

Polar Video Gating of Radar and IFF Displays Using Cartesian Control

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Many data-processing operations require the rapid and accurate extraction of position data from cathode-ray-tube information sources such as radar, IFF, and sonar PPI repeaters. An IFF Active Readout System under development required gating out IFF video responses at positions controlled by a hook position marker. In this implementation, the hook marker is presented on the PPI in x - y coordinates during the radar repeater recovery or retrace period. A means was devised of developing a video gate control which gates the video with a constant angular width and constant range depth using the x and y dc hook position voltages and the PPI repeater resolved x and y sweep voltages. The computation uses an analog approximation technique which is relatively simple. The approximation deviates from the ideal less than 0.5% for a 10° angular width gate. This deviation can be eliminated by the addition of a simple compensation scheme. The video gating method can be implemented digitally for those PPI displays using digital sweeps.

INTRODUCTION

Many data-processing operations require the rapid and accurate extraction, control, and coordination of position data from cathode-ray-tube information sources such as radar and IFF PPI repeaters. In the course of devising an IFF Active Readout System (1), a means of gating target video displayed in normal PPI ρ - θ coordinates from a hook (2,3,4) controlled in x - y coordinates became necessary. Most of the PPI repeaters now used with IFF displays such as the AN/UPA-50 use the PPI electronic cursor with its ρ - θ range mark and bearing cursor controls. Modifications to the PPI cursor circuits are made in order to derive the desired video gating signals. In order to position the video gate, the AN/SPA-8A PPI cursor is displayed once for each nine radar sweeps, causing 10 percent of the radar display time to be lost. Retrace-insertion techniques (2) are used in the present effort to display the hook position (desired video gating position) in order to eliminate the robbing of radar display time and to obtain a faster and more efficient operator control. Under these conditions the hook position coordinates are no longer available in the radar time coordinates.

In the design of conventional devices used for the rapid control of a hook position, such as a "joystick," "bowling ball," "conducting glass

electronic pencil" (2), or "light pencil" (3,4), the coordinate position voltages are available in x - y coordinate form. To use these voltages in the formation of a true range and bearing gate, cartesian (x - y) coordinates can be converted to polar (ρ - θ) coordinates by the direct mathematical means in either analog or digital computers. In addition to the position coordinate conversion, it is desirable that means be included in the computer manipulations for maintaining a constant angular width and range depth of the video gate for all possible target locations. The video gating could be done in x - y coordinates with a square gate or an octagonal gate if simple diode function generators are used (5,6).

Since the angular width of the gate would not be expected to exceed 16° , a relatively simple and close approximation to the desired video gate shape has been devised, without requiring an elaborate computer for coordinate conversion. The x - y hook coordinates in conjunction with the PPI repeater sweep signals are used to derive the video gate. The method is described and implemented in analog form, but can be implemented with simplicity advantages over other methods in the digital form for PPI displays using digital sweeps.

VIDEO GATE COMPUTATION

The video gate geometry is shown in Fig. 1. The target position is at B . It is desired to determine

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TABLE 1
Range Deviation δR (Expressed as a Percentage of R) as a Function of Gate Width $\Delta\phi$, Determined From the Relation (See Fig. 1)

$$\frac{\delta R}{R} = \frac{OA - R}{R} = \frac{OA}{R} - 1 = \frac{1}{\cos \Delta\phi} - 1$$

$\Delta\phi$ (degrees)	$\delta R/R$ (percent)
0	0
1	-0.001
2	0.06
3	0.14
4	0.25
5	0.40
6	0.55
7	0.75
8	0.98
⋮	⋮
⋮	⋮
15	3.53

The noted deviation, although of only minor consequence in any practical system, yields to a relatively simple compensation, rendering a no-compromise solution even out to a gate width of 90°. While this compensation is described later in this section, it may not be incorporated in the laboratory model, since it is not considered necessary in this application.

A block diagram of the video gate computer for use with a standard fixed coil PPI repeater is shown in Fig. 2. The input signals to the video gate computer are the PPI sweep voltages x_{sw} , y_{sw} , and r_{sw} , and the hook position coordinate voltages $-x_h$ and $-y_h$. The x_{sw} and y_{sw} waveforms are resolved from the R_{sw} in the PPI repeater and are in time coincidence. The hook position coordinate voltages are obtained from the hook control device.

