



# Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128/80

Maria Naya Plasencia

## ► To cite this version:

Maria Naya Plasencia. Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128/80. [Research Report] 2006, pp.14. inria-00111964v1

**HAL Id: inria-00111964**

**<https://inria.hal.science/inria-00111964v1>**

Submitted on 6 Nov 2006 (v1), last revised 13 Nov 2006 (v2)

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



INSTITUT NATIONAL DE RECHERCHE EN INFORMATIQUE ET EN AUTOMATIQUE

# *Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128/80*

María Naya Plasencia

N° ????

November 2006

Thème SYM

 *apport  
de recherche*





## Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128/80

María Naya Plasencia

Thème SYM — Systèmes symboliques  
Projet CODES

Rapport de recherche n° ??? — November 2006 — 14 pages

**Abstract:** This paper presents two attacks against Achterbahn-128/80, the last version of one of the stream cipher proposals in the eSTREAM project. The attack against the 80-bit variant, Achterbahn-80, has complexity  $2^{56.32}$ . The attack against Achterbahn-128 requires  $2^{75.4}$  operations and  $2^{61}$  keystream bits. These attacks are based on an improvement of the attack due to Hell and Johansson against Achterbahn version 2 and also on an algorithm that makes profit of the short lengths of the constituent registers.

**Key-words:** eSTREAM, stream ciphers, Achterbahn, correlation attacks, parity checks, cryptanalysis

## Cryptanalyse de Achterbahn-128/80

**Résumé :** Ce papier présente deux attaques sur Achterbahn-128/80, la dernière version d'un des algorithmes proposés dans le cadre de eSTREAM. L'attaque sur la version de 80 bits, Achterbahn-80, est en  $2^{56.32}$ . L'attaque sur Achterbahn-128 a besoin de  $2^{75.4}$  calculs et  $2^{61}$  bits de suite chiffrante. Ces attaques sont basées sur une amélioration de l'attaque proposée par Hell et Johansson sur la version 2 d'Achterbahn et aussi sur un algorithme qui tire profit des petites longueurs des registres.

**Mots-clés :** eSTREAM, chiffrement à flot, Achterbahn, attaques par corrélation, relations de parité, cryptanalyse

## 1 Introduction

Achterbahn [4, 6] is a stream cipher proposal submitted to the eSTREAM project. After the cryptanalysis of the first two versions [8, 7], it has moved on to a new one called Achterbahn-128/80 [5] published in June 2006. Achterbahn-128/80 corresponds to two keystream generators with key sizes of 128 bits and 80 bits, respectively. Their maximal keystream length is limited to  $2^{63}$ .

We present here two attacks against both generators. The attack against the 80 bit variant, Achterbahn-80, has complexity  $2^{56.32}$ . The attack against Achterbahn-128 requires  $2^{75.4}$  operations and  $2^{61}$  keystream bits. These attacks are based on an improvement of the attack against Achterbahn version 2 and also on an algorithm that makes profit of the short lengths of the constituent registers.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the main specifications of Achterbahn-128/80. Section 3 then describes the general principle of the attack proposed by Hell and Johansson [7] against the previous version of the cipher Achterbahn v2, since our attacks rely on a similar technique. We also exhibit a new attack against Achterbahn v2 with complexity  $2^{49.8}$ , while the best previously known attack had complexity  $2^{59}$ . Section 4 then presents two attacks against Achterbahn-80 and Achterbahn-128 respectively.

### 1.1 Main specifications of Achterbahn-128

Achterbahn-128 is a keystream generator, consisting of 13 binary nonlinear feedback shift registers (NLFSRs). The length of register  $i$  is  $L_i = 21 + i$  for  $i = 0, 1, \dots, 12$ . These NLFSRs are primitive in the sense that their periods  $T_i$  are equal to  $2^{L_i} - 1$ . The sequence which is used as an input to the Boolean combining function is not the output sequence of the NLFSR directly, but a shifted version of itself. The shift amount depends on the register number, but it is fixed for each register. In the following,  $x_i = (x_i(t))_{t \geq 0}$  for  $0 \leq i \leq 12$  denotes the shifted version of the output of the register  $i$  at time  $t$ .

