



Space Qualified 200-Watt Q-band Linearized Traveling-Wave Tube Amplifier

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Abstract

L3 Technologies Electron Devices Division, (L3 EDD) and L3 Technologies Narda Microwave West (L3 NMW), are completing space-flight qualification for a 200-watt Q-band linearized channelized traveling-wave tube amplifier (LCTWTA) capable of over 5 GHz instantaneous bandwidth in a conduction-cooled package. This report will discuss the LCTWTA performance, manufacturing and flight qualification test results.

Introduction

The model 2600H linearized, channel-amplifier traveling-wave tube amplifier (LCTWTA), designed and fabricated by L3 Technologies Electron Devices Division (L3 EDD) and Narda Microwave West (L3 NMW), consists of a linearized channel amplifier (LCAMP), traveling-wave tube (TWT), and electronic power conditioner (EPC), which have all completed or nearly completed flight qualification testing. Producing up to 200 W of CW saturated RF power over bandwidths over up to 5.0 GHz in the 37.5-to-42.5 GHz Q frequency band; this LCTWTA represents the highest CW power helix TWT qualified for space applications at Q-band. It maintains typical efficiency, linearity and noise performance. In addition, a linearized, channel amplifier for the same band is completing qualification at L3 Technologies Narda Microwave West (L3 NMW). Together, the 9922H TWT and the linearized channel amplifier, combined with an L3 EDD electronic power conditioner such as the 2600H, will provide unprecedented amplifier performance for commercial space downlink applications.

Background

This report discusses the L3 EDD Q-band LCTWTA. It produces up to 200 W of CW, linearized saturated RF power over up to 5 GHz in the Q frequency band. Figure 1 shows the model 2600H EPC with the model 9922H conduction-cooled TWT next to the L3 NMW linearizer and channel amplifier (LCAMP).

Traveling-Wave Tube (TWT)

The TWT model 9922H employs a helical RF circuit with periodic, permanent magnet (PPM) focusing packaged for conduction cooling. The electron gun is a dual-anode, isolated-focus-electrode design, and is designed for greater than 15 years of mission life. The helix circuit is designed to provide CW saturated RF output power up to 200 W RF over the 37.5 to 42.5 GHz Q-band frequency range. The 9922H was designed primarily using the Naval Research Laboratory codes CHRISTINE 3D (Ref. 1) and MICHELLE (Ref. 2).

TWT Qualification

The model 9922H TWT is completing flight qualification. Measured RF performance at ambient temperature is shown in Table I.

The TWT body current at saturated drive level is below 0.6 mA while the output power exceeds 200 W across 37.5 to 42.5 GHz with an average efficiency of 60 percent. The following additional test results are presented in the Appendix:

- RF output Power vs. time at a fixed frequency of 40 GHz
- Input and output return loss vs. frequency
- Single tone RF output power vs. input drive from saturation at several frequencies
- Saturated output power vs. frequency
- Small signal gain and phase vs. frequency
- Collector currents and body current vs. input power relative to saturation
- Total DC power, RF output power, and thermal dissipation vs. input power relative to saturation

The overall space-flight qualification effort includes a range of operating and nonoperating environmental tests. TWT qualification testing began after exhaustive acceptance test processing and performance quantification. Qualification testing includes random vibration testing, pyrotechnic shock testing, and thermal-vacuum cycling. The random vibration is at levels of up to 18.9 Grms for a minimum of 3 min per axis. For shock testing a high-performance vibration table was used to simulate a shock



Figure 1.—2600H EPC (upper left) with 9922H TWT (middle) and L3 NMW LCAMP (lower right).

TABLE I.—9922H TWT PERFORMANCE

Frequency, GHz	37.5	40.0	42.5	(No drive)
Drive level	Saturated			
Iw, mA	0.42	0.44	0.55	0.13
Pin, dBm	0.3	-1.2	-0.3	-----
Saturated Pout, W	204	208	201	-----
Saturated Gain, dB	52.8	54.4	53.4	-----
Total DC, W	335	347	346	112
Thermal Dissipation, W	131	139	145	112
Overall Efficiency, %	61.0	59.9	58.2	-----

pulse over the frequency range from 100 Hz to 10 KHz. Each test was performed three times per axis for a total of 9 pyrotechnic shock qualification pulses at levels of up to 2590 g's. Thermal vacuum testing is now being performed over all operating conditions from nonoperating to full RF power. Sixteen (16) thermal vacuum cycles will be performed over the temperature range of -20 to 86 °C. Four "cold starts" will soak the nonoperating TWT to thermal stability at -35 °C and then initiating a full RF power start and CW operation. The unit will also demonstrate nonoperating survival from -35 to 95 °C. Additional details on the sinusoidal vibration, random vibration, shock, thermal vacuum cycles, environmental qualification performance, and life test experience are presented in the Appendix.

At each intermediate step and again once all environmental testing completed, the TWT will be exercised through a full functional and operational test regime.

Electronic Power Conditioner (EPC)

The electronic power conditioner (EPC) shown in Figure 1 is model 2600H, qualified in 2016 (Ref. 3). This EPC is capable of processing up to 600 W of DC power at voltages of up to 12 kV. The EPC can be configured to accept either regulated or

unregulated spacecraft bus voltages of up to 100 V. The EPC efficiency ranges between 91 and 95 percent depending on the spacecraft bus voltage interface and environmental extremes requirements. At power levels below approximately 40 W, the Q-band TWT can mate to the lighter L3 EDD model 2000H or 2410H EPCs which provide cathode voltages up to 7 kV.

Linearized Channel Amplifier (LCAMP)

The L3 NMW LCAMP is shown at the lower right in Figure 1. An LCAMP consists of a channel amplifier (CAMP) and linearizer. The CAMP operates in fixed gain mode (FGM) or automatic-level-control (ALC) mode. In ALC mode, a fixed drive level is provided to the linearizer over a wide input dynamic range. In the fixed gain mode (FGM), the CAMP provides a variable gain that may be used for various system purposes such as ground mode testing. The CAMP provides 53 dB linear gain across the 37.5 to 42.5 GHz band. The linearizer is a unity-gain pre-distorter that follows the CAMP. Its purpose is to compensate TWT nonlinearity and provide reduced back-off levels of operation to enhance system linearity, power, and efficiency. Figure 2 shows typical improvement in noise power ratio (NPR) achieved by the linearizer. The LCAMP thermally compensates for the TWTA performance with thermistor-based control circuitry. Both CAMP and linearizer are mounted to a common baseplate and take an 8 V supply with 7 W power consumption. RF input and output connectors are coaxial 2.4 mm.

The LCTWTA has an input dynamic range from -49 to -13 dBm with 36 gain steps in 1.0±0.3 dB increments in FGM. In ALC mode, this LCTWTA has a minimum control range of +2 to -13 dB relative to saturation with 30 gain steps in 0.5±0.25 dB increments, and typically 18 dB range with 36 control increments. The linearizer provides ~5 dB gain expansion and 40° phase expansion over swept power with 20° intentional phase expansion variation across frequency to match TWTA characteristics.

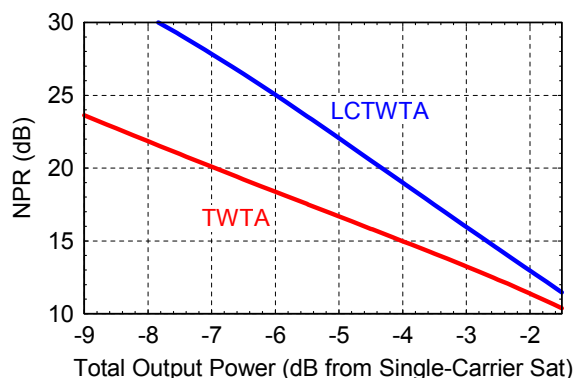


Figure 2.—Simulated LCTWTA NPR performance based on measured EM TWT and LCAMP data.

Conclusion

As a result of the thorough qualification testing, L3 EDD, with support from L3 NMW, is prepared to offer unprecedented Q-band RF amplifier performance from a flight-qualification-tested LCTWTA delivering power levels up to 200 W with LCTWTA efficiencies over 50 percent and NPR approaching 20 dB at 4.5 dB OBO from saturation.

References

1. T.M. Antonsen, D.P. Chernin, S.J. Cooke and B. Levush, “Spurious reflection of space charge fields in TWTAs,” in *IEEE Transactions on Electron Devices*, vol. 52, no. 5, pp. 755–763, May 2005.
2. J.J. Petillo, E.M. Nelson, J.F. DeFord, N.J. Dionne and B. Levush, “Recent developments to the MICHELLE 2-D/3-D electron gun and collector modeling code,” in *IEEE Transactions on Electron Devices*, vol. 52, no. 5, pp. 742–748, May 2005.
3. N.R. Robbins, W.L. Menninger, X. Zhai and D.E. Lewis, “Space qualified, 150–300-watt K-band TWTA,” *2016 IEEE International Vacuum Electronics Conference (IVEC)*, Monterey, CA, 2016, pp. 1–2.

Appendix—Additional RF Test Results and Details on Environmental Qualification



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This presentation consists of L3 Technologies, Inc. general capabilities information that does not contain controlled technical data as defined within the International Traffic in Arms (ITAR) Part 120.10 or Export Administration Regulations (EAR) Part 734.7-11.

