AC-LGAD sensor Optimization and Consideration

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Content

DC-LGAD and AC-LGAD structure

>AC-LGAD capacitance

- Impact to sensor performance and power consumption
- Components of Device Capacitance
- How to improve?

>AC-LGAD strip length

- Impact to sensor performance
 Transmission loss, charge sharing
- How to improve?

>Summary

LGAD and AC-LGAD

Low gain avalanche detector be demonstrated to have timing resolution <35ps and will be used to provide precise timing information in ATLAS HGTD and CMS ETL for address pile-up issues.

>AC-LGAD, a 4D detector, provides both timing and position information at the same time.



LGAD (Low-Gain Avalanche Diode)

• The read-out electrode is placed and connected to the N++ layer.

AC-LGAD (AC-coupled LGAD)



- metal AC readout electrode and a thin dielectric layer (Si₃N₄, SiO₂) above the N+ layer
- Charge be shared between strips(used for position reconstruction)
- Less dead area and better position resolution
- Research institute: FBK, HPK, INFN, BNL, CNM, USTC, IHEP...

Timing performance

The timing resolution of an LGAD is determined by the accuracy with which it can measure the time of arrival of particles.

 $\sigma_t^2 = \sigma_{TimeWalk}^2 + \sigma_{Landau}^2 + \sigma_{Jitter}^2$

б _{Timewalk}	The term "time walk" refers to the phenomenon where the time of signal arrival varies depending on the amplitude of the detected signal.	恒比定时 TOT correction constant fraction discriminator (CFD) method		
6_{Landau}	Variations in carrier trajectories due to Landau levels can introduce additional timing jitter, reducing the overall timing resolution.	EPI thickness		
б _{jitter}	t _{rise} , rising time, ∝ t _{rise} /(S/N) S/N, Signal to noise ratio,	Electrical field and EPI thickness Signal 【EPI thickness and gain】, Noise 【capacitance】		

Capacitance

Capacitance impact

4pF for HGTD \rightarrow 10pF for CEPC OTK

• Timing resolution worse

Rise time and noise increase, sensor timing performance worsen

• Power consumption increase

To keep the timing performance, ASIC power consumption 20mW/channel

Capacitance impact

42ps

48ps



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Capacitance impact

Sensor capacitance impact to power consumption:

Timing performance: Jitter part of ASIC $\sigma_{\text{jitter}} = \frac{e_n C_d}{Q_{\text{in}}} \sqrt{t_d}.$ $e_n = \sqrt{2kT/g_{m1}}.$ $g_{m1} = q \times I_d/2kT$

 C_d is capacitance from sensor I_d is the current of amplifier

In order to keep same timing performance (jitter from ASIC):

C_d increase by 2 times, Id need to increase 4 times, Power consumption: V_{dd} x I_d 4 times

	LGAD capacitance	FEE power consumption
HGTD (Altiroc)	4.2pF	2.7mW/channel
CEPC OTK (Juloong)	10pF	15mW/channel

Very large! To keep ASIC timing performance as 30ps Capacitance impact



→Which parameter of AC-LGAD affect the sensor's capacitance? →How to improve?

Capacitance for DC-LGAD





2025/2/20

$C = \varepsilon_0 * \varepsilon_r * A / d$

- C: Capacitance 电容
- ε₀: Vacuum permittivity, 真空介电常数
- ε_r: Relative permittivity, Dielectric constant介电常数
- A: Capacitor area 面积, d: distance between plates 距离

> DC-LGAD

C_{bulk}: Bulk capacitance, PN junction capacitance

C_{inter-pad}: pixel size and isolation structure(<0.5pF testing result)

 Depletion capacitance: C_{bulk} EPI thickness: 50um Size: 1.3mm x 1.3mm Calculation results: 电容计算结果: 8.85e-12 x 11.9 x 1.3x1.3x1e6/ 50e-6 = 4.38pF

ε₀ ε_r A d Testing results: 电容测试结果: 4.2pF

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Capacitance for AC-LGAD



Capacitance for AC-LGAD

1、 Reduce capacitor area



 $C = \varepsilon_0 * \varepsilon_r * A / d$

C₂ area: Strip length, pitch, number of strip

HGTD LGAD results: Bulk capacitance: 50um thick, 1.3mm x 1.3mm=1.69mm² Capacitance: 4.2pF

