

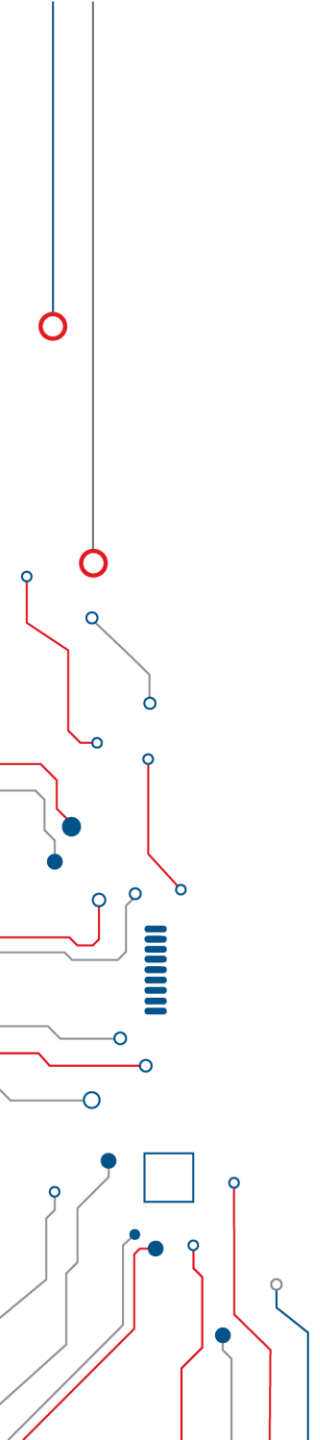


Leibniz Institute
for High
Performance
Microelectronics

Combined Effects of Ionizing Radiation and Electromagnetic Interference on Electronic Circuits & Systems

Fabian Vargas

10 Jan 2025



Agenda



1. **IHP at a Glance**
2. **Importance of Testing & Qualification of ICs for Ionizing and Non-Ionizing Radiations**
3. **Mechanisms by which Ionizing Radiation Affects Electronics and How they Impact IC Lifetime**
4. **The Need of Combined Tests for Ionizing and Non-Ionizing Radiations**
5. **TID & SEU Measurement Techniques at the IC Level**
6. **Mitigation Approaches**
7. **Case-Study on Combined Test**

1. IHP at a Glance



IHP at a Glance

IHP at a Glance



Positioning

- IHP is the **European research and innovation centre for silicon-based systems**, ultrahigh-frequency circuits and technologies
- The research focuses on **socially relevant topics** such as communication, mobility, health & environment, industry & agriculture, sustainability and security.
- With its research programmes, the IHP makes **an important contribution to the technological sovereignty** of Germany and Europe

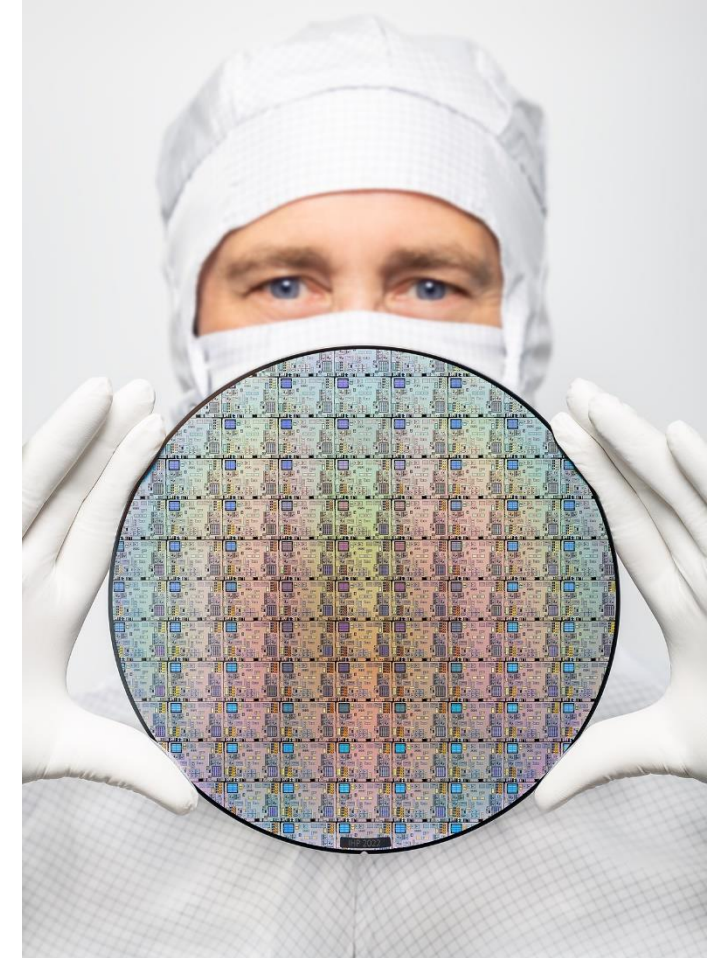


Vision

"We create foundations and prototype applications based on future silicon-based technologies and systems for a digitalised and networked world as well as for the sustainable preservation of our natural living conditions."

Profile and Strengths

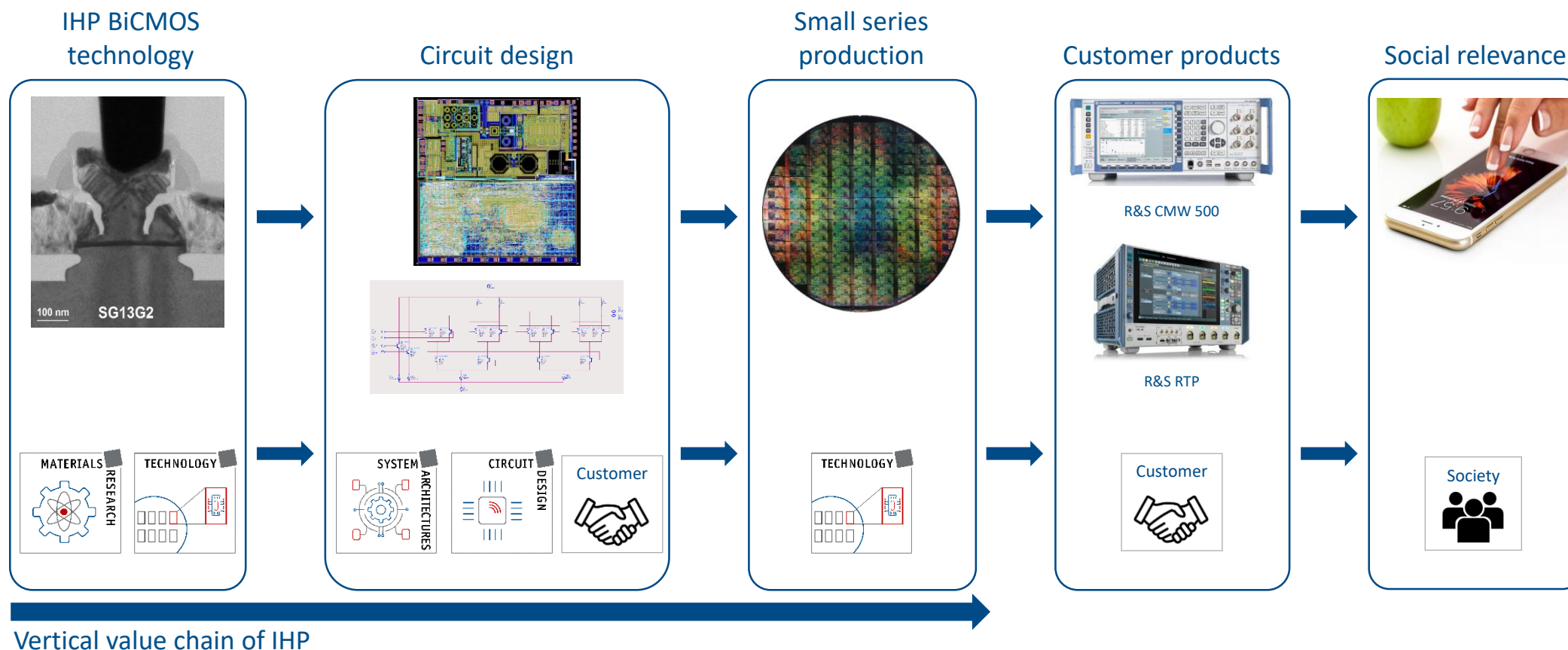
- **Vertical research** concept from materials research and technology to circuits and systems
- **International leadership and visibility** in all of its research areas
- **Unique selling point** of a **200mm pilot line** for state-of-the-art BiCMOS technologies, operated under **industry-like conditions, 24/7**, for the provision of prototypes and low-volume production runs.
- **Qualified technological platform** with direct access for science and industry



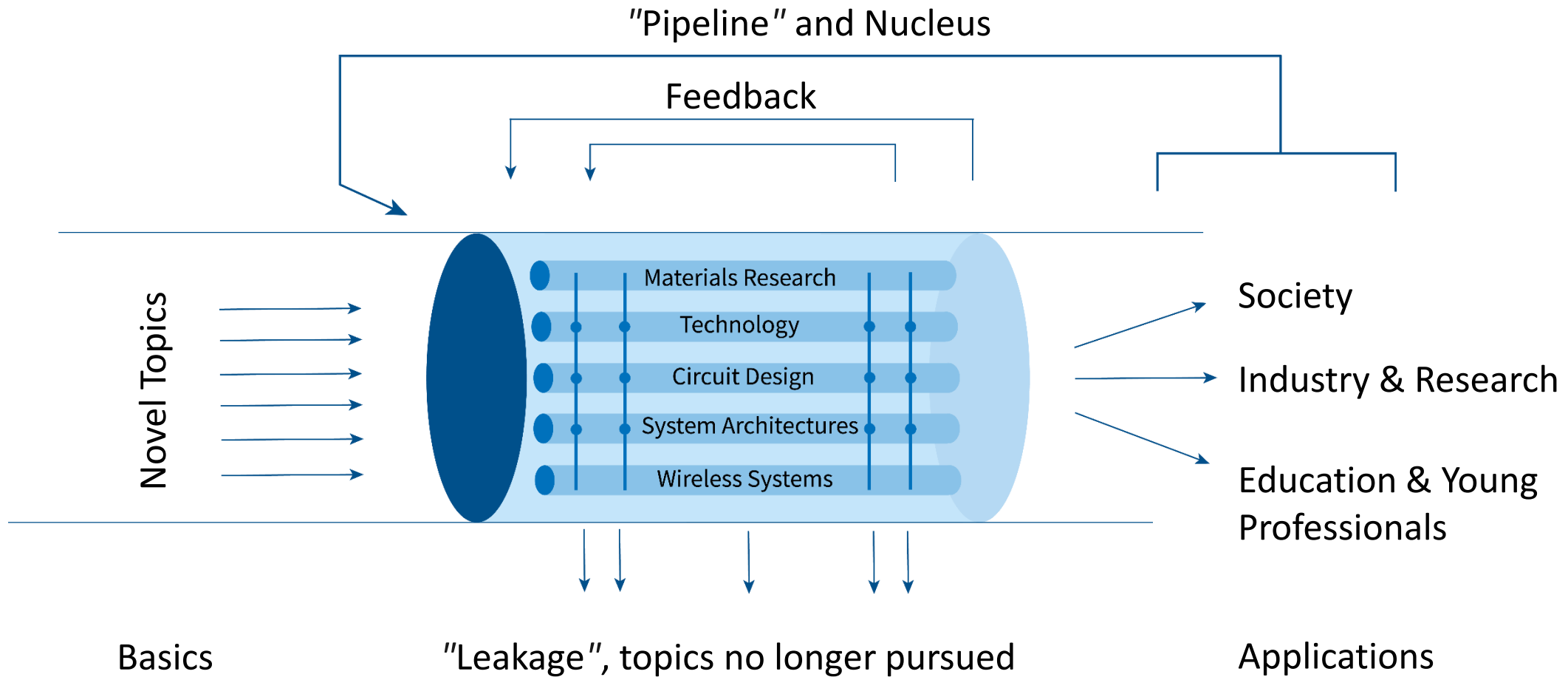
Example of Vertical Value Chain



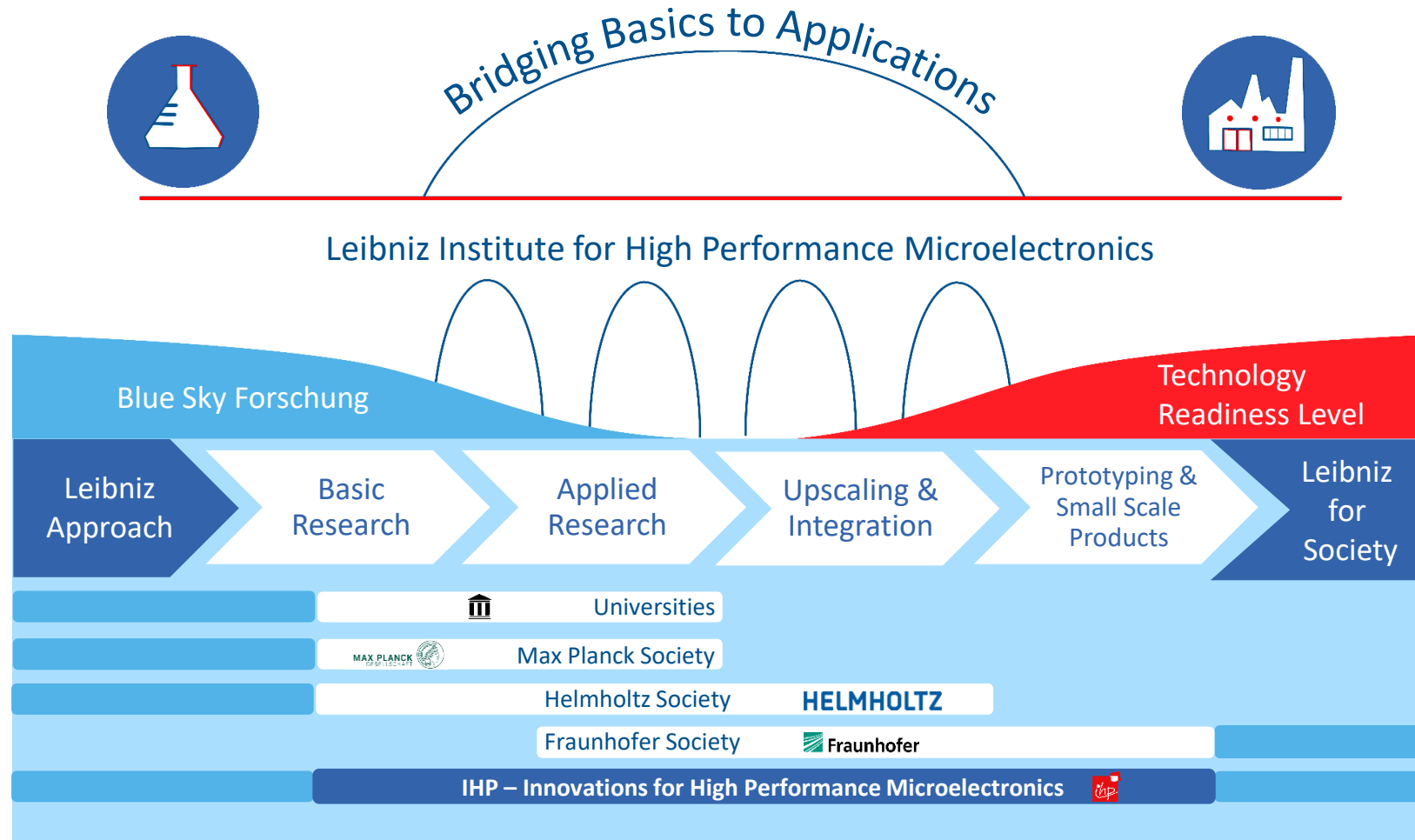
Use of the qualified IHP BiCMOS technology



