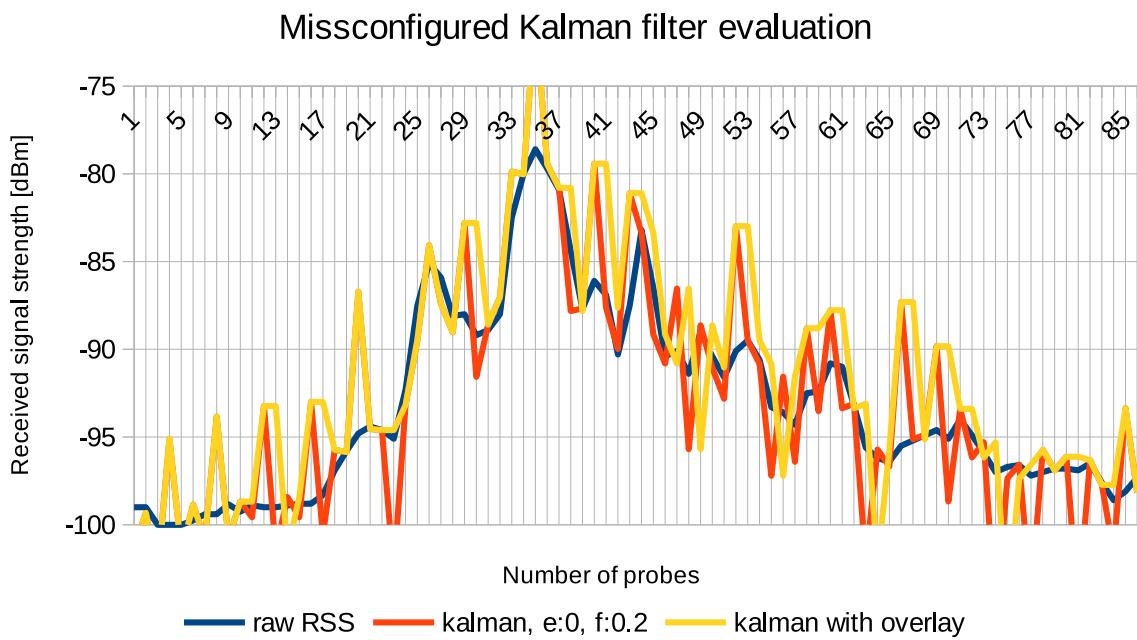


Figure 4.8. Application of Kalman filter. Red curve represent Kalman filter with  $E = 0$  noise constraint and  $P = 0.2$  exponential constraint while yellow curve represent Kalman filter but with overlay.

## 4.5. Position finding proof of concept implementation

As a part of the thesis a proof of concept implementation of the positioning model was made. As the basis for the implementation there was used Android framework dedicated to devices with Android 7.0 operating system or higher. There was used open library "altbeacon" that provide means of communication with beacons.

Application consists of two main modules: current position screen which is devoted for finding the current position and beacon ranging settings module.

Despite of regular operation mode, there was also implemented background operation mode. Regular operation mode is characterized by shorten times between subsequent radio listening periods and longer listening times. In this mode it is possible to "range" the beacons found, read messages they provide and measure the signal. An example of ranging activity is visible on figure 4.11. Application is able to read all of the messages sent by the beacon – in this case beacon named *B1(3)* – measure RSS value, aggregate those values for all packets acquired (defalut aggregation type is moving window average), count all of the sending activities versus numer of correctly readed packtes and compute approximate distance basing on the RSS values. Distance calculation by default makes use of *Log-distance path loss model* and the information about the assumed RSS value measured at one 1m distance from the beacon. Details about distance calculation methods are available in section 3.1.2.

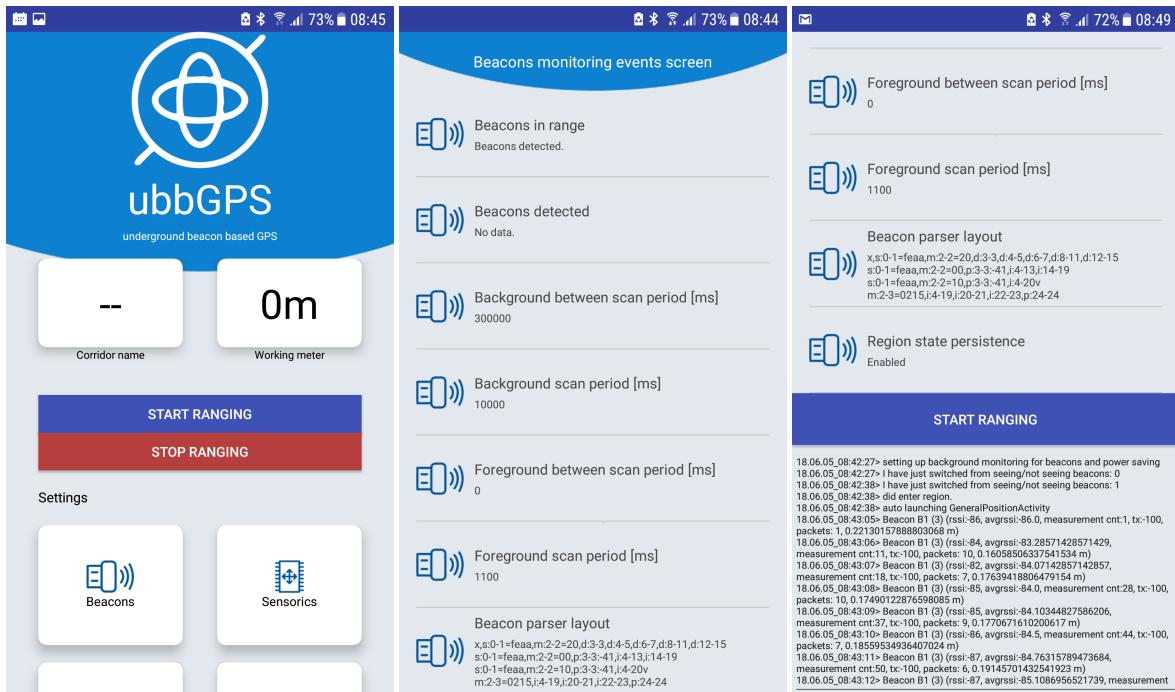


Figure 4.9. View of the main application activity – position finding module.

Figure 4.10. Bluetooth beacon ranging and monitoring module setup.

Background mode allows for lower power consumtion of the smartphone device by limitting use of Bluetooth module. It work in a manner of short scan which is aimed to detect if any of beacon was detected in the near area. If so background activity inform

```

18.06.05.08:42:27> setting up background monitoring for beacons and power saving
18.06.05.08:42:27> I have just switched from seeing/not seeing beacons: 1
18.06.05.08:42:38> did just switched from seeing/not seeing beacons: 1
18.06.05.08:42:38> did enter region
18.06.05.08:43:09> audio event: Beacon B1 (3) (rxss:-86, avgrss:-86.0, measurement cnt:1, tx:-100,
packets: 1, 0.2213015788803068 m)
18.06.05.08:43:06> Beacon B1 (3) (rssi:-84, avgrss:-83.28571428571429,
measurement cnt:11, tx:-100, packets: 10, 0.16058506337541534 m)
18.06.05.08:43:07> Beacon B1 (3) (rssi:-82, avgrss:-84.07142857142857,
measurement cnt:10, tx:-100, packets: 7, 0.17539418806479154 m)
18.06.05.08:43:08> Beacon B1 (3) (rssi:-85, avgrss:-84.0, measurement cnt:28, tx:-100,
packets: 10, 0.17490122876598085 m)
18.06.05.08:43:09> Beacon B1 (3) (rssi:-85, avgrss:-84.10344827586202,
measurement cnt:37, tx:-100, packets: 9, 0.1770671610200617 m)
18.06.05.08:43:10> Beacon B1 (3) (rssi:-86, avgrss:-84.5, measurement cnt:44, tx:-100,
packets: 7, 0.18559534936407024 m)
18.06.05.08:43:11> Beacon B1 (3) (rssi:-87, avgrss:-84.76315789473684,
measurement cnt:50, tx:-100, packets: 6, 0.19145701432541923 m)
18.06.05.08:43:12> Beacon B1 (3) (rssi:-87, avgrss:-85.108695656521739, measurement

```

activity log – details about detected beacons.

the user that he just accessed the area where positioning information is available. Background mode works even if main application remain not active. Background mode allows the user to start position finding activity immediately after successful detection of the beacon. An example output of background activity can be seen on figure 3.1.2 within the first lines of the log, just bellow the "Start ranging" button. First message *setting up background monitoring* is related to first start up of the positioning finding application. Then the application can be closed – stopped by the user. If application got killed by the operating system then neither background and regular operation modes are not working. Lines *switched from seeinf/not seeing beacons* and following are related to detection of the beacon and performing related action. In this case view of position finding activity was run.

Parameters of monitoring and ranging activities are about scan delay times in both background and regular operation modes. Application can define also a types of beacons that are accepted by definition of "layout". Syntaxt of layout relates to the header of the advertisement massages broadcasted by beacons. Exmaple of layout is available in section 3.1.2 in part concerning *iBeacon* protocol.

Position finding view presents pair of name of corridor and working meter that is obtained as a result of the proposed position finding algorithm. This pair is aimed to be enough for position identification regardless the complexity and scale of underground installation.

Principals of the proof of concept implementation were used in tests in the real environment.

## Chapter 5

# Positioning model prototype implementation tests

In order to check if the proposed solution is good enough to estimate the position of the mobile phone there was performed tests of chosen hardware components as well as proposed infrastructure that extends the environment and serve as the referencing system. There were performed tests of inertial navigation part of the solution by reviewing the outcome of the internal sensorics of the chosen smartphone under perspective of their applicability to the positioning estimation algorithm. Finally there were performed tests the prototype software application that combines both environmental information from the reference points and the inertial navigation in the real environment, in underground part of Stara Kopalnia museum placed on the site of the former Coal Mine in Wałbrzych.

### 5.1. Tests criteria and assumptions

In order to test the reference system infrastructure there was need to test reference point device (Beacon transmitter) in context of interaction between this device and the receiver (Smartphone). For the hardware testing, there were following factors being specified:

- receiver distance from the transmitter,
- smartphone orientation,
- smartphone model,
- transmitter type,
- transmitter power,
- transmitter placement,
- transmitter antenna direction,
- distance between transmitters.

Those factors were assumed that impacts the final received signal strength value.

According to *Log-distance path loss model* [47] the distance between receiver and transmitter is the major factor that impacts on the signal strength. There was need to check how distance impacts on the signal strength in the desired environment in the underground corridor.

As the Beacon operates on the 2,4 GHz frequency then it is assumed that all of the transmission path elements can impact on the resultant power strength. That is why during the tests there was checked if different antenna orientations of the transmitter and receiver causes different results. In case of the transmitter antenna orientation there were tested two cases:

1. vertical orientation where antenna points to the floor,
2. horizontal orientation where antenna points to the wall (or the oposite wall in case of mounting the antenna on the wall).

