

# Instrumentation of A New Direction Sensitive Segmented Optical Module.

Andrea Bersani on behalf of the NEMO Collaboration ??

*Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Sezione di Genova, Via Dodecaneso 33, 16146-Genova (Italy)*

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## Abstract

An efficiency increase in the intermediate energy region for an underwater neutrino telescope could be an important development to gain a better sensitivity in the study of the physical processes concerning the deep universe and to have a useful tool for better detector calibration with atmospheric neutrinos. A new, direction sensitive, segmented optical module is under development in Genova: according to preliminary simulations, this kind of device can, together with a dedicated reconstruction strategy, improve by a significant factor the telescope sensitivity at low and intermediate energies. This optical module will feature a newly developed 10" Hamamatsu 4-anodic PMT coupled to a dedicated electronic to be integrated in the NEMO readout chain: the first directional OMs will be installed in the NEMO test site during the preliminary phase of the experiment.

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## 1. Advantages of Directional Optical Modules

Deep sea neutrino telescopes were designed since the late 70s, with a common structure: an array of vertical structures featuring a series of layers of light sensitive elements, usually called Optical Modules (OM). After the pioneering work of Dumand Collaboration [?], new techniques were developed both for sea water and for polar ice detectors [?], [?], [?], [?].

All the developed optical modules have a very similar structure. A pressure resistant glass sphere hosts a large emispherical photomultiplier, optically coupled to the sphere using a layer of optical gel or glue. The power supply and front-end electronics are usually included in the sphere and directly connected to the PMT.

This setup is well proven, and allows quite a good track reconstruction if the number of hits is sufficiently high, i.e. 10 or more. This means that the track length must be sufficiently large. This is due to the limited density of sensitive elements which can be installed in such kind of detector. A steep reduction of the efficiency under 1 TeV is the observed effect for a cubic kilometer scale detector, instrumented with  $\sim 10^4$  OMs.

The hit multiplicity is partially recovered grouping several OMs in each layer: this is realized, as an example, in ANTARES with 3 OMs looking in different directions and placed at a small distance one from the other [?]. Nevertheless, the number of OMs is limited by costs and failure rate considerations, and, for low energy tracks, the poor definition of the track position w.r.t. the OM itself, is a strong limitation to the reconstruction capability for the detector as a whole.

In this scenario, we decided to ask industry to

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\* Corresponding author, e-mail bersani@ge.infn.it



Fig. 1. A section of a directional OM: if compared to a traditional one, the thick light guide with mirrors is the main difference.

develop a 4-anode, 10" PMT, which has, at least, the same photocathode area as a traditional, equivalent radius PMT. This solution has a better granularity, but is compatible with the present readout chain with minor improvements.

Such a kind of PMT can be coupled to a properly designed light guide, divided in 4 sectors, with mirrors, which can relate the incoming light direction to the photocathode quadrant which is hit. Thus, the angular acceptance of each quadrant is smaller than that of a single anode PMT. Therefore the position of the track w.r.t. the OM is measured much better. This can improve the track reconstruction. The arrangement of the PMT and the light guide in the glass sphere is shown in Fig. ??.

Several simulations were done and are underway to determine the improvement which can be achieved using these directional OMs as shown in Fig. ?. The effective area of a cubic kilometer detector increases up to more than a factor of two at low energies ( $\sim 100$  GeV) and reaches the "standard value" at energies of the order of 100 TeV. In fact, at high energies the track emits light which can be collected by several towers, so no improvement is possible, since the effective area of the detector is almost equivalent to the geometrical area of the whole detector; on the other hand, at low energies, the effective area is the sum of effective areas of several small detectors (corresponding to the single vertical structures which make the whole telescope), so the increase in sensitivity is large.

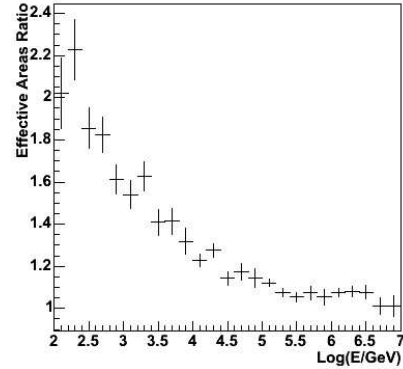


Fig. 2. Ratio of the effective areas calculated for a cubic kilometer detector with and without directional OMs: a gain of a factor 2 is predicted at low energy.

## 2. Directional OM Realization

The realization of a directional OM requires the development of completely novel technologies, including:

- a 4-anode PMT,
- the light guides,
- power supply and voltage divider,
- frontend electronics.

### 2.1. The 4-anode Photomultiplier

The 4-anode PMT was realized by Hamamatsu, starting from their former experience in large area PMTs. Two samples were delivered to us, after some measurement made at factory. The angular acceptance, compared to the one of a traditional PMT, shows a more constant behaviour as a function of the incidence angle, with a steep decrease at angles greater than 80 degrees: this is mainly due to the larger surface of the first dynodes.

A series of measurement were performed at the testing facility of the NEMO group at the INFN Sezione di Catania. We studied the single photoelectron peak, the transit time spread, the gain and the cross-talk of the prototype, to have a complete characterization and make feasible a comparison with previous models. A summary of these measurements is shown in Table ??.

