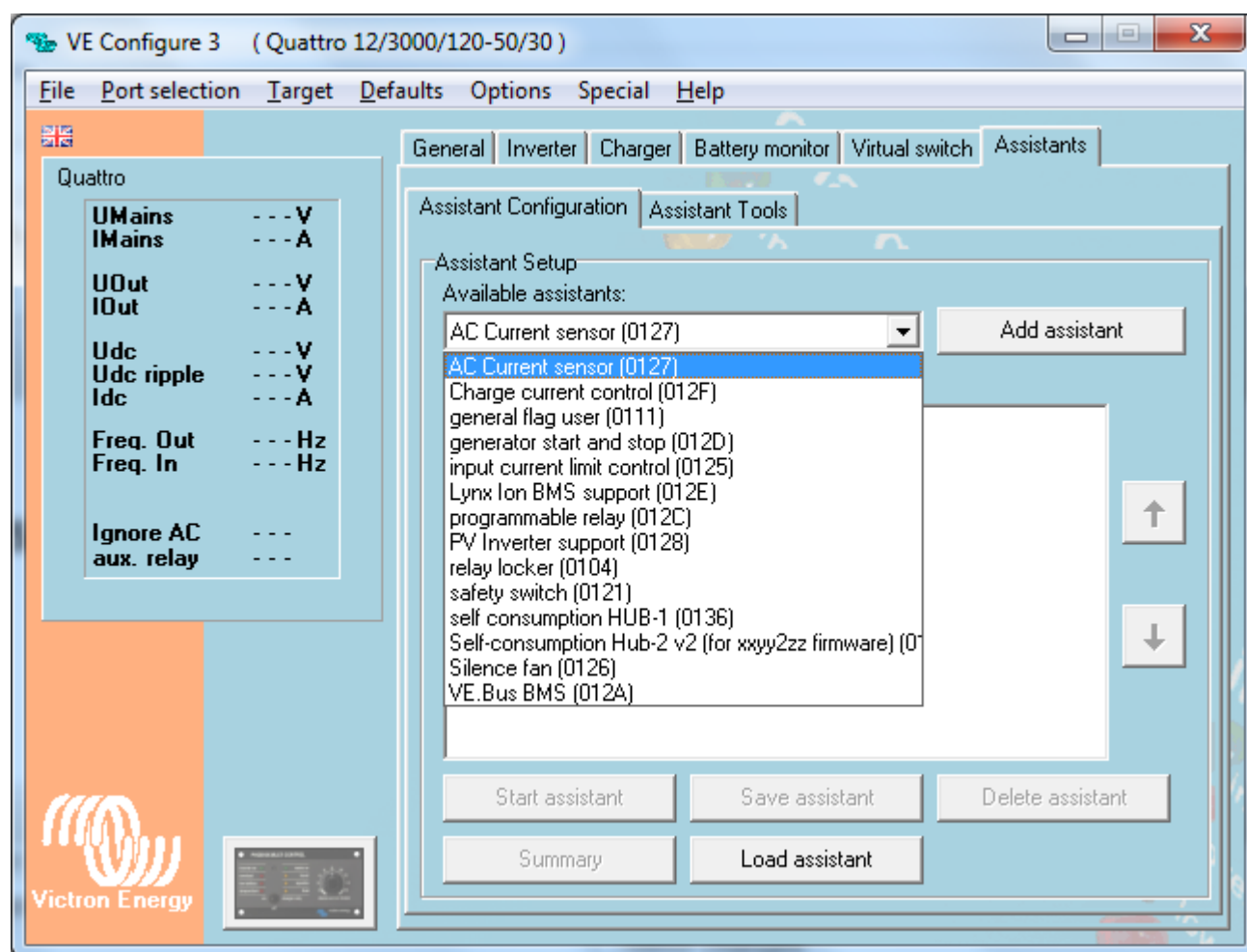# Assistants Introduction

What are Assistants?

Think of Assistants as apps, as on a smart phone. Assistants are little applications that run inside a VE.Bus Multi, Inverter or Quattro. They reduce the overall cost of a system: in 99% of all installations it will not be necessary to add an additional PLC (Programmable Logic Controller) to get for example load shedding, optimizing use of solar energy or automatically starting and stopping a genset.

In advanced systems you can also combine multiple assistants, it can even be useful to add an assistant multiple times. The Assistant logic is executed from top to bottom, which makes it possible to create complex logic.

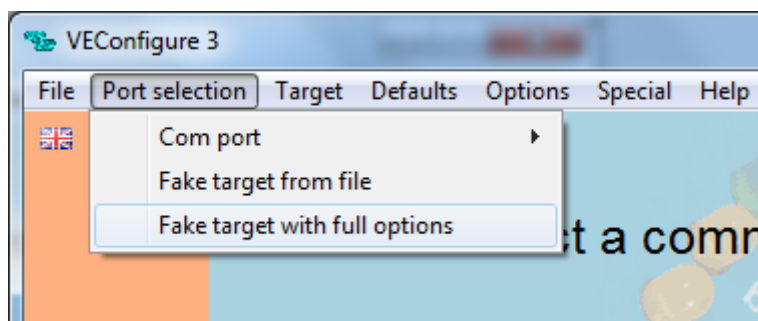To get a better understanding of the possibilities, read the list of available assistants.

I don't see the Assistants tab, how do I get it?

VE.Bus Multis, Inverters and Quattros must be loaded with 2xx or 3xx firmware in order to get the Assistants tab. Note that running these firmware versions disables the use of the Virtual switch tab. For 95% of all Victron installations it is not necessary to run Assistants at all. They either do not require complex logic, or the required logic is included on the Virtual switch tab.

More information about which firmware type to choose for an installation, and the updating instruction, is available in our PDF VE.Bus firmware versions explained.

How can I play around with Assistants without using real hardware?

1. Download and install VEConfigure3. It is available for download from our software page. Look for the link called VE Configure Tools.
2. Start VEConfigure3
3. Go to 'Port selection' in the menu and choose 'Fake target with full options'.

1. Select the voltage for your fake system
2. Done

You will now see both tabs, Virtual switch and Assistants. On a real system there will always be one of both, depending of firmware type loaded.

Note that it is even possible to make a fake three-phase and parallel system, using VE.Bus System Configurator.

What is next?

- How to add an Assistant from start to finish
- Assistants documentation main page

To keep posted on new Assistant developments, subscribe to our blog on https://www.victronenergy.com/blog/

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