

Remote Imaging Group  
RX2c INSTRUCTIONS

RX2c MANUAL



**Remote Imaging Group  
RX2c INSTRUCTIONS**

---

**Features**

- High performance at reasonable cost
- Small size
- Microcontroller driven synthesiser
- Easy to make with built-in alignment facility
- 5 channel auto-scan and on-board power supply regulation
- Intelligent signal detector with beep alert
- Ergonomic user interface
- Computer Control (with additional kit)

**Disclaimer:**

**Take care when building and operating this equipment. All reasonable precautions were taken in its design and manufacture. The Remote Imaging Group cannot be held liable for any loss, damage or injury caused by any parts, information or software herewith supplied**

**Do not attempt construction unless you are qualified to do so.**

**Acknowledgements**

- RIGsat Team - Bob Barnes, Steve Drury, Ray Godden and Bryan Taylor
- Max Hadley – For use of his Remote Control Code
- Sam Elsdon – For NOAA-18 upgrades
- Craig Anderson – for inclusion of the Wxtoimg Software
- David Taylor – Author of the PassControl Software

## **Description**

### **The schematic.**

The schematic is in three parts: the RF and IF circuitry on sheet (a), the audio processing etc. on sheet (b) and the controls etc. on sheet(c).

### **RF circuitry.**

The antenna signal is coupled to dual-gate RF amplifier MOSFET *TR2* by tuned circuit *L1* and capacitors *C35*, *C36* and *C37*. An option is to feed DC to a pre-amplifier or downconverter via *CHI*. Three loosely coupled tuned circuits form a selective band-pass filter coupling *TR6* to DGFET mixer *TR4*. The 4 tuned circuits at 137MHz achieve a high level of discrimination against out-of-band signals and a low level of image response. The local oscillator buffer drives the mixer gate 2 at a high level to provide good signal handling.

### **The local oscillator synthesiser system.**

This is based on two integrated circuits, a Microchip PIC *16C620A* (*IC5*) micro-controller and a Philips *TSA6057* synthesiser (*IC4*). The micro-controller is programmed to implement the functions of scanning, display driving and controlling the *TSA6057*. Communication between the two chips is via the Philips  $1^2C$  proprietary two-wire clock and data bus.

Integrated on the *TSA6057* are the pre-scaler, reference counter, "N" counter, phase detector, loop amplifier and other functional blocks like power regulator etc - most of the building blocks of a PLL (Phase Lock Loop) synthesiser.

It is used to control the local oscillator, FET *TR6*, by varicap diode *VC1*. *TR5* is a buffer/amplifier providing the high-level drive to mixer *TR4*. For a comprehensive description of the system refer to the article by Steve Drury, in RIG Journal 51 (December 1997).

### **IF circuitry.**

Two ceramic filters *FL1* and *FL2*, matched to the mixer drain by *L6*, attenuate any close-in signals such as pager transmissions before they reach the mixer in the IF chip *IC7*. These filters have a bandwidth of 110kHz enough to pass the weather satellite signal even allowing for the fairly wide center frequency spread of this type of filter. After conversion by mixing with a 10.245MHz crystal oscillator the 455kHz signal passes through *FL3* to the high gain IF amplifier in *IC7*. *FL3* is a high performance ceramic filter with a 6dB bandwidth of about 38kHz. This might be thought to be rather narrow for the application: theoretically allowing for deviation, sidebands, tolerances, drift and doppler shift would require a bandwidth nearer 45kHz.

**Remote Imaging Group**  
**RX2c INSTRUCTIONS**

---

However in practice, provided the synthesiser reference is set correctly, there is no perceptible image impairment. In the UK we suffer from pager transmissions as close in frequency as 137.975MHz as well as other in-band digital transmissions one of which is at 137.820MHz, only 30kHz away from the Meteor frequency of 137.850MHz. In these circumstances a filter having minimal bandwidth is an advantage.

After amplification and limiting *IC7*'s quadrature discriminator demodulates the FM signal; *L8* is the tank-tuned circuit. The RSSI (Received Signal Strength Indication) output from pin13 feeds the optional S-meter via emitter follower *TR7*. This gives an accurate logarithmic reading, linear in dB, over a wide range of signal strength.

