



The Open-Source Flight Computer

User Guide

May 10, 2016
Für OpenVario Version
<http://www.openvario.org>

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Preface

Warnings and precautions



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1 Introduction

This document is a pilot's manual for OpenVario, an open-source glide computer using XCSoar . The audience is assumed to have a sound knowledge of the fundamental theory of flight for gliders, and at least a basic working knowledge of cross-country soaring.

Updates to the OpenVario Flight Computer and XCSoar software may result in some of this manual being out of date. You should read the release notes distributed with the software to keep track of changes. Updates to the manual and software are available from

<http://www.openvario.org>

1.1 Organization of this manual

This manual most notably is written in order to get the XCSoar user started quickly *as well as* support his deep understanding of all the features, concepts and tactics introduced. At all times, the authors made their effort for doing this from a pilot's perspective (and honestly hope for having succeeded).

The authors highly encourage you to take your time reading the entire manual chapter by chapter (with exception of the reference chapters Infoboxes and Configuration). Feel assured, the time you will have spent will pay off as a manifold in understanding. On your way reading you might feel blue once in a while. That is why the authors introduced some blueish things: links and icons.



Figure 1.1: Icons configuration, reminder, gesture, warning



Warning. The icon warning is used, whenever things shall be followed strictly. Not following will cause unexpected results, total disfunction, or even danger to life. Proceed only, if warning understood.



Reminder. This icon tags a tip, trick, things you might remind after having read corresponding sections and so on.



Stop from reading manuals whilst flying inverted!

Read at home, *configure* on the ground, safely. Having perceived this (inverted) warning as an example, you are ready to proceed.

The numbers are printed in blue as are the icons introduced, signalling "help available". And so are other Universal Resource Locators, underlying blue text. Clicking on text like <http://www.openvario.org/contact> will open your world wide web browser or mailer to get in touch with other resources or knowledgeable people respectively.

The remainder of this chapter "Introduction" is about getting you prepared for XCSOar, how to raise your level of understanding and maintain your skills. Chapter ?? "Quickstart" might be the next waypoint after 2 "Installation" for the urgent user. Feel free to cut short, but do not resume too sadly when reading chapter by chapter, following:

Chapter ?? introduces the user interface concepts and gives an overview of the display .

Chapter ?? describes the moving map part of the display in greater detail and describes how the software can assist in general navigation. Chapter ?? describes how cross-country tasks are specified and flown, and presents some of the analysis tools available to pilots to help improve their performance. Chapter ?? goes into further detail on the glide computer functions as it is important for pilots to be aware of how the computer performs its calculations.

Chapter ?? describes how the computer can interface to variometers and other air data sensors, and how it uses these measurements to provide various models of the atmosphere, in particular on winds and thermal convection. Chapter ?? describes how XCSOar can assist in managing flight in special use airspace and the FLARM collision awareness system. Chapter ?? deals with systems integration and systems diagnostics, the integration of XCSOar with communications devices and with airframe switches.

The remainder of the manual contains mainly reference material. Chapter ?? lists the types of information that can be displayed in the grid of InfoBoxes next to the map display. The configuration of the software is described in detail in Chapter ???. The formats of the various data files that program uses, as well as where to obtain them from and how to edit them, is described in Chapter ???.

Finally, a short history and discussion of XCSOar's development process is presented in Chapter ???.

1.2 Notes

Terminology

A variety of terms may be used to describe embedded devices like the Pocket PC platform, including 'organiser', Portable Digital Assistant (PDA) and Personal Navigation Assistant (PNA). XCSOar is also available on Triadis Engineering's Altair glide computer,

which is formally an Electronic Flight Instrumentation System, and several other platforms. Throughout this document, these terms are used interchangeably to refer to whatever hardware XCSoar is running on.

1.3 Technical support

Troubleshooting

A small team of dedicated developers produces XCSoar. Although we are happy to help with the use of our software, we cannot teach you about basics of modern information technology. If you have a question about XCSoar in particular not found in this manual please get in touch. You will find all of the following links summarized at:

<http://www.openvario.org/contact>

To begin with communication, have a look at our website at:

<http://www.openvario.org>

Feedback

Like any complex software program, OpenVario Flight Computer may be subject to software bugs, so if you find any, please report them to the OpenVario developers by using our bug tracker portal at:

Updates

You should periodically visit the OpenVario website to check for program updates. The installation procedure described above can typically be repeated in order to upgrade the software. All user configuration settings and data files will be preserved during the re-installation/upgrade.

