

# Live Firmware Update With Device Reset on C2000™ MCUs



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## ABSTRACT

This document presents details on Live Firmware Update (LFU) with Device Reset on devices with two Flash banks, detailing the challenges involved and suggestions on how to address them. For simplicity of illustration, an LED-based example is used (included as part of [C2000ware](#)).

## Table of Contents

<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	2
<b>2 Resources Required for LFU</b> .....	2
<b>3 Memory Layout</b> .....	3
<b>4 Static Code in LFU</b> .....	5
<b>5 LED Example Application and LFU Flow</b> .....	6
<b>6 Running the LED Example</b> .....	8
6.1 Serial Flash Programmer Update.....	8
6.2 Programming Static Code – Loading via Code Composer Studio™ (CCS).....	9
6.3 Live Firmware Update of Application.....	16
6.4 Limitations and Troubleshooting.....	18
<b>7 Revision History</b> .....	18

## List of Figures

Figure 3-1. Flash Memory Contents for Bank 0 and Bank 1.....	3
Figure 5-1. Code Flow After Entering main() of Application.....	7
Figure 6-1. Flash Settings to Only Erase Necessary Sectors.....	9
Figure 6-2. Selecting Kernel to Load to Flash Bank 0.....	10
Figure 6-3. CCS Window view After Programming Bank 0 Flash Kernel.....	11
Figure 6-4. CCS Memory Browser View to Verify Successful Kernel Programming of Bank 0.....	11
Figure 6-5. LFU Serial Command Invoked From Windows Command Prompt.....	12
Figure 6-6. Successful Completion of LFU Command to Program Flash Bank 1.....	12
Figure 6-7. CCS Memory Browser View to Verify Successful Programming of Application on Bank 1.....	13
Figure 6-8. Selecting Kernel to Load to Flash Bank 1.....	13
Figure 6-9. CCS Memory Browser View to Verify Successful Kernel Programming of Bank 1.....	14
Figure 6-10. CCS Window View After Programming Bank 1 Flash Kernel.....	14
Figure 6-11. LFU Serial Command Invoked From Windows Command Prompt.....	15
Figure 6-12. Successful Completion of LFU Command to Program Flash Bank 0.....	15
Figure 6-13. LFU Serial Command Invoked From Windows Command Prompt.....	16
Figure 6-14. Successful completion of LFU Command to Program Flash Bank.....	17
Figure 6-15. LFU Code Flow Diagram.....	18

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## 1 Introduction

In applications like server power supply, metering, and so forth, the system is desired to be run continuously to reduce downtime. But typically during firmware upgrades due to bug fixes, new features, and/or performance improvements, the system is removed from service causing downtime for associated entities as well. This can be handled with redundant modules but with increase in total system cost. An alternate approach, called Live Firmware Update (LFU), allows firmware to be updated while the system is still operating. Switching to new firmware can be done either with or without resetting the device, with the latter being more complex.

## 2 Resources Required for LFU

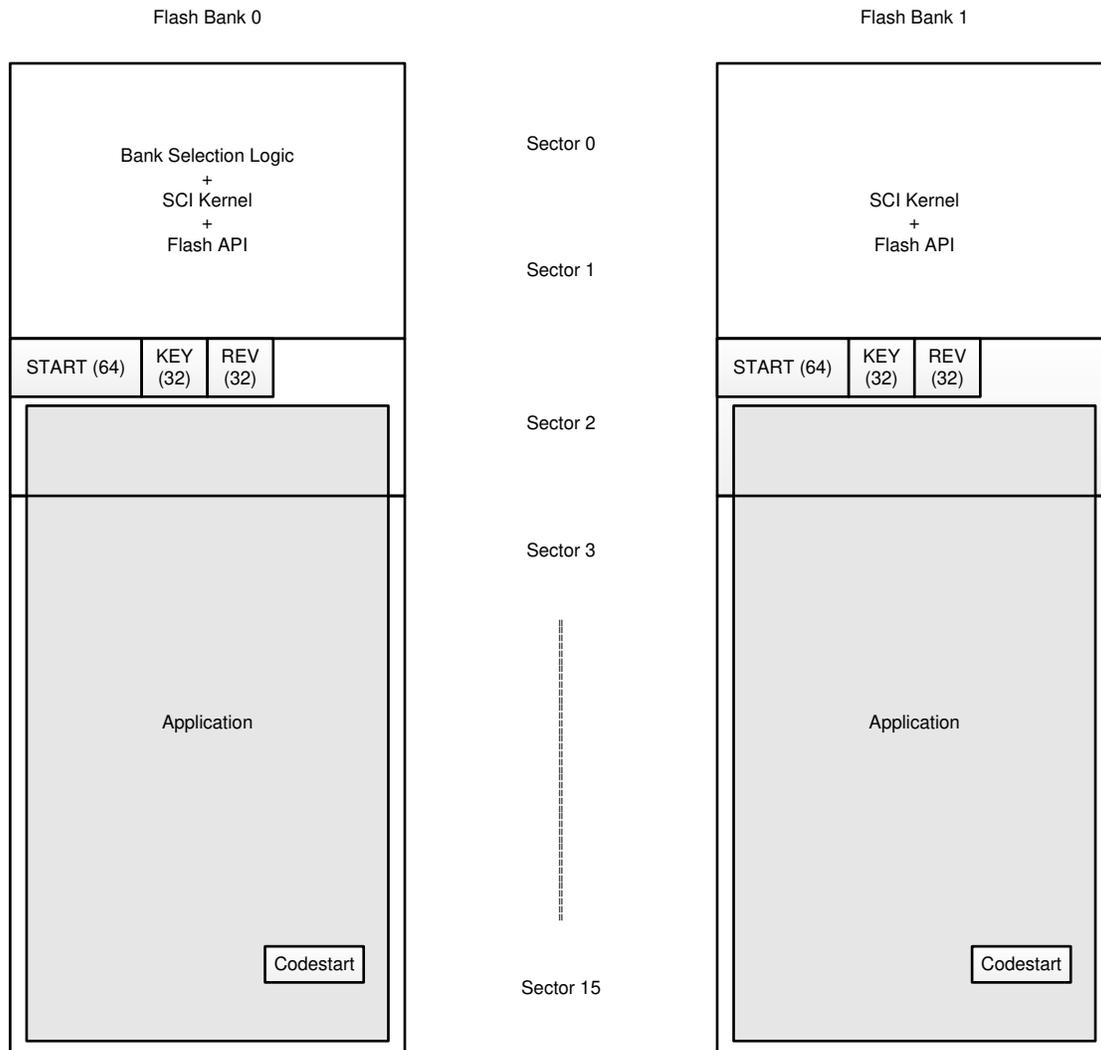
LFU is feasible when the device has enough resources of various kinds – CPU bandwidth, Memory, and Peripheral availability:

- CPU Bandwidth – The new firmware has to be transferred using a communication peripheral and written to flash memory while the application is still operating. This means CPU need to have enough available bandwidth to support LFU.
- Memory – The non-volatile memory that is used here is Flash memory. Flash read and write operations cannot be simultaneously performed on the same Flash bank. However read and write operations can be simultaneously performed on different Flash banks. Hence, the ideal scenario is for the device to contain dual Flash banks. In devices with single Flash banks, LFU is particularly challenging, but still feasible provided:
  - The complete application code (or a portion of it that controls the output(s) the user is interested in) and Flash APIs need to run from RAM memory while the new firmware is updated to Flash. This means there should be enough RAM memory that can be utilized.
  - Some devices support Flash APIs in ROM; in those devices the application code can run from RAM and Flash APIs can run from ROM memory, thus reducing the RAM requirement.
- Peripheral Availability – A spare communication peripheral using the new image can be transferred from the host to the device.