With the PPI scanning in a clockwise direction (see Fig. 1) the $(x - \Delta x, y + \Delta y)$ point is being determined in time by the subtract/add and the add/subtract circuits. When this point is reached by the PPI sweeps, the difference amplifiers null simultaneously. The simultaneous null point is detected by the AND circuit and triggers the threshold circuit. The output of the threshold circuit passes through the buffer gate and the

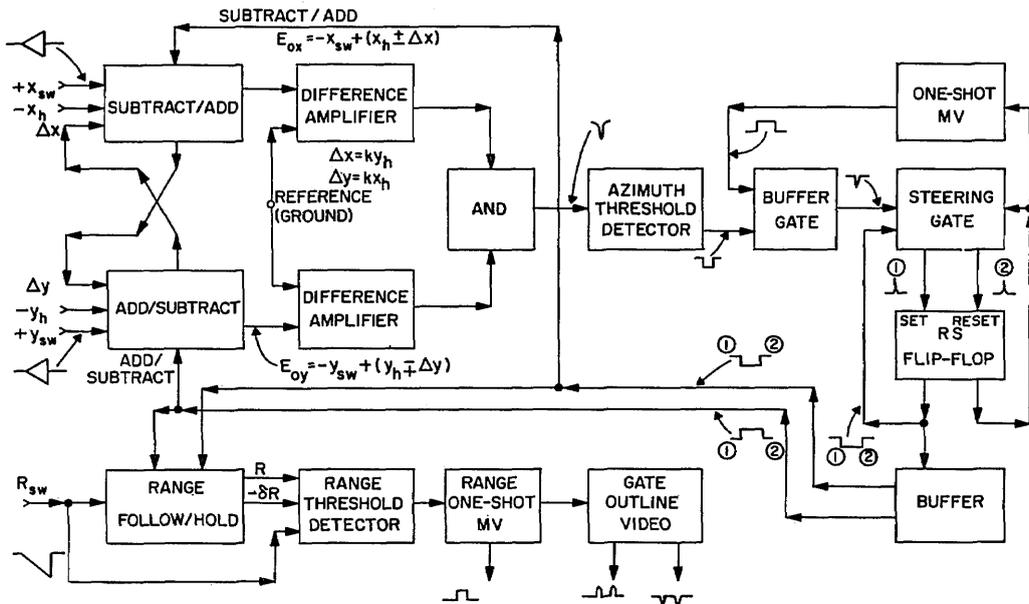


Fig. 2 - Video gate computer

steering gate and sets the *RS* flip-flop. The one-shot multivibrator output causes the buffer gate to block any extraneous pulses which may be generated by the threshold circuit immediately following the first pulse. The setting of the *RS* flip-flop also reverses the state of the subtract/add and add/subtract circuits so that the gate endpoint ($x + \Delta x$, $y - \Delta y$) can be derived.

Also when the *RS* flip-flop is set, the range follow/hold circuit is switched from the follow condition to the hold condition. This causes the range of the initial gating action to be stored. During the hold condition, each subsequent range sweep is compared with the derived gate range voltage by the range threshold detector. Each time the range sweep goes through the stored value, the threshold detector triggers the range one-shot multivibrator. The width of the range multivibrator output pulse, which is controllable, corresponds to the range depth (ΔR) of the video gate. A gate outline circuit, driven by the range multivibrator, provides video pulses for painting the outline of the video gate on the PPI. In order to compensate for the range deviations due to the computation approximation, a signal δR is subtracted from the range value in the range threshold detector. The signal δR is proportional to range, and the increment is set by a control operated in tandem with the angular width control.

When the PPI scan reaches the second point ($x + \Delta x$, $y - \Delta y$), the azimuth threshold detector detects the simultaneous null of the subtract/add and add/subtract circuits and generates a pulse which passes through the buffer gate and steering gate to reset the *RS* flip-flop. This resetting operation restores the video gate computer to its initial state so that it is ready to repeat the operation of generating the video gate on the next PPI scan through the hook marker position.

