
Getting started with the S2-LP Sigfox firmware

Introduction

The S2-LP Sigfox firmware framework provided by ST allows you to develop embedded applications on the [STEVAL-FKI868V2](#), [STEVAL-FKI915V1](#), the [X-NUCLEO-S2868A2](#) and the [X-NUCLEO-S2915A1](#) platforms.

The package also includes the support for the [STEVAL-IDB007V2](#) and [STEVAL-IDB008V2](#) kits to be used with the shields included in the above mentioned kits. This enables the support for [BlueNRG-1](#) and [BlueNRG-2](#) System-on Chip. [STEVAL-FKI001V1](#) and the [STDES-MONARCH](#) are also supported with dedicated firmware binaries and configurations.

You should first read user manual [UM2169](#) Getting started with the Sigfox [S2-LP](#) kit, which explains how to prepare the board with a Sigfox ID/PAC/KEY and to register the node on your backend account.

1 Hardware requirements

A Windows® PC with:

- 2 USB ports
- 135 MB free hard disk space

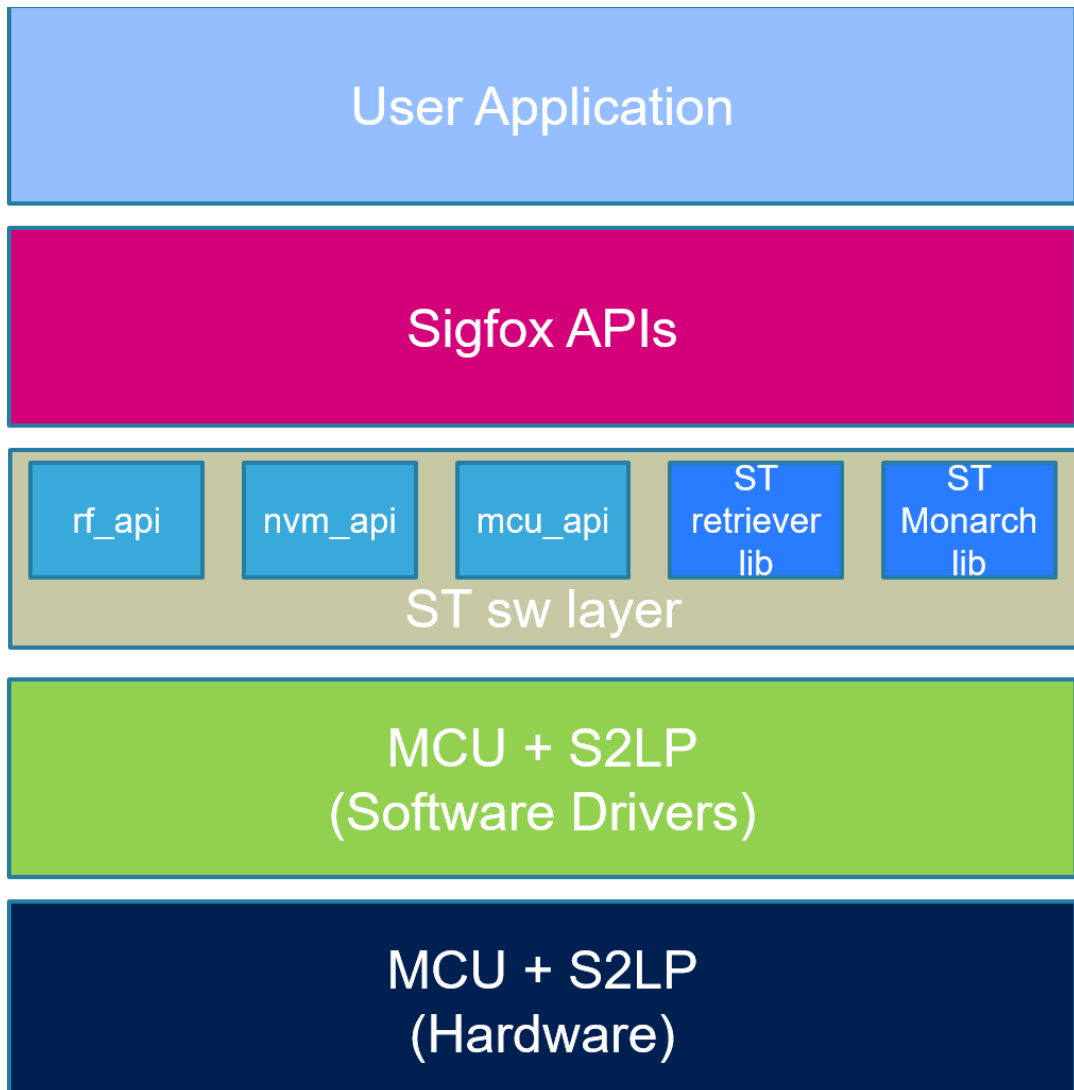
At least one of the following ST evaluation kits:

- [STEVAL-FKI868V2](#) or [X-NUCLEO-S2868A2](#) (for RC1, RC3, RC5 and RC6) kit with STM32 Nucleo-64 development board or STEVAL-IDB007V2/IDB008V2 board
- [STEVAL-FKI915V1](#) or [X-NUCLEO-S2915A1](#) (for RC2 and RC4) with STM32 Nucleo-64 development board or STEVAL-IDB007V2/IDB008V2 board
- [STEVAL-FKI001V1](#) development kit

2 Firmware architecture

The firmware consists of stacked modules in a framework where each module demands the implementation of lower level functions from the module beneath it.