Holistic Research Approach



Strategic Positioning



2. Importance of Testing & Qualification of ICs for Ionizing and Non-Ionizing Radiations



Importance of Testing & Qualification of ICs for Ionizing and Non-Ionizing Radiations

Introduction – Why Rad Test is Important



Timeline

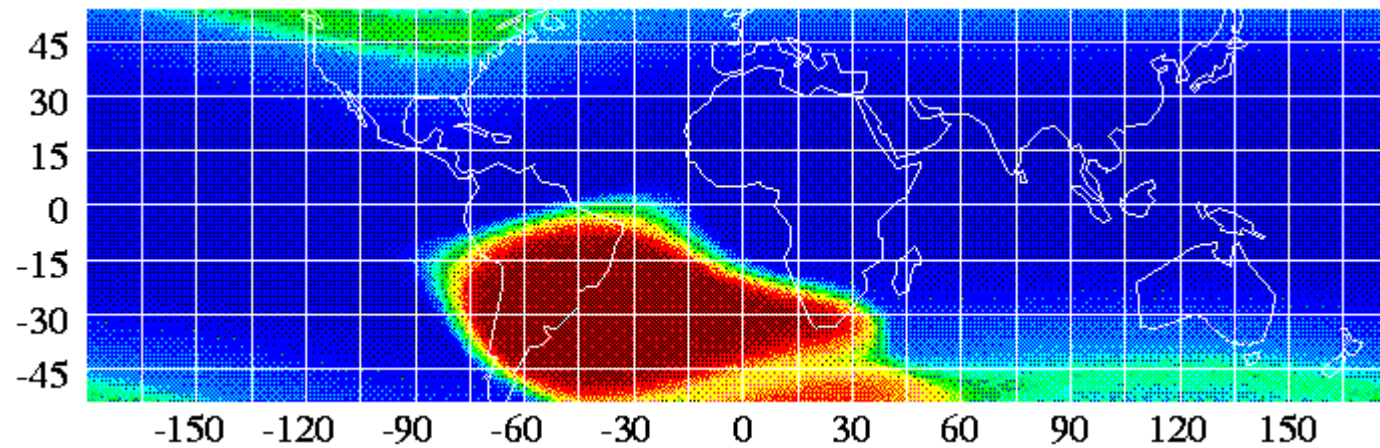
- **1954 - 57**: Single-event upsets (SEUs) were 1st described (**above-ground nuclear testing**): anomalies in electronic monitoring equipment
- **1960s**: problems **were observed in space electronics** (difficult to separate *soft* failures from other forms of interference)
- **1972 - 73**: **Hughes satellite experienced SEU** (communication with the satellite was lost during 96s). 1st SEU paper (IEEE TNS Journal)
- **1979**: 1st descriptions about the mechanism whereby a **sea-level cosmic ray** could cause a SEU in electronics
- **1984 - 90**: **systematic recordings of SEUs** on the **Tracking Data Relay Satellite System (TDRS-x) that provided communications for LEO satellites** (Hubble Space Telescope, Landsat), **Space Shuttle** (IEEE TNS, vol 38, n.6, Dec. 1991)
- since the beginning (**1990**): **Hubble Telescope has been straggled with SEUs** (replaced SEU-sensitive RAM chips by rad-hard ones)

Introduction – Why Rad Test is Important



South Atlantic Anomaly (SAA) is an area where the Earth's inner **Van Allen radiation belt** comes closest to the **Earth's** surface, dipping down to an altitude of 200 km.

This leads to an **increased flux of energetic particles** in this region and exposes orbiting **satellites** to higher-than-usual levels of radiation (so, **functional failure**).



Introduction – Why Rad Test is Important

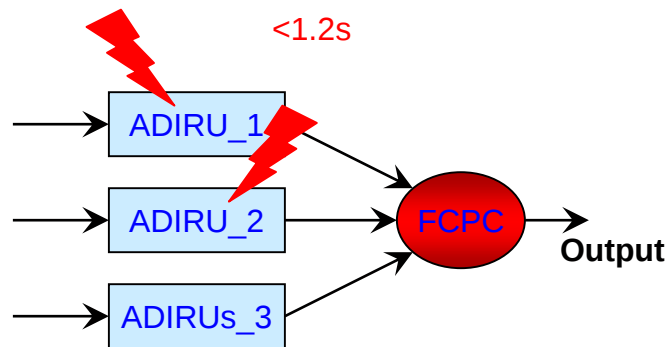


A SEU is suspect to have occurred in the flight computers of the **Airbus A330** during **Qantas Flight 72 on 7 Oct. 2008 (Singapore-Perth)** which almost resulted in aircraft crash:

Passanger
expericenced “0
Gravity”

the aircraft made a sudden **uncommanded pitch down manoeuvre**, rapidly descending **200 m**.

- **Air Data Inertial Reference Unit (ADIRU)**: computes the AOA (Angle of Attack)
- **Flight Control Primary Computer (FCPC)**: main computer unit



Tripple Modular Redundancy - TMR

When all 3 ADIRUs' outputs agree (normal operation), **the average value** of ADIRU_1 & ADIRU_2 is used by the FCPC for computation

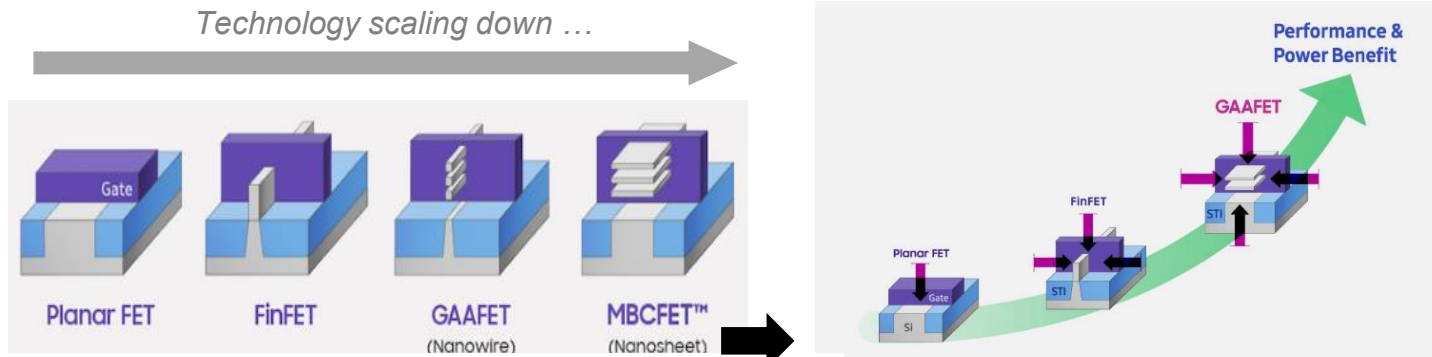
If either ADIRU_1 or ADIRU_2 significantly **deviates** from the other 2 values, the FCPC uses a memorized value for **1.2s**



Technology Trends Impact on ICs



Hot Topics
for the incoming years !!!



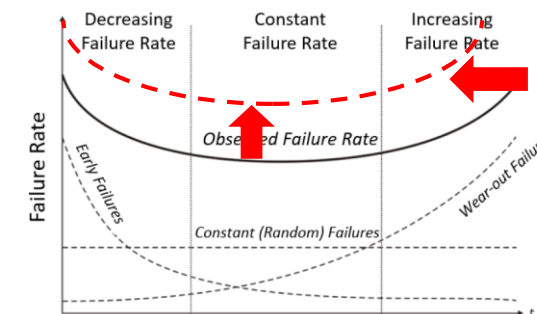
www.anandtech.com/show/14333/samsung-announces-3nm-gaa-mbcfet-pdk-version-01
Gate All Around, Multi-Bridge Channel FET

Single-Event Upsets (SEU)
&
Single-Event Transients (SET):

Total Ionizing Dose (TID):

Aging:

**Soft Error Rate (SER) per chip is increasing!
Life span is decreasing!**



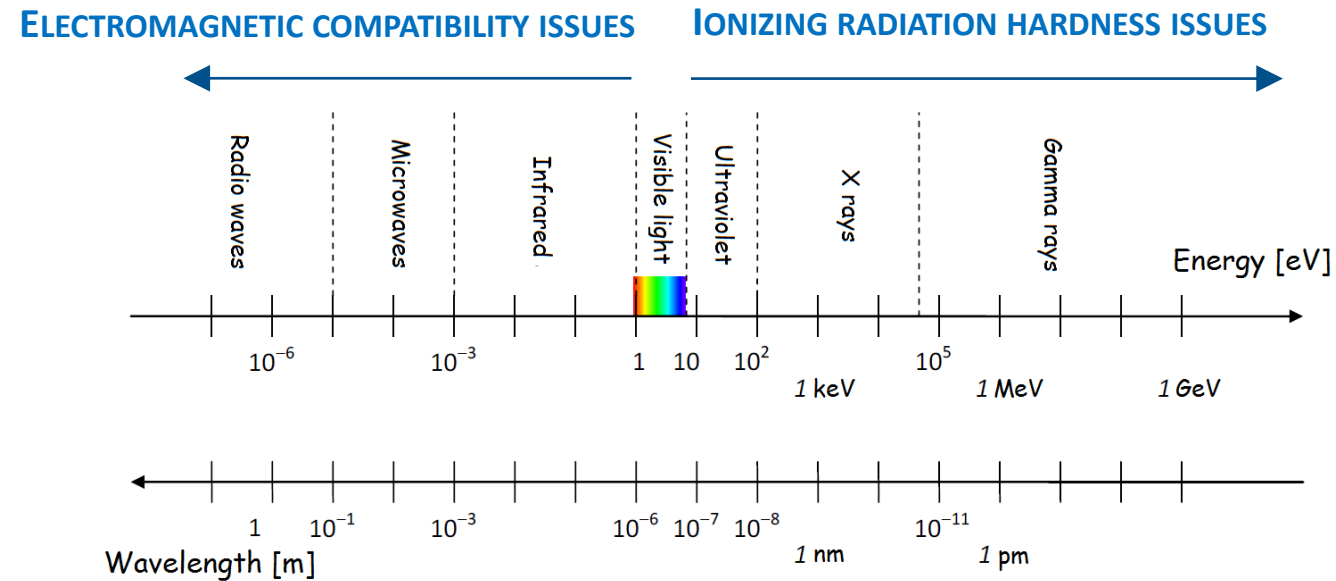
3. Mechanisms by which Ionizing Radiation Affects Electronics and How They Impact IC Lifetime



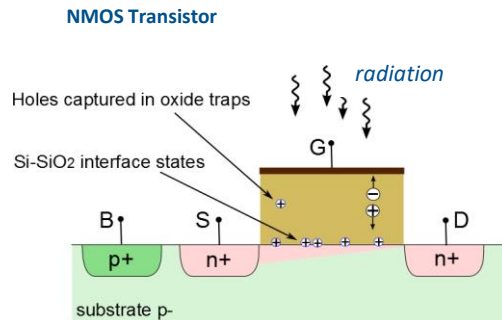
Mechanisms by which Ionizing Radiation Affects Electronics and How they Impact IC Lifetime



Frontier Between Ionizing & Non-Ionizing Radiations



Total-Ionizing Dose (TID) in MOS



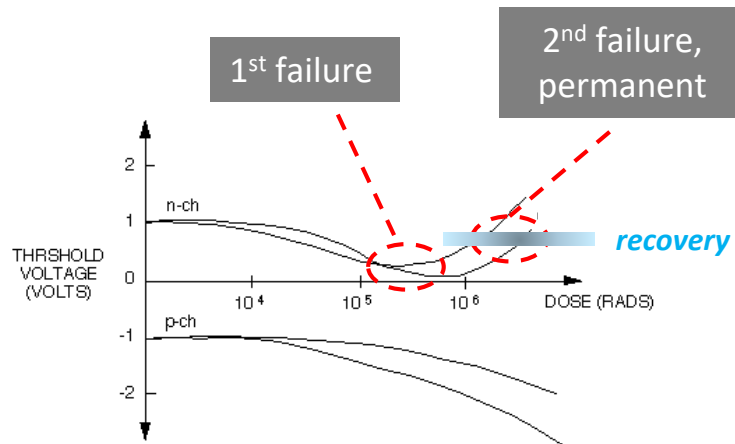
TID effects on CMOS ICs are caused primarily by **positive charge trapped in insulating layers**



For CMOS ICs, the main TID effect is the **increase of leakage currents** and **change in V_{th}** of the devices



For high doses, a **permanent functional failure** of the circuit is observed.



