COVANET
FLOW

COVANET FLOW · RECEIVING A FEED

Receiving an SRT feed

Set-up and troubleshooting

OBS Studio · vMix · CovaNet decoder rental
Client edition · November 2026

We will email you the full SRT link for your feed. It contains your stream ID and passphrase, so please treat it like a password and share it only with whoever runs your receiver. This guide shows how to use it in OBS Studio or vMix, or how a decoder we pre-set for you does it with just power and Ethernet.

1
SRT destination set up
We create an SRT destination for you in CovaNet Flow.

2
Source connected
Your programme source is patched to that destination in the Flow panel.

3
SRT link created
Flow creates the link once the source is connected, not before.

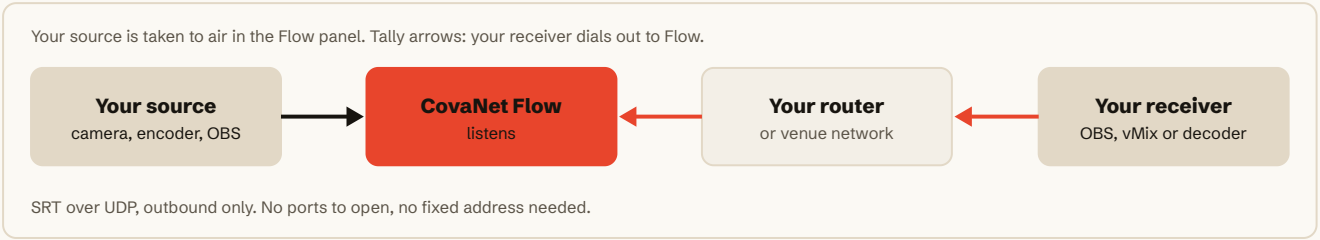
4
Link emailed to you
You receive the full link by email. Keep it private, like a password.

WHAT YOU NEED	WHERE IT COMES FROM
SRT link	The link we email you, in the form `srt://HOST:PORT?streamid=...&passphrase=....` It carries your stream ID and passphrase, so please treat it like a password.
Latency	500 ms is our default and suits most connections. You can go down to 200 ms on a good wired line.
Mode	Your receiver is always the caller. Flow listens and your machine dials out to it, so you never need to open a port on your own firewall.

Nothing arriving? Before changing any settings, ask whoever runs the Flow panel to confirm your output is on air (green), not just patched. A patched output that has not been taken live sends nothing, and every receiver will show black.

1. How it connects

Your receiver calls out to Flow over the internet. Nothing needs to call in, which is why it works behind almost any router.



Quick checks

Run these in order. Between them they fix most black screens.

CHECK	HOW	WHY IT MATTERS
1. Output on air	Flow panel shows your output green, not amber or grey.	Patched is not live. Nothing is sent until it is taken to air.
2. Link current and exact	Use the Copy button in Flow and paste the whole link. If the passphrase has been rotated since, copy it again.	A wrong or old passphrase looks identical to no connection at all.
3. Network allows UDP	Try the same settings on a phone hotspot. If it works there, the venue or office network is blocking it.	SRT travels over UDP. Some corporate, hotel and venue networks block outbound UDP.
4. Nothing else using the link	Close any other player or second OBS source using the same link. If two machines need the feed, ask us for a second output.	Flow allows one receiver per link. The first stays connected and any second one shows black until the first lets go.

Windows firewall. The first time OBS or vMix receives a stream, Windows may ask whether to allow it on public and private networks. Allow both. If you clicked Cancel, open Windows Security, Firewall, Allow an app through firewall, and tick the program in both columns.

Where the link comes from

If you have Flow, the link and the instructions for each program sit together in the SRT Listener destination. If you do not, we send you the same link by email.