Outline



Electron Devices

- **Introduction**
- **Heritage**
- **Qualification**
- **Performance summary**
- **Conclusion**



Q/V Broadband Solution

Q/V-band spectrum in the context of satellite telecom spans from 37.5 GHz to 42.5 GHz for downlink as well as 47 to 52 GHz for uplink. This is significant because **Q/V-band offers roughly 5 GHz (5,000 MHz) of continuous spectrum for downlink**

	Downlink Frequencies	Spectrum Available by GEO Orbital Position	Antenna Type and Diameter
Q/V-bands	~40 GHz	5,000 MHz	Pointed
Ka-band	~20 GHz	3,500 MHz	Pointed (0.6-1.2m)
Ku-band	~12 GHz	500 MHz	Pointed (0.9-1.2m)
C-band	~4 GHz	500 MHz	Pointed (1.8)
S-band	~3 GHz	70 MHz	Omnidirectional (0.2-0.6m)
L-band	~1.5 GHz	15 MHz	Omnidirectional (0.2-0.6m)

Higher frequency bands offer more available bandwidth.

Q/V-Band Down/Up-link TWTs



Electron Devices



- TWT Model: 9922H
- 200 W, 37.5 – 42.5 GHz
- Initial funding from NASA
- Mates with any EDD EPC
- **Qualification Complete**
- **In production now**

Downlink TWTA

Addresses emerging Q/V band commercial broadband market

- *TWT Model: 8936H
- 200 W, 47.0 – 52.0 GHz
- Uses heritage Q band TWT as a baseline
- Mates to OEM power supply
- **Available 3Q18**

Uplink TWT



* C. K. Chong "L3 technologies EDD Q/V-band helix TWT 327 for future high-data-rate communications uplink applications," *IEEE 18th Int. Vac. Electron. Conf.*, London, U.K., Apr. 2017

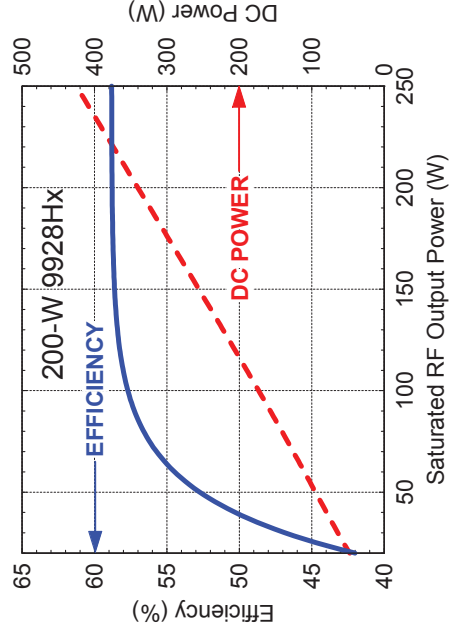
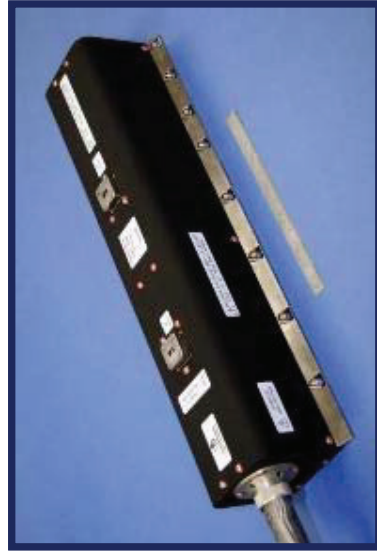
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mm-Wave (22-76 GHz) TWT Product Family

Electron Devices

Status	Flight *	Flight *	Production	Production
Parameter	9934Hx	9928Hx	9922Hx	9915Hx
Total Band	22 – 33 GHz	26 – 40 GHz	33 – 50 GHz	50 – 76 GHz
Instantaneous BW	Up to 4 GHz	Up to 5 GHz		Up to 6 GHz
RF Power	20 – 200 W	20 – 200 W	20 – 200 W	10 – 100 W
Saturated Gain	46 – 56 dB	46 – 56 dB	46 – 56 dB	43 – 53 dB
Efficiency**	30 – 60%	30 – 60%	30 – 55%	25 – 45%
Sat Drive	-5 to +1 dBm			-3 to +3 dBm
Phase Shift SS to Sat	44°			
AM/PM Conv. @ Sat	4° /dB			
Gain Ripple	0.5 dB p-p/33 MHz wc			
Gain Slope	0.015 dB/MHz wc			
Input VSWR	2.0:1 max			
Output VSWR	2.0:1 max			
Noise Figure	33 dB max			
C/3IM @ -3 dB	10 dBc			
Dimensions L" x W" x H"	14.1 x 3.5 x 2.7			13.6 x 3.5 x 2.7
Conduction	1500 g (TWT only)			
RF Input Connector	WR 34	WR 28	WR 22	WR 15
RF Output Connector	WR 34	WR 28	WR 22	WR 15
Compatible EPCs	2000Hx, 2300Hx, 2410Hx, 2600Hx, 1693Hx**			2600Hx, 1693Hx**



*- In orbit (Kepler, LRO, ScaN, JPSS, etc.)
 ** - Depends on RF power level

Acknowledgements
 Initial funding for the 9922H Q-band TWT design was provided under NASA Glenn contract no. NNC12CA45C.

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mm-Wave Space TWT Production History



Electron Devices

Supporting 8 customers and 13 missions to date

TWTA Model	TWT Model	Frequency (GHz)	Sat Power (Watts)	Ordered Qty	Delivered Qty	Units in orbit	Launch Date
2300HE	9835H	25.5 – 25.8	40	2	2	2	18 Jun 2009
2300HE	9835H	25.5 – 25.8	40	1	1	1	20 July 2012
2302HC	9934HA	26.4 – 27.0	70	2	2	2	18 Nov 2017
2302HC	9934HB	26.4 – 27.0	70	5	0		In production
2000HDA	9934HC	25.3 – 27.5	70	3	0		In production
1641H	955H	31.8 – 32.3	10	2	2	2	15 Oct 1997
2300HD	9935H	31.8 – 32.3	35	2	2	2	6 Mar 2009
2000HBW	9928HA	32.5 – 33.0	70	4	4		(2019)
2302HH	9928HD	33.0 – 36.0	70	4	0		In production
2000HDA	9922HA	40.0 – 42.0	35	30	0		In production
1693HF	9915H	60.5 – 63.5	80	8	8		(2018)
1693HG	9915HA	60.5 – 63.5	35	9	3		In production
1693HK	9915H	60.5 – 63.5	80	2	0		In production
TOTAL				74	22	9	

> 250,000 flight operating hours
No failures or anomalies

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L3 Electron Devices Division, Inc.

Q-band TWT Model 9922H

RF Performance



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Model 9922H – Broadband Performance

Frequency (GHz)	37.5	40.0	42.5	(No drive)
Drive Level	SAT			
Iw (mA)	0.51	0.57	0.64	0.12
Pin (dBm)	0.28	-1.25	-0.35	
Sat Pout (W)	203	207	200	
Sat Gain (dB)	52.8	54.4	53.4	
Total DC (W)	334	348	347	111
Thermal Diss (W)	132	141	146	111
Overall Eff (%)	60.7	59.4	57.8	
Phase Shift (deg)	-27	-41	-55	
AM-to-PM (deg/dB)	-2.6	-3.6	-5.2	
Gain Comp (dB)	7.7	7.7	7.5	
Noise Figure:	29 dB			

Broadband
High Power
High Efficiency
Typical Helix TWT performance

5 Ghz
200-watts RF
~60%

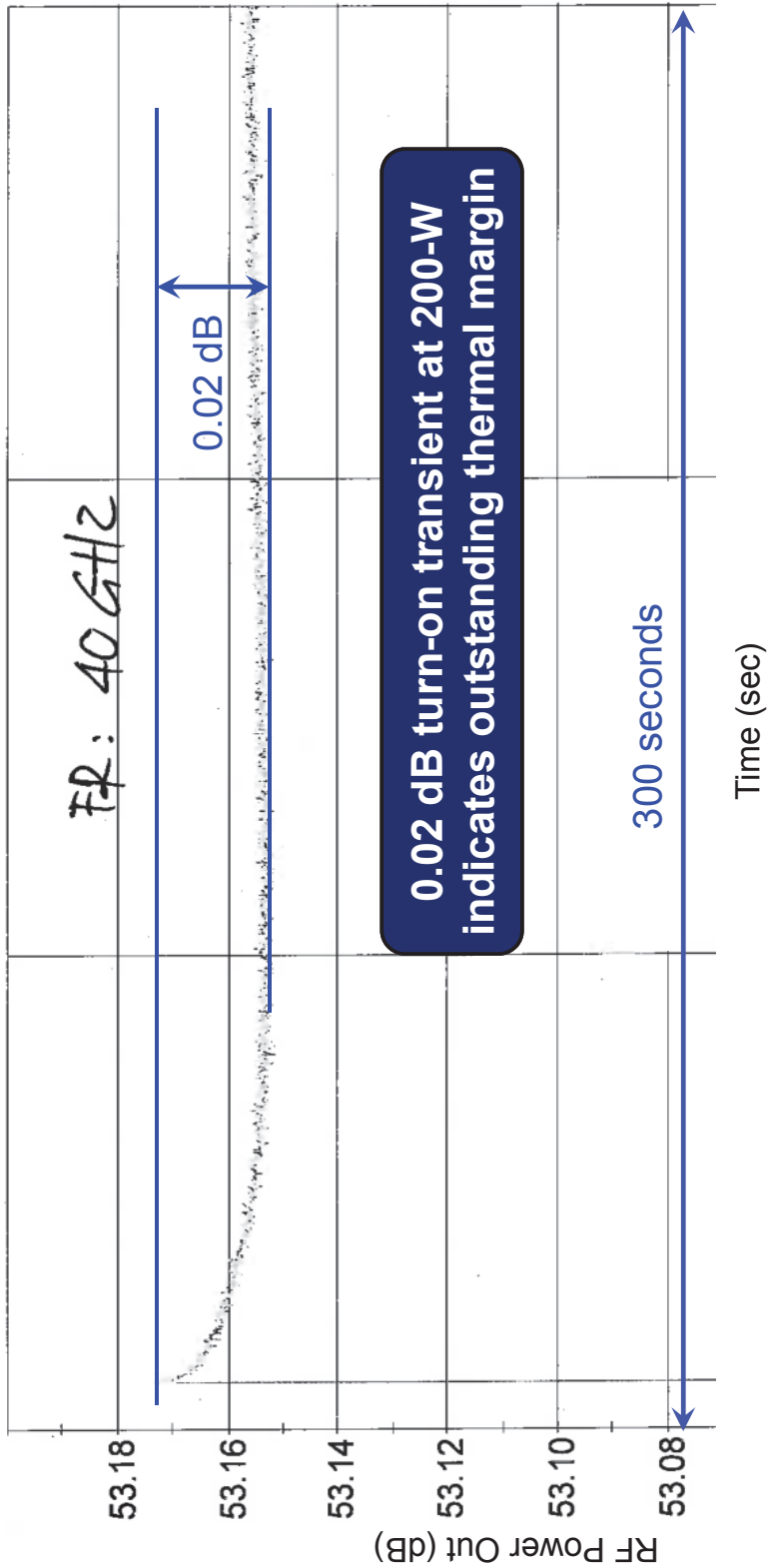
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Model 9922H – Power Handling



