

Agenda

- What's a pager?
- Who is using pagers?
- There is no pager security
- What pager messages look like
- Who is intercepting pager messages?
- Pager protocols (POCSAG & FLEX)
- Receiving pager frequencies (Modifying pagers, Radio Scanning, Software Defined Radio)
- Software to decode pager messages
- Pager frequencies in Australia (how to find them)
- Legal issues
- Online pager databases
- Security issues
- How to decode pager messages

Pagers

Tone/Vibrate Only



Numeric Pagers



AlphaNumeric Pagers





Restaurant Pagers are a different technology















Pager users before



Pager users now





- Healthcare workers
- Emergency vehicles
- Security patrols
- Courier drivers
- System administrators
- Gangstas
- Businessmen



Why are they still using pagers?

TXT messages aren't reliable enough

TXTs can take hours to deliver, or are never delivered.

Advantages of pagers over TXT messages

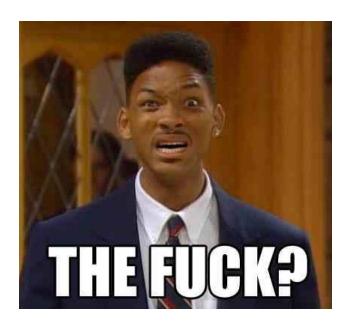
- Longer battery life
- Larger coverage area
- Higher availability
- Immediate delivery
- Can set up your own internal pager service



Pager security

There is no pager security

Messages are sent one-way in plaintext across a large geographic area.



Pager messages

Address Time Date Protocol Type BPS

0362617 23:50:00 28-01-12 POCSAG-3 ALPHA 1200 KINGSTON 57 CODE 9 13 CASUALTIES 1 TRANSPORT ETA 20 MINS TO DEPOT JULIE 0421-118-962

0416465 23:49:45 28-01-12 POCSAG-3 ALPHA 1200 2012-01-28 23:49:34 UP hbs-syd09-fw02b :Ack: - :Info:PING OK - Packet loss = 0%, RTA = 11.15 ms :Name:hbs-syd09-fw02b (10.5.44.218) Lloyds - Treasury External

Who is listening?

Hobbyists who like HAM radio, tracking trains, fire, etc People monitoring emergency broadcasts













There is a thriving community at www.aussiescanners.com/forum/



Who else is listening?

- Stalkers?
- Towing companies (illegal)
- Private investigators / Journalists
- BlackHat hackers
 - Appeared in Phrack in 1994
- Security consultants





Pager protocols

The main pager protocols are

POCSAG

FLEX

ERMES

POCSAG Protocol

- Most common in Australia
- Developed by the British Post Office in 1981
- TONE Only, Numeric, Alphanumeric
- Speeds: 512, 1200, 2400 bps
- FSK Modulation with a +/- 4.5 kHz shift on the carrier.
- Alphanumeric messages are encoded in 7 bit ASCII.



Pager protocols

FLEX protocol

- Commonly used in Australia
- Developed by Motorola in 1993
- Only AlphaNumeric
- Speeds: 1600, 3200, 6400 bps
- 2 Level FSK (1600, 3200)
- 4 Level FSK (3200, 6400)
- Believed (erroneously) to to be more secure than POCSAG

ERMES protocol

- European Radio Messaging System
- 4 Level FSK







Receiving pager radio frequencies

Software Defined Radio



Costs under \$20 on ebay Very large frequency range 100KHz to 1.5GHz

Radio scanner



Costs about \$100-\$300
Gaps in frequency ranges
Optional discriminator mod,
and data slicer

Modified pager



Costs about \$20-\$100

Fixed frequency

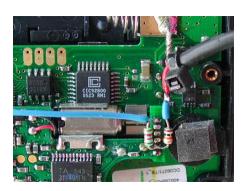
Output to serial

Hack a pager

- Costs about \$20-\$100
- Audio or serial RS232 output
- Decode with software

- Requires soldering
- Fixed frequency







Instructions for Motorola Bravo, Apollo, and many others

Decoding pager messages with a radio scanner

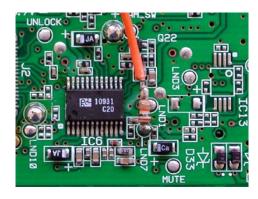
- Costs about \$100-\$300
- Radio scanner with headphone jack connected to sound card with line-in
- Use software to decode pager messages
- Scanners have gaps in frequencies ranges (not a problem for pagers)
- Unmodified radio scanner
 - Turn squelch off
 - Carefully find best volume for decoding
 - Can't decode FLEX messages (2400 BPS+)