It is also recommended to periodically check for updates to data files, particularly Special Use Airspace, which may be subject to change by the national civil aviation authority.

1.4 Training

For the safety of yourself and others, pilots using XCSoar are advised to train themselves in using XCSoar on the ground and become familiar with its interface and features prior to flight.

1.5 Using XCSoar safely

The use of an interactive system like XCSoar in flight carries with it certain risks due to the potential distraction of the pilot from maintaining situational awareness and eyes outside the cockpit.

The philosophy guiding the design and development of the software is to try to reduce this distraction by minimising the need for user interactions as much as possible, and by presenting information in a clear fashion able to be interpreted at a glance.

Pilots using XCSoar must take responsibility for using the system safely. Good practice in the use of XCSoar includes:

- Becoming familiar with the system thoroughly through training on the ground.
- Performing clearing turns before interacting with XCSoar in flight in order to ensure there is no collision risk with other traffic.
- Setting up the system to take advantage of automatic functions and input events so that user interactions can be minimised. If you find yourself mechanically performing certain interactions frequently, ask yourself (or other XCSoar users) if the software can be made to do these interactions for you.

2 Installation

This chapter describes the installation of the device in the glider and the tasks to do the initial settings.

2.1 Calibrate Touchscreen

As very first step you have to calibrate the touch screen. This can be done using OVMenu :

- Bootup the OpenVario Flight Computer
- Press **ESC** if the OVMenu appears
- Select **System**
- Select **Calibrate Touch**
- Touch the crosshairs displayed
- You have to set the display rotation again to apply this calibration

2.2 Setup Screen orientation

The OpenVario Flight Computer can be mounted in all 4 mounting positions. The screen rotation can be configured in the OVMenu . This will rotate the screen and the touch calibration.

- Bootup the OpenVario Flight Computer
- Press **ESC** if the OVMenu appears
- Select **System**
- Select **Settings**
- Select **Display Rotation**
- Select the rotation matching your mounting position
- You have to reboot the system until the settings take effect

3 Usage

Daily usage of the device

4 Setup and Configuration

5 Update

5.1 Prerequisites

- OpenVario USB Stick (see Appendix B)
- Accesible USB Port at the OpenVario Flight Computer

5.2 Update Maps using USB Stick

To update the maps and flarmdata without an internet connection (e.g. if you have no WLAN on your airport) a special USB Stick is needed.

5.2.1 Doing the update

- Connect the USB Stick to the OpenVario Flight Computer before power-on.
- Power-On the Flight Computer
- Press **[ESC]** if the OVMenu appears
- Select **System**
- Select **Update Maps**
- Wait for update to be done



The maps on the USB Stick will be installed in any case even if the maps are older than the installed ones on the SD Card !!

5.3 Update Firmware of OpenVario Flight Computer

Sometimes it is necessary to update the firmware on the OpenVario Flight Computer . This can be happen if there are new features or bugfixes.

5.3.1 Incremental Firmware update using USB Stick

An update can be done just with a OpenVario USB Stick . The update package have to be placed in the **repo** directory in the USB stick (see Appendix B).

Download the actual repository files from <ftp://ftp.openvario.org/opkg>

- Power-On the Flight Computer
- Press **[ESC]** if the OVMenu appears

- Connect the prepared USB Stick to the OpenVario Flight Computer
- Select **System**
- Select **Update System**
- The USB Stick will be checked for updates and the available updates will be shown
- Acknowledge the updates
- Wait for update to be done

5.3.2 Complete SD Card Flash

It is also possible to erase the whole SD Card and flash a new image to the OpenVario Flight Computer .



If something goes wrong during this update procedure you have to remove the SD Card and use a PC a new image. The whole process can take up to 15 minutes, so think about available battery capacity and things like this !!

