
Basic Real-Time Operating System

targeting the ARMv7-M architecture

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Version history

Version	Date	Change(s)	Note
0.1	11-30-2019	Initial document	Created version history, introduction, acknowledgement and appendix.
0.2	12-07-2019	Minor changes in Appendix A.1	Documented the first assignment (toggling LEDs)
0.3	12-08-2019	A figure of the CC3220s has been added in the introduction. The compiler version is added aswell	

Table 1: Overview of the different versions

1 Introduction

For the Real-time Operating Systems course (ROS01) taught at Rotterdam University of Applied Science, the authors had to implement a scheduler for a Real-time Operating System developed by one lecturers. Because these types of programming issues like implementing a scheduler require the programmer to be able to program at a low level and it cannot be assumed that every student following this course is familiar with low level programming (both in the C programming language and assembler), this course contains multiple assignments to bridge this gap. The code has been flashed and tested on the CC3220s development board (Figure 1). The compiler used is TI v18.12.2.LTS.

What's worth mentioning is that some code snippets in this document make a function call to `delay_1sec()`. Because this is used quite a few times and redundant to have multiple definitions in this document its implementation can be seen in Appendix A.1.

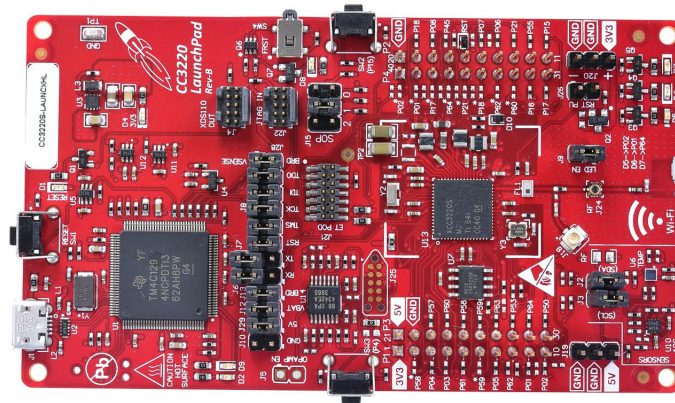


Figure 1: The CC3220s development board used during labs

2 Toggling LEDs bottom-up

The purpose of the first assignment is to become familiar with low level programming. This is done by toggling LEDs using different levels of abstraction. The sequence of this “LED show” can be seen in Table 2. Between every sequence should be a delay of approximately 1 second.

<i>Green</i>	<i>Yellow</i>	<i>Red</i>
0	0	0
0	0	1
0	1	0
0	1	1
1	0	0
1	0	1
1	1	0
1	1	1

Table 2: Order of visualisation of different LEDs

As said earlier, these “LED show” should be programmed on three different levels of abstraction. The first one is no abstraction at all using a programming technique called Direct Register Manipulation (DRM) [2]. The second implementation should make use Driverlib. The third implementation should make use of the Texas Instruments (TI) Driver.

2.1 Direct Register Manipulation

Listing 1 shows the source code to toggle LEDs according to Table 2. The reader may wonder why the implementation of `delay_1sec()` is missing. This is because it is a common function used in lots of code snippets throughout this document. For the implementation details see Appendix A.1. Now follows an explanation about interesting lines of code. Line 15 enables the GPIOA peripheral during run mode (see Figure 2). This program does not enter sleep mode or deep sleep mode. Setting bit 8 and bit 16 (Figure 2) does not make sense.