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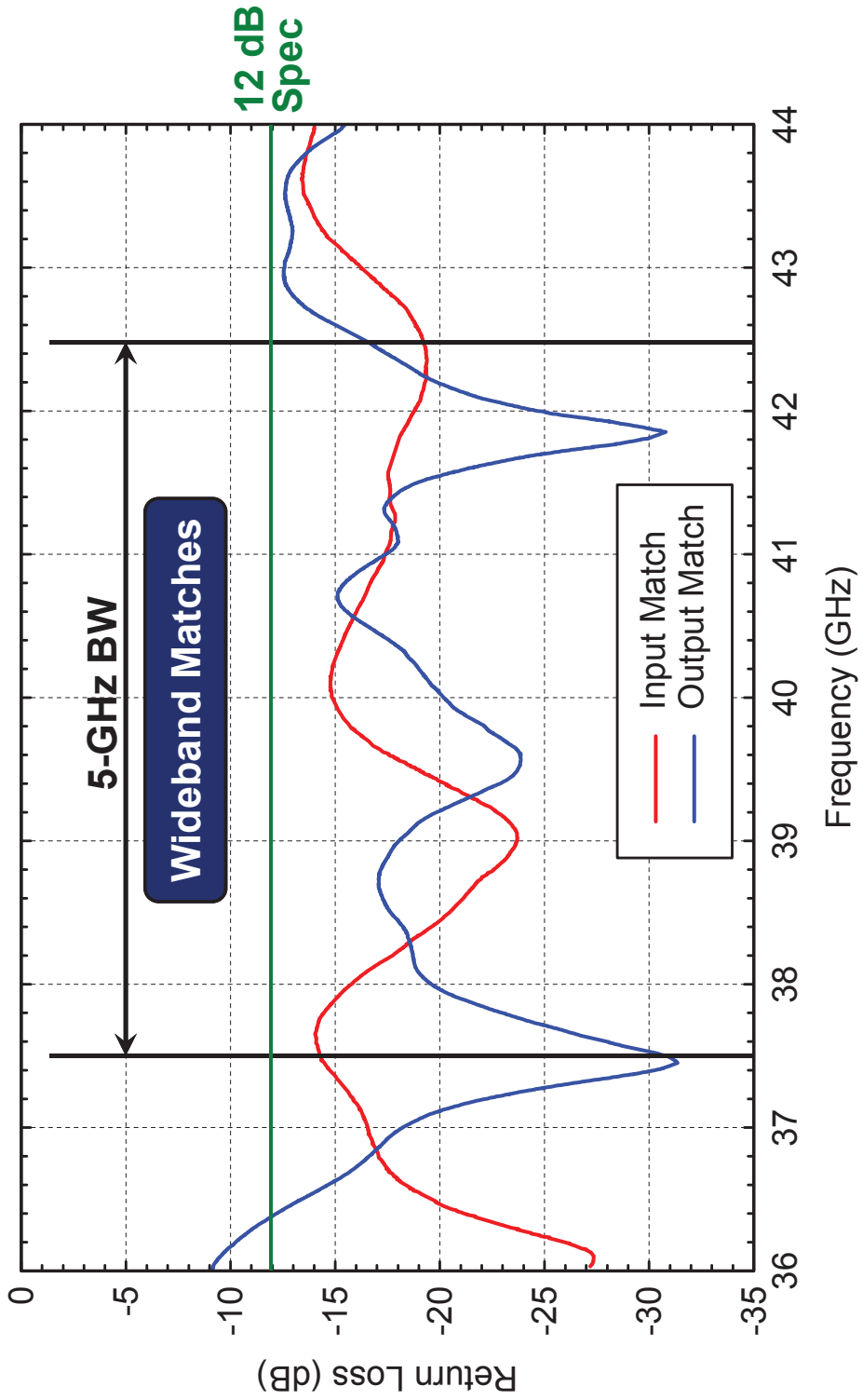
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Model 9922H – Broadband Match

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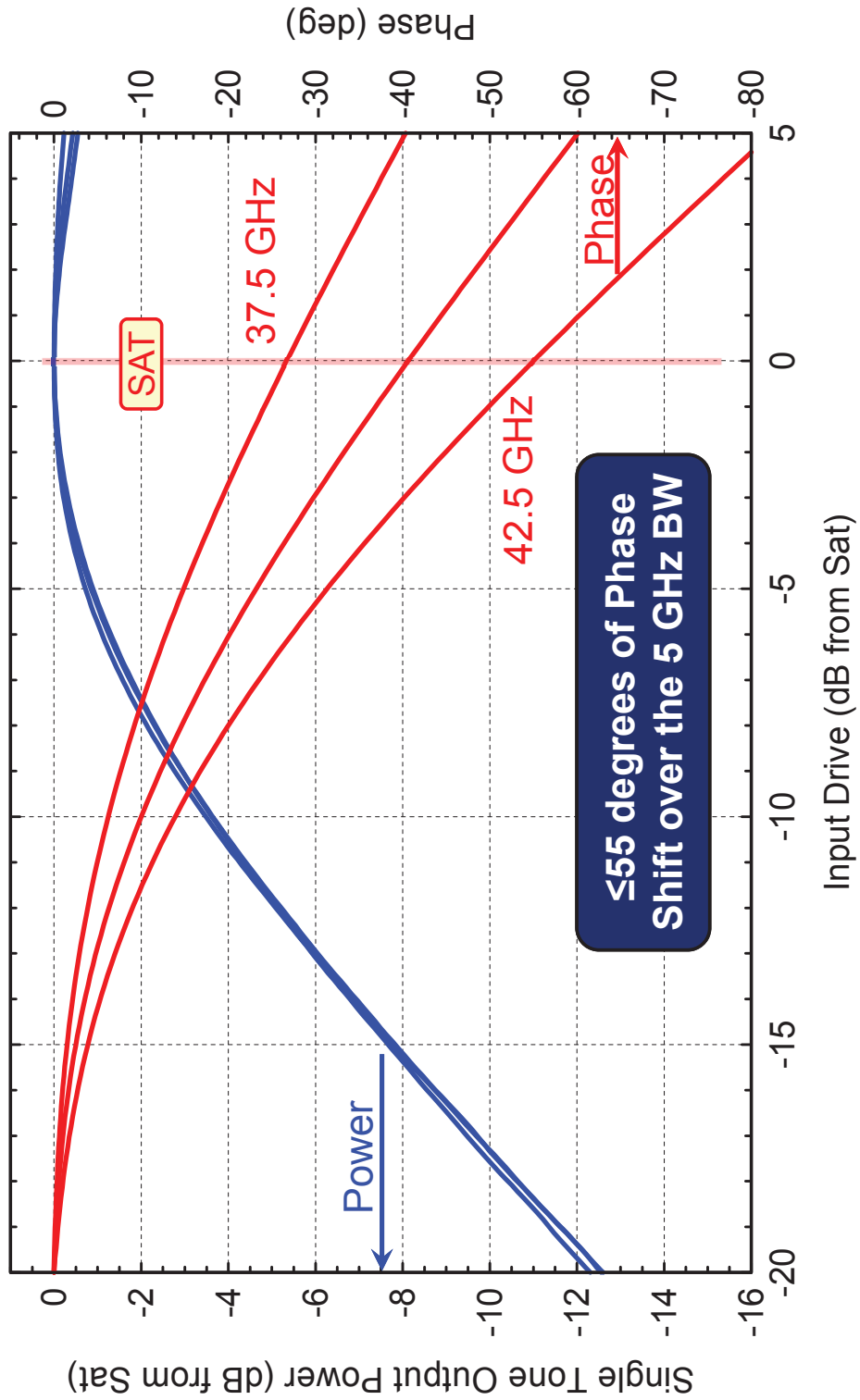


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Model 9922H – Phase vs. Drive at 200 W

