

REVERSING AN AVR- BASED ESC

by @braincode

\$ whoami

- @braincode on twitter, @brainstorm on github.
- An ~~outsider~~ newbie in the HW/RE community.
- Bioinformatician, so python is awesome (hugs @trufae).
- Recent hobbies: playing with MCUs such as Atmega8 and the mighty ESP8266/ESP32.
- Swedish, catalan, (heading towards Australia?).

I DEAL WITH THIS...

```
@SEQ_ID
GATTTGGGGTTCAAAGCAGTATCGATCAAATAGTAAATCCATTTGTTCAACTCACAGTTT
+
!'*(((((***+))%%%++)(%%%%%%%%).1***-+*'))**55CCF>>>>>CCCCCCC65
@SRR001666.1 071112_SLXA-EAS1_s_7:5:1:817:345 length=72
GGGTGATGGCCGCTGCCGATGGCGTCAAATCCCACCAAGTTACCCTTAACAACCTTAAGGC
+SRR001666.1 071112_SLXA-EAS1_s_7:5:1:817:345 length=72
IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII9IG9ICIIIIIIIIIIIIIDIIIIII>IIIIII/
@SRR001666.2 071112_SLXA-EAS1_s_7:5:1:801:338 length=72
G TTCAGGGATACGACGTTTGTATTTTAAGAATCTGAAGCAGAAGTCGATGATAATACGCGTC
+SRR001666.2 071112_SLXA-EAS1_s_7:5:1:801:338 length=72
IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII6IBIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIGII>IIII-I)8I
```

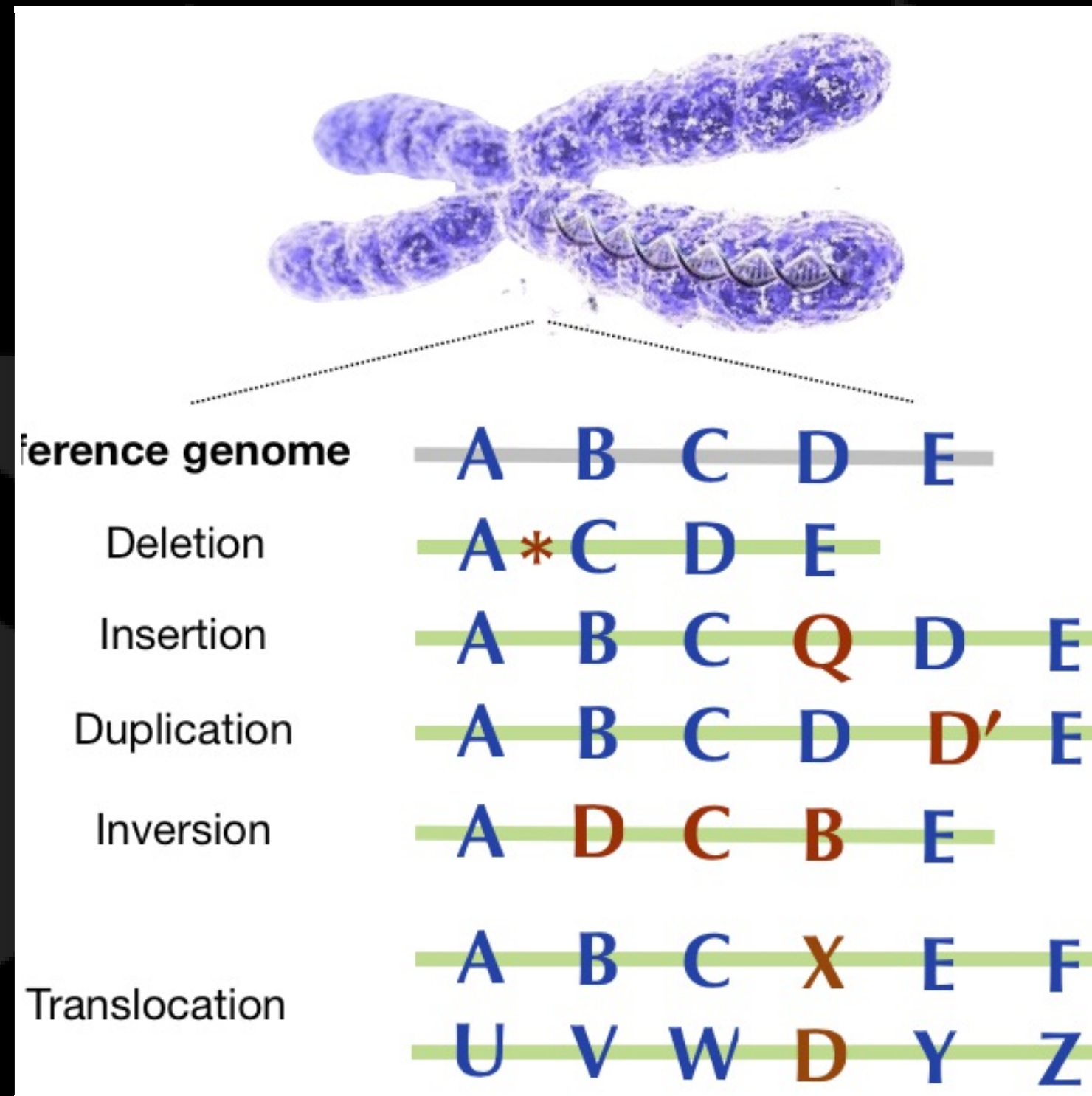
(FASTQ format)

...AND THIS

```
#CHROM POS ID REF ALT QUAL FILTER INFO FORMAT NA00001
20 14370 rs6054257 G A 29 PASS NS=3;DP=14;AF=0.5;DB;H2 GT
20 17330 . T A 3 q10 NS=3;DP=11;AF=0.017 GT:GQ:DP:HQ 0|0:
20 1110696 rs6040355 A G,T 67 PASS NS=2;DP=10;AF=0.333,0.667
```