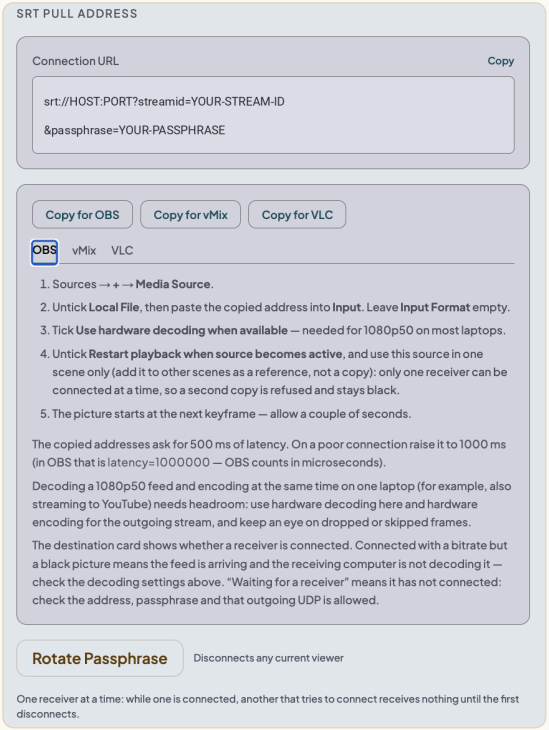
Copy for OBS, vMix or VLC gives you the link in the form that program wants, with 500 ms latency and the right settings already in it. The tabs underneath show the steps for each one.

The link appears once a source is connected to that destination, because the host name belongs to the server carrying the source. Until then Flow says *Connect a source to this destination to generate the pull URL*, and an old link will report that the host cannot be found.

One receiver at a time. While one is connected, another that tries to connect receives nothing until the first disconnects.

Rotate Passphrase disconnects the current receiver at once. Copy the new link before reconnecting.

Just want to check the feed? In VLC choose Media, Open Network Stream, paste the Copy for VLC address and press Play. Close VLC before connecting OBS or vMix.

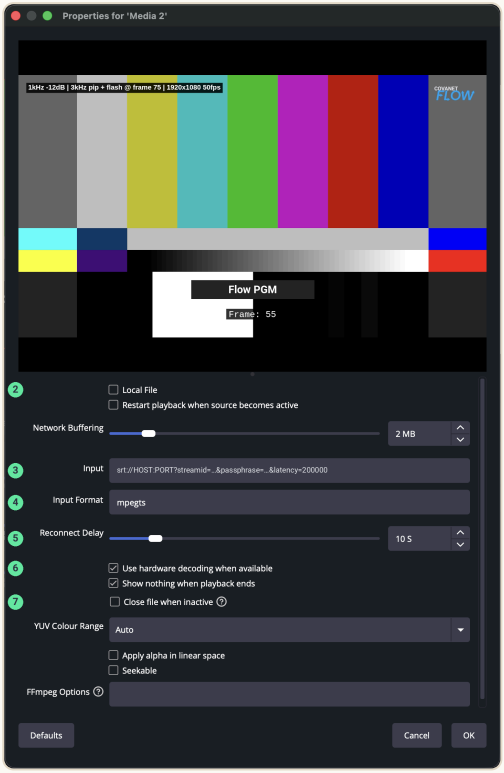


The SRT Listener destination in Flow, OBS tab. Address and passphrase replaced with placeholders.

2. OBS Studio

OBS receives SRT through a Media Source. The window is the same on Windows and Mac; the numbers on the screenshot match the steps.

STEP	SETTING
1	In Sources, click + and choose **Media Source**. Name it, for example Flow PGM.
2	Untick **Local File**. Leave **Restart playback when source becomes active** unticked, so the feed keeps running when you cut away and is there instantly when you cut back.
3	In **Input**, paste the OBS version of your link, from **Copy for OBS** in Flow or from our email. It already carries mode=caller, latency=500000 and pbkeylen=16. With a plain link, add `&mode=caller&latency=500000&pbkeylen=16` to the end.
4	**Input Format**: leave it empty. `mpegts` also works.
5	**Reconnect Delay**: between 2 and 10 s. Shorter recovers faster after a drop.
6	Tick **Use hardware decoding when available**.
7	Leave **Close file when inactive** unticked, then click OK. The picture starts at the next keyframe, usually within a couple of seconds. To show it in other scenes, use Add Existing rather than a copy: a copy is a second receiver and stays black.
8	To hear it, open Edit, Advanced Audio Properties and set the source's Audio Monitoring to Monitor and Output.



