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Novel imaging technique for thermal neutrons using a fast optical camera

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A novel imaging technique for thermal neutrons using a fast-optical camera is presented. Thermal neutrons are reacted with Lithium-6 to produce a pair of 2.73 MeV tritium and 2.05 MeV alpha particles, which in turn interact in a thin layer of LYSO crystal scintillator to produce a localized flash of light. These photons are directed by a pair of lenses to a micro-channel plate intensifier, the optical camera, TPX3CAM is connected to the intensifier output. The setup is shown in figure 1 (attached).

The results from the camera are reconstructed through a custom algorithm. Each reconstructed neutron event is made up of several sub-clusters, each cluster represents a group of photons, which were produced by the photon multiplier from a single photon input. A neutron hit is calculated to produce 3-6 photons at the intensifier input. The background of this experiment consists of low energy beta particles and x-rays, which produces single photons. Figure 2 (attached) shows 3 groups of photons, which are relatively close to each other both spatially and temporally, this event was determined as the result of a neutron hit.

In conclusion, this new optical neutron imaging technique allows remote and long-distance detection from the radiation source also magnifies the field of view of a detector by using an appropriate set of focusing lenses.

Collaboration

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