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# The DOGS praxis

# (preliminary document)

**Version 0.2 (CC1350)**



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# Preamble

The role of this praxis[[1]](#footnote-1) is to demonstrate the operation of the set of sensors onboard the CC1350 SensorTag (aka CC1350STK) and provide a generic tool for collecting sensor data from the device without having to connect it over a wire to a PC. It is intended for experiments where possibly large (relatively speaking) sets of data must be collected and stored for off-line analysis and interpretation.

After we have come up with some decent (tentative) GUI,[[2]](#footnote-2) I am going to upgrade the praxis with mechanisms facilitating high-speed data acquisition from the IMU (accelerometer) possibly involving compression and some kind of acknowledgments. The idea is to be able to collect IMU data with high reliability at the highest possible rate. While data from the remaining sensors may also be of interest, IMU is the primary concern.

This document is intentionally sketchy. Detailed information regarding the PCBs, the sensors, the PicOS platform, the RF interface, is contained in other documents by Texas Instruments and/or Olsonet Communications. Those documents are publicly available and can be easily obtained, e.g., from me.

# The devices

The setup involves two devices: a CC1350STK (see Figure 1) called the Tag in the sequel, and a LAUNCHXL-CC1350 (Figure 2) called the Peg and acting as the wireless interface between the Tag and the PC. The Tag is powered from a battery and can be freely moved around within the Tag-Peg transmission range, which is of order 100 m in open space. The wireless communication channel is neither BT nor WiFi. It is built around the so-called proprietary mode of CC1350 and operates within the 916 MHz ISM band.