Single-Event Upset (SEU) in MOS



Radiation (**SEU**) effects on CMOS ICs are mainly caused by high-energy particles striking reverse biased drain depletion region of off-transistors



For CMOS ICs, the main SEU effect is the loss of information stored in memory elements (FFs, RAMs)



Transient functional failure of the circuit is observed

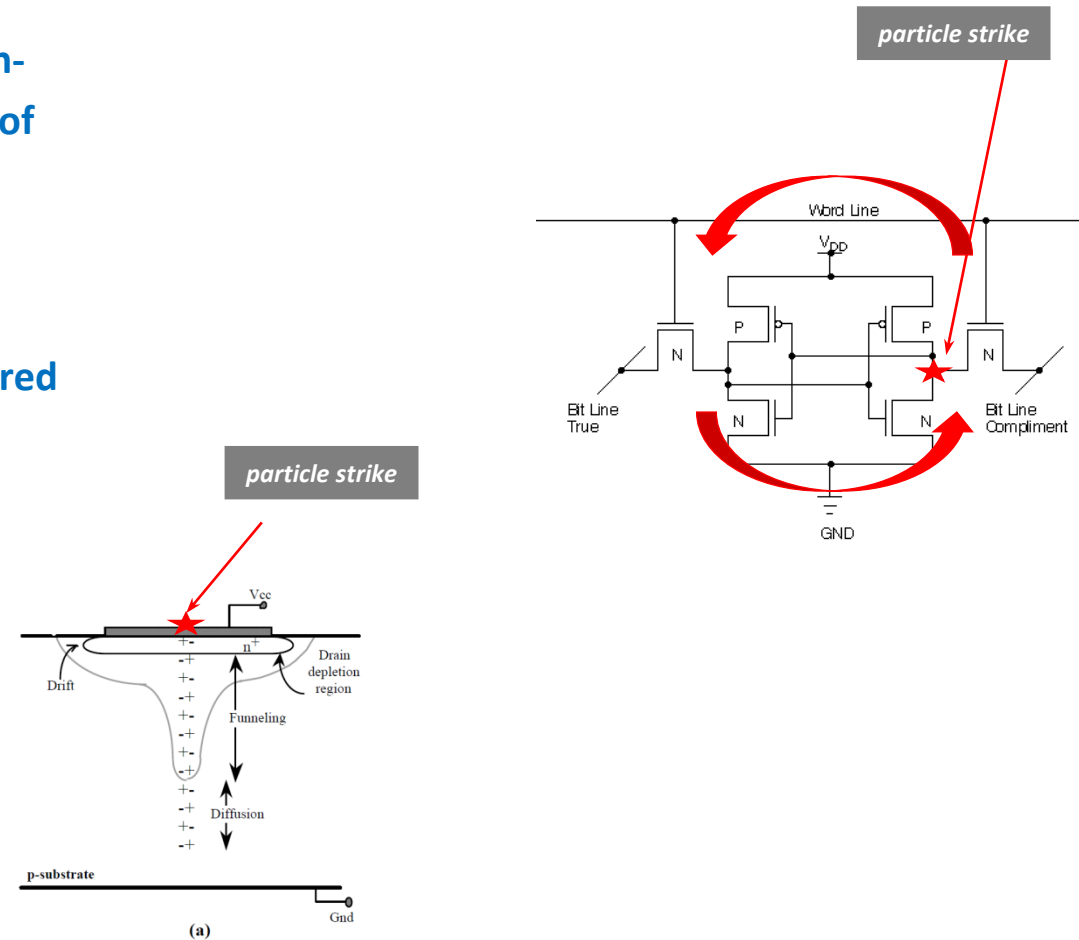


Fig. 1. Illustration of the charge collection mechanism that cause single-event upset: (a) particle strike and charge generation; (b) current pulse shape generated in the n+p junction during the collection of the charge.

Single-Event Transient (SET) in MOS



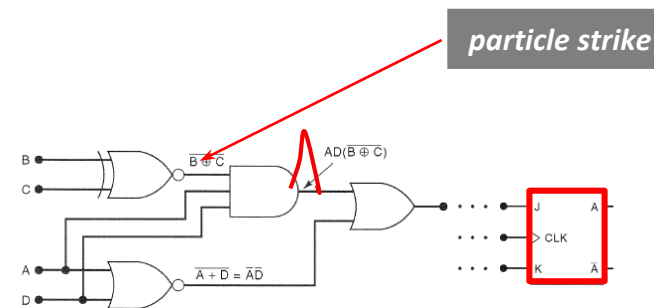
Radiation (**SET**) effects on CMOS ICs are mainly caused by **high-energy particles striking logic along with critical paths**



For CMOS ICs, the main **SET** effect is the **loss of information stored in memory elements (FFs, RAMs)**



Transient functional failure of the circuit is observed



4. The Need of Combined tests for Ionizing and Non-Ionizing Radiations

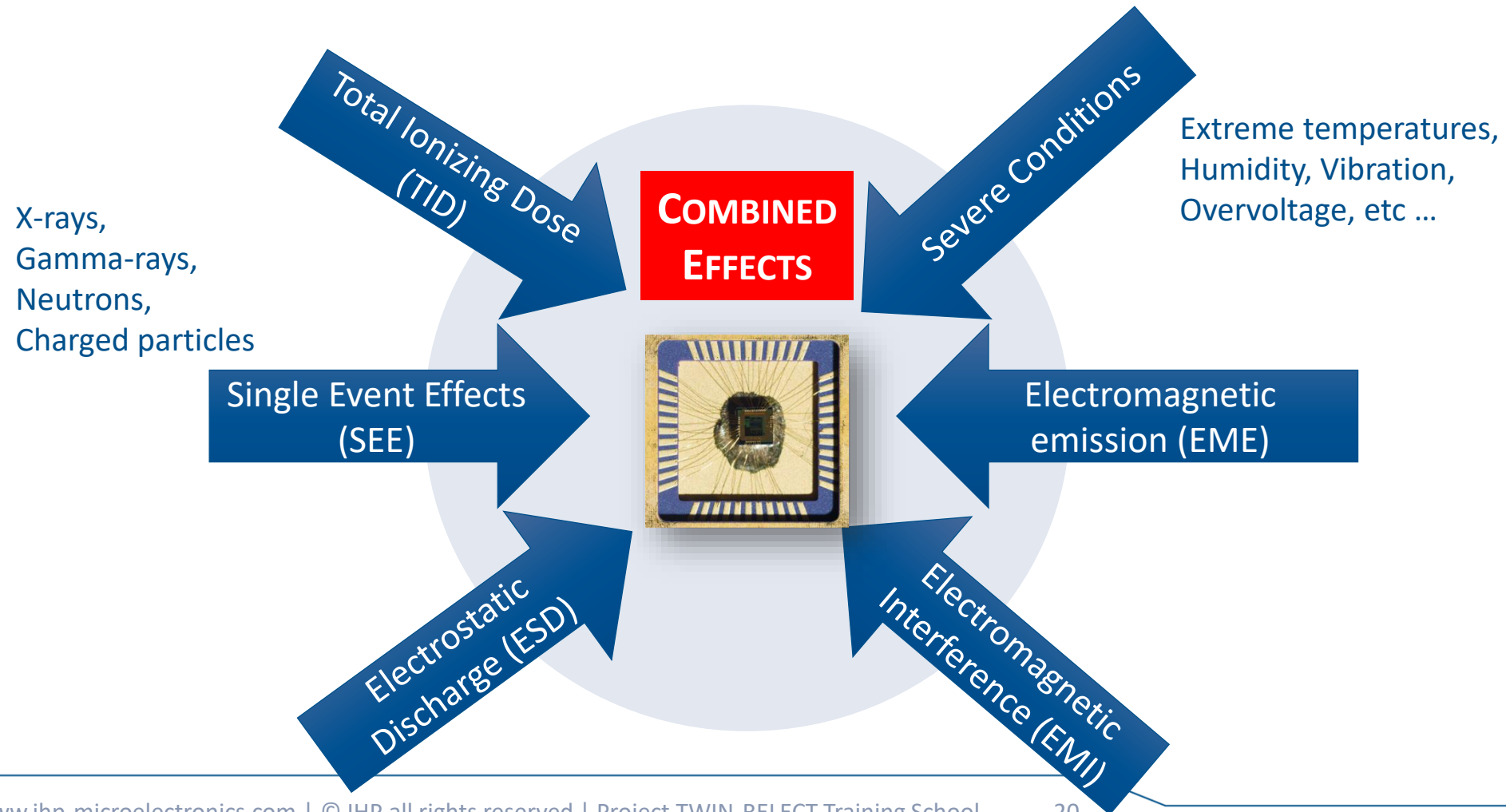


The Need of Combined Tests for Ionizing and Non-Ionizing Radiations

The Need for Combined Tests



- In a real system, various interferences can occur simultaneously.



The Need for Combined Tests



Only a few works addressing the problem: trying to understand and quantify the combined effects of ionizing (**total-ionizing dose: TID**) and non-ionizing (**EMI**) radiations on ICs

The Effects on Cardiac Pacemakers of Ionizing Radiation and Electromagnetic Interference from Radiotherapy Machines

(Int. Journal of Radiation Oncology Biol. Phys. Vol. 4. pp. 1055-1058, 1978)

Pacemaker Failure Due to Radiation Therapy

(PACE. Vol. 5, pp156-159, March-April 1982)

When cancer patients with implanted pacers undergo radiation therapy it is important to know whether the treatment will have any deleterious effects on the pacer, thus placing the patient in jeopardy from malfunction. Malfunction may consist of continuous or intermittent spurious signals or an interruption of normal pacer signals.

Radiation therapy exposes a pacemaker to ionizing radiation alone (^{60}Co), or ionizing radiation plus strong electromagnetic fields (linear accelerators and betatrons), which may induce noise and interference into reactive electronic circuits.

*“In our study, the observed **effect on pacemaker function** was severe enough to justify some concern”*

The Need for Combined Tests



From the best of our knowledge ...

Electromagnetic Interference and Ionizing Radiation Effects on CMOS Devices

(IEEE TRANS. ON PLASMA SCIENCE, VOL. 40, NO. 6, JUNE 2012)

They observed: N- and PMOS devices presented **shift and distortion of the threshold voltage and current transfer characteristics**, leading to **reduced noise margins** and **logic instability**.

They concluded: “*EMI + TID combination proved most damaging, when compared to isolated EMI and ionizing radiation experiments*”

None work, except from our group, focused on the combined effects of ionizing (**soft errors in memory elements**) and non-ionizing (**EMI**) radiations on ICs

The Need for Combined Tests



From the best of our knowledge ...

Absence of a **standard** to rule combined tests

(currently, only a Draft Recommendation from ITU:

"Overview of particle radiation effects on telecommunications systems", Geneva, Oct. 2016)

Our studies have shown a **considerable reliability degradation** for systems operating in harsh environments (such as space, where satellite electronics is exposed to the combined effects of ionizing rad: TID/soft errors and EMI)

(Analysis of SRAM-Based FPGA SEU Sensitivity to Combined EMI and TID-Imprinted Effects, IEEE TRANS. ON NUCLEAR SCIENCE, VOL. 63, JUNE 2016)

The Need for Combined Tests



It is a common practice that ...

engineers qualify electronic systems to **EMI**, **TID** or **SEU**, or eventually to all of them, but **NOT** taking into account the **combined effects** one phenomenon may take over the other.

e.g., assume a given part of an embedded system for satellite is certified by a set of EMI tests according to specific stds

The Need for Combined Tests



After a given period of time operating in the field ...

*Who can ensure that this part will still perform properly according to **the same set of EMI stds**, after a **given level of TID radiation** has been accumulated over time on the system, if the part was certified independently for EMI and radiation?*

*Moreover, who can ensure that the system will be approved for **the same set of EMI stds**, if operating in a **harsh environment with density of high-energy particles (SEEs)**?*

The Need for Combined Tests



In the light of this problem ...

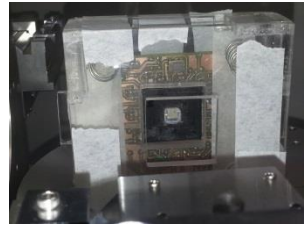
We ...