(genomic) Variant Call Format

... AND THIS TOO



SOMETIMES THIS AS SEEN IN RADARE-EXTRAS BCL SUPPORT

```
[0x0001391d 1% 115 s_1_1101.bcl]> pd $r @ entry0
```

```
, ;-- entry0:
```

```
,=< 0x0001391d      2c      A ; 11
```

```
| 0x0001391e      6e      G ; 27
```

```
| 0x0001391f      2e      G ; 11
```

```
`-> 0x00013920      83      T ; 32
```

```
0x00013921      6e      G ; 27
```

```
0x00013922      83      T ; 32
```

```
0x00013923      2f      T ; 11
```

```
0x00013924      6f      T ; 27
```

```
,=< 0x00013925      2c      A ; 11
```

```
| 0x00013926      2e      G ; 11
```

```
| 0x00013927      82      G ; 32
```

```
| 0x00013928      82      G ; 32
```

```
`-> 0x00013929      2f      T ; 11
```

```
0x0001392a      83      T ; 32
```

```
0x0001392b      2f      T ; 11
```

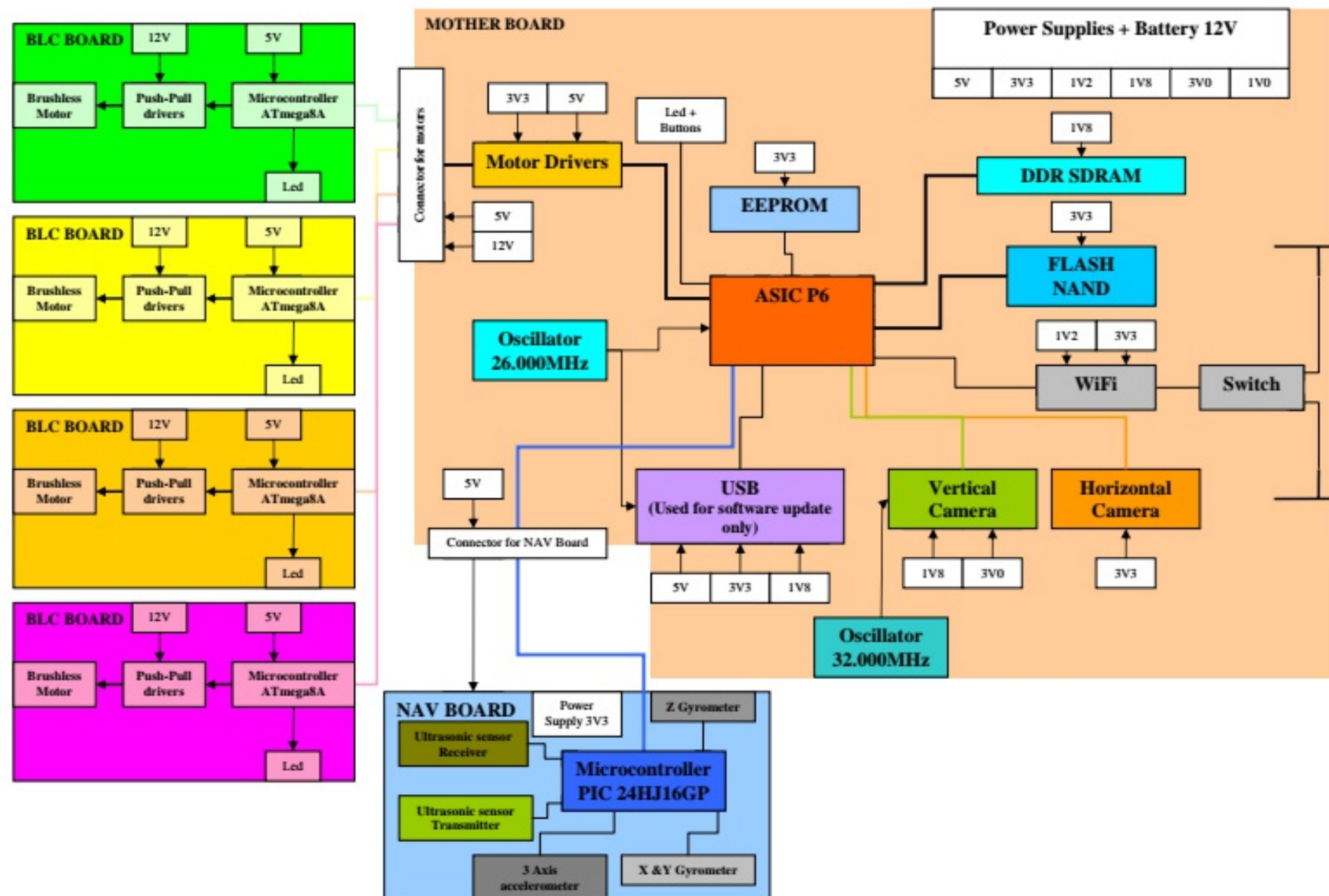
why am I here in 3 steps

1. A thing I own stopped working. I wanted to know why.
2. I inquired @trufae on radare's ARMv5 and AVR support.
3. Radare pullrequests [#5701](#) [#5453](#) [#5444](#) [#5247](#) [#5060](#) and [a few more issues](#). Impossible without @trufae and community patience and attention.

PLAN

1. Identify drone parts and ICs without opening anything (thanks to [Hugo Perquin](#) and [FCCID.io](#)).
2. Discard [MOSFETs failure](#). Focus on Atmega8 ICs onboard.
3. [Docker cross-compile support for radare2](#), avrdude, gdb.
4. [Read flash, lockbits and EEPROM from the motor AVRs](#).
5. [\(Auto-\)annotate the AVR interrupt vector table](#).
6. Try to figure out what does what, why and how.
7. [Report and help](#) with some [radare2 bugs](#) along the way, discussing with @trufae.

FCCID.IO SCHEMATIC



but what is wrong?

