

CC3120 and CC3220 SimpleLink™ Wi-Fi® Embedded Programming

The CC3120 and CC3220 devices are part of the SimpleLink™ microcontroller (MCU) platform, which consists of Wi-Fi®, Bluetooth® low energy, Sub-1 GHz, and host MCUs, which all share a common, easy-to-use development environment with a single core software development kit (SDK) and rich tool set. A one-time integration of the SimpleLink platform lets you add any combination of devices of the portfolio into your design, allowing 100 percent code reuse when your design requirements change. For more information, visit www.ti.com/SimpleLink.

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1 Introduction

The SimpleLink™ CC3120 and CC3220 devices are Wi-Fi® and networking devices that provide a comprehensive networking solution for low-cost and low-power microcontrollers (MCU) using a thin driver and simple API set.

Each product with an embedded CC3120 or CC3220 device onboard must also have a serial flash device connected. The serial flash must be formatted, and at a minimum programmed with the Service Pack, which contains necessary software updates and additional features. For the CC3220, a binary image running on the internal MCU processor must also be programmed.

There are several options for serial flash programming, as follows:

- UniFlash – a PC-based utility offering image creation and programming. Content is programmed using the UART.
- Industrial flash programmer – flashes a complete image prepared with UniFlash directly to the serial flash. Can be applied when no SimpleLink device is attached to the serial flash. Content is programmed using the serial flash SPI lines.
- Over-the-air programming – the serial flash must be formatted in advance. Content is delivered through a network connection.

This application note describes in details additional options that leverage all the features UniFlash has to offer, but without the necessary connected PC. This option is referred to as *Embedded Programming*. To achieve embedded programming, bootloader protocol implemented over UART is described in detail.

The following sections describe the setup, bootloader protocol, and procedure of the embedded programming feature.

2 Embedded Programming Schemes

Several schemes can leverage full image programming over the UART, as follows.

- Embedded programming in production line – there are setups on the production line that do not include the PC. Instead, programmable devices such as the MCU, DSP, or FPGA are used.
- Main external processor (other than the CC3220 MCU) – in many cases, CC3120 and CC3220 devices are just another component in the device enabling network communication. Such devices have main processors that usually control and schedule everything in the system. These cores must have the ability to upgrade and program CC3120 or CC3220 peripherals.

3 Setup

The UART interface must be connected between the CC3120 or CC3220 device and the main processor. Only two pins are required, UART TX and UART RX. Flow control is not required.

The common configuration that applies to all chipsets follows:

- Baud rate of 921600bps
- 8 bits
- No parity
- 1 stop bit

In addition, the nHib/nReset pin is required and it must be have the ability to be temporarily pulled to GND during a reset to make the device go into bootloader mode.

For the CC3220 device, an additional SOP1 pin must be pulled up during the device reset to make the device go into bootloader mode.



Figure 1. CC3120 and CC3220 QFN Programming Setup

4 Bootloader Protocol

4.1 Overview

The CC3120 and CC3220 bootloader protocol is a simple command-response protocol. The protocol is based on the protocol used by the Stellaris® LM Flash Programmer. The commands are serially executed and there are no unsolicited events during the bootloader phase.

4.2 General Message Format

[Table 1](#) provides the general message format.

Table 1. General Message Format

Length (Big Endian)	Checksum	Opcode	Data [optional]
2 bytes	1 byte	1 byte	n bytes

The length includes all fields except the checksum (including the Length field itself), so in general:

$$\text{Length} = \text{Length}(\text{Length}) + \text{Length}(\text{Opcode}) + \text{Length}(\text{Data}) = 3 + \text{Length}(\text{Data}) \quad (1)$$

Checksum is a simple hexadecimal addition of the Opcode and Data fields. Checksum is then clipped to occupy the least significant byte only.

[Table 2](#) lists all the commands and responses of the bootloader protocol.