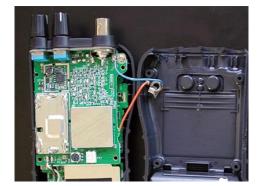


Discriminator taps for radio scanners

- A discriminator tap provides an unfiltered audio jack
- Bypass squelch and audio filters
- Decode higher data rates (2400 BPS)
- More reliable decoding
- Discriminator.nl has instructions for
 - Uniden Bearcat
 - Realistic
 - Commtel
 - Albercht
 - AOR
 - Atron
 - GRE
 - And many more



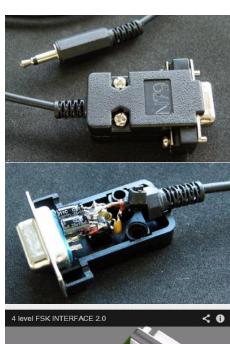


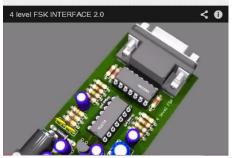


http://www.discriminator.nl/index-en.html

Data slicers for radio scanners

- Audio input from radio scanner
- Serial RS232 output
- Better with discriminator tap
- 2 Level FSK data slicer
 - Hamcomm modem
- 4 Level FSK data slicer
 - Faster protocols like FLEX & ERMES
- Instructions at http://discriminator.nl/2level/index-en.html
- Buy a 4 level FSK for EUR 50.00





SDR (Software Defined Radio)

Costs under \$20 on eBay
Cheap SDR units designed for TV

Very large frequency range

100KHz to 1.5GHz
 Look for the RTL2832 chipset
 Windows and Linux drivers
 Thriving open-source community

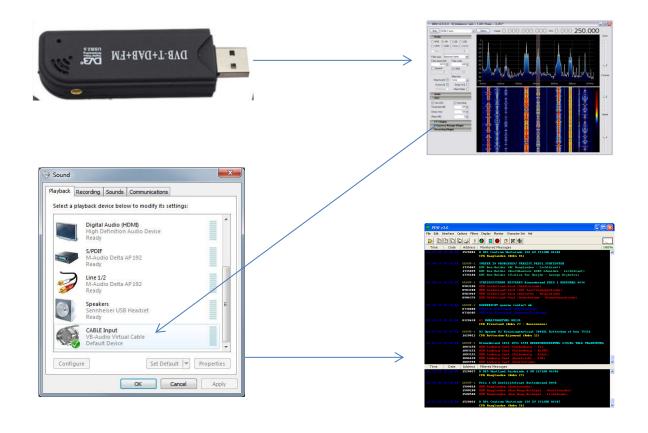
Can be used for

- Decoding pagers
- Watching TV (HD)
- Listening to the radio
- Satellite TV finder (with dish)
- Radio Astronomy (wish dish)
- Passive RADAR



Software and articles at www.rtl-sdr.com

Pager decoding with SDR



Make audio available to other apps using virtual audio cables

Configuring SDR Sharp

Select Frequency

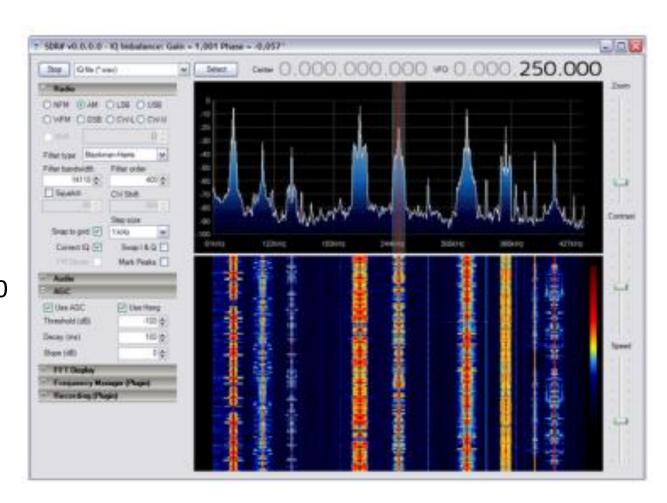
Narrow band FM

Turn off squelch

Set sample rate 48000

Set AF Gain (high)