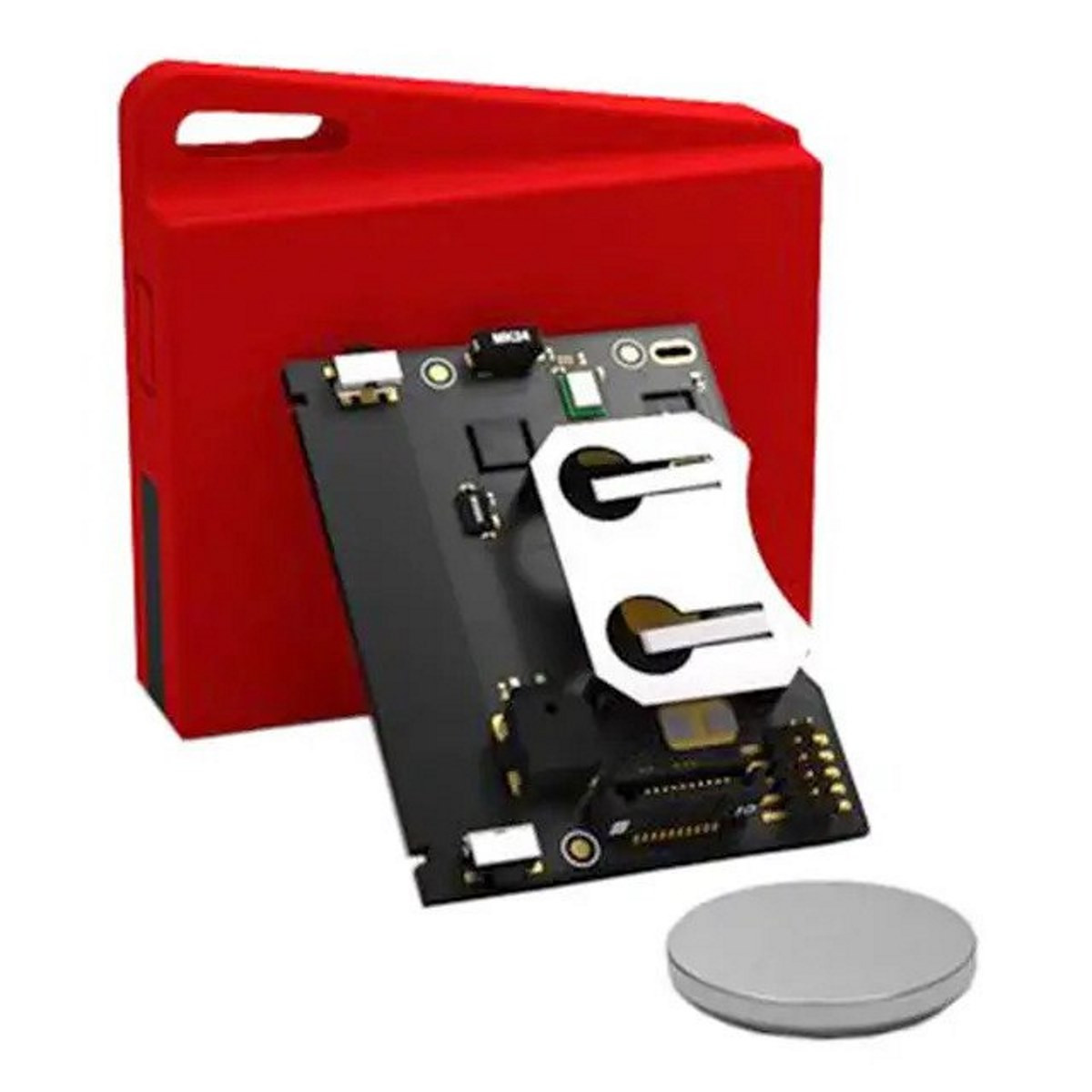


Figure 1: CC1350STK

The Tag is typically stored in a dormant state in which it uses practically zero battery power. There is no OFF switch, as such, on the device; however, the deepest sleep mode of the microcontroller effectively amounts to an OFF state because the battery drain is then negligible. To wake up the device from the dormant state, one should press Switch 1 (see Figure 3). The device will then reset to an active state, and the LED will blink twice.

Note that powering the device up (say by inserting the battery or connecting it via the USB debug interface) will cause it to go immediately dormant. Thus, pushing Switch 1 is necessary to bring the Tag to life after that. This way Switch 1 does its best to emulate a power switch.

Pressing Switch 1 while the device is active will have no effect unless the switch is held pressed for about 5 seconds. Then the LED will blink very quickly many times and the device will enter the dormant state. The switch should be released when the LED starts blinking. Otherwise, if the switch is still pressed when the LED is done blinking, the device will reset, but, finding the switch pressed upon restart, it will become active.



Figure 2: LAUNCHXL-CC1350

Switch 2 is not used at present. Switch 1 is the only means to control the device manually (without connecting to it from the Peg over the RF link). Note that the Tag can also be put to sleep remotely by a command from the Peg.

The Tag uses most power when sending data over the RF channel. With the transmitter continuously turned on, the device drains about 12 mA of current (at 3 V) which means that a 1000 mAh battery will last for about 3 days. CRC 2032 batteries, like the one shown in Figure 1) come in different qualities, with the nominal capacity typically advertised as ~200 mAh. That would translate into over 15 h of continuous streaming, although (at this current drain) figures in the ballpark of 2-3 hours are more likely.[[3]](#footnote-3) We shall study how far we can go using different kind of batteries, including AA and AAA.

If the radio is not used for 30 seconds (meaning there is no communication in either direction), the Tag enters the so-called WOR mode where it turns the radio off for some time, then listens for a short while, and so on, in a reasonably frugal duty cycle. In this mode, the battery will last for about a week (maybe more).[[4]](#footnote-4) A special request from the Peg is needed to activate the Tag in the WOR mode. The action takes about three seconds.

When the Tag starts (after the initial push of Switch 1), it enters the fully attentive mode, but if nothing happens for 30 seconds, it will transit to WOR. This will also happen when the Peg stops conversing with the Tag. To make sure that the battery drain is minimized, the Tag should be put to sleep (by pressing Switch 1 for 5 seconds). Of course, in that mode the Tag cannot respond to remote commands from the Peg.