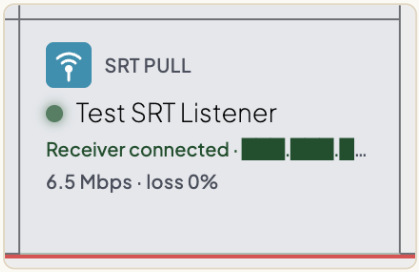
OBS Media Source receiving a Flow test card. Address, stream ID and passphrase replaced.

OBS counts latency in microseconds. latency=500000 is 500 ms and latency=200000 is 200 ms. Typing latency=500 by mistake leaves you on Flow's 120 ms default, which plays but can stutter over the internet.

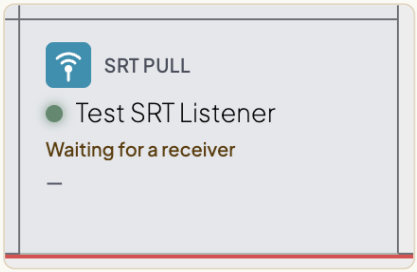
3. OBS black screen and drop-outs

First ask whoever runs Flow what the destination card says. It tells you whether the problem is the connection or the picture.

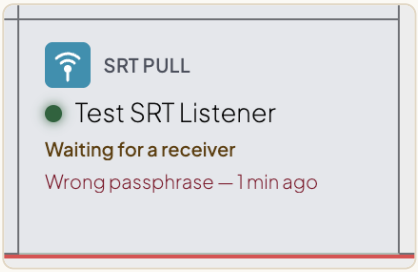
FLOW CARD SHOWS	WHAT IT MEANS
Waiting for a receiver	Nothing has connected. Check the link, the network and that nothing else is using it.
Wrong passphrase / No passphrase sent	Your receiver reached Flow but was refused. Copy the link again.
Receiver connected · IP · Mbps · loss	The feed is reaching you. A black screen is now a decoding or OBS setting problem. High loss means raise latency.



Connected: the feed is reaching you.



Nothing has connected yet.

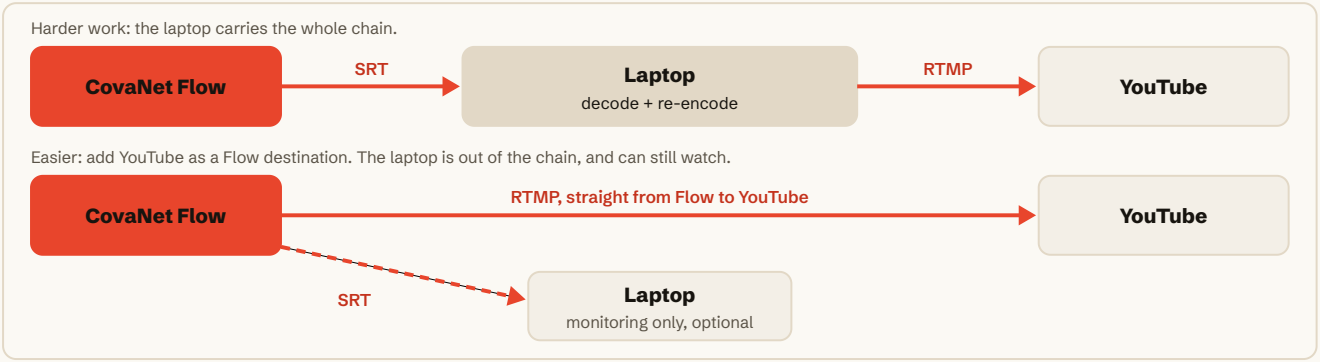


Refused: the passphrase did not match.

