



Elster A3 ALPHA® Meter/Collector
GPRS SmartMeter
User Guide

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Contact your technical support representative for more information on any of our products.

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1 Introduction

1.1 About This Guide

This document is a manual designed to help guide you through the testing, installation and activation of your A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter. This manual provides general instructions on the support of your SmartMeter and references to supporting manufacturer documentation for detailed guidelines and instructions on features and operating characteristics of the SmartMeter for installation, programming, communication, and troubleshooting.

1.2 Reference Materials

The following reference software and documentation are pertinent to the successful installation and use of the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter.

Elster

- A3 ALPHA[®] Collector Device Manual
- Metercat Software
- Metercat Installation Guide
- Metercat User Guide

SmartSynch

For more information on the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter, see the product brochure and spec sheet, available online at TBD.

1.3 Contacting SmartSynch

1.3.1 Technical Support

SmartSynch's technical support staff is ready to answer your technical questions. Your technical support representative can provide information about the latest SmartSynch products, upgrade options, and more. Contact your technical support representative directly, through the Online Customer Support Center at <http://smartsynch.com/support/login.html>, or by email at cs@smartsynch.com.

Note: You must be a registered user to access SmartSynch's online support services.

Help us help you

When contacting technical support please provide the following information for the fastest possible service:

- Your name, company name, and contact number
- SmartMeter make and model (meter manufacturer, SSI version number)
- Complete description of the issue, including the steps to reproduce it
- Wording of any message(s) displayed when the issue was encountered
- Action taken to resolve the problem

1.3.2 Documentation Feedback

SmartSynch, Inc. strives to produce quality documentation for our products and welcomes your feedback. If you have comments or recommendations about our online help or printed guides, you can email us. Please send email messages to cs@smartsynch.com. This email address is only for documentation feedback. If you have a technical question, please contact your technical support representative.

1.3.3 SmartSynch Headquarters

SmartSynch, an energy technology company based in Jackson, Mississippi, is the leading provider of advanced metering solutions to the energy and utility industry. Its core product, the SmartMeter System, enables energy and utility companies to communicate with commercial and industrial electricity meters using wireless communications and the Internet. The SmartMeter System manages the delivery of critical information to any application system, workstation, computer, or browser-enabled personal communication device.

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		Fax:	601-362-1787
Street Address:	4400 Old Canton Road Suite 300 Jackson, MS 39211	World Wide Web:	www.smartsynch.com
		Office Hours:	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time

2 Getting Started

Please review the reference documentation before you begin the installation and use of the supporting software.

2.1 Operations

The A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter is an Elster A3 ALPHA[®] Collector electronic single-phase electricity meter integrated with a SmartSynch Interface (SSI) Module, which fully supports ANSI standards for electricity metering and is intended for use by commercial and industrial utility customers.

The A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter offers you secure over-the-air transfer of data between the SmartMeter and Elster's Metering Automation Server (MAS).

2.2 Safety Precautions



The A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter contains a Motorola G24 GPRS Cellular Engine for wireless communication purposes. The following safety precautions pertain to the hazards related to this device's radio frequency (RF) functionality and must be observed during all phases of installation, operation, service, and repair. Failure to comply with these precautions violates safety standards of design, manufacture, and intended use of the product.

WARNING!

Use authorized utility procedures for installing, maintaining, and removing a SmartMeter. Equipment damage, personal injury, or death can result if devices are not properly installed and operated.

2.2.1 Interference with Medical Equipment

Before installing the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter on the premises of a hospital or other health care facility, observe the restrictions on the use of mobile communication devices in sensitive areas. Some medical equipment may be sensitive to radio frequency (RF) energy, possibly requiring the meter to be properly shielded or placed in an alternate location.

The operation of cardiac pacemakers, hearing aids, and other implanted medical equipment can be affected by interference from cellular devices placed too closely. Pacemaker patients are advised to observe the same precautions recommended for handheld mobile phones while installing or operating the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter.

2.2.2 Fire or Explosion Hazards

Do not install or operate the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter in the presence of flammable gases or fumes. This includes gasoline stations, fuel depots, chemical plants, or sites where blasting operations are in progress. Operation of any electrical equipment in potentially explosive atmospheres can constitute a safety hazard.

2.2.3 Interference with Other Devices

The communication module embedded in the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter receives and transmits radio frequency (RF) energy while in operation. Interference can occur if it is placed too close to televisions, radios, computers, or inadequately sheltered equipment. Follow any applicable regulations if you suspect that this device may cause interference or danger.