LFU is easier to implement in devices with multiple Flash banks. In this document and the reference example, it is assumed that the device has 2 Flash banks. The device considered is TMS320F28004x, which has dual flash banks. Their address space is 64K x 16 each, with addresses ranging from 0x80000-0x8FFFF, and 0x90000-0x9FFFF.

### 3 Memory Layout

The Flash memory has been partitioned as shown in [Figure 3-1](#).



**Figure 3-1. Flash Memory Contents for Bank 0 and Bank 1**

Assuming each Flash bank has 16 sectors, two sectors have been allocated to Static code (code that will not change between applications). This is described in [Section 4](#).

A few locations in sector 2 have been reserved to store the below entries:

- **START** – when this 64-bit field is set in a specific Flash bank (to 0x5A5A5A5A5A5A5A5A) by the Serial Communications Interface (SCI) Flash Kernel, it indicates that the corresponding Flash bank has been erased (Application sectors) and programming/verification is about to begin. In this example, the START field is located at addresses 0x82000 in BANK0 and 0x92000 in BANK1.

- REV – this represents a 32-bit Firmware revision number that is set by the SCI Flash Kernel which is used by the Bank Selection Logic to determine which the latest image is between Flash bank 0 and 1. REV starts at 0xFFFFFFFF and is decremented on each subsequent Flash programming cycle. Thus, the Bank with the lower revision number is considered the latest one. Firmware revision field is handled by the flash kernel for simplicity. In practice, the last downloaded image may not be the latest firmware version and the application image would contain the firmware version, but that assumption is made with this model where the kernel updates the REV field. In this example, the REV field is located at address 0x82006 in BANK0 and 0x92006 in BANK1. As an example, if the REV in BANK0 is FFFF FFFA, and the REV in BANK1 is FFFF FFF9, BANK1 will be considered the latest firmware and will execute.
- KEY– The image in a bank is considered as valid if this location contains a valid KEY (0x5B5B5B5B). This Key is written to by the SCI Flash Kernel, and is read and tested by the Bank Selection Logic. In this example, the KEY field is located at addresses 0x82004 in BANK0 and 0x92004 in BANK1.

The rest of sector 2 and sectors 3-15 can be used to store the application image. This allows the static code in sectors 0 and 1 to be programmed once, and remain unchanged during LFU.

## 4 Static Code in LFU

Static code that is used to support LFU consists of:

- Bank Selection Logic – when there are two (or more) Flash banks containing application firmware, logic that determines which Flash bank to boot is necessary. A common implementation of this logic centers on a firmware revision number. As described, the lower revision number is the latest image in this Example. Bank selection logic is placed at the default flash boot address (0x80000 in F28004x), so that once Boot ROM code completes execution, execution will transfer to bank selection logic. Bank selection logic is only included in Bank0, not in Bank1.
- Flash Kernel – it is the job of the Flash kernel to receive the Firmware image from the host using a peripheral, and call the Flash programming APIs to write it to flash memory. In this document, the SCI flash Kernel is used since the SCI peripheral is used to transfer the new firmware image. The detailed step by step flow is documented in the file header of flashapi\_ex2\_ldfu.c.
  - In a blank device (where application firmware is not present in either flash banks) the bank selection logic will identify there is no valid KEY in either Flash bank, and will wait for an LFU command over SCI. This will use the Flash Kernel to update the firmware on to bank1 as the kernel code is first programmed to bank0, and therefore executes from bank0.
  - If one or both banks contains a valid application, bank selection logic will transfer control to the code entry point (codestart) of the corresponding bank. In this example, the codestart address is 0x8EFF0 for Bank0 and 0x9EFF0 for Bank1.
  - During LFU, the application will make a call to the Flash Kernel to receive and update the firmware.
- Flash API – Flash APIs provide interfaces to erase and program Flash memory. These APIs need to run from the bank which is NOT being updated.

The static code is configured as a single example - flashapi\_ex2\_sci\_kernel project (included in C2000Ware at <C2000Ware>\driverlib\f28004x\examples\flash). This example supports multiple build configurations, of which those relevant to LFU are listed below:

- BANK0\_LDFU - Links the bank selection logic and flash kernel to Bank 0 (addresses 0x80000 - 0x81FFF). Uses Flash API symbols in flash.
- BANK0\_LDFU\_ROM - Links the bank selection logic and flash kernel to Bank 0 (addresses 0x80000 - 0x81FFF). Uses Flash API symbols in ROM; Rev A of F28004x cannot be used with this build configuration, since it does not support Flash APIs in ROM.
- BANK1\_LDFU - Links the flash kernel to Bank 1 (0x90000 - 0x91FFF). Uses Flash API symbols in flash.
- BANK1\_LDFU\_ROM - Links the flash kernel to Bank 1 (0x90000 - 0x91FFF). Uses Flash API symbols in ROM; Rev A of F28004x cannot be used with this build configuration, since it does not support Flash APIs in ROM.

For more details, see the flashapi\_ex2\_sciKernel.c in the flashapi\_ex2\_sci\_kernel project (included in C2000Ware at <C2000Ware>\driverlib\f28004x\examples\flash).

## 5 LED Example Application and LFU Flow

This example (flashapi\_ex3\_live\_firmware\_update project) is designed to demonstrate LFU with the LED blinking periodically. This is achieved using the Live Device Firmware Update (Live DFU or LDFU) command, which is part of SCI kernel. This is to be used with the Serial Flash Programmer (PC tool).

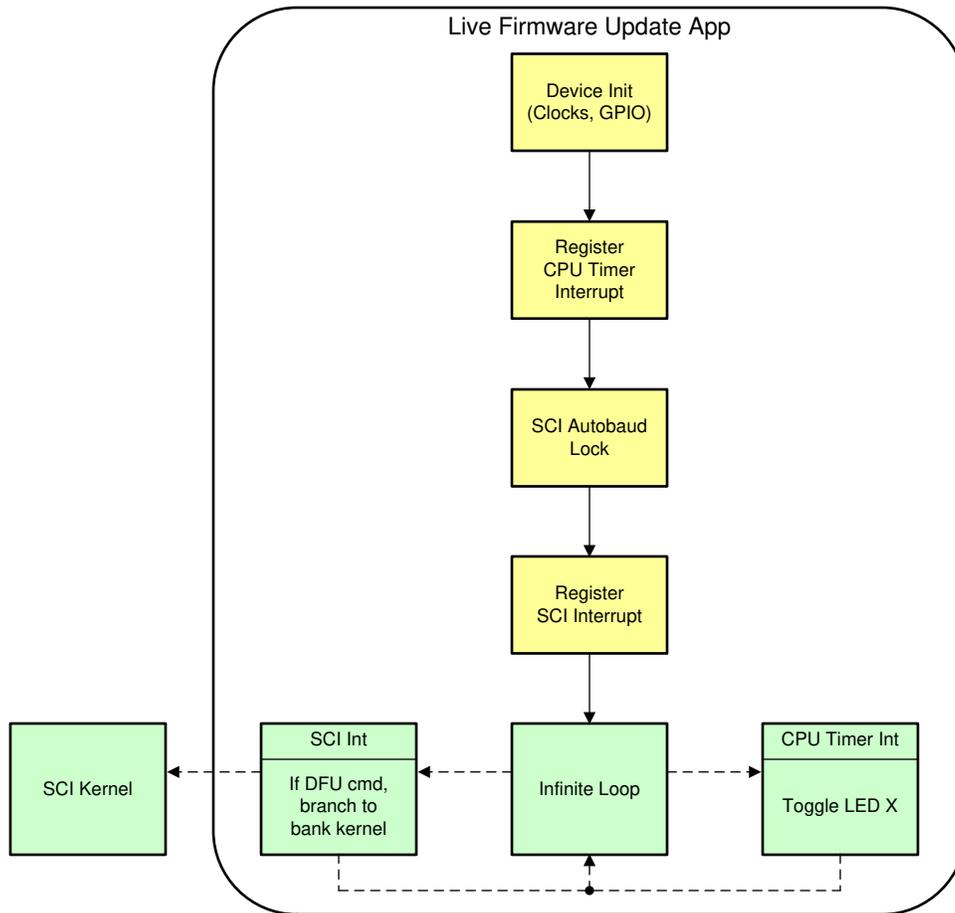
In this example, an SCI auto baud lock is performed and the byte used for auto baud lock is echoed back. Two interrupts are initialized and enabled: SCI Rx FIFO interrupt and CPU Timer 0 interrupt. The CPU Timer 0 interrupt occurs every 1 second; the interrupt service routine (ISR) for CPU Timer 0 toggles an LED based on the build configuration that is running.

