



KSG101

Strain Gauge Reader

APT User Guide



Original Instructions

Contents

Chapter 1 Safety	4
1.1 Safety Information	4
1.2 General Warnings	4
Chapter 2 Overview and Setup	5
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Power Options	6
2.3 APT PC Software Overview	7
2.3.1 Introduction	7
2.3.2 APTUser Utility	8
2.3.3 APT Config Utility	9
2.3.4 APT Server (ActiveX Controls)	10
2.3.5 Software Upgrades	11
Chapter 3 Getting Started	12
3.1 Install The Software.	12
3.2 Mechanical Installation	12
3.2.1 Environmental Conditions	12
3.2.2 Mounting Options	13
3.2.3 Using the Baseplate	13
3.3 Electrical Installation	14
3.3.1 Connecting a Strain Gauge Signal	14
3.3.2 Strain Gauge - General Information	14
3.3.3 Supply Voltage and Current Requirements	15
3.3.4 Front Panel	16
3.3.5 Powering Down The Unit	17
3.3.6 Connecting To A Standalone Power Supply	17
3.4 Connect The Hardware	18
3.5 Verifying Software Operation	19
Chapter 4 Standalone Operation	20
4.1 Introduction	20
4.2 Control Panel	21
4.2.1 Digital Display - Operating Mode	21
4.3 Settings Menu	22
4.3.1 Menu Overview	22
4.3.2 Menu Option - Zeroing	23
4.3.3 Menu Option - Analogue Out	24
4.3.4 Menu Option - Units Select	25
4.3.5 Menu Option - Force Sensors	26
4.3.6 Menu Option - Brightness	27
4.3.7 Menu Option - Display Time Out	27

Continued...

Chapter 5 Operation - Tutorial	28
5.1 Introduction	28
5.2 Using the APT User Utility	28
5.3 Closed Loop Piezo Operation	29
5.3.1 Electrical Connections and Software Settings - Hub Operation	29
5.3.2 Electrical Connections and Software Settings - Off Hub Operation	33
5.4 Setting the Position Sensor Zero	35
5.5 Using The Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube with a Piezo Driver K-Cube	36
5.6 Using the Controller with a Force Sensor	37
5.7 Creating a Simulated Configuration Using APT Config	39
Chapter 6 Software Reference	42
6.1 GUI Panel	42
6.2 Settings Panel	43
6.2.1 Settings Tab.	44
6.2.2 Panel/Triggering tab	47
 Appendices	
Appendix A Connector Pinout Details	50
Appendix B Preventive Maintenance	52
Appendix C Specifications and Associated Parts	53
Appendix D Piezo Control Method Summary	54
Appendix E Piezo Operation - Background	56
Appendix F Regulatory	59
Appendix G Thorlabs Worldwide Contacts	62

Chapter 1 Safety

1.1 Safety Information

For the continuing safety of the operators of this equipment, and the protection of the equipment itself, the operator should take note of the **Warnings, Cautions** and **Notes** throughout this handbook and, where visible, on the product itself.

The following safety symbols may be used throughout the handbook and on the equipment itself.



Shock Warning



Given when there is a risk of injury from electrical shock.



Warning



Given when there is a risk of injury to users.



Caution



Given when there is a risk of damage to the product.

Note

Clarification of an instruction or additional information.

1.2 General Warnings



Warnings



If this equipment is used in a manner not specified by the manufacturer, the protection provided by the equipment may be impaired. In particular, excessive moisture may impair operation.

Spillage of fluid, such as sample solutions, should be avoided. If spillage does occur, clean up immediately using absorbant tissue. Do not allow spilled fluid to enter the internal mechanism.

Chapter 2 Overview and Setup

2.1 Introduction

The K-Cube Strain Gauge Reader (KSG101) is a new very compact single channel reader, providing immediate 'out of the box' operation. For non-PC use the unit is equipped with an OLED Display to indicate position, together with a settings menu to change the display units and set the zero position point. The unit is also equipped with a SMA position monitor output generating an analog voltage (0-10V) proportional to the strain gauge signal.

Furthermore, when operated together with the new K-Cube Piezo Driver unit (KPZ101) on the K-Cube Controller Hub (see over), high precision closed loop positioning is possible using the complete range of feedback equipped piezo actuators available from Thorlabs.

The unit can also be placed into Force Sensing mode, to allow operation with Thorlabs Force Sensor products (FSC102 and FSC103). High sensitivity force sensing is possible down to mN levels.

For convenience the footprint of this unit has been kept to a minimum, measuring only 60mm x 60mm x 47mm (2.36" x 2.36" x 1.85") and with the facility to directly mount to the optical table close to the device under control. Table top operation also allows minimal drive cable lengths for easier cable management. All manual controls are located on the top face of the unit – very convenient when monitoring positions using the easy to read display (with brightness adjustment).



Fig. 2.1 K-Cube Strain Gauge Reader (KSG101)

A low voltage output connector allows for easy monitoring of the strain gauge signal. Zero to 10V represents a Strain gauge signal (position or force) from 0 to full scale.

USB connectivity provides easy 'Plug and Play' PC controlled operation - multiple units can be connected to a single PC via standard USB hub technology or by using the new K-Cube Controller Hub (see over) for multi-axis motion control applications. Coupling this with the very user friendly APT™ software (supplied) allows the user to very quickly get up and running in a short space of time. Custom automated strain gauge reader applications can be developed using the extensive ActiveX® programming environment also supplied. This programming library is compatible with many development tools such as LabView, Visual Basic, Visual C++, C++ Builder, LabWindows/CVI, Matlab and Delphi.

See Section 2.3. for a full description of the APT system software.

In the remainder of this handbook, the Tutorial section (Chapter 5) provides a good initial understanding on using the unit, and the reference section (Chapter 6) covers all operating modes and parameters in detail.

2.2 Power Options

For power, a compact two-way power supply unit (TPS002) is available from Thorlabs allowing up to 2 K-Cube Strain Gauge or Piezo Driver units to be powered from a single mains outlet. This power supply unit is also designed to take up minimal space and can be mounted to the optical table in close proximity to the driver units, connected via short power leads.

As a further level of convenience when using the K-Cube Controllers Thorlabs also offers the 3-channel and 6-channel K-Cube Controller Hubs (KCH301 and KCH601). These products have been designed specifically with multiple K-Cube operation in mind in order to simplify issues such as cable management, power supply routing, multiple USB device communications and different optical table mounting scenarios.

The K-Cube Controller Hub comprises a slim base-plate type carrier with electrical connections located on the upper surface to accept the K-Cubes.

Internally the Controller Hub contains a fully compliant USB 2.0 hub circuit to provide communications for all K-Cubes – a single USB connection to the Controller Hub is all that is required for PC control. The Controller Hub also provides power distribution for the K-Cubes, requiring only a single power connection.

2.3 APT PC Software Overview

2.3.1 Introduction

As a member of the APT range of controllers, the KSG101 strain gauge reader shares many of the associated software benefits. This includes USB connectivity (allowing multiple units to be used together on a single PC), fully featured Graphical User Interface (GUI) panels, and extensive software function libraries for custom application development.

The APT software suite supplied with all APT controllers provides a flexible and powerful PC based control system both for users of the equipment, and software programmers aiming to automate its operation.

For users, the APTUser (see Section 2.3.2.) and APTConfig (see Section 2.3.3.) utilities allow full control of all settings and operating modes enabling complete 'out-of-box' operation without the need to develop any further custom software. Both utilities are built on top of a sophisticated, multi-threaded ActiveX 'engine' (called the APT server) which provides all of the necessary APT system software services such as generation of GUI panels, communications handling for multiple USB units, and logging of all system activity to assist in hardware trouble shooting. It is this APT server 'engine' that is used by software developers to allow the creation of advanced automated positioning applications very rapidly and with great ease. The APT server is described in more detail in Section 2.3.4.

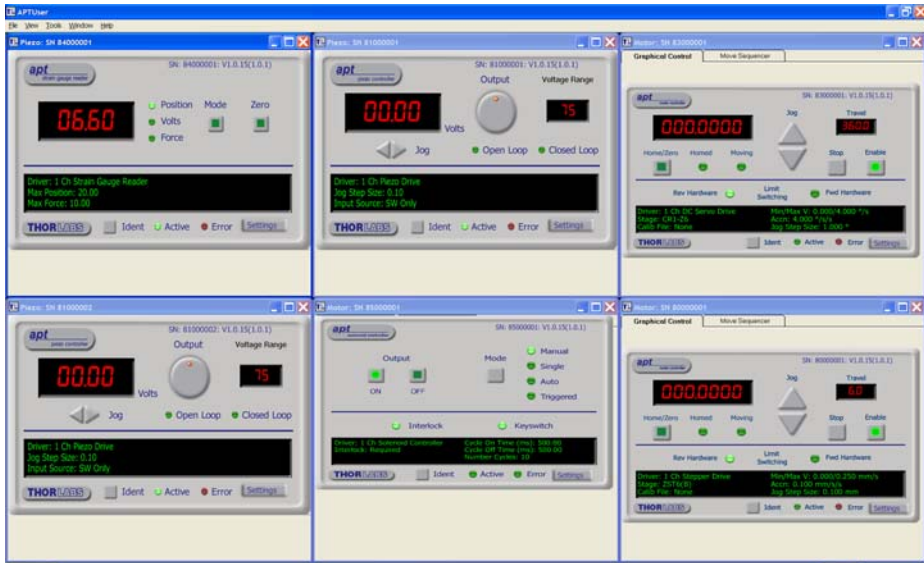
Aside

ActiveX®, a Windows®-based, language-independent technology, allows a user to quickly develop custom applications that automate the control of APT system hardware units. Development environments supported by ActiveX® technology include Visual Basic®, LabView™, Borland C++ Builder, Visual C++, Delphi™, and many others. ActiveX® technology is also supported by .NET development environments such as Visual Basic.NET and Visual C#.NET.

ActiveX controls are a specific form of ActiveX technology that provide both a user interface and a programming interface. An ActiveX control is supplied for each type of APT hardware unit to provide specific controller functionality to the software developer. See Section 2.3.4. for further details.

2.3.2 APTUser Utility

The APTUser application allows the user to interact with a number of APT hardware control units connected to the host PC. This program displays multiple graphical instrument panels to allow multiple APT units to be controlled simultaneously.



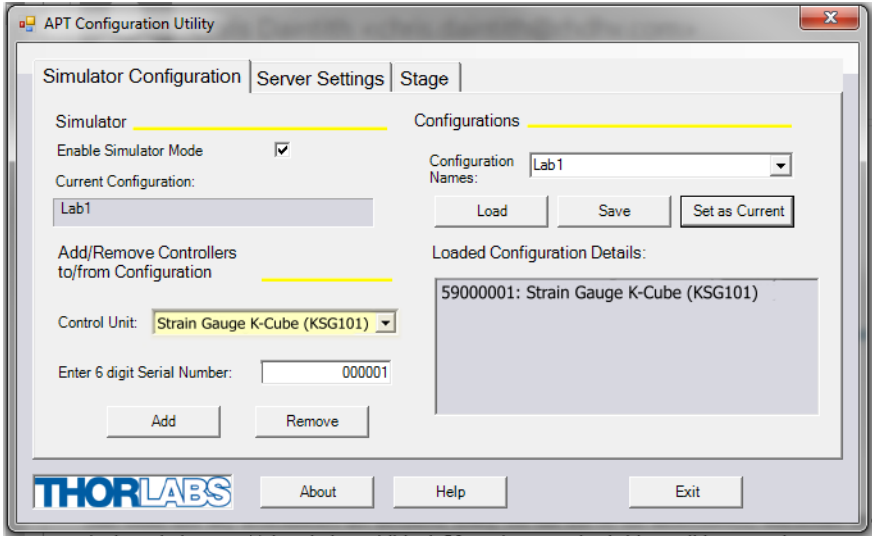
All basic operating parameters can be altered and, similarly, all operations (such as position sensor zeroing) can be initiated. Settings and parameter changes can be saved and loaded to allow multiple operating configurations to be created and easily applied.

For many users, the APTUser application provides all of the functionality necessary to operate the APT hardware without the need to develop any further custom software. For those who do need to further customize and automate usage of the controller (e.g. to implement a positioning algorithm), this application illustrates how the rich functionality provided by the APT ActiveX server is exposed by a client application.

Use of the APT User utility is covered in the PC tutorial (Chapter 5) and in the APTUser online help file, accessed via the F1 key when using the APTUser utility.

2.3.3 APT Config Utility

There are many system parameters and configuration settings associated with the operation of the APT Server. Most can be directly accessed using the various graphical panels, however there are several system wide settings that can only be made 'off-line' before running the APT software. These settings have global effect; such as switching between simulator and real operating mode and incorporation of calibration data.