**AF Circuitry.**

After demodulation the satellite 2.4kHz sub-carrier carrying the image information is low-pass filtered by *IC1a* then amplified by *IC1b* and fed via the output socket *SK4* to the sound card in your computer. The peak output signal level is approximately 1.5V r.m.s. Part of the signal is fed to *IC3*, a PLL (Phase Lock Loop) tone detector. This stops channel scanning when the 2.4kHz sub-carrier is detected, if the receiver is in this mode, and opens the loudspeaker mute circuit *TR1* and *TR2*. This system is very reliable and seldom, if ever, operates with other than a weather satellite signal. Switch *SW1* allows the mute to be opened manually if required. *LC1c* drives the loudspeaker.

Regulators *IC2* and *IC5* provide stabilised 12 volt and 5 volt rails for all circuitry. The input supply should be in the range 12-20 volt DC at 100mA. If an S-meter with a backlight is used then current drain will be increased. Similarly if a coax powered pre-amplifier or down converter is connected additional current will be drawn.

## **Building the RX2c**

### **The kit.**

Included are: the PCB and all PCB mounted parts; the 7-segment display; volume control, knob and switch; loudspeaker; metal mounting spacers and screws; ribbon cable; coil adjustment tool and power connector.

Not included are; the antenna and output connectors: S-meter; case; power supply.

### **Before you start**

Before turning on your soldering iron **READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY!**

Be sure you can identify all the components. **CHECK and CHECK AGAIN** that you have the correct part inserted before soldering - extracting it afterwards is likely to damage both the component and the PCB.

**TAKE PARTICULAR NOTE of points in bold text like this one. They are as a result of experience gained in repairing RX2's that builders have failed to make work.**

Components such as integrated circuits, transistors, diodes, electrolytic capacitors, and connectors etc. could be inserted incorrectly - check orientation before soldering. Some devices; the dual-gate FETs, PIC micro-controller and the TSASO57 synthesiser are static sensitive – before handling them discharge any charge you might be carrying by touching something that is grounded.

Do not be tempted to adjust the coils, alignment will be easier if they are left alone.

Use a fine-tipped soldering iron. Before starting assembly fit the 4 spacers to the board to protect the tracks and to ease handling. All holes are plated-through, solder from underneath the board using solder sparingly to avoid bridging tracks and causing short circuits.

### Identifying components.

If you are not sure how to read resistor values consult one of the guides published in many reference books, catalogues etc. Some capacitors are marked with their values e.g. '8p2' = 8.2pF, others use more obscure coding.

The larger-value ceramic capacitors use a code such as '104'. This means 10 followed by 4 zeros = 100,000pF or 100nF.

Mylar capacitors use a similar method e.g. '2A473K'. This means 47 followed by 3 zeros = 47,000pF or 47nF, the '2A' and 'K' can be ignored.

### Construction

Start by fitting the resistors and ceramic capacitors followed by the transistors and larger capacitors. If in your kit *TR6* is a J310 transistor then it must be fitted in a reversed position relative to the outline on the PCB. Push the resistors and capacitors down to the PCB so that they have short leads. It will be easier and quicker to bend all resistor leads, except *R12 - R19*, to the correct length with fine-nosed pliers before starting assembly. *R12* to *R19* are mounted vertically but should not be fitted yet.

Capacitor *C60* (1n) is fitted underneath the PCB, soldered with short leads between *R32* (2.7k) and the ground pin of *C23*. Transistors *TR2* and *TR4* are fitted with their markings (BF988) uppermost with the long (drain) leadout towards the right of the PCB, varicap diode *VC1* with its white band (cathode) towards the front.

Next cut 20cm of the ribbon cable, remove one wire leaving 9, separate the conductors at each end and strip 0.5cm of the insulation from each one. Tin the ends. Insert the stripped conductors into the PCB where it is marked PL2 (a plug is not used) and solder them in. Fit resistors *R12-R19*, mounted vertically. Now fit the coils, crystals, filters and connectors *PL1* and *PL3* **with their pins facing outwards.**

**Coil L2 must be correctly orientated with the short rib of its former aligned with the outline shape, towards C52. Make sure that you do not confuse coils L6 and L8. They both have 5 pins: L6 is the one with the red ring.**