# The sensors

The Tag is equipped with 5 sensors:

* MPU9250: accelerometer, gyro, compass, temperature combo
* HDC100: humidity and temperature combo
* SPH0641LM4H-1: one bit microphone
* OPT3001: ambient light sensor
* BMP280: air pressure and temperature combo

Technical details are provided in separate documents.[[5]](#footnote-5) Here I only include rudimentary description needed to understand the functionality of the application at hand. From now on, the sensors will be referred to by their selectors, i.e., names used in the application, which are, respectively: IMU, HUMIDITY, MICROPHONE, LIGHT, PRESSURE.

Three sensors, IMU, HUMIDITY, and PRESSURE, combine multiple functions (they consists of multiple, selectable, semi-independent components). IMU is the most prominent (most complex) representative of this group. Note that there are three different temperature components.[[6]](#footnote-6) Not a big surprise: many sensors provide temperature components on the side, so this is expected when you have a bunch of them.

The sensors can be independently configured. Also, for the three sensors consisting of multiple components, the components can be selected independently. Then, the sensors can be independently turned on and off. The operations of configuring a sensor and turning it on and off are separated.

The present application is a bit messy because the program running in the Tag caters to numerous tests and implements miscellaneous hooks that I needed to try out (experiment with) various things. Things can all be cleaned up when (if) we know what we want. If any *actual* functionality is expected from the thing, it is easier to remove and trim than to create and refine.

## Sampling and streaming

There are two ways to collect sensor data which we shall refer to as *sampling* and *streaming*. Sampling is available for all sensors, and for combinations of their selections at once, meaning that groups of data coming from different sensors can be sampled simultaneously as compound samples. Streaming is presently only available for the accelerometer component of the IMU. It provides for high-reliability, timed (synchronous) data collection from the accelerometer and is intended for research in canine behavior. Streaming looks like an extension of sampling that went a bit sideways and was consequently implemented as a separate function.

The sensors can be configured and turned on independently. Usually, a sensor is configured before being turned on, and it cannot be configured while being turned on, so it must be turned off, reconfigured, and turned on again. The action of configuring basically prepares a set of parameters for the sensor, so the operation of turning it on is simple (and takes no parameters). There is a streaming shortcut where the IMU (the only sensor that can be streamed) is configured and turned on, and then the proper streaming starts.

For sampling, we go through these steps:

1. configuring the sensors,
2. turning on those sensors that we want to deliver data (contribute to the sampling),
3. starting sample collection,

Following step 3, all the sensors that have been turned on will be sampled according to their configuration sending data over the RF channel to the Peg. The operation will continue until explicitly stopped by a command from the Peg.

The command to start sampling accepts the sampling rate as its single argument. The amount of data arriving in a single sample depends on the set of sensors that are turned on and the selection of their components. For example, each of the three main components of IMU, i.e., accelerometer, gyro, and compass, sends triplets of 16-bit values interpreted as vectors in 3-space, while the temperature component sends a single 16-bit value. Thus, if all four components of IMU are selected, the data sent by the sensor amounts to bytes. If multiple sensors are on, e.g., the IMU (configured with its all components selected) and the LIGHT sensor, then the data sent in a single sample will amount to bytes (the additional four bytes provided by the LIGHT sensor). The readings arriving in a sample are tagged with sensor identifiers, so they can be interpreted without the knowledge of sensor configuration.

The sampling rate is specified as the number of samples per minute. It is not particularly precise (the strobing clock is not extremely accurate), although the Tag tries to adjust it dynamically to maintain a consistent long-term rate (so the long-term rate will tend to converge to the specified rate). The maximum rate that can be legitimately specified is 15360 samples per minute, i.e., 256 samples per second, with the effective reachable rate about 160 samples per second. The minimum rate is 1 sample per minute.

## IMU modes

The whole project has been inspired by the IMU sensor (the not-so-original idea of using it for movement classification). The remaining sensors can be read (because they are available) but we see no immediate use for them.

The IMU can operate in two (or three, depending how one counts) modes. In the passive mode, the sensor only returns the readings of its selected components when explicitly polled for the next sample, according to the schedule determined by the sampling command in effect. This is also how all the remaining sensors *always* behave, if they are on during sampling.