During tests there were tested omni directional antennas build into Beacon and mobile phone hardware as they are commonly used in Beacons as well as in Smartphones devices. It was also experimentally proven that in case of 2,4 GHz wireless technologies in underground envioronment directional antennas do not increase usable coverage as well as sector antennas [39].

As the proposed solution have to be applicable for different models of Smartphone devices it is not acceptable to force users to held their devices in a given position with respect of the direction of the Bluetooth antennas build into them. Producents are free in terms of designing the Smartphones main boards including the antennas placement. Such informations are not published. Even having the possibility to open the device and look for the antenna it is difficult to distinguish the antenna used for Bluetooth from the other used for example for terrestrial mobile networks. In case of Beacons, antenna placement is visible from the first sight. On figure 5.1 antenna placements was highlighted. In case of Beacon 1 and 3 there are mounted meander monopol antennas, in case of Beacon 2 there is mounted called meander "IFA" – *Inverted-F antenna*, in case of Beacon 4 antenna is not visible on the picture.

There are a few big microcontroller producents on the market that offers compound units having integrated computational resources, programming busses and data exchange solutions including Bluetooth Low Energy wireless module. The main three competitors are Nordic Semiconductor with NRF chips, Dialog Semiconductor with DA chips and Texas Instruments with TI and CC chips. They compete on fields of power consumtion, usability in terms of set of integrated modules, computational power and permament storage size of their products. Those integrated circuts are used by Beacon producents as the main processing units with implemented Bluetooth protocols and stack and set of profiles that allows the users to configure Beacon parameters such as name or transmitter power and get information from extra sensorincs measures build into the Beacon like temperature or battery level. Integrated circuts are the part of PCB which also contains a battery slot, power circuit and antenna circuit. For tests there were chosen Beacons offered by the various producents form China thus their products were easily available via the Internet and they were cheaper than from producents from Europe or U.S. like Estimote or Texas Instruments[49]. Aim of tests with different Beacons was to check how much PCB design influences results in terms of antenna radiation, signal coverage and stability. In order to distinguish beacons during tests, each of them was labeled. There were used following beacons:

1. Wellcore beacon based on Nordic Semiconductor NRF51822 chip, with a 8500 mAh, 3,6V lithium battery (cost: 7\$, labeled as *B1*),
2. ByteReal beacon based on Dialog Semiconductor DA14580 chip, with a standard CR2477 battery (950 mAh, 3 V, cost: 8,25\$, labeled as *B2*),

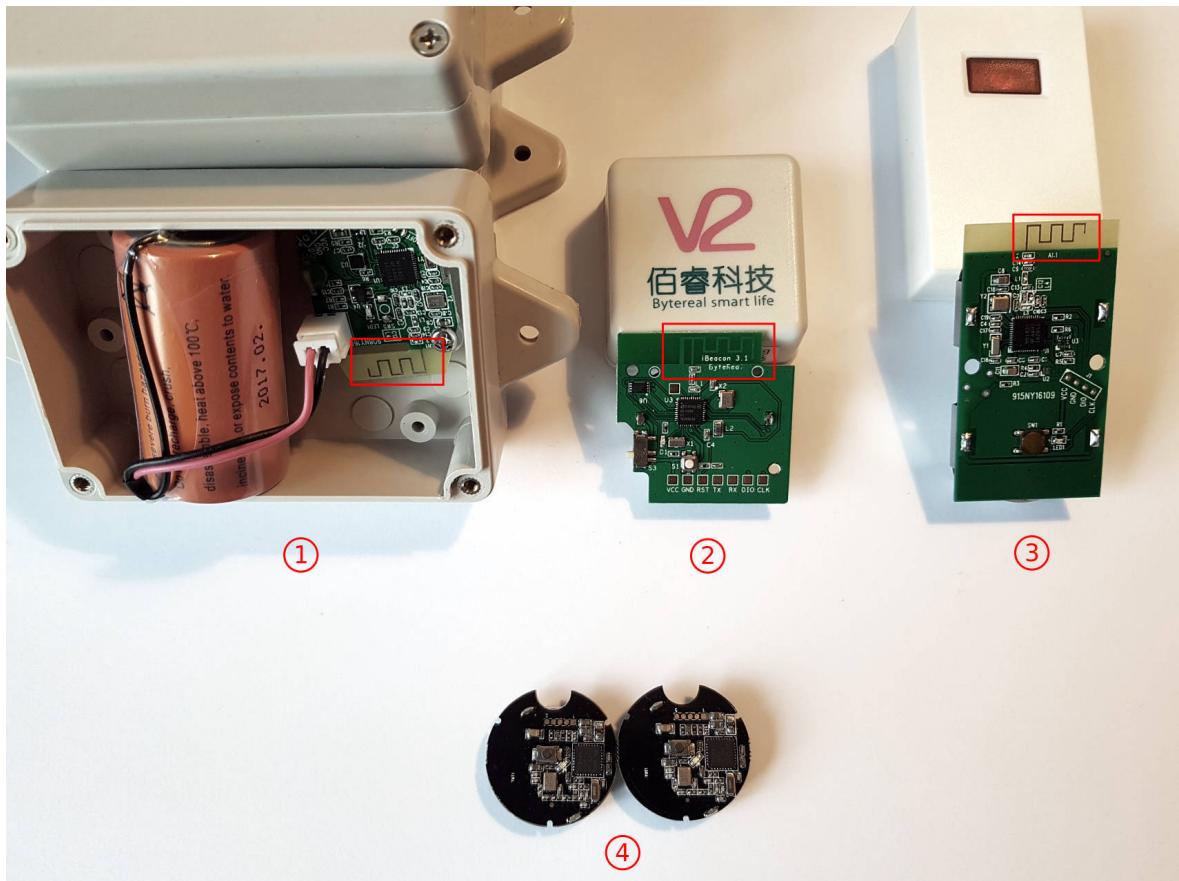


Figure 5.1. Beacons transmitters used during tests. Beacon 1 is a Wellcore product based on Nordic Semiconductor NRF51822 chip, Beacon 2 is a ByteReal product based on Dialog Semiconductor DA14580 chip, Beacon 3 is a Wellcore product based on Nordic NRF51822 chip, Beacon 4 is a Radioland product based on Texas Instruments TI2640 chip. On pictures there are highlighted antennas placement.

3. Wellcore beacon based on Nordic Semiconductor NRF51822 chip, with two standard CR277 batteries (1900 mAh, 3 V, cost: 10\$, labeled as *B3*),
4. Radioland beacon based on Texas Instruments TI2640 chip, with a standard CR2032 battery (220 mAh, 3 V, cost: 6,78\$, labeled as *B4*).

During tests there were following smartphone related factors taken into consideration: smartphone orientation and smartphone model. There was tested how differs received signal strength with when smartphone is hold horizontally (screen points to the ceiling), vertically (screen points to the user) or is kept in the pocket. There were also performed beacon ranging tests with use of two different smartphone devices: Samsung Galaxy S7 and Blackberry Z10. Samsung is equiped with Bluetooth 4.1 while Blackberry is equiped with Bluetooth 4.0. The aim of this test was to compare the result in order to check how different construction impact on the received signal strength. There was need to verify assumption about having defined constraint values on received signal that regardless the smartphone model will allow to qualify distance from signal source basing on acquired signal value.

Hardware tests were designed in a manner that each of those factors were tested separately. There were performed following test cases:

1. Obtain signal attenuation curve with respect of the power of the transmitter by measuring the received signal strength at given distances from the signal source.
2. Signal range per given transmitter power setting and smartphone placed in the pocket. Dynamic tests performed on a distance of 5 meters.
3. Received signal strength per given transmitter power setting and different smartphone orientation. Static test performed directly under the transmitter.
4. Line of sight (LOS) test. Comparison of signal attenuation curve measured in a part of the corridor where smartphone and transmitter were in line of sight and signal attenuation curve measured in a part of the corridor where corridor goes up and transmitter and smartphone are not in a line of sight.
5. Test of line of sight impact on the signal attenuation curve where user is and is not an obstacle between transmitter and smartphone.
6. Test how different antenna orientations of transmitter mounted on ceiling impacts on signal attenuation curve. Tested vertical and horizontal orientations.
7. Test how different antenna orientations of transmitter mounted on wall impacts on signal attenuation curve. Tested vertical and horizontal orientations.
8. Test how beacons from different vendors impacts on the signal attenuation curve. For this test beacons transmitting power was adjusted in order to obtain similar signal gain on the radio path.
9. Test how different smartphone models impact on the signal attenuation curve. Two different smatphones were used: Samsung Galaxy S7 with Bluetooth 4.1 and Blackberry Z10 with Bluetooth 4.0 module.
10. Walk scenario case test. Dynamic test with three beacons mounted on the wall while the user with a smartphone is walking along them. Tested two distances between beacons: 10 m and 15 m.
11. Wall scenario case test. Dynamic test with three beacons mounted on the wall while the user with a smartphone is walking along them. Tested how smartphone kept in the pocket influence the attenuation curve.

12. Compare signal attenuation curve when transmitter is placed on the wall and when it is placed on the ceiling.
  - Define factors that are important to state if solution is good or not
  - Will allow to check if system fulfills requirements
  - Test features stated in 'Localization system choise section'

## 5.2. Tests methodology

Tests were performed in part of XVIII century excavation corridor which is available for sightseeing as a part of Stara Kopalnia museum in Walbrzych in Poland. Corridor used during tests is placed 10 m bellow the ground and it is 185,7 m long. Corridor is 3,2 m high and 3,2 m wide. Corridors goes up on it's north side so this part of the corridor was used only once during line of sight test case. There is also one "T" shaped crossection with a similiar, perpendicular corridor that is 157 m meter length.

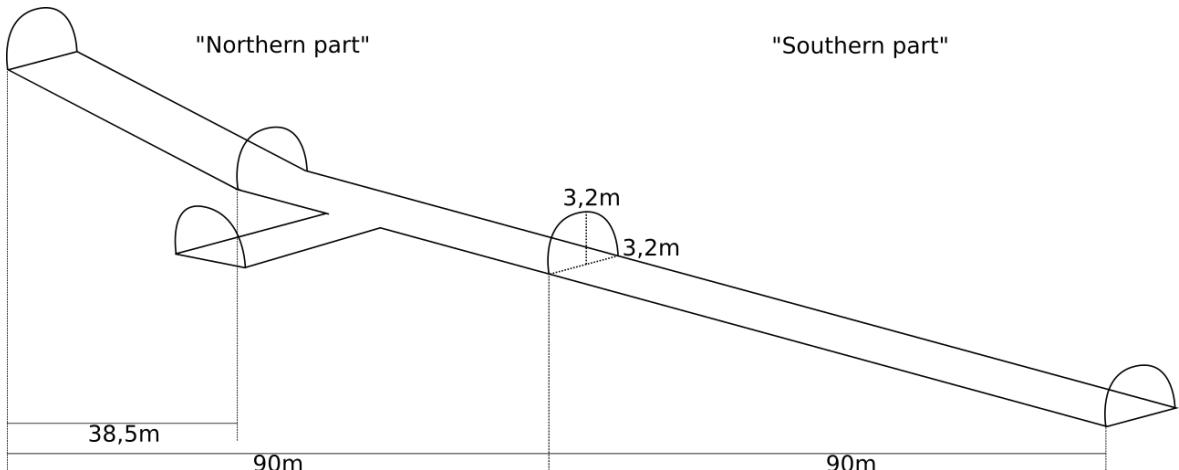


Figure 5.2. Test place scheme.