The APTConfig utility is provided as a convenient means for making these system wide settings and adjustments. Full details on using APTConfig are provided in the online help supplied with the utility.

Use of the APT Config utility is covered in the PC tutorial (Chapter 5) and in the APTConfig online help file, accessed via the F1 key when using the APTConfig utility.

2.3.4 APT Server (ActiveX Controls)

ActiveX Controls are re-usable compiled software components that supply both a graphical user interface and a programmable interface. Many such Controls are available for Windows applications development, providing a large range of re-usable functionality. For example, there are Controls available that can be used to manipulate image files, connect to the internet or simply provide user interface components such as buttons and list boxes.

With the APT system, ActiveX Controls are deployed to allow direct control over (and also reflect the status of) the range of electronic controller units, including the KSG101 Strain Gauge controller. Software applications that use ActiveX Controls are often referred to as 'client applications'. Based on ActiveX interfacing technology, an ActiveX Control is a language independent software component. Consequently ActiveX Controls can be incorporated into a wide range of software development environments for use by client application developers. Development environments supported include Visual Basic, Labview, Visual C++, C++ Builder, HPVEE, Matlab, VB.NET, C#.NET and, via VBA, Microsoft Office applications such as Excel and Word.

Consider the ActiveX Control supplied for a KSG101 Strain Gauge K-Cube unit.



This Control provides a complete user graphical instrument panel to allow the Strain Gauge unit to be manually operated, as well as a complete set of software functions (often called methods) to allow all parameters to be set and Strain Gauge control operations to be automated by a client application. The instrument panel reflects the current operating state of the controller unit to which it is associated (e.g. such as Strain Gauge reading). Updates to the panel take place automatically when a user (client) application is making software calls into the same Control. For example, if a client application instructs the associated Strain Gauge Control to zero the position sensor, progress is monitored automatically by changing position readout on the graphical interface, without the need for further programming intervention.

The APT ActiveX Controls collection provides a rich set of graphical user panels and programmable interfaces allowing users and client application developers to interact seamlessly with the APT hardware. Each of the APT controllers has an associated ActiveX Control and these are described fully in system online help. Note that the APTUser and APTConfig utilities take advantage of and are built on top of the powerful functionality provided by the APT ActiveX Server (as shown in Fig. 2.2).

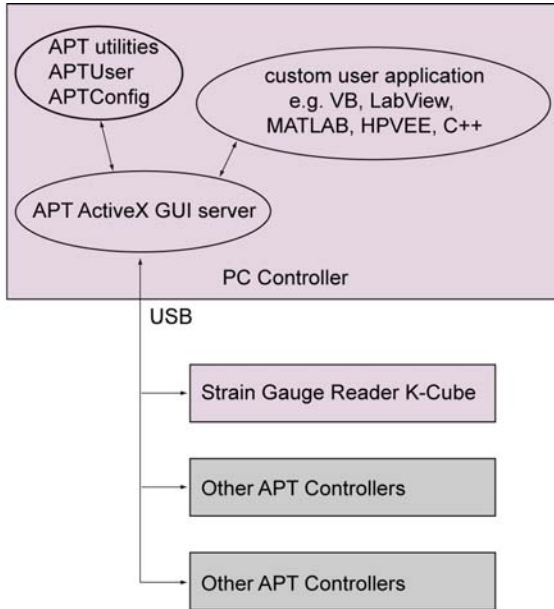


Fig. 2.2 System Architecture Diagram

Refer to the main APT Software online help file, APTServer.hlp, for a complete programmers guide and reference material on using the APT ActiveX Controls collection. Additional software developer support is provided on our website.

2.3.5 Software Upgrades

Thorlabs operate a policy of continuous product development and may issue software upgrades as necessary. The latest software can be downloaded from the 'services' section of www.thorlabs.com.



Chapter 3 Getting Started

3.1 Install The Software.

Note

This section is applicable only if the K-Cube is to be used with a PC. If your application consists only of local operation via the K-Cube front face, proceed to Section 4.1.

When operating via a PC, direct user interaction with the strain gauge reader is accomplished through intuitive graphical user interface panels (GUIs), which expose all key operating parameters and modes. The user can select multiple panel views displaying different information about a particular hardware unit. The multitasking architecture ensures that the graphical control panels always remain live, showing all current hardware activity.

Caution

Some PCs may have been configured to restrict the users ability to load software, and on these systems the software may not install/run. If you are in any doubt about your rights to install/run software, please consult your system administrator before attempting to install.

If you experience any problems when installing software, contact Thorlabs on +44 (0)1353 654440 and ask for Technical Support.

DO NOT CONNECT THE CONTROLLER TO YOUR PC YET

- 1) Go to Services/Downloads at www.thorlabs.com and download the APT software.
- 2) Run the .exe file and follow the on-screen instructions.

3.2 Mechanical Installation

3.2.1 Environmental Conditions

Warning

Operation outside the following environmental limits may adversely affect operator safety.

Location	Indoor use only
Maximum altitude	2000 m
Temperature range	5°C to 40°C
Maximum Humidity	Less than 80% RH (non-condensing) at 31°C

To ensure reliable operation the unit should not be exposed to corrosive agents or excessive moisture, heat or dust.

If the unit has been stored at a low temperature or in an environment of high humidity, it must be allowed to reach ambient conditions before being powered up.

3.2.2 Mounting Options

The K-Cube Strain Gauge Reader is shipped with a baseplate, for use when fitting the unit to a breadboard, optical table or similar surface.

For multiple cube systems, a 3-channel and 6-channel K-Cube Controller Hub (KCH301 and KCH601).) are also available - see Section 2.2. for further details. Full instructions on the fitting and use of the controller hub are contained in the handbook available at www.thorlabs.com



Cautions



When siting the unit, it should be positioned so as not to impede the operation of the control panel buttons.

Ensure that proper airflow is maintained to the rear of the unit.

3.2.3 Using the Baseplate

The baseplate must be bolted to the worksurface before the K- Cube is fitted, as shown below. The K-cube is then located on two dowels in the baseplate and secured by two clips.

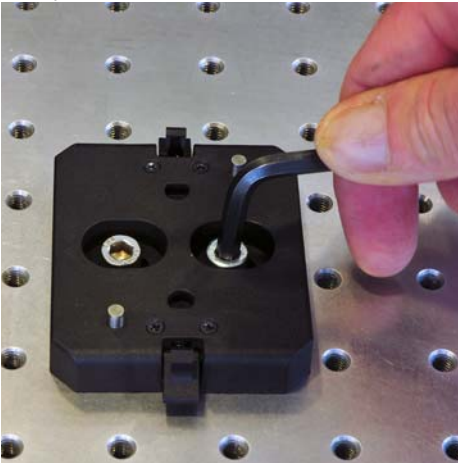


Fig. 3.1 Using The Baseplate

3.3 Electrical Installation

3.3.1 Connecting a Strain Gauge Signal

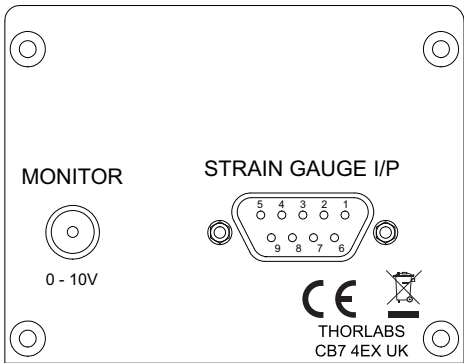


Fig. 3.2 Rear Panel Connections

STRAIN GAUGE I/P (9 Pin DIN connector) – This connector receives the signal from the strain gauge to provide the feedback for the control loop - see Section A.1. for pin out details. Thorlabs supply cabling to connect from this D-type connector to the full range of strain gauge equipped piezo actuators and force sensors.

MONITOR – This output can be connected to an oscilloscope, allowing the strain gauge output to be monitored.

Note

Thorlabs supply a variety of SMA to BNC and SMC to BNC adaptor and extension cables. Please see our catalog, or visit www.Thorlabs.com for further details.

3.3.2 Strain Gauge - General Information

Typically, the KSG101 is used with strain gauges in a full bridge configuration (Wheatstone). The resistance of each arm of the bridge should be around 350 Ω , since there is a trade-off between resolution and heating of the gauges through too much current. The gauge factor should be about '2'.

A typical bridge circuit and strain gauge layout is shown below.

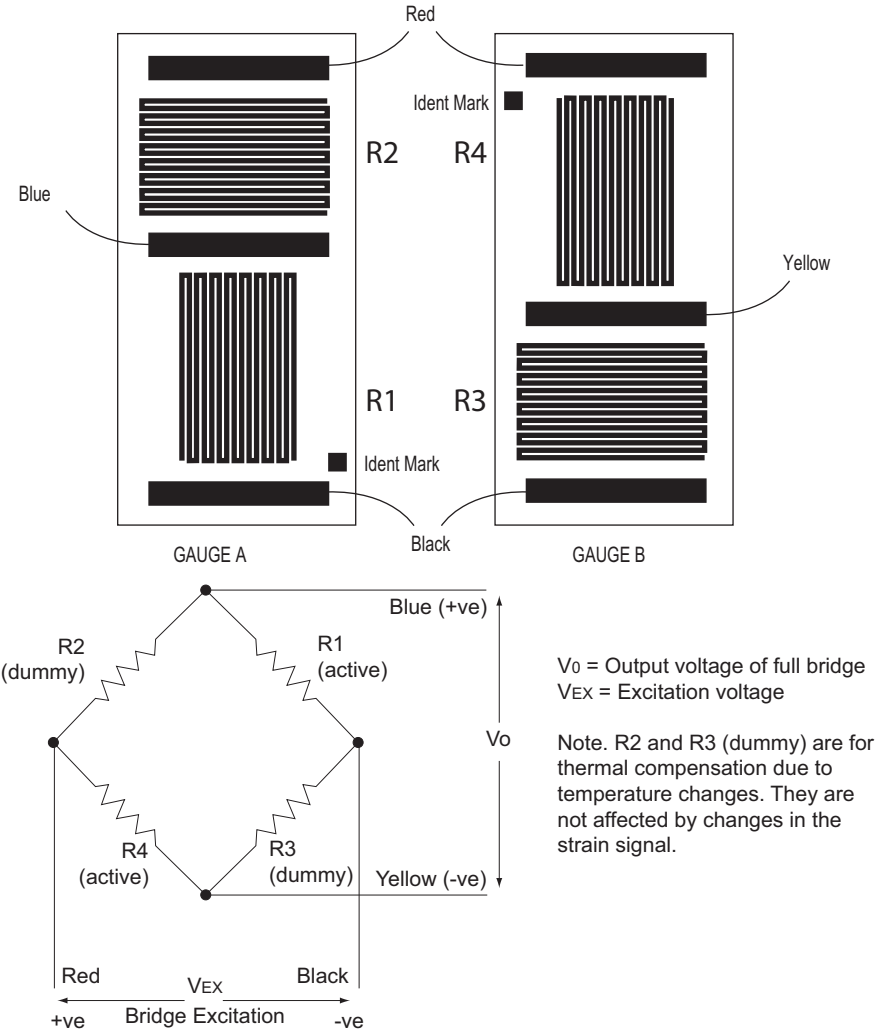



Fig. 3.3 Typical Circuit and Strain Gauge Layout


3.3.3 Supply Voltage and Current Requirements

Supply	Minimum	Maximum	Max Operating Current
+15V	+14.5V	+15.5V	220 mA
-15V	-14.5V	-15.5V	50 mA
+5V	+4.9V	+5.1V	350 mA


3.3.4 Front Panel




Warning



The unit must be connected only to a DC supply as detailed in Section 3.3.3. Connection to a supply of a different rating may cause damage to the unit and could result in injury to the operator.



Caution



Ensure the power switch on the front panel of the unit is switched off before connecting power to the K-Cube. Always power up the K-Cube unit by its ON switch. DO NOT connect the K-Cube unit to a 'live' external power supply. Doing so (i.e. “hot plugging”) carries the risk of PERMANENT damage to the unit. Similarly, to power down the unit, turn the power switch off before disconnecting the power supply.

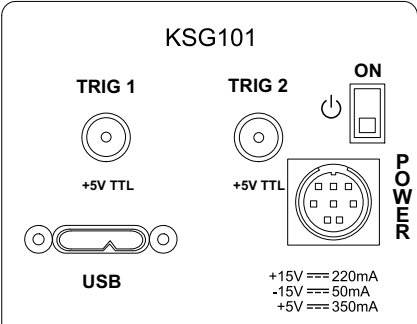


Fig. 3.4 Front Panel

POWER - Eight pin connector for connecting the unit to a regulated DC power supply of the rating detailed in Section 3.3.3.

USB - USB port for system communications.

Note

The USB cable length should be no more than 3 metres unless a powered USB hub is being used.