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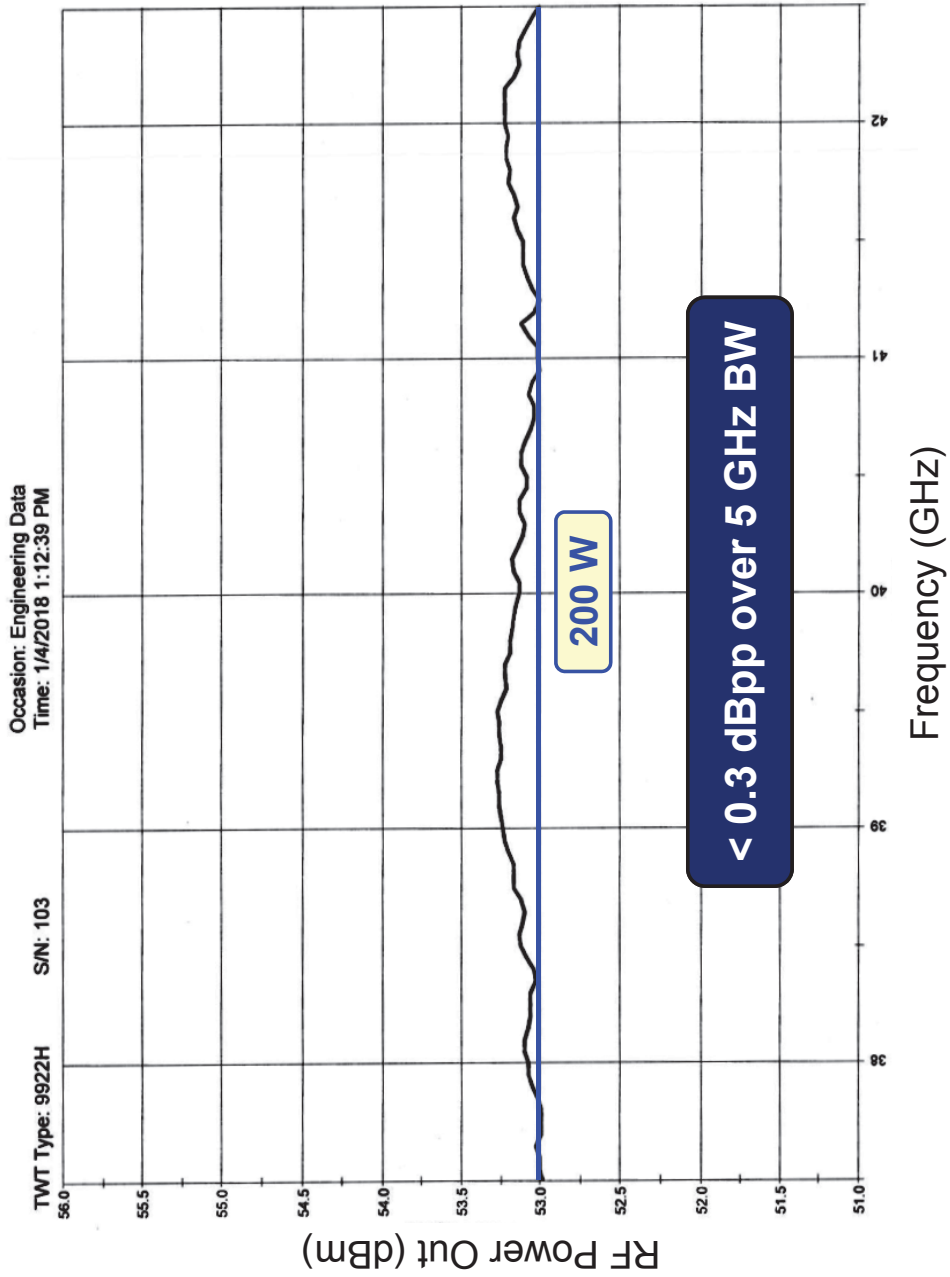


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Model 9922H – Sat Power (Fixed Drive)



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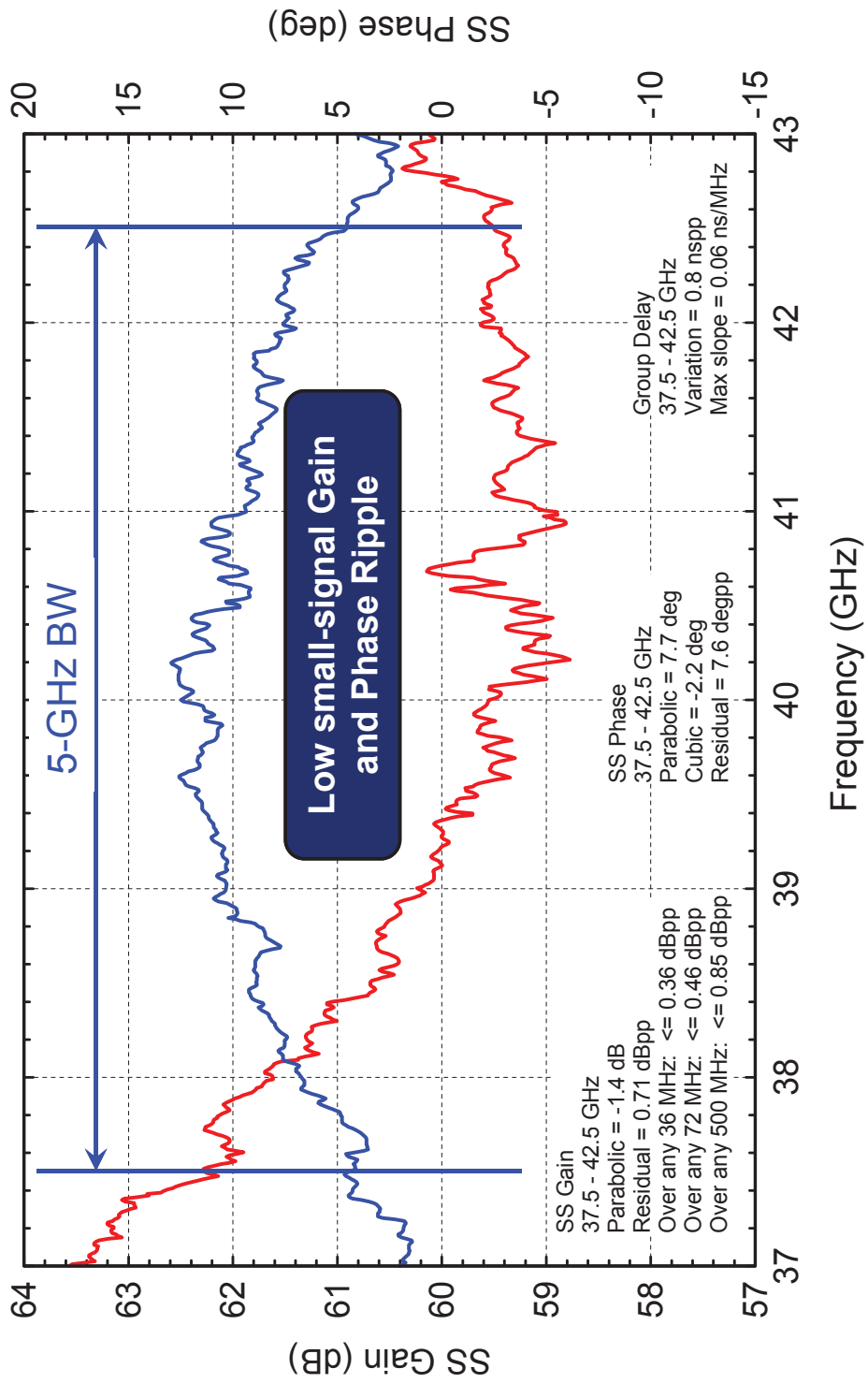


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Model 9922H – Gain and Phase Sweep

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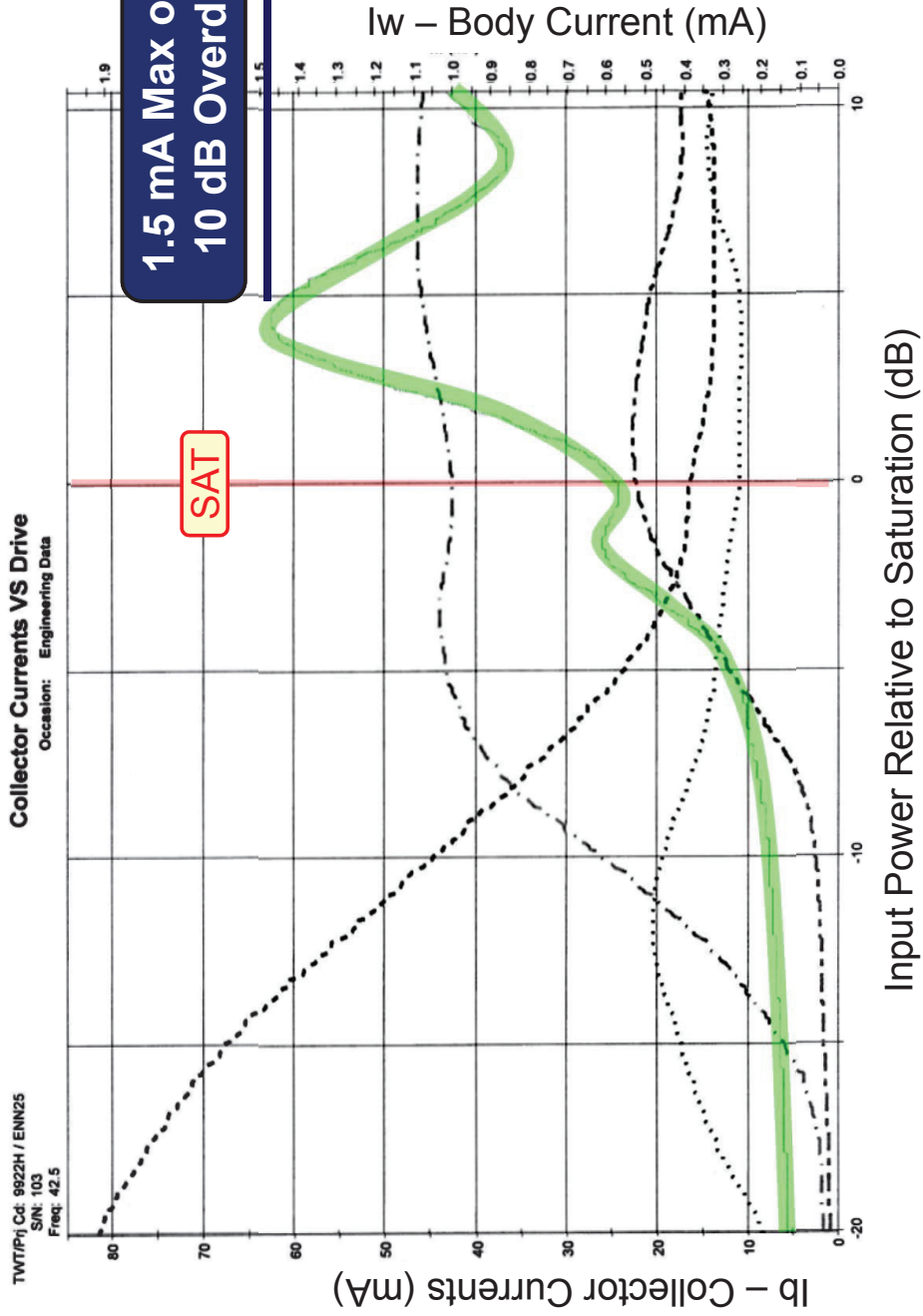