During the tests in the corridor there was 10°C and 71% of humidity. In order to avoid diffractions from corridors endings, beacons (Bluetooth transmitters) were placed in the middle of the corridor at it's 90m in case of single beacon test and in  $\pm 15m$  from this place in case of multiple beacons test.

During the test there was used

- measuring wheel for measuring the distance between subsequent distances taken into consideration for signal attenuation charts,
- smartphones with application that was collecting and storing the data (Bluetooth Low Energy receivers) and
- prepared beacons – Bluetooth Low Energy transmitters.

Beacons were prepared in a manner that their names were changed into B1(1), B1(2), B1(3), B2, B3 and B4 in order to distinguish them during evaluation. Beacon names were included into advertisement frame, which were then written into log files from the signal recording sessions.

Scope of tests performed underground as well as the values of distinguished variables chosen for the tests, got summaried in the table 5.1.



Figure 5.3. Side view on the test place (at the end of the corridor) from perpendicular corridor perspective.

Symbols and terms used in the table 5.1 are following:

- **Receiver** – smartphone device that listens to the messages sended by transmitters (beacons),
- **Transmitter** – bluetooth low energy device that broadcasts "advertisement" messages (beacon),
- **|** – receiver orientation: smartphone is held in a vertical position, display in front of an user, user is an obstacle on line of sight, smartphone is 1m above the ground,
- **F** – receiver orientation: smartphone is held in a horizontal position, display points to the ceiling (content is visible to the user), user is NOT an obstacle on line of sight, smartphone is 1m above the ground,
- **B** – receiver orientation: smartphone is held in a horizontal position, display points to the ceiling (content is visible to the user), user is an obstacle on line of sight, smartphone is 1m above the ground,
- **P** – receiver orientation: smartphone is held in an user pocket, smartphone is 1m above the ground,
- **B** – smartphone „Blackberry Z10” device,
- **S** – smartphone „Smasung Galaxy S7” device,
- **TEST** – parameter that was evaluated during the test.

Test case number	Description	Distance from transmitter	Receiver orientation	Receiver type	Transmitter type	Transmitter power	Transmitter placement	Transmitter antenna direction	Amount of transmitters	Distance between transmitters
		[m]	{\{, F-, B-, P\}}	{B, S}	{B1, B2, B3, B4}	[dBm]	{Ceiling, Wall}	{\{\downarrow, \rightarrow\}}	{1, 3}	{\{-10m, 15m\}}
1	Obtain transmitters power attenuation curve	TEST	F-	S	B1	TEST	Ceiling	\downarrow	1	-
1,1	* 4dBm transmitter power; power density measured on discrete distances from signal source					4dBm				
1,2	* -16dBm transmitter power; power density measured on discrete distances from signal source					-16dBm				
2	Signal range per given tx power setting and rx in „pocket” orientation. Dynamic tests in a sequence: * 5 sec under the tx, * move 5 meters away (actor is an obstacle), * 5 sec on 5 meters distance	{0m, 0-5m, 5m}	P	S	B1	TEST	Ceiling	\downarrow	1	-
2,1	* -12dBm tx power					-12dBm				
2,2	* -16dBm tx power					-16dBm				
2,3	* -20dBm tx power					-20dBm				
2,4	* -30dBm tx power					-30dBm				
3	Signal range per given tx power setting and different rx orientation. Static test directly under the tx	0m	TEST	S	B1	TEST	Ceiling	\downarrow	1	-
3,1	* -12dBm tx power; orientation: -			B-		-12dBm				
3,2	* -12dBm tx power; orientation:					-12dBm				
3,3	* -12dBm tx power; orientation: P			P		-12dBm				
3,4	* -16dBm tx power; orientation: -			B-		-16dBm				
3,5	* -16dBm tx power; orientation:					-16dBm				
3,6	* -16dBm tx power; orientation: P			P		-16dBm				
3,7	* -20dBm tx power; orientation: -			B-		-20dBm				
3,8	* -20dBm tx power; orientation:					-20dBm				
3,9	* -20dBm tx power; orientation: P			P		-20dBm				
3,10	* -30dBm tx power; orientation: -			B-		-30dBm				
3,11	* -30dBm tx power; orientation:					-30dBm				
3,12	* -30dBm tx power; orientation: P			P		-30dBm				
4	Line of sight (LOS) test. Tests performed with no LOS condition. Rest parameters same as in test 1,1. Test is designed to be compared with results of analogue test no. 1,1	TEST	F-	S	B1	4dBm	Ceiling	\downarrow	1	-
4,1	* With LOS (source not shadowed, same as 1,1)									
4,2	* Without LOS (source not visible due to corridor shape)									
5	Impact of actor position; obtain attenuation curve in case where an actor is an obstacle between transmitter and receiver	TEST	TEST	S	B1	4dBm	Ceiling	\downarrow	1	-
5,1	* 4dBm transmitter power; power density measured on discrete distances from signal source		F-							
5,2	* 4dBm transmitter power; power density measured on discrete distances from signal source; actor in an obstacle		B-							
6	Obtain tx signal attenuation curve per different tx antenna directions for tx mounted on ceiling	{0m, 1m, 2m, 3m, 4m, 6m, 8m, 10m, 12.5m, 15m, 20m, 25m, 35m}	F-	S	B1	-16dBm	Ceiling	TEST	1	-
6,1	\downarrow direction							\downarrow		
6,2	\rightarrow direction							\rightarrow		
7	Obtain tx signal attenuation curve per different tx antenna directions for tx mounted on wall	{0m, 1m, 2m, 3m, 4m, 6m, 8m, 10m, 12.5m, 15m, 20m, 25m, 35m}	F-	S	B1	-16dBm	Wall	TEST	1	
7,1	\downarrow direction							\downarrow		
7,2	\rightarrow direction							\rightarrow		
8	Obtain tx signal attenuation curve for different transmitters microcontrollers and hardware	{0m, 1m, 2m, 3m, 4m, 6m, 8m, 10m, 12.5m, 15m, 20m, 25m, 35m}	F-	S	TEST	-16dBm	Wall	\downarrow	1	-
8,1	* B1				B1					

Test case number	Description	Distance from transmitter	Receiver orientation	Receiver type	Transmitter type	Transmitter power	Transmitter placement	Transmitter antenna direction	Amount of transmitters	Distance between transmitters
8,2	* B2 - default tx power (not changed for tests)				B2					
8,3	* B3 – was set to -8dBm, but result was observable like -16dBm in B1				B3	-8dBm				
8,4	* B4				B4					
9	Obtain tx signal attenuation curve for different receivers (smartphones)	{0m, 1m, 2m, 3m, 4m, 6m, 8m, 10m, 12.5m, 15m, 20m, 25m, 35m}	F-	TEST	B1	-16dBm	Wall	↓	1	-
9,1	* Samsung Galaxy S7 (BLE 4.1)			S						
9,2	* Blackberry Z10 (BLE 4.0)			B						
10	Dynamic tests with 3 beacons. Tested two distances between beacons. Tests start with 5s measurement of signal strength 20m before first transmitter, consists of walk along corridor (70/80m), ends with 5s measurement of signal strength 20m after last transmitter	20m before first tx – 20m after last tx (beacon)	F-/B-	S	B1	-16dBm	Wall	↓	3	TEST
10,1	* tx in 10m intervals (two tests: there + way back)									10m
10,2	* tx in 15m intervals (two test: there + way backs)									15m
11	Dynamic tests with 3 beacons. Tested two orientations of receiver. Tests start with 5s measurement of signal strength 20m before first transmitter, consists of walk along corridor (70m), ends with 5s measurement of signal strength 20m after last transmitter	20m before first tx – 20m after last tx (beacon)	TEST	S	B1	-16dBm	Wall	↓	3	10m
11,1	* F-/B- (due to movement) rx orientation		F-/B-							
11,2	* P rx orientation		P							
12	Wall and ceiling tx placement comparison	{0m, 1m, 2m, 3m, 4m, 6m, 8m, 10m, 12.5m, 15m, 20m, 25m, 35m}	F-	S	B1	-16dBm	TEST	↓	1	-
12,1	* tx on the ceiling						Ceiling			
12,2	* tx on the wall						Wall			

Table 5.1. List of test cases and related parameters.

### 5.3. Tests of wireless reference points in underground environment

The first series of tests were about observation how different factors influence the received signal strength. Factors taken into consideration, beacon and smartphone devices used during tests are listed in section 5.1.

#### 5.3.1. Signal stability analysis

As a test base there was taken a several probes of received signal strengths at different distances from the signal source. As it is shown on the figure 5.4, signal strengths are not stable in time. The general rule of *log-distance path loss model* 3.1 where the short distance between transmitter and receiver causes bigger signal strengths are observed, but there are strong fluctuations in time. Model was dicussed in section 3.1.2.

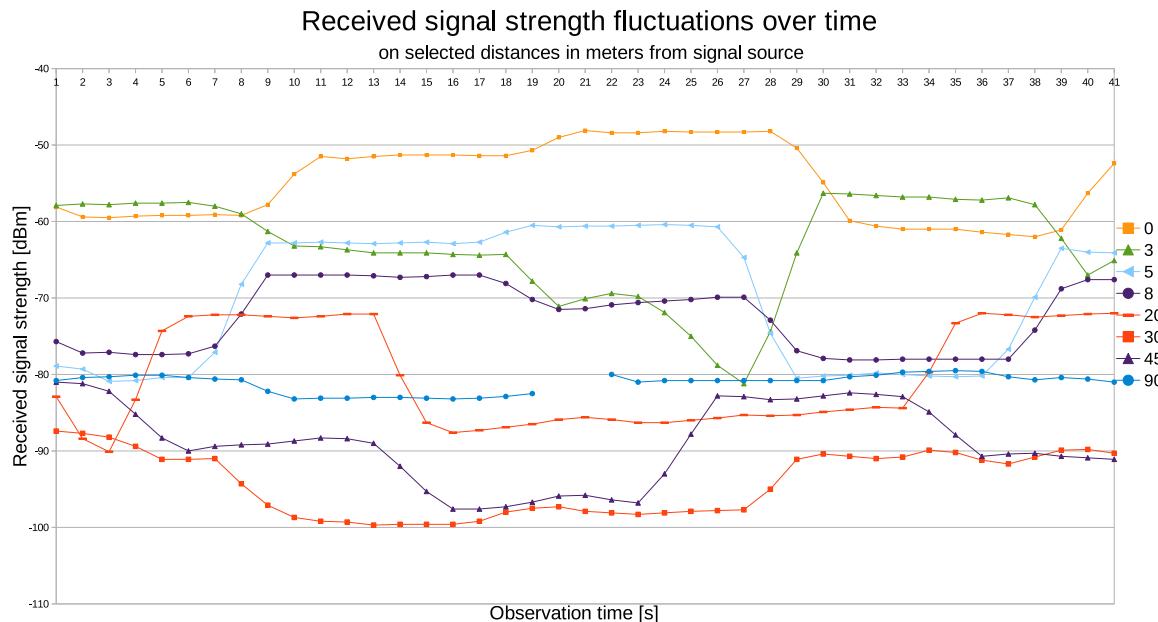


Figure 5.4. Received signal strengths measured each second at different distances between signal source and smarphone. Each line represents received signal strength obtained at given distance.