ON - Power ON/Standby switch - see Section 3.3.5.

TRIG 1 and TRIG 2 - SMA connectors for use with external trigger output signals (5V TTL levels). The function is set to trigger IN or OUT via the settings panel - see Section 6.2.2.

3.3.5 Powering Down The Unit



Warning



Always be use the front panel ON switch to power down the unit. When in the ON position, the unit is fully powered up. When the switch is turned to the Standby position, the unit initiates a controlled power down sequence, saving all user-adjustable parameters to non-volatile memory before turning off the power. For the first few seconds, the shutdown can be cancelled by turning the switch on again, in which case the unit will save the parameters but will remain powered up. In a powered down (Standby) state, the logic circuits are powered off and the unit will draw only a small quiescent current.

3.3.6 Connecting To A Standalone Power Supply



Warning



The unit must be connected only to a DC supply of the rating detailed in Section 3.3.3. Connection to a supply of a different rating may cause damage to the unit and could result in injury to the operator.



Caution



Ensure the power switch on the front panel of the unit is switched off before connecting power to the K-Cube. Always power up the K-Cube unit by its ON switch. DO NOT connect the K-Cube unit to a 'live' external power supply. Doing so (i.e. "hot plugging") carries the risk of PERMANENT damage to the unit. Similarly, to power down the unit, turn the power switch off before disconnecting the power supply.

- 1) Using the front panel connector as shown above, connect the unit to a regulated DC power supply of the rating detailed in Section 3.3.3.
- 2) Switch on the Power Supply unit, then switch on the KSG101.
- 3) The Version number of the embedded software is displayed for a few seconds. Thorlabs offers a compact, two-way power supply unit (TPS002), allowing up to two piezo driver K-Cubes to be powered from a single mains outlet. However, if an third party supply is to be used, see Appendix A.1 for power supply connector pin out details



Caution



If a third party power supply is used, ensure that the 3 supply voltages are turned on and off simultaneously. Applying the supply voltages with a large (more than 1 second) time delay between them can result in the strain gauge cube showing an incorrect reading during subsequent operation.

3.4 Connect The Hardware

- 1) Perform the mechanical installation as detailed in Section 3.2.
- 2) Install the APT Software.



Caution



During items (3) to (6) the instructions should be followed strictly in the order stated. Problems may occur if the process is not performed in the correct sequence.

- 3) Connect the Controller unit to your PC.
(**Note.** The USB cable should be no more than 3 metres in length. Communication lengths in excess of 3 metres can be achieved by using a powered USB hub).



Caution



During item (4) ensure the power supply unit is isolated from the mains before connecting to the K-Cube unit. Always power up the K-Cube unit by connecting its power supply to the mains. DO NOT connect the K-Cube unit to a 'live' external power supply. Doing so (i.e. "hot plugging") carries the risk of PERMANENT damage to the unit. Similarly, to power down the unit, disconnect the power supply from the mains before disconnecting the K-Cube unit.

- 4) Connect the strain gauge to the Controller unit - see Section 3.3.1.
- 5) Connect the Controller unit to the power supply - see Section 3.3.3.
- 6) Connect the PSU to the main supply.
- 7) Switch 'ON' the unit using the switch on the front panel.

The unit takes about 5 seconds from power application until warm up is finished, during which time the software revision is displayed. Windows™ should detect the new hardware. Wait while Windows™ installs the drivers for the new hardware..

Thorlabs KSG101
SwRev 010001

Stage Travel:
100 μm

Note

If any problems are encountered during the connection and power up process, power cycle the unit, which should clear the error.

3.5 Verifying Software Operation

The APT Software should be installed (Section 3.1.) and the hardware connected (Section 3.4.) before software operation can be verified.

⚠
Caution
⚠

In applications requiring the highest level of accuracy and repeatability, it is recommended that the controller unit is powered up approximately 30 minutes before use, in order to allow the internal temperature to stabilize.

- 1) Run the APTUser utility and check that the Graphical User Interface (GUI) panel appears and is active.



Fig. 3.5 Gui panel showing jog and ident buttons

- 2) Click the 'Ident' button. The digital display on the front panel of the associated controller flash for a short period. This is useful in multi-channel systems for identifying which channel is associated with which GUI.
 - 3) Click the Mode button on the GUI panel to change the display mode. The displayed position reading changes to a voltage or force value depending on the selection.
- Follow the tutorial described in Chapter 5 for further guidance on basic operation.

Note

The 'APT Config' utility can be used to set up simulated hardware configurations and place the APT Server into simulator mode. In this way it is possible to create any number and type of simulated (virtual) hardware units in order to emulate a set of real hardware. This is a particularly useful feature, designed as an aid to application program development and testing. Any number of 'virtual' control units are combined to build a model of the real system, which can then be used to test the application software offline.

If using real hardware, ensure that Simulator Mode is disabled. If using a simulated setup, enable Simulator Mode and set up a 'Simulated Configuration' - see Section 5.7. See also the *APTConfig* helpfile and the tutorial videos for detailed instructions.

Chapter 4 Standalone Operation

4.1 Introduction

The Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube has been designed specifically to operate with the extensive range of Thorlabs piezo-actuated feedback equipped opto-mechanical products. It is also compatible with Thorlabs force sensor products, FSC102 and FSC103 providing high-sensitivity force and touch probe sensing.

For non-PC use the unit is equipped with an OLED Display to indicate position, together with a settings menu to change the display units and set the zero position point. These parameters can also be set via the APT Server software - see Chapter 5. Parameters can be saved to the unit to allow “out of the box” operation with no further “set up” required.

The unit is also equipped with a SMA position monitor output generating an analogue voltage (0-10V) proportional to the strain gauge signal (position or force).

Furthermore, when operated together with the new K-Cube Piezo Driver unit (KPZ101) on the K-Cube Controller Hub, high precision closed loop positioning is possible using the complete range of feedback equipped piezo actuators available from Thorlabs.

The following brief overview explains how the front panel controls can be used to perform a typical series of operations.

In conjunction with this chapter, it also may be useful to read the background on piezo operation contained in Appendix E.



Caution



The unit will always output the strain gauge feedback signal on the external SMA connector on the rear panel. This means that the unit can be used out-of-the-box, without any software setup. However, before the unit is operated it is advisable to read the section on Setting The Position Sensor Zero (Section 5.4.) and either Using with a Piezo Controller (Section 5.5.) or Using with a Force Sensor (Section 5.6.).

4.2 Control Panel

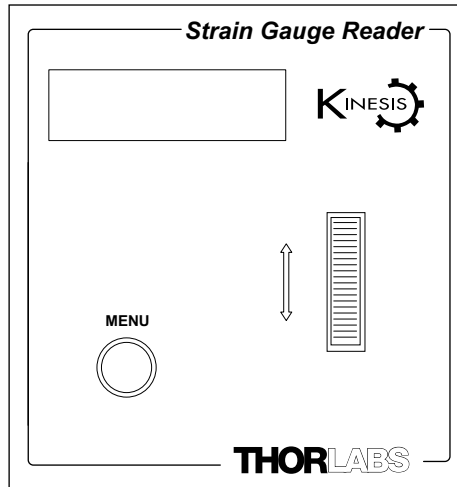


Fig. 4.1 Panel Controls and Indicators

Controls - These controls allow all motor moves to be initiated.

Wheel - The wheel/joystick is an infinite turn potentiometer, which is used to select different parameters and values in the settings menu - see Section 4.4.

Digital Display - The display shows the menu options and settings, accessed via the menu button - see Section 4.3. When the Ident button on the associated GUI panel is clicked, the display will flash for a short period.

MENU - used to access the settings menu - see Section 4.3.

4.2.1 Digital Display - Operating Mode

During normal operation, the top line of the digital display shows the current units applied, Voltage (V), Position (μm) or Force (N). The bottom line shows an indicator as to whether the unit has been zeroed (Z = Zeroed, N = Not Zeroed), the max travel of the piezo actuator connected, and the signal routing for the KCHxxx hub (Ch:1 or Ch:2)..

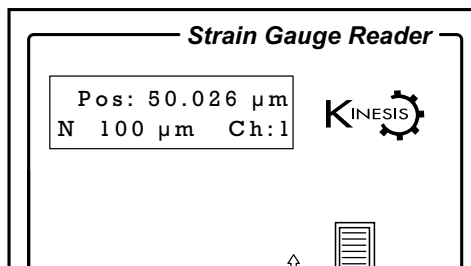


Fig. 4.2 Digital Display - Normal Operation

4.3 Settings Menu

4.3.1 Menu Overview

Press the MENU button

Use the wheel to scroll through the menu options
Press the MENU button to enter a particular option

Zeroing the Position Sensor - see Section 4.3.2.

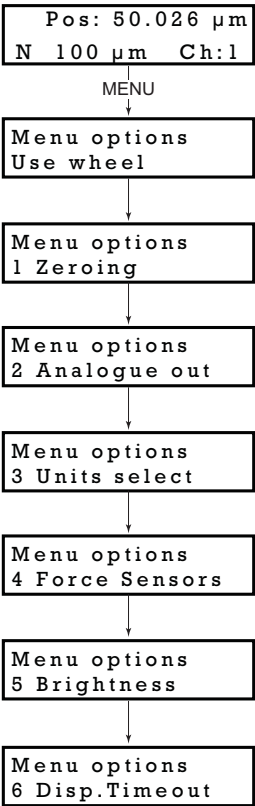
Set the KCHx01 hub comms channel - see Section 4.3.3.

Set the display units - see Section 4.3.4.

Set the type of force sensor used - see Section 4.3.5.

Set the display brightness - see Section 4.3.6.

Set the display timeout period - see Section 4.3.7.



4.3.2 Menu Option - Zeroing

The strain gauge or force sensor connected to the K-Cube may give a small signal when the device is at zero position with zero volts applied (due to limitations in manufacture, or temperature fluctuations). This 'offset' signal must be removed before the position attained by a specific applied voltage and the position attained by a corresponding specified distance can be rationalized.

Each device has a unique offset value. Therefore the offset should be adjusted whenever a device is replaced. Temperature and prolonged use can affect the performance of the device and therefore the offset value.

Each time the Strain Gauge K-Cube is powered up, the display will flash a default reading until the position sensor is zeroed.

```
Pos: 50.026 µm
N 100 µm Ch:2
```

MENU

```
Menu options
Use wheel
```

```
Menu options
1 Zeroing
```

```
Zeroing
.....
```

```
Pos: 50.026 µm
Z 100 µm Ch:2
```

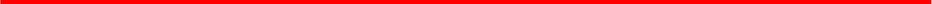
To zero the position sensor:

Press the MENU button, then use the wheel to scroll through the menu options.

Press the MENU button to enter the 1 Zeroing option.

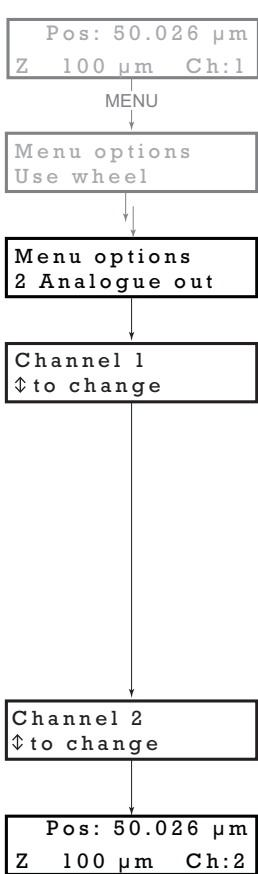
The unit will start the zeroing procedure automatically.

When zeroing is complete, the unit reverts to the normal operating display, and a 'Z' is shown on the bottom line to indicate that the unit has been zeroed.



4.3.3 Menu Option - Analogue Out

When the K-Cube Strain Gauge Reader is used in conjunction with the K-Cube Piezo Driver unit (KPZ101) on the K-Cube Controller Hub, high precision closed loop operation is possible using the complete range of feedback equipped piezo actuators available from Thorlabs. This option allows the communication channel of the hub to be selected.



t

Press the MENU button, then use the wheel to scroll through the menu options.

Press the MENU button to enter the 2 Analogue out option.

The display shows the current output setting.

If *Channel 1* is selected, the feedback signal runs through all the bays - see Fig. 6.3. This setting is useful in applications where a master cube is controlling several slave cubes

If *Channel 2* is selected, the feedback signals run between adjacent pairs of K-Cube bays (i.e. 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6) - see Fig. 6.3. This setting is useful when several pairs of cubes are being used on the same hub.

Note. *The rear panel MONITOR SMA connector is always active and cannot be turned off.*

Use the wheel to change to the required option.

Press the MENU button to save the setting and return to the operating screen. The selected option is displayed on the bottom line at the right hand side (Ch:1 or Ch:2).