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Model 9922H – Currents vs. Drive



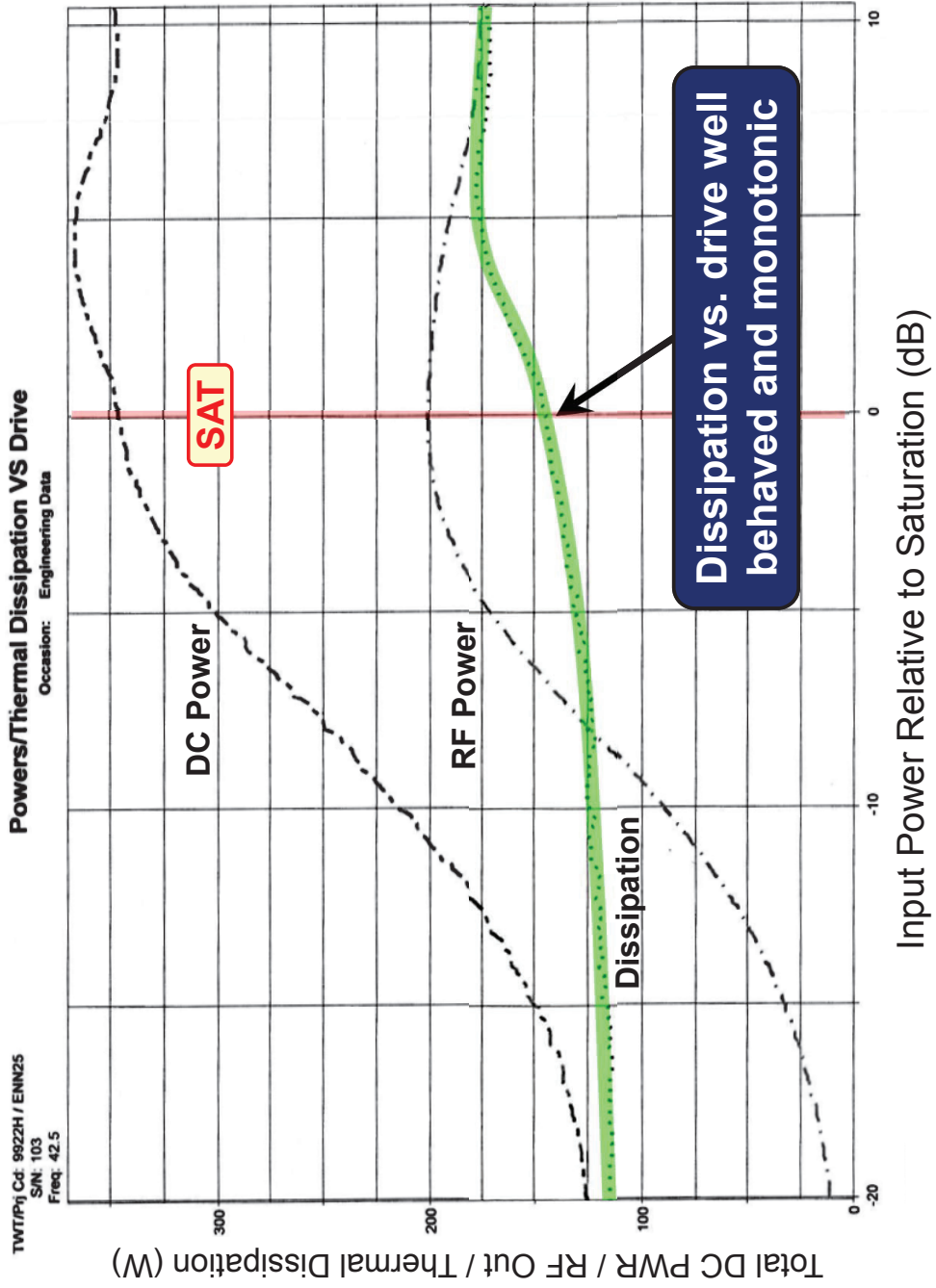
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Model 9922H – Power & Diss. vs. Drive



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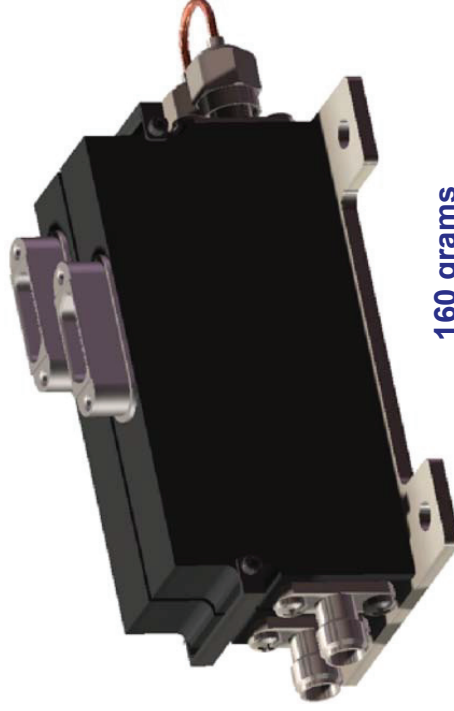
L3 Narda West Linearized Channel Amp



Electron Devices

37.5 to 42.5 GHz Performance Qualification tested -6° C to +63° C

- **CAMP**
 - Dual Mode: Fixed Gain & ALC
 - 36 dB Fixed Gain Adjustment, 1dB/step typical
 - Output Power Adjustment: 15 dB Minimum, 18dB typical (0.5 dB Steps)
 - < 10 dB Noise Figure (@ step 0)
 - Temperature Compensated
 - Internal Band-Pass Filtering
 - Mass: <80 g
 - D.C. Power: < 4.0 W, typical
- **Linearizer**
 - 6 dB Typical Gain Enhancement
 - 45 Degrees Typical Phase Advance
 - Output Power Adjustment: 15 dB Minimum, 18dB typical (0.5 dB Steps)
 - Mass: < 80 g
 - D.C. Power: < 2.5 W, typical



160 grams
Lightest Ever

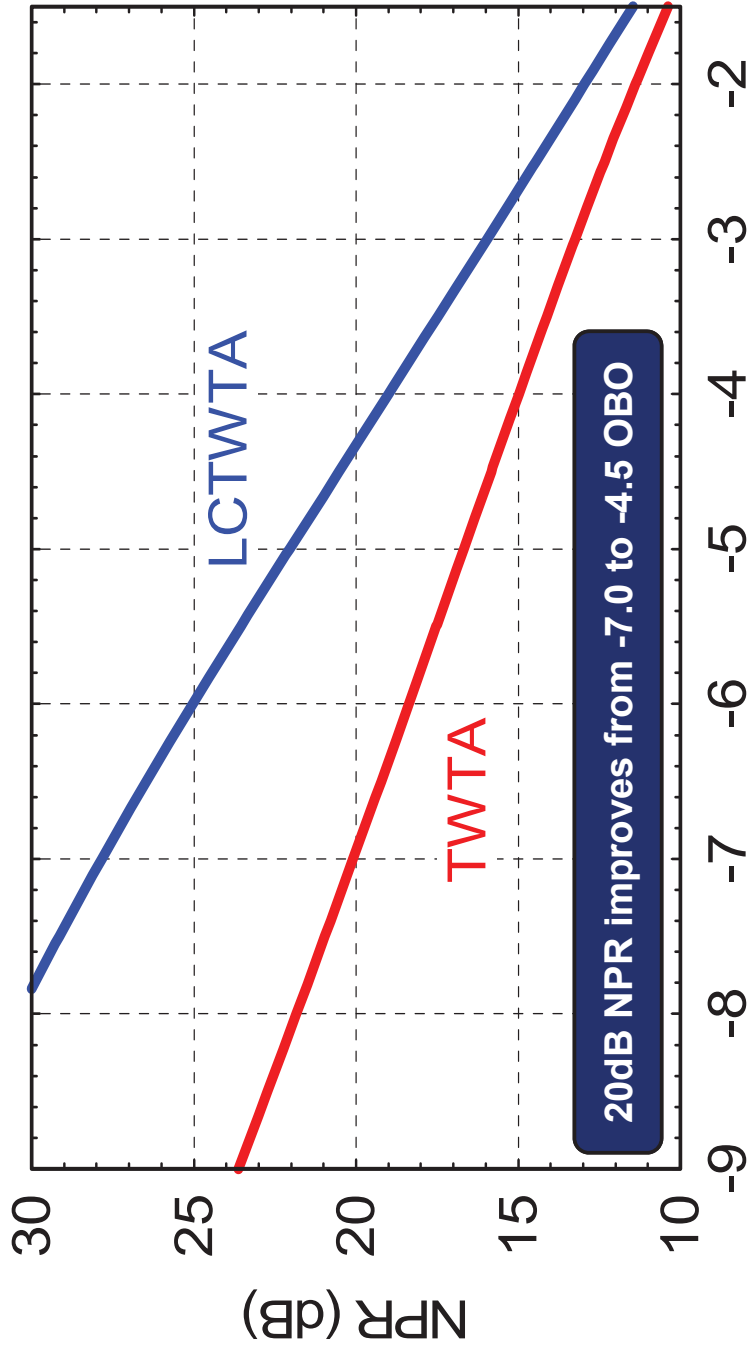
Typical Lcamp performance now available at Q-band