**Remote Imaging Group**  
**RX2c INSTRUCTIONS**

---

Finally fit the ICs. An 18-pin DIL socket is provided for the micro-controller *IC6*; do not insert *IC6* at this point. *IC4*, *T5A6057*, and *IC7*, *MC3371* are high-gain high-frequency devices and must be soldered directly to the PCB, not fitted in sockets. **Regulators *1C2* and *ICS* must have their markings facing towards the back edge of the PCB, the metal tags facing the front edge.** Link *LK1* should not be fitted until after *VR2* is adjusted during alignment so that receiver noise does not make accurate setting difficult

Connect the ribbon cable to the 7-segment display. Make the two test points by forming one end of each of two pieces of cut-off component wires into a loop and solder them into the board at points *TP1* and *TP2*. **The *TP2* wire should be short so that it cannot touch the nearby coil can.**

Strip the insulation from one end of the remaining ribbon cable and attach 10 of the conductors to connector inserts, by crimping if you have a suitable tool, otherwise by soldering. Insert them into the 10-pin socket housing. The free ends connect to the controls - see schematic (c) for the details. **The inserts must be fitted so that the projecting tabs on their sides engage with the apertures in the housing.**

Similarly assemble the 2-pin power socket with a twin cable and connect the other end to the power connector, being careful about polarity.

Connect a short piece of coaxial cable to the receiver input (*SK1*), the other end to be connected to a suitable socket for connection to the antenna. **Separate only the minimum length of the screen at each end so that both the separated screen and the exposed centre conductor are short.**

If you are intending to use a coax-powered pre-amplifier or downconverter you will need to fit choke *CH1* and resistor *R43*. These components are not supplied with the kit. A suitable value for *CH1* is 2.2 $\mu$ H. The value of *R43* depends on the requirements of your pre-amplifier or downconverter, in most case a link or another choke can be used. Note that this receiver is very sensitive; only a pre-amplifier fitted close to the antenna is likely to provide any benefit and its gain should be sufficient only to overcome feeder losses otherwise problems with local high-level signals such as pager transmissions could be exacerbated.

Contact the RIGShop if you require *CH1*.

Now connect the switch, volume control and push button controls and the loudspeaker to the 10-way ribbon cable. **Fit *IC6* taking static precautions, confirming orientation and that all pins are correctly inserted in the socket, not bent underneath the chip.**

Now your RX2c is ready for testing and alignment.

**Preliminary testing.**

## Remote Imaging Group RX2c INSTRUCTIONS

---

Before applying power examine the PCB carefully to ensure that no tracks have been bridged with solder. **The most common cause of problems is soldered joints that are not sound. Check very carefully, with a magnifying glass if necessary, that all joints have been properly soldered. Enough heat must be applied to flow the solder from lead wire to PCS pad.**

Check all connections from the 10-pin connector *PL1*; from the power connector *PL3* and from *PL2* to the 7-segment display.

The RX2 is designed for use with an unregulated power supply giving 12 to 20 volts DC on load. Connect the power supply and switch on. There should be a beep from the loudspeaker and the display should light and indicate each channel 0 - 9 in turn. Pressing the button briefly should stop the scan and further brief presses index through the channels. A longer press should restart the scan. Scan mode is indicated by the decimal point being lit.

If all is well you can now proceed with alignment. If not, compare voltages with the figures in this information to trace and rectify the problem. Before going further refer to the RX2 operating information below.

### Alignment

How you align the RX2c will depend on your resources and experience. The procedure given here assumes that you have only basic test equipment such as a voltmeter (preferably digital). Connect your voltmeter to *TP1*. Set the channel to 3. Adjust the core of *L7* slowly for a reading of 3.0V. If the reading is less than 3.0V turn the core inwards, if it is higher turn it outwards. **If you cannot make this adjustment your RX2c will not work. Check carefully the parts and wiring around *IC4*, *TR5* and *TR6*. Do not assume that *IC4* is at fault and try to remove it: it is highly unlikely that it or any other IC is defective.**

If you have a frequency counter connect it to *IC3* pin 5 and adjust *VR2* to give reading of 2,400 c/s. To set the reference frequency stop scan on channel 3 and loosely couple your counter to *C26*. Adjust trimmer *TC1* to read a frequency of 126.800MHz. If your counter cannot measure this frequency, couple it to *IC4* pin 9 and adjust *TC1* to get 40,000.0c/s. If you have no counter skip these steps and set *VR2* (slot vertical) and *TC1* (slot horizontal) to mid positions. Now fit link *LK1*, ensuring that it is clear of the tracks underneath it.