Basing on results from this test there was made obervation about the relation between the distance and the scale of fluctuation affecting the signal strengths. The biggest fluctuations are present between 0 and 10 meters from the signal source. On the distance of 70 meters and more signal strengths got flatten thus also a standard deviation is low. This relation is depicted on the figure 5.5.

*Log-distance path loss model* assumes only one input (received signal strength) what is directly a basis for distance estimation. As the model is based on logarithm (see equation 3.1) then fluctuations around reference value have smaller impact on the obtained distance aproximation than the fluctuations around the values that are

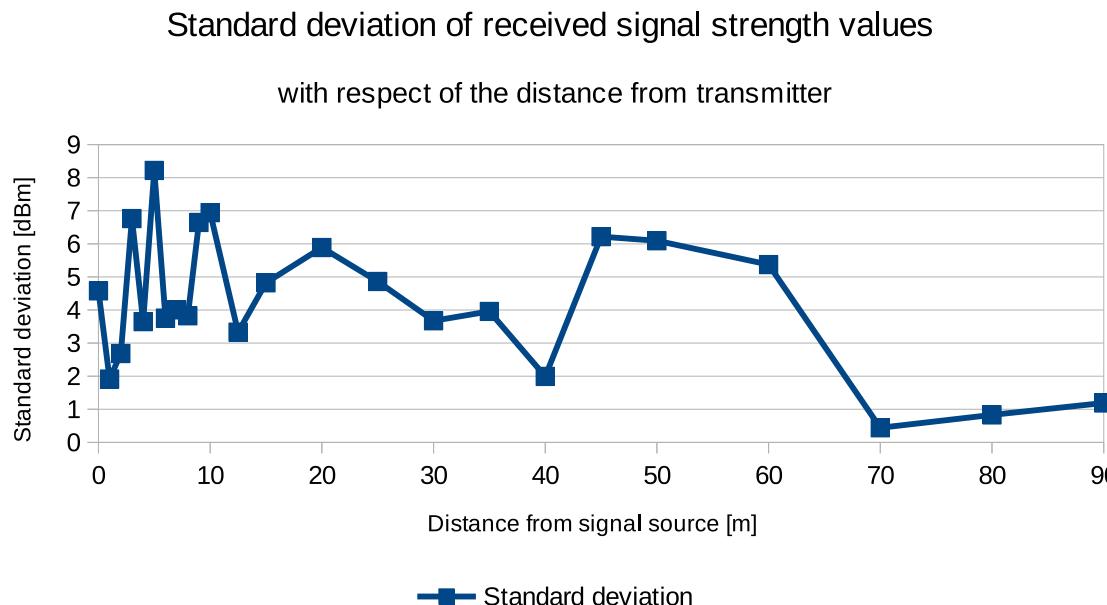


Figure 5.5. Standard deviation taken from received signal strengths measured each second at different distances between signal source and smartphone.

away from the reference value. In order to verify how model fits into the measures then distance approximations based on that model was computed on average values of the received signal strengths measured at given distances. There was more than 25 probes of the signal strengths taken to the average. Figure 5.6 depicts results of approximating the distance from beacon placed on the ceiling with the highest possible signal strength of  $4dBm$  on a range of  $90m$ . X-axis described the actual distance, y-axis describes approximated distance – output of a model. Estimations in longer distances were not accurate – they error was about  $\pm 30m$  on a  $20$  meters distance and more.

Figure 5.7 focuses on range in between  $0$  and  $20$  meters from signal source. In this range approximation error was about  $\pm 1.5$  meters. Such result leads to the assumption that on distances lower than  $20m$  from the signal source, proposed model can provide approximation which fits to the required accuracy stated for the positioning system.

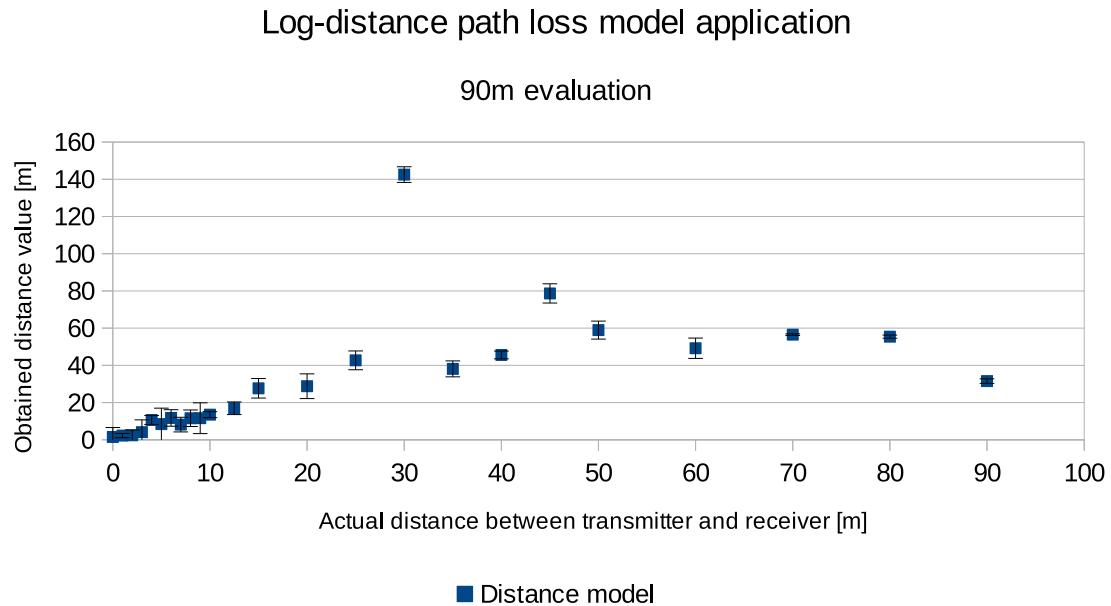


Figure 5.6. Application of *log-distance path loss model* on received signal strengths measured at discrete distances from signal source at range of 90m.

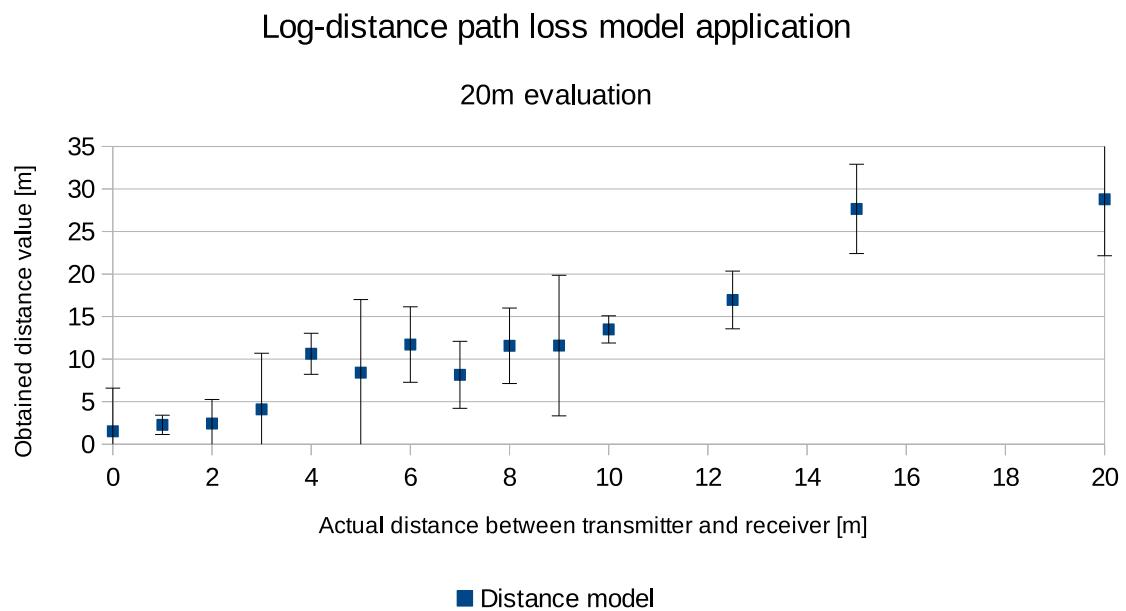


Figure 5.7. Application of *log-distance path loss model* on received signal strengths measured at discrete distances from signal source at range of 20m.

### 5.3.2. Robustness of received signal strength measures

One of the objectives stated for tests was to check how placement, orientation and different models of the devices impacts the received signal strength values. List of variables taken into consideration with explanation were written in section 5.1. Pictures 5.8 and 5.9 presents how beacon was mounted on a ceiling with it's different orientations related to the antenna direction.



Figure 5.8. Beacon 1 mounted on a ceiling with horizontal antenna direction.



Figure 5.9. Beacon 1 mounted on a ceiling with vertical antenna direction.

In order to check what is the signal range of a single beacon device, there was performed a test in which there was taken a series of received signal measures at given distances from the signal source. There were selected two transmitter power settings for the test:  $4dBm$  which is the higher transmitter power setting and  $-16dBm$  which was taken experimentally. Distances were located at 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 meters in case of  $4dBm$  setting and at 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 20, 25, 35 meters in case of  $-16dBm$  setting. During the test there was used "B1" beacon mounted on the ceiling vertically. Figure 5.10 presents results of this tests.

Range of a beacon with the highest power setting available exceeds available space in a corridor, that is why data ends for  $4dBm$  ends at 90m. Received signal strengths measured on distances larger than 20m from the source of the signal are getting stabilized while strengths measured closer than 20m from the signal source are falling significantly. Measures taken between 20m – 90m from signal source are between  $-80dBm$  and  $-90dBm$ , while the drop on the first 5m from the signal source is about  $15dBm$ . What is an interesting is that received signal strength values were not decreasing on distances between 50m and 90m. There was also observed that signal strengths get stabilized on larger distances what was depicted on figure 5.5 expressing standard deviation of received signals, as well on figure 5.4 where can be observed the course of the received signal strength values. Observation matches with the observations about the *log-distance path loss model*.



Figure 5.10. Attenuation curve for  $4dBm$  and  $-16dBm$  trasmitter power.

