

# DRV8436EVM GUI User's Guide

This document is provided with the DRV8436 evaluation module (EVM) as a supplement to [DRV8436 Stepper Motor Driver datasheet](#). This user's guide details on how to use the DRV8436 EVM GUI application.

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## Trademarks

### 1 Overview

The DRV8436 EVM is a platform to support prototyping and evaluation for the DRV8436, a medium-voltage dual H-bridge driver for stepper driving applications. The DRV8436 drives a single bipolar stepper with microstep settings ranging from full-stepping to 1/256 resolution with internally-regulated microstep levels. It provides a variety of programmable decay settings.

The EVM uses an MSP430™ microcontroller and a USB interface chip to manage communication from the GUI software application installed on a PC computer with Windows®. The GUI sends serial commands to the MSP430 to control the device signals, monitor faults, read and write SPI registers, and drive a stepper motor by issuing the step commands at the desired rate. This document describes the software and tools used to evaluate DRV8436 device for stepper motor driving on the DRV8436 EVM.

### 2 Hardware and Software Setup

The hardware (HW) and software (SW) tools that follow are required for the evaluation of DRV8436:

- DRV8436 EVM
- Stepper motor
- Voltage supply from 4.5 to 48 V

This document only describes the installation and usage of the DRV8436 EVM GUI. For additional details on hardware connections refer to the [DRV8436 EVM User's Guide](#) .

## **3 GUI Application**

### **3.1 Installation**

Installation (For Desktop Version Only)

- Download the installable DRV8436\_1.0.0\_installer\_win.zip file.
- Extract the zip.
- Double click on the installer to install the GUI Application. During first time installation, the installer prompts for installation of Cloud Agent. Please Install it.

### **3.2 Getting Started with DRV8436 EVM GUI**

The DRV8436 EVM GUI and DRV8436 EVM allows the user to configure various settings required for stepper motor driving. The DRV8436 EVM GUI lets the user adjust the motor speed, control the direction, control the step movement, configure various device settings, and monitor the device status.

Perform the following steps to begin using the GUI:

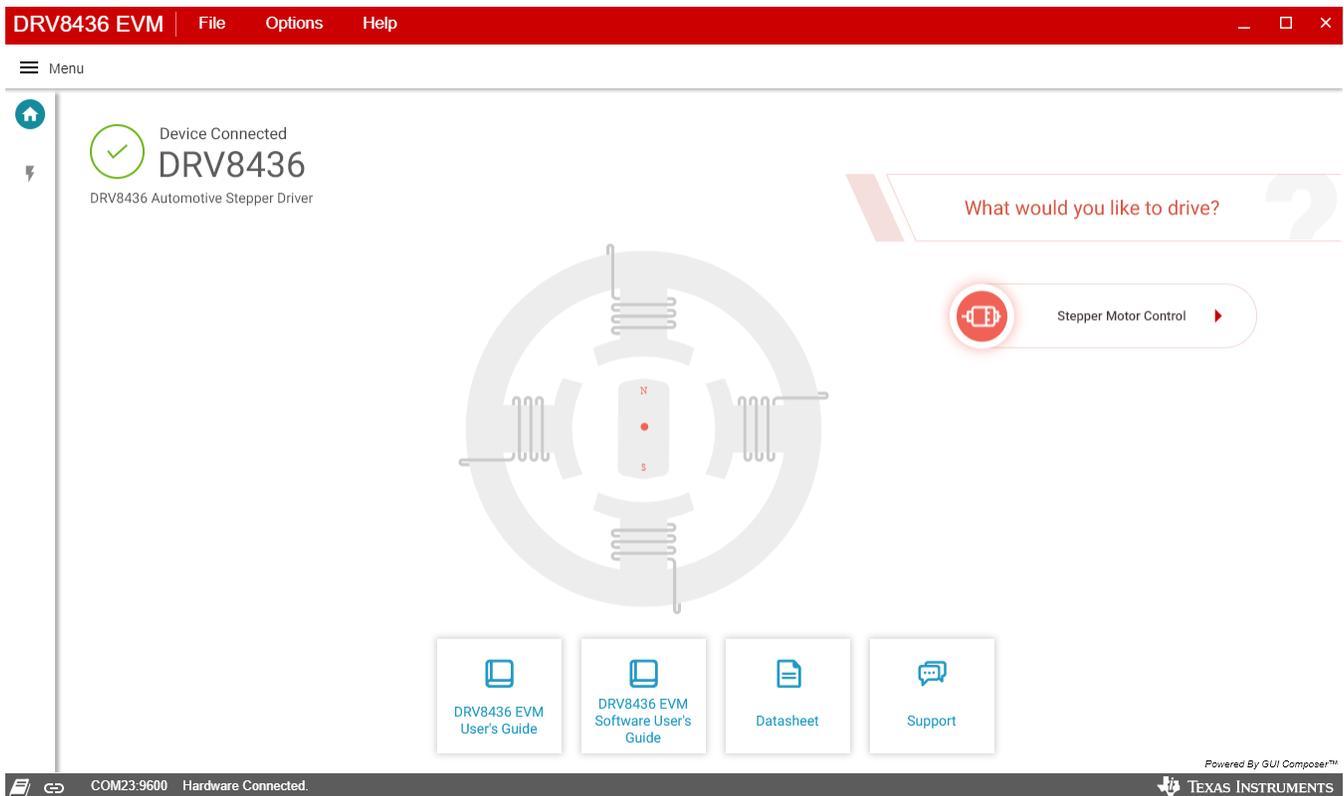
- Connect the stepper motor to the EVM.
- Plug in the micro-USB cable to the PC.
- Enable the motor power supply. For additional details on hardware connections refer to the [DRV8436 EVM User's Guide](#)

