

Application Note

Flash Upgrading the SDM-300L3 Satellite Modem

Flash Upgrading

The SDM-300L3 eliminates the need for physically replacing EPROMs to update firmware. Instead, the SDM-300L3 modem uses 'flash memory' technology internally, and new firmware can be uploaded to the unit from an external PC.



Performing a flash upgrade erases the non-volatile RAM, which is where the modem's configuration is stored. Users shall re-enter the desired configuration parameters.

The SDM-300L3 provides for flash upgrading the M&C firmware or the BULK firmware.

Note: While the M&C and BULK firmware downloads are independent processes, the modem may have to be upgraded to the latest releases of both the M&C and BULK for proper function.

Flash updating firmware is a simple process, and users can obtain updates by any of the following means:

- Download from the Comtech EF Data website: (<http://www.comtechefdata.com>)
- Request as E-mail attachments
- Request shipment on diskettes or cd-rom.

The upgrade is performed without opening the unit, by connecting the modem to the serial port of a computer and executing a flash uploader utility program.

The cable to connect the PC to the modem is the same as is used for normal EIA-232 remote control, and comprises three wires connected between two 9-pin 'D' type female connectors. Ensure this cable is connected and working properly before proceeding with a flash update.



The Remote Control port EIA-232 lines used for Flash upgrading also are connected to the Primary 25-pin data connector (P3B), and are used when 1:N Redundancy Switch is connected. Ensure that NOTHING is connected to P3B pins 4, 21 and 22 – if these pins are used, the EIA-232 remote control port will not function, and Flash upgrading is impossible.

Downloading Flash Upgrades from the Web

The latest firmware releases and a free software utility are available on the Comtech EF Data web site (<http://www.comtechefdata.com>). This utility is designed to run under Windows 95/98 or Windows NT/2000/XP and provides all of the support required to perform a Comtech EF Data firmware reflash. If web downloading is not available or practical, contact the Customer Support department to obtain the firmware via an alternate method.

The downloadable firmware files are provided in both .zip or self extracting .exe formats. If your firewall does not permit downloading an .exe file, try the .zip file instead. The downloadable file contents are identical, usually comprising an uploader program, a help file, and a flashable data file.

How to Download Flash Upgrade Files

- 1 Create a new folder on the PC. This folder will be the destination folder for any flash upgrade files downloaded.
- 2 On the Comtech EF Data web site (<http://www.comtechefdata.com>), click the "downloads" link.
- 3 Click the "flash upgrades" link for detailed downloading instructions.
- 4 Click the "flash firmware data files" link (located at the bottom of the instruction page). The flash firmware data files are organized by product.
- 5 Click the "SDM300L3" link.
- 6 Identify and download the latest M&C firmware file to the destination folder on the PC.
- 7 Repeat Step 6 for the BULK firmware file.

How to Perform a Flash Upgrade

Full on-line help is provided with the uploader program. If you experience a problem, or have a question, contact Comtech EF Data Customer Support for assistance.

- 1 On the PC, double-click the .exe or .zip flash upgrade file to uncompress its contents.
- 2 Identify and execute the uploader program.
- 3 Follow the instructions presented on the screen to select a firmware file and initiate the upload.

Following a successful upload process, the modem will automatically restart, running the new version of firmware.



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