- analyze the **impact** of combined tests for EMI + radiation (TID/SEU) on the reliability of electronic components
- propose a **new methodology for design and test ICs** that takes this combination into account in order to qualify state-of-the-art COTS ICs

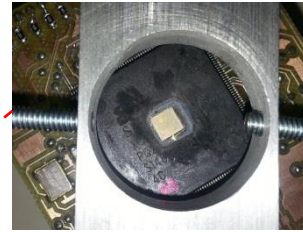


TID & SEU Measurement Techniques at the IC Level

Combined Tests: EMI + Ionizing Radiation



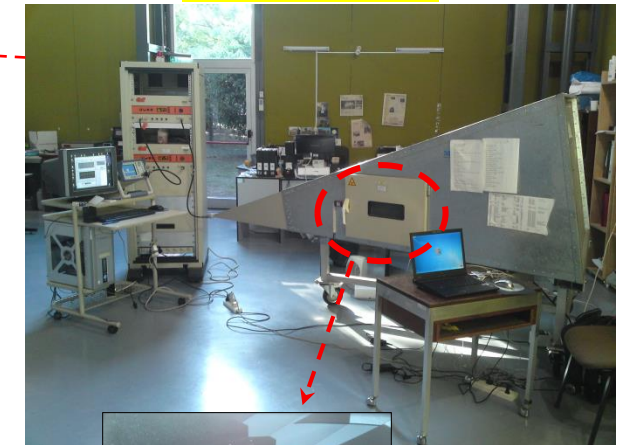
X-Ray



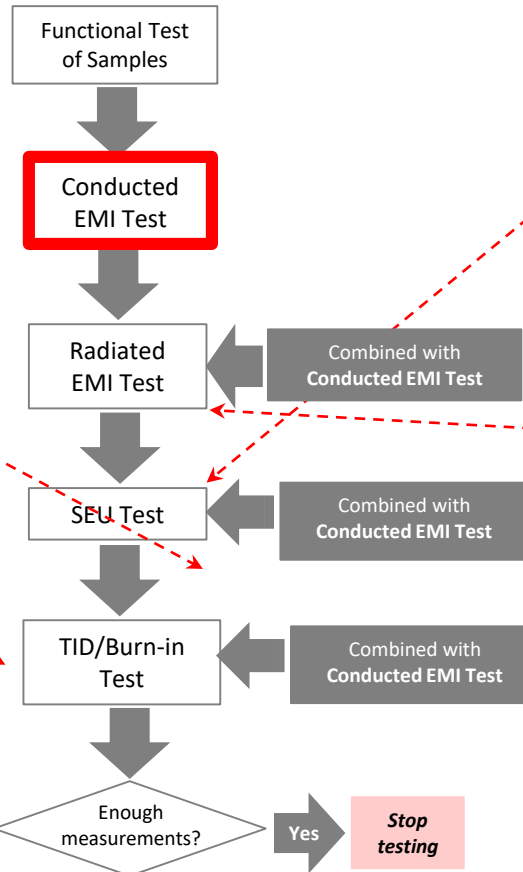
SEU



Radiated EMI Test
(G-TEM Cell Test Method)



Co⁶⁰ (Gamma Cell)



Ionizing radiation Testing Stds



US MIL-STD 883E

Establishes uniform methods, controls, and procedures for testing microelectronic devices suitable for use within military and aerospace electronic systems

METHOD NO.	ENVIRONMENTAL TESTS
1001	Barometric pressure, reduced (altitude operation)
1002	Immersion
1003	Insulation resistance
1004.7	Moisture resistance
1005.8	Steady state life
1006	Intermittent life
1007	Agree life
1008.2	Stabilization bake
1009.8	Salt atmosphere (corrosion)
1010.7	Temperature cycling
1011.9	Thermal shock
1012.1	Thermal characteristics
1013	Dew point
1014.10	Seal
1015.9	Burn-in test
1016	Life/reliability characterization tests
1017.2	Neutron irradiation
1018.2	Internal water-vapor content
1019.4	Ionizing radiation (total dose) test procedure
1020.1	Dose rate induced latchup test procedure
1021.2	Dose rate upset testing of digital microcircuits
1022	Mosfet threshold voltage
1023.2	Dose rate response of linear microcircuits
1030.1	Preseal burn-in
1031	Thin film corrosion test
1032.1	Package induced soft error test procedure (due to alpha particles)
1033	Endurance life test
1034	Die penetrant test (for plastic devices)

Ionizing Radiation Testing Std



European Space Agency
Agence Spaciale Européenne

TOTAL DOSE STEADY-STATE IRRADIATION

TEST METHOD

ESA/SCC BASIC SPECIFICATION No. 22900

SINGLE EVENT EFFECTS TEST METHOD

AND GUIDELINES

ESA/SCC Basic Specification No. 25100



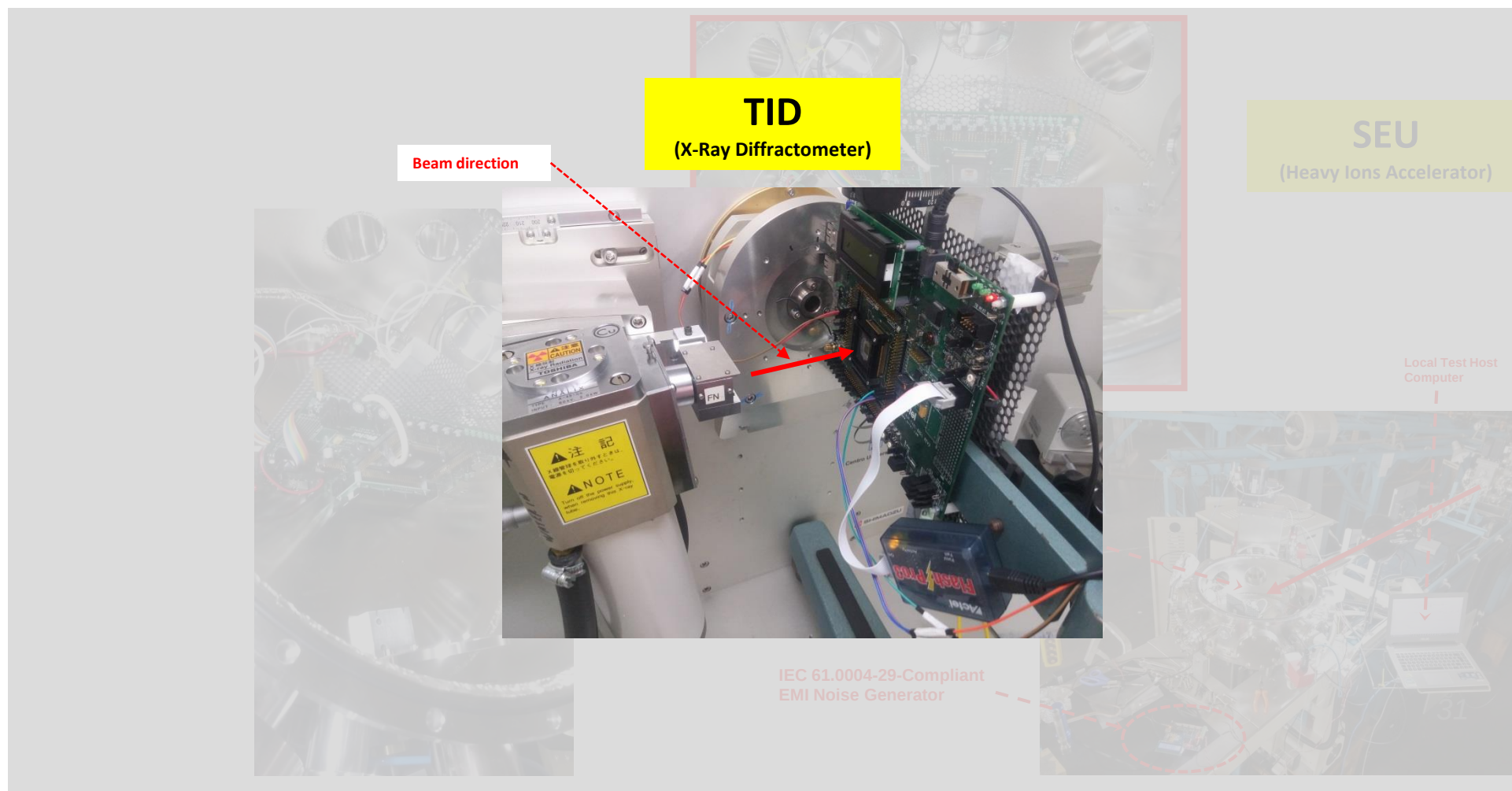
space components
coordination group

Lab Equipment for Ionizing Radiation Test



Goal:
SEU sensitivity w.r.t. V_{DD}
Disruption and TID

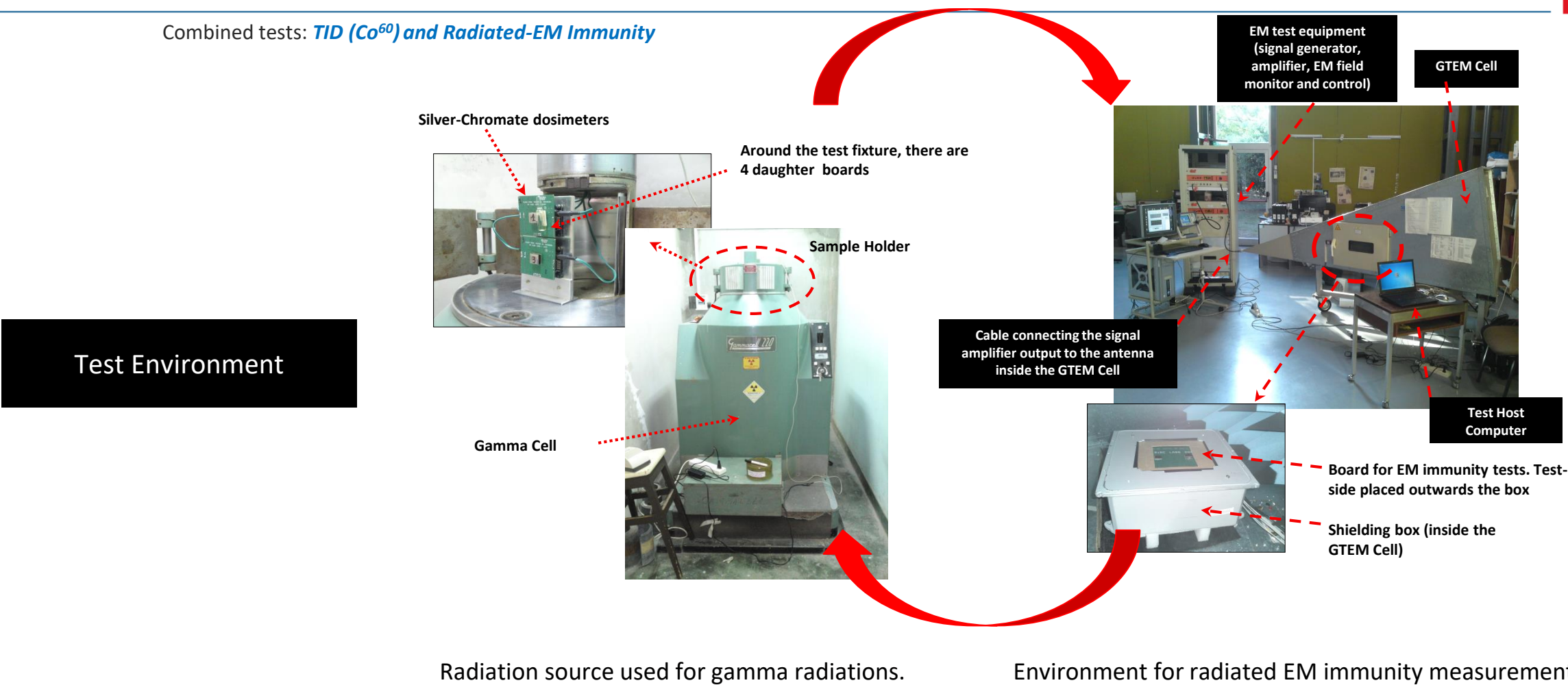
Microsemi ProAsic3E1500



Lab Equipment for Ionizing Radiation Test



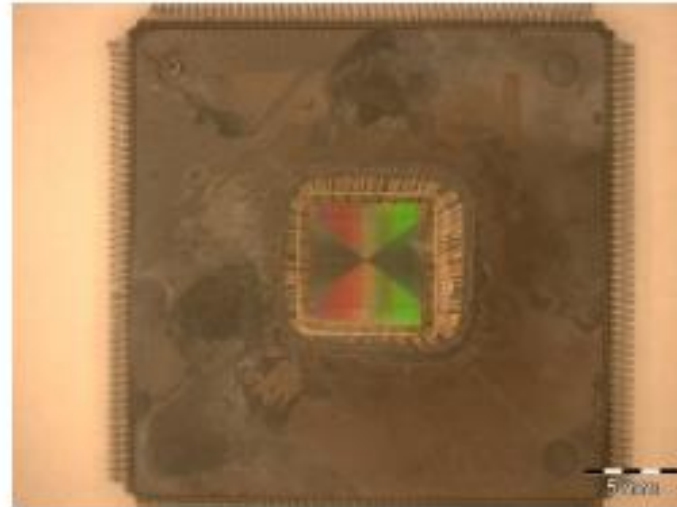
Combined tests: *TID (Co⁶⁰) and Radiated-EM Immunity*



Lab Equipment for Ionizing Radiation Test



(a)



(b)

Microsemi ProAsic3E A3PE1500 FPGA:

- (a) Packaged device;
- (b) Unpacked, ready for radiation (SEU and TID) tests.