- LED1 is toggled with the BANK0\_FLASH build configuration. "BANK0" is a pre-defined symbol in this build configuration, and when this symbol is defined, the project sets up GPIOs associated with LED1.
- LED2 is toggled with the BANK1\_FLASH build configuration. "BANK1" is a pre-defined symbol in this build configuration, and when this symbol is defined, the project sets up GPIOs associated with LED2.

The application images generated by building the above build configurations are the ones that will be used to illustrate LFU in this document. Note that other than the changes described above between the two build configurations, there are no other differences between the two application images. Hence, this is a relatively simple example for LFU illustration.

The SCI Rx FIFO interrupt is set for a FIFO interrupt level of 10 bytes. The number of bytes in a packet from the Serial Flash Programmer (when using the LDFU command) is 10. When a command is sent to the device from the Serial Flash Programmer, the SCI Rx FIFO ISR receives a command from the 10 byte packet in the FIFO. If the command matches the Live Device Firmware Update (Live DFU) command, then the code branches to the Live DFU function (liveDFU()) located inside of the SCI Flash Kernel (flashapi\_ex2\_ldfu.c) for the corresponding bank. So if the application on Bank0 is executing, control will pass to liveDFU() on Bank0, located at 0x81000. If the application on Bank1 is executing, control will pass to liveDFU() on Bank1, located at 0x91000. Within this function, execution passes to the ldfuLoad() function in order to erase the appropriate bank, load a hex formatted program (in the appropriate SCI boot format) into flash, and verify the program. Then the watchdog is configured for a reset. At the end, the watchdog is enabled in order for a reset to occur. When the device resets, it boots and loads the new Firmware.

Figure 5-1 depicts the flow of the code at a high level after the code enters main() of the application. For more details, see the flashapi\_ex3\_live\_firmware\_update.c located in the flashapi\_live\_firmware\_update project (included in C2000Ware at <C2000Ware>\driverlib\28004x\examples\flash).



**Figure 5-1. Code Flow After Entering main() of Application**

## 6 Running the LED Example

### 6.1 Serial Flash Programmer Update

The serial flash programmer (serial\_flash\_programmer.exe) supplied with C2000ware takes both the kernel and application image as parameters. Typically, the kernel is transferred first over to the SCI bootloader and executed from RAM or Flash on the device. The kernel program then takes the application image over SCI (from serial programmer running on PC) and programs the application image in flash memory.

In the case of LFU, the static content including flash kernel is first programmed to flash sectors 0 and 1 of Flash banks 0 and 1. This is described in [Section 6.2](#). After this, the serial flash programmer needs to be modified to transfer only the application image. This can be done by commenting the line “#define kernel” in serial\_flash\_programmer.cpp. The serial flash programmer can be regenerated by compiling the project in Visual C (called serial\_flash\_programmer\_appln.exe). The pre-built executable is placed at <C2000Ware>\utilities\flash\_programmers\serial\_flash\_programmer\. Thus, the user needs to take no action here.

## 6.2 Programming Static Code – Loading via Code Composer Studio™ (CCS)

The hardware used in the illustrated steps is an F28004x ControlCARD on a ControlCARD docking station Rev4.1. If a JTAG connection is available, then CCS can be used to load Flash banks 0 and 1 with static code.  
Note:

### Note

Make sure you have the settings in CCS (or your target configuration file – by right clicking and selecting properties) as shown in [Figure 6-1](#) before loading the images. Build the flashapi\_ex2\_sci\_kernel project in both BANK0\_LDFU and BANK1\_LDFU configurations, and load each to target. The CCS flash plugin will load the contents on to flash.

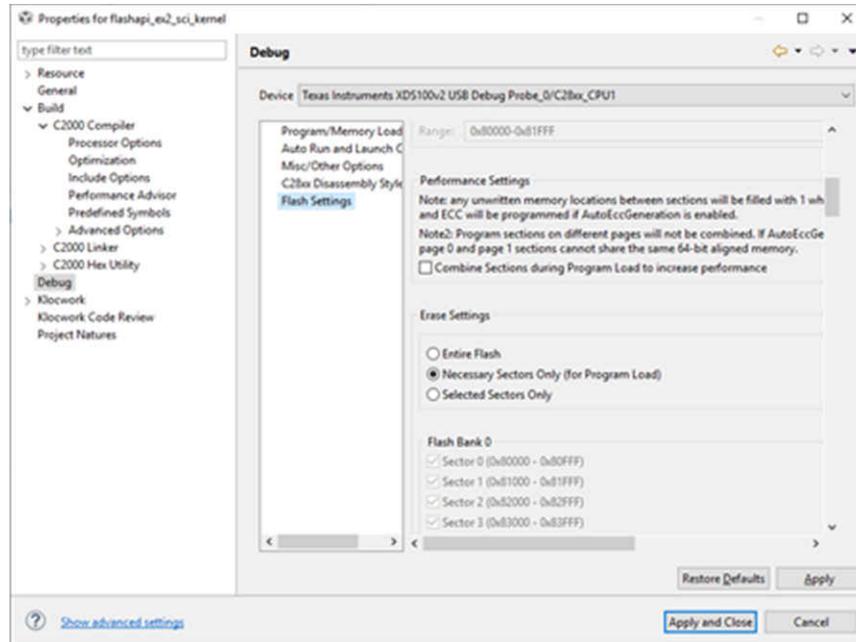
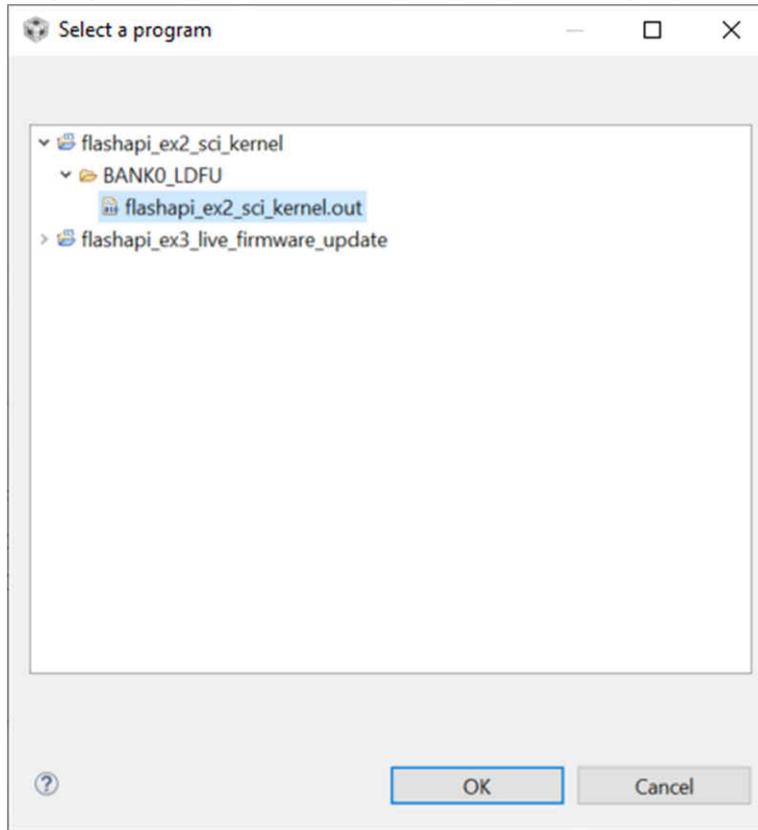