Select output audio device (virtual cable)



Pager Decoding Software

- PDW
 - Best
 - WindowsOpen source since 2013
 - Works with audio, data slicers, serial, etc
 - POCSAG, FLEX, ERMES, ACARS
 - http://www.gsm-antennes.nl/PDW/
- Multimon
 - Linux
 - POCSAG, AX.25, DTMF and ZVEI
 - http://www.baycom.org/~tom/ham/linux/multimon.html

```
File Edit Interface Options Filters Display Monitor Character Set Hel
KWC Ben-Helder (Hoofdkantoor KNRM IJmuiden - Lichtkrant)
                        1 DWARSVAARTURG ROTH.
                        A2 Opname A2 Kruiningenstraat 3086KL Rotterdam rt bon 75321
                 1003152
                 1004420
        19-10-08 GROUP-1 Prio 1 GV Goetlijfstraat Buitenbrand 0030
                1520026 B BP1 Centrum Westeinde 150 GV 2512HH 84387
```

Finding pager frequencies

Frequencies commonly used 43 MHz 148 MHz 450 MHz

Australian Government Frequency Allocation

acma.gov.au Register of Radiocommunications Licences Search Assignments by Post Code and/or Frequency Range Low Postcode 3000 High Postcode 4000 Low Frequency 140 MHz ▼ High Frequency MHz ▼ 160 Run Enquiry [New Search] acma.gov.au Register of Radiocommunications Licences Assignments found Results 1 - 50 of 2941 assignments. Frequency Emission Designator Client Licence Number 10379-43568 154.35 MHz Essential Energy (1214220) 40840 16K0F3E 10385-34950 157.66 MHz 16K0F3E 40852 Essential Energy (1214220) 1100600-1100641 158.225 MHz 10K1F3E Amalgamated Taxis Wodonga (124859) 180012 1101889-1102114 148.5625 MHz 16K0F2D Vodafone Hutchison Australia Pty Limited 1104290 (20012076) 1101890-1102115 148.6375 MHz 16K0F2D Vodafone Hutchison Australia Pty Limited 1104291 (20012076)1101891-1102116 148.5625 MHz 16K0F2D Vodafone Hutchison Australia Ptv Limited 1104292 (20012076)1101892-1102117 148.6375 MHz 16K0F2D Vodafone Hutchison Australia Pty Limited 1104293

(20012076)

Client Details

Client Number	20012076

Organisation Name Vodafone Hutchison Australia Pty Limited

Trading Name Attention: Justin Nelson

Postal Address PO Box 1113 NORTH SYDNEY

NSW 2060

ACN 096304620

ABN 76096304620

Fee Status Normal

[New Client Search]

[400MHz Licences]

Licences Held

Results 1 - 50 of 455 licences.

Licence No	Licence Type	Licence Category	Callsign	Ship name	Status
1943608	Fixed	Point to Point	VMH960		Issued
1943607	Fixed	Point to Point	VMH959		Issued
1947526	Fixed	Point to Point	VZT823		Issued
1901200	Fixed	Point to Point	VLB229		Issued
1142402	Fixed	Point to Point	AXF287		Issued
1433222	Fixed	Point to Point	VL2HUT		Issued
1143221	Land Mobile	Paging System - Exterior	VNG455		Issued
1143219	Land Mobile	Paging System - Exterior	VNG453		Issued
1143218	Land Mobile	Paging System - Exterior	VNG452		Issued

Licence Details

Licence Number	1143221
Client	Vodafone Hutchison Australia Pty Limited
Status	Issued
Licence Type	Land Mobile
Licence Category	Paging System - Exterior
Callsign	VNG455
Date of Effect	19-APR-13
Date of Expiry	18-APR-14
Advisory Notes	Conditions applicable to the operation of Paging System station(s) authorised under this licence can be found in the Radiocommunications Licence Conditions (Apparatus Licence) Determination and the Radiocommunications Licence Conditions (Land Mobile Licence) Determination. Copies of these determinations are available from the ACMA and from the ACMA home page (www.acma.gov.au). NOTE: There may be additional text attached to the
	assignment associated with this licence.
	[New Licence Search]