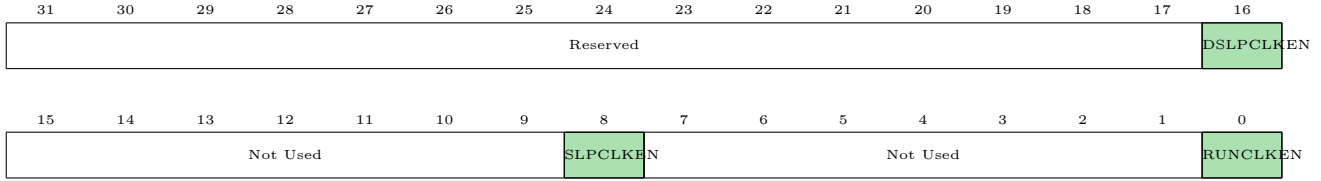


Figure 2: GPIO0CLKEN register for the CC3220s

The behavior of the pins being used must be configured. The assignment only requires the use of GPIO9, GPIO10 and GPIO11 because the built-in LEDs are routed to these pins. Configuration for these pins are done in Line 17 up to and including Line 19. The value $0x60_{16}$ is written to the `GPIO_PAD_CONFIG_x` register where x is 9, 10 and 11. It affects the second nibble of the register. Since only bit 1 and bit 2 of the nibble are affected it does not set the bit in the **open drain** field (Figure 3). Writing 001_2 to the **DRIVE STRENGTH** field means that the related GPIO pin will drive 6 mA.

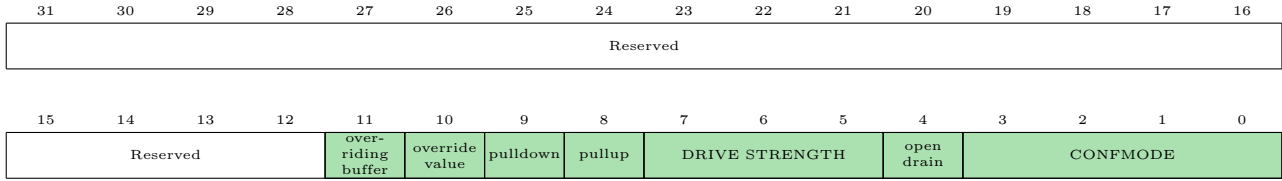


Figure 3: GPIO_PAD_CONFIG_x register for the CC3220s

A GPIO pin is either input or output. Writing a 1 to the `GPIO_DIR` register (Figure 4) configures a GPIO pin as output pin. Writing a 0 to the `GPIO_DIR` register configures a GPIO pin as input pin. Because this program only needs GPIO9, GPIO10 and GPIO11 the program needs to write a 1 to bit 1, bit 2 and bit 3 respectively. 00001110_2 is $0x0E_{16}$ in hexadecimal representation. That is why the program writes $0x0E_{16}$ to the `GPIO_DIR` register at Line 21.

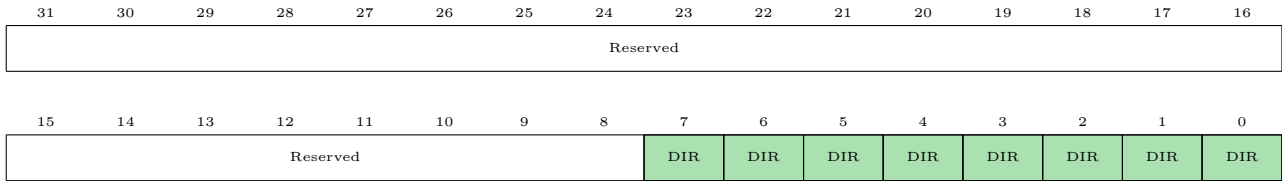


Figure 4: GPIO_DIR register for the CC3220s

Setting the output pin to logic high or logic low requires a little extra explanation. There is a mask which should be added to the base address plus the address of the `GPIO_DATA` register. This prevents software from a read-modify-write operation. A change in logic level of an GPIO output pin is done in a single cycle. The bits one would like to change should be shifted 2 positions to the right and added to base address + the `GPIO_DATA` offset. Line 22 turns the three LEDs off by writing 00000000_2 or $0x00_{16}$ to the `GPIO_DATA` register. However, because of the mask added to the address only bit 1, bit 2 and bit 3 are affected.