Now switch off and connect an antenna. At this point almost any piece of wire will probably serve the purpose. Hold down the push button and switch on.

The display should now show 't'. The receiver is tuned to 137.970MHZ, close to a pager frequency that provides a strong signal throughout most of the UK. Un-mute the loudspeaker with *SW1*. With luck you will hear noise in the

## Remote Imaging Group RX2c INSTRUCTIONS

---

speaker punctuated with bursts of pager signals, unmistakable but difficult to describe.

Connect either a voltmeter or an S-meter to the meter output. If you are receiving a pager signal adjust coils *L1*, *L2*, *L3*, *L4*, *L5* and *L6* for maximum reading. Switch off, then on and set to channel 3 and disconnect the antenna. Connect your voltmeter to *TP2*.

Watch the reading whilst rotating the core of *L8*. It should rise to a maximum as the core is wound out to the top of the can and fall as it is wound in to the bottom. Note the readings, add them together and divide the result by 2. Now set the core to get this voltage. For example...

if  $V_{max}$  is 2.2V and  
 $V_{min}$  is 1.6V, then  
 $V_{max} + V_{min} = 3.8V$  and the  
aim voltage is  $3.8/2 = 1.9V$ .

If you are not in the UK then the facility for alignment using a pager signal is not possible but you should still be able to achieve alignment using a weather satellite signal if you do not have a signal generator. The correct position is close to the point of maximum noise in the speaker.

For the last step you will need an actual satellite signal. Connect your antenna, find the predicted time for the next pass, using a prediction program or by consulting the current RIG Journal, and set the RX2c to the appropriate channel.

Connect the voltmeter to *TP2*. When the signal is strong, the satellite being at its closest, confirm that the reading is close to the voltage you calculated. If you were unable to set the reference frequency with a counter then adjust *TC1* to make this the case.

If you have not already set the tone decoder *IC3* to 2.4kHz then you will need to use a satellite signal to do so. Start with *VR2* slider at about 11 o'clock. During a pass put switch SW1 in the mute position. Rotate *VR2* first to one end and then slowly towards the other. The speaker should un-mute then mute again. Set *VR2* in the position mid-way between these points.

Finally, whilst receiving a signal, trim the adjustments to coils *L1*, *L2*, *L3*, *L4*, *L5* and *L6* to give maximum reading at the S-meter output. Do not repeat this operation too often - coil cores can seize and fracture. If you are using an S-meter its sensitivity can be set by *VR1*. Your RX2 is now ready for use.

**Remote Imaging Group  
RX2c INSTRUCTIONS**

---

**Operation of the RX2**

On switch-on there is a beep and the RX2 starts in scanning mode, indicated by the display decimal point being lit. Each channel is monitored for four seconds.

Channel frequencies: -

<b>Channel Number</b>	<b>Frequency (MHz)</b>
0	137.20
1	137.10
2	137.40
3	137.50
4	137.62
5	137.91
6	137.30
7	137.70
8	137.80
9	137.85

The channel allocation reflects the order used by David Taylor in his PassControl software.

If a valid signal is detected there is an alert beep, scanning stops and the speaker un-mutes. If the signal disappears for more than 15 seconds scanning restarts and the speaker mutes again: SWI can un-mute it at all times if required.

Should you find the alert beep annoying it can be silenced by disconnecting C2.

Pressing the push button briefly (beep) will exit from scanning mode. Subsequent brief presses (beep) index through the channels. A prolonged press (double beep) reverts to scanning mode. Holding in the button during switch-on tunes to 137.970MHz, near to a pager frequency, and displays 't'. Switching off and on again restores normal operation.

If you have any difficulties please check your RX2 carefully to ensure that it is properly built – that all components are in their correct positions, all joints are sound and that no tracks are bridged with solder – before contacting a helpline.

**Do not attempt to remove any ICs before having done so.**

**Remote Imaging Group  
RX2c INSTRUCTIONS**

---

**Troubleshooting**

How you proceed will depend on the symptoms. First confirm that all components are in their correct positions, all joints are soldered and no tracks are bridged.