Assignments for this Licence

ID		Emission Designator	Site Name
8163797-8157761	148.6375 MHz	16K0F2D	Fire Station Taloom St YELARBON (9000161)

Licence Details

Licence Number	1310372
Client	Crown Melbourne Limited
Status	Issued
Licence Type	Land Mobile
Licence Category	Paging System - Interior
Callsign	VJF649
Date of Effect	18-SEP-13
Date of Expiry	17-SEP-14
Advisory Notes	Conditions applicable to the operation of Paging System station(s) authorised under this licence can be found in the Radiocommunications Licence Conditions (Apparatus Licence) Determination and the Radiocommunications Licence Conditions (Land Mobile Licence) Determination. Copies of these determinations are available from the ACMA and from the ACMA home page (www.acma.gov.au). NOTE: There may be additional text attached to the assignment associated with this licence.
	[New Licence Search]

Assignments for this Licence

Results 1 - 1 of 1 assignments.

ID	Frequency	Emission Designator	Site Name
1308222-1306378	148.3375 MHz	16K0F3E	Crown Casino Site SOUTHBANK (100126)

Pager Frequencies in Victoria

- Orange / Hutchison
 - 148.5625 F1
 - 148.6375 F2 (Best)
- SAGRN
 - 148.8125 FLEX 1600
- Hospital Paging (Local)
 - -148.3375
- Emergency Altering System
 - 148.9125Mhz



Sending pager messages

This varies between countries

- Vodafone paging 24 hour call centre
- SMS to pager gateway
- E-mail to pager
- Web to pager
- Via modem and X25

Legal issues

 Each country has it's own rules regarding pager decoding.

 In Australia and New Zealand you cannot act on the data you decode.

 Illegal 'acting on information' includes tow-truck companies that monitor pagers to locate car crashes.

Online pager message databases

Australia

Provided by the South Australian Country
 Fire Service



- Live feed, includes Fire, Emergency, Security Patrols
- paging1.sacfs.org

Wikileaks

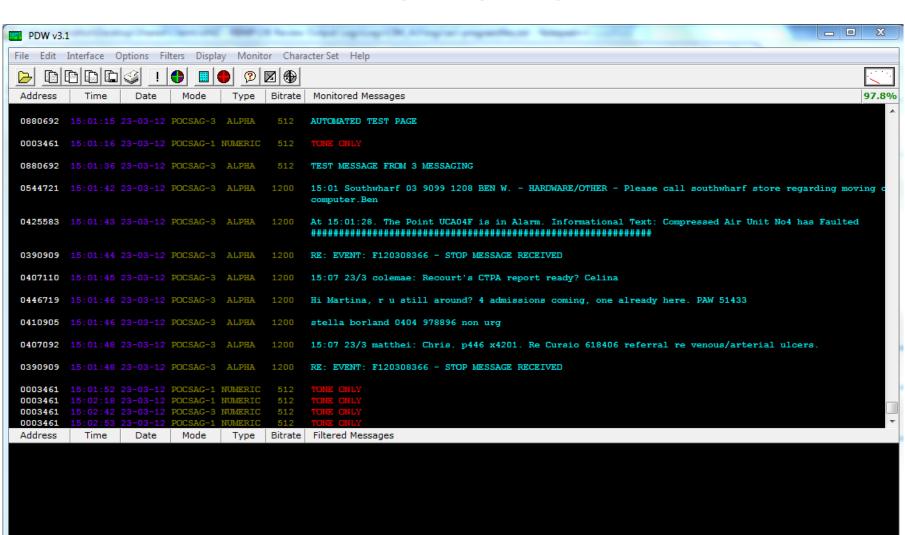
- 573,000 pager messages from 9/11/2001
- 911.wikileaks.org