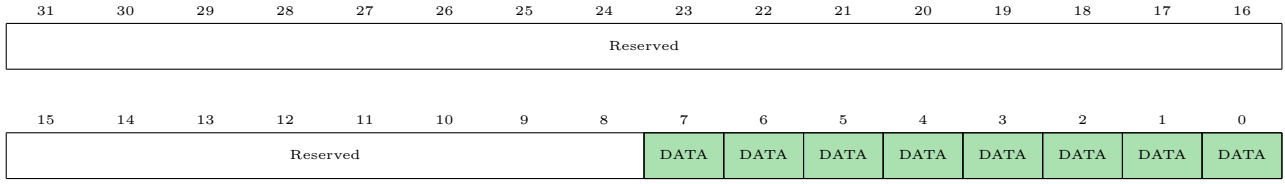


Figure 5: GPIO_DATA register for the CC3220s

The following things happen in an infinite loop. Line 28 in Listing 1 write a variable `index` to `GPIO_DATA` register. This value is shifted 1 position to the left because the first LED is positioned at GPIO9 and not at GPIO8. Line 29 increments `index`. Variable `index` can hold $0 \leq index < 16$ (although $0 \leq index < 8$ would be sufficient). The second operand of the modulo operator does not really matter as long as it is a multiple of 2^3 . Line 30 makes a call to `delay_1sec()`. The function returns after 1 second since it is a busy-wait like implementation where the CPU just burns CPU cycles.

```

1 #include <stdint.h>
2 #include <stddef.h>
3 #include "register_def.h"
4
5 #include "inc\hw_memmap.h"
6 #include "inc\hw_gpio.h"
7 #include "inc\hw_apps_rcm.h"
8 #include "inc\hw_ocp_shared.h"
9
10 /* Function delay_1sec() used to be here */
11
12 int main(void)
13 {
14     HWREG(ARCM.BASE + APPS_RCM.O.GPIO_A.CLK_GATING) = 0x01;
15
16     HWREG(OCP_SHARED.BASE + OCP_SHARED.O.GPIO_PAD.CONFIG_9) = 0x60;
17     HWREG(OCP_SHARED.BASE + OCP_SHARED.O.GPIO_PAD.CONFIG_10) = 0x60;
18     HWREG(OCP_SHARED.BASE + OCP_SHARED.O.GPIO_PAD.CONFIG_11) = 0x60;
19
20     HWREG(GPIOA1.BASE + GPIO_O.GPIO_DIR) = 0x0E;
21     HWREG(GPIOA1.BASE + GPIO_O.GPIO_DATA + (0x0E << 2)) = 0x00;
22
23     int index = 0;
24
25     while(1)
26     {
27         HWREG(GPIOA1.BASE + GPIO_O.GPIO_DATA + (0x0E << 2)) = (index << 1);
28         index = (index + 1) % 16;
29         delay_1sec();
30     }
31
32     return 0;
33 }
34

```

Listing 1: Toggling LEDs according to Table 2 using DRM programming technique

2.2 Driverlib

Driverlib is a library which provides access to peripherals. The advantage of this is that the programmer does not need to know base addresses and offsets in order to access special function registers. Line 17 in Listing 2 enables the GPIOA1 peripheral by enabling a clock signal to the peripheral. Line 19 up to and including Line 21 configures the GPIO9, GPIO10 and GPIO11 pin characteristics. The pins can use now a maximum of 2 mA per pin. Note that the function accepts a macro which contains the physical pin number instead of the logical pin number. Line 23 up to and including Line 25 configures GPIO9, GPIO10 and GPIO11 to an output pin. Line 27 up to and including Line 29 turns the three LEDs off by default.