It is assumed that the solution should be suited for three possible smartphone orientations: smartphone handled in front of the user (vertically and horizontally) and smartphone kept in the pocket. Figure 5.11 presents results of a dynamic, continuous test that consisted of three phases:

- measure received signal strength for 5s directly under the transmitter,
- walk 5m away,
- measure signal for 5s on 5m distance from signal source.

Test was performed 4 times, each for different transmitter power values:  $-12dBm$ ,  $-16dBm$ ,  $-20dBm$  and  $-30dBm$ . Beacon was placed vertically on the ceiling.

Singal strengths received by the smartphone kept in the pocket are same or even lower at 0m distance (smartphone is directly under the beacon) than measured 5m away from signal source. Difference is not significant – in case of  $-16dBm$  and  $-20dBm$  transmitting power settings, received signal strength values remains the same for the whole test ( $\pm 3dBm$ ). In case of  $-12dBm$  transmitter power setting there was observed that received signal got stronger on a 5m distance than just bellow the transmitter ( $10 \pm 4dBm$  change). Received signal strengths of the beacon with  $-30dBm$  transmission power setting were low – signals received in smaller distance than 1m from the signal source were ommited, rest were at the border of a noise level. That is why setting  $-30dBm$  was rejected as one that provides so week signal, that in case of smartphone kept in the pocket can be filtered out as a noise.

In latter test there were compared smartphone orientations in context of thier influence on the received signal strength value. As it is assumed that the crucial distance for the positioning system, that will allow for accuracy at least equal to the distance between beacons, tests were performed directly under the beacon. Beacon was placed on the ceiling with vertical anetenna direction. Test was a static test where at least 25 probes of the signal strength were taken at the same place. There were tested three

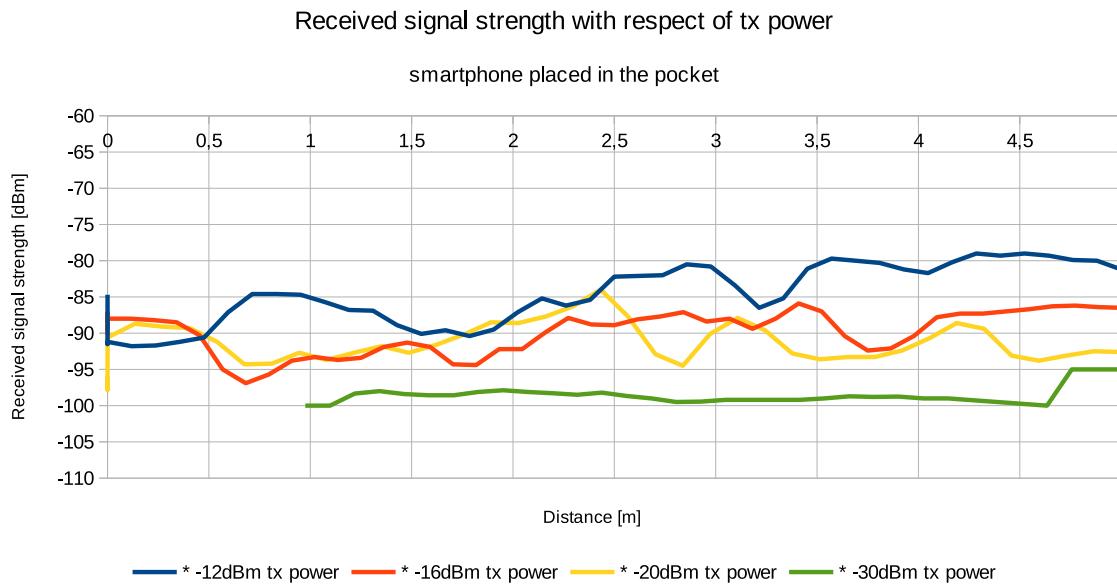


Figure 5.11. Received signal strength values measured by the smartphone kept in the pocket with respect of the transmitter power and the distance from the signal source.

values of the transmitter power in order to see if the transmitter power impacts on the all of smartphone orientations equally. Setting of  $-30dBm$  transmitter power was ommited in the evaluation. Results are presented on the figure 5.12.

#### Comparison of received signal strength with respect of smartphone orientation

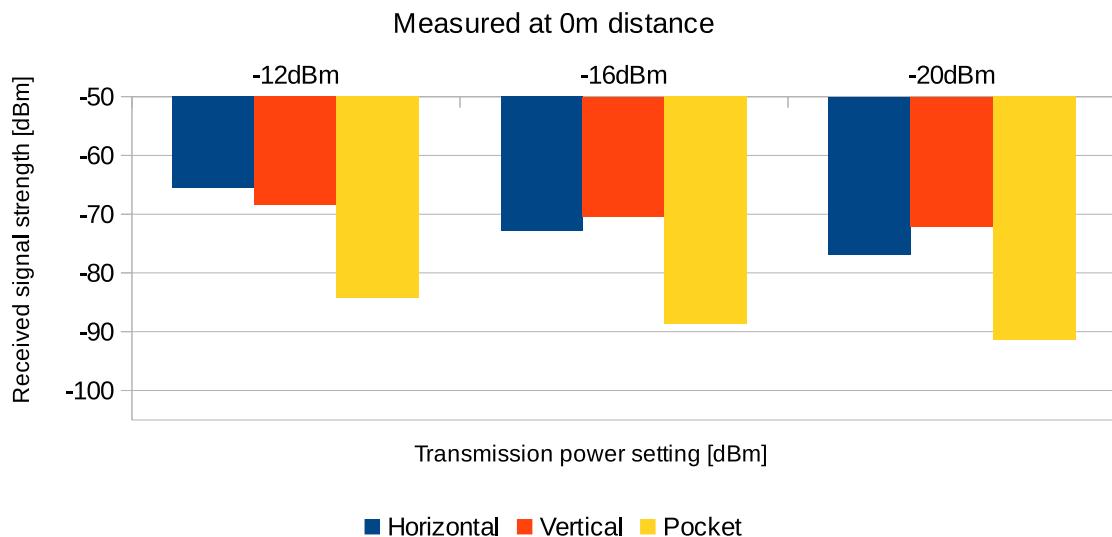


Figure 5.12. Received signal strength measured just under the beacon device mounted on the ceiling in verical orientation. Tested three transmitter power values:  $-12dBm$ ,  $-16dBm$  and  $-20dBm$  and the three smartphone orientations: vertical, horizontal and kept in the pocket.

Ideally, change of the transmission power expressed in  $dBm$  should cause the same change in the received signal strength. That was not observed on the results of performed experiment. Change of  $4dBm$  and  $8dBm$  caused following change in observed signal strengths per smartphone orientations:

- horizontally:  $7.3 \pm 2.4dBm$  and  $11.3 \pm 5.1dBm$ ,
- vertically:  $2 \pm 4dBm$  and  $8.5 \pm 5.1dBm$ ,
- kept in the pocket:  $4.5 \pm 4.8dBm$  and  $7.1 \pm 3dBm$ .

Received signal strengths obtained by the smartphone in horizontal and vertical orientation differs by  $2dBm - 4dBm$  while standard deviations taken from the set of probes are about  $2.5dBm - 5dBm$ . It means that in this test setup, horizontal and vertical orientations does not impact on the signal in an observable way. Fluctuations as well as obtained RSS value are on the same level. Significant difference is between horizontal or vertical orientation and the placement in the pocket. In all cases received signal strength was about  $18 \pm 2dBm$  lower. It means that there is need to ensure such setup of the wireless reference point installation that will ensure such transmission power that allow for correct identification of the beacon with some safety factor, even the receiver is in the pocket – so reflecting additional  $18dBm$  needed for this placement. Such safety factor is determined as a lowest acceptable value for the positioning system – every signal with a lower value is treated as a noise.

Another factor that influence radio frequency transmission is a presence of obstacles between transmitter and receiver. Situation where radio waves that can directly come from the signal source to the receiver without diffractions, in direct path, is called line-of-sight propagation. During the test session there was taken two types of obscuration taken into consideration: obscuration that results from the shape of the tunnel and user obscuration, when the user is in between the smartphone and the beacon. The first case is illustrated on the figure 5.13.

Test consisted of taking probes of the received signal strengths at discrete distances from the signal source in the "southern" part of the corridor, labeled as **LOS** and in the "northern" part of the corridor, labeled as **NLOS** (refer to the test place scheme on the figure 5.2). Southern part of corridor is flat and there were no obstacles between the beacon and the smartphone during the test. Northern part of the test place starts to go up at  $61.5m$  from the signal source. Steep grade is about 17% so at  $71.5m$  from the signal source there is no direct path between beacon and the smartphone. Smartphone was oriented horizontally, beacon was mounted vertically on the ceiling.

Despite fluctuation observed at  $30m$  from the signal source in LOS session, the shape of both LOS and NLOS curves of received signal strengths with respect of the distance was comparable until the start of the steep part of the corridor. Then NLOS curve goes down so at  $75m$  from the signal source the value of RSS is  $-98.8 \pm 2.1$  which is  $18.6dBm$  lower than in case of RSS values observed at similar distance in LOS case. It means that despite the wave guide effect that was supposed to be observed in case of electromagnetic waves in underground installations [22][16], the influence on the received signal strength is so high that have to be taken into consideration during system planning and installation. This effect can be effectively reduced by limiting the emitted signal power strength and populating the beacon devices.

On the figure 5.14 there are presented received signal strength values obtained within the test of the propagation path obscuration by the user .

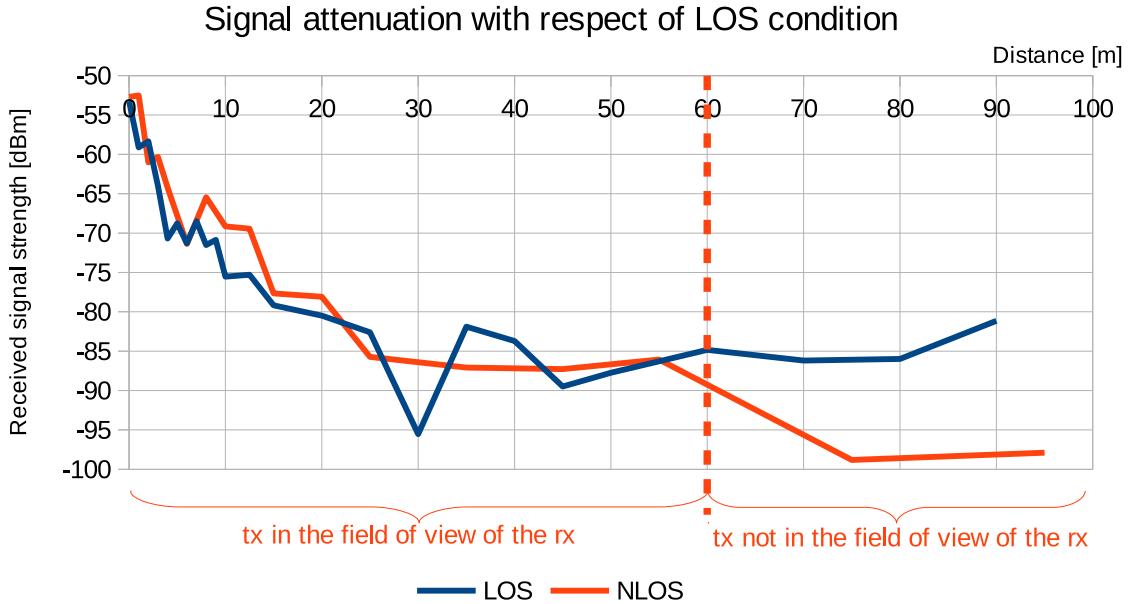


Figure 5.13. Attenuation curve based on received signal strength measured at discrete distances from the signal source. Test taken in corridor which goes up starting from 61.5m from the signal source. Red remarks concerns NLOS propagation and highlights the meter since when steep part of the corridor starts.