***Power***

If there are no signs of life and the display is not lit the fault is likely to be in the power supply system. Check the +5V and +12V rails at the points marked on the PCB. If the voltages are correct then refer to the voltage guide below to locate the probable area of the fault. If the display and controls function but no noise is audible from the speaker when un-muted then investigate the circuitry around IC1. If all else fails consult one or the help lines but please make an effort yourself first!

Voltages under no-signal conditions, speaker muted. Do not expect to measure exactly the same values.

IC 1	5.0	IC 4	5.0	IC 3	4.8	IC 4	5.0	IC 8	4.9
7	5.0			16	8.5	14	5.0	4	4.9
8	5.0							7	3.8

T e	5.0	T g2	2.1	TR e	4.5	TE d	11.7	TR e	2.0
1		2		3		4		5	
b	5.7	d	7.2	b	5.8			b	2.6
c	5.0							c	7.6

TR6 s	1.1	TR7 e	0.1
d	7.2	b	0.6
		c	5.0

### ***The case***

The case can be of any type that you feel is suitable but if it is not made of metal some provision for screening the PCB to prevent the pick up of strong broadcast signals at the IF frequency will be needed. This can take the form of a layer of aluminium foil glued to the inside bottom of the case. Make sure it has good contact to the 4 spacers and that it cannot touch the underside of the PCB. If you wish to connect an S-meter it should have an FSD (Full Scale Deflection) of around 250 $\mu$ A. A suitable meter is Maplin part number *LB80B*.

### ***Power supply***

The RX2c requires a supply of 12-18 volts at 100mA. As regulators are incorporated the supply can be unregulated provided its minimum voltage, allowing for ripple, does not fall below 15V. A 12V plug-top type of unit can be used, - with a light load such as the RX2 the output voltage will in fact be much higher than the nominal 12V.

If an additional load such as a. meter back light and/or preamplifier is used then the power supply rating will need to be increased.

### **Remote Control**

The upgraded PIC includes the Max Hadley Remote Control software. To work with the RX2 this requires a simple interface to the PC. Details can be found at:

<http://www.susato.demon.co.uk/RX2remote.html>

A kit is available from the RIGShop.

### **Software**

Your RX2c is supplied with a copy of the Wxtolmg software. This is a fully automated APT and WEFAX weather satellite (wxsat) decoder. The software supports recording, decoding, editing, and viewing on all versions of **Windows, Linux, and MacOS X**. Wxtolmg supports real-time decoding, map overlays, advanced colour enhancements, 3-D images, animations, multi-pass images, projection transformation (e.g. Mercator), text overlays, automated web page creation, temperature display, GPS interfacing, and control for many weather satellite receivers, communications receivers, and scanners.

More information at:

<http://www.wxtoimg.com/>

**The following advice appeared in RIG Journal 56.**

RIGsat Team - Bob Barnes, Steve Drury, Ray Godden and Bryan Taylor

Hints on construction.

These notes have been prepared as a result of our experiences in dealing with non-functioning RX2 kits that have been returned to us for repair.

Soldering. Almost all returned kits have had some poor soldered joints and in many cases this has been the cause of failure. Enough solder should be applied to the joint at sufficient temperature to 'wet' both the component lead and the PCB pad. A surprising number of kits have been returned with some joints not soldered at all! Use a magnifying glass to inspect all joints before applying power.

Fitting components. Be quite sure you have correctly identified all parts before placing them in the board. Ceramic capacitors are easily confused, particularly 1pF with 1nF etc. Do not lose the tiny varicap diode VC1. The regulators, IC2 and IC5, have their metal tabs **facing into the PCB**; damage will result if fitted incorrectly. If coils and their cans are supplied separately first fit the coils to the board and then orientate the earthing lugs of the can with the PCB holes before pressing it over the coil - once on the coil the can cannot be removed without damage. Plug PL1 has pin1 towards **C19 screen printing, (see the PCB overlay in the instructions)** ; PL2 has pin1 towards the left **facing C15**. Connect the 10-way ribbon cable so that pin1 is brown and the colours will follow the resistor number code, making identification at the other ends simple.