Click on DRV8436 EVM GUI shortcut either on the desktop or from the start menu to run the GUI application.

### **3.3 Use the DRV8436 EVM GUI**

The Application opens with launch page shown in [Figure 1](#)

The application will try to establish communication with the device connected. A message showing 'Connected to Cloud Agent. Connecting to target...' will be displayed in the hardware connection status pane at the bottom of the screen. If the connection is successful, 'COMxx:9600 Connected to Target' message appears as shown in [Figure 2](#) below



**Figure 1. DRV8436 EVM GUI (Home Page)**



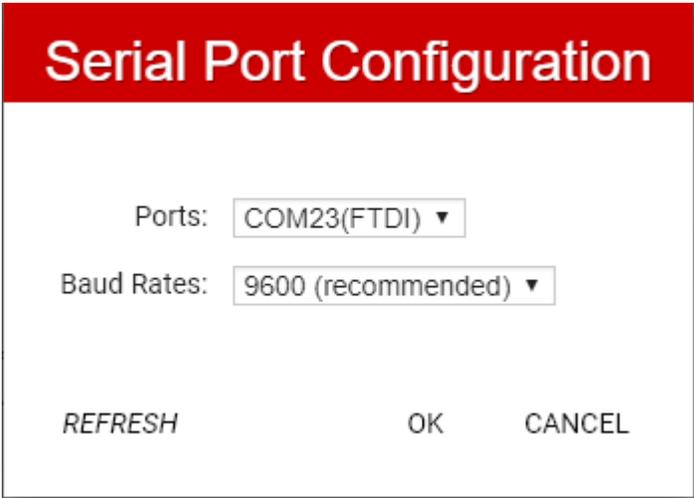
**Figure 2. DRV8436 EVM GUI (Device Connection Pane)**

If the GUI fails to connect to the EVM, the hardware connection status pane will show the message 'Hardware Not Connected'.

If the GUI is opened without connecting the EVM, the hardware connection status pane will show 'Error: no serial ports found'.