Isolation structure: reduce this number of strips to one

Isolated AC-LGAD: one strip The capacitance is proportional to [strip length X pitch]

length	pitch	Two strip EPI thickness(50um)	One strip EPI thickness(50um)
4cm	100um	~20pF	4/1.69 x 4.2=~10pF
	200um	40pF	20pF
2cm	100um	10pF	5pF
	200um	20pF	10pF

Capacitance for AC-LGAD

2、 Increase EPI thickness



EPI thickness and Timing performance

The timing resolution of an LGAD is determined by the accuracy with which it can measure the time of arrival of particles.

$$\sigma_t^2 = \sigma_{TimeWalk}^2 + \sigma_{Landau}^2 + \sigma_{Jitter}^2$$

The term "time walk" refers to the $\mathbf{6}_{\mathsf{Timewalk}}$ 恒比定时 TOT correction phenomenon where the time of constant fraction discriminator (CFD) method signal arrival varies depending on the amplitude of the detected signal Variations in carrier trajectories due to Landau levels can $\mathbf{6}_{\mathsf{Landau}}$ $\mathbf{6}_{\mathsf{Landau}}$ **EPI thickness** introduce additional timing jitter, reducing the overall timing Landau affect resolution. t_{rise}, rising time, electrical field and EPI thickness EPI thickness t_{rise} б_{jitter} $t_{rise}/(S/N)$ S/N, Signal to noise ratio, EPI thickness(MIP, 70-80e/um) EPI thickness MIP charge $\sigma_{\text{jitter}} = \frac{e_n C_d}{Q_{\text{in}}} \sqrt{t_d}$ EPI thickness Cd

EPI thickness and timing performance

During IHEPV3, Sensors with same size, different EPI thickness: 50um(W12), 65um(W24), 80um(W26) be fabricated. Testing results be got recently.



Power consumption VS EPI thickness



Capacitance Optimization method

Capacitance

Method to improve:

- Trench metal Dielectric p+ layer p+ layer P-stop JTE Thickness: 80/100um
- Change area: Add isolated structure, [JTE+Pstop, Trench, dielectric layer separate]
- Change EPI thickness: Increase EPI thickness [50um to 80/100um], without changing length

By using these methods, the capacitance can be reduced from 10pF to 5pF, and the readout power consumption reduce from 20mW/channel to 8.8 mW/channel.

Timing performance

- Sensor timing performance will be from 25ps to 35ps (when EPI thickness: 50um—>80um)
- How does the total timing resolution impact physical analysis when it varies from 40 ps to 50 ps, or even worse?

Spatial resolution

• With EPI thickness increasing, spatial resolution will be better (MIP generate more charge)

Strip length impact

Strip length: bad impact

> Signal transmission loss: signal amplitude reduce which will affect timing performance

2cm to 4cm

Charge sharing \succ

Strip length increases signal sharing among more strips, the signal-to-noise ratio decreases, leading to worse timing performance

Strip length: good impact (🙂)



- Reduce the readout channels
- > Easy for module assembly, enough room to accommodate supporting electronics(DC-DC, etc)

Strip length affect

Signal transmission: signal amplitude reduce? Timing performance worse



Readout from end, and inject laser from near, middle and far. The signal amplitude decrease, and the timing performance get worse(from 25ps to 40ps) as increasing the length of readout line.



Method to improve: Readout the signal from middle instead of end

Strip length affect

charge sharing

Strip length increases charge sharing, worse timing expected

signal from primary strip decrease





HPK long strip AC-LGAD results





Sensor parameters that can be changed to decrease charge sharing:

- 1. increase the pitch size, reduce capacitance between strips Change pitch size larger, sharing reduce. Timing and spatial resolution?
- 2 increase resistance between strips
 By increasing the resistivity of n+ layer. Timing and spatial resolution?
- 3、 Isolation (not mentioned here)

1 Increasing pitch size

Capacitance between pixel reduces, charge sharing be reduced





Figure 11: Position (left) and time (right) resolution as functions of the x position for strip sensors of different active thickness. The sensors presented have 80 µm pitch, 60 µm strip width, $1600 \Omega/\Box$ sheet resistance, and 240 pF/mm^2 coupling capacitance. Spatial resolution values have a tracker contribution of 5 µm removed in quadrature. Time resolution values have a reference contribution of 10 ps removed in quadrature.



