

Using SiRF Star IV with an External Host

Application Note

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3. SiRF Star IV Functionalities

The “External Host Controlled Mode” allows a customer not only to directly receive the NMEA data stream relayed by SiRF Star IV (see [3]) but also to configure and control SiRF Star IV specific functionalities.

These functionalities, almost the same available by means of the Telit AT commands, can be configured by switching SiRF Star IV communication protocol from NMEA to SiRF Binary (OSP), and by sending specific OSP messages.

The following paragraphs show how to switch communication protocols and how to configure and control SiRF Star IV specific functionalities.



WARNING:

The following NMEA and OSP messages are formatted and ready to be sent as they are over SiRF Star IV’s NMEA serial port: NMEA messages already include checksum while OSP messages are in HEX format.

3.1. Switching SiRF Star IV serial communication protocols

SiRF Star IV serial communication protocol may be switched from NMEA to SiRF Binary OSP and vice-versa.

SiRF Star IV serial communication protocol can be switched from NMEA to OSP (57600bps) by sending the following SiRF custom NMEA sentence:

\$PSRF100,0,57600,8,1,0*37 <CR><LF>

Once in OSP mode, SiRF Star IV is able to receive OSP messages.

SiRF Star IV serial Communication Protocol can be switched back to NMEA (4800bps) by sending the following OSP message (MID 129):

A0 A2 00 18 81 02 01 01 00 01 01 01 05 01 01 01 00 01 00 01 00 00 01 00 00 12 C0 01 65 B0 B3

3.2. SiRF Star IV Software Version

Before configuring SiRF Star IV functionalities, it might sometimes be useful to retrieve SiRF firmware version:

- 1) Switch GPS Communication Protocol from NMEA to OSP as described in 3.1
- 2) Send Poll Software Version Message (OSP MID 132):



In Trickle-Power Mode, the system selects a minimum rate of navigation solution updates and minimizes average current. TP Mode focuses on an update rate and navigation solution quality, so it can transition to FP Mode for specified limited periods when conditions are difficult or satellite navigation data must be demodulated. This results in variable power savings but for a fixed output rate, much more reliable performance. Applications using TP Mode perform similarly to applications using full power, but with significant power savings in strong-signal conditions.

Trickle-Power Mode is best suited for applications that require solutions:

- At a fixed rate
- Low-power consumption and still
- Maintain the ability to track weak signals

Position requests are set for a specific update period (Update-Rate), and a specific RF sampling time during each period (On-Period).

Trickle-Power Mode, with 3 seconds Update-Rate and 300ms On-Period can be configured as follows:

- 1) Switch GPS Communication Protocol from NMEA to OSP as described in 3.1
- 2) Send Power Mode Request Message (OSP MID 218, SID 3):

A0 A2 00 10 DA 03 00 64 00 00 01 2C 00 00 75 30 00 04 93 E0 03 8A B0 B3

- 3) Switch GPS Communication Protocol back to NMEA 4800bps as described in 3.1

Trickle-Power Mode can be disabled as follows during the On-Period (i.e., whenever the GPS_WAKEUP output pin goes high, see [1]):

- 1) Switch GPS Communication Protocol from NMEA to OSP as described in 3.1
- 2) Send Power Mode Request Message (OSP MID 218, SID 0):

A0 A2 00 02 DA 00 00 DA B0 B3

- 3) Switch GPS Communication Protocol back to NMEA 4800bps as described in 3.1



WARNING:

When in Trickle-Power Mode all NMEA and OSP messages must be sent during the On-Period (i.e., whenever the GPS_WAKEUP output pin goes high, see [1]), otherwise SiRF Star IV might not be able to successfully receive them.

Therefore, if the GPS Serial protocol has to be switched, this should be done as soon as Power Mode Request Message has been sent or when SiRF Star IV is still ON.

SiRF Star IV can be awakened at any moment (GPS_WAKEUP output pin should be low) by issuing a pulse on the input GPS_ON_OFF pin (see [1]).