Another mode of the sensor is the *motion detection* mode. When the IMU is configured this way, the accelerometer becomes its only active component, and the sensor triggers events on a configurable acceleration threshold. Configuring the IMU in this mode automatically selects the accelerometer component and disables the remaining components. The data sent by the sensor consists of the acceleration vector ( bytes) augmented by two more bytes ( bytes total). The extra two bytes amount to a 16-bit unsigned integer value returning the number of motion events triggered from the last readout.

An additional option available in the motion detection mode is the *report option*. When the option is off, the motion data is only collected via scheduled sampling, as for any other (passive) sensor that can be sampled. If the report option is on (note that the option is only effective in the motion detection mode), a motion event will automatically trigger a spontaneous sample report sent to the Peg. That sample arrives out of band and contains the IMU data only (8 bytes, as explained above), even if other sensors are also active (their values being collected and included in regular samples).

The third mode of the IMU sensor is used in streaming (one may call it the *synchronous* data extraction mode). In this mode, the sensor triggers events at prescribed regular intervals when new data becomes ready for acquisition. The mode provides the Tag with precise strobes driving the streamed samples, so the collection rate can be accurate. The available rates start at the high end of samples per second and go down to samples per second. They are internally determined by a *divider* of the base rate of Hz, whereby a value of between and indicates the number of ticks of the base clock to be skipped before triggering the event. For example, when , the rate is (the event occurs on every fourth tick of the base clock). Similar to the motion detection mode, the only active component of the IMU sensor in the streaming mode is the accelerometer. The values arriving from the sensor are the three coordinates of the acceleration vector reduced to 10 bits each and sent in packages (blocks) of 12 readings. The blocks are sent using a special communication protocol that tries to compensate for occasional packet losses in the radio channel with retransmissions. How far we can go with effective streaming rates is to be determined (we need to experiment with different RF rates, distances, as well as the parameters of the streaming protocol), but something like (reliable) samples per seconds appears to be easily achievable without trying too hard.

## HUMIDITY

The sensor comes with two components: the *actual* humidity sensor and a temperature sensor. Either component returns two bytes of data, i.e., a 16-bit value. Once turned on, the sensor is internally sampled by the Tag at the interval specified as one of the configuration parameters (even if no scheduled sampling is in progress). The same approach is followed for PRESSURE and LIGHT. The official (scheduled) sample returns the sensor’s last internally sampled value. The role of this internal (background) pre-sampling is to:

1. Prevent the delays in physical sampling (readouts) of the sensor, which may be significant for slow sensors (whose values are not meant to change very fast), from impacting the scheduled sampling. Generally, it is assumed that scheduled sampling is delay-free.
2. Decouple the readouts of slow sensors from scheduled sampling, such that those readouts can be made formally available at high rates (at which one may want to sample other sensors) without overtaxing the slow sensors. This may sound like a slightly different formulation of point 1.

## PRESSURE

Like HUMIDITY, the sensor consists of two components: air pressure and temperature. Each component returns a 4-byte (32-bit) value.

## LIGHT

The sensor has a single component and returns two 16-byte values: light intensity and status.

## MICROPHONE

The sensor is a standard one-bit microphone which I have rather crudely transformed into a counter accumulating the imbalance between zeros and ones in consecutive 8-tuples of bits (bytes) acquired from the microphone. This imbalance can be interpreted as a measure of acoustic noise in the neighborhood. The value returned by the sensor consists of two unsigned 32-bit numbers (8 bytes total). The first value returns the accumulated imbalance counted from the previous readout (sample), the other returns the total number of bits received from the sensor since the previous readout was made. The imbalance should be interpreted relative to the total bit count.

The present driver for the MICROPHONE sensor is a stub opening the sensor for potentially interesting applications, like barking recognition, to be implemented later.

# Setting things up

For GUI development and testing, the Tag can be powered from a USB cable through the DevPack interface (see Figure 4). This is a small board about the same size as the Tag PCB which can be connected (piggybacked) *onto* the Tag board to provide access to the Tag for programming and debugging. When powered through DevPack, the Tag behaves in the same way as when powered from the battery.