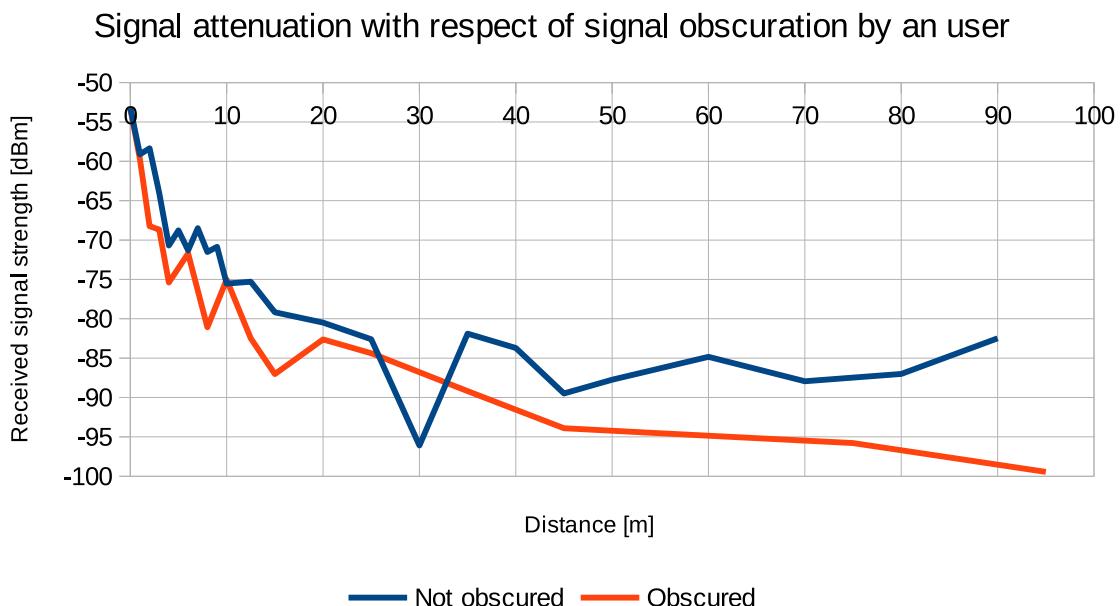


Figure 5.14. Received signal strength with respect of the distance from the signal source and the LOS condition where user is an obstacle on the propagation path.

Test was performed two times: one session was about taking the measures while user was an obstacle in between the smartphone and the beacon (labeled on chart as "Obscured") and the second session which was about taking the measures while user was not an obstacle (labeled as "Not obscured"). Whole "Obscured" curve is bellow the "Not obscured". The difference between received signal strengths in both conditions is about the same in first 3m from the signal source, then is up to 10dBm lower, despite the fluctuations. It means that there is need to reflect the need of additional signal strength required in case of user obscuration into the power setting of the beacons.

The next test, depicted on the figure 5.16, is about checking how different beacon placement and its orientation impacts the received signal strength.



Figure 5.15. Beacon B3 mounted on the wall in its vertical orientation.

The goal of this test was to deduce the best mounting place and orientation of the beacon inside the underground corridor. There were taken into account four possibilities: placement on the ceiling, placement on the wall, with vertical and horizontal antenna directions. On figure 5.15 there is presented mounting point on the wall. The test was a static one, when probes were taken at discrete distances from the signal source. For test purposes transmitter power got reduced to value of  $-16\text{dBm}$ . Smartphone was oriented horizontally.

The biggest received signal strength values were obtained with the beacon mounted on the ceiling in horizontal antenna direction. Signal strengths were at least  $7\text{dBm}$  higher for this setting than for any other. There was also observed the biggest signal coverage for this setting – 35m. Vertical antenna orientations in both cases of mounting on the ceiling and the wall causes similar ( $\pm 5\text{dBm}$ ) RSS values measures, despite the pick on 2m from the signal source of beacon mounted on the wall. Both vertical and horizontal orientations of beacon mounted on the wall characterizes with the signal strength pick on 2m–3m distance from the signal source. Results of the tests points to the fact that beacon placement affects the signal strength as well as the coverage and the part of the fluctuations.

### Attenuation curve with different tx placement and antenna direction

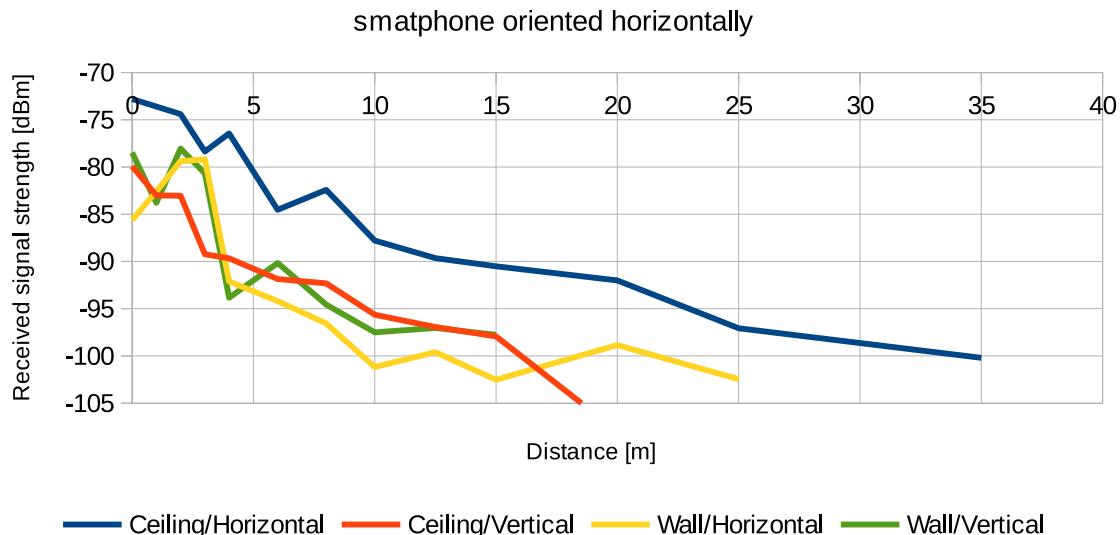


Figure 5.16. Transmitter position and orientation impact on the received signal strength.

Test of different beacon hardwares was difficult beacause of different electronic solutions being used inside them. Figure 5.17 presents result of this test.

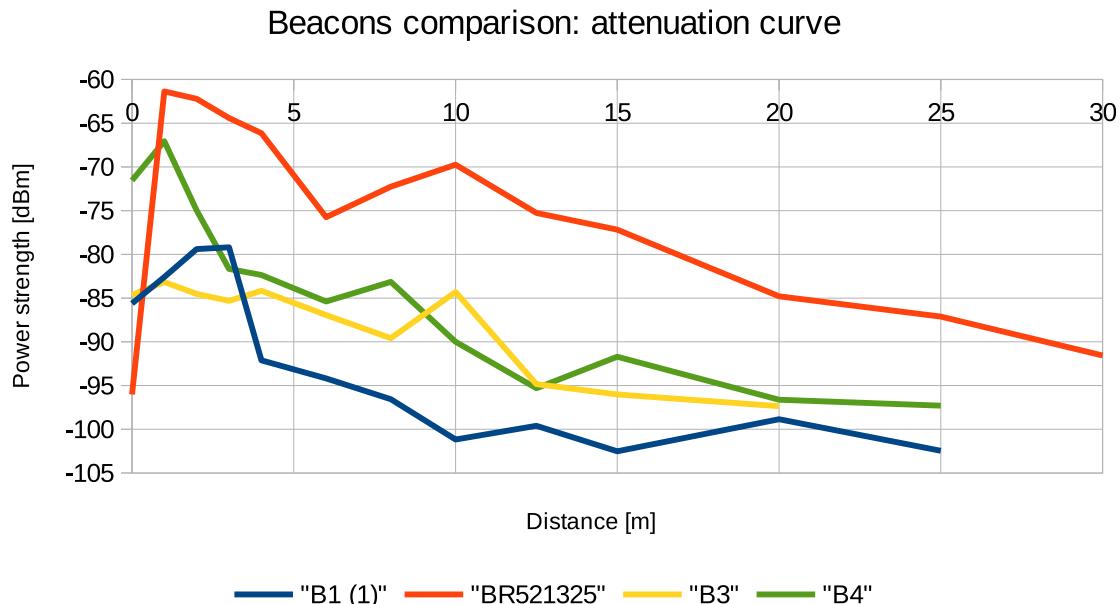


Figure 5.17. Attenuation curve obtained with use of different beacons and their similiar power setting.

There is no standard for creating beacon devices. As many beacons as many hard-

ware solutions for power management, additional sensorics mounted, and the antenna type and installation. In case of beacons that were bought in order to perform tests, each had to be individually configured in order to achieve similar coverage and received signal strengths. That is why value signal strength obtained during the test is not an object of investigation but the curve shape and fluctuations. There were tested beacons B1, B2, B3, B4. Details about the beacons are available in section 5.1.

All of the beacons were mounted on the wall, with vertical antenna direction. Each of them was tested separately. What is characteristic for that placement is that received signal strength measured at 0m from the beacon is lower than 1–2 meters away. Each measure proves that such rule is true despite different transmitter hardware. There can be also observed that signal strength is the biggest near the source, then drops about 10dBm on a distance of 5m from the signal source. Situation repeats with smaller amplitudes till the minimum acceptable signal strength values. In case of beacon B1, B2 and B4 there were observed such values in the close distance to the signal source (about 0m–5m) that significantly differs from those observed in bigger distances. Only B3 beacon emits its signal on not distinguishable power levels within the close range.

The next figure (5.18) presents results of test with different smartphones being used as receivers of the signal.