With the MOSFETs tested and healthy, there seems to be a software-only issue preventing to get one of the motors up and running:

```
$ telnet 192.168.1.1
# bin/program.elf
(...)
BLC motor 3 soft version 1.43, hard version 3.0, supplier 1.1, lot number 11/10, F
BLC call for motor 4
BLC motor 4 soft version 1.43, hard version 3.0, supplier 1.1, lot number 11/10, F
BLC motor 1 dead
BLC reflash required, perform off/on cycle
(...)
/home/aferran/.ardrone/mykonos/version/Mykonos/Soft/Build/./
../Soft/Toy//Os/elinux/Control/motors.c:1593.
Reason is Motors have not been initialized correctly !!!
```

MOSFETS

Applications

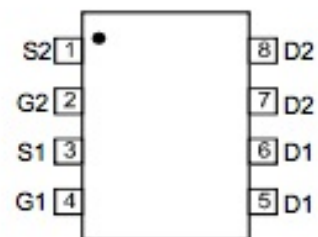
- Power Management Functions
- Analog Switch
- Load Switch

UL Flammability Classification Rating 94V-0

- Moisture Sensitivity: Level 1 per J-STD-020
- Terminals Connections: See Diagram
- Terminals: Finish - Matte Tin annealed over Copper lead frame
Solderable per MIL-STD-202, Method 208 ④③
- Weight: 0.072 grams (approximate)