The output of the keystream generator at time  $t$ , denoted by  $S(t)$ , is the one of the Boolean combining function  $F$  with the inputs corresponding to the output sequences of the NLFSRs correctly shifted, i.e.  $S(t) = F(x_0(t), \dots, x_{12}(t))$ . The Boolean combining function  $F$  is given by:

$$\begin{aligned} F(x_0, x_1, \dots, x_{12}) = & x_0 + x_1 + x_2 + x_3 + x_4 + x_5 + x_7 + x_9 + x_{11} + x_{12} + x_0x_5 + x_2x_{10} + \\ & x_2x_{11} + x_4x_8 + x_4x_{12} + x_5x_6 + x_6x_8 + x_6x_{10} + x_6x_{11} + x_6x_{12} + x_7x_8 + x_7x_{12} + x_8x_9 + x_8x_{10} + \\ & x_9x_{10} + x_9x_{11} + x_9x_{12} + x_{10}x_{12} + x_0x_5x_8 + x_0x_5x_{10} + x_0x_5x_{11} + x_0x_5x_{12} + x_1x_2x_8 + x_1x_2x_{12} + \\ & x_1x_4x_{10} + x_1x_4x_{11} + x_1x_8x_9 + x_1x_9x_{10} + x_1x_9x_{11} + x_1x_9x_{12} + x_2x_3x_8 + x_2x_3x_{12} + x_2x_4x_8 + \\ & x_2x_4x_{10} + x_2x_4x_{11} + x_2x_4x_{12} + x_2x_7x_8 + x_2x_7x_{12} + x_2x_8x_{10} + x_2x_8x_{11} + x_2x_9x_{10} + x_2x_9x_{11} + \\ & x_2x_{10}x_{12} + x_2x_{11}x_{12} + x_3x_4x_8 + x_3x_4x_{12} + x_3x_8x_9 + x_3x_9x_{12} + x_4x_7x_8 + x_4x_7x_{12} + x_4x_8x_9 + \\ & x_4x_9x_{12} + x_5x_6x_8 + x_5x_6x_{10} + x_5x_6x_{11} + x_5x_6x_{12} + x_6x_8x_{10} + x_6x_8x_{11} + x_6x_{10}x_{12} + x_6x_{11}x_{12} + \\ & x_7x_8x_9 + x_7x_9x_{12} + x_8x_9x_{10} + x_8x_9x_{11} + x_9x_{10}x_{12} + x_9x_{11}x_{12} + x_0x_5x_8x_{10} + x_0x_5x_8x_{11} + \\ & x_0x_5x_{10}x_{12} + x_0x_5x_{11}x_{12} + x_1x_2x_3x_8 + x_1x_2x_3x_{12} + x_1x_2x_7x_8 + x_1x_2x_7x_{12} + x_1x_3x_5x_8 + \\ & x_1x_3x_5x_{12} + x_1x_3x_8x_9 + x_1x_3x_9x_{12} + x_1x_4x_8x_{10} + x_1x_4x_8x_{11} + x_1x_4x_{10}x_{12} + x_1x_4x_{11}x_{12} + \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& x_1x_5x_7x_8 + x_1x_5x_7x_{12} + x_1x_7x_8x_9 + x_1x_7x_9x_{12} + x_1x_8x_9x_{10} + x_1x_8x_9x_{11} + x_1x_9x_{10}x_{12} + \\
& x_1x_9x_{11}x_{12} + x_2x_3x_4x_8 + x_2x_3x_4x_{12} + x_2x_3x_5x_8 + x_2x_3x_5x_{12} + x_2x_4x_7x_8 + x_2x_4x_7x_{12} + \\
& x_2x_4x_8x_{10} + x_2x_4x_8x_{11} + x_2x_4x_{10}x_{12} + x_2x_4x_{11}x_{12} + x_2x_5x_7x_8 + x_2x_5x_7x_{12} + x_2x_8x_9x_{10} + \\
& x_2x_8x_9x_{11} + x_2x_9x_{10}x_{12} + x_2x_9x_{11}x_{12} + x_3x_4x_8x_9 + x_3x_4x_9x_{12} + x_4x_7x_8x_9 + x_4x_7x_9x_{12} + \\
& x_5x_6x_8x_{10} + x_5x_6x_8x_{11} + x_5x_6x_{10}x_{12} + x_5x_6x_{11}x_{12}.
\end{aligned}$$

Its main cryptographic properties are :

- balancedness
- algebraic degree = 4
- correlation immunity order = 8
- nonlinearity = 3584
- algebraic immunity = 4

## 1.2 Main specifications of Achterbahn-80

Achterbahn-80 consists of 11 registers, which are the same ones as in the above case, except for the first and the last ones. The Boolean combining function,  $G$ , is a sub-function of  $F$  :

$$G(x_1, \dots, x_{11}) = F(0, x_1, \dots, x_{11}, 0).$$

Its main cryptographic properties are :

- balancedness
- algebraic degree = 4
- correlation immunity order = 6
- nonlinearity = 896
- algebraic immunity = 4

As we can see, Achterbahn-128 contains Achterbahn-80 as a substructure.