If there are more than one DRV8436 EVM boards connected, the first matching device will be connected automatically. In order to switch to another EVM:

1. Click Options -> Serial Port. A serial port configuration popup is displayed as shown below in [Figure 3](#).
2. Choose the appropriate port and baud rate.
3. Click OK



The image shows a 'Serial Port Configuration' dialog box. It has a red header with the title 'Serial Port Configuration' in white. Below the header, there are two dropdown menus: 'Ports:' with 'COM23(FTDI)' selected and 'Baud Rates:' with '9600 (recommended)' selected. At the bottom, there are three buttons: 'REFRESH', 'OK', and 'CANCEL'.

**Figure 3. Serial Port Configuration**

Once the correct device is connected, the home page will show a message 'Device Connected' with a green check mark as shown in [Figure 1](#)

Click on the 'Stepper Motor' button to open the stepper control page.

### 3.3.1 Stepper Control Page

This page (shown in [Figure 4](#)) includes various controls to sleep/wake the driver, ocp latched settings and control the stepper motor by configuring various parameters such as full scale current, step mode, direction and so forth. Hovering over the (?) icon to the right of a control displays a brief description about the control.

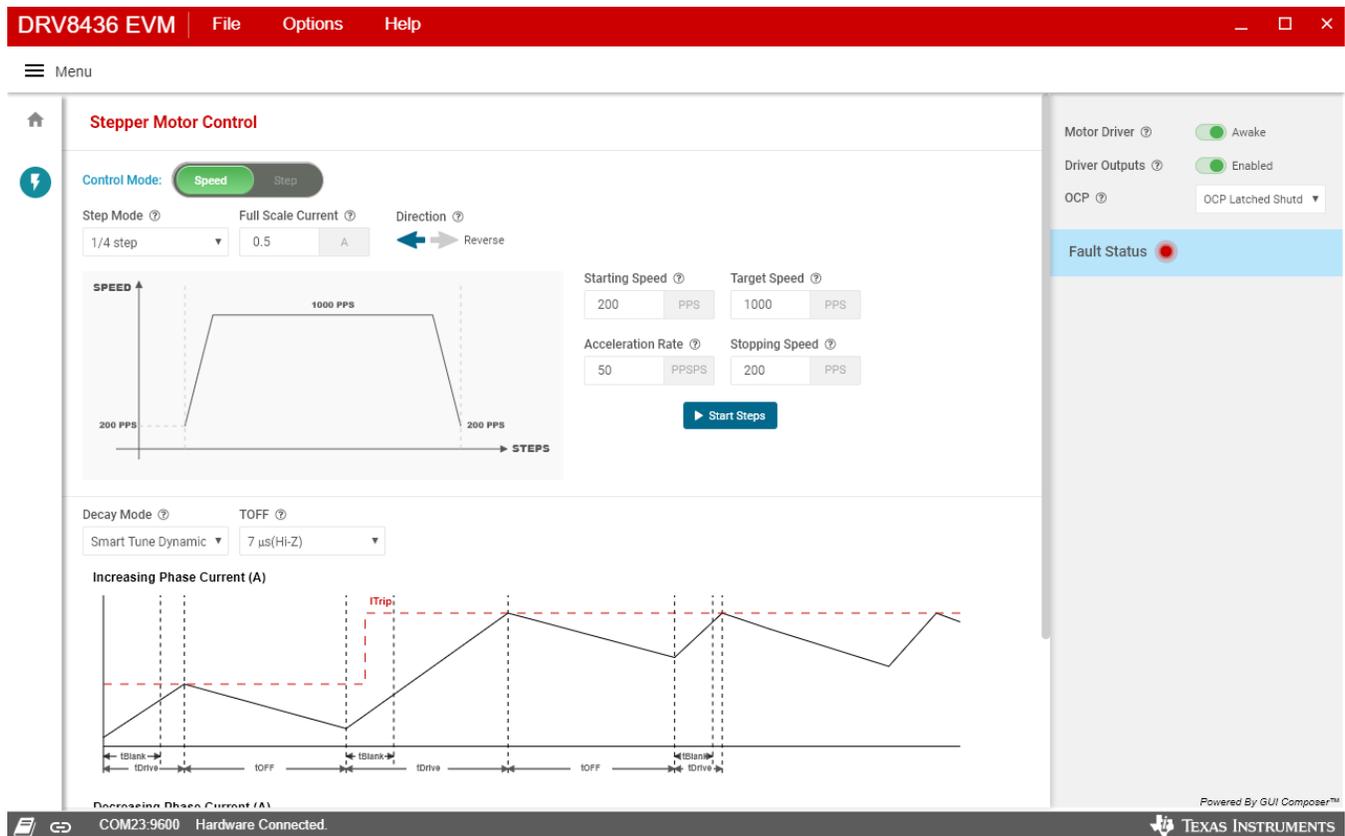


Figure 4. DRV8436 EVM GUI (Stepper Motor Control Page)

### 3.3.1.1 Stepper Control Modes

The GUI allows the user to control the stepper motion profile in two modes – Speed Mode and Step Mode. To toggle between the modes, use the toggle button at the top of the screen.

#### 3.3.1.1.1 Speed Mode

Speed Mode allows the user to spin the stepper motor continuously at a desired speed. The user configures the starting speed, stopping speed, acceleration rate, and target speed. Stepper controls are enabled only when 'Motor Driver' control is enabled. 