Figure 1. Sigfox firmware application



2.1 RF_API

The `rf_ap` library is responsible of the S2-LP configuration and implementation of the modulation scheme. This library drives the S2-LP according to the Sigfox modulation protocol:

- DBPSK for uplink (14dBm at 100bps for RC1/3/5, 22dBm at 600bps for RC2/4)
- 2GFSK, BT=1 for downlink

The channel frequency, datarate and other relevant parameters depend on the applicable radio control zone (RC). Exported callbacks are:

Name	Argument	Description
ST_RF_API_S2LP_IRQ_CB	None	The RF_API module configures the S2-LP to raise interrupts and to notify them on a GPIO. When the interrupt of this GPIO is raised, this function must be called
ST_RF_API_Timer_CB	state: 0 for timer start, 1 for timer stop	This callback must be called when the timer started by the MCU_API_timer_start expires.
ST_RF_API_Timer_Channel_Clear_CB	None	This callback must be called when the timer started by the MCU_API_timer_start_Carrier_sense expires

2.2 NVM API

This is the layer use to read/write in FLASH or EEPROM all the information handled by the Sigfox library (for example messages counter).

Main functions are:

Name	Argument	Description
NVM_Read	nAddress: read start address cNbBytes: number of bytes to read pcBuffer: returned buffer	Read a buffer from NVM
NVM_Write	nAddress: write start address cNbBytes: number of bytes to write pcBuffer: data to write writeMode: write mode operation type (Writeover/Erase)	Writes a buffer into NVM
NVM_UpdateOffset	updateWhat: offset to update data: new value	Update Board Offsets (Frequency, RSSI and LBT offset)

2.3 MCU_API

If the platform changes, but the processor type remains the same, you only need to re-implement the MCU_API module. This means that the framework can easily be ported to another board equipped with a microprocessor of the same type but with a different pinout by simply re-implementing this module.

Main functions are:

Name	Argument	Description
MCU_API_delay	delay_type: the type of delay (SFX_DLY_INTER_FRAME_TRX, SFX_DLY_INTER_FRAME_TX, SFX_DLY_CS_SLEEP, SFX_DLY_OOB_ACK)	Inter stream delay, called between each RF_API_send
MCU_API_timer_start_carrier_sense	time_duration_in_ms: Timer value in milliseconds	Start timer for carrier sense maximum window (used in ARIB standard)
MCU_API_timer_start	time_duration_in_s: Timer value in seconds	Start timer for in second duration
MCU_API_timer_stop	None	Stop the timer (started with MCU_API_timer_start)
MCU_API_timer_stop_carrier_sense	None	Stop the timer (started with MCU_API_timer_start_carrier_sense)
MCU_API_timer_wait_for_end	None	Blocking function to wait for interrupt indicating timer elapsed. <u>This function is only used for the 20 seconds wait in downlink</u>

2.4 ST retriever lib

This module is in charge of perform all the encryption routines and to retrieve the credentials from the device. Main functions are:

Name	Argument	Description
enc_utils_retrieve_data	id: the ID stored in EEPROM pac: the PAC stored in EEPROM rcz: the RC Zone stored in EEPROM	Retrieve the ID, PAC and RCZ number of the board stored into the EEPROM and returns it to the caller
enc_utils_retrieve_data_from_flash	nvmBoardData: ID, PAC, RCZ and offset stored into the FLASH UIDAddress: address of the MCU UID UIDLen: Length of the MCU ID	Retrieve the Sigfox credentials and all the offset stored in FLASH
enc_utils_set_test_key	en: 1 -> enable; 0 -> disable	Switch the to the test KEY 0x0123456789ABCDEF0123456789ABCDEF

2.5 ST Monarch lib

This module performs all the operation to scan the air and detect Sigfox Monarch beacons. Main functions are:

Name	Argument	Description
SIGFOX_MONARCH_API_execute_rc_scan	<p>rc_capabilities_bit_mask: Bit Mask (see table XX) of the RCx on which the scan has to be executed</p> <p>timer: Scan duration value</p> <p>unit: Unit to be considered for the scan time computation</p> <p>app_callback_handler: this is the function that will be called by the Sigfox Library when the scan is completed</p>	This function executes a scan of the air to detect a Sigfox Beacon
SIGFOX_MONARCH_API_stop_rc_scan	None	This function stops a RC scan which is on going

3 Application development

Embedded applications using the Sigfox framework call SIGFOX_APIs to manage communication.