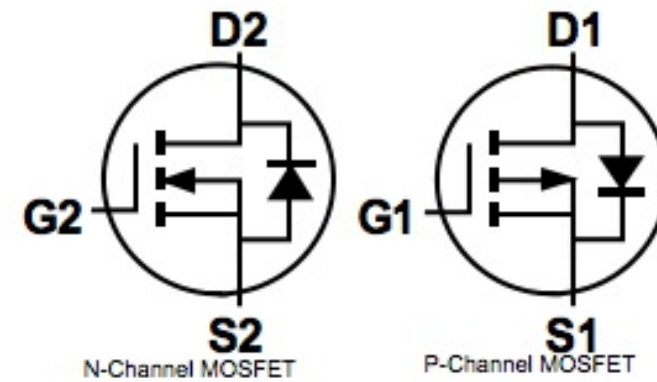


Top View

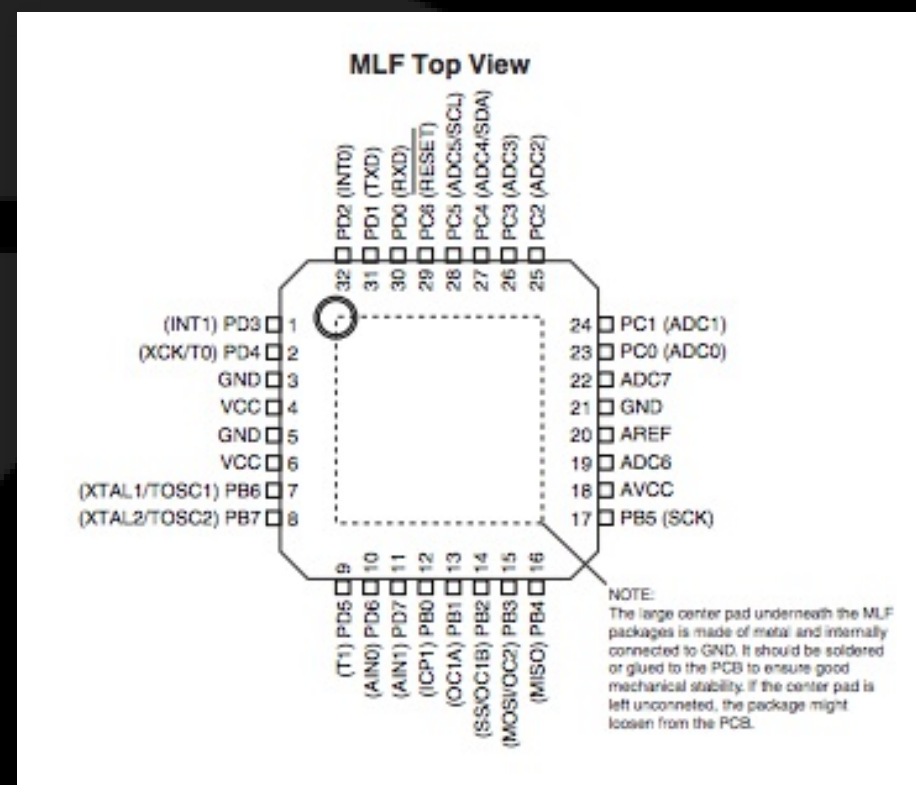


Top View

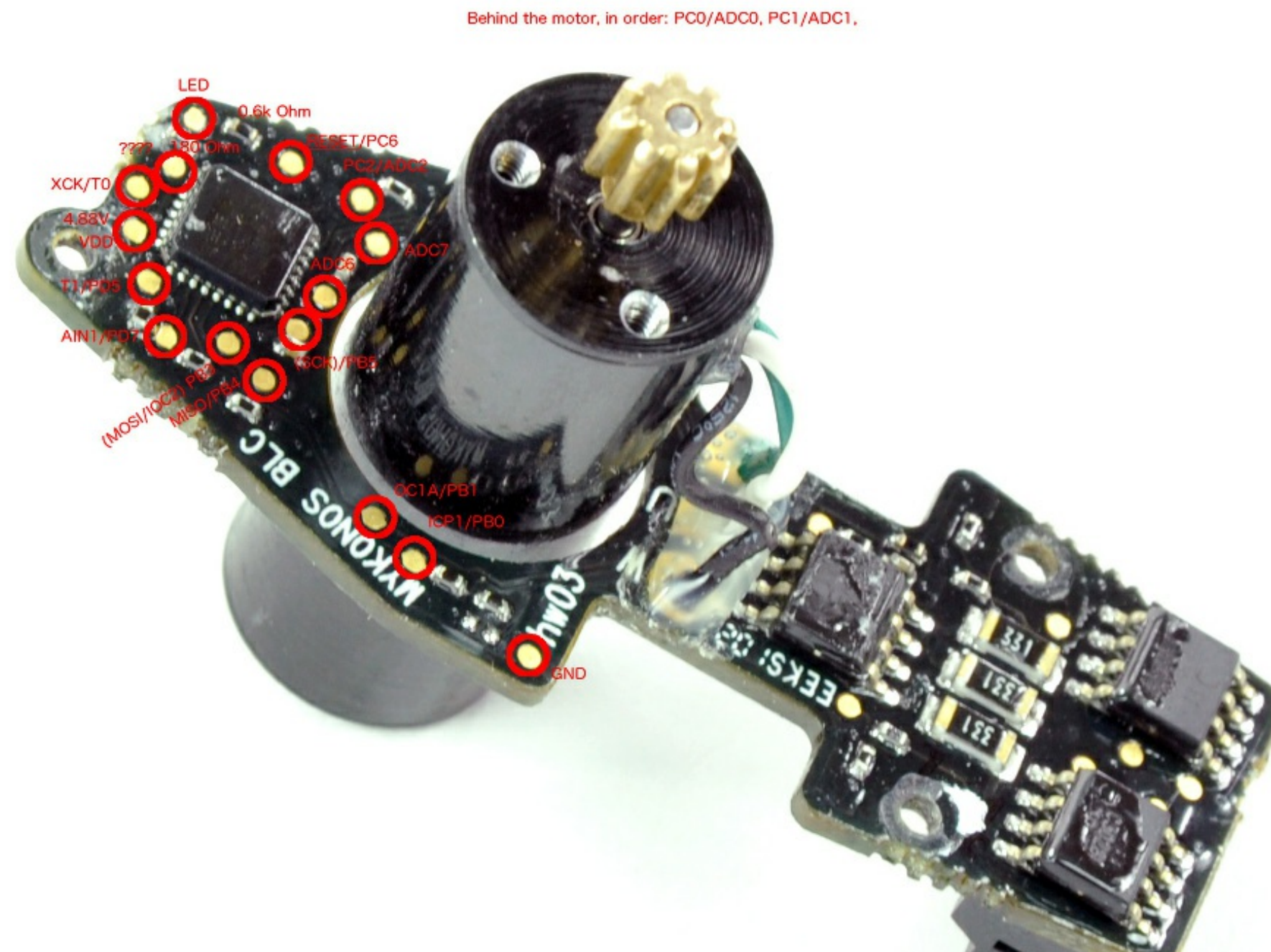
SO-8



ATMEL ATMEGA8A



DRONE BLC



Hugo Perquin points out that setting GPIOs that talk to the different motors go from 68 to 71:

```
gpio 68 -d i = select motor1
gpio 68 -d ho 0 = deselect motor1
gpio 69 -d i = select motor2
gpio 69 -d ho 0 = deselect motor2
gpio 70 -d i = select motor3
gpio 70 -d ho 0 = deselect motor3
gpio 71 -d i = select motor4
gpio 71 -d ho 0 = deselect motor4
```

So after typing a few commands in radare against **program.elf...**:

```
[0x00000000]> izzq~BLC      # looking for "BLC" (motor-related) str
[0x00000000]> s 0xbde40     # what is there around those strings?
[0x000bde40]> V
[0x000bde40]> s 0x28fcc     # hm, that function looks interesting
[0x00028fcc]> V
[0x00028fcc]> s 0x28b5c     # yeah, let's look at the callgraph
[0x00028b5c]> VV
```

STRINGS

```
[0x00000040]> izzq~BLC
0xbdbfc 38 37 BLC failed to allocate parsed memory\n
0xbdc30 19 18 BLC.hex too large\n
0xbdc44 12 11 BLC verify\n
0xbdc50 30 29 BLC verify FAILED - page %d \n
0xbdc70 15 14 BLC verify OK\n
0xbdc80 17 16 BLC start flash\n
0xbdc94 19 18 BLC flash aborted\n
0xbdca8 16 15 BLC flash done\n
0xbdcbb8 23 22 BLC call for motor %d\n
0xbdcdd0 45 44 BLC check BLC memory corruption on motor %d\n
0xbdd00 34 33 BLC memory corrupted on motor %d\n
0xbdd24 30 29 BLC erase memory on motor %d\n
0xbdd44 30 29 BLC start FAILED on motor %d\n
```


STRINGS CONT'D

```
0xbdd64 112 111 BLC motor %d soft version %d.%d, hard version %d.%d, supplied  
0xbddd4 35 34 BLC motor %d flash & start FAILED\n  
0xbddf8 23 22 BLC new hex available\n  
0xbde10 26 25 BLC backup hex available\n  
0xbde2c 19 18 BLC motor %d dead\n  
0xbde40 44 43 BLC reflash required, perform off/on cycle\n  
0xbded4 23 22 BLC fails to load hex\n  
0xbdeec 36 35 BLC UART warning: bad echo message\n  
0xbdf2c 29 28 BLC UART error during write\n  
0xbdf94 36 35 BLC UART error during reading echo\n  
0xbf314 25 24 /firmware/BLC.hex.backup  
0xbf330 18 17 /firmware/BLC.hex  
0xbf35c 29 28 Could not open BLC.hex file.
```

... we have the motors IOCTL/GPIO main logic from the ARMv5 IC. A.k.a "program.elf" inside the drone:

```
-----  
| [0x28b5c]  
| (fcn) sub.memset_b5c 1108  
| ; var int local_191h @ fp-0x191  
| ; var int local_190h @ fp-0x190  
| push {r4, r5, r6, r7, r8, sb, sl, fp, lr}  
| mov r0, 0x6b  
| sub sp, sp, 0x14  
| bl sub.ioctl_5d0 ;[a]  
| mov r1, 2  
| mov r0, 0x44  
| bl sub.ioctl_620 ;[b]  
| mov r1, 2  
| mov r0, 0x45  
| bl sub.ioctl_620 ;[b]  
| mov r1, 2  
| mov r0, 0x46  
| bl sub.ioctl_620 ;[b]  
| mov r1, 2  
| mov r0, 0x47  
| bl sub.ioctl_620 ;[b]  
| bl sub.memset_c88 ;[c]  
| subs sb, r0, 0  
| beq 0x28ccc ;[d]  
-----
```

t f

```
-----  
| 0x28ccc  
| bl sub.rename_4d8 ;[e]  
| bl sub.memset_c88 ;[c]  
-----  
| 0x28ba8  
| mov r0, 7  
| ldr r1, [pc, 0x26c]  
-----
```