'Start Steps' button is enabled only when 'Driver Outputs' control is enabled for example, ENABLE pin is set to high. When the 'Start Steps' button is clicked, the motor begins spinning at the starting speed and accelerates to the target speed according to the configured acceleration rate. The acceleration profile in the microcontroller firmware accepts the starting-speed PPS signal and target-speed PPS signal as a clock cycle number.

When the 'Start steps' button is clicked, the PWM timer generates steps at a rate specified by the 'Starting Speed' PPS parameter. When 'Stop Steps' is clicked, the motor starts decelerating at the 'Acceleration Rate' configured to reach the stopping speed and eventually stop. The configuration is visualized by the embedded graph shown on the GUI screen.

When accelerating or decelerating, the PPS signal is adjusted every 32 ms based on the integer value of  $PPSPS / 32 \text{ ms}$ . Acceleration rates must be between 1 and 65,535 PPSPS. The step rate increases by the calculated value until the target speed is reached.

The starting speed must be less than or equal to the target speed. If the starting speed and target speed are equal, the EVM firmware will not perform an acceleration routine. The stopping speed must also be less than or equal to the target speed. The target speed is limited to a range between 1 and 65,535 PPS.

The 'Start Steps' command computes how frequently automatic speed updates are issued and a second timer is used to change the speed according to the programmed acceleration rate profile. Once clicked, the motor will begin spinning according to the parameters set in the GUI.

When the target speed PPS value is reached, the acceleration profile ends and the motor continues running until the 'Stop Steps' button is clicked. When the stepper is commanded to stop, the controller performs the same actions as it did while accelerating, but in reverse order to decelerate until the stop speed PPS value is reached, in which case the motor fully stops.

Figure 5 shows the acceleration profile and the role each parameter plays during speed computation.