Figure 6-1. Flash Settings to Only Erase Necessary Sectors

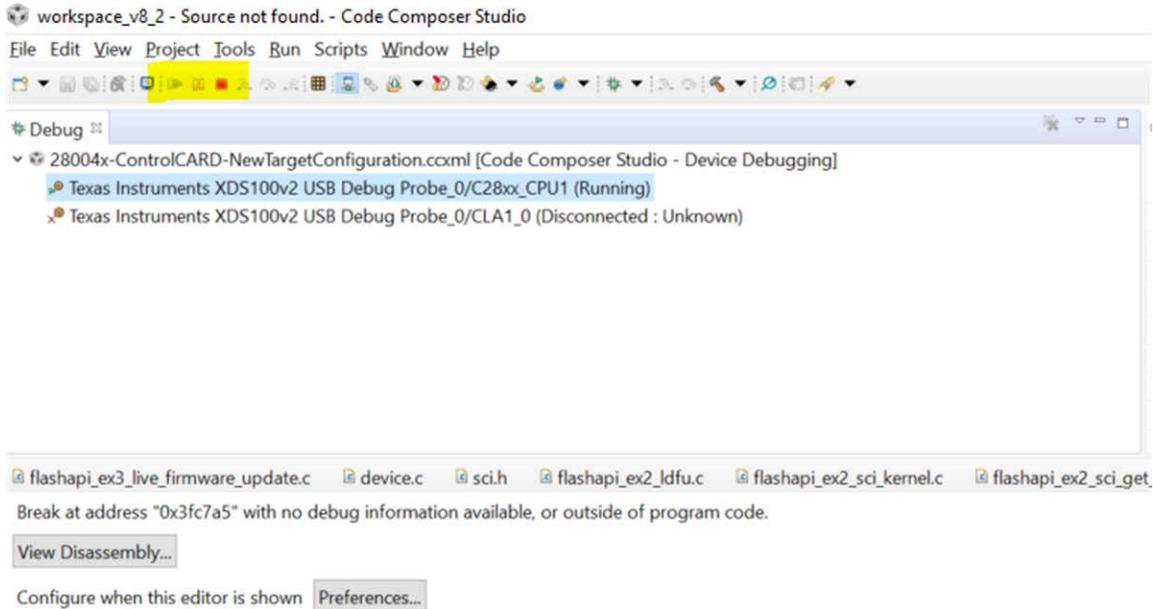
1. Load BANK0 static image (BANK0\_LDFU of flashapi\_ex2\_sci\_kernel project).



**Figure 6-2. Selecting Kernel to Load to Flash Bank 0**

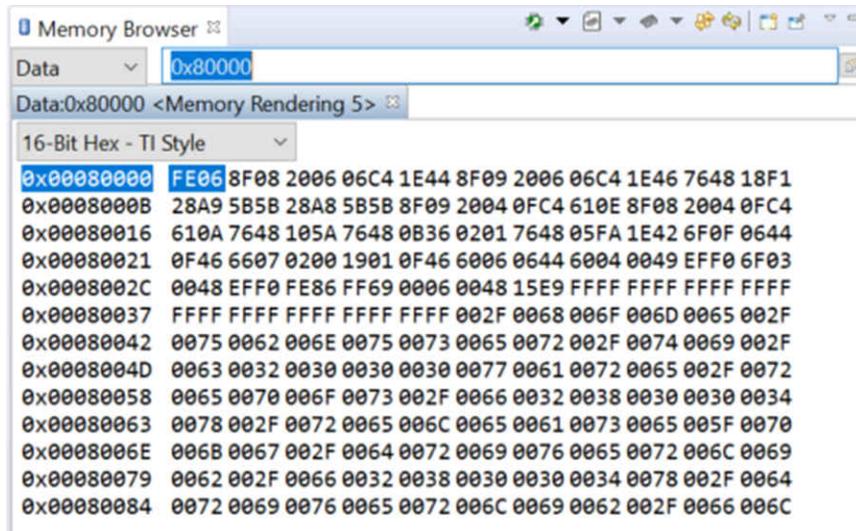
After the static contents are loaded on BANK0, the first thing that happens is the execution of the bank selection logic that will determine that application firmware is not programmed in either bank.

Control will pass to the flash kernel, which will be ready to program the application in BANK1. The CCS view will look [Figure 6-3](#) (the program will not stop at main(), but will be running, awaiting a SCI command):



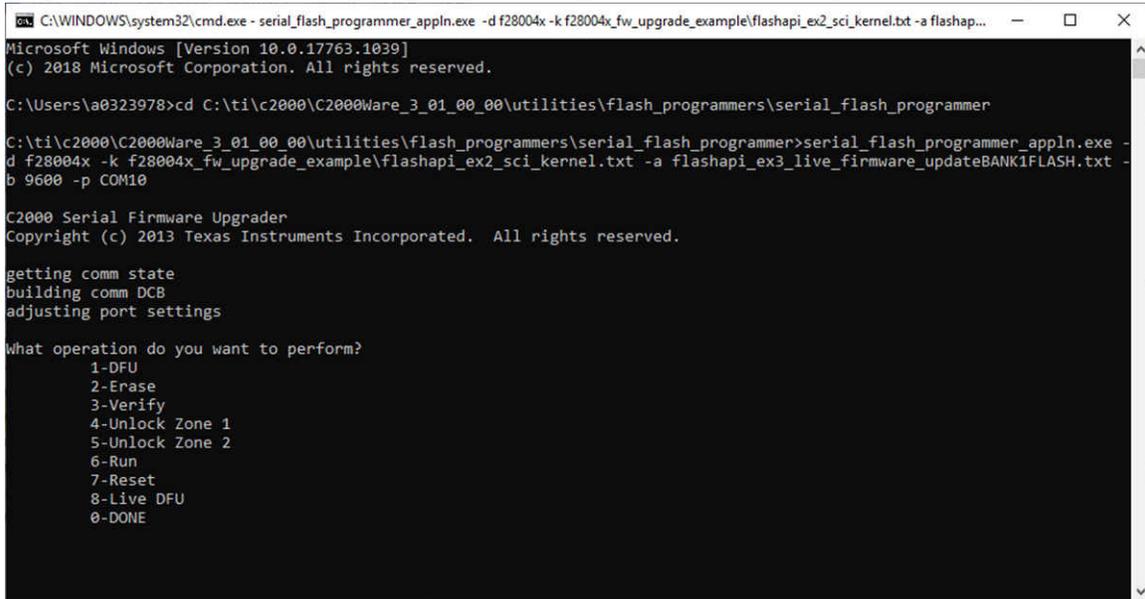
**Figure 6-3. CCS Window view After Programming Bank 0 Flash Kernel**