WARNING:

When in Push-To-Fix Mode all NMEA and OSP messages must be sent when SiRF Star IV is awake (i.e., whenever the GPS_WAKEUP output pin goes high, see [1]), otherwise it might not be able to successfully receive them.

Therefore, if the GPS Serial protocol has to be switched, this should be done as soon as Power Mode Request Message has been sent or when SiRF Star IV is still ON.

SiRF Star IV can be awakened at any moment (GPS_WAKEUP output pin should be low) by issuing a pulse on the input GPS_ON_OFF pin (see [1]).

3.5.4. Micro Power Mode

Micro Power Mode is a very low-power maintenance mode.

The objective of Micro Power Mode is to remain below a stated average current level while maintaining a low level of uncertainty in time, frequency, position and ephemeris state. SiRF Star IV goes to a very low power state while maintaining Hot Start conditions.

When this mode is turned on, SiRF Star IV goes into update cycles (usually every 1-10 minutes) or maintenance cycles (usually every 30 to 60 minutes).

When the MPM request is sent from full power mode, a direct transition is requested as soon as sufficient ephemeris data is available, and a valid navigation solution is calculated at near zero user velocity.

If the request is sent when SiRF Star IV is in any other low power mode, it will first switch to Full-Power Mode, then switch to MPM mode.

Micro Power Mode can be configured as follows:

- 1) Switch GPS Communication Protocol from NMEA to OSP as described in 3.1
- 2) Send Power Mode Request Message (OSP MID 218, SID 2):

A0 A2 00 06 DA 02 FF FF FF FF 04 D8 B0 B3

- 3) Switch GPS Communication Protocol back to NMEA 4800bps as described in 3.1

Micro Power Mode can be disabled at any moment (GPS_WAKEUP output pin should be low) by issuing a pulse on the input GPS_ON_OFF pin (see [1]): this will send the receiver to Full-Power Mode.



WARNING:

When in Micro Power Mode all NMEA and OSP messages must be sent when SiRF Star IV is awake (i.e., whenever the GPS_WAKEUP output pin goes high, see [1]), otherwise it might not be able to successfully receive them.

Therefore, if the GPS Serial protocol has to be switched, this should be done as soon as Power Mode Request Message has been sent or when SiRF Star IV is still ON.



3.6. Static Navigation

Static navigation, also called position pinning, is a mechanism that it is used by the receiver to freeze, or pin, the position when the velocity falls below a threshold indicating that the receiver is stationary. The heading is also frozen, and the velocity is reported as 0. The solution is then unpinned when the velocity increases above a threshold or when the computed position is a set distance from the pinned position, indicating that the receiver is in motion again. Note that these velocity and distance thresholds cannot be changed.

By default static navigation is disabled.

Static navigation can be enabled as follows:

- 1) Switch GPS Communication Protocol from NMEA to OSP as described in 3.1
- 2) Send Static Navigation Message (OSP MID 143):

A0 A2 00 02 8F 01 00 90 B0 B3

- 3) Switch GPS Communication Protocol back to NMEA 4800bps as described in 3.1

Static navigation can be disabled as follows:

- 1) Switch GPS Communication Protocol from NMEA to OSP as described in 3.1
- 2) Send Static Navigation Message (OSP MID 143):

A0 A2 00 02 8F 00 00 8F B0 B3

- 3) Switch GPS Communication Protocol back to NMEA 4800bps as described in 3.1

3.7. SBAS

SiRF Star IV is capable [*] of using Satellite-Based Augmentation System (SBAS) satellites as a source of both differential corrections and satellite range measurements. These systems (WAAS, EGNOS, MSAS) use geostationary satellites to transmit regional differential corrections via a GPS-compatible signal. The use of SBAS corrections can improve typical position accuracy to 3m or less in open-sky applications.

SBAS can be enabled as follows:

- 1) Switch GPS Communication Protocol from NMEA to OSP as described in 3.1
- 2) Send DGPS Source Message (OSP MID 133):

A0 A2 00 07 85 01 00 00 00 00 00 86 B0 B3

- 3) Switch GPS Communication Protocol back to NMEA 4800bps as described in 3.1



4. Document History

Revision	Date	Changes
0	2011-11-10	First issue