Table 2. Bootloader Commands and Responses

Item	Command or Response	Link
Get Status	Command	Section 4.3.1
Get Storage List	Command	Section 4.3.2
Raw Storage Write	Command	Section 4.3.3
Get Version Information	Command	Section 4.3.4
Raw Storage Erase	Command	Section 4.3.5
Get Storage Info	Command	Section 4.3.6
Execute from RAM	Command	Section 4.3.7
Switch UART to APPS MCU	Command	Section 4.3.8
FS Programming	Command	Section 4.3.9
Ack	Response	Section 4.4.1
Nack	Response	Section 4.4.2
Last Status	Response	Section 4.4.3
Storage List	Response	Section 4.4.4
Storage Info	Response	Section 4.4.5
Version Info	Response	Section 4.4.6

4.3 Commands

4.3.1 Get Status

Table 3 lists the Get Status command.

Table 3. Get Status

	Description
Brief	This command returns the status of the last command executed. Typically, this command must be invoked after every command sent to ensure that the previous command was successful or, if unsuccessful, to properly respond upon failure. The bootloader responds by sending a 1-byte packet containing the current status code.
Opcode	0x23
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack + Last Status response
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode
Comments	Host responds back with Ack (Ack + Last Status response).

4.3.2 Get Storage List

Table 4 lists the Get Storage List command.

Table 4. Get Storage List

	Description
Brief	This command is used to fetch the list of existing storages.
Opcode	0x27
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack + Storage List response
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode
Comments	—

4.3.3 Raw Storage Write

Table 5 lists the Raw Storage Write command.

Table 5. Raw Storage Write

	Description
Brief	This command triggers sending a chunk of raw storage data specified by StorageID, starting from a position specified by Offset and with a size specified by Length.
Opcode	0x2D
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode [UINT32] StorageID [UINT32] Offset (starting offset relative to the start of storage, in bytes) [UINT32] Length (amount of bytes to write) [BYTE Stream] Data
Comments	The chunk is 4096 bytes and the Length must be smaller than (chunk_size-16). The SRAM storage ID is 0x0. The serial flash storage ID is 0x2.

4.3.4 Get Version Info

Table 6 lists the Get Version Info command.

Table 6. Get Version Info

	Description
Brief	This command is used to fetch version information of all cores and chip types.
Opcode	0x2F
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack + Version info response
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode
Comments	—

4.3.5 Raw Storage Erase

Table 7 lists the Raw Storage Erase command.

Table 7. Raw Storage Erase

	Description
Brief	This command erases the specified blocks (making them writable) from storage specified by StorageID. NumOfBlocks specifies the amount of blocks to erase and Offset specifies the offset of the first blocks from the start of the device.
Opcode	0x30
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode [UINT32] StorageID [UINT32] Offset (in blocks, relative to start of device) [UINT32] NumOfBlocks (number of blocks to erase)
Comments	The SRAM storage ID is 0x0. The serial flash storage ID is 0x2.

4.3.6 Get Storage Info

Table 8 lists the Get Storage Info command.

Table 8. Get Storage Info

	Description
Brief	This command is used to fetch storage information of a requested storage ID.
Opcode	0x31
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack + Storage Info response
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode [UINT32] StorageID
Comments	The SRAM storage ID is 0x0. The serial flash storage ID is 0x2. Host responds back with Ack on the (Ack + Storage Info) response.

4.3.7 Execute from RAM

Table 9 lists the Execute from RAM command.

Table 9. Execute from RAM

	Description
Brief	This command is used to execute a preloaded program in the SRAM.
Opcode	0x32
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack followed by another Ack
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode
Comments	First Ack indicates a complete command and the second Ack indicates that initialization has completed.

4.3.8 Switch UART to APPS MCU

Table 10 lists the Switch UART to APPS MCU command.

Table 10. Switch UART to APPS MCU

	Description
Brief	This command instructs UART lines to get MUX from the CC3220 MCU to the CC3120 network processor.
Opcode	0x33
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode [UINT32] Delay [in ticks]
Comments	Applies only to CC3220. One second is required, hence, the value 26666667 must be used.

4.3.9 FS Programming

Table 11 lists the FS Programming command.