2. Verify the Kernel content of BANK0 by opening the Memory Browser window in CCS, and entering address 0x80000.



**Figure 6-4. CCS Memory Browser View to Verify Successful Kernel Programming of Bank 0**

- Now switch to the Windows command prompt, and execute the command below: `serial_flash_programmer_appln.exe -d f28004x -k f28004x_fw_upgrade_example\flashapi_ex2_sci_kernel.txt -a flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK1FLASH.txt -b 9600 -p COMx` where x = COM port corresponding to the JTAG connection between the PC and the target board. The COM port number can be found by looking up Ports in Device Manager. This will be populated by virtue of the fact that there is a USB cable connected between the target and the computer, which provides both JTAG and SCI functionality. The example uses a baud rate of 9600. `flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK1FLASH.txt` is generated by building the CCS project `flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_update` in build configuration `BANK1_FLASH`.



```

C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe - serial_flash_programmer_appln.exe -d f28004x -k f28004x_fw_upgrade_example\flashapi_ex2_sci_kernel.txt -a flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK1FLASH.txt -b 9600 -p COM10
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.17763.1039]
(c) 2018 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\A0323978>cd C:\ti\c2000\C2000Ware_3_01_00_00\utilities\flash_programmers\serial_flash_programmer

C:\ti\c2000\C2000Ware_3_01_00_00\utilities\flash_programmers\serial_flash_programmer>serial_flash_programmer_appln.exe -d f28004x -k f28004x_fw_upgrade_example\flashapi_ex2_sci_kernel.txt -a flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK1FLASH.txt -b 9600 -p COM10

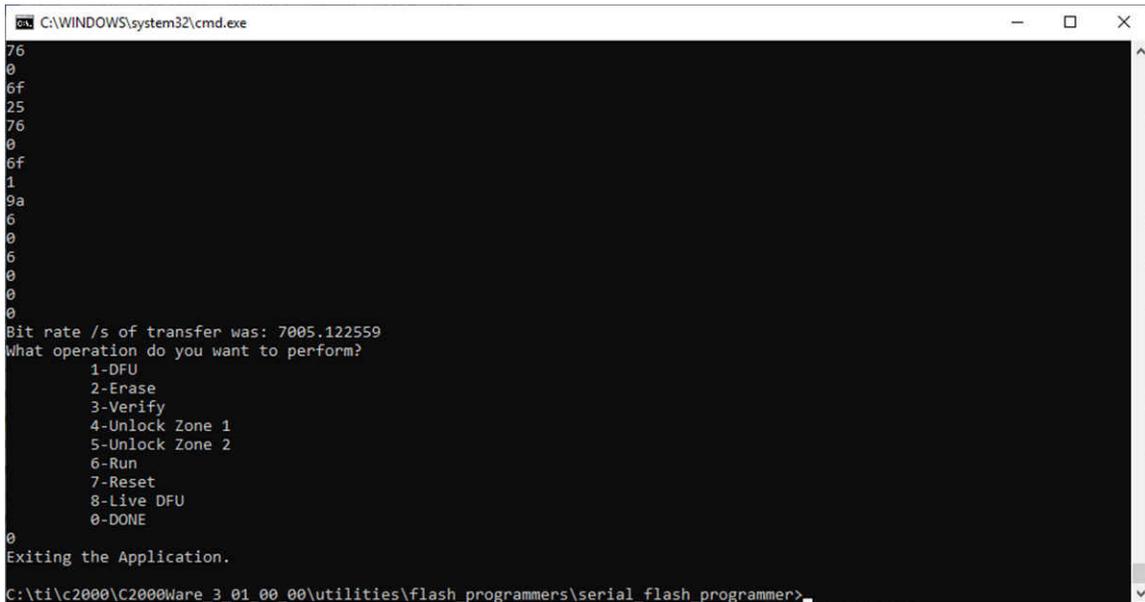
C2000 Serial Firmware Upgrader
Copyright (c) 2013 Texas Instruments Incorporated. All rights reserved.

getting comm state
building comm DCB
adjusting port settings

What operation do you want to perform?
1-DFU
2-Erase
3-Verify
4-Unlock Zone 1
5-Unlock Zone 2
6-Run
7-Reset
8-Live DFU
0-DONE
    
```

**Figure 6-5. LFU Serial Command Invoked From Windows Command Prompt**

- Once LDFU (8) command is selected, the kernel will receive and program the application in BANK1. The application size is about 36KB. Download time will be about 30 seconds.



```

C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe
76
0
6f
25
76
0
6f
1
9a
6
0
6
0
0
0
0
Bit rate /s of transfer was: 7005.122559
What operation do you want to perform?
1-DFU
2-Erase
3-Verify
4-Unlock Zone 1
5-Unlock Zone 2
6-Run
7-Reset
8-Live DFU
0-DONE
0
Exiting the Application.
C:\ti\c2000\C2000Ware_3_01_00_00\utilities\flash_programmers\serial_flash_programmer>
    
```

**Figure 6-6. Successful Completion of LFU Command to Program Flash Bank 1**

- After transfer is complete, enter 0 to indicate end of command operations. Verify the Application content of BANK1 by opening the Memory Browser window in CCS, and entering address 0x92000.

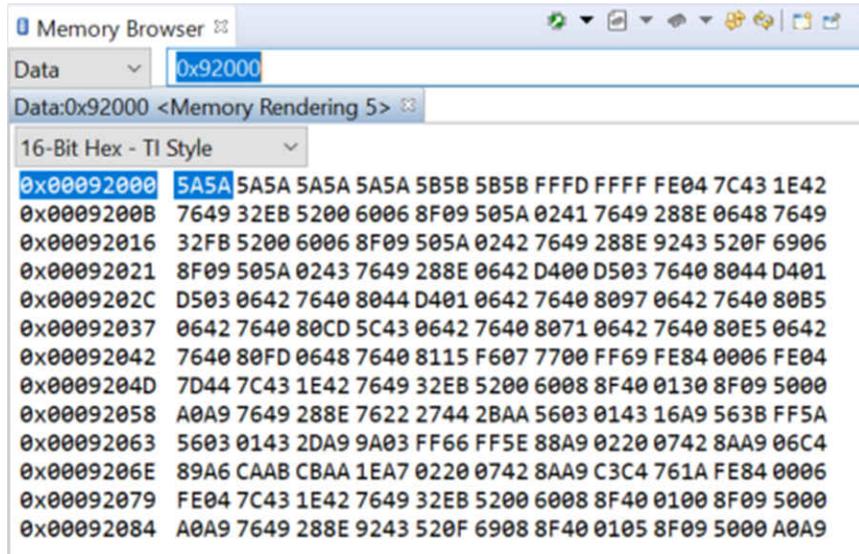


Figure 6-7. CCS Memory Browser View to Verify Successful Programming of Application on Bank 1

The kernel will also update the KEY and revision number in BANK1 sector 2. Now the static image, in programmed BANK0 and application image, is programmed in BANK1.

6. At this point, the user can reset the board to see LED2 start blinking.
7. Next load BANK1 static image (BANK1\_LDFU of flashapi\_ex2\_sci\_kernel project).