Download the desired image files from

`ftp://ftp.openvario.org/images`

- Power-Off the Flight Computer
- Connect the OpenVario USB Stick to USB Port of OpenVario Flight Computer
- Power-On the Flight Computer
- The boot screen appears and show ”!!! Recovery !!!”
- Wait for OpenVario Flight Computer to boot
- Select **Flash SD Card**
- Select the image version you want to flash



If the image you want to flash is not showing up, check if it resides in openvario/images

- Select **Update All**
- Wait for update to be done and reboot the OpenVario Flight Computer

Appendix A Configuration Files

A.1 Global config file

A.2 variod Config File

The configuration settings for the *variod* reside in
`/opt/conf/variod.conf`

A.2.1 Deadband Low

The lower limit for the deadband of the audio vario.

Option: `deadband_low` [value]

Unit: m/s

Example: `deadband_low -0.2`

A.2.2 Deadband High

The upper limit for the deadband of the audio vario.

Option: `deadband_high` [value]

Unit: m/s

Example: `deadband_high 0.5`

A.2.3 Pulse Length

The length of the pulse generated by the vario synthesizer

Option: `pulse_length` [value]

Unit: Samples

Example: `pulse_length 12289`

A.2.4 Pulse length gain

The gain the pulse length will be boosted if vario value increases

Option: `pulse_length_gain` [value]

Unit:

Example: `pulse_length_gain 1.1`

A.2.5 Base Frequency Positive

Frequency of the vario tone if vario value is positive

Option: `base_freq_pos` [value]

Unit: Hz

Example: `base_freq_pos 402`

A.2.6 Base Frequency Negative

Frequency of the vario tone if vario value is negative

Option: `base_freq_neg` [value]

Unit: Hz

Example: `base_freq_neg 404`

A.3 sensord Config File

The configuration settings for the *sensord* reside in
/opt/conf/sensord.conf

A.3.1 Static pressure sensor

This section is used to correct the static pressure sensor. There is correction for offset as well as linearity possible.

Option: static_sensor [offset] [linearity]

Unit: Pa

Example: static_sensor 0.0 1.0

A.3.2 TEK pressure sensor

This section is used to correct the TEK pressure sensor. There is correction for offset as well as linearity possible.

Option: tek_sensor [offset] [linearity]

Unit: Pa

Example: static_sensor 0.0 1.0

A.3.3 Dynamic pressure sensor

This section is used to correct the dynamic pressure sensor. There is correction for offset as well as linearity possible.

Option: dynamic_sensor [offset] [linearity]

Unit: Pa

Example: static_sensor 0.0 1.0

A.3.4 Output value config

This section is used to enable the NMEA sentences the *sensord* is generating.

Option: output_POV_E

Enables the POV E sentence (tek vario value)

Option: output_POV_P_Q

Enables the POV P and Q sentence
(static and dynamic pressure)

Appendix B OpenVario USB Stick

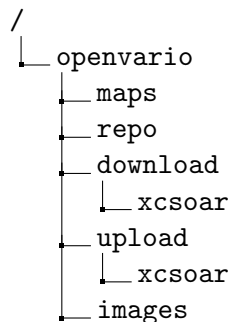
B.1 Create an USB Stick

There are a few requirements to use a USB Stick:

- The filesystem on the USB Stick must be **FAT32**
- There has to be a special directory structure on the stick

B.1.1 Required directory structure

There have to be several directories on the USB Stick the tools expect:



maps

This directory is used for updating map files. The format of the map files can either be *.xcm or a compiled ipk for the opkg packet manager. The map file will be copied/installed to XCSoar settings directory and can be selected using the XCSoar map settings dialog

repo

This directory is used for software updates of the OV-Linux system on a packet basis. The whole repository directory on the FTP server has to be mirrored into this sub-directory for update.

download

This directory is used for transferring files from the OpenVario Flight Computer to the USB Stick. There is a subdirectory for each application transferring files (e.g. xcsoar).

upload

This directory is used for transferring file from the USB Stick to the OpenVario Flight Computer . There is a subdirectory for different applications: xcsoar: XCSoar home directory

images

This directory holds Software Image Files used for recovery of the whole OpenVario Flight Computer .

B.1.2 Download files for the USB Stick

All files need for updating the OpenVario Flight Computer can be downloaded at

`ftp://ftp.openvario.org/`

B.1.3 Recovering using USB Stick

To recover the whole OpenVario Flight Computer a special file has to be stored in the **openvario** sub directory.

The file is named

ov-recovery.itb

and includes a complete linux kernel as well as a initramfs to bootup the OpenVario Flight Computer . A user menu shows up after booting which enables the user to write a new image file on the SD Card.