Table 1. Application level Sigfox APIs

Name	Arguments	Description
SIGFOX_API_open	rc : pointer to sfx_rc_t type representing the RC number (1, 2, 3 or 4).	This function opens the library initializing all the state machine parameters. This function does not involve the radio configuration.
SIGFOX_API_send_frame	cust_data : pointer to the data to transmit cust_data_size : size in bytes of the data to transmit (max 12) cust_response : pointer to the buffer where to store the received payload (only if initiate_downlink_flag=1, see below) tx_mode : shall be set to 2 initiate_downlink_flag : wait for a response after transmitting.	Section 3.2 Sending frames
SIGFOX_API_close	None	Closes the Sigfox library, resetting its state.
SIGFOX_API_set_std_config	config_words_ptr : 3-config-word array to select the FCC channels to use. sfx_bool timer_enable : enable timer feature for FH	Section 3.3 node_set_std_config command description
SIGFOX_API_get_version	version_ptr : pointer to the array where to store the lib version version_size_ptr : size of the written version array type : The type of version (MCU, RF, ...)	Returns the library version.
SIGFOX_API_get_info	info : array containing info	
SIGFOX_API_send_outofband	oob_type : Type of the OOB frame to send	Sends an out-of-band frame. These are test frames used to monitor the node parameters (voltage, temperature).
SIGFOX_API_send_bit	bit_value : bit value to send cust_response : pointer to the buffer where to store the received payload (only if initiate_downlink_flag=1, see below) tx_mode : tx_mode shall be set to 2	This function is used to send a single bit. It is mainly used when the node seeks downlink data (and not to transmit).

Name	Arguments	Description
	initiate_downlink_flag : wait for a response after transmitting.	
SIGFOX_API_start_continuous_transmission	frequency : Frequency at which the signal has to be generated type : Type of modulation to use in continuous mode	Executes a continuous wave or modulation depending on the parameter type
SIGFOX_API_stop_continuous_transmission	None	Stop the current continuous transmission
SIGFOX_API_send_test_frame	frequency : Frequency at which the wave is generated customer_data : Data to transmit customer_data_length : Data length in Bytes initiate_downlink_flag : Flag to initiate a downlink response	This function builds a Sigfox Frame with the customer payload and send it at a specific frequency
SIGFOX_API_receive_test_frame	frequency : Frequency at which the wave is generated mode : Mode (AUTHENTICATION_ON or AUTHENTICATION_OFF) buffer : Depends of the Authentication mode : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if AUTHENTICATION_OFF : buffer is used as input to check the bit stream of the received frame if AUTHENTICATION_ON : buffer is used as output to get the received Payload timeout : Timeout for the reception of a valid downlink frame rssi : RSSI of the received frame	This function waits for a valid downlink frame during timeout time and return in customer_data the data received.
SIGFOX_API_get_device_id	dev_id : Pointer where to write the device ID	This function copies the ID of the device to the pointer given in parameter.
SIGFOX_API_get_initial_pac	initial_pac : Pointer to initial PAC	
SIGFOX_API_switch_public_key	use_public_key : Switch to public key if SFX_TRUE, private key else	Switch device on public or private key.
SIGFOX_API_set_rc_sync_period	rc_sync_period : Transmission period of the RC Sync frame (in number of 'normal' frames)	Set the period for transmission of RC Sync frame

The application should call a set of functions in order to instruct the RF_LIB to configure the radio in the proper way.

These are the main functions exported by the ST_RF_API header (st_rf_api.h) and are implemented into the [Section 2.1 RF_API](#) module.

Table 2. ST_RF_API

Name	Arguments	Description
ST_RF_API_set_xtal_freq	An integer with the XTAL value in Hz.	Sets the XTAL frequency of the S2-LP in Hertz (default is 50MHz).

Name	Arguments	Description
<code>ST_RF_API_set_freq_offset</code>	An integer with the RF offset value in Hz.	Sets the RF frequency offset in Hertz (default is 0 Hz).
<code>ST_RF_API_set_tcxo</code>	1 for TCXO, 0 if XTAL	Instructs the library to configure the S2-LP for a TCXO or for a XTAL. This is needed to configure the S2-LP oscillator registers.
<code>ST_RF_API_set_rssi_offset</code>	An integer with the RSSI offset value in dB.	Set an RSSI offset for the RSSI. Very useful if the RF frontend has an LNA or to calibrate the RSSI measurement.
<code>ST_RF_API_get_rssi_offset</code>	A pointer to the variable where the RSSI value should be stored.	Get the RSSI offset for the RSSI
<code>ST_RF_API_gpio_irq_pin</code>	An integer representing the number of the GPIO to be set as an interrupt source.	Configures one of the S2-LP pin to be an IRQ pin.
<code>ST_RF_API_gpio_tx_rx_pin</code>	An integer representing the number of the GPIO to be set as a TX or RX state indication. 0xFF to configure no one of the S2-LP GPIO with this function.	Configures one of the S2-LP pin to be to be configured as (RX or TX) signal
<code>ST_RF_API_gpio_rx_pin</code>	An integer representing the number of the GPIO to be set as a RX state indication. 0xFF to configure no one of the S2-LP GPIO with this function.	Configures one of the S2-LP pin to be configured as RX signal.
<code>ST_RF_API_gpio_tx_pin</code>	An integer representing the number of the GPIO to be set as a TX state indication. 0xFF to configure no one of the S2-LP GPIO with this function.	Configures one of the S2-LP pin to be configured as TX signal.
<code>ST_RF_API_reduce_output_power</code>	Power reduction in half dB	Reduces the output power of the transmitted signal by a factor (reduction*0.5dB against the actual value)
<code>ST_RF_API_smpps</code>	SMPS voltage word from 1 (1.2V) to 7 (1.8V).	Instructs the library to configure the S2-LP with a user defined smpps frequency
<code>ST_RF_API_set_pa</code>	A boolean value (1 if a PA, 0 if not.).	Instructs the library to configure the S2-LP for a external PA (Power Amplifier).