Table 11. FS Programming

	Description
Brief	This command is used for programming a single chunk of a complete image.
Opcode	0x34
Direction	Host to target
Response	Ack + 4 bytes status code
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [BYTE] Opcode [UINT16] key size [UINT16] chunk size [UINT32] flags [key buffer in bytes] key buffer [chunk buffer in bytes] chunk buffer
Comments	The status code indicates the accumulated number of bytes received. The status for the last chunk must be 0 to indicate successful programming, otherwise, a negative status is returned. Chunks must be serially activated as the NWP assumes orderliness. Chunk size must be the minimum between 4096 and the residue left from the complete image. Flags are for future use and must be 0. If an image is encrypted, a 16-byte key is required.

4.4 Responses

4.4.1 Ack

Table 12 lists the Ack response.

Table 12. Ack

	Description
Brief	This message is sent to acknowledge a packet.
Opcode	0xCC
Direction	Target to host
Response	None
Format	[BYTE] 0 (zero) [BYTE] Opcode
Comments	—

4.4.2 Nack

Table 13 lists the Nack response.

Table 13. Nack

	Description
Brief	This message is sent to indicate an acknowledge error.
Opcode	0x33
Direction	Target to host
Response	None
Format	[BYTE] 0 (zero) [BYTE] Opcode
Comments	—

4.4.3 Last Status

Table 14 lists the Last Status response.

Table 14. Last Status

	Description
Brief	This message is sent to indicate last operation status.
Opcode	N/A
Direction	Target to host
Response	Ack from host
Format	[4 BYTES] Status code
Comments	The data includes 2 bytes for length, 1 byte of checksum, and 1 byte for status.

4.4.4 Storage List

Table 15 lists the Storage List response.

Table 15. Storage List

	Description
Brief	This message is sent as a response to the Get Storage List command.
Opcode	N/A
Direction	Target to host
Response	None
Format	[BYTE] Storage list bitmap: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLASH_DEV_BIT (0x02) • SFLASH_DEV_BIT (0x04) • SRAM_DEV_BIT (0x80)
Comments	—

4.4.5 Storage Info

Table 16 lists the Storage Information response.

Table 16. Storage Info

	Description
Brief	This message is sent as a response to the Get Storage Info command.
Opcode	N/A
Direction	Target to host
Response	Ack from Host
Format	[2 BYTES] block size [2 BYTES] number of blocks [4 BYTES] reserved
Comments	—

4.4.6 Version Info

Table 17 lists the Version Information response.

Table 17. Version Info

	Description
Brief	This message is sent as a response to the Get Version Info command.
Opcode	N/A
Direction	Target to host
Response	Ack
Format	[USHORT] Length (exclude checksum) [BYTE] Checksum (exclude length) [4 BYTES] Bootloader version (x.x.x.x) [4 BYTES] NWP Version [4 BYTES] MAC Version [4 BYTES] PHY Version [4 BYTES] Chip type [4 BYTES] Reserved [4 BYTES] Reserved
Comments	—

5 Embedded Programming Procedure

5.1 Overview

The following sections describe the bootloader commands and responses, as well as the ordered steps during image programming.

Because content and timing are important during the procedure, all steps were captured for reference. Saleae is the logic used. This utility is free for use and can be downloaded from <https://www.saleae.com/downloads>.

The image must first be created using UniFlash. Detailed instructions on how to create an image are listed in the [UniFlash CC3120 and CC3220 SimpleLink™ Wi-Fi® and IoC Solution ImageCreator and Programming Tool User's Guide](#) under *Image Creation and Programming Using UniFlash*.

5.2 High-Level Flow Diagram

Figure 2 shows the programming flow in high level. For a low-level description, see the following subsections.