CIRCUITS

The video gate computer circuits for use with the AN/SPA-8A PPI repeater are shown in Figs. 3, 4, and 5. Several types and varieties of microelectronic devices from several manufacturers were used in the video gate computer to evaluate the microelectronic devices in this type of operation. Stable dc operational amplifiers with differential input were used for the add/subtract

functions as shown in Fig. 3. The add/subtract function is obtained by switching the $\Delta x/\Delta y$ signal to the positive input to the operational amplifier. The transfer function (see Appendix) of the add/subtract circuit for the situation illustrated is

$$E_o = -0.2x_{sw} + \left(\frac{30}{7.5 + R_{cal}} \right) X_H - 3\Delta x + N(6\Delta x)$$

where $N = 1$ for the switch closed (add) and $N = 0$ for the switch open (subtract). The outputs of the add/subtract circuits are compared against signal ground by the two difference amplifiers. The outputs of the difference amplifiers drive a logical AND circuit. When both difference amplifiers simultaneously null, the output of the AND circuit goes low and causes the Schmitt threshold detector to trigger. The triggering of the threshold detector generates the azimuth leading edge pulse which is passed through the $M\mu L-911$ buffer gate and the $M\mu L-910$ steering gate to set the $M\mu L-910$ *RS* flip-flop. The setting of the *RS* flip-flop triggers the $M\mu L-910$ multivibrator and holds the steering gate so that any subsequent pulses from the buffer gate will reset the flip-flop. The multivibrator output inhibits the buffer gate for a period sufficiently long for the circuits controlled by the *RS* flip-flop to become stabilized. The inhibiting action blocks any subsequent pulses from the threshold detector until after the add/subtract circuits have been switched and allowed to stabilize. The setting of the *RS* flip-flop also reverses the state of the MD-985 driver circuit, which then reverses the state of the add/subtract circuits. This action allows these circuits to be ready to determine the azimuth trailing edge of the video gate. The driver circuit switches the range follow and hold circuit in Fig. 4 from the follow to the hold state.

The follow and hold circuit in Fig. 4 follows the PPI range sweep during the nongating period. When the PPI scans through the azimuth leading edge, the driver circuit of Fig. 3 reverses state and switches the circuit in Fig. 4 to the hold state. At the instant of the change to hold, the PPI range value is stored on the C_s capacitor. The capacitor C_s is within the feedback loop of an operational amplifier during the follow action by having $Q1$ cut off and $Q2$, $Q3$, and $Q6$ conducting. Thus the output of $Q5$ is an inversion of the input waveform. When the hold action is made, the transistors $Q2$,