Security issues

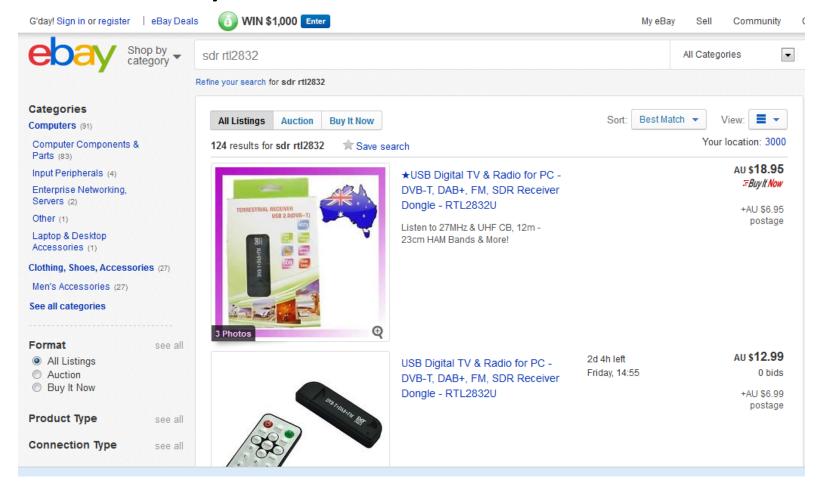
- No encryption / messages are in clear-text
- No assurance of message receipt
- No message sender identity assurance
- Message contents can be sensitive
 - Passwords and PIN codes
 - Locations of physical keys
 - Disclosure of names, usernames, IP addresses, hostnames, IT systems used
- Privacy compliance problems
 - Hospitals send personally identifiable information (PII) including names, addresses, and medical details
- Pager messages often fall outside the scope of penetration testing and security assessments.

Live Demo

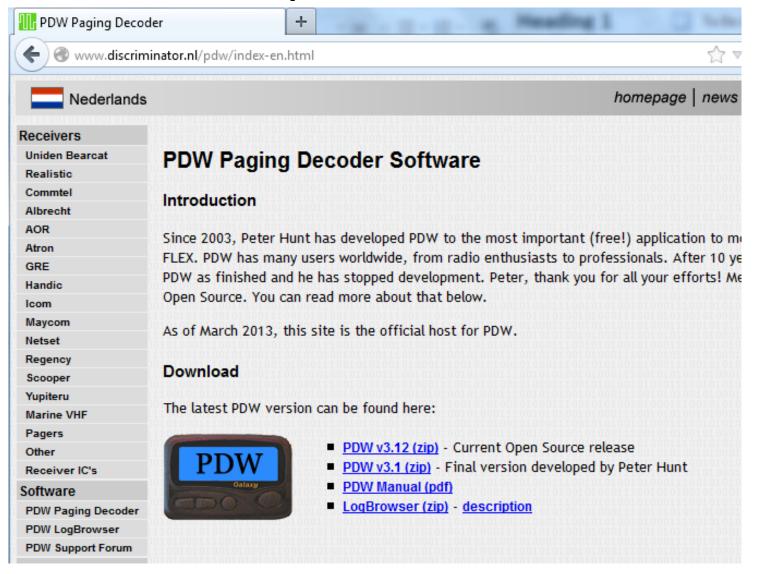


Getting set up

Search eBay for a SDR RTL



Setup: Get PDW



Setup: VB-CABLE



Setup: Get SDRSharp



sdrsharp.com/index.php/downloads



Search





BLOC DOWNLO ADS COT THE AIRSPY? Click here to register your interest! SUPPORT If you like this software, please support it by donating money, hardware (preferred) or simply write a good documentation and spread the word. Donate RECENT POSTS ADSB# - A simple and cheap ADS-B receiver using RTL-SDR Contributors Automatic IQ Correction Algorithm Source code RECENT COMMENTS

lu3aeo on Welcome

zabex on Welcome

lu3aeo on Welcome

tvdl on Welcome

MIETA

Register

Annunaki on Welcome

This page is updated every time a version is available. So, stay tuned!