Line 35 writes the value `switcher` to the `GPIO_DATA` register but only `GPIO_PIN_1`, `GPIO_PIN_2` and `GPIO_PIN_3` (which are GPIO9, GPIO10 and GPIO11) are sensitive for this value change. Line 36 makes a function call to `delay_1sec()` which will return to the caller after 1 second.

```
1 #include <stdint.h>
2 #include <stddef.h>
3 #include "register_def.h"
4
5 #include "gpio.h"
6 #include "pin.h"
7 #include "prcm.h"
8
9 /* GPIO 9 is PIN_64 is (red) */
10 /* GPIO 10 is PIN_2 is (green) */
11 /* GPIO 11 is PIN_1 is (yellow) */
12
13 /* Function delay_1sec() used to be here */
14
15 int main(void)
16 {
17     PRCMPeripheralClkEnable(PRCM.GPIOA1 ,PRCM.RUN_MODE_CLK);
18
19     PinTypeGPIO(PIN_64, PIN_STRENGTH_2MA, false); /* Red LED is push-pull */
20     PinTypeGPIO(PIN_01, PIN_STRENGTH_2MA, false); /* Yellow LED is push-pull */
21     PinTypeGPIO(PIN_02, PIN_STRENGTH_2MA, false); /* Green LED is push-pull */
22
23     GPIODirModeSet(GPIOA1_BASE, GPIO_PIN_2, GPIO_DIR_MODE_OUT);
24     GPIODirModeSet(GPIOA1_BASE, GPIO_PIN_3, GPIO_DIR_MODE_OUT);
25     GPIODirModeSet(GPIOA1_BASE, GPIO_PIN_1, GPIO_DIR_MODE_OUT);
26
27     GPIOPinWrite(GPIOA1_BASE, GPIO_PIN_2, ~GPIO_PIN_2); /* Turn yellow LED off */
28     GPIOPinWrite(GPIOA1_BASE, GPIO_PIN_3, ~GPIO_PIN_3); /* Turn green LED off */
29     GPIOPinWrite(GPIOA1_BASE, GPIO_PIN_1, ~GPIO_PIN_1); /* Turn red LED off */
30
31     int switcher = 0;
32
33     while(1)
34     {
35         GPIOPinWrite(GPIOA1_BASE, GPIO_PIN_1 | GPIO_PIN_2 | GPIO_PIN_3, switcher);
36         delay_1sec();
37
38         switcher = (switcher + 1) % 16;
39     }
40 }
```

Listing 2: Toggling LEDs according to Table 2 using Driverlib library

2.3 TI Driver

TI Driver is a library which provides access to peripherals. The advantage of this is that the programmer does not need to know base addresses and offsets in order to access special function registers. Line 4 in Listing 3 enables the GPIOA peripheral. Line 7 up to and including Line 9 configures the GPIO pins wired to the LEDs as output pins. Line 12 up to and including Line 14 turns the LEDs off by default.

Line 20 up to and including Line 22 set GPIO9, GPIO10 and GPIO11 respectively. The function `GPIO_write()` its second parameter accepts either a 1 or 0 according to the documentation generated by Doxygen. That is why there are masks and bit shifts. Line 23 calls the `delay_1sec()` function which waits 1 second before returning to the caller. Variable `switcher` is incremented (Line 25) modulo 8 to make sure no overflow will happen.

```
1 void *mainThread(void *arg0)
2 {
3     /* Call driver init functions */
4     GPIO_init();
5
6     /* Configure the LED */
7     GPIO_setConfig(Board_GPIO_LED0, GPIO_CFG_OUT_STD | GPIO_CFG_OUT_LOW);
8     GPIO_setConfig(Board_GPIO_LED1, GPIO_CFG_OUT_STD | GPIO_CFG_OUT_LOW);
9     GPIO_setConfig(Board_GPIO_LED2, GPIO_CFG_OUT_STD | GPIO_CFG_OUT_LOW);
10
11     /* Turn off user LED */
12     GPIO_write(Board_GPIO_LED0, Board_GPIO_LED_OFF); /* Turn red LED off */
13     GPIO_write(Board_GPIO_LED1, Board_GPIO_LED_OFF); /* Turn yellow LED off */
14     GPIO_write(Board_GPIO_LED2, Board_GPIO_LED_OFF); /* Turn green LED off */
15
16     unsigned int switcher = 0;
17
18     while(1)
19     {
20         GPIO_write(Board_GPIO_LED0, switcher & 1);
21         GPIO_write(Board_GPIO_LED1, (switcher & 2) >> 1);
22         GPIO_write(Board_GPIO_LED2, (switcher & 4) >> 2);
23         delay_1sec();
24
25         switcher = (switcher + 1) % 8;
26     }
27
28
29     return (NULL);
30 }
```

