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DarkSide-20k Veto photon-detector units: construction and characterization

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DarkSide-20k, a global direct dark matter search experiment, is located at the Gran Sasso National Laboratory (LNGS), Italy. It is designed to reach a total exposure of 200 tonne-years nearly free from instrumental backgrounds. The core of the detector is a dual-phase Time Projection Chamber (TPC) containing 50 tonnes of underground liquid argon (UAr) with low levels of cosmogenic ${}^{39}Ar$ isotope. Surrounding the TPC walls is a layer of polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA), acting as a neutron veto. The neutron veto is equipped with large-area cryogenic Silicon Photomultiplier (SiPM) array detectors, positioned along the walls of the TPC on the outer side. SiPMs are arranged in a compact layout to reduce the amount of material used for the Printed Circuit Board (PCB), cables and connectors which together form the Veto PhotoDetection Units (vPDUs). A vPDU consists of SiPMs, along with front-end electronics and a motherboard, which distributes voltage and control signals and electrical signal transmission.

This talk focuses on the production of the first vPDUs, emphasising the rigorous QA/QC procedures, and the final characterisation of the first completed prototypes. Extensive testing in liquid nitrogen baths has been conducted on the vPDUs, aiming to assign a "quality passport" to ensure optimal performance and reliability in the DarkSide-20k experiment."

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