

The invention relates to a method for operating a multistage counter in only one counting direction. The inventive method comprises the following steps: changing the count value of a single-stage Auxiliary counter that can only be changed in one counting direction, whereby count value states of the multi-stage counter are predetermined, detecting the respective count value states of the multi-stage counter and the single-stage auxiliary counter and producing first authenticity data by linking the count value of the auxiliary counter to additional data.