Increasing pitch size will worsen both spatial resolution and timing resolution

For the method: consider both charge sharing and time-position resolution

Results for pixel and strip centimeter-scale AC-LGAD sensors with a 120 GeV proton beam, Fermilab, BNL, HPK, July 16, 2024



Figure 9: Position (left) and time (right) resolution as functions of x position for strip sensors of different active thicknesses. The sensors presented have 500 µm pitch, 50 µm strip width, $1600 \Omega/\Box$ sheet resistance, and 600 pF/mm^2 coupling capacitance. Spatial resolution values have a tracker contribution of 5 µm removed in quadrature. Time resolution values have a reference contribution of 10 ps removed in quadrature.

IHEP AC-LGAD R&D

1、 Increasing pitch size



Increasing pitch size will worsen spatial resolution

For the method:

consider both charge sharing and position resolution

2 Increasing the n+ resistivity Charge sharing can be decreased!





Developments in AC-LGADs for future colliders and nuclear physics experiments Jennifer Ott, C. Bishop, A. Das, J. Ding, M. Gignac, S.M. Mazza, A. Molnar, M. Nizam, T. Shin, Y. Zhao, H.F.-W. Sadrozinski, A. Seiden, B. Schumm November 9, 2023 CPAD Workshop *jeott@ucsc.edu

How?

What is the difference for E600 and C600?

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Increase resistivity of n+ layer!

In terms of signal sharing / signal amplitude:

 Signal sharing is strongly impacted by the n-layer resistivity – almost 20 % more for lower resistivity, as well as different longrange behavior

2. Increasing the n+ resistivity

HPK sensors



FNAL 120 GeV proton beam

Varying resistivity and capacitance

Strip sensors

2. Increasing the n+ resistivity



Design of AC-coupled low gain avalanche diodes (AC-LGADs): a 2D TCAD simulation study, JINST, 2022.9, DOI:10.1088/1748-0221/17/09/C09014

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2. Increasing the n+ resistivity

IHEP AC-LGAD results



When n+ dose decreases(higher n+ resistivity), spatial resolution is improved. While the corresponding timing resolution is similar

Strip length impact

Strip length: bad impact

Signal transmission loss: signal amplitude reduce which will affect timing performance Method to improve: Readout the signal from middle instead of end

Charge sharing

Strip length increases signal sharing among more strips, the signal-to-noise ratio decreases, leading to worse timing performance

Methods to improve:

- 1, increase the pitch size, while the spatial resolution worsen(10um \rightarrow 15um, 20um).
- 2 increase the n+ resistivity, spatial resolution is better, and timing resolution is comparable. [cannot be very high(lower n+ dose change PN junction properties)]

Compromise consideration, trade-off

New submission

New submission: several optimization methods have been implemented

Strip AC-LGAD with different length and pad-pitch size, [1cm, 2cm, 4cm] [100um, 200um, 500um]

Strip AC-LGAD with EPI layer of different thickness(50um, 65um, 80um) Strip AC-LGAD with different isolation structure Redu

Reduce capacitance, increase signal

Reduce both capacitance and charge sharing

Strip AC-LGAD with different process parameters: reduce **n+ dose(resistivity)** Reduce charge sharing and improve spatial resolution



• Sector, Fan shape AC-LGAD for Endcap



Yield

>Yield depends on sensor size (not only strip length)

2cm x 2cm, or 4cm x 4cm [Yield will be too bad for large sensor size: 8cm x 9cm, 14cm x 14cm]

>Larger sensor size, worse yield!

From the point of yield, 2cm x 2cm is more preferred than 4cm x 4cm.

> But smaller sensor requires more readout channels, results in larger dead area and smaller place for electronics. More studies are needed to address following issues:

the impact of more readout channels

the impact of small sensor size to module assembly(ASIC, readout board, and so on)

the impact of the dead area to physics

The advantage of large sensor is obvious.