4.3.4 Menu Option - Units Select

The display can be set to show the position (in microns) of the strain gauge, the voltage applied to the strain gauge, or the force (in N) detected.

```
Pos: 50.026 µm
Z 100 µm Ch:2
```

MENU

```
Menu options
Use wheel
```

Press the MENU button, then use the wheel to scroll through the menu options.

```
Menu options
3 Units select
```

Press the MENU button to enter the 3 Units select option.

```
Position (µm)
↓ to change
```

Use the wheel to scroll through the options.

```
Voltage (V)
↓ to change
```

POSITION - This mode displays the position of the sensor in μm .

```
Force (N)
↓ to change
```

VOLTAGE - This mode displays a voltage proportional to the signal measured by the strain gauge, range 0 to 10V (10V is full scale deflection).

FORCE - In this mode, the strain gauge sensor signal is scaled to a force in N. Full scale deflection is set in the Setting panel - see Section 6.2.

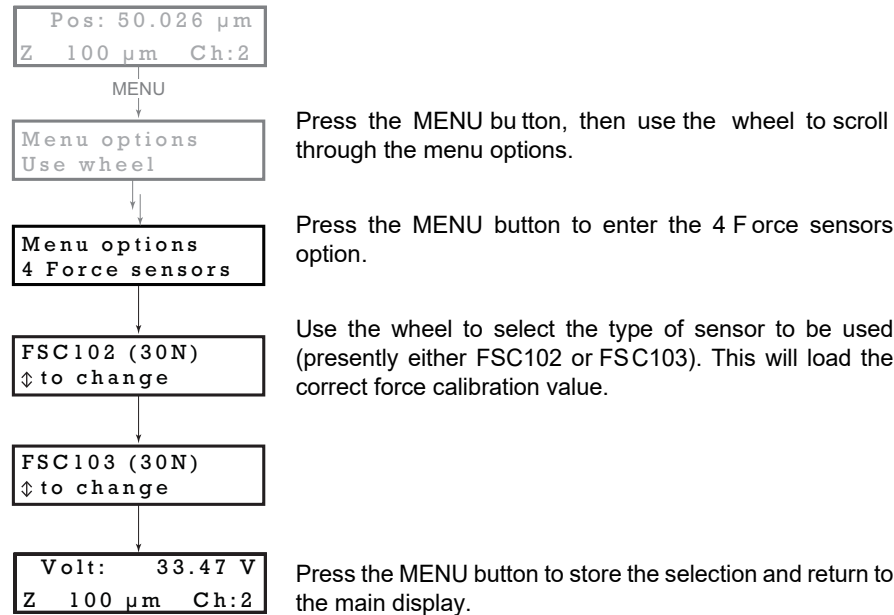
See Section 4.3.5. for instructions on the nulling the position sensor.

```
Volt: 33.47 V
Z 100 µm Ch:2
```

Press the MENU button to store the selection and return to the main display.

4.3.5 Menu Option - Force Sensors

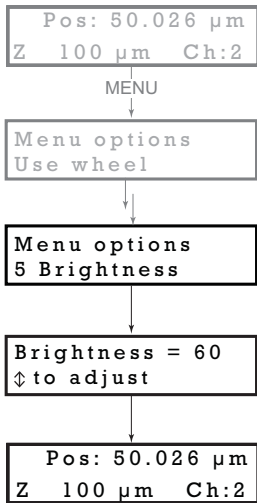
The Strain Gauge Reader unit can also be used to control a force sensor.



For best performance, wait approximately 30 mins for the unit to thermally stabilize to the environment. Failure to observe this delay could result in inaccurate readings.

The force sensor may display an offset when no contact is apparent. This latent offset must be removed, such that the sensor only detects a force when contact is experienced. To remove the offset proceed as follows.

- 1) Ensure that the force sensor is correctly orientated in the axis it is to be used.
- 2) Ensure that the force sensor is not in contact with any other equipment.
- 3) Null the force sensor - see Section 4.3.2.
- 4) The system is now ready for use.



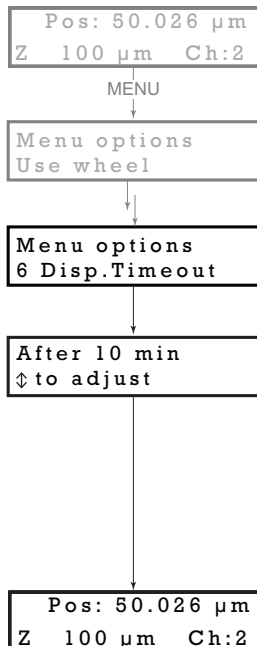
4.3.6 Menu Option - Brightness

In certain applications, it may be necessary to adjust the brightness of the LED display. The brightness is set as a value from 0 (Off) to 100 (brightest). The display can be turned off completely by entering a setting of zero, however, pressing the MENU button on the top panel will temporarily illuminate the display at its lowest brightness setting to allow adjustments. When the display returns to its default operating display mode, it will turn off again.

Press the MENU button, then use the wheel to scroll through the menu options.

Press the MENU button to enter the 9 Brightness option.

Use the wheel to adjust the brightness, then press the MENU button to store the selection and return to the main display.



4.3.7 Menu Option - Disp.Timeout

'Burn In' of the display can occur if it remains static for a long time. To prevent this, the display is automatically dimmed after a specified time interval.

Press the MENU button, then use the wheel to scroll through the menu options.

Press the MENU button to enter the Disp.Timeout option.

The time out interval is specified in minutes in the range 1 to 480. The adjustment is done in steps of 1 minute if the timeout is between 1 to 10 minutes, 10 minute steps between 10 minutes and 1 hour, and 30 minute steps above, up to a maximum of 480 minutes. After 480 minutes there is an option for Never.

The dim level can only be adjusted via the Settings panel - see Section 6.2.2.

Press the MENU button to store the selection and return to the main display.

Chapter 5 Operation - Tutorial

5.1 Introduction

The following brief tutorial guides the user through a typical series of actions and parameter adjustments performed using the PC based APT software. It assumes that the unit is electrically connected as shown in Section 3.3. and that the APT Software is already installed - see Section 3.1. It also assumes that a Strain Gauge signal is connected to the 'STRAIN GAUGE I/P' connector on the rear panel.

5.2 Using the APT User Utility

The APT User.exe application allows the user to interact with any number of APT hardware control units connected to the PC USB Bus (or simulated via the APTConfig utility). This program allows multiple graphical instrument panels to be displayed so that multiple APT units can be controlled. All basic operating parameters can be set through this program, and all basic operations (such as monitoring the Strain Gauge reading) can be initiated. Hardware configurations and parameter settings can be saved to a file, which simplifies system set up whenever APT User is run up. This tutorial shows how the APTUser application provides all of the functionality necessary to operate the APT hardware.

- 1) Run the APT User program - Start/All Programs/Thorlabs/APT User/APT User. The APT server registers automatically the units connected on the USB bus and displays the associated GUI panels as shown in Fig. 5.1.



Fig. 5.1 Typical APT User Screen

2) The GUI panel for the Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube is displayed - see Fig. 5.2.



Fig. 5.2 Strain Gauge Reader Software GUI

The APT User utility will be used throughout the rest of this tutorial to interface with the Strain Gauge Reader.

5.3 Closed Loop Piezo Operation

The following procedures explain the basic operation of the Piezo Driver K-Cube when used in conjunction with a Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube. Section 5.3.1. explains operation on the KCHx01 USB Controller hub, while Section 5.3.2. explains use off the hub, with external wiring via the rear panel connections.

5.3.1 Electrical Connections and Software Settings - Hub Operation

The following procedure describes a typical set up, when a KPZ101 piezo driver cube and a KSG101 Strain Gauge Reader are used on the KCHx01 controller hub to drive a piezo actuated stage - see Fig. 5.3 for a general system schematic diagram.

The K-Cube positions on the hub and associated parameter settings described are by no means the only possible options. For further information, see Section 6.2.1..

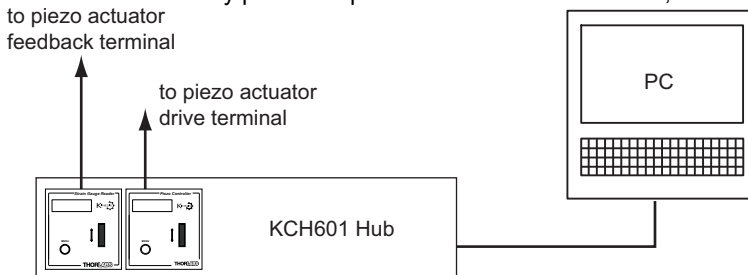


Fig. 5.3 Typical System Set Up - Hub Operation

- 1) Perform the mechanical installation as detailed in Section 3.2. of this manual and also in the manual for the K-Cube Piezo controller.
- 2) Install the K-Cube units onto the controller hub. Fit the Piezo unit in bay 1, and the Strain Gauge Reader in bay 2 as shown in Fig. 5.3.
- 3) Connect the HV OUT terminal on the rear of the Piezo driver to the associated piezo actuator.
- 4) Connect the STRAIN GAUGE I/P terminal on the rear panel of the strain gauge unit to the Feedback connector on the piezo actuator.
- 5) Connect the controller hub to the power supply - see Section 3.3.3.
- 6) Connect the PSU to the main supply and switch 'ON'. The version number of the embedded software is displayed on the Piezo unit during boot up. The software version is useful when requesting technical support. The ident number of the associated K-Cube bay on the hub is also displayed.
- 7) Connect the controller hub to your PC.

Note

The USB cable should be no more than 3 metres in length. Communication lengths in excess of 3 metres can be achieved by using a powered USB hub).

- 8) Windows™ should detect the new hardware. Wait while Windows™ installs the drivers for the new hardware.
- 9) Run the APTUser utility
Start/All Programs/Thorlabs/APT/APT User.

- 10) Click the 'Settings' button on GUI of the Piezo Driver to display the Settings panel (shown below).

Note

To identify the piezo unit associated with the GUI panel, click the 'Ident' button; the display on the panel of the associated controller flashes for a short period.

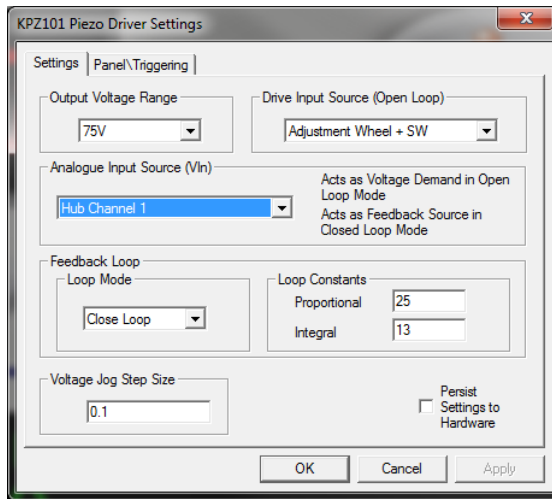


Fig. 5.4 Piezo Driver Settings

- 11) Make the following parameter settings, as shown in Fig. 5.4
Output Voltage Range - Set the corresponding voltage for the piezo being driven, 75V, 100V or 150V.
Drive Input Source (Open Loop) - Select *Adjustment Wheel + SW*
Analogue Input Source (EXT IN) - Select *Hub Channel 1*
Feedback Loop Mode - Select *Closed Loop*
- 12) If desired, click the 'Persist Settings To Hardware' box. These settings will then be loaded on each power up cycle.
- 13) Click 'OK' to save the settings.
- 14) Click the 'Settings' button on GUI of the Strain Gauge Reader fitted in bay 2, to display the Settings panel (shown below).

Note

To identify the Strain Gauge unit associated with a GUI panel, click the 'Ident' button on the GUI panel; the display on the panel of the associated controller flashes for a short period.

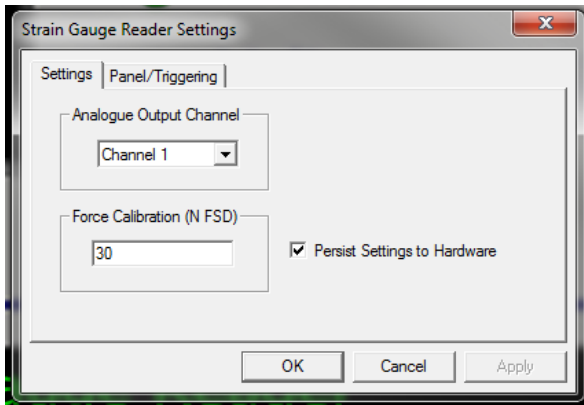


Fig. 5.5 Strain Gauge Reader Settings

- 15) Set the *Analogue Output Channel* parameter to *Channel 1*.
- 16) If desired, click the 'Persist Settings To Hardware' box. These settings will then be loaded on each power up cycle
- 17) Click 'OK to save the settings.
- 18) Refer to Section 5.4. for instructions on setting the position sensor zero value.