- SDR# Stable (Revision 1000, Stable)
- SDR# Dev (Continuous Integration, Last Changed Rev: 1193)
- SDR# RTLSDR Plugin (Continuous Integration, Last Changed Rev:
- ADSB# v1.0.11.1, a SDR ADS-B Receiver in C# and its documentation
- · Source code (SVN)
- Changesets

Licensing

SDR# (SDRSharp) is released under the MIT license for the GUI and the plugin parts, and under the MS-RSL for the DSP. As such, you can:

- · Create, Modify and Redistribute plugins
- . Create, Modify and Redistribute the GUI in both its binary and source code forms under a different name (it's no longer SDR#!) preserving the original copyrights and licenses

But you cannot:

. Modify or Redistribute the DSP (SDRSharp.Radio.dll and its corresponding code)

Important note for RTL-SDR users

You can use this quick installation script to test the latest development

http://sdrsharp.com/downloads/sdr-install.zip

A step by step installation instructions can be found in the community website:

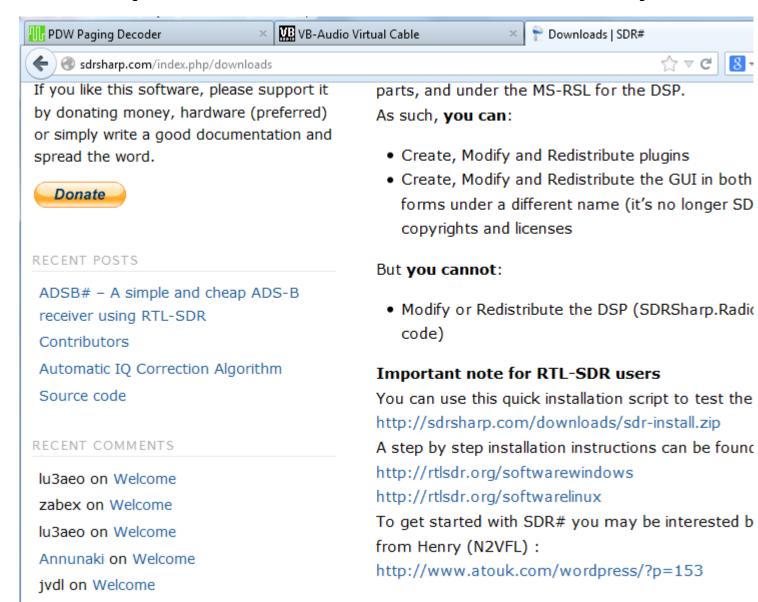
http://rtlsdr.org/softwarewindows http://rtlsdr.org/softwarelinux

To get started with SDR# you may be interested by the excellent document from Henry (N2VFL) :