The image file which should be written to SD Card has to reside in the

images

subdirectory. The file used is exactly the same as used for writing to a SD Card using a PC.

Appendix C Hardware Description

C.1 4,3" Variant

C.1.1 Backpanel Overview

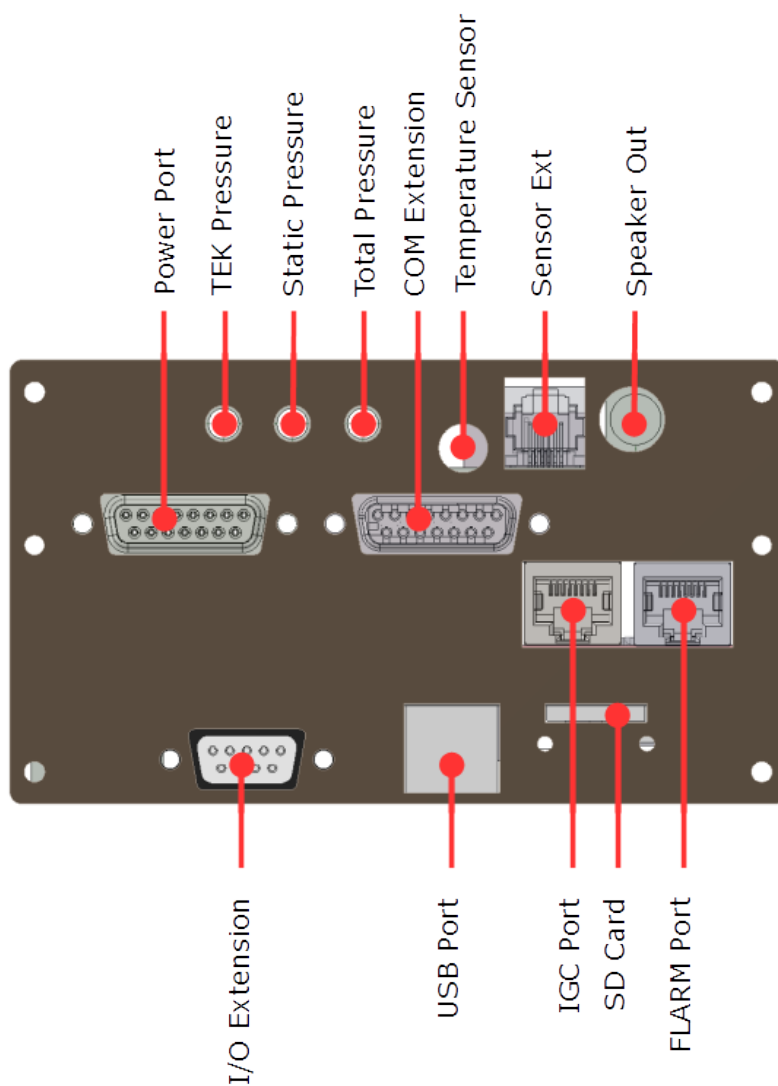


Figure C.1: Backpanel 4,3" Variant

C.1.2 Wiring Diagramm