5.3.2 Electrical Connections and Software Settings - Off Hub (Hard Wired) Operation

The following procedure describes a typical set up, when a KPZ101 piezo driver cube and a KSG101 Strain Gauge Reader are used to control a piezo actuated stage - see Fig. 5.6 for a general system schematic diagram..

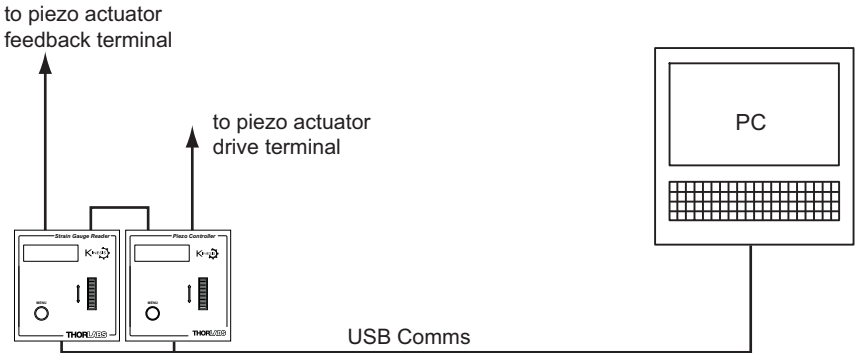


Fig. 5.6 Typical System Set Up - Off Hub (Hard Wired) Operation

- 1) Perform the mechanical installation as detailed in Section 3.2. of this manual and also in the manual for the K-Cube Piezo controller.
- 2) Connect the MONITOR terminal on the rear panel of the strain gauge unit to the EXT IN terminal on the rear panel of the piezo unit.
- 3) Connect the STRAIN GAUGE I/P terminal on the rear panel of the strain gauge unit to the Feedback connector on the piezo actuator.
- 4) Connect the HV OUT terminal on the rear of the Piezo driver to the associated piezo actuator.
- 5) Connect the units to their power supplies - see Section 3.3.6. of this manual and also the manual supplied with the Piezo driver.
- 6) Connect the PSU to the main supply and switch 'ON'. The version number of the embedded software is displayed on the Piezo unit during boot up. The software version is useful when requesting technical support.
- 7) Connect each controller unit to your PC.

Note

The USB cable should be no more than 3 metres in length. Communication lengths in excess of 3 metres can be achieved by using a powered USB hub).

- 8) Windows™ should detect the new hardware. Wait while Windows™ installs the drivers for the new hardware - see the Getting Started guide for more information.
- 9) Run the APTUser utility
Start/All Programs/Thorlabs/APT/APT User.

- 10) Click the 'Settings' button on the GUI panel of the Pie zo Driver to di splay the Settings panel (shown below).

Note

To identify the piezo unit associated with a GUI panel, click the 'Ident' button; the display on the panel of the associated controller flashes for a short period.

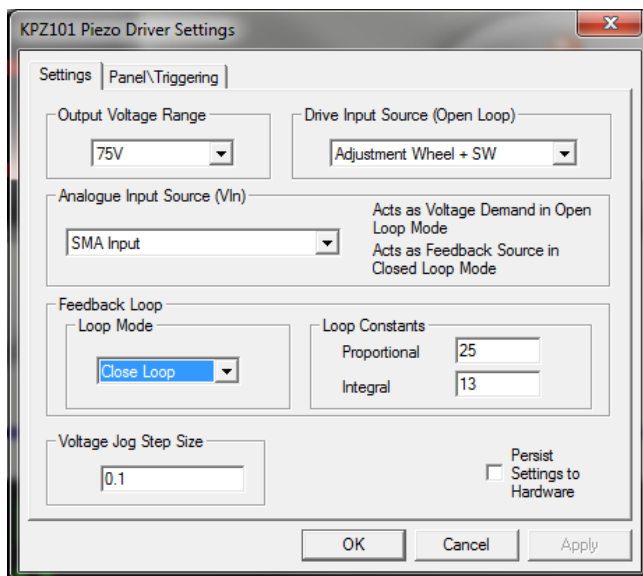


Fig. 5.7 Piezo Driver Settings

- 11) Make the following parameter settings, as shown in Fig. 5.7
- Output Voltage Range* - Set the corresponding voltage for the piezo being driven, 75V, 100V or 150V.
 - Drive Input Source (Open Loop)* - Select *Adjustment Wheel + SW*
 - Analogue Input Source (Vin)* - Select *SMA Input*
 - Feedback Loop Mode* - Select *Closed Loop*

Note

There is no need to set the Strain Gauge Reader Analogue Input Source, because the unit always outputs via the rear panel SMA connector.

- 12) If desired, click the 'Persist Settings To Hardware' box. These settings will then be loaded on each power up cycle
- 13) Click 'OK' to save the settings.
- 14) Refer to Section 5.4. for instructions on setting the position sensor zero value.

5.4 Setting the Position Sensor Zero

The strain gauge or force sensor connected to the K-Cube may give a small signal when the device is at zero position with zero volts applied (due to limitations in manufacture, or temperature fluctuations). This 'offset' signal must be removed before the position attained by a specific applied voltage and the position attained by a corresponding specified distance can be rationalized.

Each device has a unique offset value. Therefore the offset should be adjusted whenever a device is replaced. Temperature and prolonged use can affect the performance of the device and therefore the offset value.

Each time the Strain Gauge K-Cube is powered up, the display will flash a default reading until the position sensor is zeroed.

To zero the position sensor:

- 1) If a Piezo Driver K-Cube is used in conjunction with the Strain Gauge Reader, ensure that the piezo drive output is zero. On the Piezo K-Cube control panel, turn the OUTPUT control to minimum and remove any input on the rear panel EXT IN connector.
- 2) Either select zeroing in the settings menu of the Strain Gauge K-Cube, click the 'Zero' button in the Strain Gauge K-Cube GUI panel, or call the 'SG_ZeroPosition' method in the application software.

During the nulling process, display on the Strain Gauge K-Cube shows 'Zeroing.....'. Once zeroing is complete, the display reverts to the normal operating screen.

5.5 Using The Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube with a Piezo Driver K-Cube

The following procedure explains the basic operation of the Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube when used in conjunction with a Piezo Driver K-Cube (KPZ101). It is assumed that the system is already connected and powered up, and that the various parameter settings have been made, as described in Section 5.3.1. and Section 5.3.2.

Note

The piezo position can be adjusted only when a Strain Gauge K-Cube (KSG101) is connected and when operating in ‘Closed Loop’ mode. The position of the actuator is relative to the minimum position set for the arrangement using the ‘Null’ facility, see Section 5.4. The extension of the actuator is displayed on the Strain Gauge K-Cube as a position in microns.

- 1) Zero the position sensor - see Section 5.4.
- 2) Set the Strain Gauge K-Cube to ‘Position’ mode - see Section 4.3.4.
- 3) Enable the output of the piezo K-Cube and set the wheel mode to Voltage Adjust.
- 4) Rotate the wheel on the Piezo Drive K-Cube upwards. Notice how the voltage display increments to show the increasing voltage applied to the piezo. The Position display on the Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube shows a proportional increase in position (in microns).
- 5) Rotate the wheel on the Piezo Drive K-Cube downwards. Notice how the voltage display decrements to show the decreasing voltage applied to the piezo. The Position display on the Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube shows a proportional decrease in position (in microns).

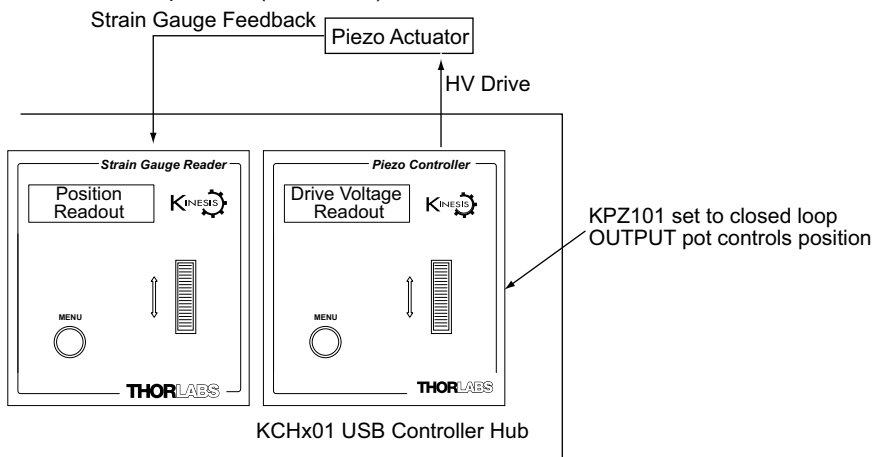


Fig. 5.8 Schematic Drawing of Piezo and Strain Gauge K-Cube Arrangement

5.6 Using the Controller with a Force Sensor

The Strain Gauge Reader unit can also be used to control a force sensor.

- 1) In the GUI panel, click the 'Mode' button to select the Force mode.

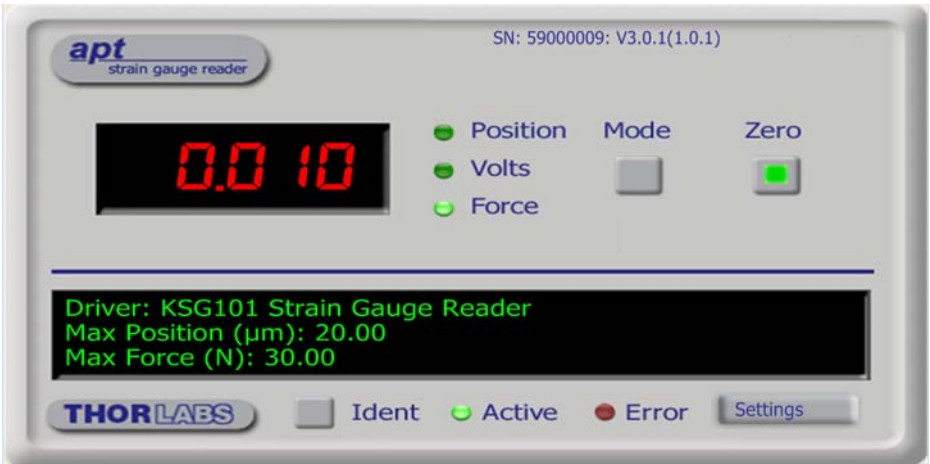
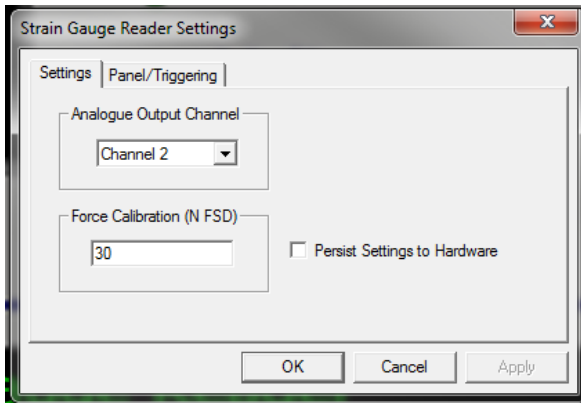


Fig. 5.9 Strain Gauge settings panel

- 2) Click the 'Settings' button to display the settings panel.



- 3) In the 'Force Calibration (N FSD)' field, enter the calibration factor for the type of force sensor being used. For example, if set to 20, the GUI digital display shows a detected force of 0 to 20N. The default setting for this parameter is 30, to be compatible with our FSC102 force sensor, which is specified to read forces up to 30N.

- 4) For best performance, wait approximately 30 mins for the unit to thermally stabilize to the environment. Failure to observe this delay could result in inaccurate readings.

The force sensor may display an offset when no contact is apparent. This latent offset must be removed, such that the sensor only detects a force when contact is experienced. To remove the offset proceed as follows.

- 5) Ensure that the force sensor is correctly orientated in the axis it is to be used.
- 6) Ensure that the force sensor is not in contact with any other equipment.
- 7) Null the force sensor - see Section 5.4.
- 8) The system is now ready for use.

5.7 Creating a Simulated Configuration Using APT Config

The 'APT Config' utility can be used to set up simulated hardware configurations and place the APT Server into simulator mode. In this way it is possible to create any number and type of simulated (virtual) hardware units in order to emulate a set of real hardware. This is a particularly useful feature, designed as an aid learning how to use the APT software and as an aid to developing custom software applications 'offline'.

Any number of 'virtual' control units can be combined to emulate a collection of physical hardware units. For example, an application program can be written, then tested and debugged remotely, before running with the hardware.