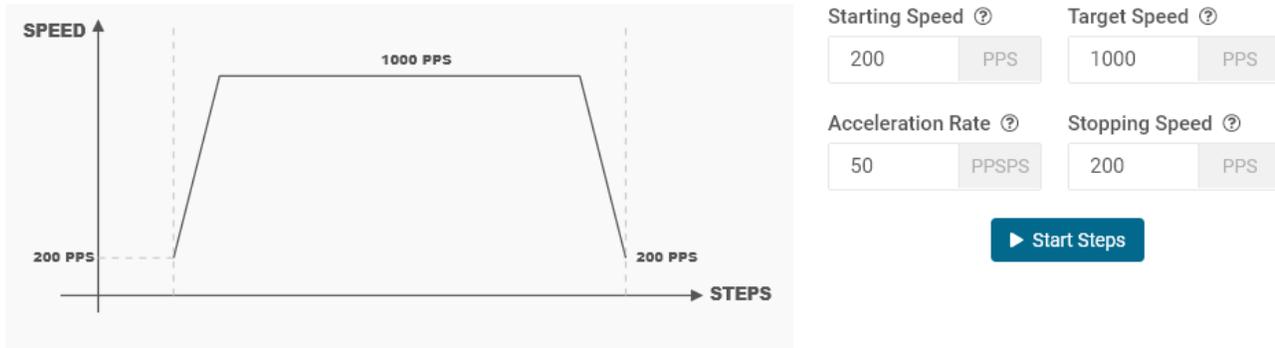


Figure 5. Controls Available for Speed Mode

### 3.3.1.1.2 Step Mode

Step Mode allows the user to move the stepper motor a configured number of steps. Stepper controls are enabled only when 'Motor Driver' control is enabled. 'Start Steps' button is enabled only when 'Driver Outputs' control is enabled for example, ENABLE pin is set to high. When the 'Start Steps' button is clicked, the motor starts spinning at the starting speed and accelerates at the rate configured to reach until the number of steps is reached after which it stops.

The acceleration and deceleration profiles work similarly as before, except when the deceleration routine starts and when the motor stops are a function of the 'Steps to Stop' and deceleration rate parameters.

The configuration can be visualized in the graph embedded in the GUI. If the "Reciprocate" button is enabled, the stepper will travel the set number of steps, then reverse direction. It will do this continuously until 'Stop Steps' is clicked. Figure 6 shows the controls available in Step Mode.

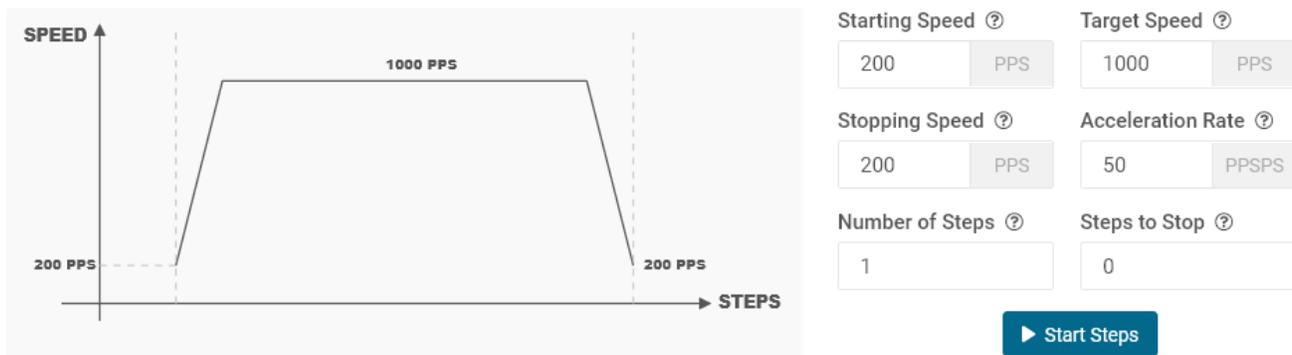


Figure 6. Controls Available for Step Mode

The parameters from 'Speed Mode' are reused as well, and they operate the same as described in Section 3.3.1.1.1. Two new parameters have been added to properly control the limited number of steps actuation. These parameters are described as follows:

**Number of Steps**—This parameter is the number of steps that the controller will issue.

**Steps to Stop**—The controller is continuously monitoring the step being issued and when the current step is equal to the 'Steps to Stop' parameter, a deceleration profile is issued. If the value of the 'Steps to Stop' parameter is larger than the number of steps, then the motor stops abruptly and without undergoing a deceleration profile.

When a deceleration profile is issued, the controller decreases the speed until reaching the value of the 'Stopping Speed' parameter. If the 'Number of Steps' parameter is met before the deceleration profile is complete, then the motor stops at the current speed. If the stopping speed is met before all the number of steps is issued, then the motor rotates at the stop speed value until all the steps are executed.

Ideally, the system should resemble the case in which the controller executes all the commanded steps at a speed as close as possible to the stop speed. In the event this is not possible because of the particular parameters that were selected, stopping the motor at a speed very close to the 'Stopping Speed' parameter is often good enough to ensure good motion quality and application performance.