Let's focus on improving the performance and yield first!

Summary

Capacitance: impact both power consumption and timing resolution bulk capacitance

Methods to improve: adding isolation structure, increasing the EPI thickness

Sensor timing performance be a little worse (25ps \rightarrow 35ps) because of the thick EPI layer

Strip length:

- Transmission, impact signal amplitude(rise time)
 - Method to improve: readout pads placed at the middle of strips
- > Charge sharing, impact to signal amplitude and timing performance
 - Method to improve: increasing pitch size, reducing the n+ layer dose,

Let's do more work

1. Simulation and testing, find methods to improve capacitance \charge sharing \sensor performance

Need manpower and support!

- 2、 Improve the yield
- 3、 A backup design with 2cmx 2cm sensor will be implemented in Ref-Tdr

Plan

Simulation: (2025.2-2025.6)

- Simulate sensor performance with long strip
 - TCAD software + spice model
- Simulate process and structure parameters to improve sensor capacitance and performance
 - N+ resistivity, isolation structure

>Testing: (2025.2-2025.5)

- Radiation performance of available sensors(TID)
- Testing of sensors from FBK
- Timing and spatial resolution(Beam test)

>Submission: (2025.2-2025.5)

- Layout ready, adding new isolated structure ongoing
- Process parameter chosen based on simulation

	2024 Q4	2025 Q2	2025 Q4	2026 Q2	2026 Q4	2027 Q2	2027 Q4
Sensor:	OTKLGAD 1st submission (4cm long)	Test & characterization	OTKLGAD 2nd submission (optimization)	Test with ASIC, Test beam , radiation test	OTKLGAD 3rd submission(larg array)	je Te	st
ASIC:		OTKroc ASIC 1st submission	ASIC Test	OTKroc ASIC 2nd submission	ASIC Test	OTKroc ASIC 3rd submission	ASIC Test
Module:			Modu	le built and test		prototype bui test(large size)	lt and)

Backup

Plan

Long term plan

time	work
2025	 Testing the sensors from first submission, clarify the sensors performance and requirement (include Test beam and radiation test) Find out how to optimize the sensor performance(structure and process) Submission 2 Based on the results from first version and more simulation sensors with strip length ~4cm
2026	 Test of sensors from submission 2(basic properties and together with ASIC and BEE?) Submission 3 large area sensor design and fabrication
2027	 Submission 4 if needed module: sensor + ASIC module built and test

Backup

LGAD performance with operation temperature changing(before radiation)



Need to change operation voltage

Bias Voltage(V)



Testing setup



Picosecond laser scanning system

- Displacement accuracy 1 $\,\mu\,\text{m}$
- Automated scanning
- Picosecond laser 1064nm
- Spot size 2~5 µm

ALTIROC power consumption



Both preamplifiers are built around a cascoded common source NMOS amplifier to ensure high bandwidth (see figure 2). The drain current (I_d) of the input transistor is adjustable between 200 µA and 1 mA. The transistor size is optimized to operate close to weak inversion while keeping its capacitance small compared to that of the sensor. The operating current is chosen to minimize the series noise while not dissipating too much power (< 2.25 mW/ch for the analog part). A PMOS follower is added to isolate the load from the discriminator. The total preamplifier power consumption is 0.85 mW using a nominal current $I_d = 600 \,\mu\text{A}$ in the input transistor. A bank of seven capacitors (from 0 to 3.5 pF) can be connected by slow control to the preamplifier input to emulate the sensor capacitance when measuring the ASIC alone. They are not used when the ASIC is connected to the LGAD sensor array.

TOA measurement. Each discriminator output is sent to a sampling cell to generate a "Hit Flag" bit, that is equal to 1 in case of a hit or to 0 in case of n ion

is slightly less than 0.4 mW.

f no hit. The discriminator's power consump

$$\sigma_{\text{jitter}} = \frac{e_n C_d}{Q_{\text{in}}} \sqrt{t_d}.$$

$$e_n = \sqrt{2kT/g_{m1}}.$$

$$= \frac{e_n C_d}{Q_{\text{in}}} \sqrt{t_d}.$$
$$e_n = \sqrt{2kT/g_{m1}}.$$

 $g_{m1} = q \times I_d / 2kT$

transimpedance preamplifiers. Beam test measurements with a pion beam at CERN were also undertaken to evaluate the performance of the module. The best time resolution obtained using only ALTIROC TDC data was 46.3 ± 0.7 ps for a restricted time of arrival range where the coupling issue is minimized. The residual time-walk contribution is equal to 23 ps and is the dominant electronic noise contribution to the time resolution at 15 fC.