http://www.atouk.com/wordpress/?p=153

Support

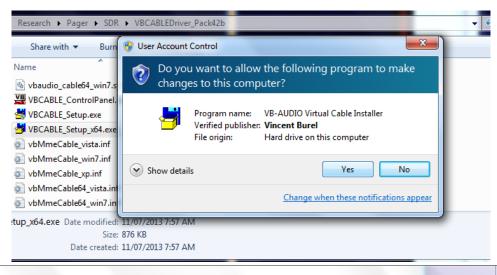
Setup: The latest SDRSharp ZIP

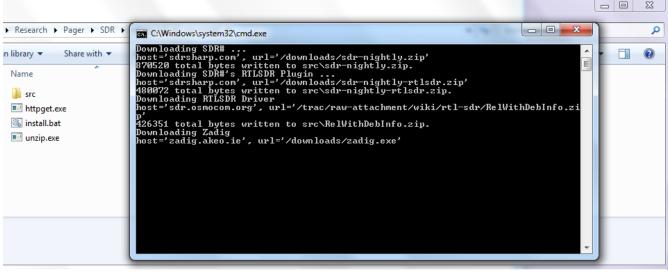


Setup: Unpack

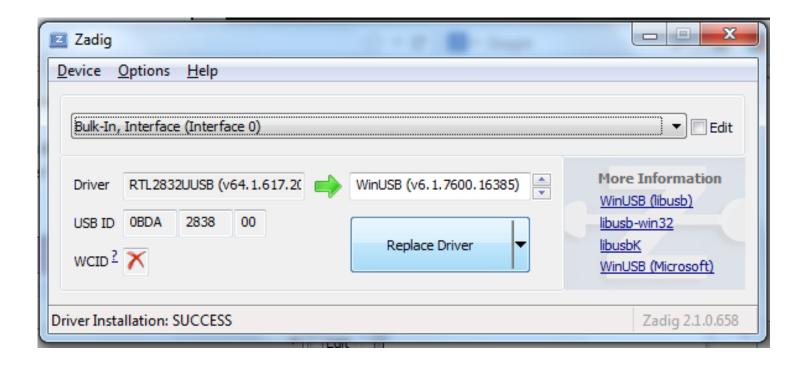
n library ▼ Share with ▼ Burn New folder				
Name	Date modified	Type	Size	
NBCABLEDriver_Pack42b.zip	27/03/2014 12:09	Compressed (zipp	1,031 KB	
引 sdr-install.zip	27/03/2014 12:10	Compressed (zipp	152 KB	
pdw3.12-full.zip	27/03/2014 12:08	Compressed (zipp	1,392 KB	
VBCABLEDriver_Pack42b	27/03/2014 12:11	File folder		
📗 sdr-install	27/03/2014 12:11	File folder		
pdw3.12-full	27/03/2014 12:10	File folder		