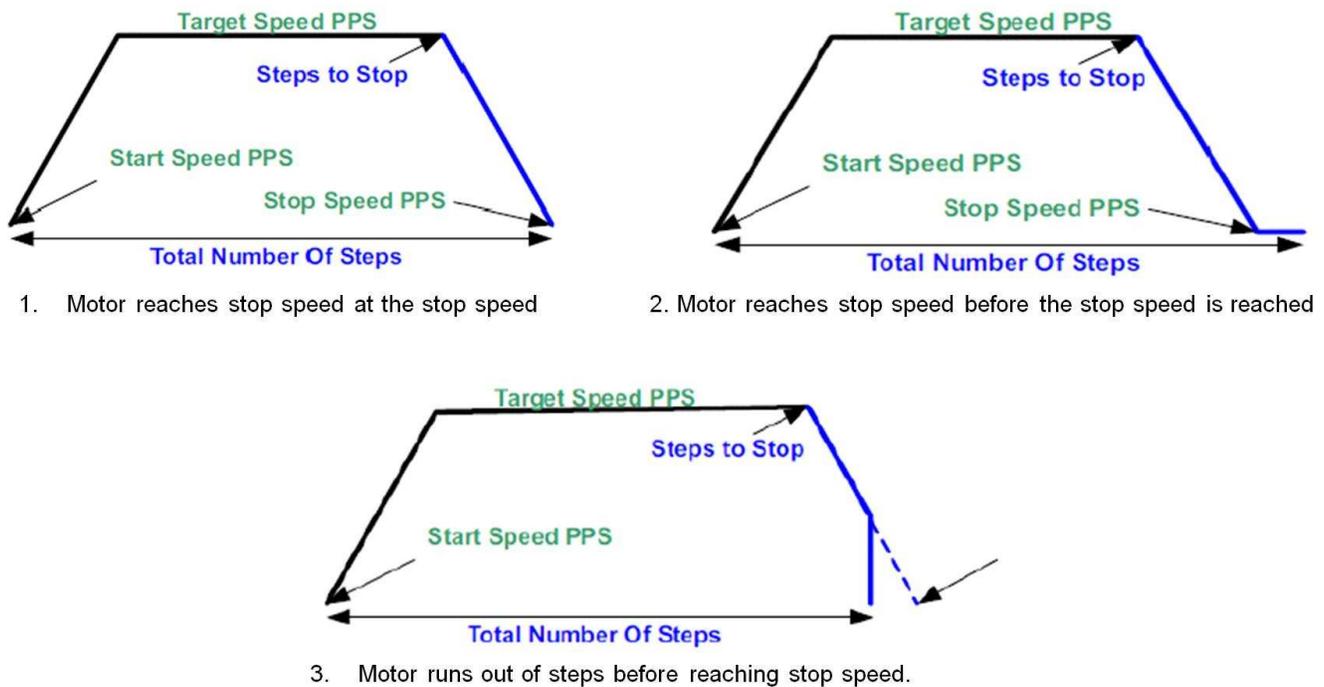