2.3 Prerequisites

To perform the installation of your SmartMeter, you must have access to the following supporting software and should have reviewed relevant documentation:

Elster meter programming software, for programming the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector. Metercat communicates with the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector for program development, meter programming, meter reading, meter testing, and report generation. Metercat system requirements and installation instructions may be obtained in the:

- **Metercat Installation Guide**
- **Metercat User Guide**

3 Installing the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter

3.1 Preliminary Inspections

The A3 ALPHA[®] Collector SmartMeter is calibrated and tested at the factory and is ready for installation. Before installing and applying power to the SmartMeter, a quick inspection of the SmartMeter is recommended to ensure there is no damage to the SmartMeter, which could possibly occur during shipping. Physical damage to the SmartMeter indicates potential damage to the inside of the SmartMeter. Do not connect power to a SmartMeter that is suspected of having internal damage. Contact your SmartSynch technical support representative if you suspect your SmartMeter is damaged.

3.2 Installation Process

The customer will receive meters in a “Preconfigured” state. This means that meters have been integrated with an SSI SmartMeter Module loaded with the SSI embedded software, an **inactive (unless shipped active per customer request)** cellular network Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) card, and has passed several quality control stages. In addition, a *Ship* file containing device specific information has been generated by SmartSynch for the customer. This file is imported into a configuration server by SSI personnel and a copy is provided to the customer. Upon SIM card activation, upon shipment, or later upon customer request, an *Activation* file containing cellular network-specific information is generated. This file is also imported into the configuration server and a copy is provided to the customer.

Typically, a customer can deploy the meter using one of two methods, depending on business needs:

3.2.1 Option 1: Direct Field Installation

This option is used when the customer prefers immediate deployment of the meters “from the box to the base.” This option is desirable in a deployment situation where a large number of meters need to be deployed in a relatively short period of time. The customer-specific information is automatically Over-the-Air downloaded to the SSI module upon energizing the meter and no additional action is needed on-site. Follow the meter installation instructions in Section 3.2.3.

3.2.2 Option 2: Meter Shop Test and Field Installation

There is no need for the Meter Shop to reprogram and test the SmartMeter when it arrives. Upon shipment, the meter will have undergone significant functional and RF testing at the factory. Internal quality control checks will ensure the SSI module is able to communicate with the meter successfully as well as communicate with all other internal components before it is shipped. The device will also arrive in a generic “Preconfigured” state with no customer-specific data stored in internal memory. There is no need for the Meter Shop to perform any programming steps on the meter.

3.2.3 Meter Installation

1. The installer verifies network coverage with a SmartSynch Coverage Validation Unit (CVU).
Note: If the option board display codes are enabled in the meter program, the Received Signal Strength Indicator (RSSI) display values can be used to verify coverage without the CVU. Refer to section 5 for additional information.
2. The meter is placed in the socket and energized. The meter is now in the Pre-Configured state.

3. Once in the Pre-Configured state, the SSI embedded software transmits an Auto-Configuration message to the configuration server.
4. Upon receiving the meter's Auto-Configuration message, the configuration server will set all of the customer specific parameters into the SSI module's non-volatile memory.
5. When the SSI module inside the meter is fully configured with the customer specific information it will immediately send an Auto-Registration message to the configuration server.
6. Once the meter is registered to the configuration server, meter data can be collected from the meter via MAS.

3.3 Communicating with the SmartMeter using MAS

MAS must be programmed with the IP address of the SmartSynch Routing Solution (SRS) and the port associated with the meter to be communicated with.

Once a message is sent from MAS, the SRS routes the message to the appropriate meter in the form of an SMS. Once the meter receives the SMS, the meter opens a socket with the SRS. The SRS then joins the socket to the meter with the socket to MAS allowing messages to flow freely between the two.