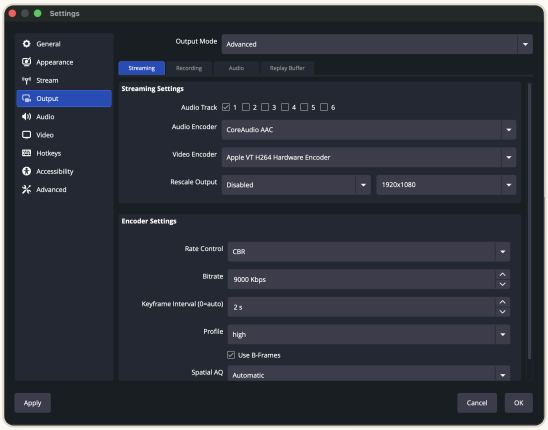
WHAT YOU SEE	LIKELY CAUSE	FIX
Black, audio meter not moving	Not connected at all.	Check the output is on air in Flow, copy the link again, re-paste it, then right-click the source and choose Restart.
Black, audio meter moving	Connected, but the picture is not decoding.	Untick hardware decoding, click OK, then tick it again. Update the graphics driver. If it persists, the source may be H.265, which some machines cannot decode. Flow passes the picture through untouched, so ask whoever runs the source encoder to send H.264.
Black or Connecting, worked before	Another receiver is still using the link.	Close any second OBS source, other scene collection or VLC window using the same link.
Black for a few seconds after every cut	The source restarts each time it comes on screen.	Untick Restart playback when source becomes active and Close file when inactive.
Freezes or breaks up every few seconds	Latency too low for the connection, or Wi-Fi.	Raise latency to 1000000, or 2000000 across continents. Use Ethernet rather than Wi-Fi.
Fine at first, worse over time	The computer is running out of headroom.	Open View, Stats. Rising skipped or lagged frames confirm it. See the next page.

Receiving and streaming on one laptop

Pulling a Flow feed and streaming it on to YouTube from one laptop means the laptop decodes and re-encodes 1080p at the same time, which is where most laptops give up. If the laptop is only passing the feed on, let Flow send to YouTube directly and the laptop is out of the chain.



IF THE LAPTOP MUST STREAM	WHAT TO DO
Hardware encoder	Settings, Output, Video Encoder: NVIDIA NVENC, Intel QuickSync or AMD AMF on Windows, Apple VT H264 Hardware Encoder on a Mac. Never x264 on a laptop doing both jobs.
Lighter output	1080p30 or 720p rather than 1080p60, CBR around 6,000 to 9,000 Kbps, keyframe interval 2 s, and Rescale Output disabled.
Plug in and close	Mains power, high-performance power plan, and browsers and video calls closed.
Second machine	One receives, the other streams, or rent our decoder (section 5) into an HDMI capture.

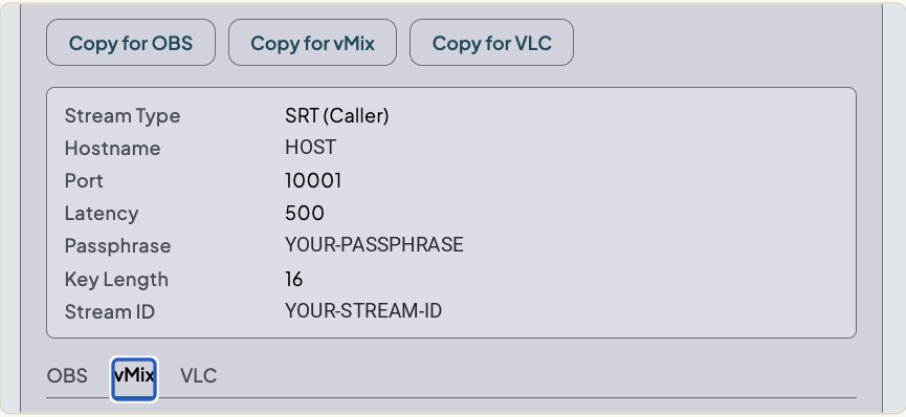


OBS Output settings on a Mac using the hardware encoder.

4. vMix

vMix (Windows only) receives SRT as a Stream input, with the link split across separate fields.

STEP	SETTING
1	Add Input, then **Stream / SRT**.
2	**Stream Type**: SRT (Caller).
3	Easiest: use **Copy for vMix** in Flow, which lists every field below. Otherwise, **Hostname**: the part of your link between `srt://` and the colon. **Port**: the number after the colon.
4	**Stream ID**: everything between `streamid=` and `&`.
5	**Passphrase**: everything after `passphrase=`. **Key Length**: 16.
6	**Latency**: 500, or 200 on a good wired line. vMix counts in milliseconds, unlike OBS. Tick hardware decoding if offered, then OK.