KEYWORDS: Front-end electronics for detector readout; Timing detectors

The TDC power consumption is dependent on the time-interval being measured. For the TOA TDC using 2.5 ns (full dynamic range), the average power consumption over the 25 ns measurement period is about 5.2 mW. It is only 3.5 mW for a time-interval equal to half the dynamic range. Thanks to the reverse START-STOP operation, the power consumption of the TDC is much lower in the absence of a hit over threshold. This results in an average power consumption per channel of 1.1 mW for both TDCs, assuming a time interval uniformly distributed (1.25 ns average) and a maximal channel occupancy of 10%.



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V_{BD} Map

2cm x 2cm DC-LGAD 15x15 array Pixel size: 1.3mm x 1.3mm

$$\begin{cases} X = X_0 + k_x m \\ Y = Y_0 + k_y n \\ m = \frac{q_1 + q_2 - q_3 - q_4}{q_1 + q_2 + q_3 + q_4} \\ n = \frac{q_1 + q_4 - q_2 - q_3}{q_1 + q_2 + q_3 + q_4} \end{cases}$$



Fig. 6. The discretized positioning circuit representation of an AC-LGAD [14].

$$\begin{cases} k_x = L \frac{\sum (m_{i+1} - m_i)}{\sum (m_{i+1} - m_i)^2} \\ k_y = L \frac{\sum (n_{i+1} - n_i)}{\sum (n_{i+1} - n_i)^2} \end{cases}$$
(2)

Strip AC-LGAD R&D

Strip AC-LGAD: Strip length:5.65mm

pad-pitch size: 100-250um, 100-200um, 100-150um

$$\sigma_t^2 = \sigma_{TimeWalk}^2 + \sigma_{Landau}^2 + \sigma_{Jitter}^2$$

constant fraction discriminator (CFD) method







Strip AC-LGAD R&D

Strip AC-LGAD: Spatial resolution(Laser testing)

Amplitude information of two electrodes \rightarrow position reconstruction \rightarrow Spatial resolution







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LGAD types





DJ-LGAD

- isolation structures (p-stop and JTE) are replaced by a deep trench, less than a μm wide
- Increasing the fill factor

 A deep junction be made by a large area of uniform n+ and p+ gain implants. and n+ DC coupled electrodes are placed a few microns from the surface.

To increase fill factor and improve radiation hardness



N- type

topside

Monolithic LGAD

Considerations regarding future colliders

- Standalone timing layers or integration into 4D (5D) Trackers?
 - Integration of gain layer in CMOS sensors...
- Occupancy:
 - Challenging for resistive layers
 - AC-coupling may not be ideal or necessary: DC-coupled resistive detectors? (in production at FBK)
- Radiation hardness: similar problems related to gain layer radiation hardness as other LGADs, potentially additional features
 - Partially compensated boron doping
- Segmentation
 - AC-LGADs can achieve better position resolution through charge sharing – may come at expense of timing performance
 - Deep-junction LGAD or deep gain layer

RSD, resistance sensitive LGAD



LGAD研究进展

高能所团队进行了多版器件的研发,改善其抗辐照性能。



AC-LGAD development

2022



AC-LGAD R&Dv1:

Pixelated AC-LGAD

One wafer

 With different pad-pitch size 1000-2000um 100-500um

100-200um

50-100um

• wafers: with different n+ dose: 10P to 0.2P

Process parameters be studied.