Setup: Install VB Cable

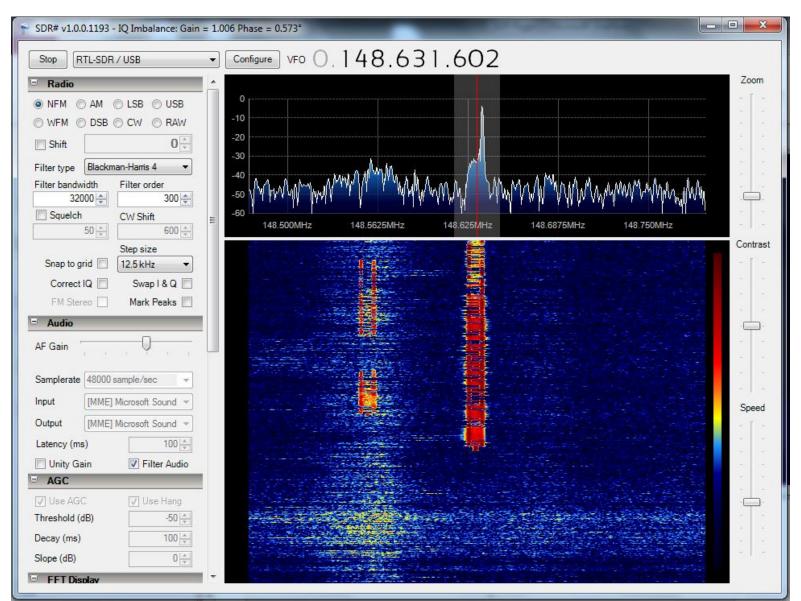




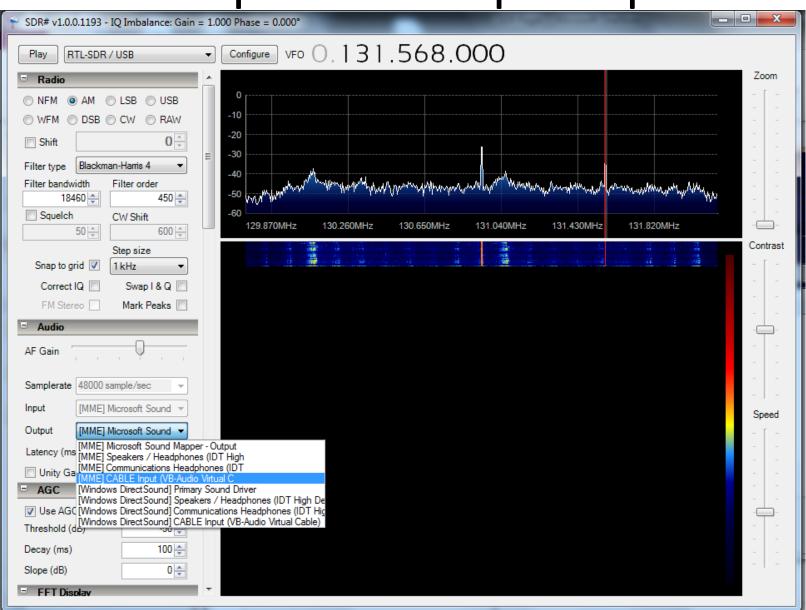
Setup: Zadig



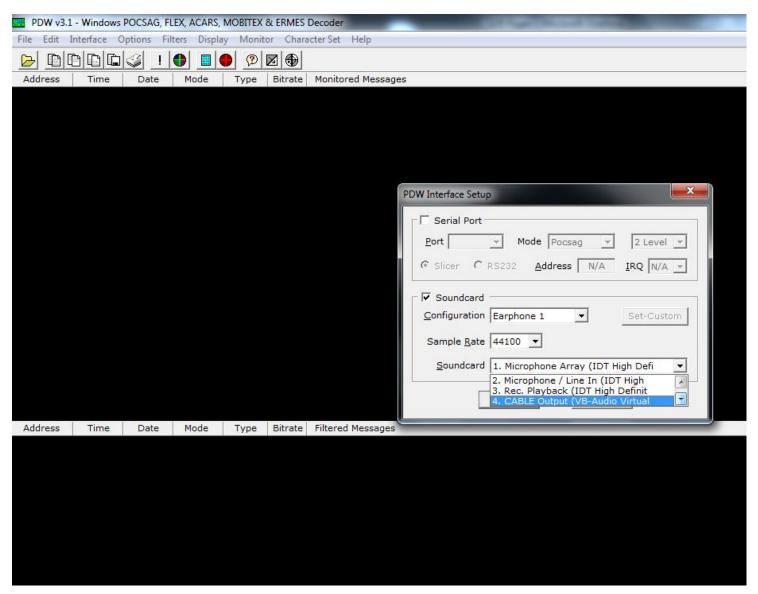
Setup: SDRSharp



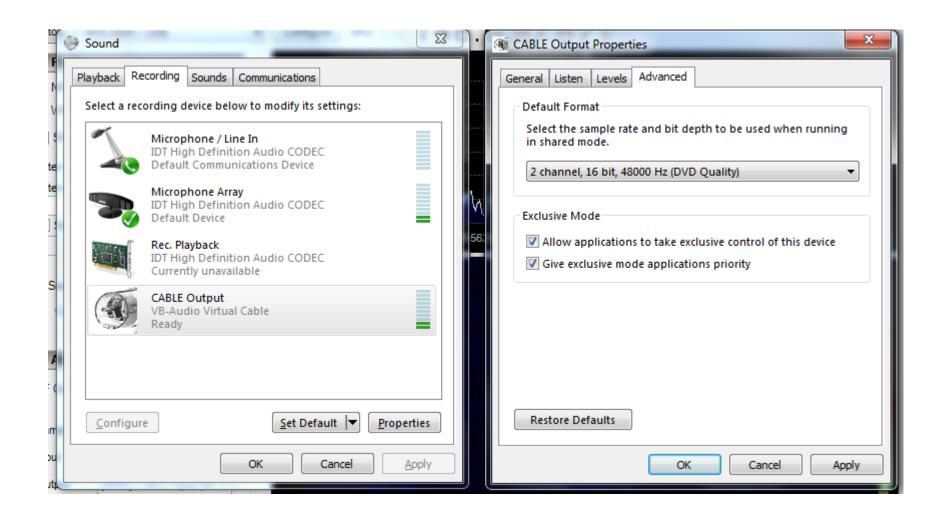
Setup: SDRSharp Output



Setup: PDW Input



Setup: VB Cables



Thank you for listening (in)



Learn more

Buy an SDR

 Search ebay for sdr. Look for the RTL2832U chip

Pager Decoding Software

www.gsm-antennes.nl/PDW/

SDR Sharp

sdrsharp.com

RTL SDR

Blog about SDR

Pagers and FLEX

www.nettwerked.net

The Wonderful World of Pagers by Erik Bloodaxe

Phrack Issue Forty-Six

Radio Scanner Discriminator Mods www.discriminator.nl

Australian Frequency Allocation

web.acma.gov.au

Database of Australian SAGRN Pager Messages

www.sascan.net.au

Live pager messages in NSW

• paging1.sacfs.org

Wikileaks pager messages from 9/11/2001

911.wikileaks.org