IOCTL'S RAX2'D

```
$ rax2 0x44 0x45 0x46 0x47  
68  
69  
70  
71
```

BLC_MOTORS_MAIN

```
=====
| 0x56c5c |
| mov r0, r4 |
| pop {r4, r5, r6, pc} |
=====
| 0x56c64 |
| str ip, [r4] |
| bl sub.setvbuf_83c ;[k] |
| ldr r1, [pc, 0x5c] |
| ldr r2, [pc, 0x5c] |
| ldr r0, [pc, 0x5c] |
| b blc_start_flash ;[l] |
=====
v
|
|-----|
|
|-----|
| 0x281f0 |
| (fcn) blc_start_flash 256 |
| ; var int local_b8h @ fp-0xb8 |
| push {r4, r5, r6, r7, r8, sb, sl, fp, lr} |
| cmp r0, 0 |
| sub sp, sp, 0xac |
| str r0, [sp, 0xc] |
| beq 0x2836c ;[a] |
=====
f t
|-----|
|
```

BLC_MOTORS_* FUNCTIONS TL;DR

1. Read and/or backup the AVR ihex file for the motor(s) in the drone's linux UBIFS filesystem.
2. `radiff2 atmega8.ihex BLC.hex` was broken. @trufae fixed it.
3. Make sure motors are ok and reflash them as needed.
4. Send commands to the motors, check status. Cutout flip-flops when drone crashes.

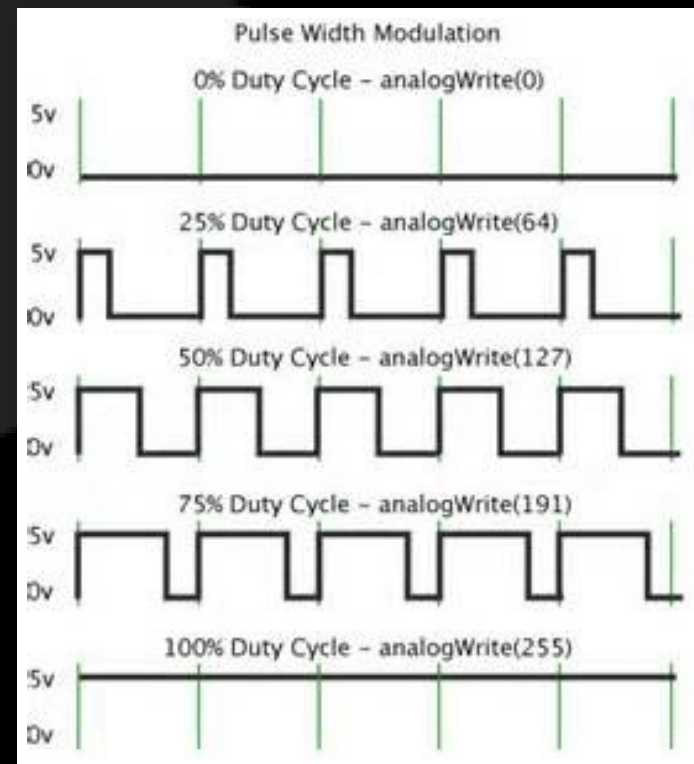
ATMEGA8A IN EACH BLC

```
[0x00000002 0% 200 ihex://flash_blc.hex]> pd $r @ sym.vector.int0
    > ;-- vector.int0:
    > 0x00000002    2cc0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- vector.int1:
    > 0x00000004    2bc0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- vector.timer2cmp:
    > ;-- sym.vector.timer2_compare_match:
    > 0x00000006    2ac0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- vector.timer2ovf:
    > ;-- sym.vector.timer2_overflow:
    > 0x00000008    c5c3    rjmp timer2_overflow    ;[2] ; relative jump
    > ;-- vector.timer1capt:
    > ;-- sym.vector.timer1_capture_event:
    > 0x0000000a    28c0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- vector.timer1cmpa:
    > ;-- sym.vector.timer1_compare_match_A:
    > 0x0000000c    33c3    rjmp sym.syscall.timer1cmpa ;[3] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.timer1_compare_match_B:
    > 0x0000000e    54c3    rjmp sym.syscall.timer1_compare_match_B ;[4] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.timer1_overflow:
    > 0x00000010    57c3    rjmp 0x1aa_SRAM_access    ;[5] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.timer0_overflow:
    > 0x00000012    24c0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.serial__spi__transfer_complete:
    > 0x00000014    23c0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.usart_Rx_complete:
    > 0x00000016    08c5    rjmp sym.syscall.usart_Rx_complete ;[6] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.usart_data_register_empty:
    > 0x00000018    21c0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.usart_Tx_complete:
    > 0x0000001a    dec4    rjmp USART_TX_complete    ;[7] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.ADC_conversion_complete:
    > 0x0000001c    1fc0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
    > ;-- sym.vector.EEPROM_ready:
    > 0x0000001e    1ec0    rjmp 0x5c    ;[1] ; relative jump
```