## 1.3 The key-loading algorithm

The key-loading algorithm uses the key  $K$  and an initial value  $IV$ . The method for initializing the registers is the following one: first of all, all registers are filled with the bits of  $K||IV$ . After that, register  $i$  is clocked  $a - L_i$  times where  $a$  is the number of bits of  $K||IV$ , and the remaining bits of  $K||IV$  are added to the feedback bit. Then, each register outputs one bit. Those bits are taken as input on the Boolean combining function, which outputs

a new bit. This bit is now added to the feedbacks for 32 additional clockings. Then we overwrite the last cell of each register with a 1, in order to avoid the all zero state.

This algorithm has been modified in relation to the previous versions. The aim of this modification is to prevent the attacker from recovering the key  $K$  from the knowledge of the initial states of some registers.

## 2 Attack against Achterbahn version 2 with complexity of $2^{49.8}$

### 2.1 Principle of Hell and Johansson attack against Achterbahn v2

Achterbahn version 2 was the previous version of Achterbahn. The main and most important differences to this last one, which are used by the attack are that:

- it had 10 registers, with lengths between 19 and 32 bits,
- the Boolean function,  $f$ , had correlation immunity order 5.

This version has been broken by Johansson and Hell [7]. Their attack is a distinguishing attack that relies on the following well-known lemma, which is a particular case of [1, Th. 6].

**Lemma 1** *Let  $X$  be a random variable that takes its values into  $\mathbf{F}_2$  with a distribution  $D$  close to the uniform distribution that is*

$$\Pr_D[X = 1] = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \varepsilon) \text{ with } |\varepsilon| \ll 1.$$

*Then, for a number of samples*

$$N = \frac{d}{\varepsilon^2}$$

*where  $d$  is a real number, the error probability of the optimal distinguisher is approximately  $\Phi(-\sqrt{d}/2)$ , where  $\Phi$  is the distribution function of the standard normal distribution:*

$$\Phi(x) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^x \exp\left(-\frac{t^2}{2}\right) dt.$$

In the following, we will consider  $d = 1$  which corresponds to an error probability of about 0.3. The previous quantity  $\varepsilon$  that measures the distance between  $D$  and the uniform distribution is called the *bias* of  $D$ .

The attack proposed by Hell and Johansson exploits a quadratic approximation  $q$  of the combining function  $f$ :

$$q(y_1, \dots, y_n) = \sum_{j=1}^s y_{i_j} + \sum_{i=1}^m (y_{j_i} y_{k_i})$$



with  $m$  quadratic terms and which satisfies

$$\Pr[f(y_1, \dots, y_n) = q(y_1, \dots, y_n)] = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \varepsilon).$$

We build the parity-check equations, as the ones introduced by [8], that make disappear the quadratic terms by summing up:

$$q(t) = \sum_{j=1}^s x_{i_j}(t) + \sum_{i=1}^m x_{j_i}(t)x_{k_i}(t)$$

at  $2^m$  different moments  $(t+\tau)$  moments, where  $\tau$  varies in the set of the linear combinations with 0–1 coefficients of  $T_{j_1}T_{k_1}, T_{j_2}T_{k_2}, \dots, T_{j_m}T_{k_m}$ . In the following, this set is denoted by  $\langle T_{j_1}T_{k_1}, \dots, T_{j_m}T_{k_m} \rangle$ , i.e:

$$\langle T_{j_1}T_{k_1}, \dots, T_{j_m}T_{k_m} \rangle = \left\{ \sum_{i=1}^n c_i T_{j_i k_i}, c_1, \dots, c_m \in \{0, 1\} \right\}.$$

This leads to

$$\begin{aligned} pc(t) &= \sum_{\tau \in \langle T_{j_1}T_{k_1}, \dots, T_{j_m}T_{k_m} \rangle} q(t + \tau) \\ &= \sum_{\tau \in \langle T_{j_1}T_{k_1}, \dots, T_{j_m}T_{k_m} \rangle} (x_{i_1}(t + \tau) + \dots + x_{i_s}(t + \tau)). \end{aligned}$$

We then decimate the sequence  $(pc(t))_{t \geq 0}$  by the periods of  $p$  sequences among  $(x_{i_1}(t))_{t \geq 0}, \dots, (x_{i_s}(t))_{t \geq 0}$ . We can suppose here without loss of generality that the periods of the first  $p$  sequences have been chosen.