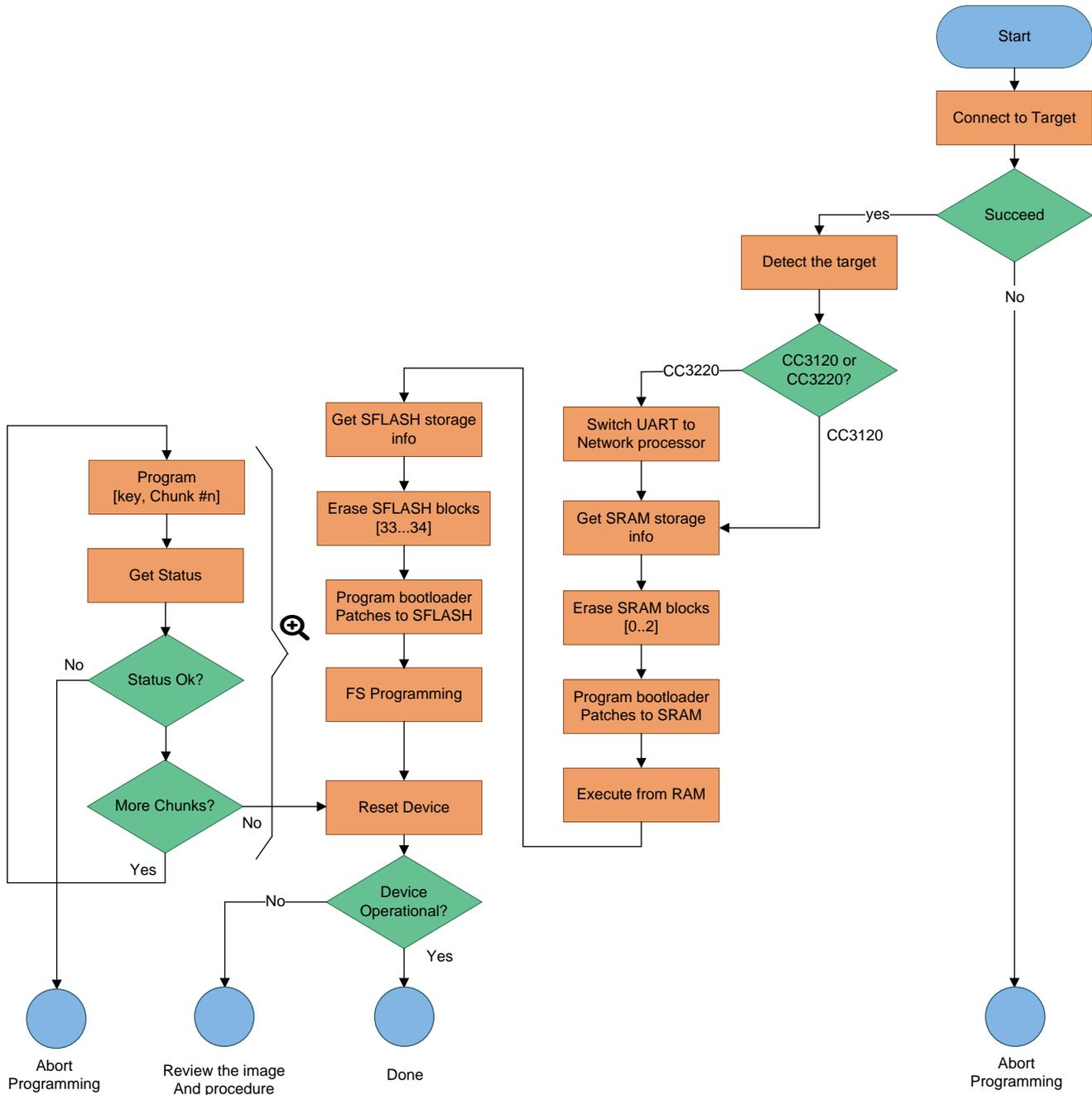


Figure 2. High-Level Programming Flow

5.3.3 Step 3: MUX UART to the Network Processor

If the device is a CC3220, it is required to MUX the UART lines from the internal application processor (ARM® Cortex®-M4) to the network processor.

The procedure for switching UART lines in CC3220 case follows:

1. The main processor sends the [Switch UART to APPS MCU](#) command. The user must provide the delay until the network processor is ready. One second is sufficient and should be used. During this time, the UART lines are switched, and the network processor is rebooted into bootloader mode. The reset is internal so the user does not need to externally apply it.
2. The CC3220 device responds with an [Ack](#). This is the command response.
3. The main processor should send a break signal (sending continuous Spacing values [no Start or Stop bits]) on the CC3220 UART RX line. The network processor must sense this break signal during power up.
4. Because there are cases in which the break signal is missed or the Ack packet is being missed, TI recommends sending the break signal up to four times. Follow the following pseudocode for details.
5. The network processor responds with an Ack. This response is an indication that the network processor sensed the break signal and entered bootloader mode.
6. The main processor deasserts the break signal.

```

For i=1..4
set BREAK sleep 100mSec read ACK
unset BREAK
If successful break
Else continue
    
```

Figure 5 shows the [Switch UART to APPS MCU](#) command and the [Ack](#) command response.