TIMERS FOR PWM

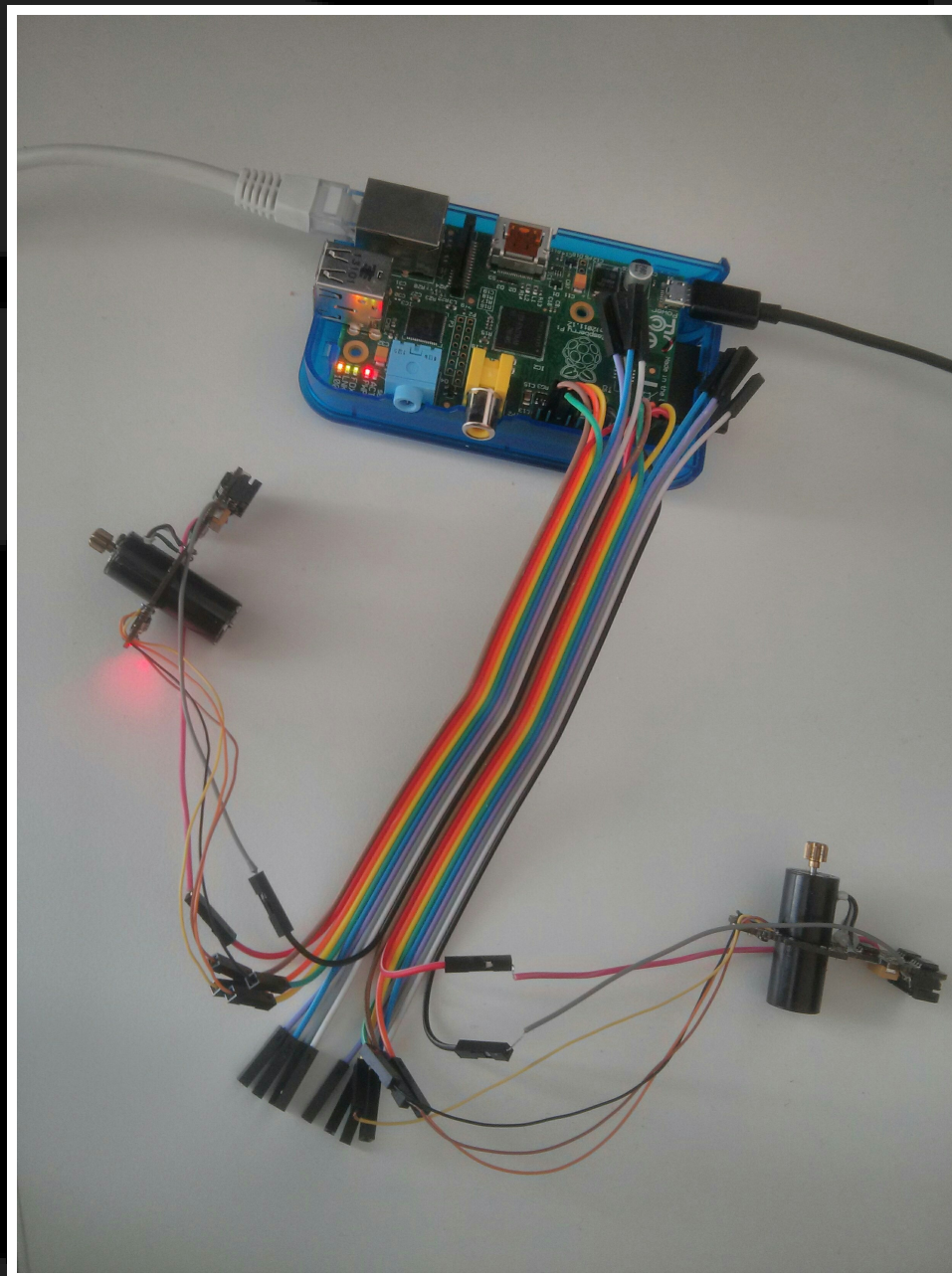
```
0x00000224    84e0    ldi r24, 0x04    ; LDI Rd,K. load immediate; sym.vector.int1
0x00000226    83bf    out 0x33, r24    ; IO TCCR0: Timer/Counter Control Register 0
0x00000228    84e6    ldi r24, 0x64    ; LDI Rd,K. load immediate
0x0000022a    82bf    out 0x32, r24    ; IO TCNT0: Timer/Counter Register 0 (8 bits)
0x0000022c    89b7    in r24, 0x39     ; IO TIMSK: Timer/Counter Interrupt Mask
0x0000022e    8e7f    andi r24, 0xfe   ; logical AND with immediatend
0x00000230    89bf    out 0x39, r24    ; IO TIMSK: Timer/Counter Interrupt Mask
0x00000232    88b7    in r24, 0x38     ; IO TIFR: Timer/Counter Interrupt Flag Register
0x00000234    8160    ori r24, 0x01    ; logical OR with immediate
0x00000236    88bf    out 0x38, r24    ; IO TIFR: Timer/Counter Interrupt Flag Register
0x00000238    0895    ret              ; return from subroutine
0x0000023a    8aef    ldi r24, 0xfa    ; LDI Rd,K. load immediate
0x0000023c    84bd    out 0x24, r24    ; IO TCNT2: Timer/Counter2 (8 bits).
0x0000023e    1092a001 sts 0x1a0, r1     ; store direct to SRAM
0x00000242    87e0    ldi r24, 0x07    ; LDI Rd,K. load immediate
0x00000244    85bd    out 0x25, r24    ; IO TCCR2: Timer/Counter2 Control Register (8 bits).
0x00000246    12bc    out 0x22, r1     ; IO ASSR: Asynchronous Operation of the Timer/Counter.
0x00000248    88b7    in r24, 0x38     ; IO TIFR: Timer/Counter Interrupt Flag Register
0x0000024a    8064    ori r24, 0x40    ; logical OR with immediate
0x0000024c    88bf    out 0x38, r24    ; IO TIFR: Timer/Counter Interrupt Flag Register
0x0000024e    89b7    in r24, 0x39     ; IO TIMSK: Timer/Counter Interrupt Mask
0x00000250    8064    ori r24, 0x40    ; logical OR with immediate
0x00000252    89bf    out 0x39, r24    ; IO TIMSK: Timer/Counter Interrupt Mask
0x00000254    0895    ret              ; return from subroutine
0x00000256    81e0    ldi r24, 0x01    ; LDI Rd,K. load immediate
0x00000258    8002a001 sts 0x1a0, r1     ; store direct to SRAM
```

PWM



DIFFING HARDWARE

How does the "dead" motor compare to the "healthy" one?



FUSE BITS (03 FC): "DEAD" MOTOR

Manual fuse bits configuration

[Apply feature settings](#)

This table allows reviewing and direct editing of the AVR fuse bits. All changes will be applied instantly.

Note: ☐ means unprogrammed (1); ☒ means programmed (0).