Name	Arguments	Description
ST_RF_API_get_ramp_duration	None	Returns the duration of the initial (or final) ramp in ms.
ST_RF_API_Get_Continuous_TX_or_MONARCH_Scan_Flag	None	Returns information about the TX state of the MCU API
ST_RF_API_set_lbt_thr_offset	An integer representing the offset in dB	Set an offset (dB) for tuning the LBT mechanism

3.1 Opening the library

SIGFOX_API_open must be called to initialize the library before performing any other operation.

This API requires pointer to the Radio Configuration zone struct to be used.

Uplink frequencies are available at <https://build.sigfox.com/sigfox-radio-configurations-rc>

Note:

As frequency hopping is implemented, the transmission frequency won't be fixed.

For radio control zones 2 and 4 (FCC), refer to Section 3.3 node_set_std_config command description for how to map the macro channels.

Downlink frequencies are available at: <https://build.sigfox.com/sigfox-radio-configurations-rc>

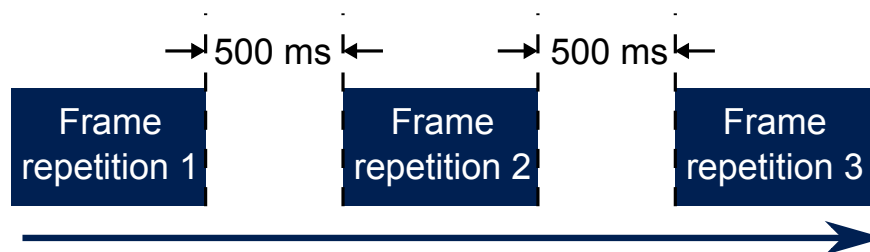
3.2 Sending frames

SIGFOX_API_send_frame is the core Sigfox library function; this blocking function handles message exchange between the node and the base-stations.

An important parameter of this function is initiate_downlink_flag:

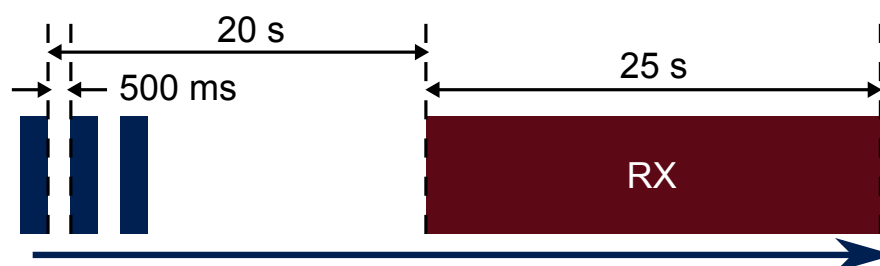
- When the **initiate_downlink_flag** is 0, the library only reads the first two parameters. The send frame is transmitted three times with a 500 ms pause.

Figure 2. TX Frame timing



- When the **initiate_downlink_flag** is 1, the send frame is transmitted **tx_repetition** times + 1 (max. 3) with a 500 ms pause. A 25 s RX window then opens 20 s after the end of the first repetition.

Figure 3. TX/RX timings



If the reception is successful, the received 8-byte downlink frame is stored in the buffer location indicated by the **cust_response** input parameter.

The content of the frame can be set in the backend or by registering a callback to a website.

3.3 node_set_std_config command description

This function has different purposes according to the RC mode at which the serial port is open. FCC allows the transmitters to choose certain macro channels to implement a frequency hopping pattern allowed by the standard. The channel map is specified in the first argument of `SIGFOX_API_set_std_config`, which consists of an array of three 32-bit configuration words.

Note: This API and its arguments are not applicable to RC1.

Each bit of the `config_words[0, 1, 2]` array represents a macro channel according to the following mapping:

Table 3. Macro channel mapping - config_words[0]

Macro Ch.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	...	32
Frequency (MHz)	902.2	902.5	902.8	903.1	903.4	903.7	904.0	...	911.5
config_words[0] bit	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	...	31

Table 4. Macro channel mapping - config_words[1]

Macro Ch.	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	...	64
Frequency (MHz)	911.8	912.1	912.4	912.7	913.0	913.3	913.6	...	921.1
config_words[1] bit	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	...	31

Table 5. Macro channel mapping - config_words[2]

Macro Ch.	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	...	86
Frequency (MHz)	921.4	921.7	922.0	922.3	922.6	922.9	923.2	...	927.7
config_words[2] bit	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	...	21

A macro channel is only enabled when the corresponding `config_words[]` bit is set to 1. At least 9 macro channels must be enabled to meet the FCC specifications.

The second argument is a boolean indicating whether to use a timer feature in RC2 or 4 to be sure fulfilling the FCC duty cycle requirements.

In RC3 the function is used to configure the LBT mode.

`config_word[0]`: number of attempts to send the first frame (has to be greater or equal to 1)

`config_word[1]`: maximum carrier sense sliding window (in ms) (greater than 6 ms)

`config_word[2]`: bit 8: set the value to 1 to indicate that the device will use the full operational radio band (192 kHz). bit 7-3: number of carrier sense attempts. bit 2-0: number of frames sent.