Figure 4. CC1350STK with attached DevPack board

The Peg must be connected to a PC to be operable. The USB interface of the Peg appears as two serial ports on the PC. Under Windows, these are COM ports; under Linux (say Ubuntu or Fedora), the devices are named /dev/ttyUSBACMx where x is a digit. One of those ports is for programming and debugging, the other maps to the UART of the Peg’s microcontroller. This is the port that the program run on the computer and talking to the Peg is going to use to communicate with the device.

Both the Tag and the Peg have been programmed in PicOS. The present interface to the Peg consists of a command-line program (a Tcl script) and a (relatively simple) GUI (which BTW is also a Tcl script using Tk widgets). The command-line script is intended to provide full access to all capabilities of the Tag, while the GUI can only be used for (easy) streaming.

The command-line script consists of two parts. The first (main) part is the generic OSS module whose intention is to provide a framework for interfacing OSS (Operational Support System) programs to PicOS master nodes. The second part extends the generic module by defining the specific set of commands and messages for the application. For the project at hand, the two parts come together in two files: ossrun.tcl (this is the generic part) and ossi.tcl (the specific part) that must be present the same directory.[[7]](#footnote-7) The whole thing is run by executing:

./ossrun.tcl

The “main” script will find the specific part and “evaluate” it in the proper context. The script can run on Windows (e.g., under ActiveState Tcl/Tk) as well as on Linux (e.g., Ubuntu) using the standard Tcl/Tk packages.

The GUI is completely stand alone. I have turned it into an executable program that can be started just by clicking on the icon.

# The command-line interface

When invoked properly (see above), the script will produce a window looking as shown in Figure 5 (this is how the Windows appears on my Fedora). The script must connect to the Peg before we can start conversing with the setup. When we press “Connect” (in the bottom right corner), the program will try to automatically identify the serial device into which the Peg’s UART has been mapped. This is accomplished by polling all serial USB devices for a known response code. When the script finds the right device, the window’s title will change to let us know that we are now connected to the Peg.



Figure 5. The OSS window

Once a connection has been established, one can converse with the Peg (and thus with the Tag) by entering commands into the field in the left bottom area of the window. The command syntax is described below. It can also be inferred from the comments and declarations at the beginning of ossi.tcl.

## Command syntax

A command starts with a keyword which can be followed by *selectors* and *parameters*. A selector is a word that *selects* something, e.g., a sensor. A parameter is a pair: –name value. The name of a parameter is preceded by – (the minus sign). The value of a parameter can be a character string or a number.

Here is a sample command:

configure imu –accuracy high –components at

The piece of string following the command keyword is a *selector*: it selects the sensor (IMU) to which the subsequent parameters apply. The value of –accuracy is a keyword representing a *magnitude* setting. The value of –components is the string “at” indicating two components of the sensor: the accelerometer and the thermometer.

A keyword can be abbreviated as much as to be still distinguishable from another keyword that might legally appear in its place. In particular, the above command can be shortened to:

c i –a hi –c at

The reason why “high” cannot be reduced to “h” is that “huge” is also an option for the magnitude setting. Note that “at” is not a keyword but a string of letters indicating the sensor components.

Practically all parameters are optional. When an optional parameter is not specified, it means either “default” or “unaffected”, i.e., retaining the last set value.

# Command interpretation

Most commands issued to the Peg are directly transformed into commands to the Tag and expedited by the Peg over the RF channel. Two exceptions are: “ap”, which is intended exclusively for the Peg (no message is sent to the Tag at all), and “wake”, which causes the Peg to issue a wake-up sequence to the Tag (it takes more than simply forwarding the original request). The packets exchanged between the Peg and the Tag identify a specific setup (via a 16-bit Tag Id). One can use the same Peg to talk to Tags belonging to different setups by changing the Tag Id with the “ap” command.

As explained earlier, the Tag will switch to the WOR mode, if there has been no communication from the Peg (and no outgoing traffic from the Tag) for 30 seconds. In the WOR mode, the Tag will not respond to any command[[8]](#footnote-8) except for “wake” which is intended to wake the Tag up and switch it to the fully active (receptive) mode. Thus, when we see that the Tag does not respond, we should try “wake” to make sure that the Tag is in the receptive mode.