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Q-band TWTA vs LTWTA – NPR Prediction

Electron Devices



Total Output Power (dB from Single-Carrier Sat)

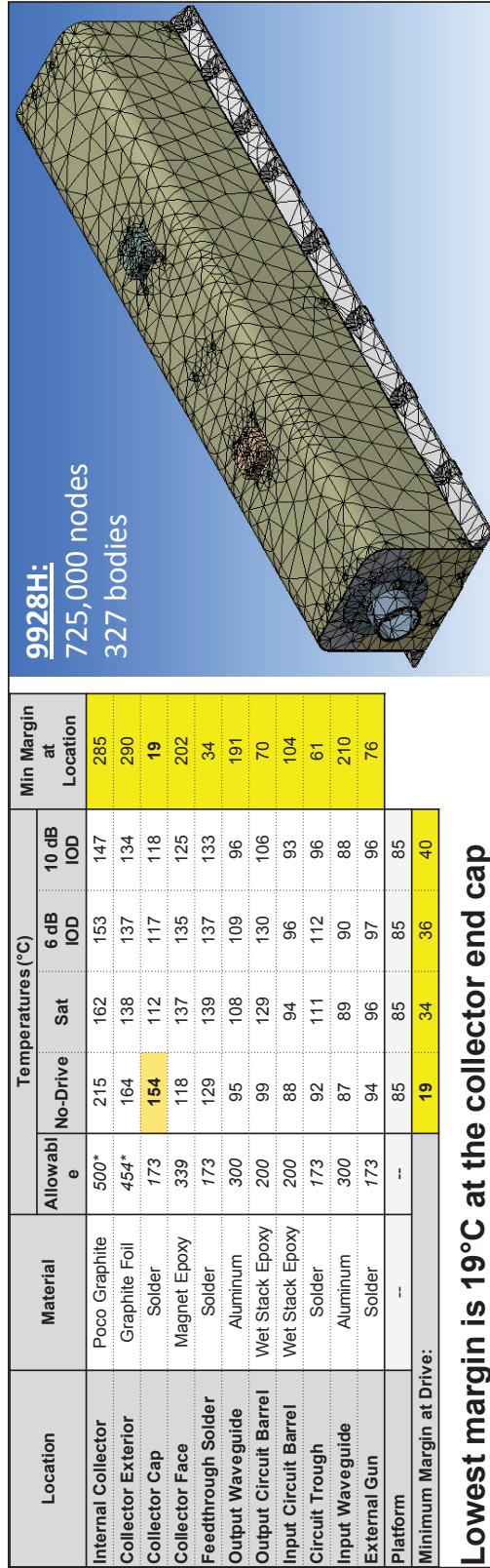
Performance prediction for the L3 EDD Q-band TWTA with and without the L3 Narda West Linearizer integrated

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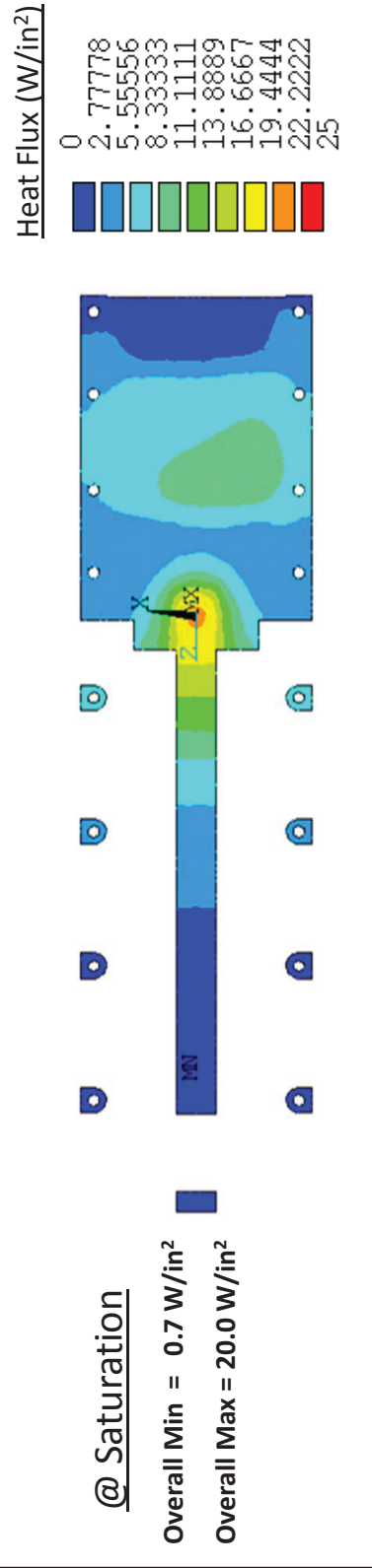


Thermal Analysis: Results

When operating at 210-watts RF



Lowest margin is 19°C at the collector end cap



Predicted temperatures are below material and customer allowable limits



mm-Wave TWT Qualification Levels

Electron Devices

Qualification Test Event	Units	Ka-band	*Q-band	V-band
Random Vibration, X-Y Axis	Grms	19.4	17.9	15.4
Random Vibration, Z Axis	Grms	19.4	18.9	20.9
Shock, All Axes	G @ Hz	40g @ 100 Hz	70g @ 100 Hz	70g @ 100 Hz
Shock, All Axes	G @ KHz	2000g @ 1.0 KHz	1000g @ 0.8 KHz	1000g @ 1.4 KHz
Shock, All Axes	G @ KHz	2000g @ 4.0 KHz	2594g @ 3.0 KHz	2000g @ 4.0 KHz
Shock, All Axes	G @ KHz	2000g @ 10 KHz	2594g @ 10 KHz	2000g @ 10 KHz
Min, Operating Survival	Celsius (°C)	-35	-35	-25
Min, Operating Performance	Celsius (°C)	-25	-20	-15
Max, Operating Performance	Celsius (°C)	75	90	70
Max, Operating Survival	Celsius (°C)	75	90	70
Thermal Vacuum Cycles	# Cycles	9	16	28
Number of Units Tested	# Units	1 + 1 PFM	1 + 1 PFM	2

*Could argue that the Q-band TWT is qualified by similarity, but full qualification testing at 200-watts has now completed

Sinusoidal Vibration



Electron Devices

This Qualification

Q-band Qualification (All Axes)	
Sweep Rate:	2 oct/min
Frequency (Hz)	Amplitude (G's)
5.0	1.0
28.0	28.0
100.0	28.0

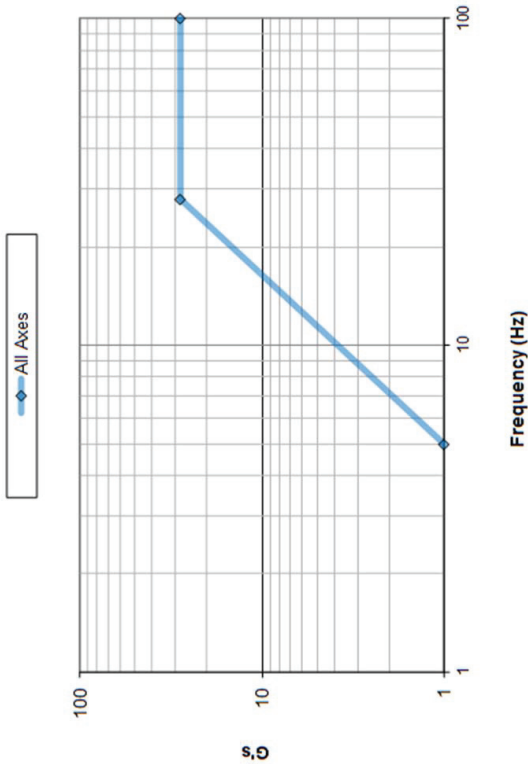
Heritage Requirements

Heritage mm-Wave (All Axes)	
Sweep Rate:	4 oct/min
Frequency (Hz)	Amplitude (G's)
5.0	0.6
18.0	8.0
150.0	8.0