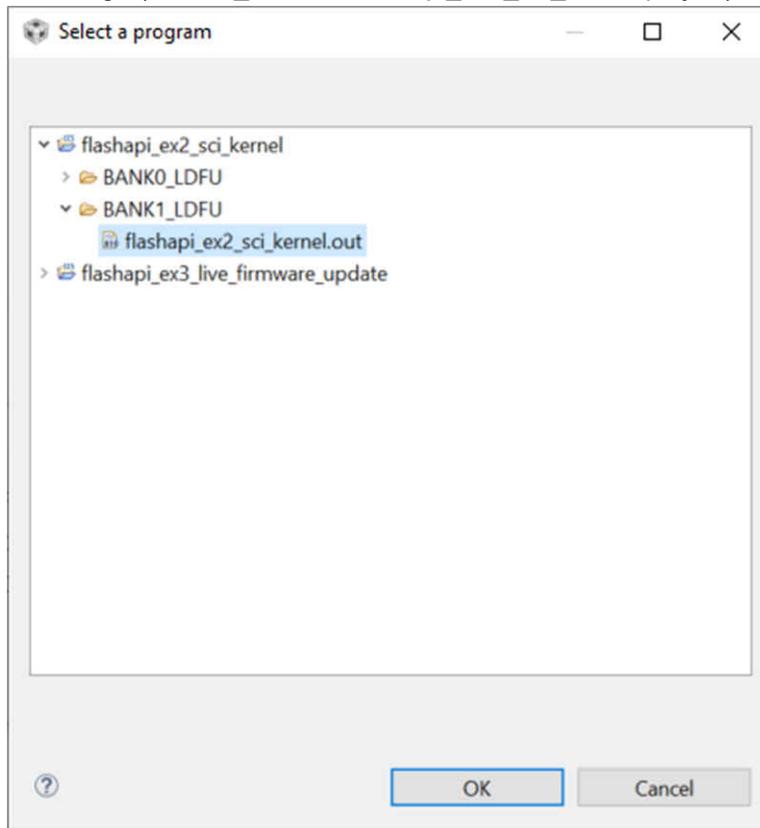


Figure 6-8. Selecting Kernel to Load to Flash Bank 1

8. Verify the Kernel content of BANK1 by opening the Memory Browser window in CCS, and entering address 0x90000.

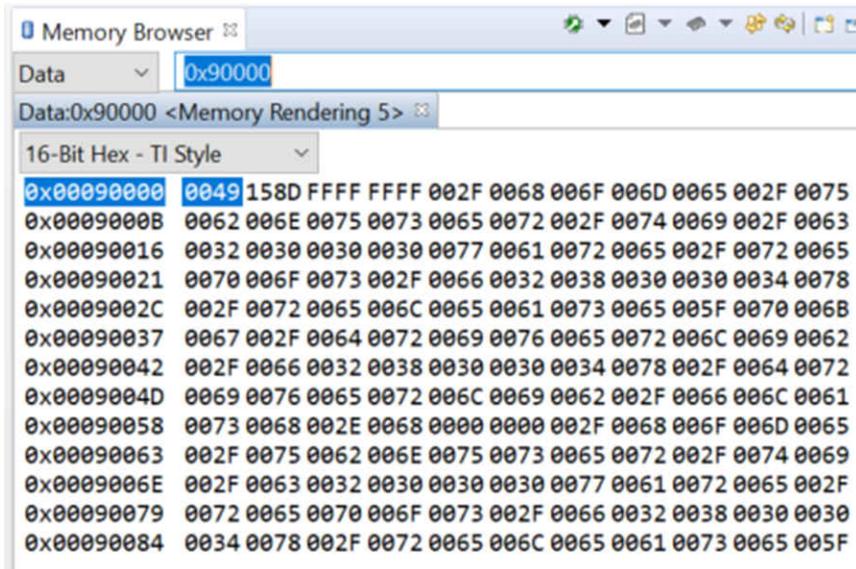


Figure 6-9. CCS Memory Browser View to Verify Successful Kernel Programming of Bank 1

After the static contents are loaded on to BANK1, execution stops at main(). This occurs for the kernel on Bank1 because bank selection logic resides only on Bank0, not on Bank1. Thus, for Bank1, execution flow follows the conventional flow of codestart leading up to main().

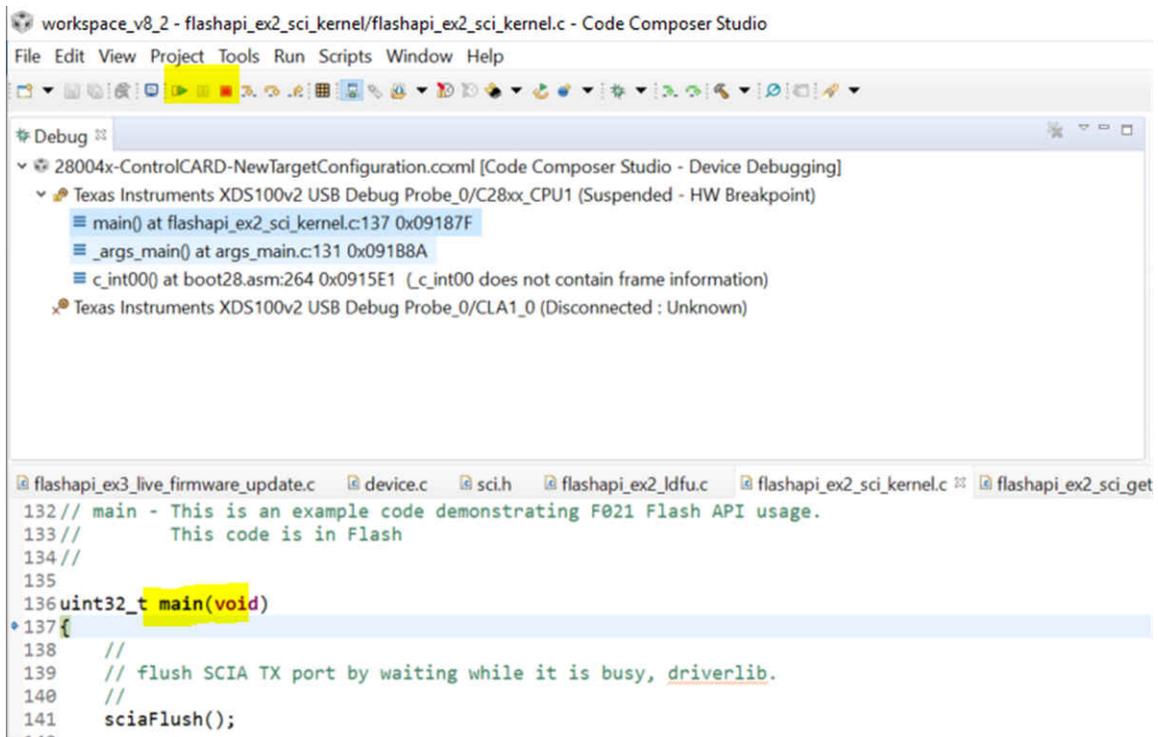
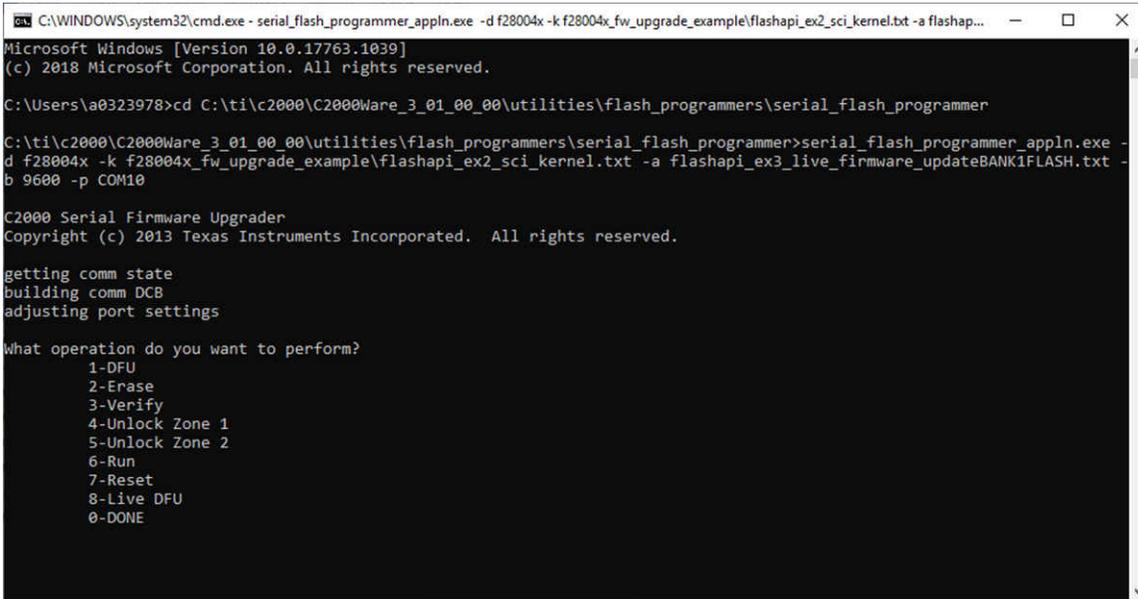