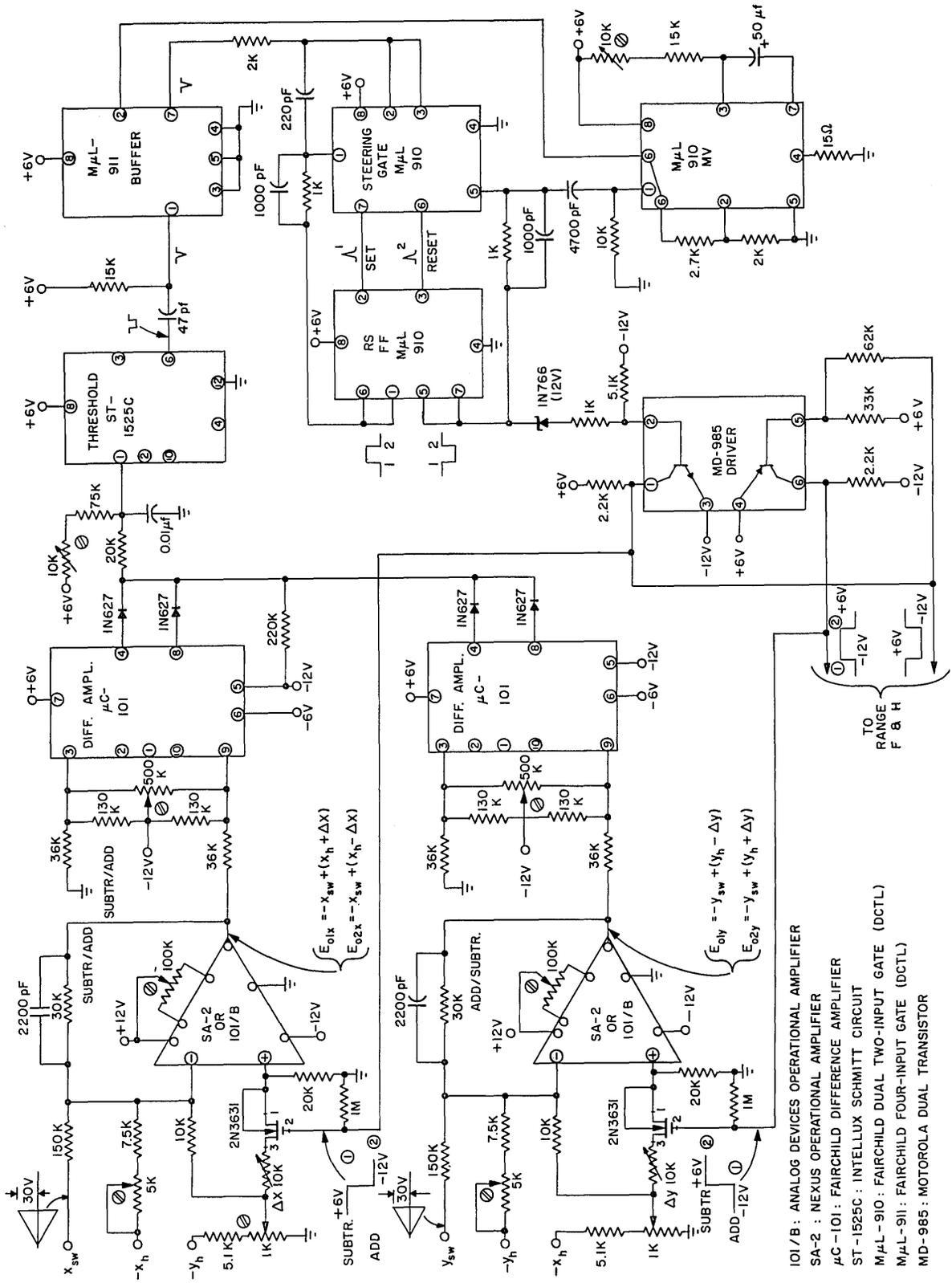


Fig. 3 - Video gate azimuth computer

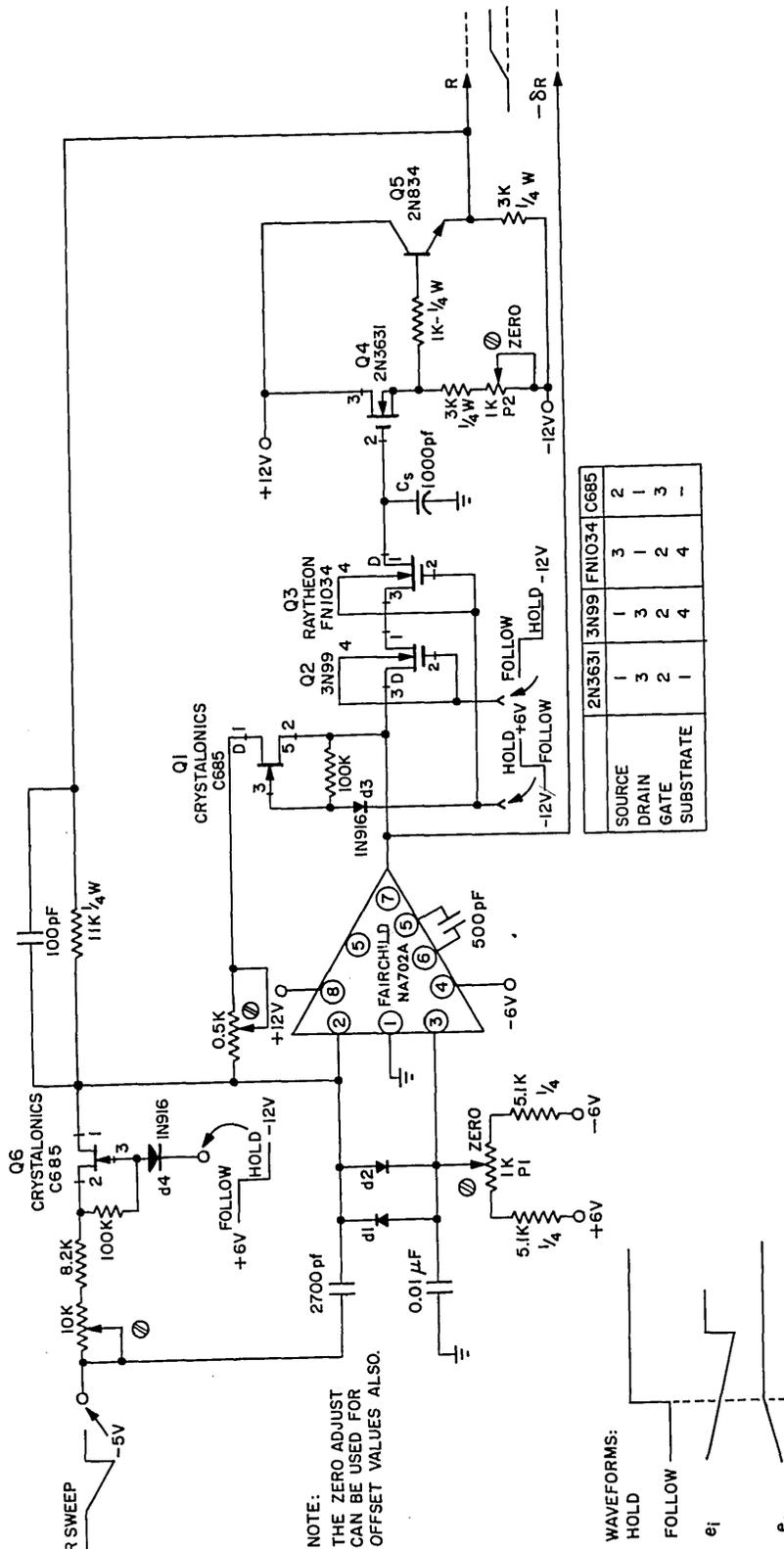


Fig. 4 — Range follow and hold

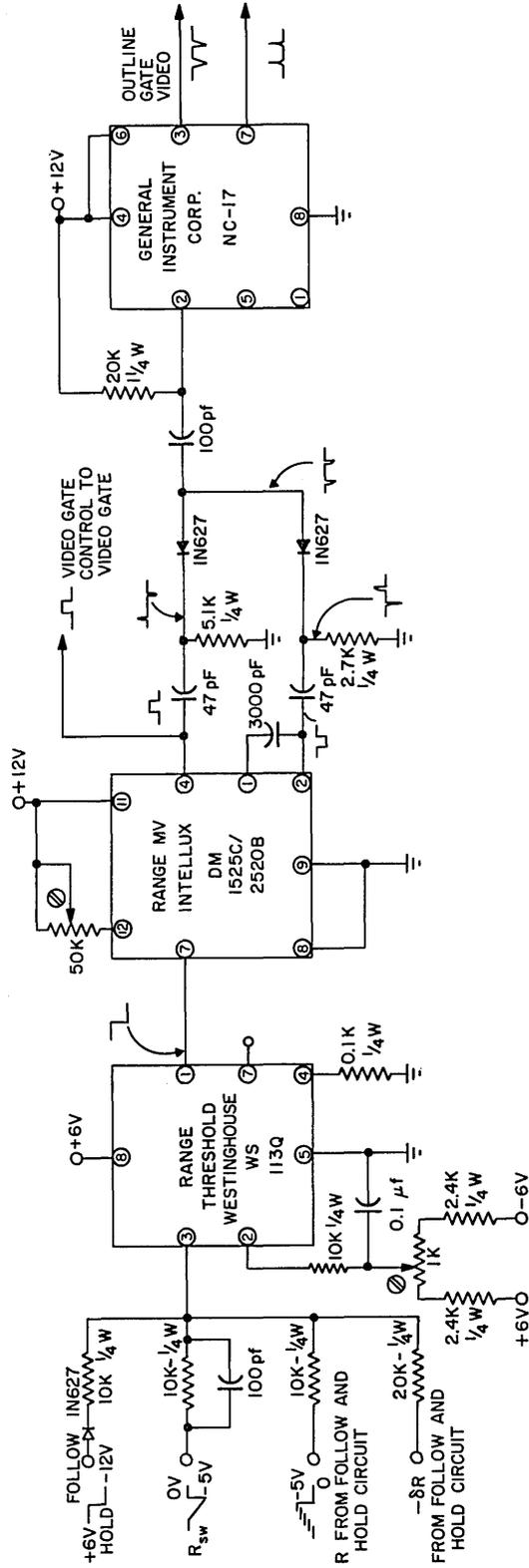


Fig. 5 — Video gate driver

$Q3$, and $Q6$ are cut off and $Q1$ is made conducting. The value of the range sweep voltage at the instant of the hold action is stored by C_s and is read out by $Q4$ and $Q5$. By turning $Q1$ on and $Q6$ off, the feedback path of the amplifier is set at a gain value which is proportional to the compensation value δ . The output of $Q5$ provides the input range R to the amplifier, thus causing the output of the $\mu A702$ to provide the compensation $-\delta R$ during the hold period. The use of an n-channel (3N99) metal-semiconductor (MOS) in series with a p-channel (FN1034) MOS reduce the leakage current through the switch $Q2-Q3$ to a small value. The MOS 2N3631 has a very high input impedance and consequently very low leakage. Thus the storage capacitor C_s will hold the derived range voltage for the period of the video gating with negligible degradation. C_s must be a low-leakage, low-dielectric storage capacitor.