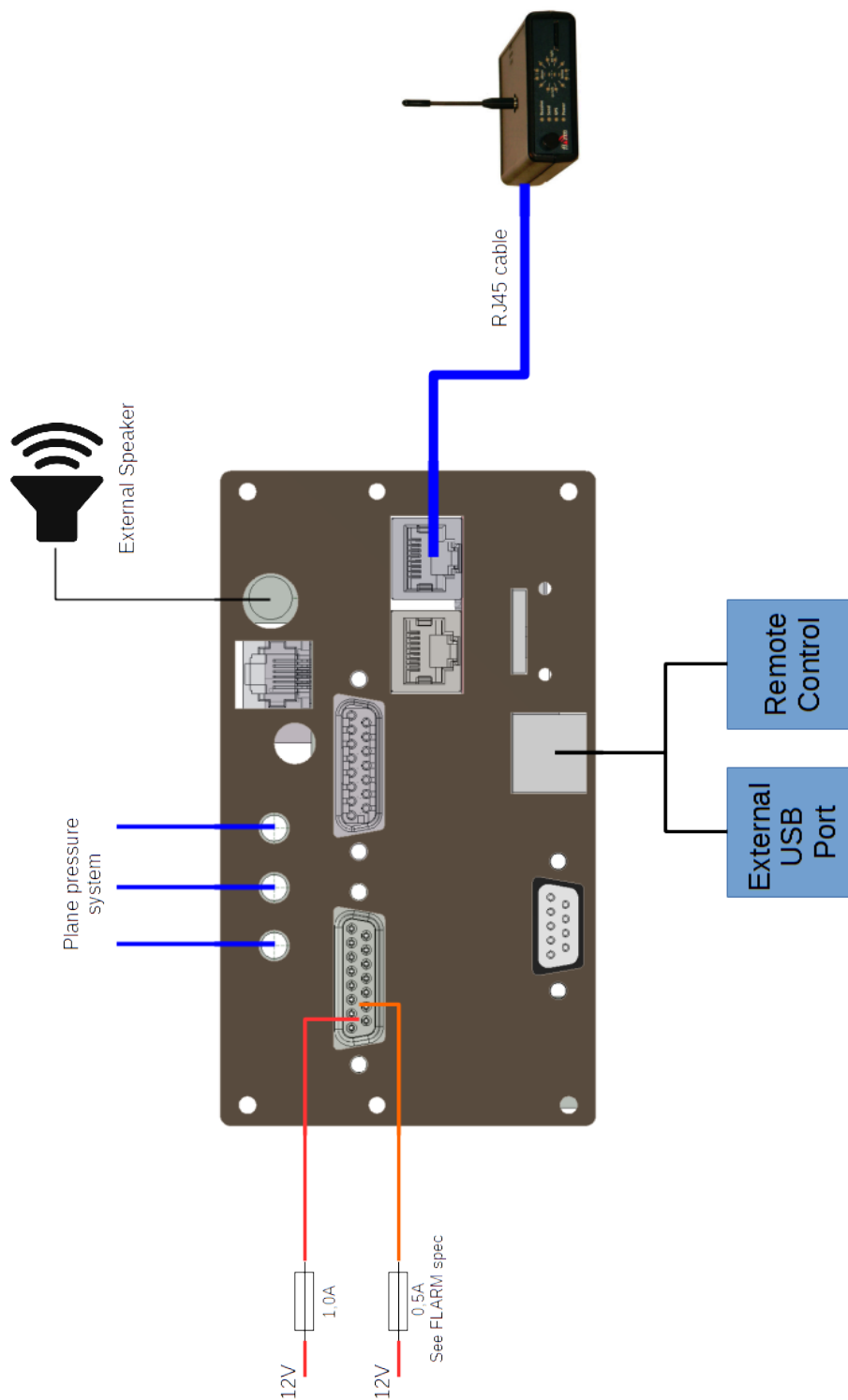


Figure C.2: Wiring 4,3" Variant

C.1.3 Detailed Connector description

COM Extension

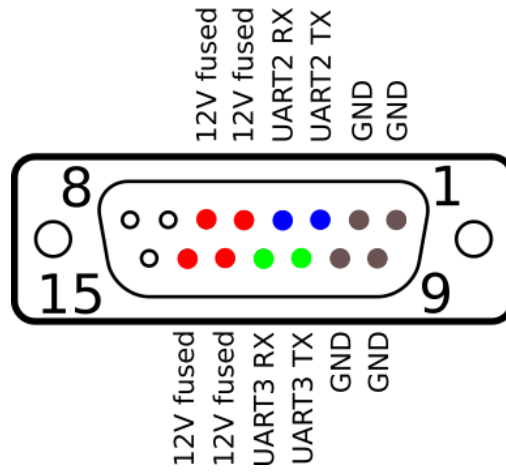


Figure C.3: COM Extension

Power Port

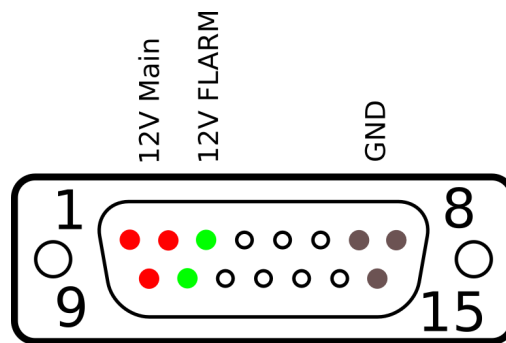


Figure C.4: Power Port

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