Figure 6-10. CCS Window View After Programming Bank 1 Flash Kernel

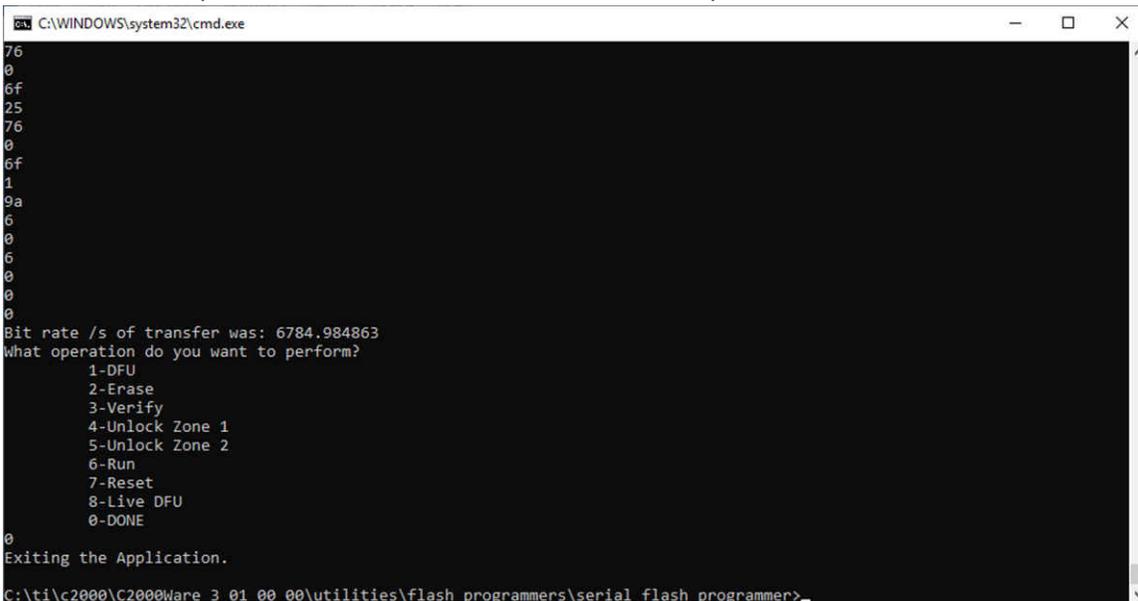
- Press Run in CCS, the bank selection logic will run and execute application from BANK1. Then, execute the below command from command line in PC.

```
serial_flash_programmer_appln.exe -d f28004x -
k f28004x_fw_upgrade_example\flashapi_ex2_sci_kernel.txt -a
flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK0FLASH.txt -b 9600 -p COMx where x = COM
port corresponding to the JTAG connection between the PC and the target board.
flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK0FLASH.txt is generated by building the CCS project
flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_update in build configuration BANK0_FLASH.
```



**Figure 6-11. LFU Serial Command Invoked From Windows Command Prompt**

- Control will pass to flash kernel from the application and, once LDFU (8) command is selected, the kernel will receive and program the application in BANK0.
- After transfer is complete, enter 0 to indicate end of command operations.



**Figure 6-12. Successful Completion of LFU Command to Program Flash Bank 0**

The kernel will also update the KEY and revision number in BANK0 sector 2. Now the static image in programmed BANK1 and application image is programmed in BANK0.

12. At this point, as before, the user can reset the board, to see LED1 start blinking.

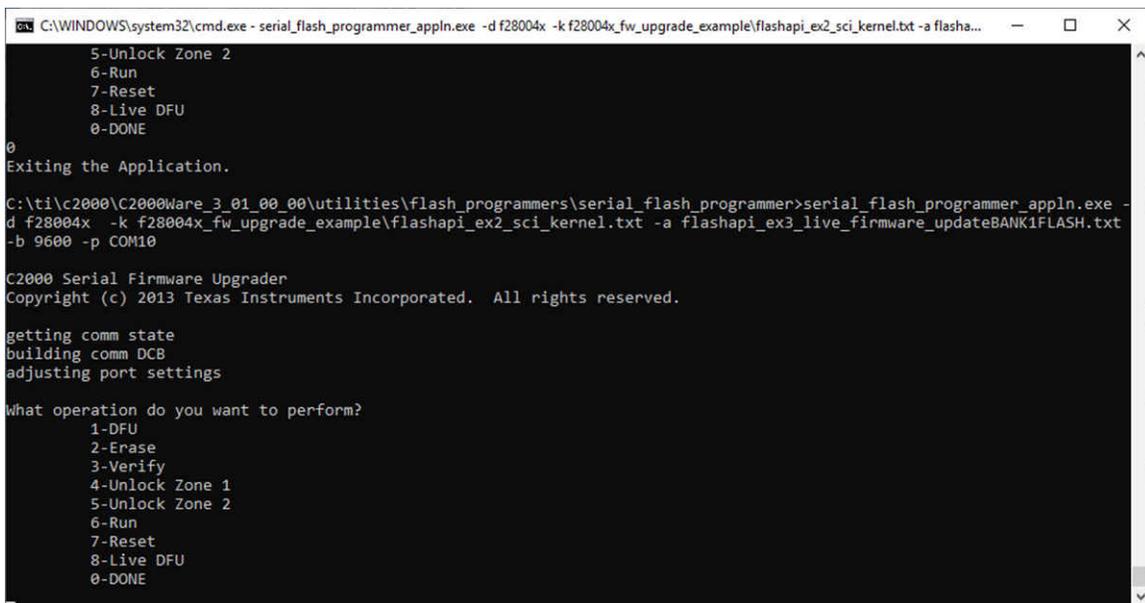
### 6.3 Live Firmware Update of Application

After programming the static contents, disconnect the debugger and set the boot mode switches to flash boot mode. When the device boots up, it will jump to Flash. The default flash entry point is 0x80000, which is where the static code (Bank selection logic + SCI Flash Kernel) has been programmed in Bank0. The bank selection logic will execute and determine that valid images exist in both Banks 0 and 1 (based on KEY and revision number). Bank0 will be selected to run because, in [Section 6.1](#), it was programmed later so it will be deemed the newest version based on the REV field. So the application firmware in Bank0 will be executed.

The application blinks LED1 at every 1 second. At the same time the application also monitors the serial port to check if it is getting any image for live firmware update.