Listing 3: Toggling LEDs according to Table 2 using TI Driver

2.4 Verification of the behaviour using a logic analyzer

The behavior of the programs must be verified to be able to determine with certainty whether the requirements of the assignment has been met. This verification is done using a logic analyzer. The logic analyzer has been used for all three programs, but the results are almost the same. That is why there are only three figures instead of nine. Figure 6 up to and including Figure 8 are the same snapshot but the mouse hovers different channels to pop up extra information. Channel 0 is the red LED, channel 1 is the yellow LED and channel 2 is the green LED.

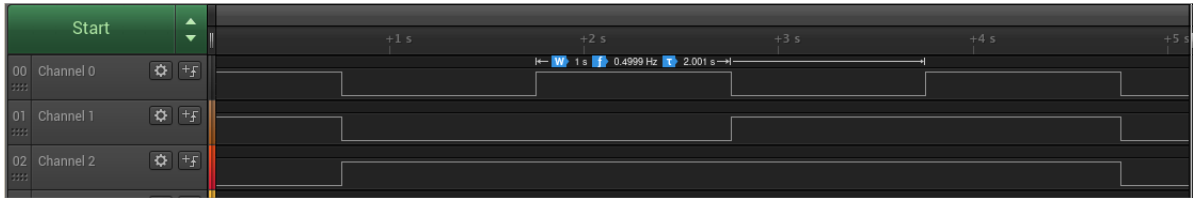


Figure 6: The red LED is toggled every second

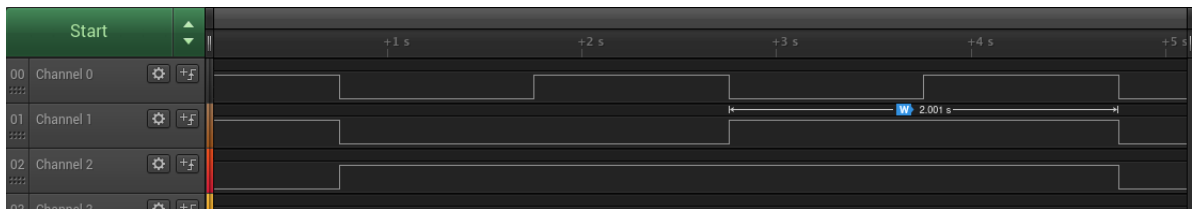


Figure 7: The yellow LED is toggled every two seconds (twice as much as the red LED)

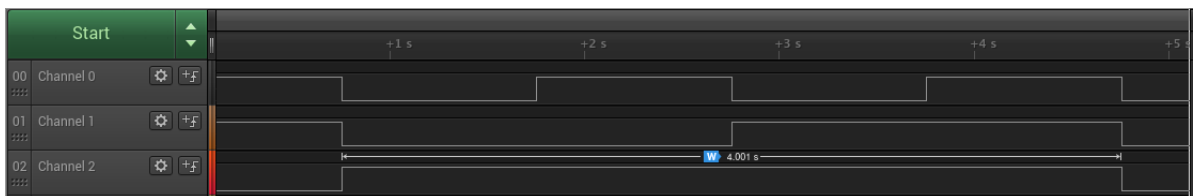


Figure 8: The green LED is toggled every four seconds (twice as much as the yellow LED)

3 Replace busy-wait techniques using the SysTick timer

Using a busy-wait technique to delay for a certain amount of time is not efficient. Wasting “expensive” CPU cycles should be avoided whenever possible. This is where hardware timers comes in. Hardware timers decrement or increment a given value at a certain frequency and generates a signal if the value reached a treshold (this could be in the form of underflow or overflow aswell as reaching a certain value where 0 is the most common one). This chapter describes the **SysTick** hardware timer.