(commonly used for automotive and aerospace apps)

Lab Equipment for Ionizing Radiation Test

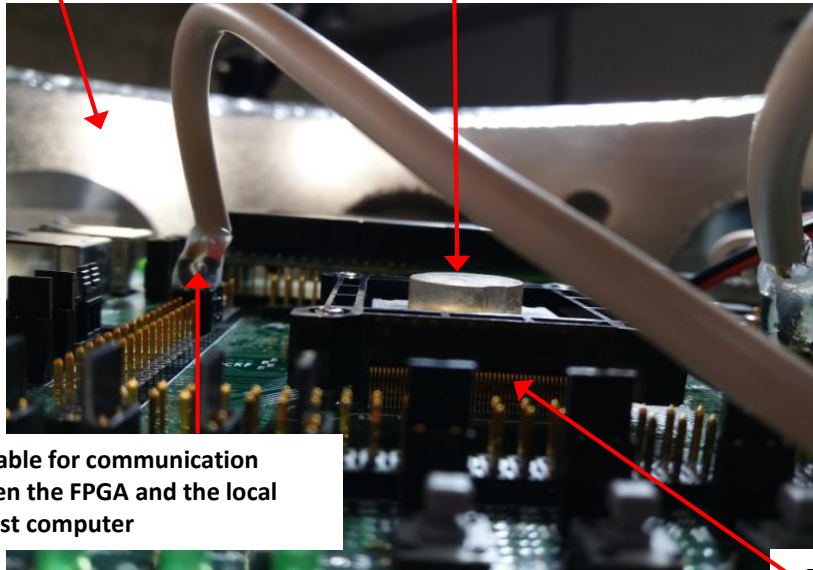


SEU Test:

Vacuum chamber

Alpha particles source placed above
the FPGA

JTAG cable for communication
between the FPGA and the local
test host computer



FPGA under test

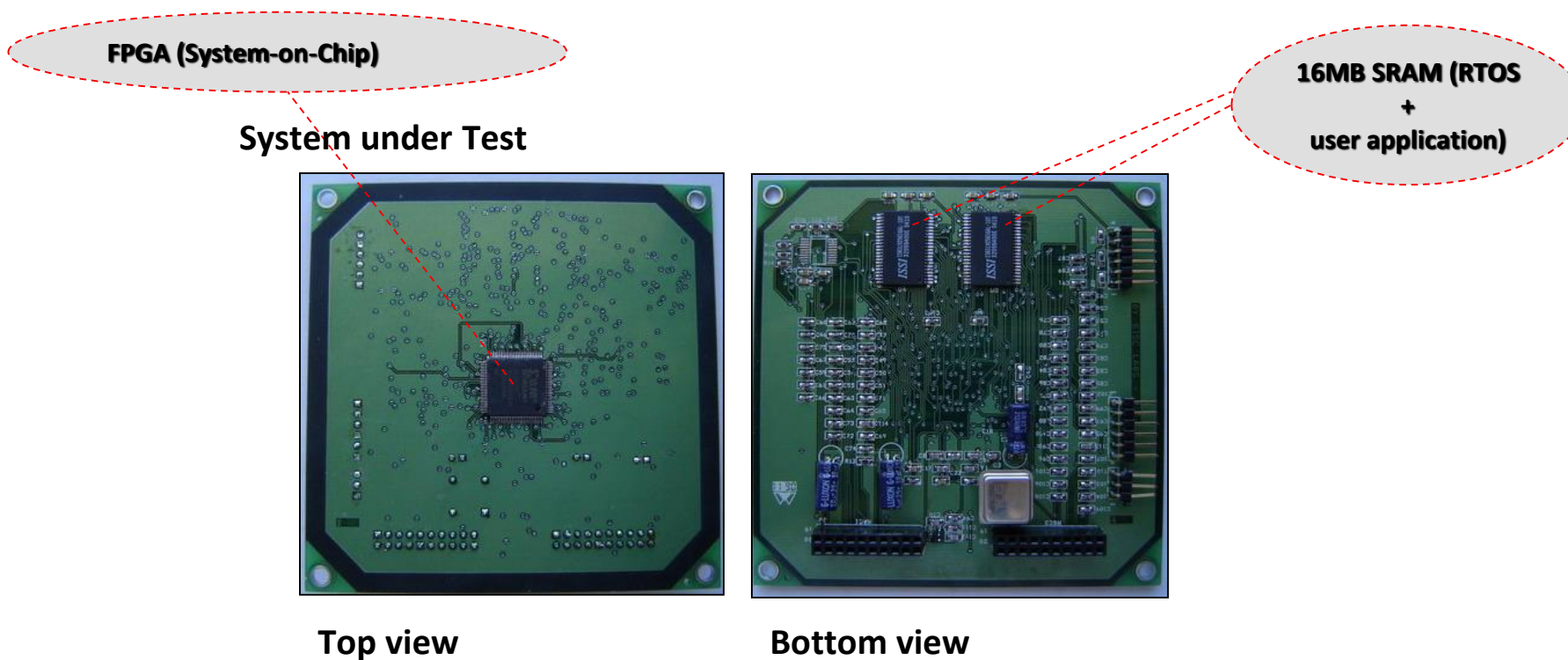
Test setup for the ^{241}Am source

ProASIC3E FPGA exposed to 5.4 MeV alpha particles
emitted by a ^{241}Am source

Alpha-particle flux:.
Appr. 1,300 part/cm².s
(13.7 particles/second /millisteradian)

Microsemi ProAsic3E A3PE1500

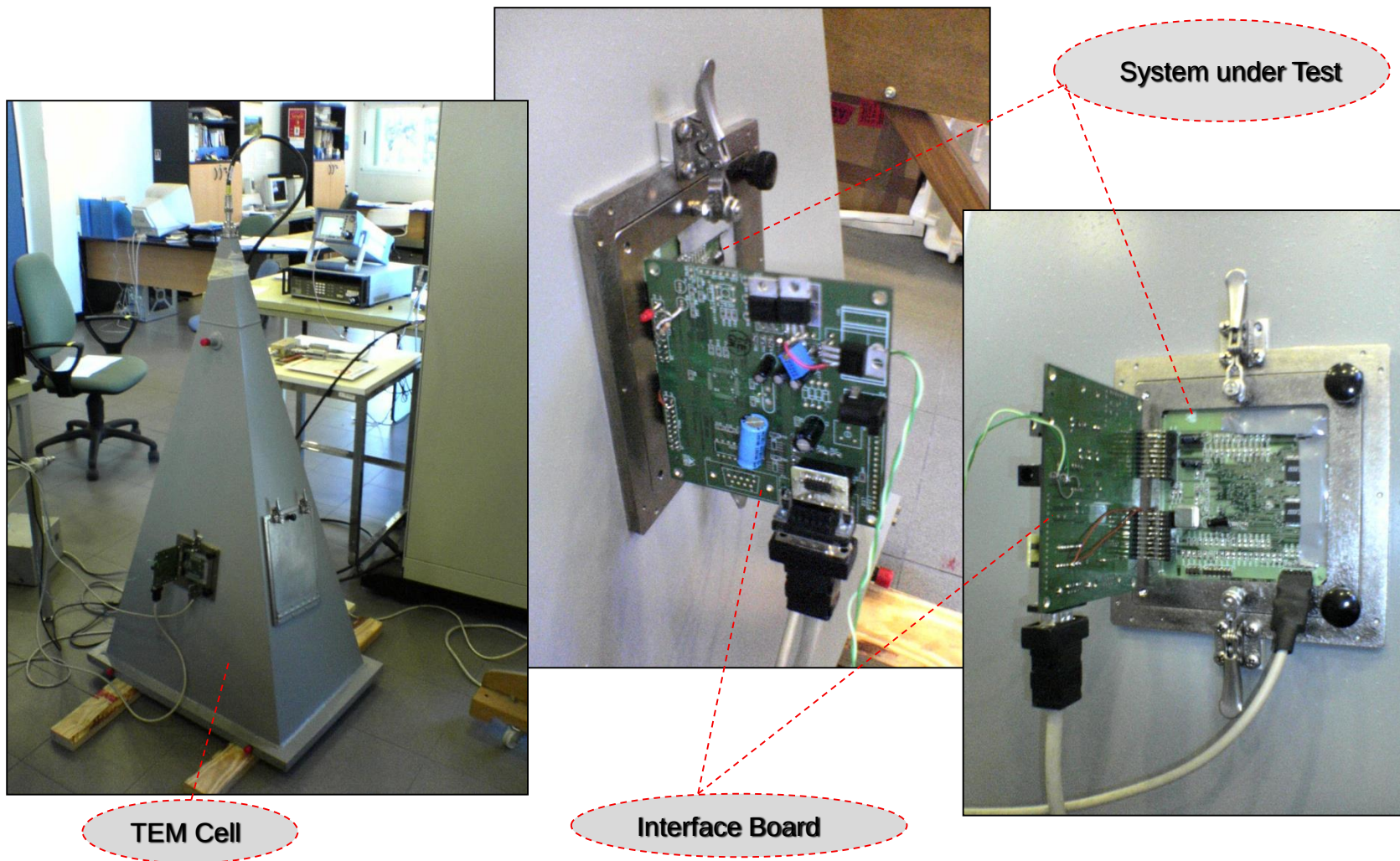
Platforms for Combined Test



IEC 62.132-2 std compliant board.
Four-layers: Gnd (top) - signal - signal - Vdd (bottom).

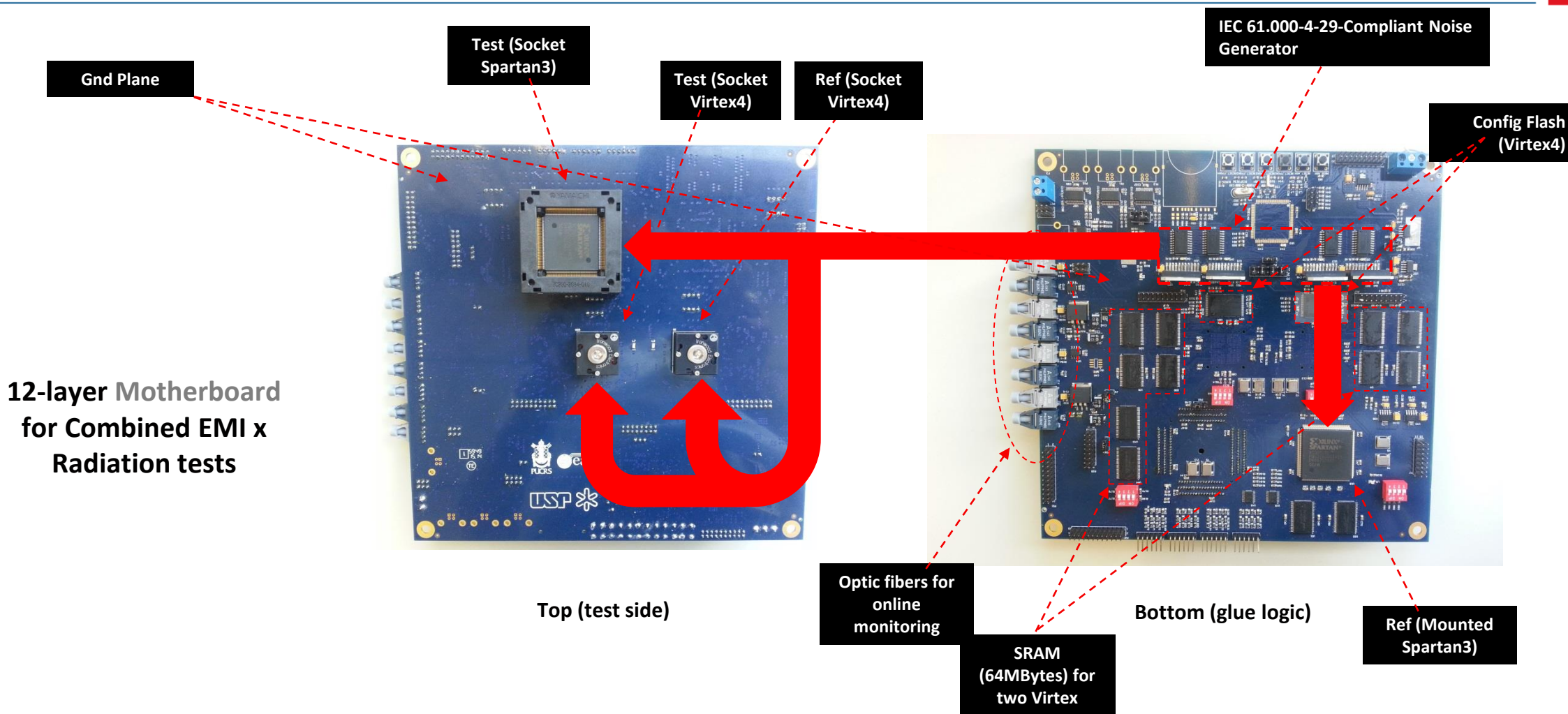
1st

Platforms for Combined Test



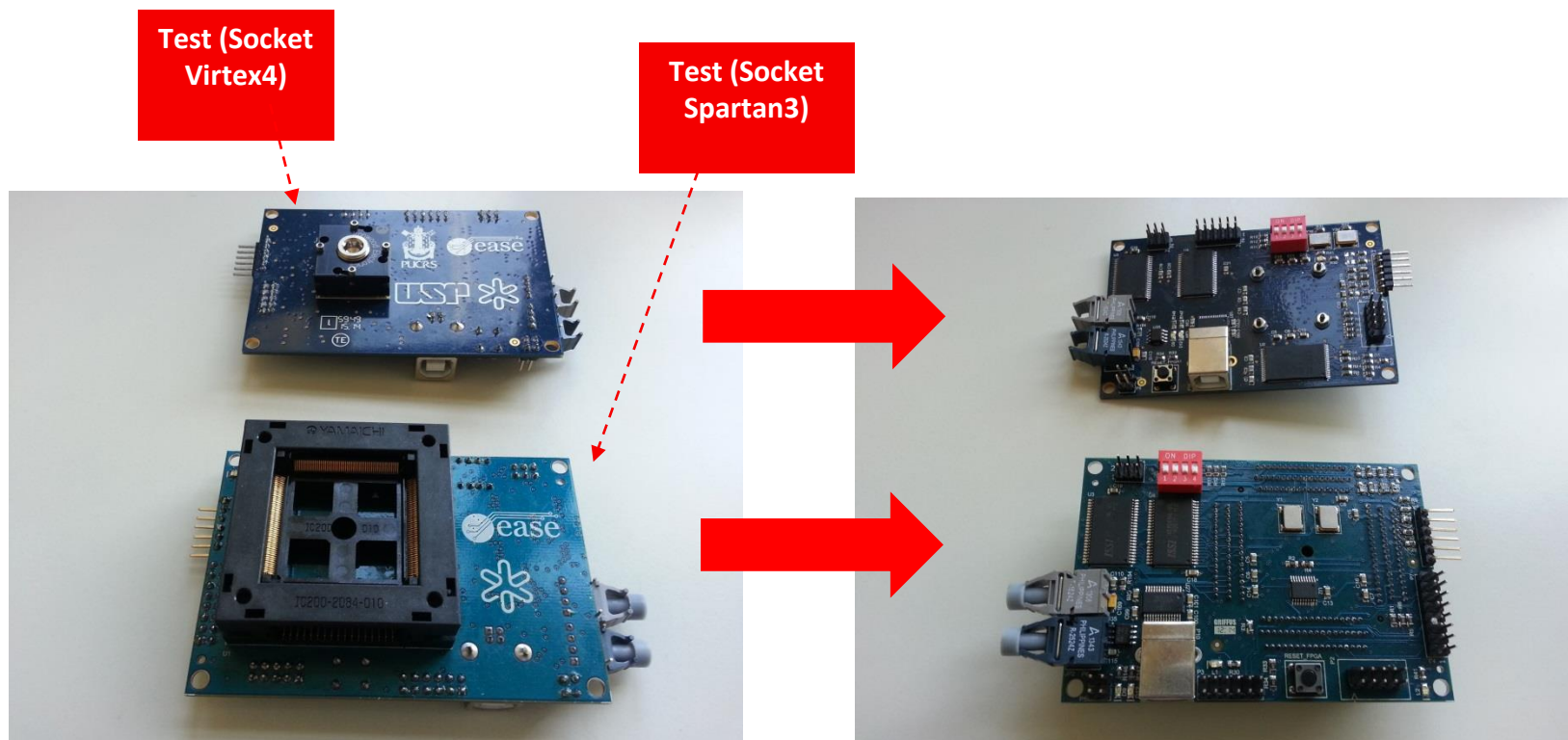
1st

Platforms for Combined Test



4th

Platforms for Combined Test



Top (test side)