Bit	Low	High
7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BODLEVEL Brown out detector trigger level	<input type="checkbox"/> RSTDISBL Disable reset
6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BODEN Brown out detector enable	<input type="checkbox"/> WTDON Enable watchdog
5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUT1 Select start-up time	<input type="checkbox"/> SPIEN Enable Serial programming and Data Downloading
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUT0 Select start-up time	<input type="checkbox"/> CKOPT Oscillator Options
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CKSEL3 Select Clock Source	<input type="checkbox"/> EESAVE EEPROM memory is preserved through chip erase
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CKSEL2 Select Clock Source	<input type="checkbox"/> BOOTSZ1 Select Boot Size
1	<input type="checkbox"/> CKSEL1 Select Clock Source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOOTSZ0 Select Boot Size
0	<input type="checkbox"/> CKSEL0 Select Clock Source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOOTRST Select Reset Vector

[Apply manual fuse bit settings](#)

Current settings

These fields show the actual hexadecimal representation of the fuse settings from above. These are the values you have to program into your AVR device. Optionally, you may fill in the numerical values yourself to preset the configuration to these values. Changes in the value fields are applied instantly (taking away the focus)!

Low	High	Action	AVRDUDE arguments
0x03	0xFC	Apply values Defaults Apply manual changes to the values on the left side, or load factory default values for the selected device.	<code>-U lfuse:w:0x03:m -U hfuse:w:0xfc:m</code> Select (try triple-click) and copy-and-paste this option string into your avrdude command line. You may specify multiple -U arguments within one call of avrdude.

FUSE BITS (2F D0): GOOD MOTOR

Manual fuse bits configuration

[Apply feature settings](#)

This table allows reviewing and direct editing of the AVR fuse bits. All changes will be applied instantly.

Note: ☐ means unprogrammed (1); ☒ means programmed (0).

Bit	Low	High
7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BODLEVEL Brown out detector trigger level	<input type="checkbox"/> RSTDISBL Disable reset
6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BODEN Brown out detector enable	<input type="checkbox"/> WTDON Enable watchdog
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4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUT0 Select start-up time	<input type="checkbox"/> CKOPT Oscillator Options
3	<input type="checkbox"/> CKSEL3 Select Clock Source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EESAVE EEPROM memory is preserved through chip erase
2	<input type="checkbox"/> CKSEL2 Select Clock Source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOOTSZ1 Select Boot Size
1	<input type="checkbox"/> CKSEL1 Select Clock Source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOOTSZ0 Select Boot Size
0	<input type="checkbox"/> CKSEL0 Select Clock Source	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOOTRST Select Reset Vector

[Apply manual fuse bit settings](#)

Current settings

These fields show the actual hexadecimal representation of the fuse settings from above. These are the values you have to program into your AVR device. Optionally, you may fill in the numerical values yourself to preset the configuration to these values. Changes in the value fields are applied instantly (taking away the focus)!

Low	High	Action	AVRDUDE arguments
0x2F	0xD0	Apply values Defaults Apply manual changes to the values on the left side, or load factory default values for the selected device.	<code>-U lfuse:w:0x2f:m -U hfuse:w:0xd0:m</code> Select (try triple-click) and copy-and-paste this option string into your avrdude command line. You may specify multiple -U arguments within one call of avrdude.

EEPROM

```
$ diff -u motor1/eeprom.hex motor2/eeprom.hex
--- motor2/eeprom.hex      2016-06-06 08:47:26.815120557 +0000
+++ motor1/eeprom.hex      2016-06-06 09:35:17.664976258 +0000
@@ -1,4 +1,4 @@
-:20000000AC8A0001018A0A110BFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
+:20000000FF030001010B0A120B0AFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
:20002000FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
:20004000FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
:20006000FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
```

No idea what this is yet... did I mention we badly need ESIL
for AVR to make sense of memory mappings?

AVRDUDE SAVES THE DAY

```
avrdude -p m8 -C /etc/avrdude.conf -c motor_1 -e  
avrdude -p m8 -C /etc/avrdude.conf -c motor_1 -U flash:w:flash.hex:i
```

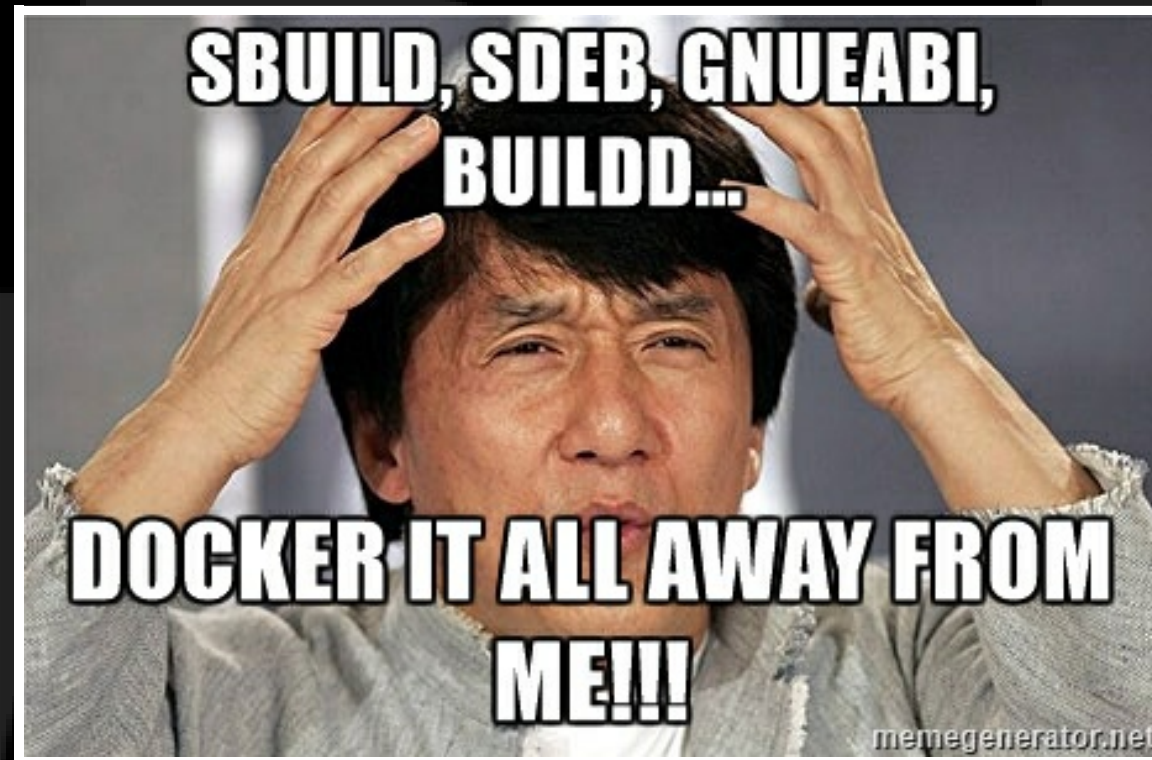
Erasing the entire chip and flashing the flash section back.