`timer_enable`: unused

The delay between several attempts of carrier sense for the first frame is set by `SFX_DLY_CS_SLEEP`

This setting only affects the uplink and should be called whenever `SIGFOX_API_open` is called to open the library.

3.4 Duty cycle

3.4.1 RC1

The European regulation governing the 868 MHz band enforces a transmission duty cycle of 1%. Since each message can last up to 6 seconds, it is possible to send up to 6 messages per hour.

Your application must take this duty cycle into account in order to comply with the ETSI regulation.

3.4.2 RC2/4

According to FCC 15.247, each device should ensure that continuous transmission never exceeds 400 ms and that a given frequency channel is not reused inside 20 seconds. These limits are ensured by defining at least 9 macro-channels via `SIGFOX_API_set_std_config`.

Each macro-channel is a group of 6 25 kHz bandwidth channels with which the library performs random frequency hopping. There must be at least 9 macro-channels to satisfy the minimum 50 channel limit set in FCC 15.247.

When the `SIGFOX_API_send_frame` is called:

1. the device transmits 3 repetitions on 3 different channels of the default macro-channel hopping list
2. the second transmission takes place over the other 3 channels available on the same macro-channel
3. the third transmission hops to another listed macro-channel and uses 3 channels from that group
4. hopping and transmission continues according to the same logic

Since the transmission lasts between 200 and 350 ms and a minimum delay of 500 ms occurs between frames, the device never returns to a given channel inside 20 seconds.

The Sigfox base stations installed in RC2 are currently enabled to receive in the macro channel 1. The ones in the RC4 are enabled to receive on the 63rd channel.

Any transmission performed over a different macro channel from the default is lost.

3.5 Listen before talk

3.5.1 RC3/5

In RC3/5, the transmitter should sense the channel before starting to transmit.

For this reason, each TX phase into the figures 3 and 4 is preceded by a RX phase of variable duration.

The duration of the listen before talk is called carrier sense time.

This time can be in the range [cs_min , cs_max].

The timings cs_min is 5ms, cs_max is defined by the user into the `config_word[1]` argument of the `SIGFOX_API_set_std_config`.

The behavior of the LBT is the following:

- Enter in RX
- If no power $> -80\text{dBm}$ is detected within the cs_min window, the LBT exits with success allowing a new transmission
- If a power $> -80\text{dBm}$ is detected and no cs_min time has elapsed with the power $< -80\text{dBm}$, the LBT exits with error, preventing a new transmission.

Case no power detected:

Figure 4. Behavior of the LBT above -80dBm is detected within the cs_min window

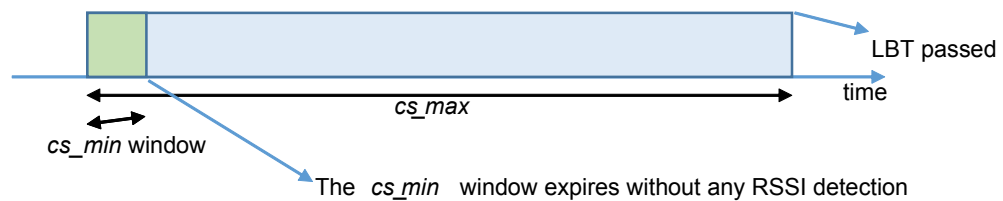
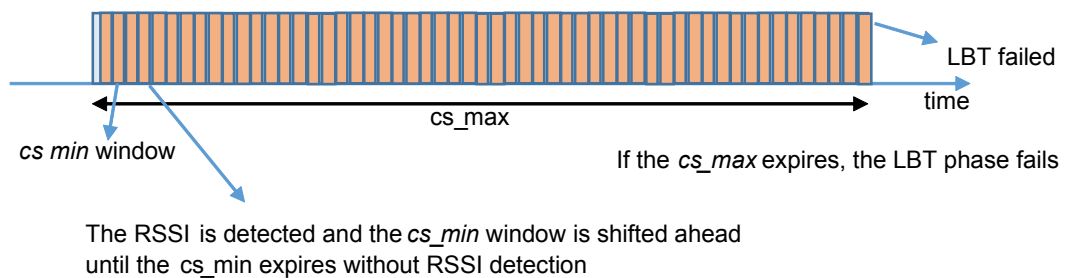


Figure 5. Behavior of the LBT -80dBm is detected and no cs_min time has elapsed with the power below -80dBm



If the channel is found busy for the cs_max time, the transmission will fail with error code 0x7D.

The LBT is implemented by the ST `RF_API` in the following way.

When a LBT cycle must be done, the lib will call the function `MCU_API_timer_stop_carrier_sense`.

This timer will start to count the cs_max time.

Then, the library will call the `RF_API_wait_for_clear_channel` function. In its implementation, the MCU will program the S2-LP as follows:

- Set the `RSSI_THRESHOLD=-80dBm` (this is an argument of the function)
- Register the 2 interrupts `RX_TIMEOUT` and `RSSI_ABOVE_THRESHOLD`.
- Program the `RX_TIMEOUT` to the cs_min (passed to the function as an argument)
- Set the device in RX and go into low power mode.