Bottom (glue logic)

6-layer Daughterboards for Combined EMI x Radiation tests

4th

6. Mitigation Approaches



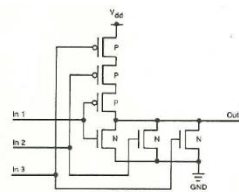
Mitigation Approaches

Mitigating Total-Ionizing Dose (TID)

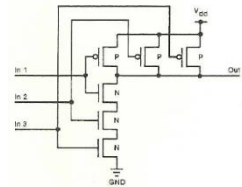


- Use of **guardbands**: **slow down clock frequency** (add extra timing margins)
- Prefer use of **modern technologies** (instead of old, mature ones): scaling down is always a good option since **nanotechnologies** (typically under 65nm) are strongly TID-tolerant
- Use of **TID-tolerant std cells library** (build-up **pMOS devices much larger** than nMOS devices, **replace NOR gates by Nand ones**, etc)

CMOS circuit schematic:
(a) NOR gate; (b) NAND gate:



(a)



(b)

NAND gate has shown in Co⁶⁰ tests to retain a higher degree of its original noise margins with radiation and is thus the preferred logic gate for hardened IC designs.

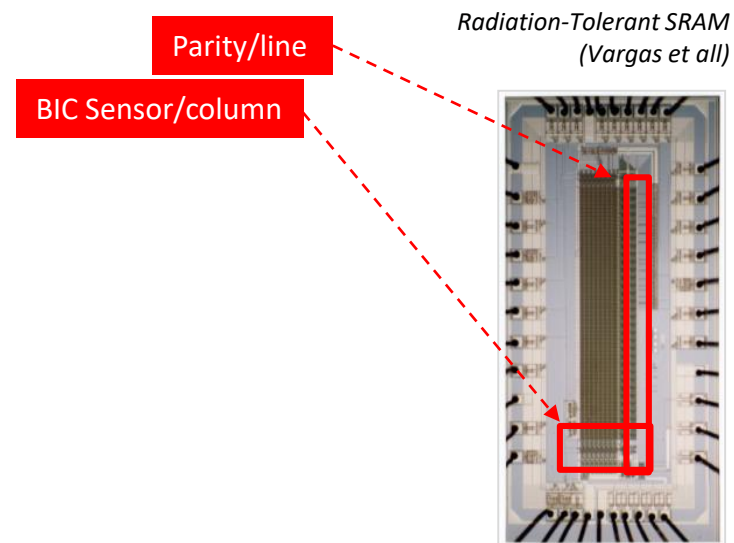
If NOR gates must be used in circuits designed for space, the # of inputs (i.e., the fan-in) should be minimized.

Mitigating Total-Ionizing Dose (TID)



Use of *HW, SW, Time & Information (EDAC) Redundancy* such as *TMR, Functional Units Duplication with Comparator, Interleaving, etc ...*

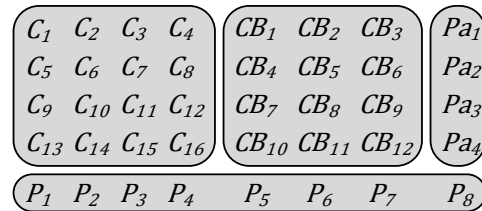
- Use of *Build-In Current Sensors (BICs)*



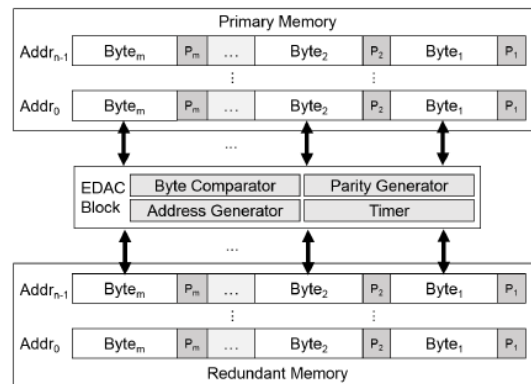
Mitigating Single-Event Upset (SEU)



➔ **EDAC in Memory Array: Parity, Hamming Extended, Checksum, CRC, Reed-Muller, Matrix, CLC, ...**



Codified CLC word model

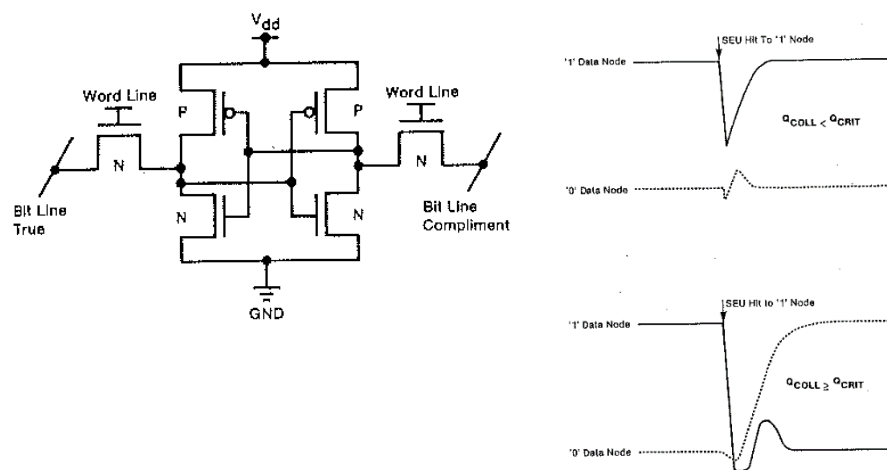


Parity-per-Byte and Duplication (PBD) Approach

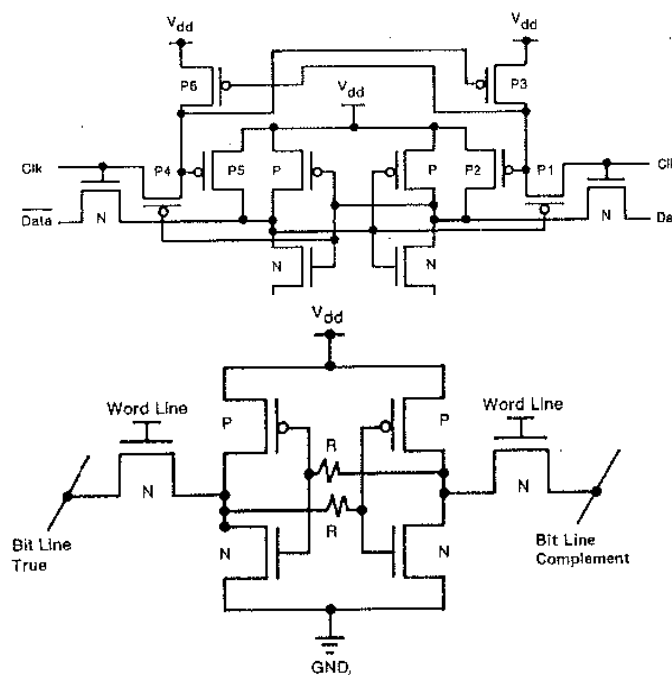
Mitigating Single-Event Upset (SEU)

Use of **SEU-tolerant std cells library**: design rad-hard SRAM cells

Classic CMOS SRAM cell schematic and the critical charge (Q_{crit}):



Design-hardened CMOS SRAM cell schematics:



Mitigating TID & SEU



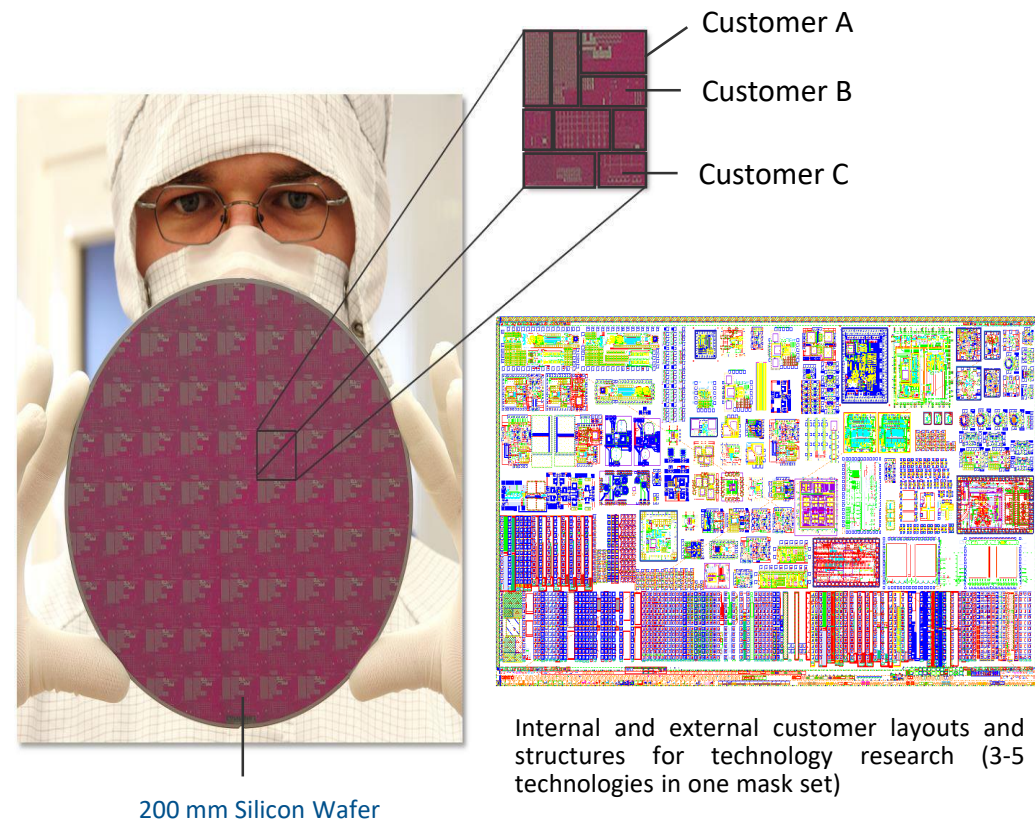
Moreover: service approach - Multi Project Wafer

Use of **130nm BiCMOS RadHard IHP** (SG13RH): **phase 2 evaluation testing i.a.w. 2269010 (Endurance)**.

For inclusion in the **ESA preferred parts list (EPPL)** for space applications.

RHBD Library: **ELT Transistors, TMD FF with Voter and Self-Correction Mechanism** (clockless, instant error mitigation).

Std version of this technology: **available on Open PDK**.



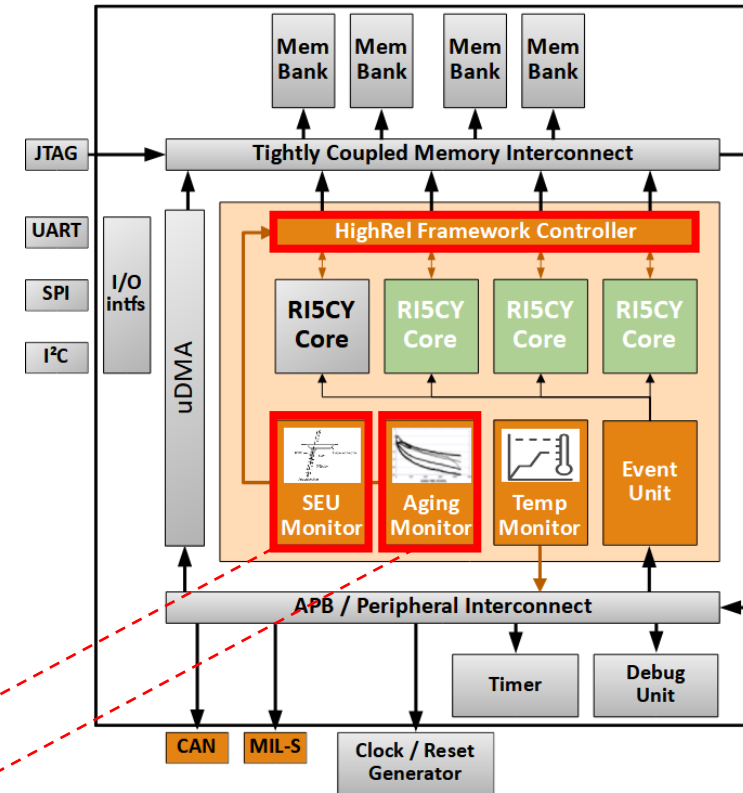
TetRISC SoC Solution



A highly reliable resilient quad-core multiprocessing system: TetRISC (TETra Core System based on RISC-V) SoC, has been developed

It monitors **multiple fault sources** to **adjust (in real-time) system reliability** in harsh environments

Based on the **open-source PULPissimo** single-core architecture.



