

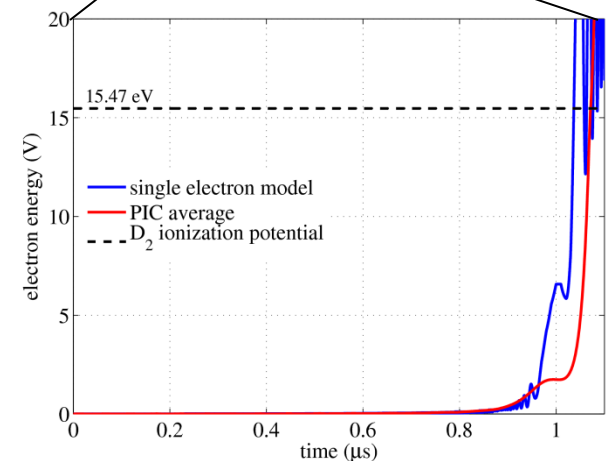
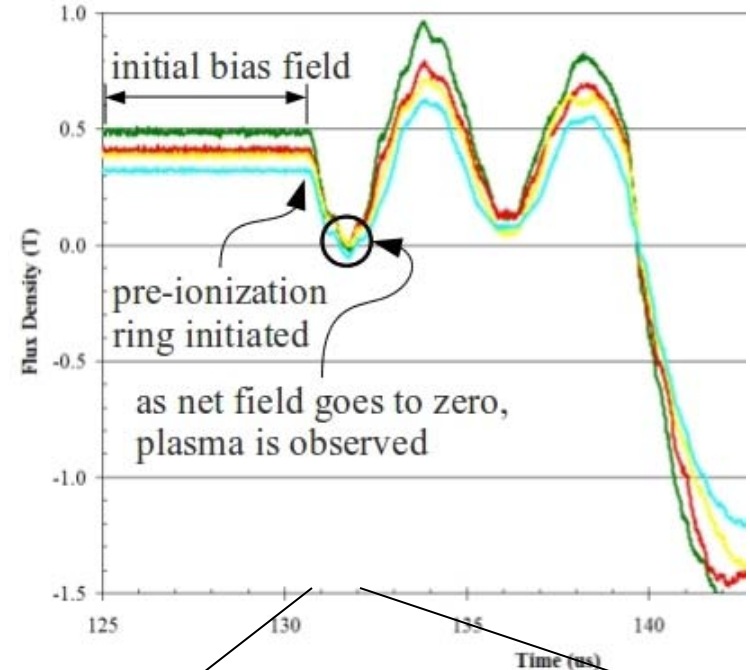
Explaining the Delay in Theta-Pinch Gas Breakdown

Questions with no clear answers;

- How is the pre-plasma gas evolving at early times?
- What is the most beneficial method of pulsed inductive PI?
- When is a bias magnetic field necessary?
- Why is a delay in gas breakdown seen in biased pulsed inductive devices?

Our numerical approach;

- ✓ model particle physics at early times in theta-pinch device
- ✓ show correlation with experiment
- ✓ elucidate how well the field energy is used during initial breakdown and provide explanation for ionization delay
- ✓ propose selection criteria when designing a bias and main discharge for pulsed inductive devices



Report Documentation Page

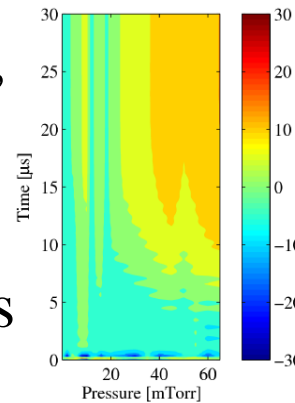
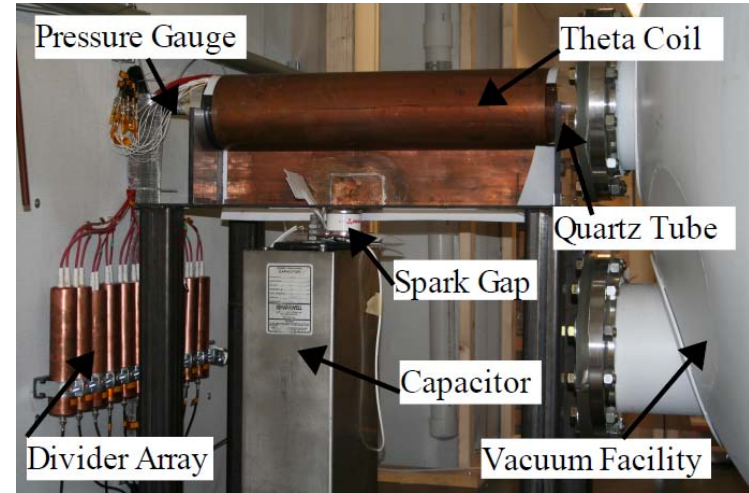
Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