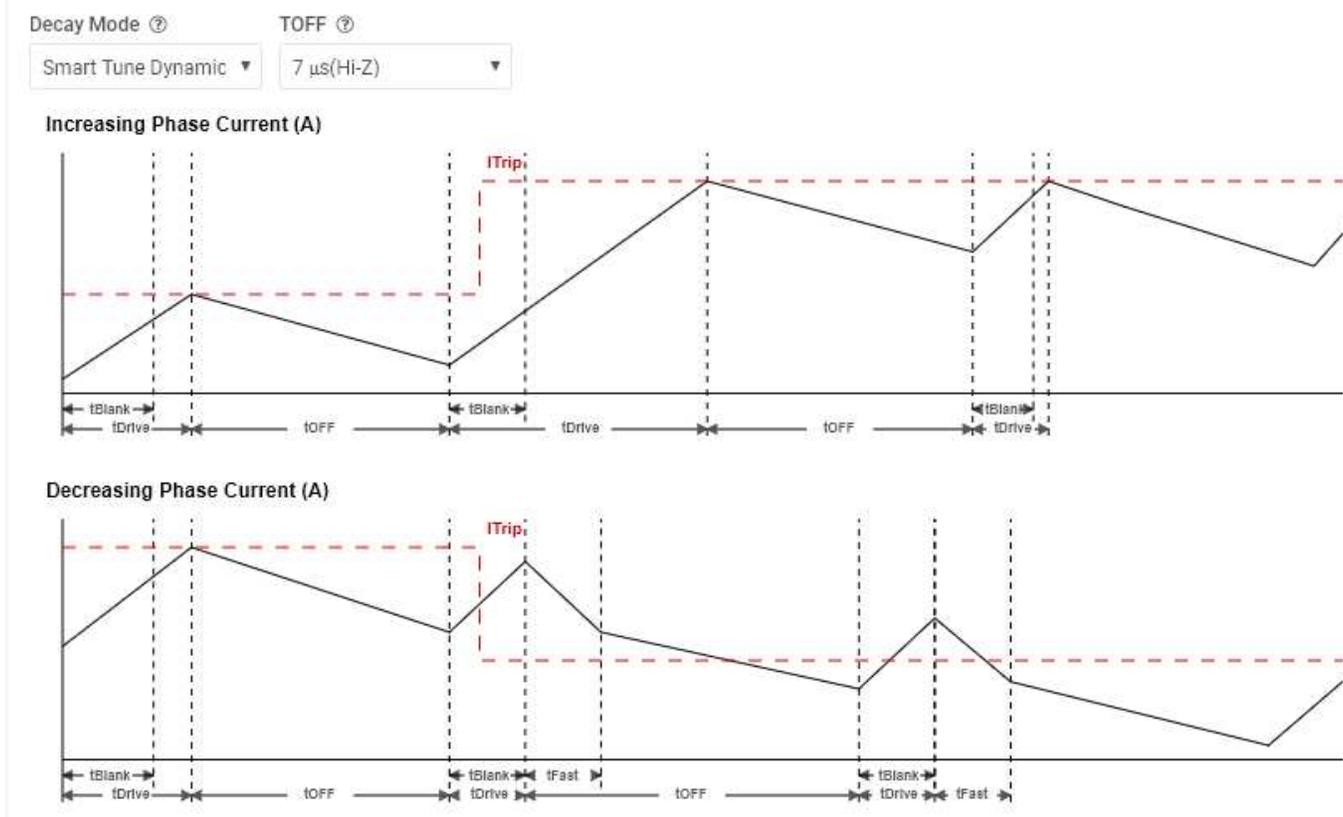