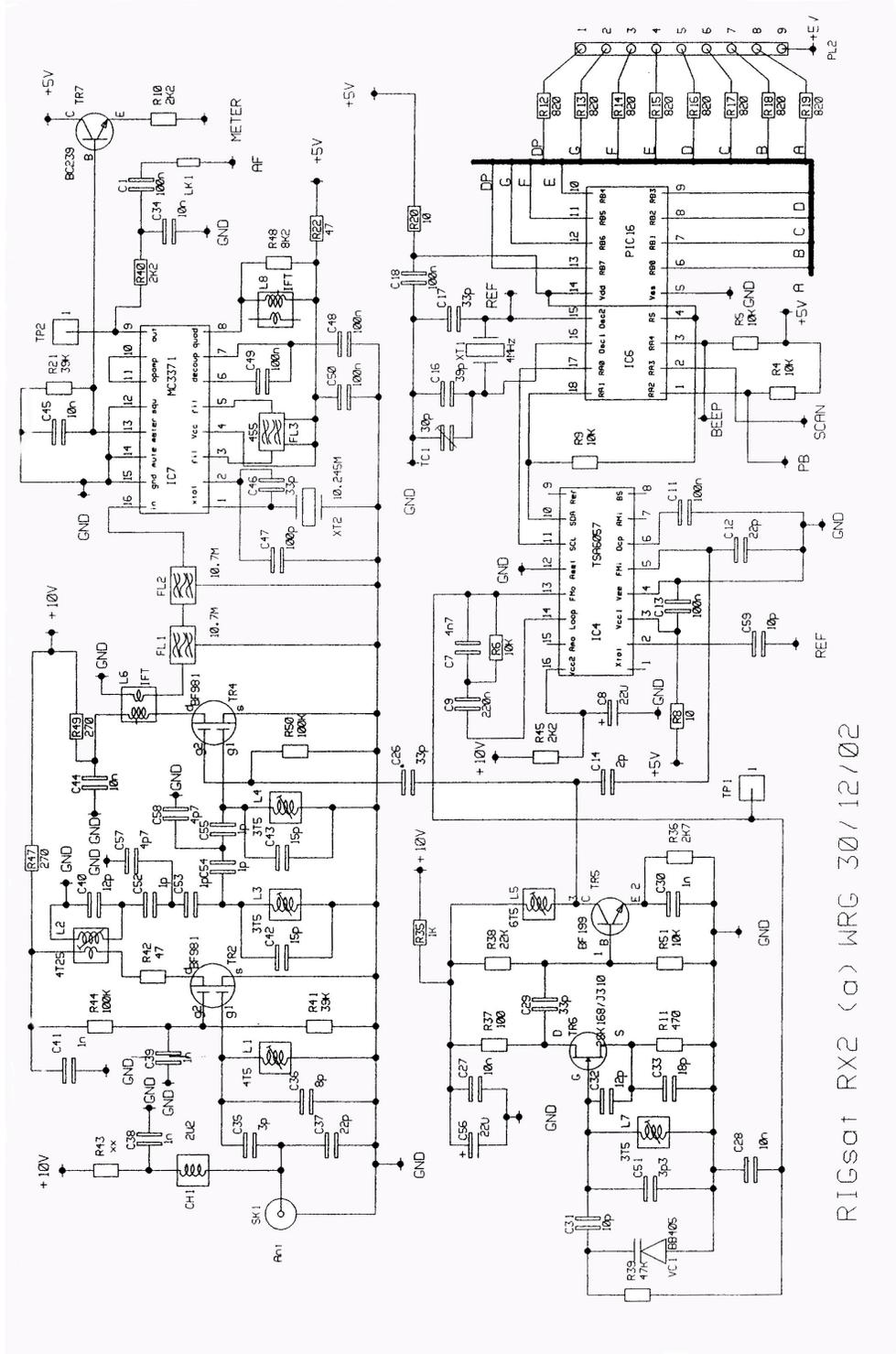
Alignment without test equipment. First make sure you have the correct voltage on TP1. Set the core of L1 flush with the top of its can; L2, L3 and L4 one turn down; L5 to the middle of the former. **L8 can be roughly aligned for maximum noise with the mute open**. Do not move the cores of L6. Now follow the procedure in the instructions.

If it does not work. Check that all components are in their correct positions and that all soldered joints are sound. Make sure that the connections from PL1 to the controls and from PL2 to the 7-segment display are correct. Compare voltages with those in the instructions, this could point to the fault. Do not attempt to remove any IC that you are suspicious of - they are rarely faulty unless having been subject to static, excessive voltage or short circuits. If you are unsuccessful in overcoming the problem then seek advice before becoming frustrated by contacting one of the help lines: do not return your RX2 without having done so.