Now a new parity-check,  $pc_p$ , can be defined by:

$$pc_p(t) = pc(tT_{i_1} \dots T_{i_p}).$$

This way, the influence of those  $p$  registers on the parity-check  $pc_p(t)$  corresponds to the addition of a constant for all  $t \geq 0$ , so it will be 0 or 1 for all the parity-checks.

Now, the attack consists in performing an exhaustive search for the initial states of the  $(s - p)$  remaining registers, i.e. those of indices  $i_{p+1}, \dots, i_s$ . For each possible values for these initial states, we compute:

$$\sigma(t) = \sum_{\tau \in \langle T_{j_1}T_{k_1}, \dots, T_{j_m}T_{k_m} \rangle} \left[ S(tT_{i_1} \dots T_{i_p} + \tau) + \sum_{j=p+1}^s x_{i_j}(tT_{i_1} \dots T_{i_p} + \tau) \right] \quad (1)$$

We have

$$\Pr[\sigma(t) = 0] = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \varepsilon^{2^m}).$$

Using this bias, we can distinguish the keystream  $(S(t))_{t \geq 0}$  from a random sequence and also recover the initial states of  $(s - p)$  constituent registers.

## 2.2 Complexity

- We will have  $2^m$  terms in each parity-check. That means that we need to compute  $\varepsilon^{-2^{m+1}} = 2^{n_b 2^{m+1}}$  values of  $\sigma(t)$  for mounting the distinguishing attack, where  $n_b = \log_2 \varepsilon^{-1}$ . Besides,  $\sigma(t)$  is defined by (1), implying that the attack requires

$$2^{n_b 2^{m+1} + \sum_{j=1}^p L_{i_j}} + \sum_{i=1}^m 2^{L_{j_i} + L_{k_i}} \text{ keystream bits,}$$

where  $L_{i_j}$  are the lengths of the registers associated to the periods by which we have decimated, and the last term corresponds to the maximal distance between the bits involved in each parity-check.

- Time complexity will be

$$2^m 2^{n_b 2^{m+1} + \sum_{j=p+1}^s L_{i_j}}$$

where  $i_{p+1}, \dots, i_s$  are the indices of the registers by which period we have not decimated, so the registers over whom we have made an exhaustive search and whose initial state we are going to find.

## 2.3 Example with Achterbahn version 2

Hell and Johansson [7] have used this attack against Achterbahn version 2 with the following quadratic approximation:

$$Q(x_1, \dots, x_{10}) = x_1 + x_2 + x_3 x_8 + x_4 x_6.$$

Then, they decimate by the period of the second register, whose length is 22. After that, they make an exhaustive search over the first register, whose length is 19. Time complexity will be  $2^{62}$  and data complexity  $2^{59.02}$ . Using the small lengths of the registers, time complexity can be reduced below data complexity, so the final complexity of the attack will be  $2^{59.02}$ .

## 2.4 Improvement of the Attack against Achterbahn version 2

We are going to improve the previously described attack against Achterbahn v2 and we reduce the complexity to  $2^{49.8}$ .

For this attack, we use the idea of associating the variables in order to reduce the number of terms that we will have in the parity-checks. The only effect that this could have on the final complexity of the attack is to enlarge the number of required keystream bits; but being careful, we make it stay the same while reducing the time complexity.

**The chosen approximation.** At first, we searched between all the quadratics approximations of  $f$  with one and two quadratic terms, as the original attack presented by Hell and Johansson was based on a quadratic approximation. Finally, after looking after a trade-off between the number of terms, the number of variables, the bias... we found that none

quadratic approximation was better for this attack than linear ones. It is worth noticing that, since the combining function  $f$  is 5-resilient, any approximation of  $f$  involves at least 6 input variables. Moreover, the highest bias corresponding to an approximation of  $f$  by a 6-variable function is achieved by a function of degree one as proved in [3]. After analyzing all linear approximations of the Boolean combining function, we found that the best one was:

$$g(x_1, \dots, x_{10}) = x_8 + x_6 + x_4 + x_3 + x_2 + x_1.$$

We have  $f(x_1, \dots, x_{10}) = g(x_1, \dots, x_{10})$  with a probability of  $\frac{1}{2}(1 + 2^{-3})$ .