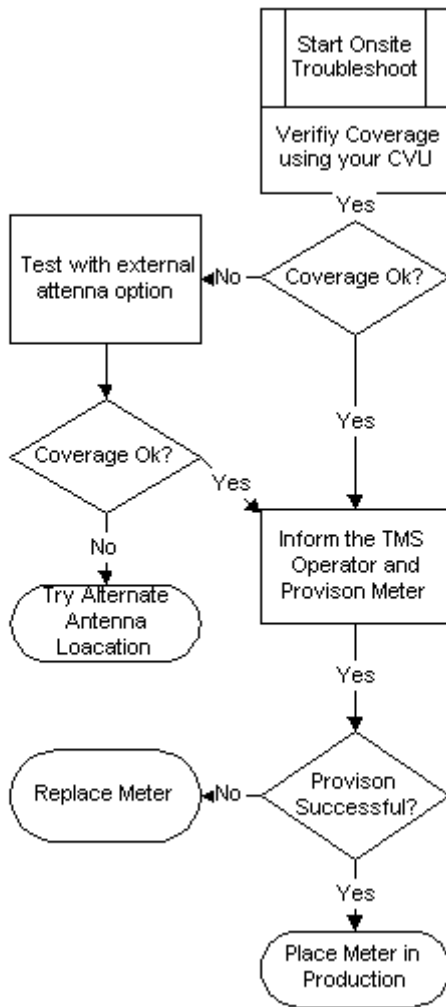
4 Troubleshooting

4.1 Troubleshooting Process Flow

The troubleshooting support directives may involve a number of participants to resolve the issue, depending on the type of issue involved. Resolution may include TMS Administrators, TMS Operators, Field Meter Support personnel, or any user who may be required to support the TMS, its clients, or related data.

Section 4.2 describes the required corrective action that corresponds with each step in the flowcharts. The first chart describes the process for Onsite (Field) troubleshooting, and the next describes the process from the TMS Operator’s perspective

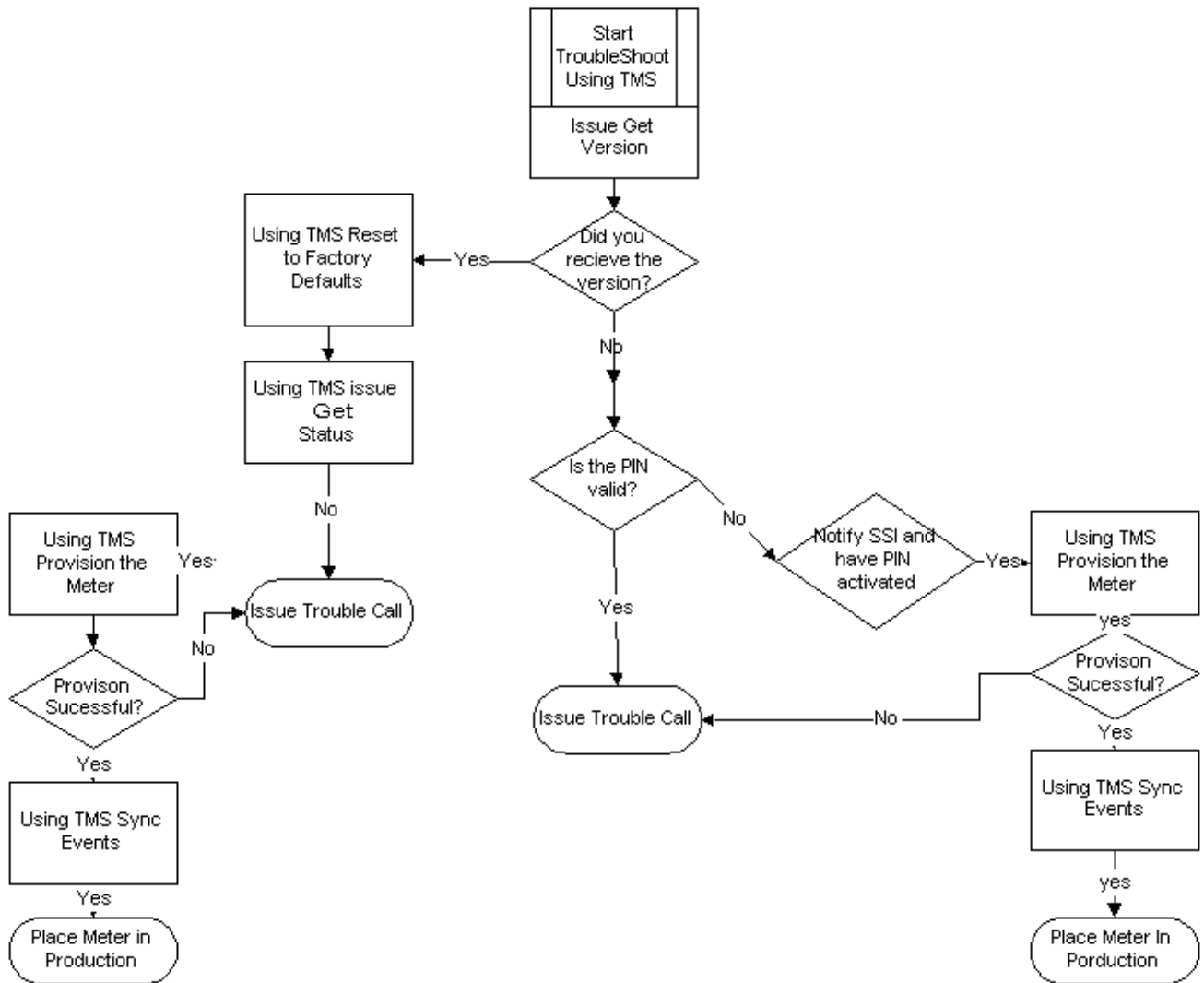
Onsite Troubleshooting Flowchart



With either process, be sure to perform these initial steps:

1. Confirm that the meter is actually installed in the field.
2. Verify that the PIN for that meter is correct.
3. Verify that the site exceeds the acceptable minimums using the Coverage Validation Unit.

TMS Troubleshooting Flowchart (for meters that have been previously provisioned successfully)



4.2 Troubleshooting Process Description

Process Steps	Description	Action
1	Is Meter Installed in field?	Check work orders, inventory management, or verify with Field Personnel that meter is installed and energized at a valid Customer location.
2	Install Meter	Refer to the Installation section of this document

Process Steps	Description	Action
3	Is Pin # Correct?	Validate that the pin number in the TMS system is indeed the pin number that is matched with the correct meter. Checking the manufacturer's spreadsheet sent with the meters and/or visually inspecting the label on the meter can accomplish this task.
4	Did site pass CVU tests?	Check Meter Test Person's site validation notes and verify that test were properly run and meet the minimum requirements.
5	Get Version?	Perform Get Version ANSI action on device. (See TMS User Guide)
6	Restore Meter to Factory Defaults?	Perform Restore Meter to Factory Defaults ANSI (see TMS User Guide)
7	Get Status?	Perform Get Status ANSI action on device. (See TMS User Guide)
8	Get Status Successful?	Check the results of the Get Status ANSI using Event Search and View Details. (See TMS User Guide)
9	Execute the following Task: Provision	Execute Provision on the meter. (See TMS User Guide)
10	Did the meter provision?	Check the results of the Provision ANSI using Event Search and View Details. (See TMS User Guide)
11	Sync System to Device	If meter is already in a Functional Group, user will need to execute task Sync System to device. (See TMS User Guide)
12	Put meter into production system	Do the necessary paperwork to put meter on production system and notify appropriate stakeholders.
13	Ping the Module Using the Internet/Web Browser	Go to the Network web page. Send a message tab. Enter in the pin number of the device and a miscellaneous message in the message field. Click Send. (See Section 4.2.1)
14	Is Pin Active?	After using the internet/web browser, does the screen say message submitted (yes) or invalid pin (no)? (See Section 4.2.1)
15	Activate Pin Through SmartSynch	Log on to the OCS and create a new case for the invalid pin. SmartSynch Personnel will take care of the issue and notify the user when the PIN is active.
16	Field Site Visit - Call into TMS Operator	Dispatch a meter tech to perform the Onsite troubleshooting procedure and have them call into the TMS operator at the time of completion.
17	Bring Meter in for evaluation	Replace meter with another SmartMeter and bring into Meter Shop for further evaluation.

5 Requirements and Compliance

The A3 ALPHA[®] Collector GPRS SmartMeter is compliant with all applicable Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Industry Canada (IC) requirements. The FCC and IC identification numbers for the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector GPRS SmartMeter are listed as follows:

FCC identifier: QHC-GPRSCOLL1
IC identifier: 4393B-GPRSCOLL1

This certification is granted to SmartSynch Inc.

5.1 FCC Grant Statement

“The antennas used for this transmitter must be installed to provide a minimum separation distance of 20 cm from all persons, and must not be co-located or operate in conjunction with any other antenna or transmitter. The GSM/GPRS antenna gain, including cable loss, must not exceed 6.8 dBi at 850 MHz / 2.2 dBi at 1900 MHz for mobile operating configurations.”

5.2 Compliance Statement (Part 15.19)

The A3 ALPHA meter/collector complies with Part 15 of the FCC Rules and with RSS-210 of Industry Canada. Operation is subject to the following two conditions:

1. This device may not cause harmful interference, and
2. This device must accept any interference received, including interference that may cause undesired operation.

5.3 Warning (Part 15.21)

Changes or modifications not expressly approved by Elster Electricity, LLC and SmartSynch, Inc. could void the user's authority to operate the equipment.

5.4 RF Radiation Safety Guidelines per Part 2 of FCC Rules and Regulations

The meter should be installed in a location where there will be a separation greater than 20 cm (8 inches) from locations occupied by humans.