The performance of large-pitch AC-LGAD with different N+ dose, Trans. Nucl. Sci., 2023.6

2023



AC-LGAD R&Dv2: One wafer

Pixelated and strip AC-LGAD

 With different pad-pitch size 1000-2000um pixel 100-250um strip 100-150um strip 50-100um strip



wafers: with different n+ dose:0.2P to 0.01P

The performance of AC-coupled Strip LGAD developed by IHEP, NIMA, Volume 1062, May 2024, 169203

C. The time resolution

The arrival time of particle or laser $(t_{arrived})$ is defined as the mean value of the cross-threshold time of four AC pad 189 signals: 190

$$t_{\text{arrived}} = (t_1 + t_2 + t_3 + t_4)/4$$
 (4)

where t_1 , t_2 , t_3 , t_4 are the cross-threshold time of four AC pads obtained according to the constant fraction discriminator (CFD) method. In this experimental setup, the spread of arrival time is mainly composed of the time resolution of AC-LGAD (σ_{ACtime}) and the jitter of the trigger t_0 (σ_{t_0}):

$$\sigma_{(t_1+t_2+t_3+t_4)/4}^2 = \sigma_{ACtime}^2 + \sigma_{t_0}^2 \tag{5}$$

To avoid the jitter of t_0 , $(t_1 + t_2 - t_3 - t_4)/4$ is used to calculate the time resolution of AC-LGAD sensors:

$$\sigma_{ACtime} = \sigma_{(t_1 + t_2 - t_3 - t_4)/4}.$$
 (6)

Figure 10 shows the distribution of $(t_1 + t_2 - t_3 - t_4)/4$, with a time resolution of 15.6 ps. The time resolution here is based on laser tests and includes only the jitter component [1], [2], which is evaluated by the mean value of the jitter component of 36 test positions. Figure 11 shows the jitter component of the time resolution of AC-LGAD with different N+ doses. The jitter component of the time resolution varies slightly, about 15-17 ps with different N+ doses.

Given the large length of these sensors, a position-dependent delay is introduced in the mean arrival times of the signal based on the impinging location of the proton. To correct for this, the first strategy uses the external tracker to determine the proton hit position as a function of x and y, and creates a reference map of correction values depending on the location of the hit. The second correction strategy utilizes the signals from the leading and sub-leading channels on the sensor and re-defines the *multi-channel timestamp* as defined in **13**, is given by:

$$t = \frac{a_1^2 t_1 + a_2^2 t_2}{a_1^2 + a_2^2},\tag{1}$$

where subscript 1 (2) refers to the leading (subleading) channel: $t_{1(2)}$ is the time of arrival and $a_{1(2)}$ is the amplitude of the leading (subleading) channel respectively.

The jitter from one channel is given by $\sigma_{\text{jitter}} = N/\frac{dV}{dt}$, where N is the baseline noise and $\frac{dV}{dt}$ is the signal slew rate, for events throughout the sensor. However, since the aim is to calculate the contribution of the jitter to the time resolution arising from multiple channels, a "weighted jitter" method is implemented as follows:

$$\sigma_{t,\text{jitter}} = \sqrt{\frac{a_1^4 \sigma_{t_1,\text{jitter}}^2 + a_2^4 \sigma_{t_2,\text{jitter}}^2}{(a_1^2 + a_2^2)^2}} \tag{2}$$

where $\sigma_{t,jitter}$ is the weighted jitter from the AC-LGAD signal, and $\sigma_{t_1,jitter}$ and $\sigma_{t_2,jitter}$ are the jitter from the leading and subleading channels, respectively.

All time resolution numbers quoted in this paper remove the MCP reference contribution of 10 ps in quadrature.

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The design used now



In terms of signal sharing / signal amplitude:

- Signal sharing is strongly impacted by the n-layer resistivity – almost 20 % more for lower resistivity, as well as different longrange behavior
- Strip length increases signal sharing, but signal from primary channel decreases down to ~10% at the next neighbor
- Roles of sensor bulk thickness, strip width, dielectric capacitance are less significant





Sensor type



结论: 2、耦合电容越大(氮化硅介电常数大),位置分辨越好



Figure 7: MPV amplitude as a function of x position (left), position reconstruction fit results (center), and time resolution as a function of x position (right) for HPK strip sensors of different coupling capacitance and sheet resistance values. The sensors presented here have a 50 µm active thickness and a 50 µm strip width.

N+电阻率变大	电容增大,位置分辨
信号变化量大	变好(变化量)
影响大	影响较小

时间分辨,电阻率大仍可到35ps