AVRDUDE INSIDE THE DRONE

Thought: why not put AVRdude inside the drone for when things go wrong again with the motor(s)?

ARMv5 does not have "hardfloat" support, so any recent cross-compiler will result into an "Illegal instruction" error.

Setting up a cross-compiling toolchain is a bit of a PITA.



WRAP THE MESS INSIDE DOCKER WITH DOCKCROSS

<http://radare.today/posts/dockcross/>

(and cross-compile radare2 for ARMv5 while we are at it)

**CAPTURE THE
R2CON2016 PRIZE!**

THIS DRONE CAN BE YOURS!



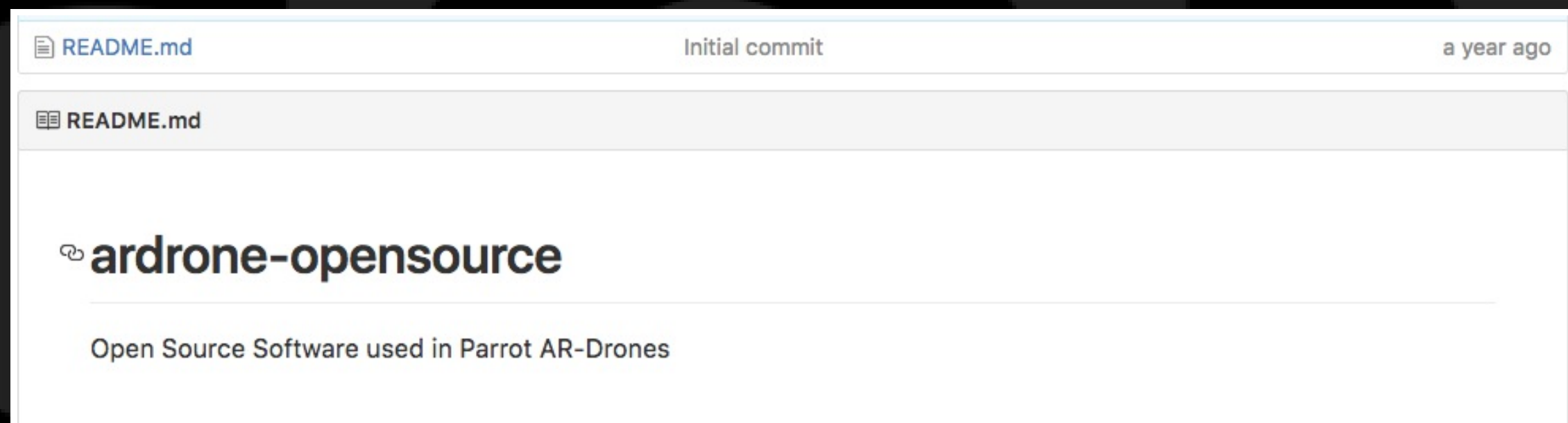
WITH A LITTLE BIT OF ESIL HACKING

82	84	op->type2 = 0;
✚		@@ -86,6 +88,7 @@ static int avr_op(RAnal *anal, RAnalOp *op, ut64 addr, const ut8 *buf, int len)
86	88	}
87	89	if (ins == 0) {
88	90	op->type = R_ANAL_OP_TYPE_NOP;
	91	+ r_strbuf_setf (&op->esil, ",");
89	92	op->cycles = 1;
90	93	}
91	94	if (buf[1] == 1) { //MOVW
✚		@@ -260,6 +263,7 @@ static int avr_op(RAnal *anal, RAnalOp *op, ut64 addr, const ut8 *buf, int len)
260	263	break;

```
(fcn) init_flags_and_SP 260
; CALL XREF from 0x00000200 (serial_and_all_about_the_timers)
0x0000005e    cf92    TODO,push r12    ; push register on stack
0x00000060    df92    TODO,push r13    ; push register on stack
0x00000062    ef92    TODO,push r14    ; push register on stack
0x00000064    ff92    TODO,push r15    ; push register on stack
0x00000066    cf93    TODO,push r28    ; push register on stack
0x00000068    df93    TODO,push r29    ; push register on stack
0x0000006a    cdb7    TODO,in r28, 0x3d ; IO SPL: Stack lower bits SP0-SP7
0x0000006c    deb7    TODO,in r29, 0x3e ; IO SPH: Stack higher bits SP8-SP10
0x0000006e    2897    TODO,sbiw r28, 0x08 ; subtract immediate from word
0x00000070    0fb6    TODO,in r0, 0x3f   ; IO SREG: flags
0x00000072    f894    TODO,cli          ; clear global interrupt flag
0x00000074    debf    TODO,out 0x3e, r29 ; IO SPH: Stack higher bits SP8-SP10
```

OR JUST TROLL AROUND

1. Fork <https://github.com/Parrot-Developers/ardrone-opensource>
2. Pullrequest a real opensource clone of program.elf and flash_blc.hex.
3. Hint: <https://github.com/cbarox/ardrone>. No AVR OSS part yet though.



FUTURE WORK

1. Determine the meaning of the EEPROM contents.
2. ESIL support for AVR!!!
3. Port [F# radare script from the AVR Russians](#).
4. Share binaries with encrypted project files, integrate with radare-cloud.
5. Fix/try more (working!) simulators like [simavr_emscripten](#) and [javr](#).

QUESTIONS?