**Parity-checks.** Let us build a parity-check as follows:

$$ggg(t) = g(t) + g(t + T_1T_8) + g(t + T_2T_6) + g(t + T_1T_8 + T_2T_6),$$

with

$$g(t) = x_8(t) + x_6(t) + x_4(t) + x_3(t) + x_2(t) + x_1(t).$$

The terms  $x_8, x_6, x_2, x_1$  will disappear and, so,  $ggg(t)$  is a sequence that depends uniquely on the sequences  $x_3$  and  $x_4$ . Adding four times the approximation has the effect of multiplying the bias four times, so the bias of

$$\sigma(t) = S(t) + S(t + T_1T_8) + S(t + T_2T_6) + S(t + T_1T_8 + T_2T_6)$$

is  $2^{-3 \times 4} = 2^{-12}$  because 4 is the number of terms in  $ggg(t)$ . That means that we will need  $2^{3 \times 4 \times 2} = 2^{24}$  values of the parity-check for detecting this bias. If we decimate  $ggg(t)$  by the period of register 3, we will need

$$\begin{aligned} 2^{24}T_3 + T_1T_8 + T_2 + T_6 &= 2^{24+23} + 2^{29+19} + 2^{27+22} \\ &= 2^{49.8} \text{ bits of keystream,} \end{aligned}$$

and time complexity will be

$$2^{24} \times 2^{L_4} = 2^{49}$$

as we only guess the initial state of register 4.

We consider that the total complexity is given by the data complexity, as it is higher than the time complexity. This complexity is  $2^{49.8}$  while the complexity of the previous attack was equal to  $2^{59}$ .

### 3 Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128/80

Now, we describe a new attack against Achterbahn-80 with a complexity of  $2^{56.32}$  where a linear approximation of the output function is considered. The attack is a distinguishing attack but it also allows to recover the initial states of certain constituent registers. We also describe an attack against Achterbahn-128 with a complexity of  $2^{75.4}$  where we consider a linear approximation of the output function and we make profit of the short lengths of the registers involved in the proposed stream cipher.

### 3.1 Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-80

This attack is very similar to the improvement of the attack against Achterbahn version 2 which has been described in the previous section.

Our attack exploits the following linear approximation of the combining function  $G$ :

$$\ell(x_1, \dots, x_{11}) = x_1 + x_3 + x_4 + x_5 + x_6 + x_7 + x_{10}.$$

Since  $G$  is 6-resilient,  $\ell$  is the best approximation by a 7-variable function.

For  $\ell(t) = x_1(t) + x_3(t) + x_4(t) + x_5(t) + x_6(t) + x_7(t) + x_{10}(t)$ , the keystream  $(S(t))_{t \geq 0}$  satisfies  $\Pr[S(t) = \ell(t)] = \frac{1}{2}(1 - 2^{-3})$ .

**Parity-checks.** Let us build a parity-check as follows:

$$\ell\ell(t) = \ell(t) + \ell(t + T_4T_7) + \ell(t + T_6T_5) + \ell(t + T_4T_7 + T_6T_5).$$

The terms containing the sequences  $x_4, x_5, x_6, x_7$  vanish in  $\ell\ell(t)$ , so  $\ell\ell(t)$  depends exclusively on the sequences  $x_1, x_3$  and  $x_{10}$ .

Adding four times the approximation has the effect of multiplying the bias four times, so the bias of

$$\sigma(t) = S(t) + S(t + T_7T_4) + S(t + T_6T_5) + S(t + T_7T_4 + T_6T_5)$$

where  $(S(t))_{t \geq 0}$  is the keystream, is  $2^{-4 \times 3}$ . This means that we need  $2^{3 \times 4 \times 2} = 2^{24}$  parity-checks  $\sigma(t)$  to detect this bias.

We now decimate  $\sigma(t)$  by the period of the register 10, which is involved in the parity-check, so we create like this a new parity-check:

$$\sigma'(t) = \sigma(t(2^{31} - 1)).$$

Then, the attack performs an exhaustive search for the initial states of registers 1 and 3. Its time complexity is  $2^{24} \times 2^{L_1 + L_3} = 2^{70}$ .

The number of keystream bits that we need is

$$2^{24} \times T_{10} + T_4T_7 + T_6T_5 = 2^{56.32}$$

### 3.2 Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128

Now, we present a distinguishing attack against the 128-bit version of Achterbahn which also recovers the initial states of two registers.