After the hold action takes place, the range threshold detector (Fig. 5) is released. The subsequent range sweeps are then compared to the derived range voltage less the compensation δR from the follow and hold circuit. Each time the range sweep voltage passes through the derived compensated range voltage, the range threshold detector triggers the range one-shot multivibrator. The output period of the multivibrator is set to provide the desired range depth of the video gate. The output of the range multivibrator provides the video gate control signals for use in the Active Readout Display System. In order to outline the video gate, when desired, the output of the range multivibrator is differentiated and mixed in a diode *OR* circuit. The output of the *OR* circuit triggers a Schmitt circuit which provides the required short-rise-time pulses for driving the PPI video amplifier.

SUMMARY

A video gating technique, which uses the resolved x - y sweep voltages from a radar PPI repeater and the x - y position voltages from the hook (or gate) control, has been devised to provide a constant angular width and range depth video gate control. Without compensation the angular gate width can be extended up to 16° with less than 1% range deviation. With a simple computation circuit the gate width could be extended to 90° without compromise if needed.

The computation is relatively simple and has been implemented in analog form. The method can be implemented digitally for PPI display systems which use digital sweeps.

A follow and hold circuit for deriving the gate range from the x - y inputs has been developed. The drift of the range voltage during the video gate period is negligible.

As implemented the video gating method can be used with any standard fixed-coil PPI repeater. Microelectronic devices were used wherever possible in order to check their usefulness in switched analog systems. The circuits have operated with an AN/SPA-8A PPI repeater using the Light-Pencil Coordinate Positioner as the hook control.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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Appendix

USE OF A DIFFERENTIAL-INPUT OPERATIONAL AMPLIFIER AS THE ADD/SUBTRACT COMPUTER

The method of using a single differential-input operational amplifier as the add/subtract computer is outlined below. From Fig. A1, which shows the amplifier configuration,*†

$$E_o = -ACV + BCE_4$$

and

$$V = \frac{\frac{E_1}{R_1} + \frac{E_2}{R_2} + \frac{E_3}{R_3} + \frac{E_o}{R_f}}{\frac{1}{R_1} + \frac{1}{R_2} + \frac{1}{R_3} + \frac{1}{R_f}}$$

where R_f is the feedback resistance. Thus,

$$E_o = \frac{-AC\left(\frac{E_1}{R_1} + \frac{E_2}{R_2} + \frac{E_3}{R_3}\right) + \left(\frac{1}{R_1} + \frac{1}{R_2} + \frac{1}{R_3} + \frac{1}{R_f}\right)BCE_4}{\left(\frac{1}{R_1} + \frac{1}{R_2} + \frac{1}{R_3} + \frac{1+AC}{R_f}\right)}$$

