

gate loses due to parasitic modes (the ground plane is etched on the bottom of this layer due to the topology of the double-Ybalun).

The double-Y balun transitioning from an unbalanced microstrip line to a balanced coplanar strip (CPS) line does not provide inherent impedance transformation; hence, Klopfenstein impedance tapers were synthesized to transition from 50 to 77  $\Omega$  in the microstrip section and from 77 to 110  $\Omega$  in the CPS section. At the balun junction, the CPS stub lengths were chosen such that the  $\lambda/8$  resonance is pushed out-

side the bandwidth of operation. Also, the smallest allowable conductor width and gap spacing were chosen to meet acceptable manufacturing tolerances.

The microstrip-to-waveguide transition has been analyzed numerically using a commercial 3D finite-element electromagnetic solver. The WR-90 waveguide (10.16×22.86×25.56 mm) was modeled as an air box. The 6010 and ULTRALAM substrates were modeled to account for dielectric losses. The microstrip section of the waveguide feed was excited using a 50- $\Omega$  lumped port; the output face of the waveguide was

modeled as a wave port. The waveguide achieves maximum insertion loss of 0.84 dB, and a minimum insertion loss of 0.32 dB from 8.0 to 12.4 GHz with the ULTRALAM substrate and additional ground. The resulting insertion loss at the band edges is significantly lower. Further improvement in the insertion loss of the waveguide feed can potentially be obtained with continued numerical optimization.

*This work was done by Jaikrishna Venkatesan of Caltech for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Further information is contained in a TSP (see page 1). NPO-42667*

## Thin-Film Ferroelectric-Coupled Microstripline Phase Shifters With Reduced Device Hysteresis

**These are useful for electronically steerable ferroelectric reflectarray antennas.**

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This work deals with the performance of coupled microstripline phase shifters (CMPS) fabricated using  $\text{Ba}_x\text{Sr}_{1-x}\text{TiO}_3$  (BST) ferroelectric thin films. The CMPS were fabricated using commercially available pulsed laser deposition BST films with Ba:Sr ratios of 30:70 and 20:80. Microwave characterization of these CMPS was performed at upper Ku-band frequencies, particularly at frequencies near 16 and 18 GHz. X-ray diffraction studies indicate that the 30:70 films exhibit almost a 1:1 ratio between the in-plane and out-of-plane lattice parameters, suggesting that their cubics create strain-free films suitable for producing CMPS devices with reduced hysteresis in the paraelectric state.

The quality of performance of the CMPS was studied based on their relative phase shift ( $\Delta\phi = \phi_n - \phi_0$ , where  $n = 0$  to 400 volts DC) and insertion loss within the DC bias range of 0 to 400 V (i.e., E-field ranges within 0 to 53 V/ $\mu\text{m}$ ). The performance of the CMPS was tested as a function of temperature to investigate

their operation in the paraelectric, as well as in the ferroelectric, state (i.e., above and below the Curie temperature, respectively). The novel behavior discussed here is based on the experimental observation of the CMPS. Remarkably, these devices were hysteresis-free in the paraelectric state, and only showed  $\Delta\phi$  hysteresis while performing in the ferroelectric state. This behavior, observed for the aforementioned cation ratio, highlights the relevance of good crystalline structure for high-quality CMPS.

Elimination of  $\Delta\phi$  hysteresis is essential for practical microwave applications such as voltage-controlled oscillators and beam-steerable devices, particularly electronically steerable phased array antennas, which require accurate phase shift versus tuning voltage profiles for reliable operation. Accordingly, the optimization of the interplay among film microstructure, Ba content, and dielectric constant is critical for reliable CMPS devices. The origin of hysteresis is most likely related to fixed charges and ferroelectric domain

phenomena in the ferroelectric state, as well as remnant ferroelectric domains in the paraelectric state. Consequently, to achieve minimum device hysteresis in the paraelectric domain, the BST films selected for the CMPS devices should be of optimal film composition [i.e., FWHM (full width at half maximum)  $< 0.05^\circ$ ], with minimum film strain (i.e., in-plane to out-of-plane lattice parameters ratio as close as possible to 1), and moderate values of dielectric constant ( $\approx 800$  at  $V = 0$ ) to enable acceptable tunability at manageable insertion losses.

*This work was done by Félix A. Miranda and Robert Romanofsky of Glenn Research Center, Carl H. Mueller of Qinetiq North America, and Frederick Van Keuls of Ohio Aerospace Institute. Further information is contained in a TSP (see page 1).*

*Inquiries concerning rights for the commercial use of this invention should be addressed to NASA Glenn Research Center, Innovative Partnerships Office, Attn: Steve Fedor, Mail Stop 4-8, 21000 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44135. Refer to LEW-18370-1.*

## Two-Stage, 90-GHz, Low-Noise Amplifier

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A device has been developed for coherent detection of the polarization of the cosmic microwave background (CMB). A two-stage amplifier has been designed that covers 75–110 GHz. The

device uses the emerging 35-nm InP HEMT technology recently developed at Northrop Grumman Corporation primarily for use at higher frequencies. The amplifier has more than 18 dB gain

and less than 35 K noise figure across the band.

These devices have noise less than 30 K at 100 GHz. The development started with design activities at JPL, as well as