We consider the following approximation of the combining function  $F$ :

$$\ell(x_0, \dots, x_{12}) = x_0 + x_3 + x_7 + x_4 + x_{10} + x_8 + x_9 + x_1 + x_2.$$

Then, for  $\ell(t) = x_0(t) + x_3(t) + x_7(t) + x_4(t) + x_{10}(t) + x_8(t) + x_9(t) + x_1(t) + x_2(t)$ , we have  $\Pr[S(t) = \ell(t)] = \frac{1}{2}(1 + 2^{-3})$ .

**Parity-checks.** The period of any sequence obtained by combining the registers 0, 3 and 7 is equal to  $\text{lcm}(T_0, T_3, T_7)$ , i.e.  $2^{59.3}$  as  $T_0$ ,  $T_3$  and  $T_7$  have common divisors. We are going to denote this value by  $T_{0,3,7}$ .

If we build a parity check as follows:

$$\ell\ell\ell(t) = \sum_{\tau \in \langle T_{0,3,7}, T_{4,10}, T_{8,9} \rangle} \ell(t + \tau),$$

the terms containing the sequences  $x_0, x_3, x_7, x_4, x_{10}, x_8, x_9$  will disappear from  $\ell\ell\ell(t)$ , so  $\ell\ell\ell(t)$  depends exclusively on the sequences  $x_1$  and  $x_2$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \ell\ell\ell(t) &= \sum_{\tau \in \langle T_{0,3,7}, T_{4,10}, T_{8,9} \rangle} \ell(t + \tau) \\ &= \sum_{\tau \in \langle T_{0,3,7}, T_{4,10}, T_{8,9} \rangle} x_1(t + \tau) + x_2(t + \tau) \\ &= \sigma_1(t) + \sigma_2(t), \end{aligned}$$

where  $\sigma_1(t)$  and  $\sigma_2(t)$  are the parity-checks calculated on the sequences generated by NLFSRs 1 and 2.

Adding eight times the approximation has the effect of multiplying the bias eight times, so the bias of

$$\sigma(t) = \sum_{\tau \in \langle T_{0,3,7}, T_{4,10}, T_{8,9} \rangle} S(t + \tau)$$

where  $(S(t))_{t \geq 0}$  is the keystream, is  $2^{-8 \times 3}$ . So:

$$\Pr[\sigma(t) + \sigma_1(t) + \sigma_2(t) = 1] = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \varepsilon^8).$$

This means that we need  $2^{3 \times 8 \times 2} = 2^{48}$  values of  $\sigma(t) + \sigma_1(t) + \sigma_2(t)$  to detect this bias.

We now describe an algorithm for computing the sum  $\sigma(t) + \sigma_1(t) + \sigma_2(t)$  over all values of  $t$ . This algorithm has a lower complexity than an exhaustive search for the initial states of the registers 1 and 2 simultaneously. Here we use  $(2^{48} - 2)$  values of  $t$  since  $(2^{48} - 2) = T_2 \times (2^{25} + 2)$ .

We can write it down as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
\sum_{t'=0}^{2^{48}-3} \sigma(t') \oplus \ell\ell\ell(t') &= \sum_{k=0}^{T_2-1} \sum_{t=0}^{2^{25}+1} \sigma(T_2t+k) \oplus \ell\ell\ell(T_2t+k) \\
&= \sum_{k=0}^{T_2-1} \sum_{t=0}^{2^{25}+1} \sigma(T_2t+k) \oplus \sigma_1(T_2t+k) \oplus \sigma_2(T_2t+k) \\
&= \sum_{k=0}^{T_2-1} \left[ (\sigma_2(k) \oplus 1) \left( \sum_{t=0}^{2^{25}+1} \sigma(T_2t+k) \oplus \sigma_1(T_2t+k) \right) + \right. \\
&\quad \left. \sigma_2(k) \left( (2^{25}+2) - \sum_{t=0}^{2^{25}+1} \sigma(T_2t+k) \oplus \sigma_1(T_2t+k) \right) \right],
\end{aligned}$$

since  $\sigma_2(T_2t+k)$  is constant for a fixed value of  $k$ .

At this point, we can obtain  $\sigma(t)$  from the keystream and we can make an exhaustive search for the initial state of register 1. More precisely:

- We choose an initial state for register 2, e.g. the all one initial state. We compute and save a binary vector  $V_2$  of length  $T_2$ :

$$V_2[k] = \sigma_2(k),$$

where the sequence  $x_2$  is generated from the choosen initial state. The complexity of this state is  $T_2 \times 2^3$  operations.