Allows EDAC and Error Rate prediction

Allows aging prediction

TetRISC SoC Goal and Main Modules



TetRISC objectives:

1. implement a **RISC-V based resilient multiprocessing system**
2. enable **on-chip reliability monitoring**
3. **dynamically reconfigure the system** into different **operating modes in real-time** (based on **multiple on-chip sensors and user requirements**)
 - 3.1 **(A)** Normal, **(B)** Dup&Comp, **(C)** Triple-Module Redundancy, and **(D)** N-Module Redundancy (NMR)
 - 3.2 Can be combined with **Clock Gating** Approach

Final Goal: **achieve optimized switching** between different operating modes (to enable trade-off: **reliability ↔ power consumption ↔ performance**)

On-Chip Sensor: SEU Monitor & In-Flight SEU Rate Prediction



Each memory word comprises **40 bits** (**32** bits used for data storage + **8** EDAC bits).

SEU Monitor:

(A) based on an Error Detection and Correction (**EDAC**) method, a **scrubbing** module, and a **dedicated process to identify** all upsets and distinguish the type of faults that occurs in each SRAM word.

(B) **integrated into the memory interface controller** of the Tightly Coupled Memory Interconnect (TCMI).

On-Chip Sensor: SEU Monitor & In-Flight SEU Rate Prediction

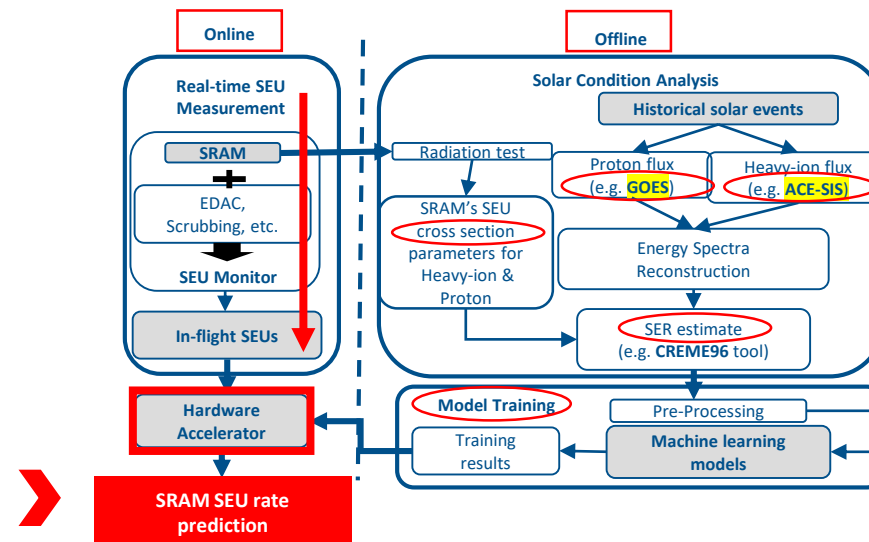


In addition to **EDAC-based on Extended Hamming Code** to detect and correct errors in memory...

... the proposed SEU monitor can also **predict in-flight SRAM SEU rate**

based on **AI training** and **HW accelerator**:

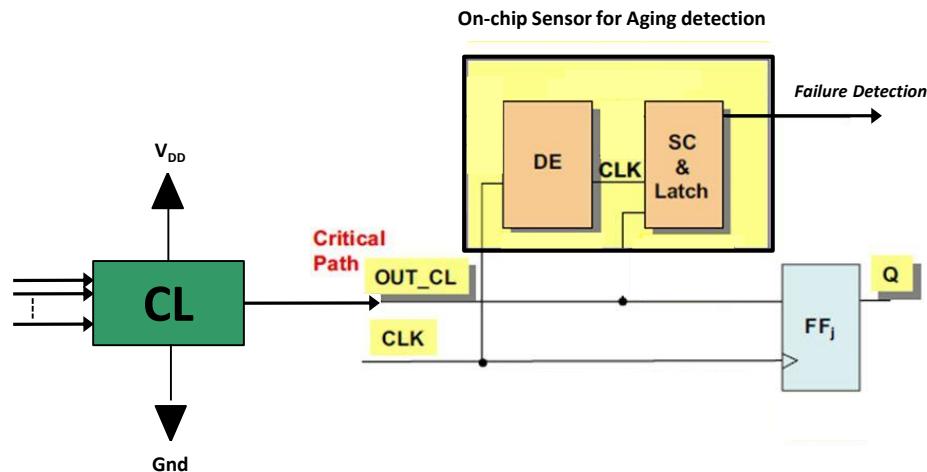
- (A) cross-section determination
- (B) use of available **public historical space particle flux databases**: (**GOES**) and (**ACE-SIS**) from previous space missions
- (C) **Machine Learning** Model



On-chip Aging Sensor



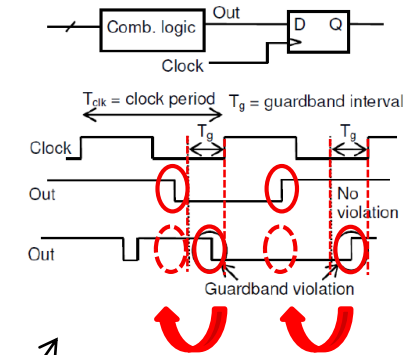
M. Valdés, J. Freijedo, M. J. Moure, J. J. Rodríguez-Andina, J. Semião; F. Vargas, I. C. Teixeira, J. P. Teixeira
"Programmable sensor for on-line checking of signal integrity in FPGA-based systems subject to aging effects"
2011 12th Latin American Test Workshop (LATW)
doi: [10.1109/LATW.2011.5985926](https://doi.org/10.1109/LATW.2011.5985926).



According to the **degree of aging detected** by the sensor, **it increases the V_{DD} source**.

Fresh circuit

Old circuit



Aging sensor detects **guardband violation** during circuit operation.

Other counter measures:

Application of rejuvenation algorithms

Op frequency reduction

Power up spare units

etc ...

(1) ASIC Demonstrator

Manufactured in **130nm BiCMOS RadHard** IHP Technology

TETRISC SoC in **Ceramic-Socket**

Wafer probe test: approved

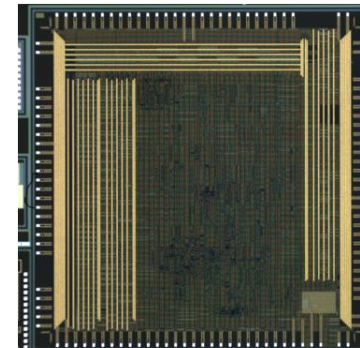
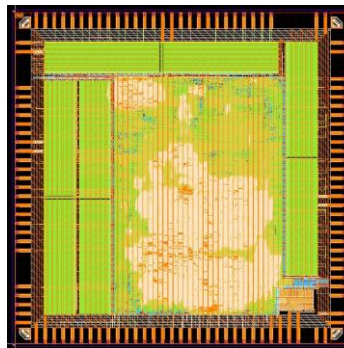
Currently: under **packaging process**

Board manufactured and ready

Scale4Edge Chip
RISC-V processor
43.56 mm²

(39.17% allocated to four 8192 x 40-bit shared L2 SRAM blocks that can also serve as sensing elements for radiation monitoring)

Tape-out: July 2022



(2) FPGA Demonstrator

ARTIX-7 FPGA

IHP Fault injection in cores (RTL) → **Saboteurs**
Fault injection by means of switch at board level
LCD display outputs **detection status**



TETRISC operating in the **following modes** during **fault injection** campaign in cores:

Quadruple Modular Redundancy (QMR)



QMR with Fault Injection



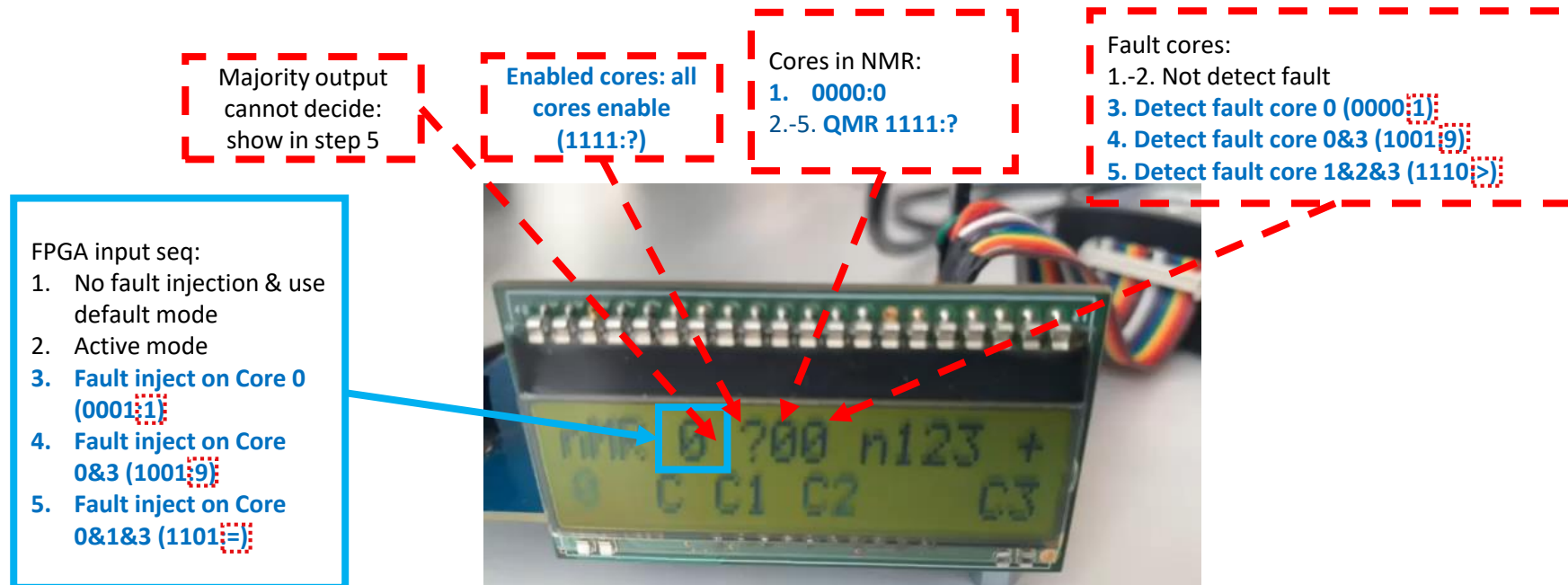
QMR for cores 0,1,2,3 with Master Core 0

Expect:

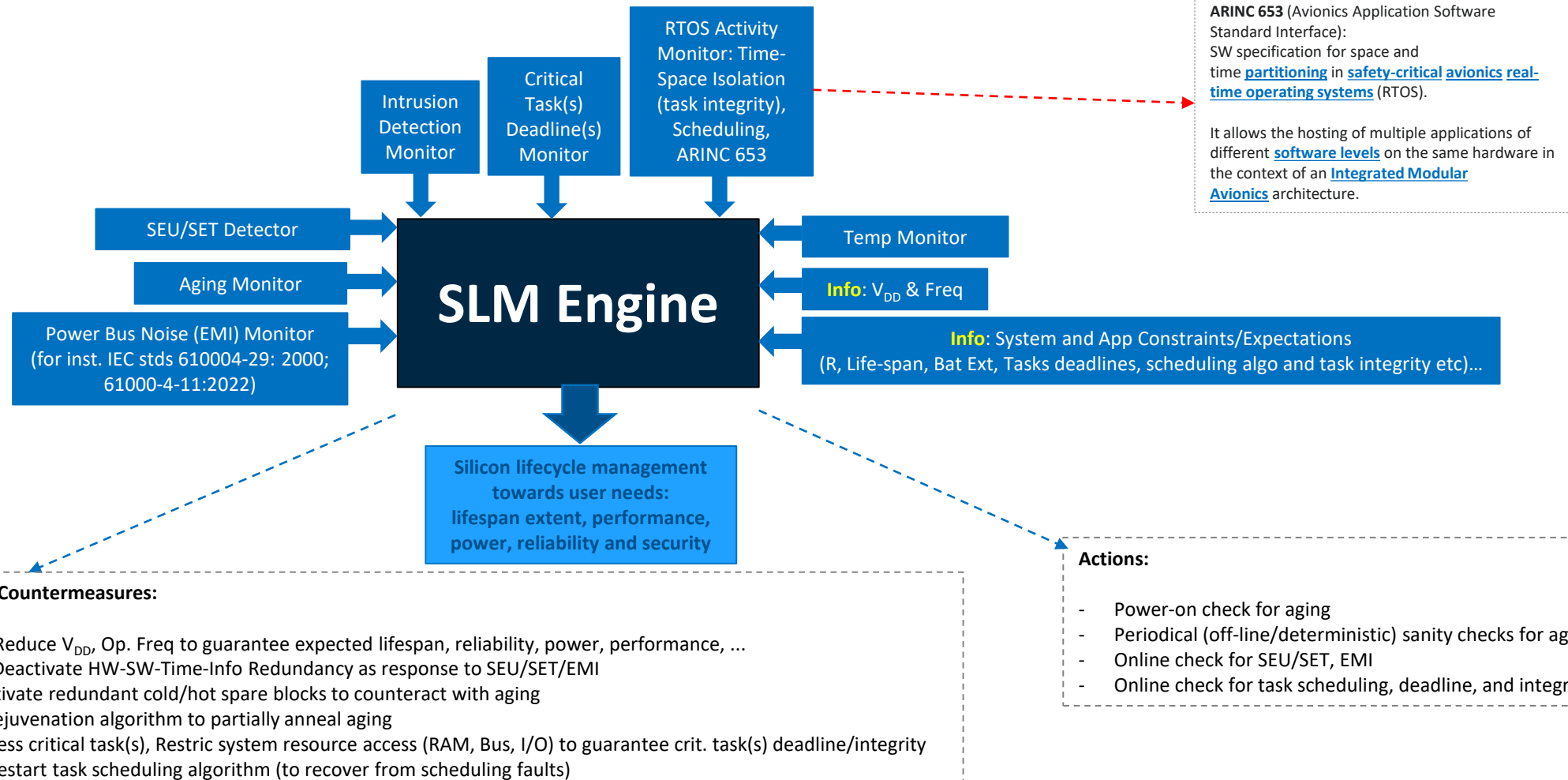
During QMR, cores 0,1,2,3 run the same task and display the result of core0