- If the RX timeout arises, it means that one *cs_min* window has elapsed without any RSSI_ABOVE_THRESHOLD (no RSSI detected) for the current *cs_min* window. Return without error after having disabled all the IRQs on the S2-LP.

If the RSSI_THRESHOLD is raised, stop the RX and restart it again. If the channel becomes free at some point within the *cs_max* and it is kept free for a time equal to *cs_min*, the RX_TIMEOUT interrupt will be raised and the function will return with no error. Otherwise the radio will be continuously stopped until the *cs_max* timeout (started by the *MCU_API_timer_stop_carrier_sense*) occurs, in this case the function returns with error.

3.6 Application example

To develop an application on the supported platforms, the application should:

1. Initialize the hardware:
 - System clock
 - S2-LP SPI initialization
 - S2-LP SDN pin initialization
2. Retrieve the crystal frequency and the carrier offset from the manufacturer data E2PROM, via the function `S2LPManagementIdentificationRFBoard()`.
3. Retrieve the Sigfox ID, PAC and RC via the function `enc_utils_retrieve_data` or `enc_utils_retrieve_data_from_flash`. Assume that this function will return the ID of the board in the variable `uint32_t id`.

The procedure for opening and setting the library differs slightly for each radio control zone and is described by the `ST_Sigfox_Open_RCZ` function in the `St_Sigfox_Init.c` file of the SDK.

Assuming you have the 4-byte `customer_data` buffer to send and no downlink request:

- `SIGFOX_API_send_frame(customer_data, 4, customer_resp, 0, 0);`

With donwnlink request:

- `SIGFOX_API_send_frame(customer_data, 4, customer_resp, 0, 1);`

The function will return after about 50 seconds and, in the absence of errors (error code = 0), the `customer_resp` buffer will be filled with an 8-byte response.

For further details, refer to the `SigFox_PushButton_Project` or the `SigFox_CLI_Demo_Project` example code and corresponding doxygen documentation in the ST-Sigfox package.

3.7 Test mode

The test modes are available in the separate library `ADDON_RF_PROTOCOL` API.

In order to access the test modes, it is necessary to close the Sigfox library.

The test mode API is the following:

```
sfx_error_t ADDON_SIGFOX_RF_PROTOCOL_API_test_mode(sfx_rc_enum_t rc_enum, sfx_test_mode_t test_mode)
```

where:

- `rc_enum` is a number representing the number of RC.
- `test_mode` is a number representing the test_mode.

Please see the doxygen documentation included in the package `STSW-S2LP-SFX-DK`.

The test mode should be used to perform the Sigfox verified certification using the SDR Dongle and the RSA Environment. For more information visit <https://build.sigfox.com/sdr-dongle>.

4 Current consumption on ST reference design

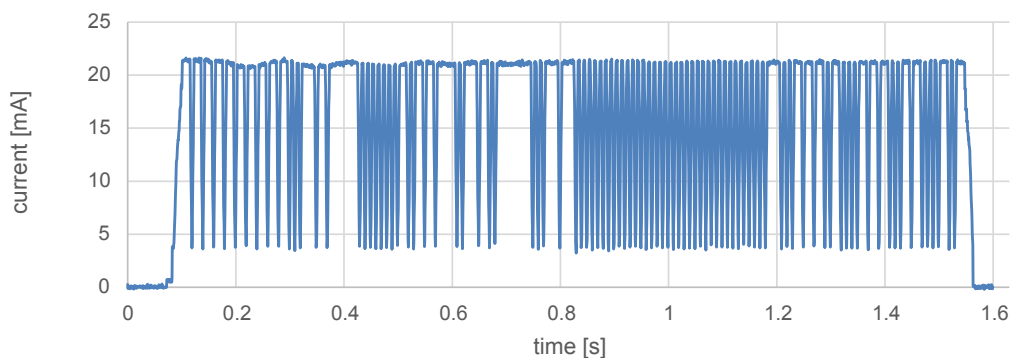
4.1 Current consumption for the STEVAL-FKI868V2 (for RC1/3)

The current consumption of the S2-LP and of the STM32L152 is given below for both TX and RX phases. In the non-active phases, the S2-LP is maintained in shutdown mode with negligible current consumption.

4.1.1 Transmission

During transmission, the averaged current on the S2-LP on the STEVAL-FKI868V2 is about 17 mA.

Figure 6. S2-LP TX current profile for STEVAL-FKI868V2



The current on the STM32 side is much lower because the microcontroller is set in low power mode for most of the transmission phase: it is only woken during transmission when the TX FIFO must be filled with new data.

The resulting current profile shows some 7 mA spikes every 10 ms, with troughs in between representing the sleep current below 10 μ A.