To increase the reliability of communication (in the receptive mode), the Peg can be set to repeat every command a prescribed number of times (see below). This costs little and there is no risk that the same command will be interpreted multiple times by the Tag, because the commands are numbered.

The Tag is expected to respond to every command, even one that requests it to become dormant. If the command, as seen by the Peg, succeeds (meaning the Tag has responded indicating success and the Peg has received the response), you should see the text “<OK>” in the OSS windows. The lack of (any) response usually means that the Tag can’t be reached or is irresponsive (because it is too far, off, dormant, or in the WOR mode). Responses other than “<OK>” are possible (they will always show up as pieces of text encapsulated in < … >) to indicate errors or problems.

The traffic between the Tag and the Peg involves commands (sent by the Peg to the Tag), responses (ACK codes sent by the Tag to the Peg in reply to commands), and messages sent by the Tag to the Peg, e.g., containing sampled data from the sensors. All messages arriving from the Tag are displayed in the OSS window in a formatted (and legible) fashion. Note that the information appearing in the window can be directed to a file (so the samples/blocks arriving from the Peg can be preserved). This is what the “Save” button is for. When the “All” box is additionally checked, the saved data also includes the commands typed in the box at the bottom of the OSS window.

There are two special (and sometimes useful) features of the command input interpreter. The exclamation sign (!), entered as a complete command, acts as a shortcut and has the effect of re-entering the previous (last-typed) command. If the string entered as a command starts with a colon (:), the remaining portion of the string will be executed as a Tcl script within the context of the interpreter (this may be useful for debugging).

# Command: ap

This command (“ap” stands for “access point”) is the only command addressed exclusively to the Peg. Its syntax is:

ap –node *nn* –retries *nr* –loss *pl*

All parameters are optional, and their values are nonnegative numbers. Their meaning is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| node | Specifies the Id of the Tag (as explained above). The parameter can be used to switch among the different Tags serviced by the same Peg. |
| retries | The number of retries for a regular command send to the Tag. Zero and one both mean a single attempt. The default is 2, i.e., every command is repeated once. |
| loss | This parameter is for testing (emulating) packet losses in the Tag 🡪 Peg direction, in those situations when they cannot be easily triggered in the natural way, e.g., by separating the two devices physically. The default is zero. The parameter gives the number of Tag packets per 1024 to be randomly dropped (ignored) by the Peg. |

If the command is issued without arguments, it polls the Peg for the current setting of the above parameters.

# Command: wake

This command takes no arguments. It instructs the Peg to issue a sequence of wake packets to the Tag intended to switch the Tag to the fully attentive mode.

Technically, the WOR mode at the Tag is implemented by turning the receiver on for a short interval (about 10 ms) to listen for a packet, then turning the radio off for about 1.5 s, and so on. The length of the duty cycle is about 0.7% which formally means that the effective average current drain is below 0.1 mA. Any packet received during the short reception period will trigger an exit from the WOR mode, but the chance that a random packet will make it through is slim. In response to “wake”, the Peg will quickly send a back-to-back sequence of short packets, taking about 2 ms each, for about 2 seconds. This practically guarantees that one of those packets will fall into the reception interval.

# Command: configure

The command configures a sensor (or several sensors) at the Tag. The list of arguments consists of a sensor selector (one of: imu, humidity, microphone, light, pressure) followed by the list of parameters specific to the sensor. Any sensor selector can be abbreviated to a single letter. A single “configure” command can apply to multiple sensors.

Configuration is cumulative. Is it?

The list of parameters of a sensor can be followed by another sensor selector (which can never be confused with a parameter) followed in turn by the list of parameters for the sensor. For example, this command:

conf imu -motion yes -report yes -thresh low humid -heater yes -com h

configures IMU and HUMIDITY in a single go.