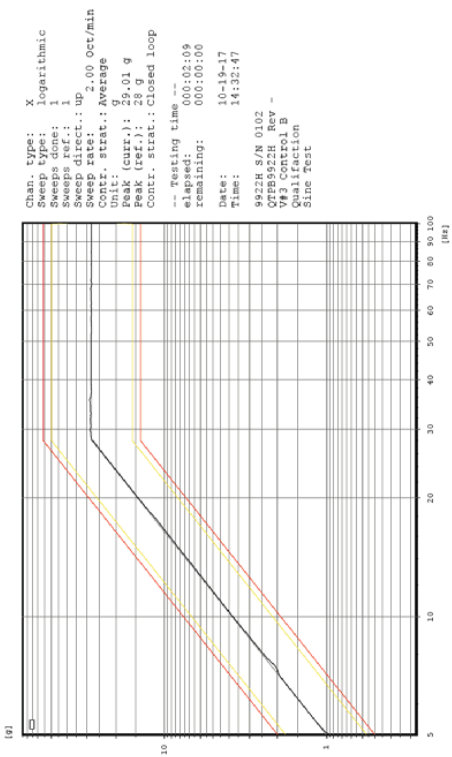
Current Production Spec

Q-band Flight Spec (All Axes)	
Sweep Rate:	2 oct/min
Frequency (Hz)	Amplitude (G's)
5.0	0.60
22.6	13.0
50.0	13.0
51.0	5.2
100.0	5.2

EDD - 9922H Qualification Sine Vibration



Sine
TWV Vibration
Major Horizontal
Stamp #10015817



Chan. type: X
Sweep type: logarithmic
Sweeps done: 1
Sweeps left: 0
Sweep rate: 2.00 Oct/min
Unit: (curr.): g, 0.01 g
Peak (ref.): 28 g
Contr. strat.: Closed loop
-- Testing time --
elapsed: 000:02:09
remaining: 000:00:00
Date: 10-18-17
Time: 14:32:47
9922H S/N 0102
VIB CONTROL A -
VIB CONTROL B -
Qualification
Sine Test

Q-band sine vibration test spec satisfies typical flight program requirements

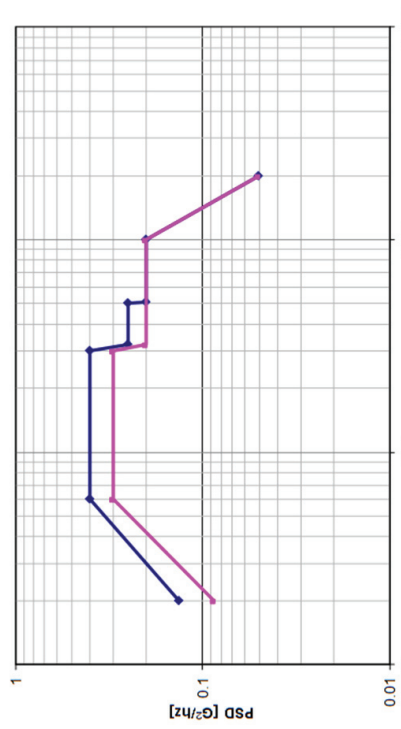
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Random Vibration



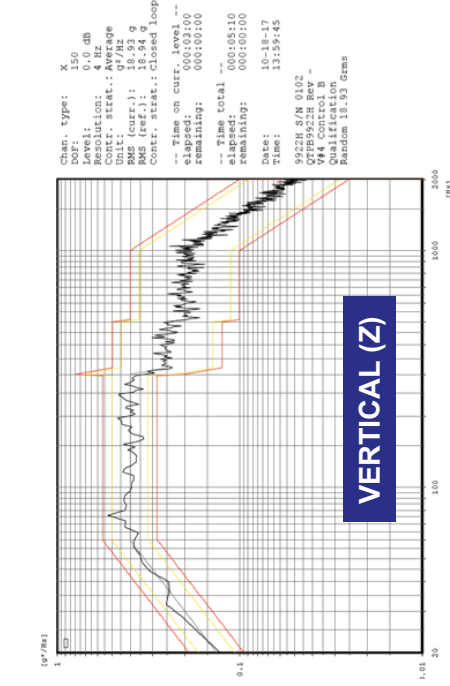
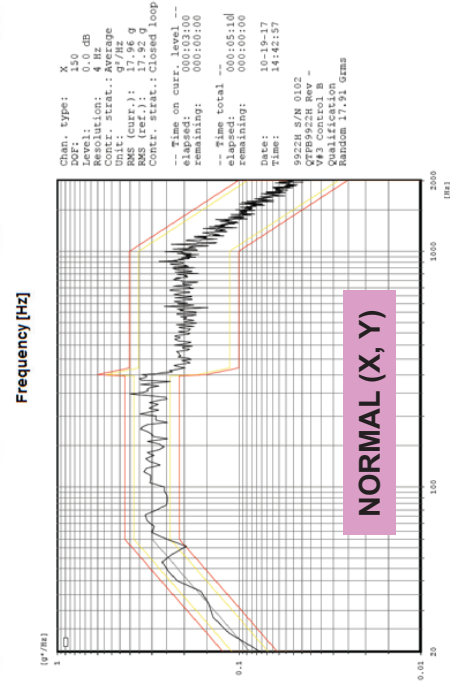
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Normal (Out-of-Plane) To Mounting, TWT Vertical, 18.93 Grms
 Parallel (In-Plane) To Mounting, TWT Horizontal, 17.91 Grms



RANDOM VIBRATION - QUALIFICATION LEVELS
 180 sec/axis

TWT Axis	Power Spectral Density			Slope (dB/Oct)	Total (Grms)
	Frequency (Hz)	Beginning (G²/Hz)	Ending (G²/Hz)		
Vertical (Z) Normal	20 - 60	0.1338	0.4000	3.00	18.93
	60 - 300	0.4000	0.4000	0.00	
	300 - 320	0.4000	0.2500	-21.92	
	320 - 500	0.2500	0.2500	0.00	
	500 - 510	0.2500	0.2000	-33.92	
510 - 1000	0.2000	0.2000	0.00	17.91	
1000 - 2000	0.2000	0.0502	-6.00		
20 - 60	0.0867	0.3000	3.40		
60 - 300	0.3000	0.3000	0.00		
300 - 320	0.3000	0.2000	-18.91		
320 - 1000	0.2000	0.2000	0.00		
1000 - 2000	0.2000	0.0502	-6.00		



Q-band random vibration test satisfy typical flight program requirements

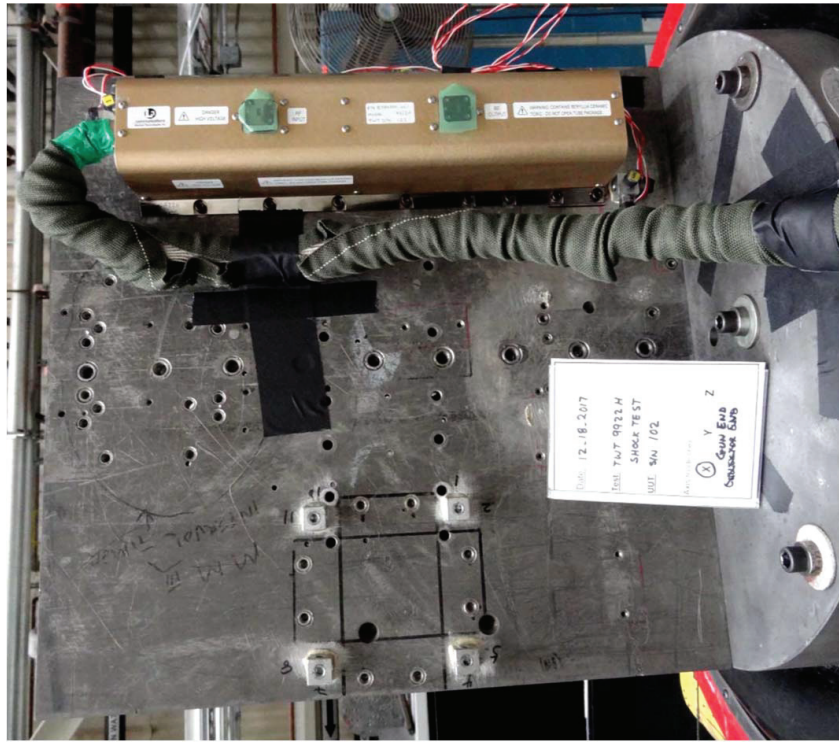
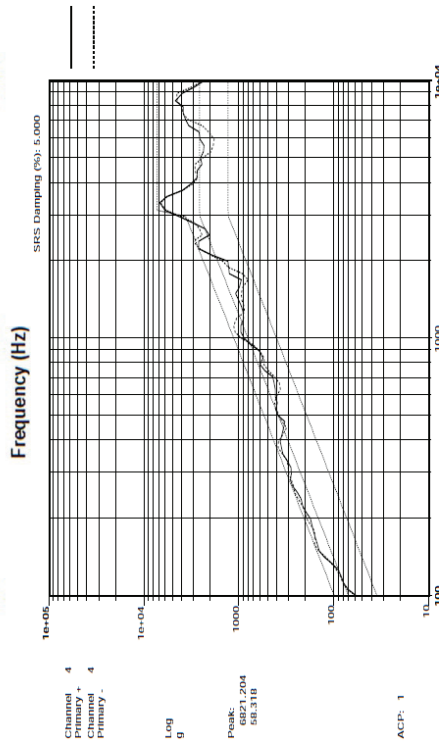
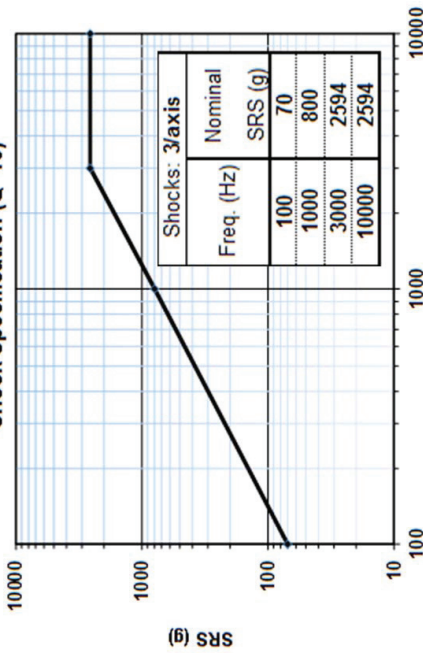
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Shock (X-Axis Example)