Figure 7. Stop Conditions

### 3.3.2 Decay Mode

Decay refers to how the driving currents recirculate in H-bridge FETs during the off time. The user configures the decay mode using the GUI



**Figure 8. DRV8436 EVM GUI (Decay Mode)**

Decay mode and appropriate TOFF values can be configured in this section. The configurations can be visualized in the graph shown. For information about the different decay modes, refer to the [DRV8436 Stepper Motor Driver datasheet](#).

### 3.3.3 Fault Monitoring

The fault monitor section at the right side of the screen allows the user to monitor the fault. The LED staying green indicates 'No Fault'. When the LED turns red, it indicates that a fault has occurred.

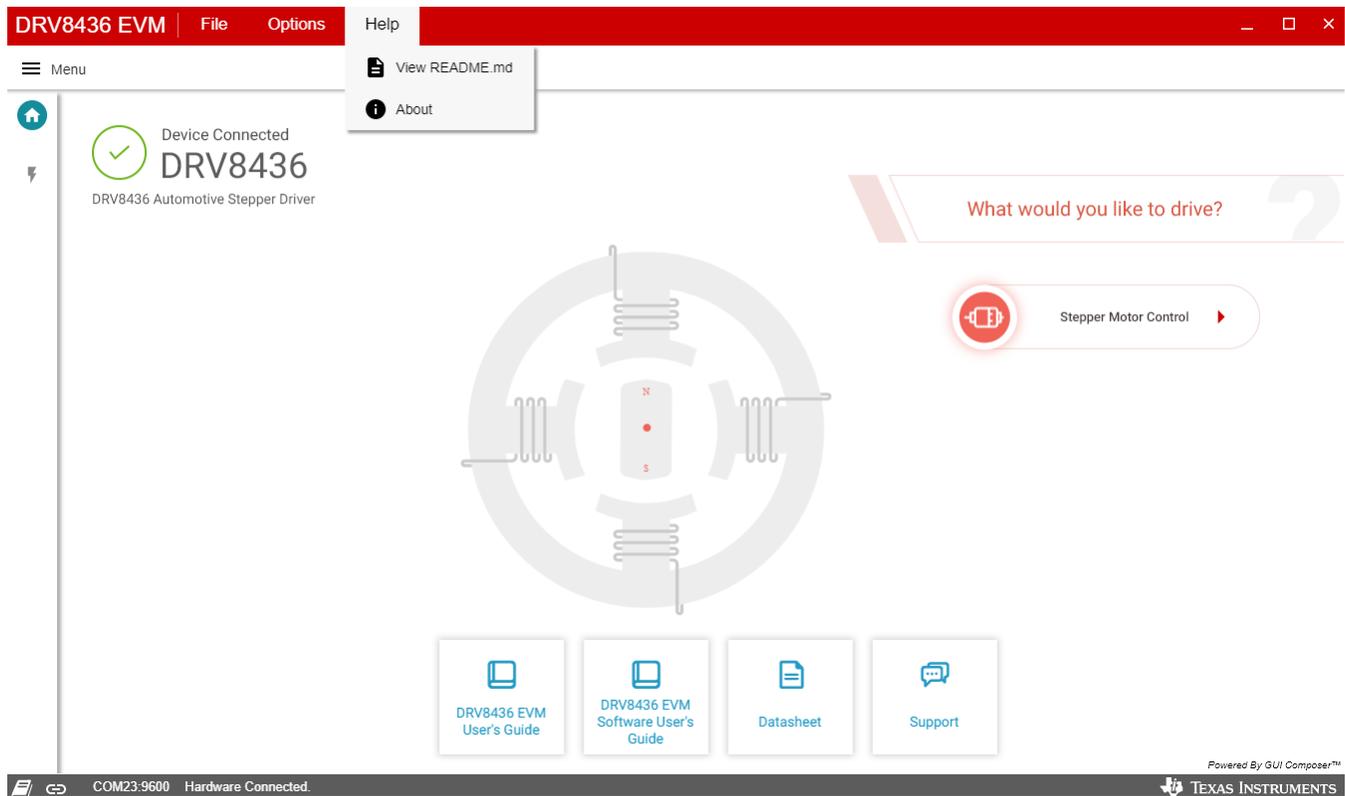
### 3.3.4 Use the Side-Bar Menu

Use the side-bar menu in the left pane to navigate to the different pages at any time. Click on the hamburger button in the top-left corner of the GUI to expand the side-bar menu. The following pages that are displayed in the side-bar menu:

- Home
- Stepper motor control

### 3.3.5 Menu Bar Options

The following menus are available in the menu bar displayed at the top of the GUI as shown in [Figure 9](#).



**Figure 9. DRV8436 EVM GUI (Menu Bar – Help Option)**

### 3.3.5.1 File Menu

The File Menu has the following options:

**Program Device**—The user can load the firmware (.out) file onto the device by clicking this option. For the firmware load to work, MSP430 FET needs to be plugged into the J2 connector on the EVM board.

**Load/Save Registers** —The user can save (and load) a particular configuration of the registers. This saves time when the user needs to reconfigure the registers after power cycle.

### 3.3.5.2 Options Menu

This menu provides the option to configure the serial port communication settings.

### 3.3.5.3 Help Menu

The Help Menu contains options to view Readme File and About Section. The About Section displays the installed software information, including the application version.

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