If the gain of the C section of the amplifier is very large ($C \rightarrow \infty$) and if $A \approx B$, then

$$E_o = \frac{R_f}{R_1} E_1 - \frac{R_f}{R_2} E_2 - \frac{R_f}{R_3} E_3 + \left(1 + \frac{R_f}{R_1} + \frac{R_f}{R_2} + \frac{R_f}{R_3}\right) E_4$$

For the purpose of add/subtract, E_4 is to be equal either to zero, which is the subtract condition, the condition in which E_o is a combination of

$-E_1$, $-E_2$, and $-E_3$, or to kE_3 , where k is assigned a value which causes E_o to be a combination of $-E_1$, $-E_2$, and $+E_3$, which is the add condition. To allow either condition the expression for E_o can be rewritten as

$$E_o = -\left(\frac{R_f}{R_1} E_1 + \frac{R_f}{R_2} E_2\right) + \left[k\left(1 + \frac{R_f}{R_1} + \frac{R_f}{R_2} + \frac{R_f}{R_3}\right) - \frac{R_f}{R_3}\right] E_3$$

For the subtract condition, $k = 0$. For the add condition, $k > 0$ is chosen such that

$$k\left(1 + \frac{R_f}{R_1} + \frac{R_f}{R_2} + \frac{R_f}{R_3}\right) - \frac{R_f}{R_3} = \frac{R_f}{R_3}$$

or

$$k = \frac{2 R_f/R_3}{1 + \frac{R_f}{R_1} + \frac{R_f}{R_2} + \frac{R_f}{R_3}}$$

To more readily permit k to be either this value or zero the expression for E_o can be rewritten as

$$E_o = -\left(\frac{R_f}{R_1} E_1 + \frac{R_f}{R_2} E_2\right) + \left(\frac{2 R_f}{R_3} N - \frac{R_f}{R_3}\right) E_3$$

where $N = 0$ for the subtract condition and $N = 1$ for the add condition.

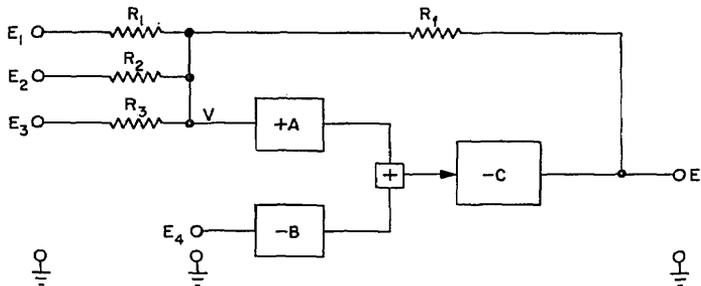


Fig. A1 - Operational amplifier configuration

*G. A. Korn and T. M. Korn, "Electronic and Hybrid Computers," New York:McGraw-Hill, 1964, pp. 1-9 through 1-16.

†H. D. Huskey and G. A. Korn, editors, "Computer Handbook," New York:McGraw-Hill, 1962, pp. 2-8 through 2-40.

For the case illustrated in Fig. 3, $E_1 = x_{sw}$, $E_2 = -x_h$, $E_3 = \Delta x$, $R_f = 30$ kilohms, $R_1 = 150$ kilohms, $R_2 = 7.5$ to 12.5 kilohms, and $R_3 = 10$ kilohms. Thus

$$E_o = -\frac{x_{sw}}{5} + \frac{30}{R_2} x_h + (6N - 3)\Delta x.$$

The expression is the same for the y channel. The resistor R_2 was made variable in order to calibrate the hook signals to the PPI sweep signals. The value of R_2 is $7.5 + R_{cat}$ in kilohms; therefore

$$E_o = -0.2x_{sw} + \left(\frac{30}{7.5 + R_{cat}}\right)x_h + (6N - 3)\Delta x.$$

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14. KEY WORDS	LINK A		LINK B		LINK C	
	ROLE	WT	ROLE	WT	ROLE	WT
Display systems Identification systems Plan position indicators Position finding Data processing systems Azimuth gating Range gating						

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