Radi-N Measurements of Neutron Radiation on the International Space Station

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Radi-N Neutron Field Study

• Radi-N is carried out within the Matroshka-R framework

• Radi-N science team
  - Canadian Space Agency
  - Bubble Technology Industries (BTI)
  - Institute of Biomedical Problems (IBMP)
  - RSC-Energia
  - With International Partner support

• Bubble Detectors have been cleared to enter all USOS segments of the ISS
Matroshka-R Measurements

- Previous measurements have been made using bubble detectors during the ISS-13, ISS-14 and ISS-15 missions, as part of the Matroshka-R experiments*
- Measured neutron dose variations with location in the ISS
- Determined neutron dose variations on and in a spherical phantom
- Established relationship between the neutron dose measured externally to the body and the dose received internally

* R. Machrafi et al., Radiation Protection Dosimetry (2009), Vol. 133, No. 4, pp. 200–207
Radi-N Neutron Field Study

• Radi-N Objectives:

i) characterize the neutron spectrum aboard the ISS using a new bubble-detector spectrometer (BDS) developed for space applications

ii) map out neutron field variations and determine average dose and field symmetry within several ISS modules
Radi-N Neutron Field Study

**Purpose:** will assist in optimizing both radiation health risk countermeasures and shielding scenarios

Neutrons are of particular interest to radiation health since they have a relatively high biological effectiveness and have not been well characterized by operational monitoring.
Experimental Apparatus

• Space bubble detectors (SBD’s):
  - Test-tube-shaped neutron dosimeter developed by Bubble Technology Industries Inc. (BTI)
  - Microscopic liquid droplets form bubbles of trapped gas upon contact with neutrons
  - Number of bubbles can be auto-counted using a reader and is indicative of the neutron radiation field intensity
Experimental Apparatus

- Space bubble detectors:
  - BDS consisting of six detectors with six energy thresholds
  - Two bubble-detector personal neutron dosimeters (PND’s)
  - Currently aboard ISS (delivered on Progress 34P)
Experimental Apparatus

• The space BDS is based on a commercial BTI product
• The commercial BDS is unsuitable for space applications for three major reasons
  – Special detector formulation is required for space
  – Detector response is temperature dependent, so all measurements must be performed at 20 °C
  – Recompression chamber is required to re-zero detectors
Experimental Apparatus

- Bubble counts from the six detectors can be unfolded to obtain the energy spectrum of neutrons

Measured response functions for commercial BDS
MIR Neutron Exposure (Nov 92-Jan 93) (BTI)

- BDS: 150 µSv/d (with CERF calibration factor, 1.62)

- TLD Measurements (Badhwar)
  - 260 µGy/d x 2.5 (average TEPC quality factor) x 20% (neutron fraction of charged particle dose equivalent) = 130 µSv/d
Experimental Apparatus

• A new space BDS has been developed
  – Space formulation
  – No recompression chamber required
  – Temperature compensation applied
    • Detector response is unaffected by temperatures in the range 20 – 30 °C (appropriate for the ISS)

• Detectors were calibrated using an AmBe source (1.13 × 10^7 n/s) at BTI’s Chalk River facility
  – Temperature compensation tested from 20 – 37 °C

• Extensive testing was performed at the DRDC-Ottawa accelerator
  – Monoenergetic neutron beams (50 keV to 14 MeV)
  – Energy thresholds investigated as a function of temperature
Experimental Apparatus

- Temperature compensation measured at BTI’s facility

BDS-10000 compensation checked with neutron beams at DRDC
Experimental Apparatus

- Energy thresholds measured at DRDC for new space BDS
Experimental Apparatus

- Energy thresholds (approximate) used for space BDS in the Radi-N experiment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy Threshold</th>
<th>Average Sensitivity (bubbles/mrem over 20 -37 °C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 keV</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 keV</td>
<td>1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>600 keV</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 MeV</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 MeV</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 MeV</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experimental Apparatus

• Bubble reader:
  - Already aboard ISS (Russian Segment)

Source: Bubble Technology Industries
http://www.bubbletech.ca/radiation_detectors_files/bdr.html
Radi-N Measurements

- Approach for BDS measurements
  - Six detectors are deployed in one pouch
  - Simultaneous measurements allow the determination of the energy spectrum of neutrons
  - Duration of each measurement is 5 – 7 days
  - For future data comparison six spectrometric detectors should always be deployed next to the ISS tissue-equivalent proportional counter (TEPC)
Radi-N Measurements

• On-orbit operations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Attended</th>
<th>Unattended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1</td>
<td>Experiment unstow and activation</td>
<td>54 min</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 2</td>
<td>SBD initialization &amp; deployment</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 3</td>
<td>Photograph locations</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 4</td>
<td>Experiment execution</td>
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<td>5-7 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 5</td>
<td>Retrieve SBD’s and read out</td>
<td>31 min</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 6</td>
<td>Experiment deactivation and stow</td>
<td>39 min</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Cosmonaut assistance is requested
- Performed by Canadian astronaut
Radi-N Schedule

- **Session 1**: took place Aug 13th - 18th 2009. All eight detectors (six BDS detectors and two PND’s) were placed in the service module next to the TEPC

- **Session 2 (September 2009)**: Six spectrometric detectors deployed to Columbus. One PND is worn by Canadian astronaut and one placed in his sleeping quarters in the Japanese experiment module (JEM)

- **Session 3 (October 2009)**: Six spectrometric detectors deployed to JEM. One PND is worn by Canadian astronaut and one placed in his sleeping quarters in the JEM
Data from Session 1

- Data analysis is ongoing
  - BDS data will be unfolded to produce neutron spectrum
  - PND data will be used to provide dose indication
- Results will be compared to previous measurements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detector Designator</th>
<th>A09</th>
<th>A10</th>
<th>A11</th>
<th>A12</th>
<th>A13</th>
<th>A14</th>
<th>A15</th>
<th>A16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detector Serial Number</td>
<td>4713</td>
<td>4716</td>
<td>4111</td>
<td>4214</td>
<td>4316</td>
<td>4419</td>
<td>4515</td>
<td>4604</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detector Type</td>
<td>PND</td>
<td>PND</td>
<td>BDS-10</td>
<td>BDS-100</td>
<td>BDS-600</td>
<td>BDS-1000</td>
<td>BDS-2500</td>
<td>BDS-10000</td>
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<td>Exposure Time (minutes)</td>
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<td>7418</td>
<td>7421</td>
<td>7422</td>
<td>7422</td>
<td>7422</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Bubbles</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

• First measurements with the new space BDS have been performed on the ISS
• Measurements are ongoing and will continue until October 2009
• Data analysis is ongoing
Selected Bibliography