	Requirement	R7081	Prototype
nominal voltage	< 2000 V	1340 V	1550 V
gain	$5 \cdot 10^7$	$5 \cdot 10^7$	$5 \cdot 10^7$
peak to valley ratio	> 2	2.8	$\sim 3$
dark noise (thr. 0.3 pe)	< 10000 Hz	910 Hz	$\sim 1200$ Hz
transit time spread	< 4 ns	3 ns	$\sim 4$ ns

Table 1  
Performances of the 4 anodic prototype compared to Hamamatsu R7081.

## 2.2. High Voltage Generation

In a deep sea neutrino telescope, high voltage is generated directly inside the pressure resistant sphere. For commonly used PMTs, such as Hamamatsu R7081-2, commercial high voltage generators and supply exist, produced, for example, by ISEG Spezialelektronik GmbH. A dedicated power supply was developed and built by Genova division for the 4-anode PMT, it is shown in Fig. ??.

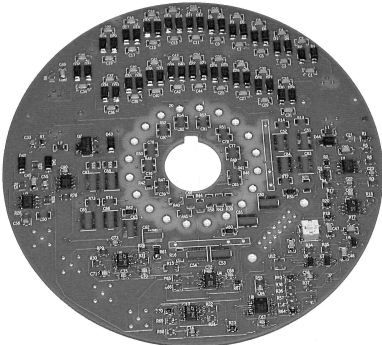


Fig. 3. The newly developed power supply and voltage divider for the 4-anode PMT.

## 2.3. Cross-Talk Handling

The main issue with a so large multi-anode PMT is the cross-talk between channels: this is due both to electric coupling between dynode cascades and to wrongly collected photoelectrons. The cross-talk was initially measured in INFN Sezione di Catania [?], showing a significant amount of fake hits due to electric coupling between the dynode cascades. This is evident when looking at the signals, as shown in Fig. ??.

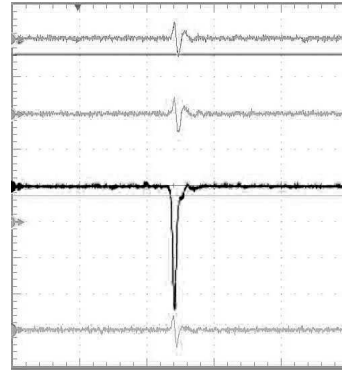


Fig. 4. The real and induced signals on the four anodes when only one quadrant is lighted (black line).

A proper active filter was designed and realized in Genova. With this filter, the oscillating signals were attenuated and only the remaining cross-talk was related to internally reflected photons and wrongly focused photoelectrons

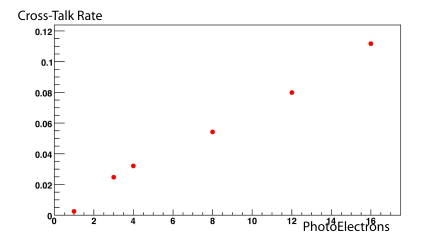


Fig. 5. Trigger rate on channel 1 vs. signal amplitude (directed on quadrant 3).

The ultimate cross-talk rate was so reduced to few %: in addition, the signal amplitude on the wrong anode was always under 2 PE.

## 2.4. The Light Guide

To optically couple the multi-anode PMT and the pressure resistant sphere a proper light guide is needed: the directional behavior is achieved with a sufficiently thick guide (8 cm or more, i.e. the thickness is comparable with the transverse dimensions of the quadrants) and a mirror system that guarantees a good separation between the quadrants. The guide which is so realized acts as a Winston cone: the total effective area is almost unchanged, but a good correlation between incident light direction and hit position is achieved [?].



Fig. 6. The complete Directional Optical Module ready to be tested. The mu-metal cage and the mirror system are visible.

Both a plexiglas and an optical gel guide were realized. The first has better optical performances, while the second features by far better mechanical characteristics. This is due to the greater elasticity and to the minor number of different materials involved. The optical gel guide was chosen for our prototype.

A cage of mu-metal was inserted in the gel, as close as possible to the glass sphere, to screen the earth magnetic field.

The light guide is completed by a mirror system that concentrates the light on the different quadrants of the cathode. The mirror system was realized with properly shaped plexiglass plates and high reflectivity foils. Several foils were characterized, both based on aluminized plastics and on multilayer sandwiches of many transparent foils with different refractive indices before choosing the best solution [?]. The performances were achieved with 3M Vikuiti ESR Film [?], a non-metallic adhesive multilayer foil, which was used in our prototype realization.

A photograph of the complete OM is shown in Fig. ??.

### 2.5. Assembling and Testing

The first Directional Optical Module was completely assembled, featuring the multi-anode PMT realized by Hamamatsu and the electronics developed in Genova.

We immediately did an attenuation measurement, to compare the response of the OM with the response of the “naked” PMT. The preliminary re-

sults confirm the simulation we did, showing a decrease of 5% of the light that reaches the photocathode.

After this preliminary characterization, a more complete characterization of the OM as a whole is underway in our water vessel, detecting Čerenkov light produced by cosmic muons.

### 3. Perspectives and Acknowledgments

A prototype for a directional OM for deep sea neutrino telescopes was realized in the INFN Sezione di Genova, within the framework of the NEMO Collaboration, as an R&D for KM3NeT. The characterization of this OM is underway, in sight of the installation in the Capo Passero site of two directional OMs.

Reconstruction code optimization is underway, and preliminary results are very encouraging. An increase of the overall detector sensitivity of a factor of two is predicted by MonteCarlo simulations at low energies.

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