- For each possible initial state of register 1:
  - we compute and save a vector  $V_1$  composed of  $T_2$  integers of 26 bits.

$$V_1[k] = \sum_{t=0}^{2^{25}+1} \sigma(T_2t+k) \oplus \sigma_1(T_2t+k).$$

The complexity of this state is:

$$2^{48} \times (2^4 + 2^{4.7}) = 2^{53.4}$$

for each possible initial state of register 1, where  $2^4$  corresponds to the number of operations required for computing each  $(\sigma(t) + \sigma_1(t))$  and  $(2^{25} + 2) \times 2^{4.7} = (2^{25} + 2) \times 26$  is the cost of summing up  $2^{25} + 2$  integers of 26 bits.

- For each possible  $i$  from 0 to  $T_2 - 1$ :

\* we define  $V'_2$  of length  $T_2$ :

$$V'_2[k] = V_2[k + i \bmod T_2].$$

Actually,  $(V'_2[k])_{k < T_2}$  corresponds to  $(\sigma_2(k))_{k < T_2}$  when the initial state of register 2 corresponds to internal state after clocking  $R2$   $i$  times from the all one initial state.

\* With the two vectors that we have obtained, we compute:

$$\sum_{k=0}^{T_2-1} [(V'_2[k] \oplus 1) V_1[k] + V'_2[k] (2^{25} + 2 - V_1[k])] . \quad (2)$$

When we do this with the correct initial states of registers 1 and 2, we will find the expected bias.

```

for each possible initial state of  $R1$  do
  for  $k = 0$  to  $T_2 - 1$  do
     $V_1[k] = \sum_{t=0}^{2^{25}+1} \sigma(T_2 t + k) \oplus \sigma_1(T_2 t + k)$ 
  end for
  for each possible initial  $i$  state of  $R2$  do
    for  $k = 0$  to  $T_2 - 1$  do
       $V'_2[k] = V_2[k + i \bmod T_2]$ 
    end for
     $\sum_{k=0}^{T_2-1} [(V'_2[k] \oplus 1) V_1[k] + V'_2[k] (2^{25} + 2 - V_1[k])]$ 
    if we find the bias then
      return the initial states of  $R1$  and  $R2$ 
    end if
  end for
end for

```

Table 1: Algorithm for finding the initial states of registers 1 and 2

The total time complexity of the attack is going to be:

$$T_1 \times [2^{48} \times (2^4 + 2^{4.7}) + T_2 \times 2 \times T_2 \times 2^{4.7}] + T_2 \times 2^3 = 2^{75.4},$$

where  $2 \times T_2 \times 2^{4.7}$  is the time it takes to compute the sum described by (2). Actually, we can speed up the process by rewriting the sum (2) in the following way

$$\sum_{k=0}^{T_2-1} (-1)^{V_2[k+i]} \left( V_1[k] - \frac{2^{25} + 2}{2} \right) + T_2 \frac{2^{25} + 2}{2}$$

The issue is now to find the  $i$  that maximizes this sum, this is the same as computing the maximum of the crosscorrelation of two sequences of length  $T_2$ . We can do that efficiently

using a fast Fourier transform as explained in [2, pages 306-312]. The final complexity will be in  $O(T_2 \log T_2)$ . Anyway, this does not change our total complexity as the higher term is the first one.

The complexity is going to be, finally:

$$T_1 \times [2^{48} \times (2^4 + 2^{4.7}) + O(T_2 \log T_2)] + T_2 \times 2^3 = 2^{75.4}.$$

The length of keystream needed is:

$$T_{0,3,7} + T_{4,10} + T_{8,9} + 2^{48} < 2^{61} \text{ bits.}$$

## 4 Conclusion

We have proposed an attack against Achterbahn-80 in  $2^{70}$ . To this attack we can apply the same algorithm as the one described in Section 3.2 against Achterbahn-128, and its time complexity will be reduced to about  $2^{45}$ , so we can consider as the total complexity the length of the keystream needed, since it is bigger. The complexity of the attack against Achterbahn-80 will then be  $2^{56.32}$ . An attack against Achterbahn-128 is also proposed in  $2^{75.4}$  where fewer than  $2^{61}$  bits of keystream are required. The complexities of the best attacks against all versions of Achterbahn are summarized in the following table:

| version        | data complexity | time complexity | references |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| v1 (80-bit)    | $2^{32}$        | $2^{55}$        | [8]        |
| v2 (80-bit)    | $2^{59.02}$     | $2^{62}$        | [7]        |
| v2 (80-bit)    | $2^{49.8}$      | $2^{49}$        |            |
| v80 (80-bit)   | $2^{56.32}$     | $2^{46}$        |            |
| v128 (128-bit) | $2^{60}$        | $2^{75.4}$      |            |