Figure 7. microcontroller TX current profile for STEVAL-FKI868V2

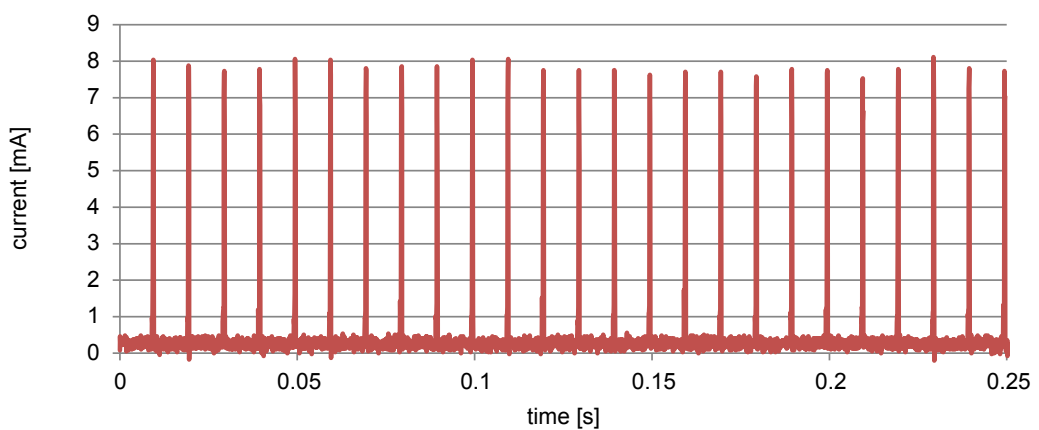
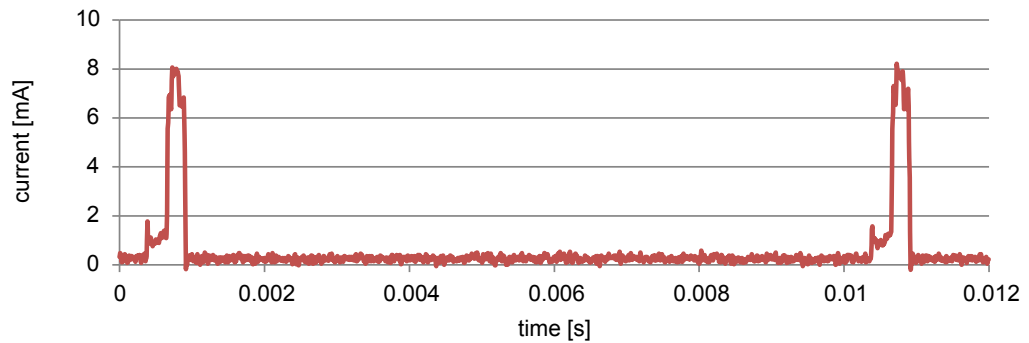
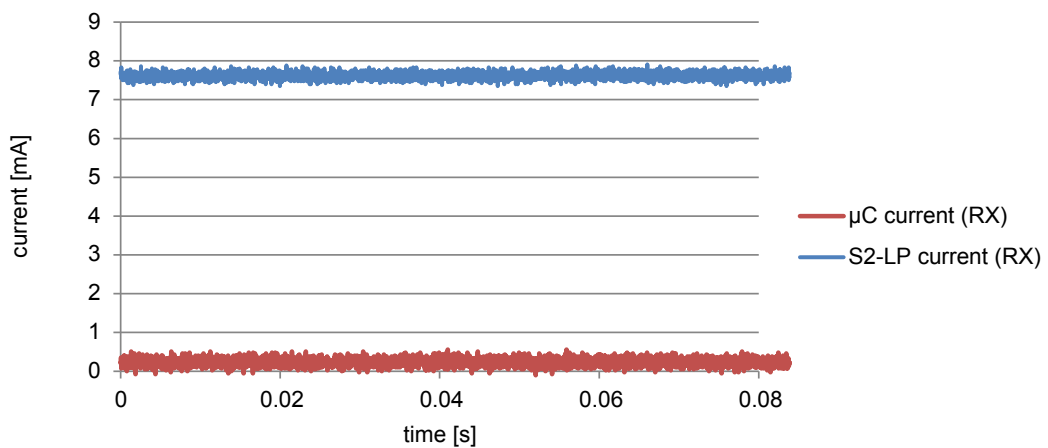


Figure 8. microcontroller TX current profile - zoom


4.1.2 Reception

According to the Sigfox protocol, reception lasts a maximum of 25 seconds. During this time, the S2-LP current consumption remains around 7.5 mA and the STM32 is maintained in stop mode with a current below 10 μ A.

Figure 9. S2-LP and microcontroller RX current profile for STEVAL-FKI868V2


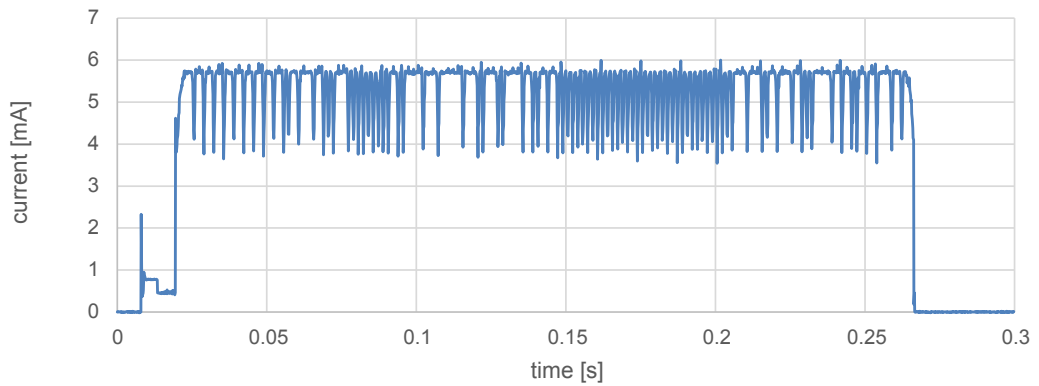
4.2 Current consumption for the STEVAL-FKI915V1 (for RCZ2/4)

For the [STEVAL-FKI915V1](#), we need only consider the current on the S2-LP and on the FEM (Skyworks-SE2435L) as the current consumption of the STM32 is the same as for the [STEVAL-FKI868V2](#).