The framework controller can detect the erroneous core & the majority output can be determined if only one or two cores fail

The output display can show the correct output of C0, and fault core status could be restored if possible



Resilient System for Critical Applications



7. Case Study on Combined Test



Case-Study on Combined Test

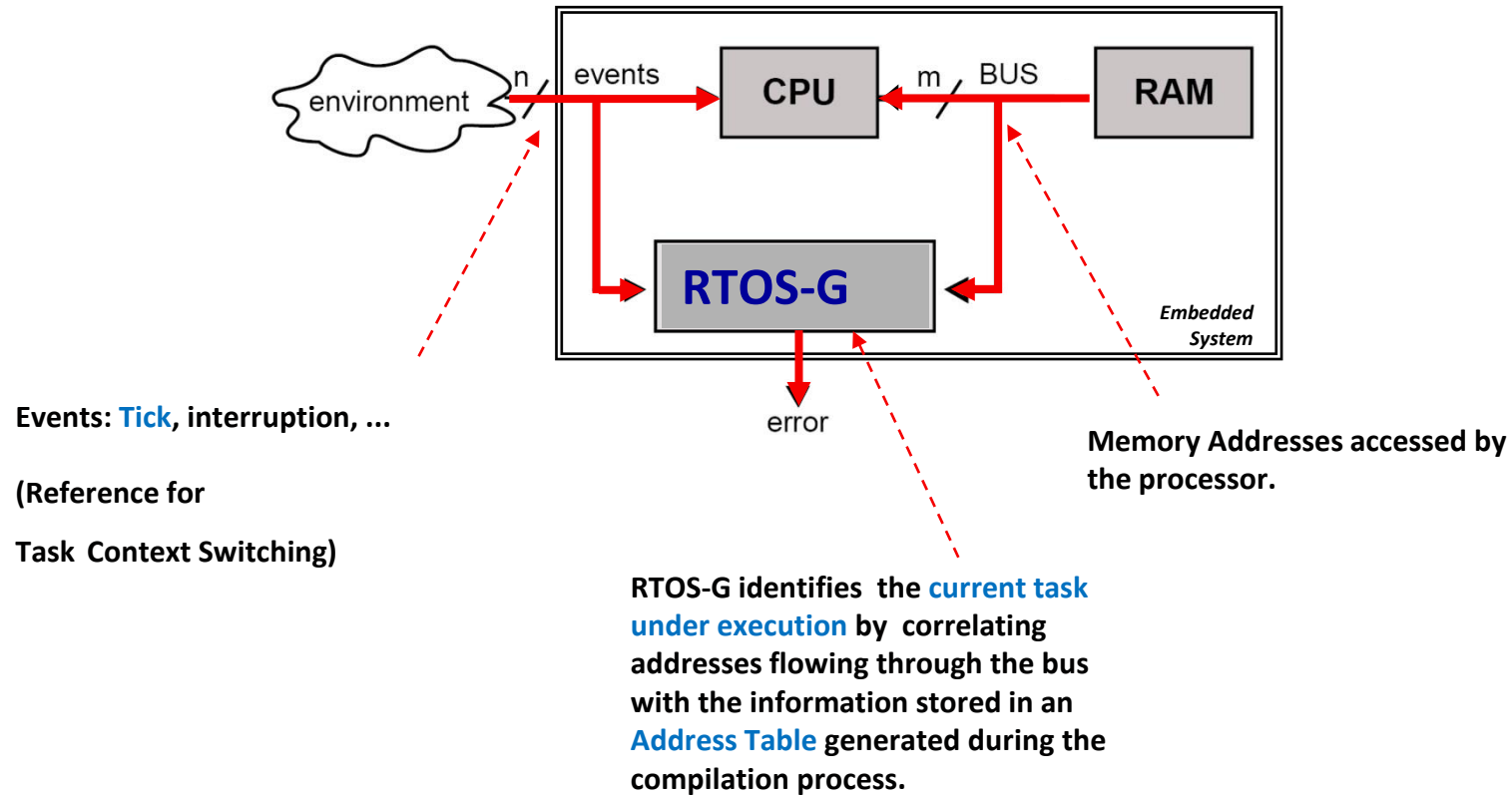
Combined Test: Conducted EMI and TID



IP Core: RTOS-Guardian (RTOS-G), a watchdog to monitor RTOS activity in embedded systems

👉 the RTOS-G targets faults that **ESCAPE** detection by the **native structures** present in the RTOS kernel.

Combined Test: Conducted EMI and TID



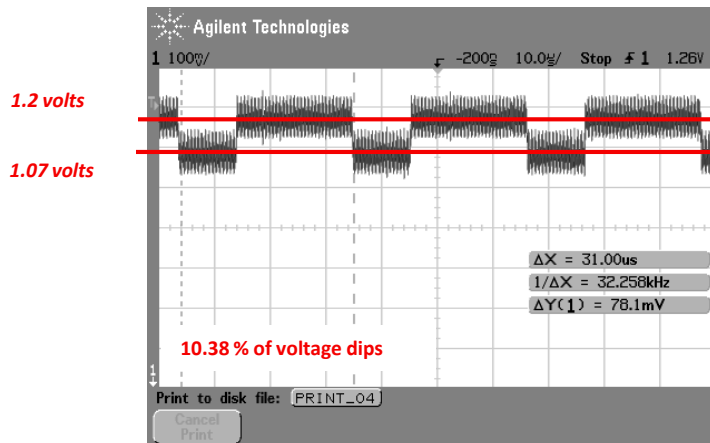
Block diagram of the target embedded system

Combined Test: Conducted EMI and TID

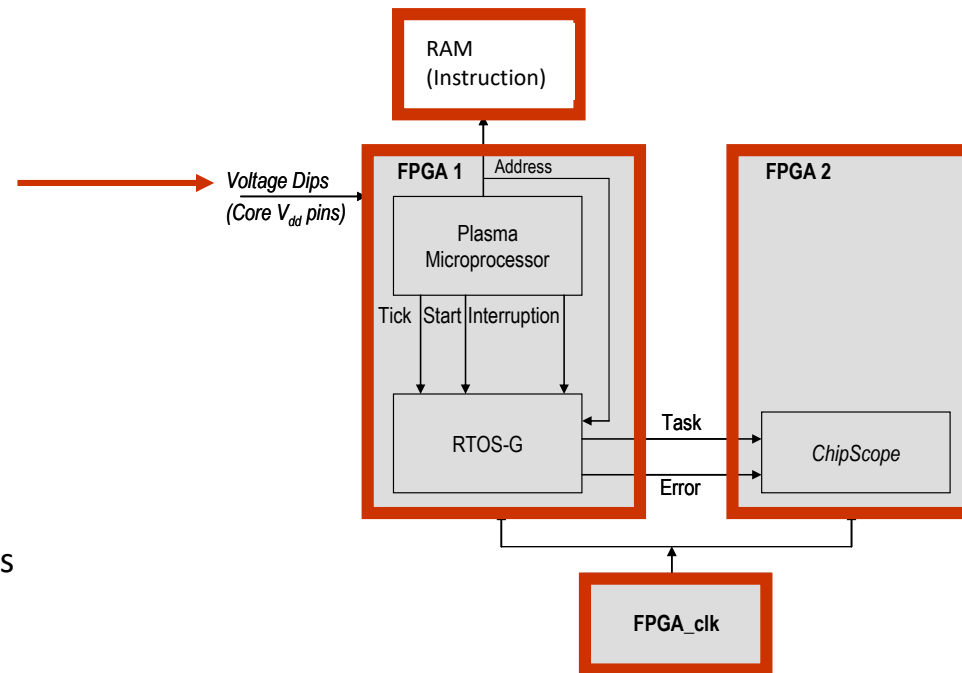


Fault injection campaign: *generated according to the IEC 61.000-4-29 Int. Std. for conducted EMI on the DC input power port of (fresh) FPGA 1*

Voltage dips were randomly injected at the **FPGA 1 V_{dd} input pins** at a frequency of **25.68 kHz** and consisted of dips of about **10.83% of the nominal V_{dd}** .



Injected noise at the FPGA power bus
(conducted EMI)



Fault injection environment

Combined Test: Conducted EMI and TID



Results for Fault Detection

As long as more complex services of the kernel are used, the higher is the RTOS error detection.



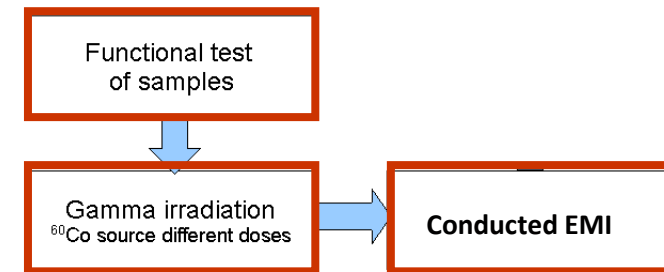
Benchmark	RTOS Kernel [%]	RTOS-G [%]
<i>BM1</i>	2.40	99.90
<i>BM2</i>	25.90	100.00
<i>BM3</i>	45.80	100.00
<i>Average</i>	24.70	99.97

*The native fault detection mechanism (**assert()** function) is called by the kernel every time RTOS runs its services (message queues, semaphores).*

Combined Test: Conducted EMI and TID

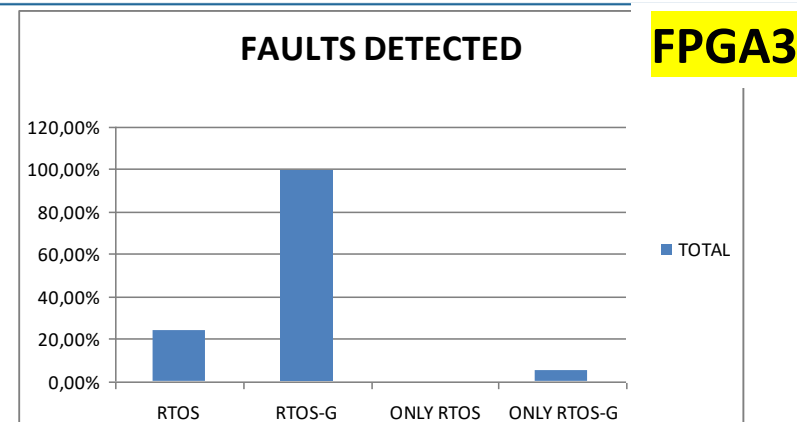
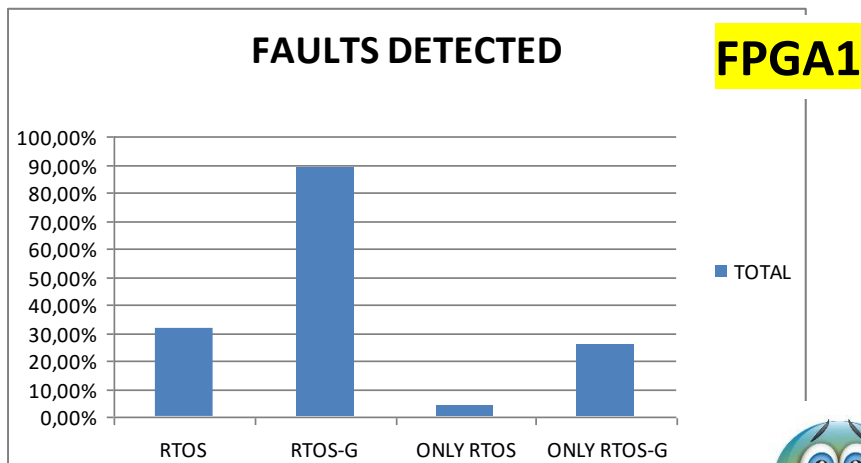


Fault injection campaign:
TID irradiation of FPGA1 in a Gamma Cell with ^{60}Co



Experiment	FPGA0 (krads)	FPGA1 (krads)	FPGA2 (krads)	FPGA3 (krads)	FPGA4 (krads)
1st experiment	0	5.6	51.9	111.0	216.0
2nd experiment	0	217.6	263.9	323.0	---

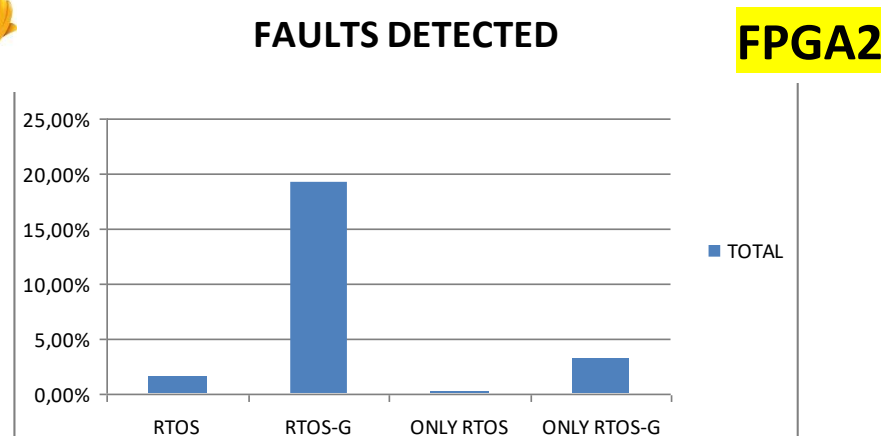
Combined Test: Conducted EMI and TID



RTOS-G: 68,67%



RTOS: 18,00%





Thank you for your attention!

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