Table 2: Attacks complexities against all versions of Achterbahn

## References

- [1] T. Baignères, P. Junod, and S. Vaudenay. How far can we go beyond linear cryptanalysis? In *Advances in Cryptology - ASIACRYPT 2004*, volume 3329 of *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, pages 432–450. Springer-Verlag, 2004.
- [2] R. E. Blahut. *Fast Algorithms for Digital Signal Processing*. Addison Wesley, 1985.
- [3] A. Canteaut and M. Trabbia. Improved fast correlation attacks using parity-check equations of weight 4 and 5. In *Advances in Cryptology - EUROCRYPT 2000*, volume 1807 of *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, pages 573–588. Springer-Verlag, 2000.



- [4] B. M. Gammel, R. Gottfert, and O. Kniffler. The Achterbahn stream cipher. eSTREAM, ECRYPT Stream Cipher Project, Report 2005/002, 2005. <http://www.ecrypt.eu.org/stream/ciphers/achterbahn/achterbahn.pdf>.
- [5] B. M. Gammel, R. Gottfert, and O. Kniffler. Achterbahn-128/80. eSTREAM, ECRYPT Stream Cipher Project, Report 2006/001, 2006. [http://www.ecrypt.eu.org/stream/p2ciphers/achterbahn/achterbahn\\_p2.pdf](http://www.ecrypt.eu.org/stream/p2ciphers/achterbahn/achterbahn_p2.pdf).
- [6] B. M. Gammel, R. Gottfert, and O. Kniffler. Status of Achterbahn and tweaks. eSTREAM, ECRYPT Stream Cipher Project, Report 2006/027, 2006. <http://www.ecrypt.eu.org/stream/papersdir/2006/027.pdf>.
- [7] M. Hell and T. Johansson. Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-version 2. eSTREAM, ECRYPT Stream Cipher Project, Report 2006/042, 2006. <http://www.ecrypt.eu.org/stream/ciphers/achterbahn/achterbahn.pdf>.
- [8] T. Johansson, W. Meier, and F. Muller. Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn. In *Advances in Cryptology - FSE 2006*, volume 4047 of *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, pages 1–14. Springer, 2006.

## Contents

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Introduction</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| 1.1      | Main specifications of Achterbahn-128 . . . . .                                     | 3         |
| 1.2      | Main specifications of Achterbahn-80 . . . . .                                      | 4         |
| 1.3      | The key-loading algorithm . . . . .   | 4         |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Attack against Achterbahn version 2 with complexity of <math>2^{49.8}</math></b> | <b>5</b>  |
| 2.1      | Principle of Hell and Johansson attack against Achterbahn v2 . . . . .              | 5         |
| 2.2      | Complexity . . . . .  | 7         |
| 2.3      | Example with Achterbahn version 2 . . . . .   | 7         |
| 2.4      | Improvement of the Attack against Achterbahn version 2 . . . . .                    | 7         |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128/80</b>   | <b>8</b>  |
| 3.1      | Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-80 . . . . .  | 9         |
| 3.2      | Cryptanalysis of Achterbahn-128 . . . . .   | 9         |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Conclusion</b>   | <b>13</b> |



---

Unité de recherche INRIA Rocquencourt  
Domaine de Voluceau - Rocquencourt - BP 105 - 78153 Le Chesnay Cedex (France)

Unité de recherche INRIA Futurs : Parc Club Orsay Université - ZAC des Vignes  
4, rue Jacques Monod - 91893 ORSAY Cedex (France)

Unité de recherche INRIA Lorraine : LORIA, Technopôle de Nancy-Brabois - Campus scientifique  
615, rue du Jardin Botanique - BP 101 - 54602 Villers-lès-Nancy Cedex (France)

Unité de recherche INRIA Rennes : IRISA, Campus universitaire de Beaulieu - 35042 Rennes Cedex (France)

Unité de recherche INRIA Rhône-Alpes : 655, avenue de l'Europe - 38334 Montbonnot Saint-Ismier (France)

Unité de recherche INRIA Sophia Antipolis : 2004, route des Lucioles - BP 93 - 06902 Sophia Antipolis Cedex (France)

---

Éditeur  
INRIA - Domaine de Voluceau - Rocquencourt, BP 105 - 78153 Le Chesnay Cedex (France)  
<http://www.inria.fr>  
ISSN 0249-6399