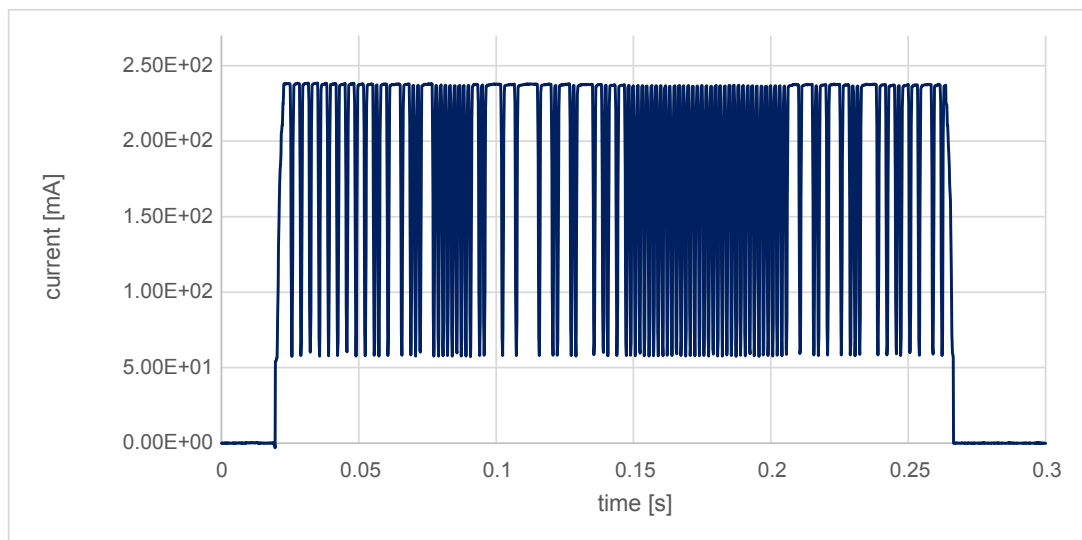
In the non-active phases both the [S2-LP](#) and FEM are kept under shutdown and their current consumption is negligible.

4.2.1 Transmission

The average current consumption of the S2-LP during frame transmission is about 5 mA.

Figure 10. S2-LP TX current profile for FKI915V1


The 22 dBm power is provided by the FEM, with the following current shown below.

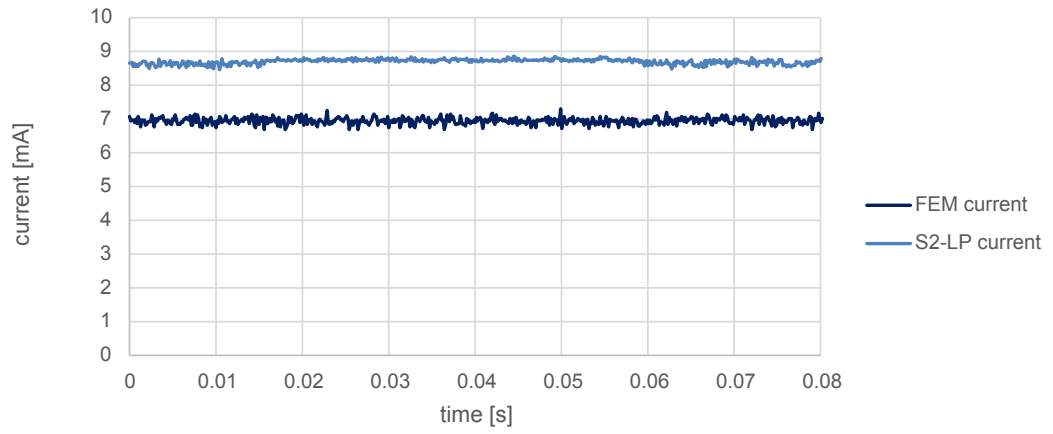
Figure 11. FEM TX current profile for FKI915V1


4.2.2

Reception

According to the Sigfox protocol, the reception lasts a maximum of 25 seconds. During this time, the current consumption of the S2-LP is constant, at about 8.7 mA, while the FEM has a consumption of 7 mA.

Figure 12. S2-LP and FEM RX current profile for STEVAL-FKI915V1



Revision history

Table 6. Document revision history

Date	Version	Changes
08-Feb-2017	1	Initial release.
01-Jun-2017	2	Minor text edits Updated <i>Table 1: MCU API</i> Updated <i>Table 3: Retriever API</i>
01-Dec-2017	3	Updated: <i>Figure 1, Section 1, Section 2.1, section 2.2, Section 3.1 and Section 3.4.2</i> Added: <i>Test mode section.</i> Minor text edits.
22-May-2018	4	Updated API description. Minor text edits.
10-Sep-2018	5	Updated Introduction, MCU_API, ST retriver lib, Application development and application example.
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