Figure 5. Switch UART Lines to APPS MCU Command

Figure 6 shows the BREAK assertion and deassertion followed by an [Ack](#).



Figure 6. Switch UART to APPS MCU Procedure

5.3.4 Step 4: Get SRAM Storage Info

To introduce some fixes to the ROM bootloader, it is necessary to download patches to the SRAM. The procedure for getting information of SRAM storage follows:

1. The main processor sends the [Get Storage Info](#) command. The user must provide the storage ID for the SRAM.
2. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an [Ack](#) followed by the [Storage Info](#) response. The response includes the block size and number of blocks for the SRAM.
3. The main processor responds with an [Ack](#).

Figure 7 shows the Get Storage Info command followed by an Ack and Storage Info Response.



Figure 7. Get Storage Info

5.3.7 Step 7: Execute from RAM

After the bootloader patches are programmed to the SRAM, it is required to execute the code. The ROM bootloader ROM is executed together with the programmed patches.

The procedure for executing the bootloader from the RAM follows:

1. The main processor sends the [Execute from RAM](#) command.
2. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an [Ack](#). This first Ack is to indicate a command is complete.
3. The CC3120 or CC3220 device sends a second Ack to indicate that initialization is completed.

5.3.8 Step 8: Get SFLASH Storage Info

The same ROM bootloader fixes that were downloaded to the SRAM must also be programmed to the SFLASH. The main purpose is to have all fixes during the return-to-factory-default feature. The procedure for getting information from SFLASH storage follows:

1. The main processor sends the [Get Storage Info](#) command. The user must provide the storage ID for the SFLASH.
2. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an [Ack](#) followed by the [Storage Info](#) response. The response includes the block size and number of blocks for the SFLASH.
3. The main processor responds with an Ack.

[Figure 11](#) shows the Get SFLASH Storage Info command followed by an Ack and Storage Info response.



Figure 11. Get SFLASH Storage Info

5.3.9 Step 9: Raw Storage Erase – SFLASH

Before downloading the patches to the SFLASH, it is essential to erase the relevant memory location in the SFLASH. The procedure for erasing the SFLASH follows:

1. The main processor sends the [Raw Storage Erase](#) command. The user must provide the storage ID for the SFLASH, offset in blocks, and number of blocks to erase. In this case, erase two blocks starting from offset 33.
2. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an [Ack](#).
3. The main processor responds with an Ack.
4. The main processor sends the [Get Status](#) command.
5. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an Ack followed by the [Last Status](#) response. Only the fourth byte should be inspected; 0x40 means success whereas other values indicate error.
6. The main processor sends an Ack response.

[Figure 12](#) shows the Raw Storage Erase command.



Figure 12. Raw Storage Erase to SFLASH

5.3.10 Step 10: Raw Storage Write – SFLASH

Programming the patches to the SFLASH is applied in chunks. The chunk size is 4096 bytes but the maximal size that can be programmed is 4080 bytes. Thus, the buffer is programmed in actual chunks of 4080 bytes. The procedure for programming the SFLASH follows:

1. The main processor sends the **Raw Storage Write** command in chunks of 4080 bytes. The user must provide the storage ID for the SFLASH, offset in bytes, and number of bytes to program. The content must reside in the 8 bytes offset of block 33, which makes the total offset equal to $33 \times 4096 + 8 = 135176$ bytes.
2. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an **Ack**.
3. The main processor sends the **Get Status** command.
4. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an Ack followed by the **Last Status** response. Only the fourth byte should be inspected; 0x40 means success whereas other values indicate error.
5. The main processor sends an Ack response.
6. Steps 1 to 5 repeat if the data is larger than chunk size.