A sensor parameter can be of one of two types:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| option | Such a parameter is a string where every letter selects an option. Some options may be exclusive (e.g, “n” and “y” may mean “no” and “yes”), depending on the context. |
| range | A parameter like this describes a discrete numerical setting that can range from some minimum to some maximum. The range always starts from 0 end extends up to the maximum for the given parameter, with 15 being the absolute maximum (i.e., a specific maximum is never bigger than 15). |
| component | A parameter of this type is used to select sensor components and is applicable to the three sensors equipped with multiple components: IMU, HUMIDITY, and PRESSURE. The parameter consists of a sequence of letters indicating which components should be selected. The letters can be: a = accelerometer, c = compass, g = gyro, h = humidity, p = pressure t = temperature. For example, “agt” selects the accelerometer, gyro, and temperature components of the IMU sensor. |

Below we list the sets of parameters per sensor. The sampling option, applicable to HUMIDITY, LIGHT, and PRESSURE, refers to the background sampling frequency of the three (slow) sensors (as described earlier). The background sampling frequency is between once per 8 seconds (tiny) to 16 times per second (extreme).

IMU

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **name** | **type** | **description** |
| event | o | Selects the type of events triggered by the sensor. The legal values are: n (none, which is the default) meaning that no events are generated by the sensor (the sensor operates in the polled mode where it only returns values when explicitly asked); m (motion detection) meaning that the sensor will trigger motion events on the specified acceleration threshold (see below); and d (for data ready) indicating the synchronized data acquisition mode to be used with streaming. |
| threshold | m | Sets the threshold for motion detections. This parameter is only relevant when m is selected as the value of the event parameter (see above). The specified value between 0 and 15 maps linearly into 15-255 |
| lpm | m | Selects the low power mode. |
| accuracy | m | Resolution of sensor readings. |
| bandwidth | m | Bandwidth for the low-pass filter. |
| components | c | Selects the active components of the sensor: a, g, c, t. |
| report | b | Selects the report option for motion events. If selected, motion events will be triggering immediate report packets sent to the Peg (as described earlier). The option is ignored if the motion detection mode has not been set. |

Defaults: no, big, big, huge, medium, a, no

HUMIDITY

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **name** | **type** | **description** |
| heater | b | Turns on or off the internal heater to eliminate condensation. |
| accuracy | m | Sets the resolution of the result. |
| components | c | Selects the active components: h, t. |
| sampling | m | The background sampling rate for the sensor. |

Defaults: no, extreme, h, big

MICROPHONE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **name** | **type** | **description** |
| rate | m | The frequency of bit sampling from 100 kHz (tiny) to 2.475 MHz (extreme). |

Defaults: big (corresponding to 1.5 MHz)

LIGHT

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **name** | **type** | **description** |
| continuous | b | Selects the continuous mode for internal operation of the sensor, as opposed to the default single-shot mode. |
| accuracy | m | Selects the accuracy of the sensor. There are basically two values <= medium and > medium translating into two internal sampling times. |
| sampling | m | The background sampling rate. |

Defaults: no, medium, big

PRESSURE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **name** | **type** | **description** |
| forced | b | Selects the forced mode for internal operation of the sensor where the sensor only responds to direct readouts. In normal mode, the sensor constantly evaluates the pressure, its response is faster and more accurate. Parameters rate and bandwidth (below) only apply if forced is not set. |
| rate | m | Selects the internal sampling rate for the sensor (the reciprocal of the standby interval). |
| accuracy | m | Selects the accuracy of the result determined by the internal oversampling rate. |
| bandwidth | m | Selects the filtering rate used to smooth out the results based on previous values. |
| sampling | m | The background sampling rate. |

Defaults: yes, extreme, big, extreme, low, big

# Command: radio

This command is used to change the status of the RF module at the Tag. The syntax is:

radio *mode* or

radio wor *offdelay worinterval*

In the first case, mode can be on, off, or hibernate (with admissible abbreviations). In the second case, two optional arguments can define (or redefine) two parameters of the WOR mode:

1. The duration of the RF inactivity period after which the Tag will resume the WOR mode following a packet reception (offdelay). When the device receives a packet in the WOR mode, it will temporarily switch to the full reception mode in anticipation of more traffic, even if it formally remains in the WOR mode. If the traffic does not materialize within the specified interval (and the device is not formally switched to full reception), the Tag will return to WOR. The interval is specified in PicOS milliseconds with the default of 5120 (5 seconds).
2. The length of one WOR cycle, i.e., the period of checking for an activity in the RF channel specified in PicOS milliseconds. The default is 1024, i.e., one second. This parameter should match the preamble length used by the Peg in its wakeup packets.