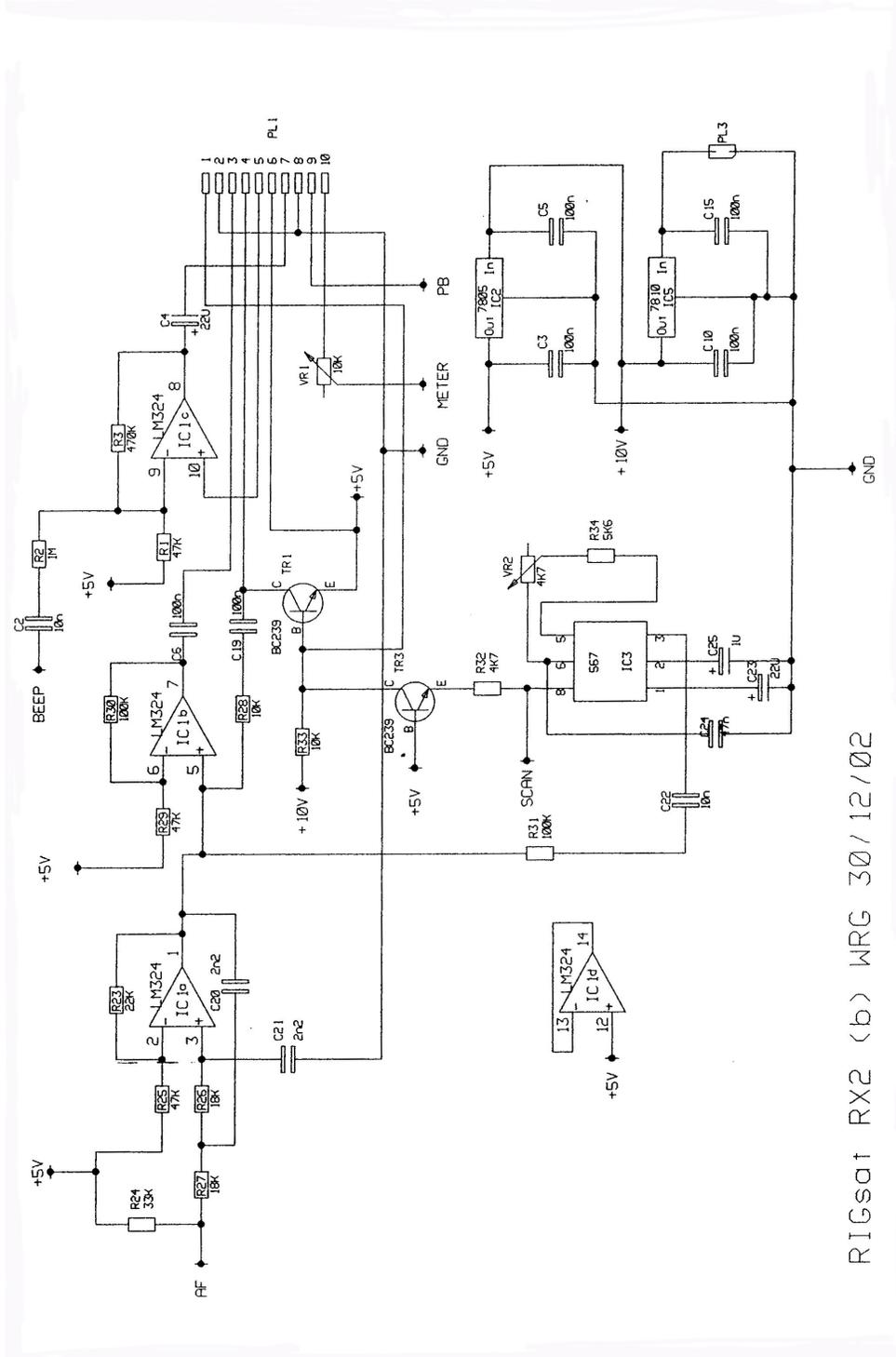
# Remote Imaging Group RX2c INSTRUCTIONS