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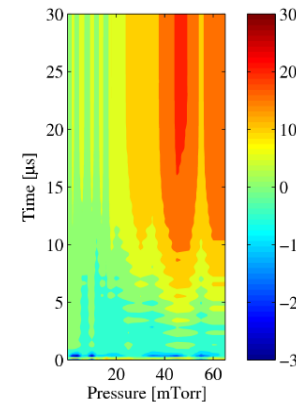
1. REPORT DATE SEP 2012		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2012 to 00-00-2012	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Explaining the Delay in Theta-Pinch Gas Breakdown				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Missouri University of Science & Technology, 1870 Miner Circle, Rolla, MO, 65409				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES Presented at the 2012 AFOSR Space Propulsion and Power Program Review held 10-13 September in Arlington, VA. U.S. Government or Federal Rights License					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 4	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Pulsed Inductive Test Article

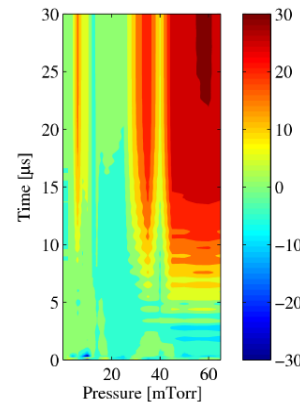
- **Missouri Plasmoid Experiment**
 - Pulsed inductive test article for studying fundamental plasma processes
 - Electric and magnetic probes diagnostics
 - Internal plasma probe diagnostics: shunted probe, ion saturation probe
 - Future: spectroscopy, fast framing camera diagnostics



Air, 15 kV



Argon, 15 kV

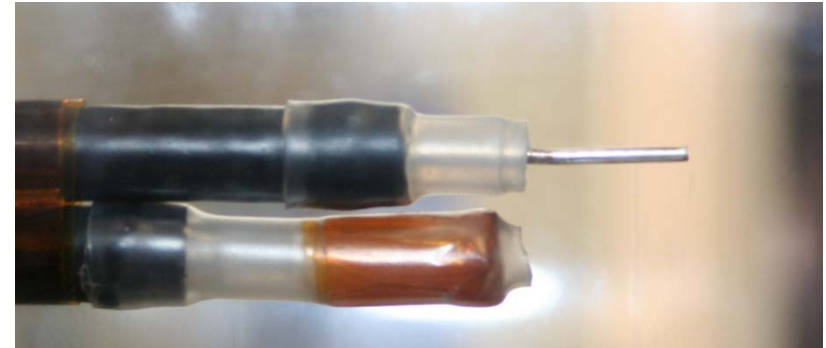


Air, 20 kV

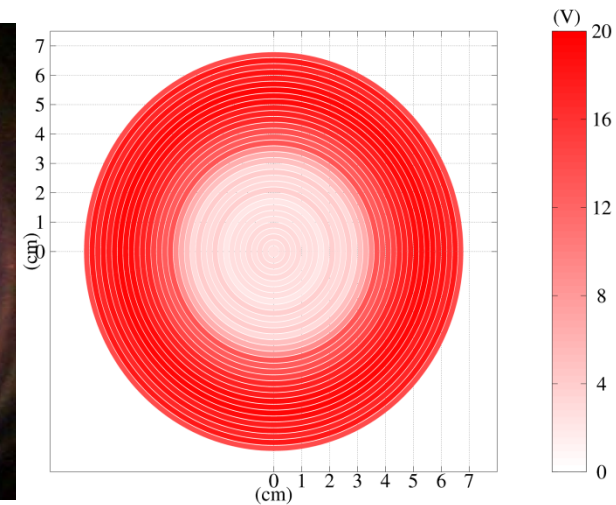
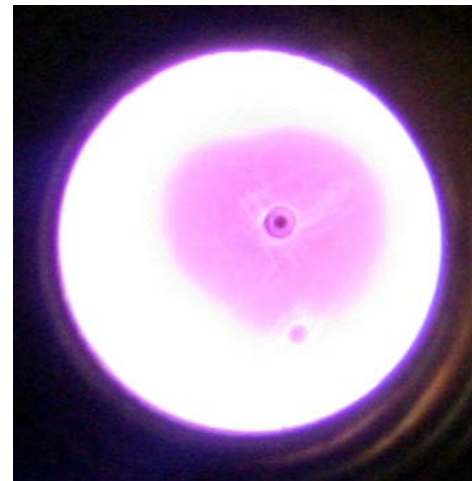
Building MPX Internal Probe Diagnostics

Goals for internal probes;

- ✓ design and fabricate Langmuir probe pair for use in the MPX pulsed power environment
- ✓ verify removal of noise to acceptable levels
- ✓ generate rough picture of plasma discharge activity
- verify azimuthal symmetry
- bias probe to ion saturation levels to quantify additional plasma characteristics
- refine picture with fine spatial resolution via the 2-D translation stage and couple with external measurements to provide a full picture of the plasma evolution



Dual probes used for MPX test article consisting of an exposed probe (top) and a dielectrically shielded null probe (bottom).



Time-lapsed exposure of MPX operation at 30 mTorr along side shunted probe voltage data taken at 14 mTorr.

B-dot Probes

I. Differential probe design

- Removes common mode (capacitive coupling, electrostatic) noise from probe signal
- Constructed on Printed Circuit Board (PCB)
 - Ensures consistency between probes
- Calibrated using pulsed-power Helmholtz coil
 - 1.60×10^5 T/V-s