5.5 User Information (Part 15.105)

The A3 ALPHA meter/collector has been tested and found to comply with the limits for a Class B digital device, pursuant to part 15 of the FCC Rules. These limits are designed to provide reasonable protection against harmful interference in a residential installation. This equipment generates, uses and can radiate radio frequency energy and, if not installed and used in accordance with the instructions, may cause harmful interference to radio communications. However, there is no guarantee that interference will not occur in a particular installation. If this equipment does cause harmful interference to radio or television reception, the user is encouraged to try to correct the interference by one or more of the following measures:

- Reorient or relocate the receiving antenna.

- Move the receiving equipment farther away from the A3 ALPHA meter/collector.
- Consult the dealer or an experienced radio/TV technician for help.

5.6 Industry Canada Statement

The term “IC” before the certification/registration number only signifies that the Industry Canada technical specifications were met.

In addition, the A3 ALPHA[®] Collector GPRS SmartMeter fully complies with the TS 51.010 tests as adopted by the PTCRB and defined in the NAPRD section 11.

5.7 Acceptable Antenna Configuration

The only acceptable GSM/GPRS antenna configurations are as follows:

1. SSI-SAC-ANKEG-ODG-010 Monopole GPRS Antenna Kit (External Mount).
2. Laird/Antenex pn TRA821/18503P GSM/GPRS Antenna (Meter Panel Mount).

The only acceptable LANOB 900Mhz antenna is the Elster pn 1B12150H01 antenna that comes from the factory installed on the meter under the meter's cover.

When using the Mobile Mark RMM-UMB monopole, the ground plate (spider ground) must be used with the antenna to provide a ground plane for proper operation of the antenna.

If the Antenex pn TRA821/18503P antenna is used, when mounted properly to the meter panel metal socket, the meter socket provides the ground plane. Additionally, the use of the Antenex TRA821/18503P requires the installation of bandpass filter PN 1B12483H01 to be installed between the LANOB output and the LANOB antenna. It will also require the use of an SMA-Male to N-Male adapter to connect the meter's SMA pigtail to the antenna.



FIGURE 1 Typical A3 GPRS Collector with GPRS I/O cable.



FIGURE 2 Typical routing of SSI Monopole cable for external remote antenna.

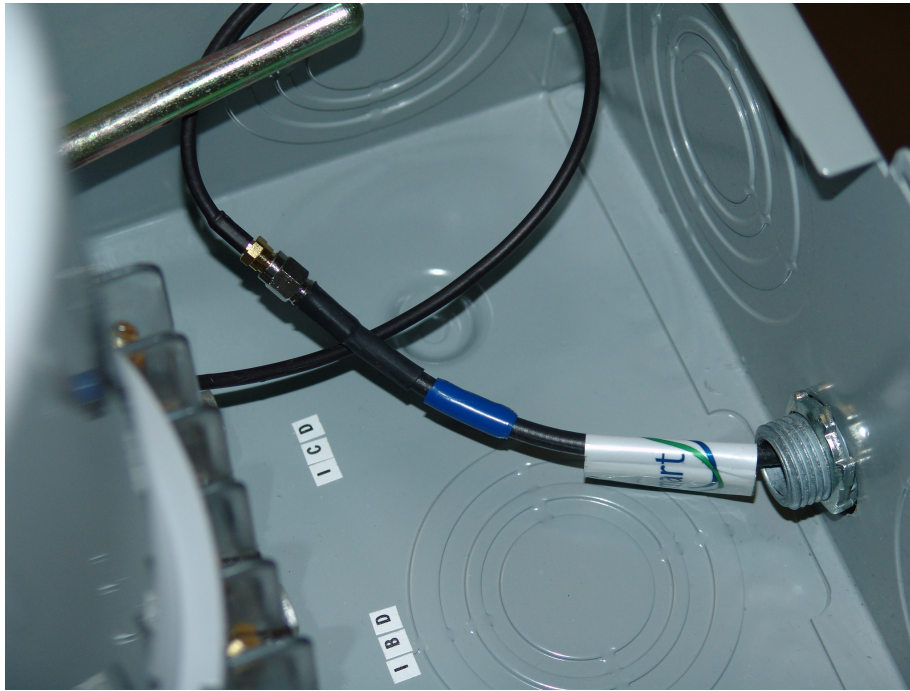


FIGURE 3 Internal connection of SSI Monopole to A3 I/O "Pigtail"



FIGURE 4 Mounting example of Laird/Antenex antenna directly to meter panel.



FIGURE 5 Internal connection of Laird/Antenex antenna via N-Male to SMA-Male Adapter