Diagram A – IF and RF circuitry



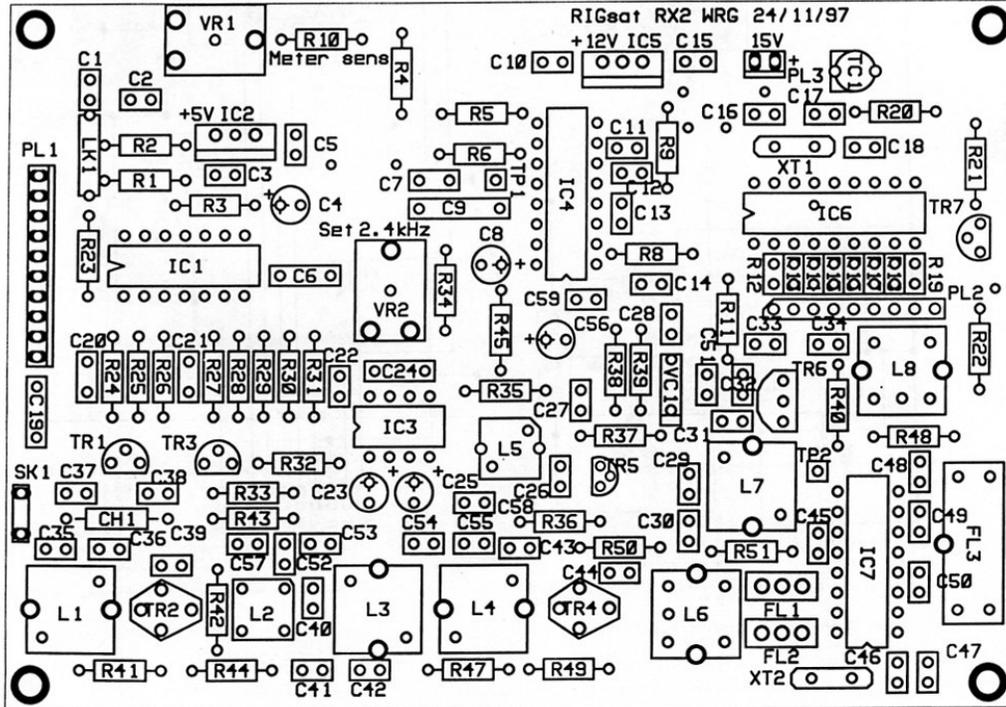
# Remote Imaging Group RX2c INSTRUCTIONS

**Diagram B – audio processing etc**





Remote Imaging Group  
RX2c INSTRUCTIONS



Front

# Remote Imaging Group RX2c INSTRUCTIONS

## ANNEX A – RESISTOR WORKING SHEET

Resistors	10	47	100	270	470	1k	2K2	2K7	4K7	5K6	8K2	10k	18k	22k	33k	39k	47k R1	100k	470k	1m	Not Pres	
1																						
2																						
3																						
4																						
5												R4										
6												R5										
7												R6										
8	R8																					R7
9													R9									
10							R10															
11					R11																	
12					R12																	
13					R13																	
14					R14																	
15					R15																	
16					R16																	
17					R17																	
18					R18																	
19					R19																	
20	R20																					
21																	R21					
22		R22																				
23																R23						
24															R24							
25																						
26																						
27													R26									
28												R28	R27									
29																						
30																						
31																						
32									R32													
33												R33										
34										R34												
35						R35																
36								R36														
37			R37																			
38																						
39																						
40									R40													
41																						
42		R42																				
43																						
44																						R43 not suppld
45									R45													R46
46																						
47					R47																	
48													R48									
49					R49																	
50																						
51												R51										
	Br	Y	Br	R	Y	Br	R	R	Y	Gn	Gy	Br	Br	R	Or	Or	Y	Br	Y	Br		
	Bk	P	Bk	P	P	Bk	R	P	P	Blu	R	Bk	Gy	R	Or	Wh	P	Bk	P	Bk		
	Bk	Bk	Br	Br	Br	R	R	R	R	R	R	Or	Or	Or	Or	Or	Or	Y	Y	Y	Bk	Gn
Totals																						
9			1			1		1	1	1	1										1	1
12	2	2		2									2	2	2							
6							3															3
8																						
7													7								4	4
9						9																
51																						
VR1																						
VR2																						
VR3																						50K log