To create a simulated configuration proceed as follows:

- 1) Run the APT Config utility - Start/All Programs/Thorlabs/APT/APT Config.
- 2) Click the 'Simulator Configuration' tab.

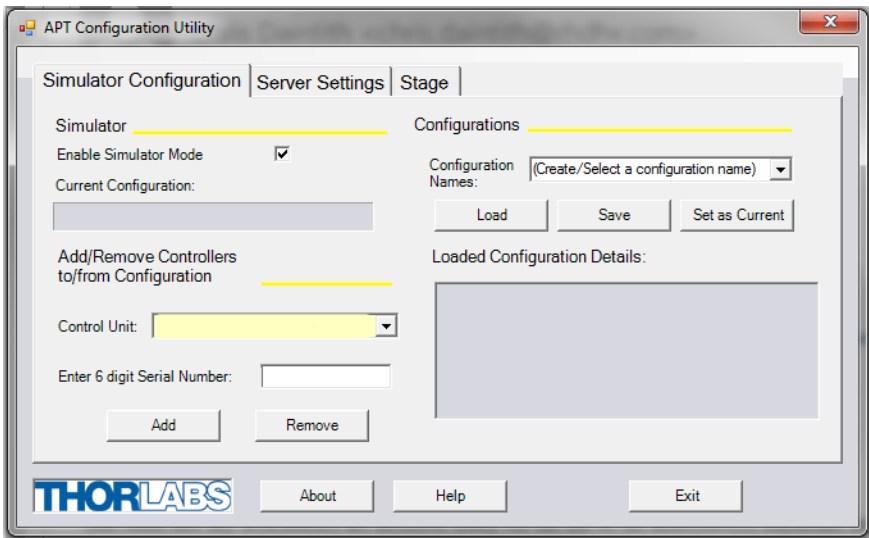
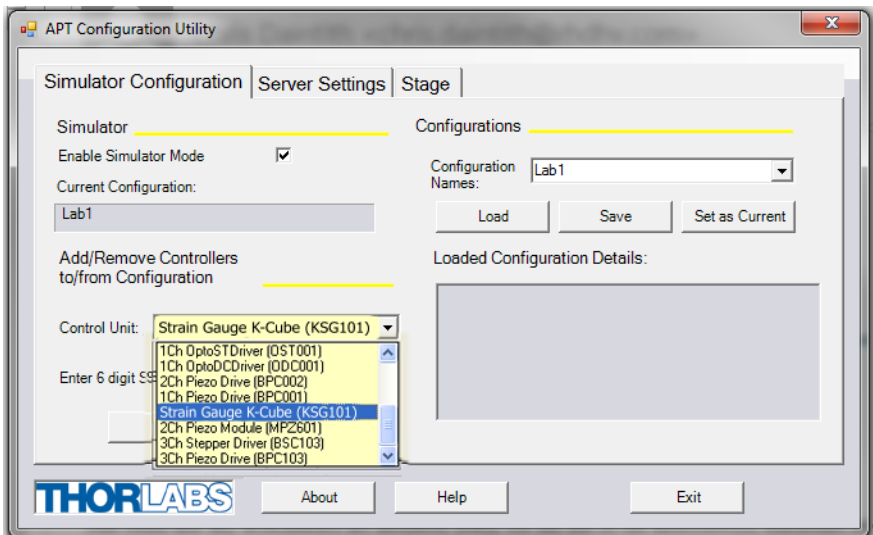


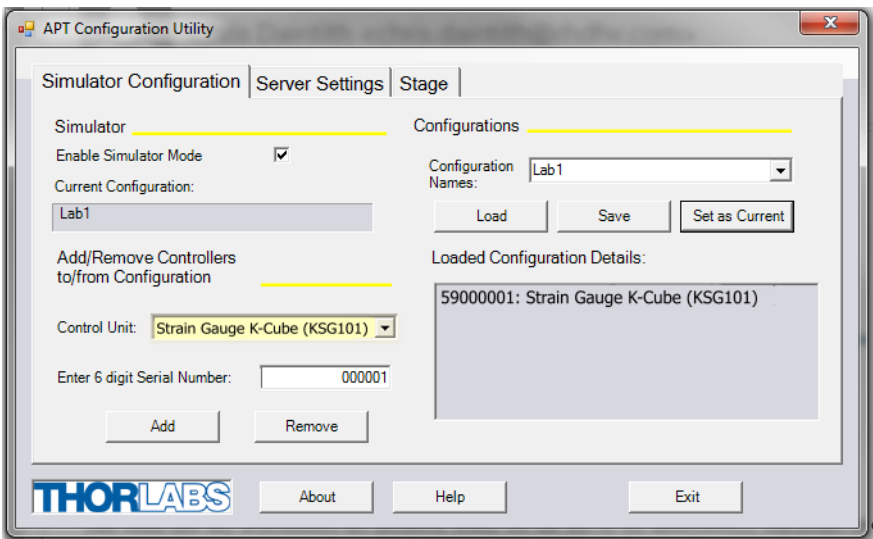
Fig. 5.10 APT Configuration Utility - Simulator Configuration Tab

- 3) Enter 'LAB1' in the Configuration Names field.

- 4) In the 'Simulator' field, check the 'Enable Simulator Mode' box. The name of the most recently used configuration file is displayed in the 'Current Configuration' window.



- 5) In the 'Control Unit' field, select '1 Ch Strain Gauge K-Cube (KSG101)'.



- 6) Enter a 6 digit serial number.

Note

Each physical APT hardware unit is factory programmed with a unique 8 digit serial number. In order to simulate a set of 'real' hardware the Config utility allows an 8 digit serial number to be associated with each simulated unit. It is good practice when creating simulated configurations for software development purposes to use the same serial numbers as any real hardware units that will be used. Although serial numbers are 8 digits (as displayed in the 'Load Configuration Details' window), the first two digits are added automatically and identify the type of control unit.

The prefixed digits relating to the KSG101 K-Cube Strain Gauge Reader are:

59xxxxxx - 1 Ch Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube

- 7) Click the 'Add' button.
- 8) Repeat items (1) to (7) as required. (A unit can be removed from the configuration by selecting it in the 'Loaded Configuration Details' window and clicking the 'Remove' button or by right clicking it and selecting the 'Remove' option from the pop up window).
- 9) Enter a name into the 'Configuration Names' field.
- 10) Click 'Save'.
- 11) Click 'Set As Current' to use the configuration.

Chapter 6 Software Reference

6.1 GUI Panel

The following screen shot shows the graphical user interface (GUI) displayed when accessing the controller using the APTUser utility.



Fig. 6.1 KSG101 Strain Gauge Reader Software GUI

Note

The serial number of the KSG101 unit associated with the GUI panel, the APT server version number, and the version number (in brackets) of the embedded software running on the unit, are displayed in the top right hand corner. This information should always be provided when requesting customer support.

Position, Volts and Force LEDs - These LEDs show the current display mode setting. This setting can be stored (persisted) within the unit itself, such that when the unit is next powered up these settings are applied automatically - see *Persist Settings To Hardware* in Section 6.2.1.

Mode Button - push button control used to toggle the display between Position, Volts and Force modes. The corresponding LED is lit when selected.

Zero - used to zero the position sensor (strain gauge) - see Section 5.4. Setting The Position Sensor Zero.

Digital display - shows the position (in microns) of the strain gauge, the voltage applied to the strain gauge, or the force (in N) detected.

Settings display - shows the name of the associated K-Cube together with the following user specified settings:

Max Position (μm) - the maximum position (range of travel) in microns, of the associated piezo actuator

Max Force (N) - the maximum force detected (in Newtons),

Settings button - Displays the 'Settings' panel, which allows the parameters to be set - see Section 6.2.

Ident - when this button is pressed, the OLED display of the associated controller K-Cube will flash for a short period.

Active - lit when the unit is operating normally and no error condition exists.

Error - lit when a fault condition occurs, e.g. the strain gauge unit is powered up without a feedback input connected.

6.2 Settings Panel

When the 'Settings' button on the GUI panel is clicked, the 'Settings' window is displayed. This panel allows data such as Display Intensity and Force Calibration factors to be entered. Note that all of these parameters have programmable equivalents accessible through the ActiveX methods and properties on this Control (refer to the *Programming Guide* in the *APTServer helpfile* (accessed via the Windows 'Start' menu) for further details and to Section 2.3.4. for an overview of the APT ActiveX controls).

6.2.1 Settings Tab.

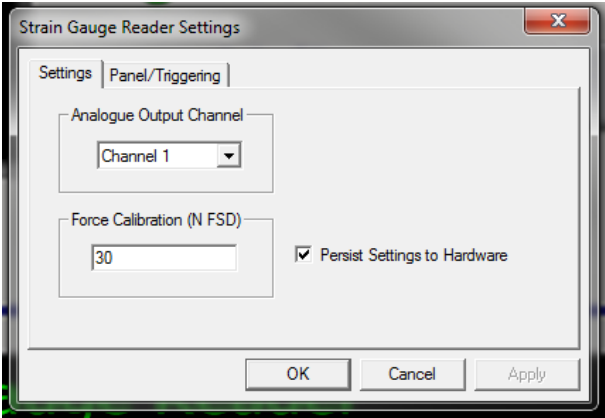


Fig. 6.2 Strain Gauge Reader Settings panel

Analogue Output Channel - When the K-Cu be Strain Gauge Reader is used in conjunction with the K-Cube Piezo Driver unit (KPZ101) on the K-Cube Controller Hub (TCH002), high precision closed loop operation is possible using the complete range of feedback equipped piezo actuators available from Thorlabs.

If *Channel 1* is selected, the feedback signal runs through all the bays - see Fig. 6.3. This setting is useful in applications where a master cube is controlling several slave cubes

If *Channel 2* is selected, the feedback signals run between adjacent pairs of K-Cube bays (i.e. 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6) - see Fig. 6.3. This setting is useful when several pairs of cubes are being used on the same hub.

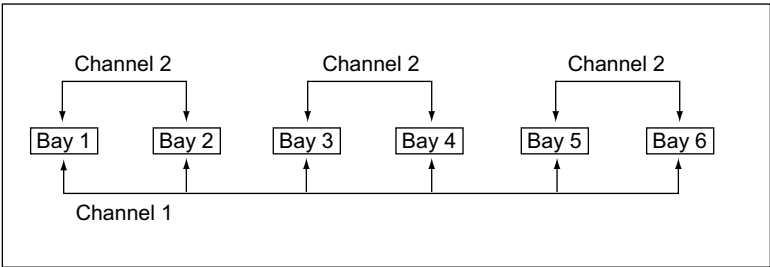


Fig. 6.3 Controller Hub Feedback Channels (KCH601 shown)

Only certain K-Cube arrangements allow the system to function correctly. Furthermore, the setting for the *Analogue Input Source (EXT IN)* parameter in the settings panel, depends on the bays in which the K-Cube units are fitted. The various

bay options, and their associated *Analogue Input Source (EXT IN)* settings are described in Fig. 6.4.



Caution



In general, when members of the K-Cube family are on the KCHx01 controller hub, using the signal channels (Channel 1 and Channel 2), users must ensure that:

**The individual cubes are set up to use the intended signal channel.
Only one cube is driving the intended signal channel.**

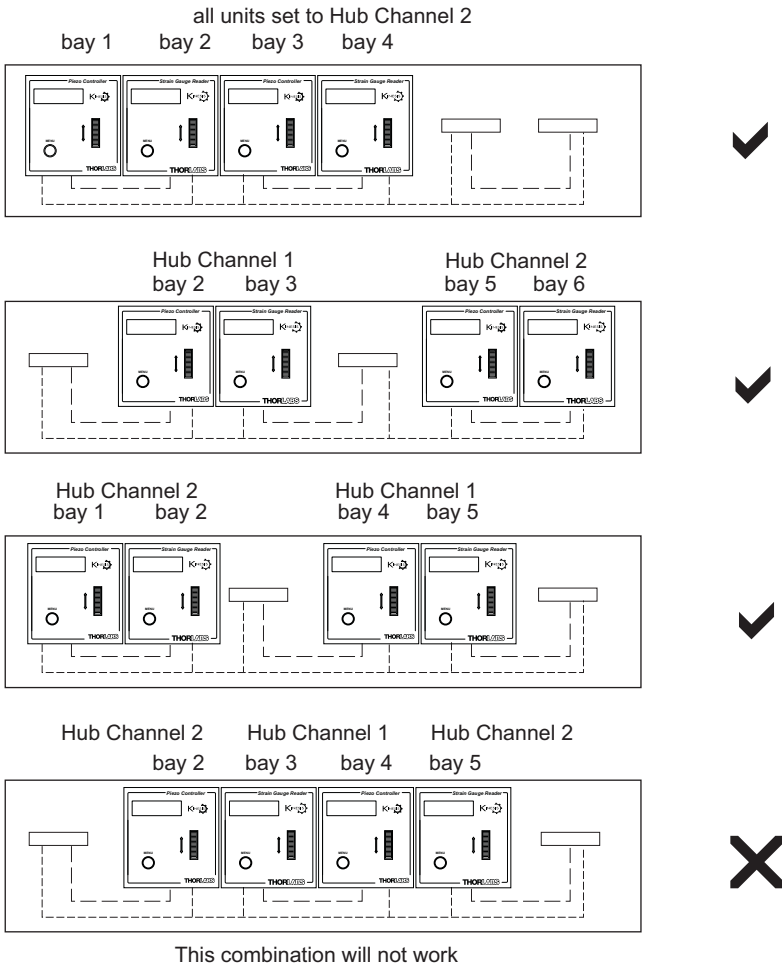


Fig. 6.4 Bay Options and Associated Analog Input Source Settings

Force Calibration (N FSD) - The Force Sensor connected to the Strain Gauge K-Cube has a specific maximum operating force.