3.1 SysTick timer and interrupt using DRM

As mentioned in the previous section, when one uses the DRM programming technique it is important that the programmer knows the microcontroller really well. Understanding the different Special Function Registers (SFR) related to the hardware module one wants to use is a consequence. The three SFR related to **SysTick** are described below.

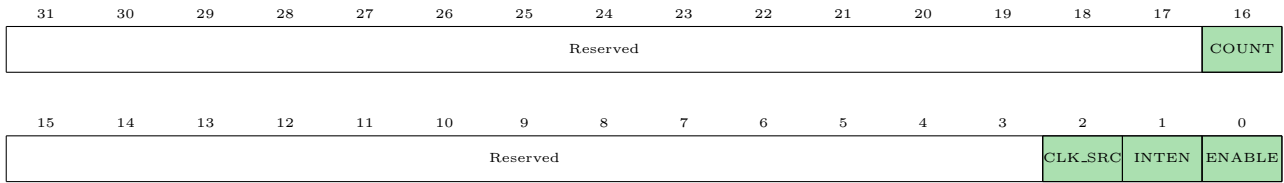


Figure 9: STCTRL register for the CC3220s

First, there is **STCTRL** (**SysTick** Control Register) which enables the **SysTick** features [1]. Bit 0 (Figure 9) enables the **SysTick** module if this bit is set or disables the **SysTick** module if this bit is cleared. The **SysTick** module will generate an interrupt only if bit 1 is set. The clock source fed into the **SysTick** module can be the system clock if bit 3 is set or a precision internal oscillator if bit 3 is cleared [1].

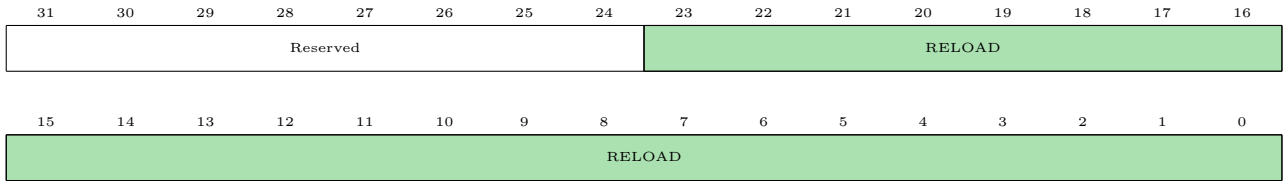


Figure 10: STRELOAD register for the CC3220s

Second, there is **STRELOAD** register (Figure 10) which stores the constant that should be loaded to the **STCURRENT** register if the previous value reached value 0. One should keep in mind that if the desired behaviour is an interrupt or a flag every x ticks, one should store $x - 1$ ticks in this register. This is because the **RELOAD** value is copied to **STCURRENT** current register if 0 is reached (so not one tick after zero).

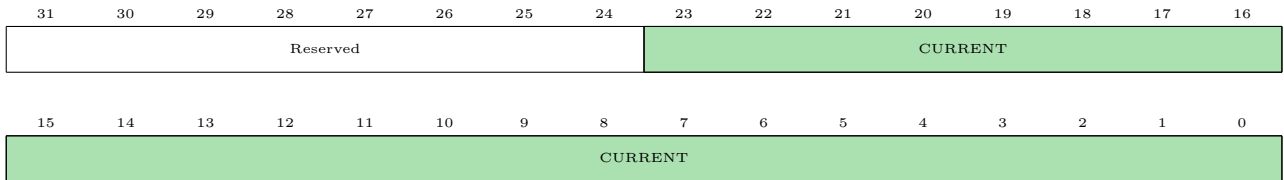


Figure 11: STCURRENT register for the CC3220s

The last register is the **STCURRENT** register. This register holds the current value being decremented. An important detail is that the **CURRENT** field is write-clear behaviour. This means that writing any value to this field clears the register and the **COUNT** bit of the **STCTRL** register [1].