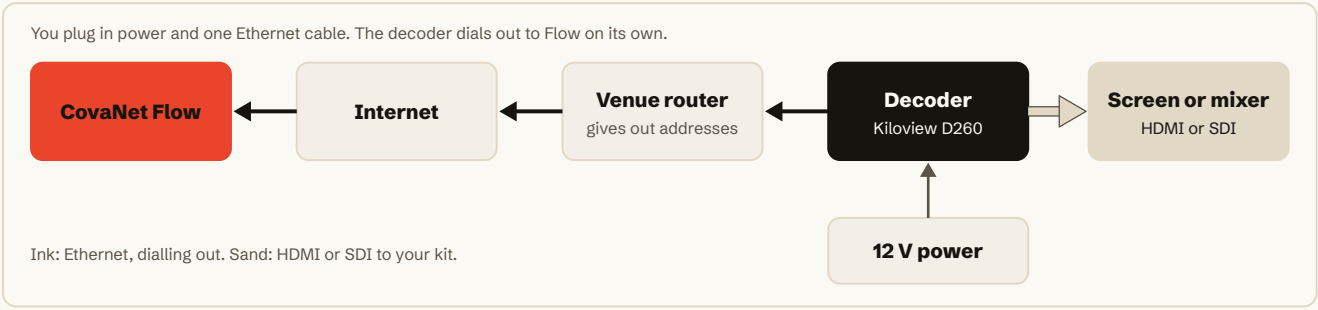


Copy for vMix in Flow: each field ready to type in. Host, passphrase and stream ID replaced.

WHAT YOU SEE	FIX
Input stays on Connecting	Check the output is on air in Flow, then copy the link again and re-check the four fields above. Still stuck? Try a phone hotspot: if it connects there, your network is blocking UDP.
Picture stutters or freezes	Raise latency to 1000, or 2000 across continents. Use Ethernet.
Audio out of step with picture	Input settings, Audio, adjust the delay. Our feed carries audio and video together, so a fixed offset usually comes from elsewhere in your chain.
Drops when the main stream starts	Same headroom problem as OBS: use a hardware encoder for vMix's own output, or a second machine.

5. Rent a decoder from us

For a screen, a vision mixer or anyone who would rather not touch software. We set it up for your feed before it leaves us.



What it is	A Kiloview D260 hardware decoder, about the size of a paperback, pre-set by us to call your Flow output.
What you plug in	The power supply and an Ethernet cable to any network that gives out addresses automatically, which is nearly all of them.
What comes out	HDMI (two outputs, same picture) and 3G-SDI, up to 1080p60, plus analogue audio on a 3.5 mm jack.
How long it takes	Picture usually appears within a minute of power on. No screen, keyboard or settings needed.
In the box	Decoder, 12 V power supply, Ethernet cable, HDMI cable, and a label with the feed it is set to.



Kiloview D260. You only need the power socket and Ethernet port 1 on the back; the picture comes out of HDMI or SDI on the front. Leave the USB and Type-C ports empty.

Please do not press the reset button. The small pin-hole reset puts the decoder back to factory settings and removes everything we set up, after which it will not find your feed. If it happens, call us and we will talk you through it or swap the unit.

Networks it will not work on. Wi-Fi with a sign-in page (hotels, conference centres), because the decoder cannot click Accept, and corporate networks that block outbound UDP. For the first, use a wired port or a 4G router. For the second, send your IT team the address and port on the label and ask them to allow outbound UDP to it.

6. Still stuck

Send us these four things and we can usually fix it from our side without a call.

SEND	EXAMPLE
A screenshot of your settings	The OBS Media Source window or the vMix input settings, stream ID and passphrase blanked out, please.
What you see	Black with no audio, black with audio, freezes every few seconds.
Your network	Office, venue, home broadband, 4G. Wired or Wi-Fi.
The time it went wrong	With the time zone, and within 48 hours, please: our server logs only go back about two days.

Email **info@covanet.co.uk** with those four and we will come back to you with the fix. To book a decoder, tell us the date, the feed and the delivery address, please.