Enter the calibration factor for the type of force sensor being used. For example, if set to 1, the GUI digital display shows a detected force of 0 to 1. The default setting for this parameter is 30, to be compatible with our FSC102 force sensor, which is specified to read forces up to 30N.

Persist Settings to Hardware - Many of the parameters that can be set for the Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube can be stored (persisted) within the unit itself, such that when the unit is next powered up these settings are applied automatically. This is particularly important when the unit is being used manually in the absence of a PC and USB link. The *Analogue Input Channel*, *Force Calibration* and *Display Intensity* parameters are settings that can be altered and then persisted in the driver for use in absence of a PC. The Display Mode (Position, Voltage or Force) selected via the GUI panel is also persisted when the 'Persist Settings To Hardware' checkbox is used.

When the 'Persist Settings to Hardware' checkbox is used the unit will also persist the display mode selected on the main GUI panel (i.e. Position, Volts or Force). This is useful if for example the unit is being used as a force sensor - i.e. if Force display mode is persisted then this mode is the default when the unit next powers up.

To save the settings to hardware, check the 'Persist Settings to Hardware' checkbox before clicking the 'OK button'.

6.2.2 Panel/Triggering tab

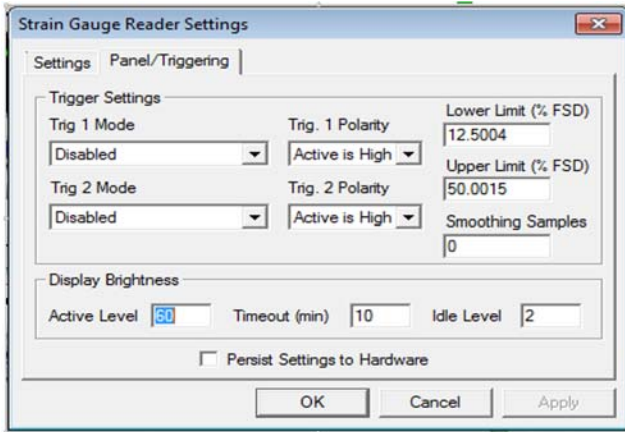


Fig. 6.5 Panel/Triggering tab

Triggering Introduction

The K-Cube strain gauge reader has two bidirectional trigger ports (TRIG1 and TRIG2) that can be used as a general purpose digital input/output, or can be configured to output a logic level to control external equipment.

When the port is used as an output it provides a push-pull drive of 5 Volts, with the maximum current limited to approximately 8 mA. The current limit prevents damage when the output is accidentally shorted to ground or driven to the opposite logic state by external circuitry. The active logic state can be selected High or Low to suit the requirements of the application.



Warning



Do not drive the TRIG ports from any voltage source that can produce an output in excess of the normal 0 to 5 Volt logic level range.. In any case the voltage at the TRIG ports must be limited to -0.25 to +5.25 Volts.

The Trigger can be used to monitor a specific area, and output a signal when the devices moves away from this region of interest. This signal can then be used to give a warning by sounding a bell or turning on an LED. The triggers are set using a combination of the Trig 1 Mode and Trig 2 Mode parameters, and the Lower and Upper Limit parameters.

For example, consider the situation in Fig. 6.6, where a device is moving between two limits, and the trigger modes are set as shown.

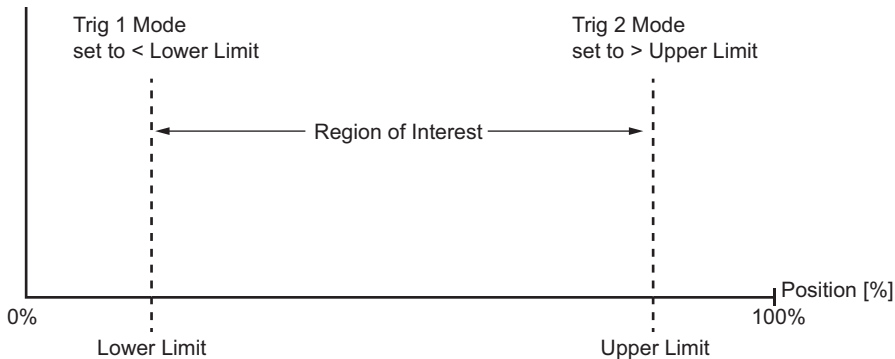


Fig. 6.6 Trigger Example

While the device is within the region of interest the triggers are inactive. If the device position was to move beyond the lower limit, Trig 1 would become active. Similarly, if the device were to move beyond the upper limit, Trig 2 would become active.

Trigger Settings

The mode for each trigger port is set in the *Trig 1 Mode* and *Trig 2 Mode* parameters as follows:

Disabled - The trigger IO is disabled

Digital Input - General purpose logic input (read through status bits using the `LLGetStatusBits` method).

Digital Output - General purpose logic output (set using the `LLSetGetDigOPs` method).

Trig Out : <Lower Limit - The trigger is active when the strain gauge input is less than the lower limit.

Trig Out : >Lower Limit - The trigger is active when the strain gauge input is greater than the lower limit.

Trig Out : <Upper Limit - The trigger is active when the strain gauge input is less than the upper limit.

Trig Out : >Upper Limit - The trigger is active when the strain gauge input is greater than the upper limit.

Trig Out : Between Limits - The trigger is active when the strain gauge input is between the two limits.

Trig Out : Outside Limits - The trigger is active when the strain gauge input is outside either of the two limits.

Triggering Polarity

The polarity of the trigger pulse is specified in the *Trig. 1 Polarity* and *Trig 2 Polarity* parameters as follows:

Active is High - The active state of the trigger port is logic HIGH 5V (trigger output on a rising edge).

Active is Low - The active state of the trigger port is logic LOW 0V (trigger output on a falling edge).

Lower Limit (% FSD) - The lower limit as a percentage of full scale deflection.

Upper Limit (% FSD) - The upper limit as a percentage of full scale deflection.

Smoothing Samples - The reading shown on the display is an average of the number of samples set in this parameter, between 1 and 1000. As a new sample is taken, the earliest sample is discarded.

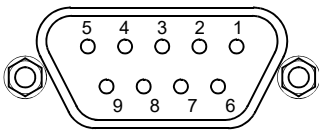
Display Brightness - In certain applications, it may be necessary to adjust the brightness of the LED display on the top of the unit. The brightness is set in the *Active Level* parameter, as a value from 0 (Off) to 100 (brightest). The display can be turned off completely by entering a setting of zero, however, pressing the MENU button on the top panel will temporarily illuminate the display at its lowest brightness setting to allow adjustments. When the display returns to its default position display mode, it will turn off again.

Furthermore, 'Burn In' of the display can occur if it remains static for a long time. To prevent this, the display is automatically dimmed after the time interval specified in the *Timeout (min)* parameter has elapsed. The time interval is specified in minutes in the range 0 (never dimmed) to 480. The dim level is set in the *Idle Level* parameter, as a value from 0 (Off) to 10 (brightest) but is also limited by the *Active Value* parameter if this is lower.

Appendix A Connector Pinout Details

A.1 STRAIN GAUGE I/P Connector

This connector receives the signal from the position sensor (strain gauge) to provide the feedback for the control loop. The pin functions are detailed in Fig. A.1.



Pin	Description
1	Wheatstone Bridge Excitation
2	† +15V out
3	† -15V out
4	Ground
5	AC Feedback IN
6	Ground
7	* Actuator ID signal
8	Reserved for future use
9	Reserved for future use

Notes

† Power supply for the piezo actuator feedback circuit. It must not be used to drive any other circuits or devices.

* This signal is applicable to Thorlabs piezo actuators fitted with an ID resistor. It enables the system to identify the piezo extension associated with the actuator.

Fig. A.1 STRAIN GAUGE I/P Connector Pin Identification

A.2 POWER Connector

A.2.1 Pin Identification

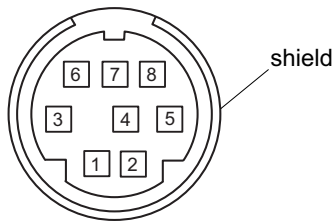
Thorlabs recommends that the Strain Gauge Reader K-Cube is operated with Thorlabs power supply TPS002, as it was specifically designed for use with this product. However, to enable customers to use the cube in installations where a $\pm 15\text{V}$ and 5V power is already available, the unit can be operated with a different external power supply, such as a bench or lab supply.

In this case however, extreme care must be taken to ensure that it meets the specifications and is connected to the cube correctly. Out of tolerance supply voltages or incorrect connection, applied even momentarily, can result in the sensitive electronic inside the cube getting damaged, invalidating warranty.

The K-Cube uses a standard “mini-DIN” type of input connector, the corresponding plug is available from most standard electronics suppliers.

The picture below shows the mini-DIN socket as viewed by looking at the rear panel of the cube. The pin numbering follows the standard for mini-DIN connectors

The pin functions are detailed in in Fig. A.2 .



Pin	Description	Pin	Description
1	+5V	6	Common Ground
2	+5V	7	Common Ground
3	-15V	8	Common Ground
4	+15V	Shield	Common Ground
5	+5V		

Fig. A.2 POWER Connector Pin Identification



Warning



When wiring the mini-DIN plug, ensure that all the ground pins are used and the shield is connected to common ground. This provides a level of protection against overvoltages due to loss of ground. A “loss of ground” condition can seriously damage the electronics inside the cube

Appendix B Preventive Maintenance



Warning



The equipment contains no user servicable parts. There is a risk of severe electrical shock if the equipment is operated with the covers removed. Only personnel authorized by Thorlabs Ltd and trained in the maintenance of this equipment should remove its covers or attempt any repairs or adjustments. Maintenance is limited to safety testing and cleaning as described in the following sections.

B.1 Safety Testing

PAT testing in accordance with local regulations, should be performed on a regular basis, (typically annually for an instrument in daily use).



Caution



The instrument contains a power supply filter. Insulation testing of the power supply connector should be performed using a DC voltage.

B.2 Cleaning



Warning



Disconnect the power supply before cleaning the unit.

Never allow water to get inside the case.

Do not saturate the unit.

Do not use any type of abrasive pad, scouring powder or solvent, e.g. alcohol or benzene.

The fascia may be cleaned with a soft cloth, lightly dampened with water or a mild detergent.

Appendix C Specifications and Associated Parts

C.1 Specifications

Parameter	Value
Strain Gauge Input (9-pin D-type)	
Bridge Type	AC
Excitation Frequency	18 kHz
Bandwidth	500 Hz
Supply	±15V, +5V
Monitor Output	0-10V (SMA Connector)
Reading Resolution	Position mode 1 nm Force mode 1 mN Voltage mode 1 mV
Reading Display	OLED
USB Port	Version 3.0 (Micro B)
K-Cube Controller Hub Connector	26 way ERNI
Input Power Requirements (DIN Connector)	
Voltages:	+15V (220mA), -15V (50mA), +5V (350mA)
General Data	
Housing Dimensions (W x D x H)	60 x 60 x 47 mm (2.36" x 2.36" x 1.85")
Weight	160 g (5.5 oz)

C.2 Associated Products

Product Name	Part Number
Drive Cable for Piezoelectric Actuators (3.0 m)	PAA100
Drive Cable for Piezoelectric Actuators (1.5 m)	PAA101
K-Cube Piezo Driver	KPZ101
Piezoelectric Feedback Cable, Male D-type to Female LEMO converter (3.0 m)	PAA622
2-Way Power Supply Unit	TPS002
3-Channel K-Cube Controller Hub	KCH301
6-Channel K-Cube Controller Hub	KCH601
SMA to BNC Converter Cable 6"	CA2806
SMA Female to BNC Male Converter	T4289
SMA Male to BNC Female Converter	T4290

Appendix D Piezo Control Method Summary

In addition to providing the functionality required for a client application to control one or more of the APT series of piezo controller units, the 'Piezo' ActiveX Control also provides the functionality for the KSG101 K-Cube Strain Gauge reader.