An unspecified argument retains its last setting.

# Command: on

The command turns the indicated sensors on. The syntax is:

on *sen sen … sen*

where the arguments are sensor selectors. Initially all sensors are off. Note that turning the radio off (or changing its mode) does not affect the sensor status.

# Command: off

The command turns the indicated sensors off. The syntax is:

off *sen sen … sen*

where the arguments are sensor selectors.

# Command: status

The command polls the Tag for its status. It takes no argument, so the syntax is just:

status

The message arriving from the Tag in response to the “status” command returns this information (which is shown in the OSS window with legible headers):

1. The up time of the Tag in seconds.
2. The current (wall-clock) time as reported by the Tag. The Tag’s clock is set to the proper (wall) time with the sample command (see below). If that has happened, the reported time should match the proper time.
3. The battery voltage (it should be around 3V).
4. Memory usage (for the heap): current free and minimum free seen so far (probably not very relevant).
5. Active sensors, i.e., the ones that are currently on.
6. Whether the Tag is sampling (collecting), i.e., the Tag is running the last sampling command received from the Peg. Two numbers indicate the rate (in samples per minute) and the number of samples remaining to collect. If the second number is zero, it means that no samples are being collected at the time.

This information is followed by the report on the sensor configuration. For every sensor, regardless of its on/off status, the sensor’s current configuration settings are shown.

# Command: sample

The command instructs the Tag to start sampling the sensors that are currently on. The syntax is:

sample –frequency *freq* –count *cnt*

The first parameter specifies the sampling frequency in samples per minute, the second indicates how many samples should be taken. If –frequency is not specified, it defaults to 60, i.e., 1 sample per second. If –count is not specified, it defaults to 1. Thus, when the command is issued without arguments, it will ask the Tag for a single sample reporting the readouts of all sensors that are on now.

# Command: stop

The command stops sampling in progress. It takes no arguments, so the syntax is just:

stop

# Sample reports

Having received a sample command, the Tag will respond with the requested number of samples taken at the prescribed intervals. A sample arrives at the Peg as an RF packet whose size depends on the active sensors and their selected components. The data is presented in a formatted fashion, by sensor, in a way that should be immediately legible. A spontaneous report arriving from the IMU sensor operating in the motion detection mode is shown in the same manner, except that the data refers to a single sensor only.

1. For simplicity, we may assume that this term means “application” in PicOS parlance, which is particularly true in this case. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This paragraph is old, but I am retaining it as a remainder about the permanently tentative nature of the project. The present version does include a protocol for high-speed reliable data acquisition (aka streaming) plus a (simple) GUI to that end. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. CRC 2032 batteries are typically tested under lower discharge current. Here is a quote from a manufacturer’s sheet: “210mAh (on continuous discharge at 20℃ under 15kΩ load to 2.0V end-voltage)”. My quick test using a somewhat suspect battery that I pulled out of my drawer yielded about 2 hours. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Experiments are needed for a better estimate. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As mentioned earlier, there are two levels of such documents: 1) PicOS documentation (device drivers) [written by me], 2) sensor datasheets provided by the manufacturer. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. There is a fourth, i.e., the temperature sensor implanted into the microcontroller itself. Note that those sensors return the die temperature, as opposed to the ambient temperature, but in many cases the die temperature directly reflects the ambient temperature, e.g., if the sensor has been idle prior to the measurement. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. This is all described in separate documents. We have an SDK (development platform) for PicOS where the ossrun.tcl part belongs to the platform and the “project” provides its specific ossi.tcl part. The whole thing can be run independently of the platform by putting the two parts together. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Strictly speaking, the Tag will be *unlikely to respond* to a command because it would have to fall into the narrow window when the Tag’s RF module is active. Exit from WOR will occur when the Tag receives any packet within that window. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)