4 Acknowledgement

The authors want to thank Daniel Versluis for writing his Minimal Working Example (MWE) Real-time Operating Systems “VersdOS” and providing the authors access to the source code. The authors also want to thank Harry Broeders for his time and effort in solving the problem related to the `delay_1sec()` function and inline assembly instruction cycles mismatch.

A Appendix

The appendix contains subsections that support this report or its where its content goes too much off-topic with the purpose of this report, but are interesting for the reader to possibly read.

A.1 Delay *exactly* one second counting instruction cycles

Many assignments require a delay of 1 second to spot blinky LEDs by eye. One can use the SysTick timer or hardware timers, but where is the fun in that? For the sake of some assignments, it is acceptable to burn clock cycles by wasting the CPU. Listing 4 contains a function which will delay the return moment by 1 second. Now each line containing inline assembly will be explained.

```
1 void delay_1sec(void)
2 {
3     __asm("    PUSH {r4-r11,lr}");
4
5     __asm("    LDR r4, [pc, #12]");
6
7     __asm("    MOV r5, pc");
8     __asm("    NOP");
9
10    __asm("    SUBS r4, #1"); /* 1 instruction cycle */
11    __asm("    ITE NEQ");   /* 1 instruction cycle */
12
13    __asm("    MOV pc, r5"); /* 1 + P instructions (where P is between 1 and 3 depending on
    pipeline refill) */
14
15
16    __asm("    POP {r4-r11,pc}");
17    __asm("    .word 5000000");
18 }
```

Listing 4: C function containing inline assembly to perform a delay of *exactly* one second

Line 3 pushes 8 registers onto the stack. This is part of the ARM Architecture Procedure Call Standard (AAPCS) which is part of the ARM Application Binary Interface (ABI) [2]. This standard describes that R0 up to and including R4 are used to pass input parameters into a C function. Functions should preserve the content of registers R4 up to and including R11. Listing 4 does not use all of the registers a callee should save, but it is best practice to push them in case one does not know how many registers his or her piece of software will use. Line 7 stores the Program Counter (PC) into R5. Because the PC is two instruction (8 bytes) ahead in ARM mode it actually stores the address for Line 10. This is the first instruction that should be executed iterative. Line 8 makes sure the instruction located at Line 7 contains the correct address. The alternative is replacing this instruction with a SUB instruction and subtract 4 bytes from R5. Line 11 does a check whether the content of R4 is equal to zero or not [3]. If R4 is not equal to zero (which makes the statement true because we check for NEQ condition code) Line 13 is executed. If R4 is equal to zero Line 16 is executed. Line 13 stores the PC we saved earlier in Line 7 to the PC. This results a branch to Line 10. Line 16 restores the saved registers and jumps back to the caller. It is not an option to leave out the restore to the PC because that means that the next instruction executed will be the one on Line 17. This is not an intentional instruction but just a location to store a number. If we let the PC execute this line we get undefined behaviour.

References

- [1] *CC3220 SimpleLink™ Wi-Fi® and Internet of Things Technical Reference Manual*. SWRU465. Texas Instruments. Feb. 2017.
- [2] Jonathan W. Valvano. *Introduction to ARM Cortex-M Microcontrollers. Embedded Systems*. self-published, 2017.
- [3] Joseph Yiu. *The Definitive Guide to ARM Cortex-M3 and Cortex-M4 processors*. Newnes, 2014.