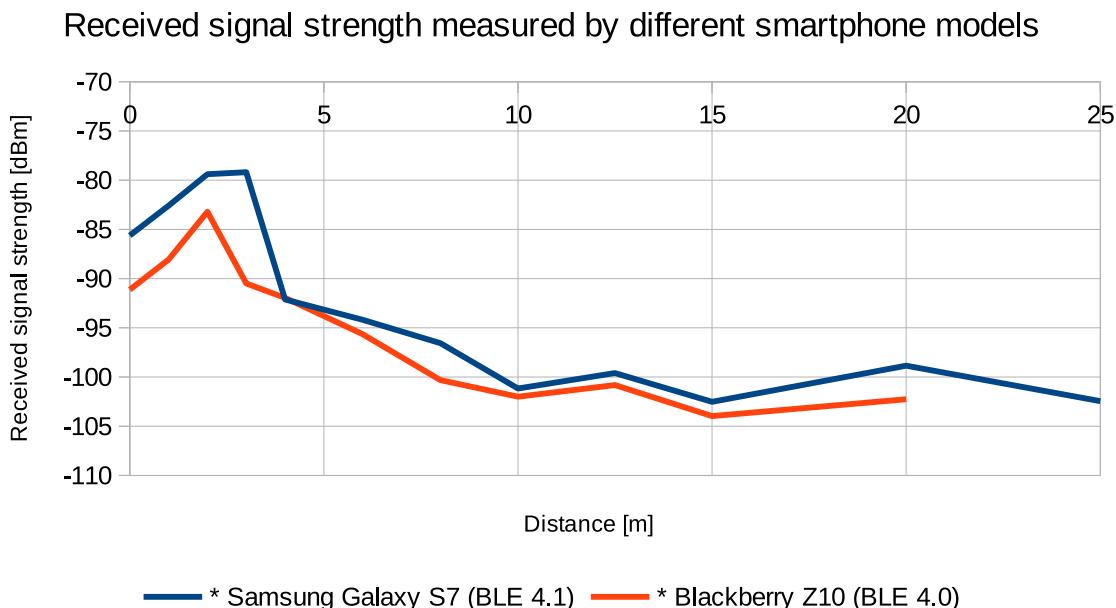


Figure 5.18. Comparison of received signal strength values captured by two different smartphone models: Samsung Galaxy S7 and Blackberry Z10.

For this test there was used beacon B1 mounted vertically on the wall. There were performed measures of the RSS signal taken by two models of smartphones at 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12.5, 15, 20, 25, 35 meters from the beacon. Curve shapes for both smartphones are moved with respect to each other by 5dBm on 0m–4m distances. Then the difference is about 2dBm. Difference may come from the type and the amount material that was used to cover antennas inside the devices. Despite slight differences between signal strength, the received signal strength peak is distinguishable by both

smartphones. Bluetooth standard implemented by two smartphones also do not affect shape of attenuation curve. That means that the solution build on the Bluetooth technology based beacons behaves same for different types of smartphones being used.

### 5.3.3. Real case scenario evaluation

Second part of the test session in the underground installation was devoted to check if proposed position fining system based on the wireless reference points (Bluetooth beacons) can take received signal strength as a factor determining the distance between the user device and the reference point. Aim of tests was take strength values of signals from beacons during the walk along the tunnel with sample positioning infrastructure and check how the observed values fits to the proposed positioning solution.

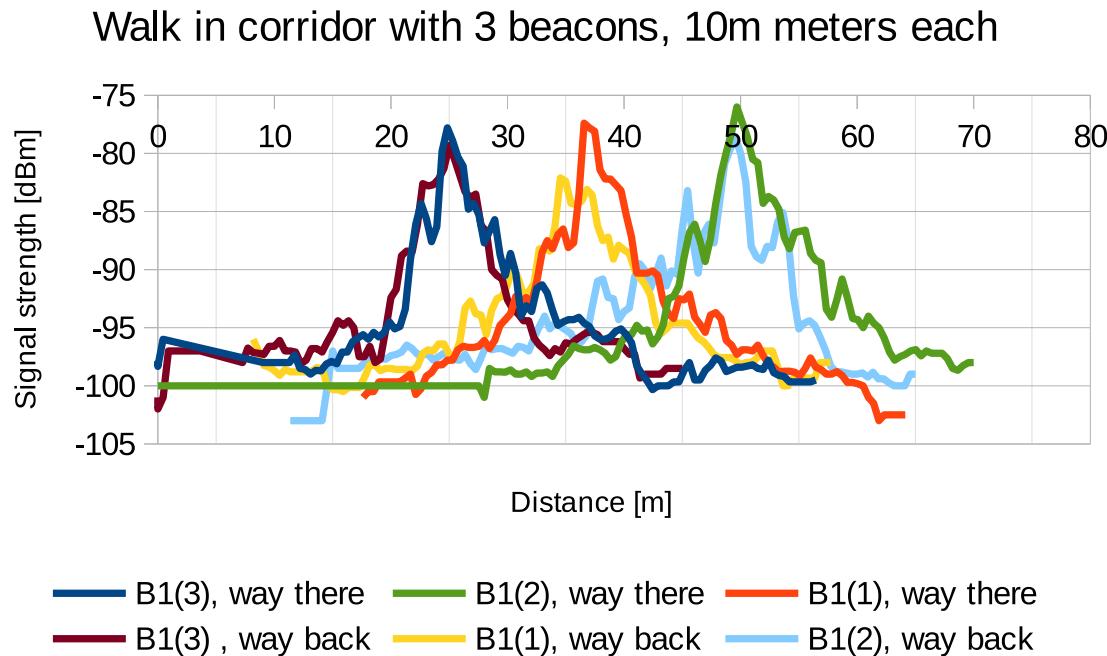


Figure 5.19. Signal strengths of the beacons placed 10m each, measured during the walk with smartphone hold in hand in its horizontal orientation.

During tests there were 3 scenarios taken into consideration. One was about position of the smartphone: evaluation of the signal strength values recorded by the smartphone carried in the pocket and smartphone held by the user in his hand (horizontal orientation). The second scenario concerns distance between the reference points. There were evaluated 10m and 15m distances between the beacons. There were used three B1 beacons with  $-16\text{dBm}$  power setting placed vertically on the wall. The last scenario was about checking how direction of user movement impacts on the observed signal strength values. That case is a direct extension to the static tests of shadowing direct signal path by the user (see figure 5.14).

Each test that covers first and the second scenario, was performed two times, named as: "way there" and "way back". That is how the third scenario was included into

two two first. That way creates the possibility to check if walking direction influence received signal strength. Each test round consisted of three phases: warm up, walk, settle down. Warm up phase was about capturing the signal strength values for 5s, 20m before first beacon. Walk was about making a distance of 70m in case of beacons mounted 10m each or a distance of 80m in case of beacons mounted 15m each. Settle down phase ends with 5s measurement of signal strength at distance of 20m after last beacon mounted on the wall.

Walking pace and speed was not arbitrary set and controlled during test. That is why distances assigned to given values are approximated under assumption that the pace was constant during the walk. Instead of matching distances to signal strength values picks there was evaluated how signal strength values changes during the walk.

First test concerns walk with the smartphone hold in hand horizontally and beacons placed in 10m distances between each other. Figure 5.19 depicts RSS values recorded by the smartphone. Approximate placement of the reference point can be determined because of characteristic picks. There can be also observed that at level of  $-95\text{dBm}$  signals strength from beacons got stabilized. Because of the fluctuations these signal strength values are not useful. Beacons emit their signal with such power level that when the user was just under the second beacon B1(1) (about 35m on the chart) he was still received signals from the nearby beacons: B1(3) –  $-95\text{dBm}$ , B1(2) –  $-97\text{dBm}$ . It can be observed that in the middle of the distance between nearby beacons, they have similar power values like in case of B1(3) and B1(1) at 31 meter: B1(3) –  $-91,6\text{dBm}$ , B1(1) –  $-91\text{dBm}$ .

### Walk in corridor with 3 beacons, 15m meters each

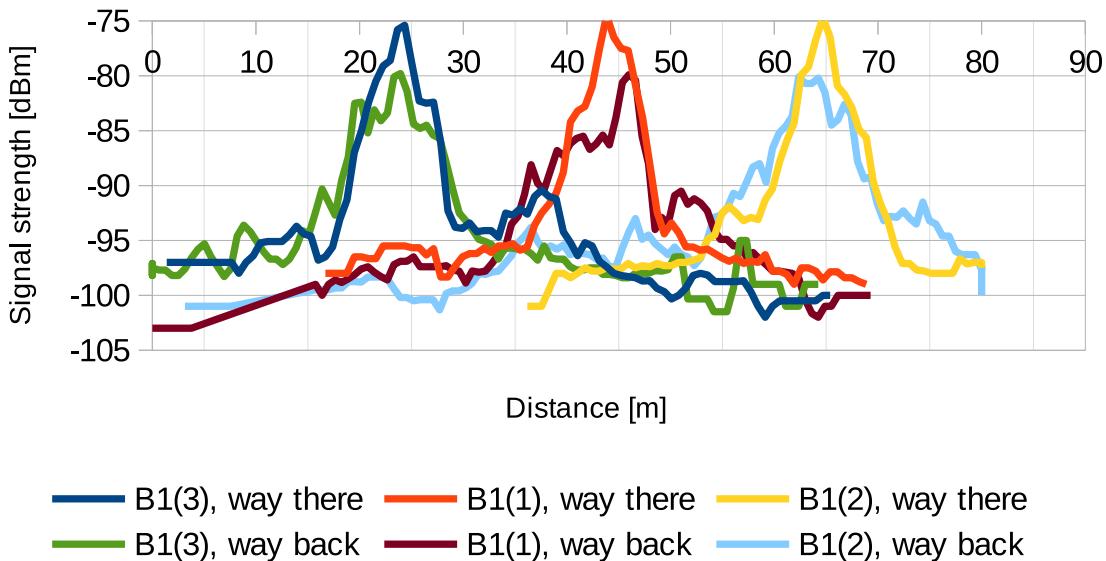


Figure 5.20. Attenuation curve with respect of the transmitter power.

It can be observed that slope of the curve after reaching its peak is slightly smoother than just before the peak. There are two possible reasons of such results. Values could be smoothed during the signal processing by the hardware or software before

value evaluation. It may also mean that the user presence on direct path between beacon and smartphone can influence the observed signal strengths.

Figure 5.20 presents values obtained during test with beacons placed 15m each. Absolute values recorded during the test are similar to those from previous test. In test with 10m gaps, values in peaks were about  $-78dBm$  –  $-76dBm$ ; in test with 15m gaps, values in peaks were about  $-75dBm$  –  $-74dBm$ . Also the RSS values in the middle of distances between two nearby beacons are similar, about  $-95dBm$ .