Figure 13 shows the SFLASH programming procedure in a zoomed-out pane. As observed, the procedure is divided into three separate programming instances.

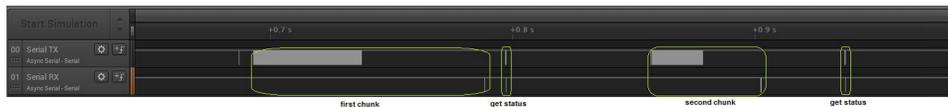


Figure 13. Raw Storage Write to SFLASH (Zoomed Out)

Figure 14 shows the SFLASH programming procedure in a zoomed-in pane to the first chunk. As observed, the chunk is 4080 bytes in offset ($33 \times 4096 + 8 = 135176$ bytes).



Figure 14. Raw Storage Write to SFLASH (Zoomed In)

5.3.11 Step 11: FS Programming

The next step is the actual programming of the image to the SFLASH. Programming is applied in chunks of 4096 bytes. The image can be either unencrypted or encrypted with a 16-byte symmetric key.

- If the image is unencrypted, the key size is irrelevant and uses a length of 0.
- If the image is encrypted, the key size must be 16 bytes. The key buffer precedes the data chunk.

In both cases, flags are for future use and must be 0. The procedure for programming the SFLASH follows:

1. The main processor sends the FS Programming command in chunks of 4096 bytes. The user must provide the following elements in order:
 1. Key size (in bytes for an encrypted image) must be 16, otherwise 0.
 2. Chunk size (in bytes) must be 4096, except for the last chunk, which may be smaller according to the residue from the total size.
 3. Flags must be 0.
 4. Key buffer
 5. Data buffer
2. The CC3120 or CC3220 device responds with an **Ack** followed by a 4-byte response indicating the accumulated number of bytes received. The status for the last chunk must be 0 to indicate successful programming, otherwise, a negative status is returned.
3. Steps 1 and 2 repeat until the entire image is programmed.
4. The image gets extracted and the file system is created.

Figure 15 shows the programming procedure in a zoomed-out pane. The last status code is 0 to indicate a successful programming and is delayed in time to reflect the period of image extraction.

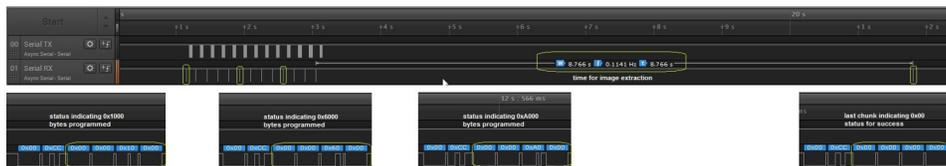


Figure 15. FS Programming (Zoomed Out)

Figure 16 shows the programming procedure in a zoomed-in pane for an unencrypted image.

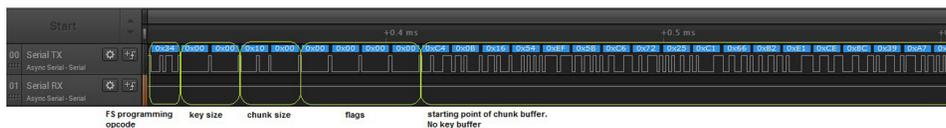


Figure 16. FS Programming of Unencrypted Image (Zoom In)

Figure 17 shows the programming procedure in a zoomed-in pane for an encrypted image.

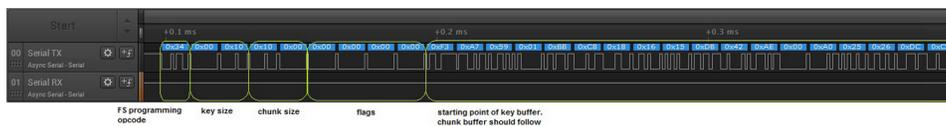


Figure 17. FS Programming of Encrypted Image (Zoomed In)

5.3.12 Step 12: Device Reset

The final step is the device reset.

Revision History

NOTE: Page numbers for previous revisions may differ from page numbers in the current version.

Changes from Original (May 2017) to A Revision	Page
• Updated OpCode field for FS Programming.	8

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