To specify the particular controller being addressed, every unit is factory programmed with a unique 8-digit serial number. This serial number is key to the operation of the APT Server software and is used by the Server to enumerate and communicate independently with multiple hardware units connected on the same USB bus. The serial number must be specified using the HWSerialNum property before an ActiveX control instance can communicate with the hardware unit. This can be done at design time or at run time. Note that the appearance of the ActiveX Control GUI (graphical user interface) will change to the required format when the serial number has been entered.

The Methods and Properties of the Piezo ActiveX Control can be used to perform activities such as selecting output voltages, reading the strain gauge position feedback, operating open and closed loop modes and enabling force sensing mode. A brief summary of the methods and properties applicable to the KSG101 unit is given below, for more detailed information and individual parameter description please see the on-line help file supplied with the APT server.

Methods

DisableHWChannel	Disables the drive output.
DoEvents	Allows client application to process other activity.
EnableEventDlg	Enables or disables the event dialog box.
Identify	Identifies the controller by flashing unit LEDs.
LLSaveHWDefaults	Allows the current settings of the operation parameters to be saved into the onboard 'Flash' memory of the hardware unit.
SG_DeleteParamSet	Deletes stored settings for specific controller.
SG_GetDispIntensity	Gets the front panel LED display intensity.
SG_GetDispMode	Gets the front panel reading display mode.
SG_GetForceCalib	Gets the force calibration factor.
SG_GetHubAnalogueChanOut	Gets the hub analogue output channel used for close loop operation.
SG_GetMaxTravel	Gets the maximum travel of a strain gauge equipped device
SG_GetReading	Gets the strain gauge reading.

SG_LoadParamSet	Loads stored settings for specific controller.
SG_SaveParamSet	Saves settings for a specific controller.
SG_SetDispIntensity	Sets the front panel LED display intensity.
SG_SetDispMode	Sets the front panel reading display mode.
SG_SetForceCalib	Sets the force calibration factor.
SG_SetHubAnalogueChanOut	Sets the hub analogue output channel used for close loop operation.
SG_ZeroPosition	Nulls the strain gauge reading to take out offset errors.
ShowEventDialog	Shows the event dialog when it has previously been disabled using the EnableEventDlg method
StartCtrl	Starts the ActiveX Control (starts communication with controller)
StartOutputLUT	Starts outputting the voltage waveform (LUT).
StopCtrl	Stops the ActiveX Control (stops communication with controller)

Properties

APTHelp	Specifies the help file that will be accessed when the user presses the F1 key. If APTHHelp is set to 'True', the main server helpfile MG17Base will be launched.
HWSerialNum	specifies the serial number of the hardware unit to be associated with an ActiveX control instance.

Appendix E Piezo Operation - Background

E.1 Piezoelectric Controller

E.1.1 The Piezoelectric Effect

Piezoelectricity is the effect whereby certain types of crystal expand reversibly when subjected to an electric field.

Although the amount of expansion is usually very small (corresponding to less than 1% strain in the material) it can be controlled extremely finely by varying the strength of the electric field. Piezoelectric materials therefore form the basis of very high precision actuators. The resolution of these actuators is effectively only limited by the noise and stability of the drive electronics. Moreover, the force generated by the expanding piezo is very large, typically hundreds of newtons.

Perhaps the most useful property of these actuators is their ability to produce oscillating motion at considerable frequencies, usually limited by the mechanical system driven rather than by the piezoactuator itself. This ability is used to advantage in the NanoTrak control system, for example.

The electric field gradient needed to produce a useful amount of expansion is quite large. Thus to avoid excessive drive voltages, the actuator is constructed as a stack, consisting of lamina of active material sandwiched among electrodes – see Fig. E.1. In this way, the distance from positive to negative electrodes is very small. A large field gradient can therefore be obtained with a modest drive voltage (75 V in the case of Thorlabs actuators).

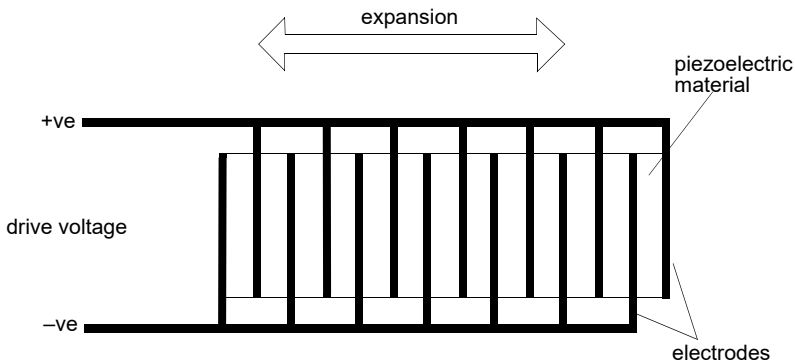


Fig. E.1 Piezo-electric actuator schematic diagram

E.1.2 Hysteresis

Despite the very high resolution of piezoelectric actuators, an inherent problem is the significant amount of hysteresis they exhibit, (i.e., the tendency of the actuator to reach a final position that lags behind the demand position).

If a cyclic voltage is applied to the actuator the positions reached on the upward sweep are smaller than those achieved on the downward sweep. If position is plotted against voltage, the graph describes a hysteresis loop – see Fig. E.2.

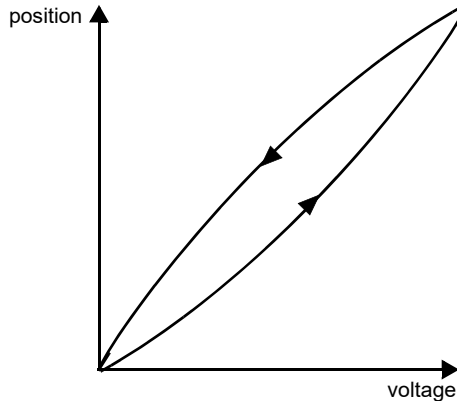


Fig. E.2 Piezo-electric hysteresis

E.1.3 Position Sensing and Feedback Control

Hysteresis can be eliminated by using a position sensor and feedback loop, i.e., the sensor measures the position, the circuit subtracts the measured position from the demand position to get the error, and a proportional-integral feedback loop adjusts the voltage to the actuator until the error is virtually zero.

Some Thorlabs nanopositioning actuators have position sensing, others do not. The Piezoelectric control module allows both types to be controlled.

To control an actuator with position sensing, the Piezoelectric control module should be set to closed-loop mode. To control an actuator without position sensing, the Piezoelectric Control module should be set to open-loop mode.

Notes

An actuator with position sensing can also be driven in open-loop mode if desired, since the feedback part of the circuit can be switched off. An advantage of open-loop mode is the greater bandwidth of the system.

Block diagrams for both modes of operation are shown in Fig. E.3.

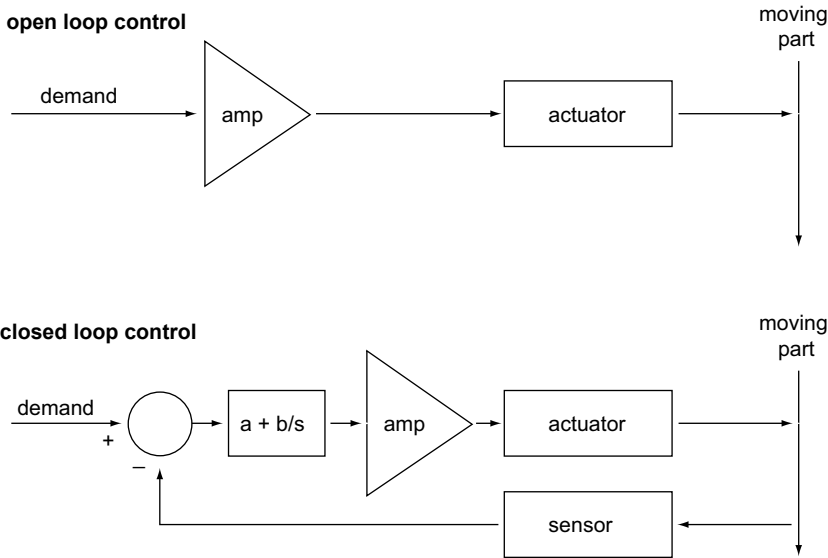


Fig. E.3 Open loop and closed loop control

The result of using closed-loop control is a linear relationship between demand (voltage) and measured position – see Fig. E.4, in contrast to open loop control – see Fig. E.2.

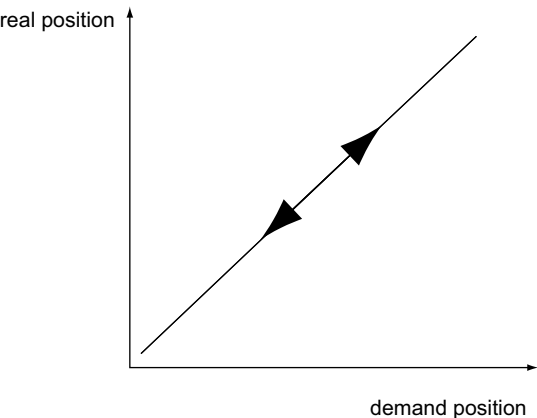





Fig. E.4 Closed loop response

Appendix F Regulatory

F.1 Declarations Of Conformity

F.1.1 For Customers in Europe

	THORLABS www.thorlabs.com
EU Declaration of Conformity <i>in accordance with EN ISO 17050-1:2010</i>	
We:	Thorlabs Ltd.
Of:	1 St. Thomas Place, Ely, CB7 4EX, United Kingdom
<i>in accordance with the following Directive(s):</i>	
2014/30/EU	Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive
2011/65/EU	Restriction of Use of Certain Hazardous Substances (RoHS)
 <i>hereby declare that:</i>	
Model:	KSG101
 Equipment:	K-Cube Strain Gauge Reader
 <i>is in conformity with the applicable requirements of the following documents:</i>	
EN 61326-1	Electrical Equipment for Measurement, Control and Laboratory Use - EMC Requirements
	2013
 <i>and which, issued under the sole responsibility of Thorlabs, is in conformity with Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8th June 2011 on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment, for the reason stated below:</i>	
does not contain substances in excess of the maximum concentration values tolerated by weight in homogenous materials as listed in Annex II of the Directive	
 <i>I hereby declare that the equipment named has been designed to comply with the relevant sections of the above referenced specifications, and complies with all applicable Essential Requirements of the Directives.</i>	
Signed:	
	On: 13 October 2016
Name:	Keith Dhese
Position:	General Manager
	EDC - KSG101 -2016-10-13
	

F.1.2 For Customers In The USA

This equipment has been tested and found to comply with the limits for a Class A digital device, pursuant to part 15 of the FCC rules. These limits are designed to provide reasonable protection against harmful interference when the equipment is operated in a commercial environment. This equipment generates, uses and can radiate radio frequency energy and, if not installed and used in accordance with the instruction manual, may cause harmful interference to radio communications. Operation of this equipment in a residential area is likely to cause harmful interference in which case the user will be required to correct the interference at his own expense.

Changes or modifications not expressly approved by the company could void the user's authority to operate the equipment.

F.2 Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive

F.2.1 Compliance

As required by the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive of the European Community and the corresponding national laws, we offer all end users in the EC the possibility to return "end of life" units without incurring disposal charges.

This offer is valid for electrical and electronic equipment

- sold after August 13th 2005
- marked correspondingly with the crossed out "wheelie bin" logo (see Fig. 1)
- sold to a company or institute within the EC
- currently owned by a company or institute within the EC
- still complete, not disassembled and not contaminated



Fig. 6.1 Crossed out "wheelie bin" symbol

As the WEEE directive applies to self contained operational electrical and electronic products, this "end of life" take back service does not refer to other products, such as

- pure OEM products, that means assemblies to be built into a unit by the user (e. g. OEM laser driver cards)
- components
- mechanics and optics
- left over parts of units disassembled by the user (PCB's, housings etc.).

If you wish to return a unit for waste recovery, please contact Thorlabs or your nearest dealer for further information.

F.2.2 Waste treatment on your own responsibility

If you do not return an "end of life" unit to the company, you must hand it to a company specialized in waste recovery. Do not dispose of the unit in a litter bin or at a public waste disposal site.

F.2.3 Ecological background

It is well known that WEEE pollutes the environment by releasing toxic products during decomposition. The aim of the European RoHS directive is to reduce the content of toxic substances in electronic products in the future.

The intent of the WEEE directive is to enforce the recycling of WEEE. A controlled recycling of end of life products will thereby avoid negative impacts on the environment.

Appendix F Thorlabs Worldwide Contacts

For technical support or sales inquiries, please visit us at www.thorlabs.com/contact for our most up-to-date contact information.



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