To perform live firmware updates, build the updated application for BANK1 configuration and execute the command shown in [Figure 6-13](#) from the host PC in the command line. Enter '8' for LDFU when the menu is listed.

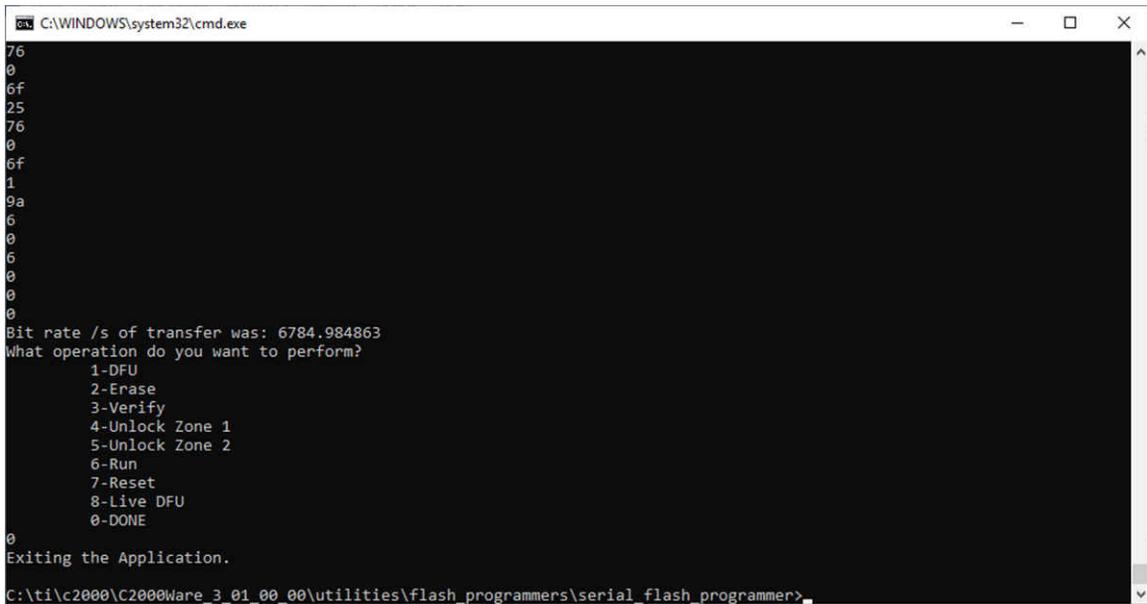
```
serial_flash_programmer_appln.exe -d f28004x -k f28004x_fw_upgrade_example\flashapi_ex2_sci_kernel.txt -a flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK1FLASH.txt -b 9600 -p COMx.
```



```
C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe - serial_flash_programmer_appln.exe -d f28004x -k f28004x_fw_upgrade_example\flashapi_ex2_sci_kernel.txt -a flasha...
5-Unlock Zone 2
6-Run
7-Reset
8-Live DFU
0-DONE
0
Exiting the Application.
C:\ti\c2000\C2000Ware_3_01_00_00\utilities\flash_programmers\serial_flash_programmer>serial_flash_programmer_appln.exe -d f28004x -k f28004x_fw_upgrade_example\flashapi_ex2_sci_kernel.txt -a flashapi_ex3_live_firmware_updateBANK1FLASH.txt -b 9600 -p COM10
C2000 Serial Firmware Upgrader
Copyright (c) 2013 Texas Instruments Incorporated. All rights reserved.
getting comm state
building comm DCB
adjusting port settings
What operation do you want to perform?
1-DFU
2-Erase
3-Verify
4-Unlock Zone 1
5-Unlock Zone 2
6-Run
7-Reset
8-Live DFU
0-DONE
```

**Figure 6-13. LFU Serial Command Invoked From Windows Command Prompt**

If it receives an image, control will jump to the flash kernel in Bank0 and update the firmware image on Bank1. After transfer is complete, enter 0 to indicate end of command operations. When the new image is being downloaded to Bank1, the application continues to run on Bank0 (LED1 continues to blink at the usual 1s rate). This is because LFU processing occurs in a background loop, not the SCI Receive interrupt. This allows other interrupts, such as the CPU Timer interrupt that toggles the LEDs, to be serviced.



```
C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe
76
0
6f
25
76
0
6f
1
9a
6
0
6
0
0
0
Bit rate /s of transfer was: 6784.984863
What operation do you want to perform?
1-DFU
2-Erase
3-Verify
4-Unlock Zone 1
5-Unlock Zone 2
6-Run
7-Reset
8-Live DFU
0-DONE
0
Exiting the Application.
C:\ti\c2000\C2000Ware_3_01_00_00\utilities\flash_programmers\serial_flash_programmer>
```

**Figure 6-14. Successful completion of LFU Command to Program Flash Bank**

After the Watchdog timer resets, the device resets, and control is passed to the newest application image in Bank1, and LED2 will start blinking.

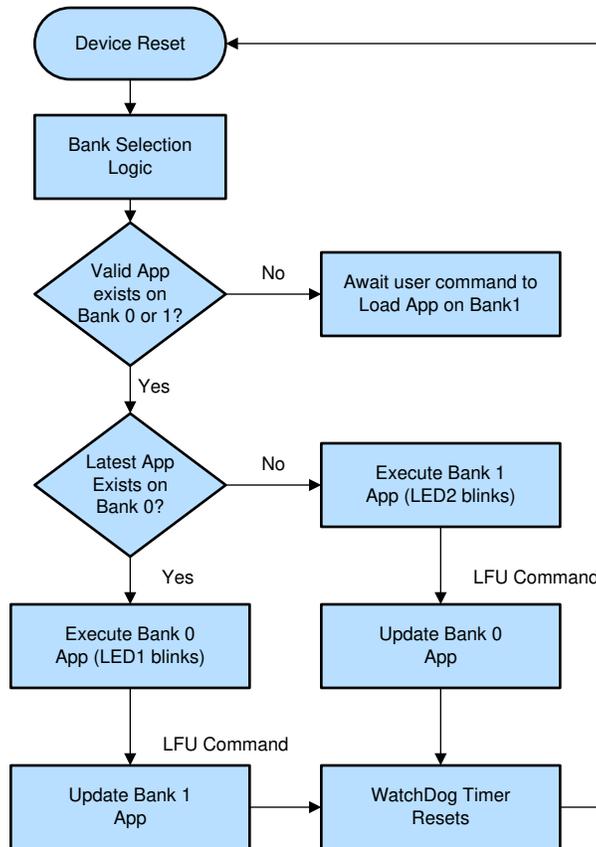
---

**Note**

The manual device reset is no longer required.

---

This process can be repeated to update the image in alternate banks. Figure 6-15 illustrates the flow described above.



**Figure 6-15. LFU Code Flow Diagram**

### 6.4 Limitations and Troubleshooting

- One point for the user to note is that since the Bank Selection Logic resides in Bank0, if Flash corruption occurs when the Application is being updated on Bank0, it is possible that the Static contents of Bank0, although located at different sectors, end up corrupted as well. This would include the Bank selection logic + SCI Flash Kernel + Flash APIs (if running from Flash). The user would then have to repeat the steps involved in programming static code to get the system operational again.
- While programming the Flash kernel in Section 6.2, the erase settings for Flash should be set to “Necessary Sectors only”, otherwise, while Programming Kernel on BANK1, the Application on BANK1 will be erased.

### 7 Revision History

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

Changes from Revision * (March 2020) to Revision A (August 2021)	Page
• Updated the numbering format for tables, figures and cross-references throughout the document.....	2

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