Shock Specification (Q=10)



Q-band shock test satisfies typical flight program requirements

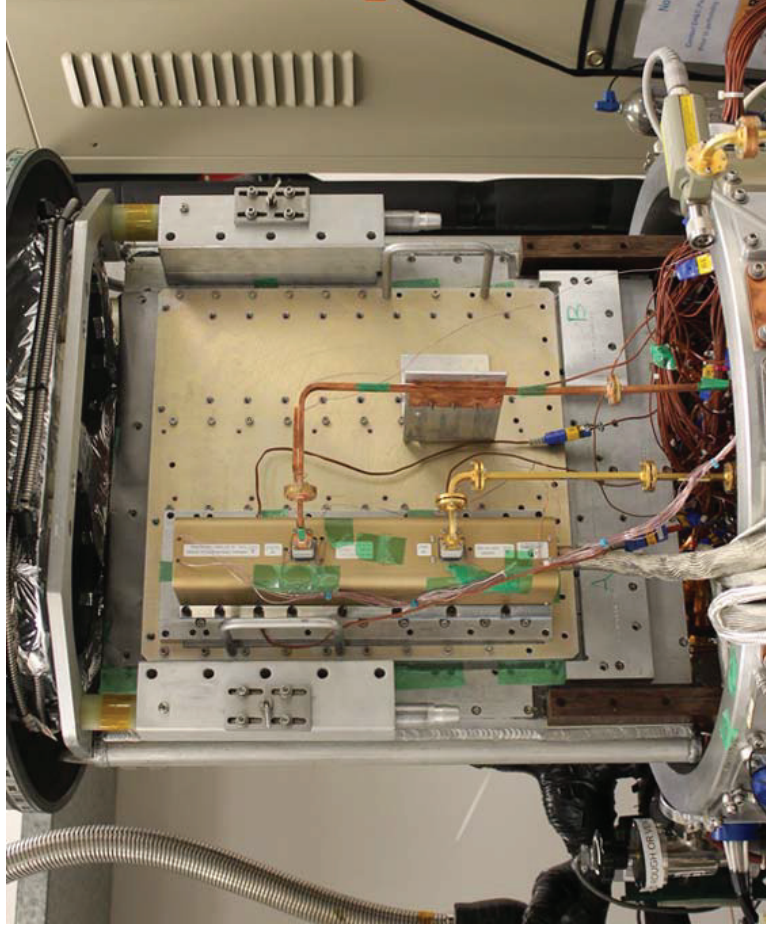
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Thermal Vacuum



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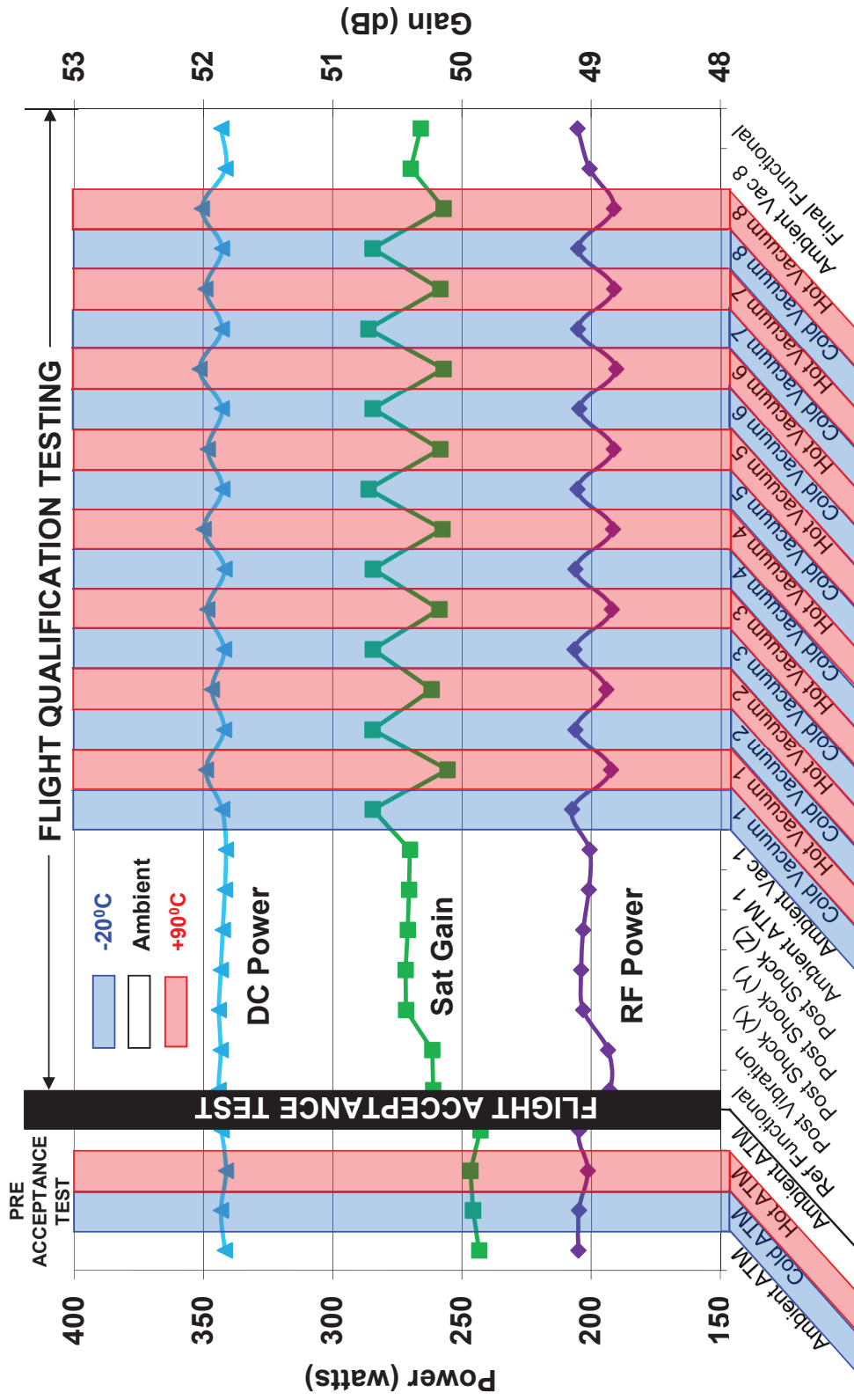
Source	Boundary	Operating (°C)		Non-operating(°C)		Start-up (°C)	
		Cold	Hot	Cold	Hot	Cold	Hot
EDD Q-band Qual Spec	Temperature (°C)	-20	90	-35	95	-35	90
	Cycles or starts	12 cycles		4 cycles		4 starts	



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Environmental Qualification Performance



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Life Test Experience



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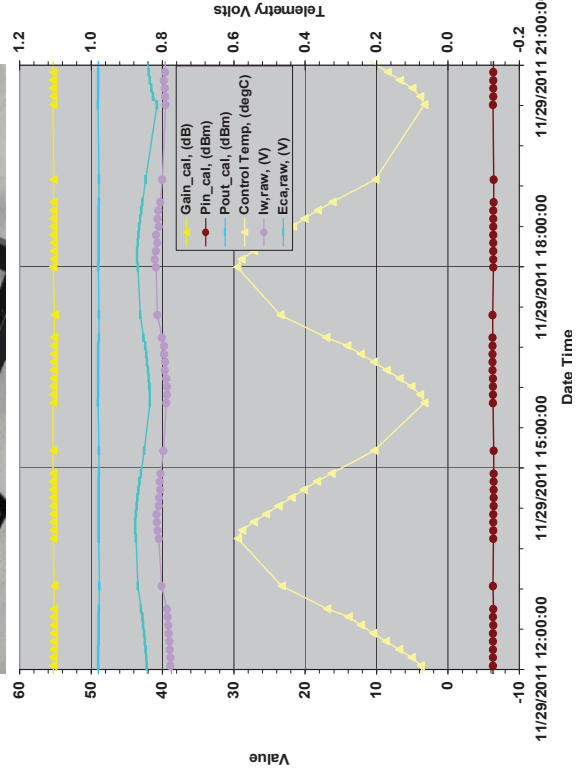


Model 1693HC TWTA:

- TWT Model 9915H
- 58-64 GHz
- 80-watts RF minimum
- Operating at 13.5 kV

Performance thru April 16th, 2018:

- Testing began Nov 18th, 2011
- 22,805 operating hours
- 3,661 heater on/off cycles
- 406,523 HV on/off cycles
- 14,945 thermal cycles
- Entirely under vacuum
- No failures or anomalies



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Conclusion



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- The L3 EDD model 9922H Q-band TWT is now flight qualified at any RF power level up to 200-watts RF and over any portion or all of the 37.5 to 42.5 GHz frequency
- The L3 Narda West Q-band Linearizer & Channel Amplifier is now flight qualified over any portion or all of the 37.5 to 42.5 GHz frequency
- L3 EDD has a family of flight qualified and proven Electronic Power Supplies (EPC) capable of supplying voltage and processing DC power that supports any Q-band application of up to 200-watts RF
- Flight production of Q-band LCTWTAs has begun