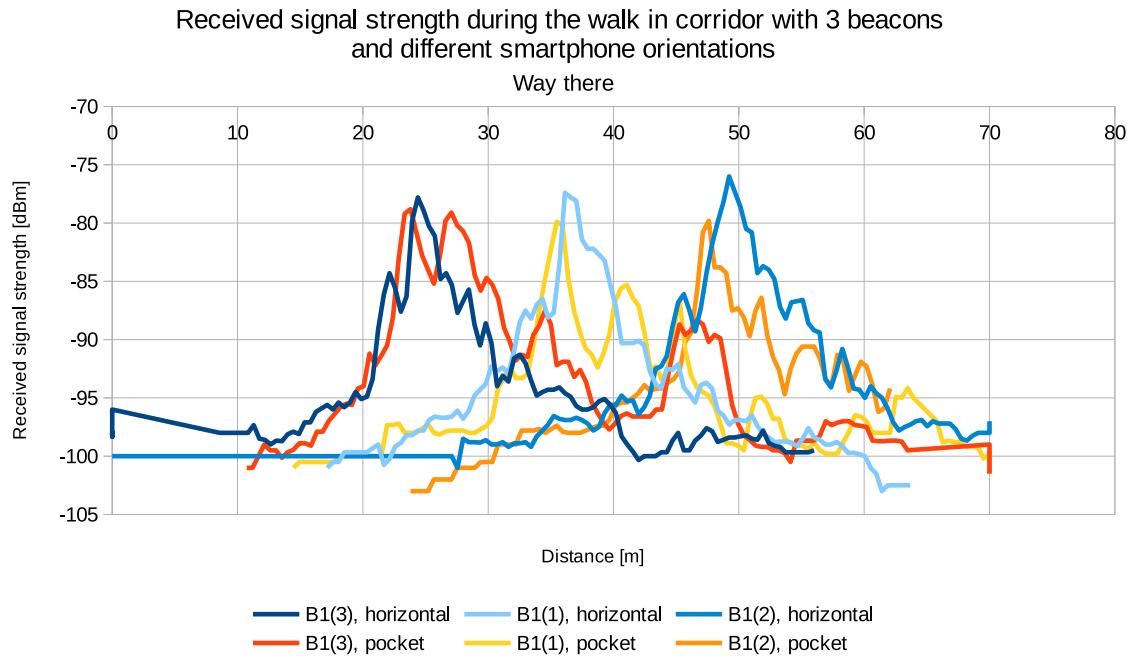


Figure 5.21. Attenuation curve of three beacons with respect of the placement of the smartphone.

Figure 5.21 presents results of a test where beacons were placed 10m each and the smartphone was kept in the pocket. The main difference between signals recorded by smartphone in its horizontal orientation and when it was kept in the pocket is the strong fluctuation near the signal source. It is most visible on meter 35 and 38 where yellow curve of RSS of beacon B1(1) drops from  $-79dBm$  to  $-92dBm$  and then goes up to  $-85dBm$  at 40 meter.

## 5.4. Application of signal filtering

In order to improve the accuracy of the signal strength based positioning, there was applied low-pass filtering to the measures. Filtering aim is to limit signal strength fluctuations. Figure 5.22 presents filtered values obtained during dynamic test presented before on figure 5.19.

Low-pass filter does not smoothed the signal in a way that no fluctuations can be observed but it limits their amplitude. For example drop at 23m of a RSS from beacon B1(3) got reduced from  $-2dBm$  to  $-0.3dBm$ .

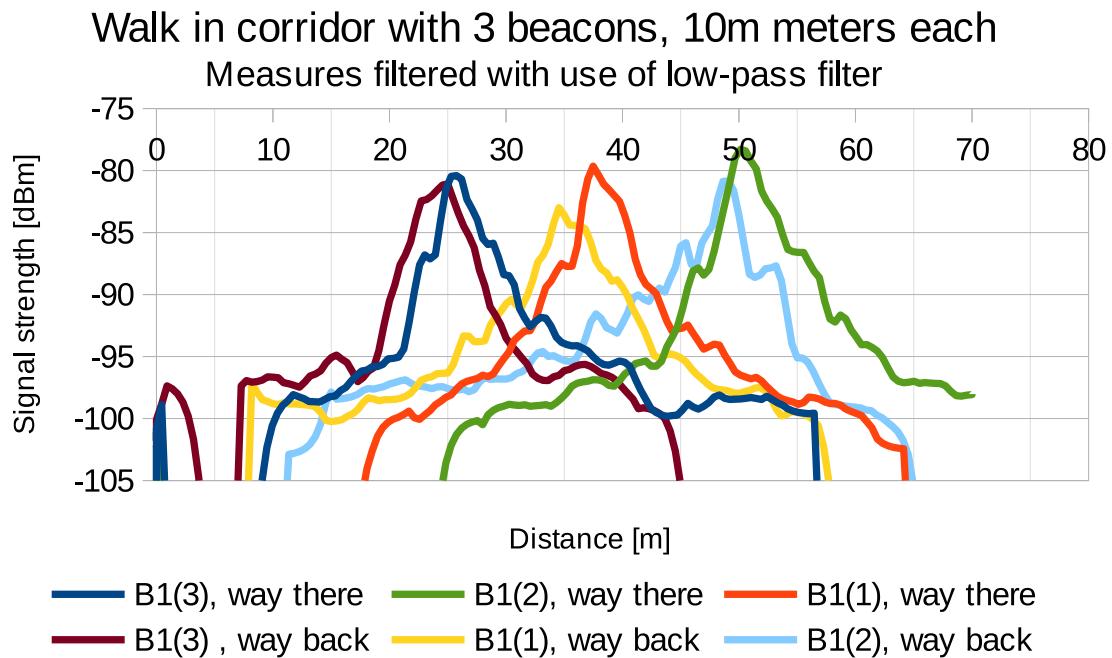


Figure 5.22. Attenuation curve with respect of the transmitter power.

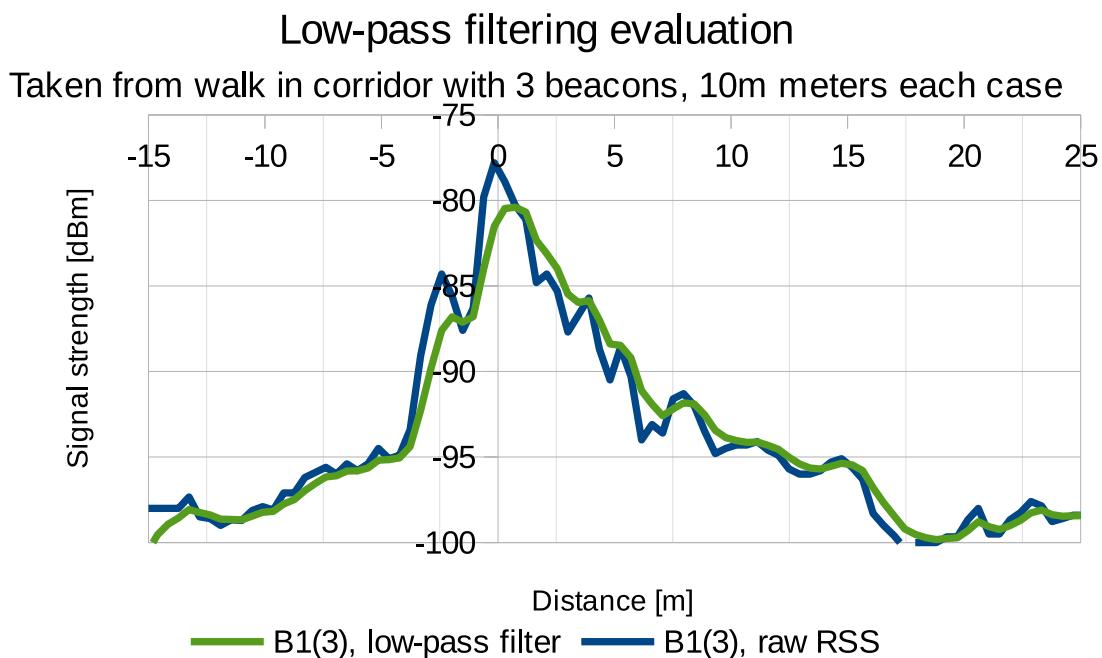


Figure 5.23. Comparison of raw and low-pass filtered RSS values of B1(3) taken from dynamic test with 3 beacons.

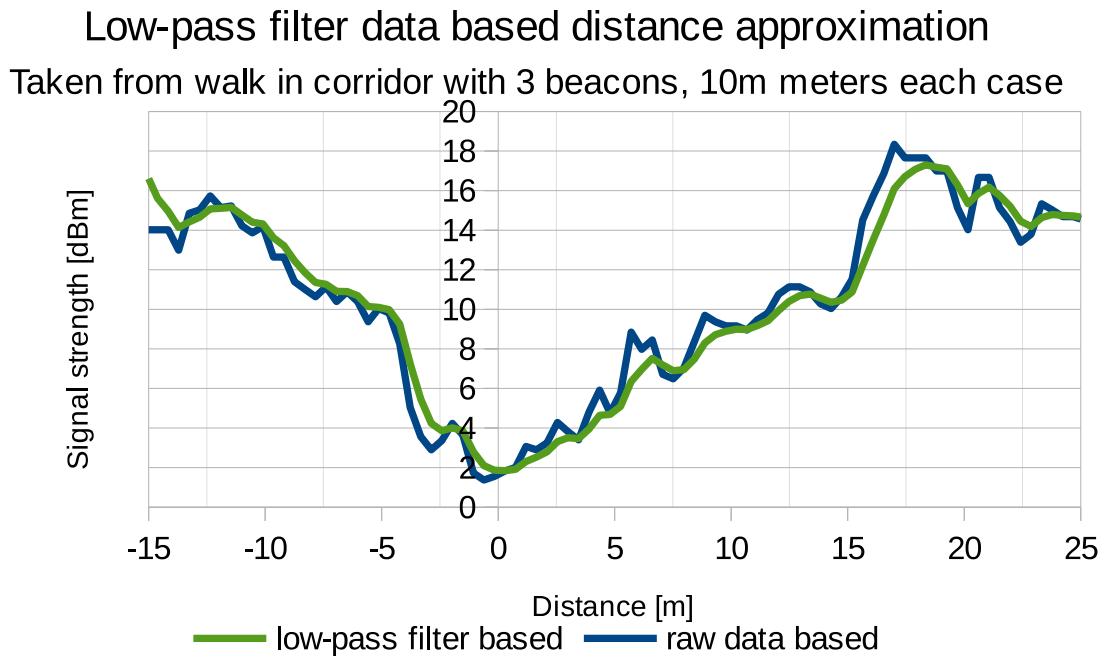


Figure 5.24. Comparison of distance model approximation based on raw and low-pass filtered RSS values.

Drawback of such data filtering is that it introduces some delay to dynamically changing values. For example: RSS value pick of B1(3) beacon in not filtered data (fig. 5.23) was observed at 0m while pick on filtered data was observed 1m further (3 RSS probes later), assuming  $1.6 \frac{km}{h}$  test device speed and  $1Hz$  frequency of RSS probing. Problem may be overcome by increasing probing frequency but decreasing the beacon battery life.

Figure 5.24 presents how low-pass filter affects distance approximations of *log-distance path loss model*. Model was adjusted to match lower transmitter signal power ( $-16dBm$  used during the test). Filtering does not improve or decrease accuracy of the model, just smooth resulting values.

Low-pass filtering does not solve the problem of RSS values fluctuations but it is a good solution to limit effects of a random, highly different values of RSS happening during the measurement session.

## 5.5. Mobile application

## 5.6. Tests summary

- State if some factors have impact on signal quality
- State if some factors have impact on position finding

# **Chapter 6**

# **Conclusions**



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