

LORAN

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LORAN

Long Range Navigation

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Foreword

THE tremendous research and development effort that went into the development of radar and related techniques during World War II resulted not only in hundreds of radar sets for military (and some for possible peacetime) use but also in a great body of information and new techniques in the electronics and high-frequency fields. Because this basic material may be of great value to science and engineering, it seemed most important to publish it as soon as security permitted.

The Radiation Laboratory of MIT, which operated under the supervision of the National Defense Research Committee, undertook the great task of preparing these volumes. The work described herein, however, is the collective result of work done at many laboratories, Army, Navy, university, and industrial, both in this country and in England, Canada, and other Dominions.

The Radiation Laboratory, once its proposals were approved and finances provided by the Office of Scientific Research and Development, chose Louis N. Ridenour as Editor-in-Chief to lead and direct the entire project. An editorial staff was then selected of those best qualified for this type of task. Finally the authors for the various volumes or chapters or sections were chosen from among those experts who were intimately familiar with the various fields, and who were able and willing to write the summaries of them. This entire staff agreed to remain at work at MIT for six months or more after the work of the Radiation Laboratory was complete. These volumes stand as a monument to this group.

These volumes serve as a memorial to the unnamed hundreds and thousands of other scientists, engineers, and others who actually carried on the research, development, and engineering work the results of which are herein described. There were so many involved in this work and they worked so closely together even though often in widely separated laboratories that it is impossible to name or even to know those who contributed to a particular idea or development. Only certain ones who wrote reports or articles have even been mentioned. But to all those who contributed in any way to this great cooperative development enterprise, both in this country and in England, these volumes are dedicated.

L. A. DuBRIDGE.

Preface

THE preceding volumes of the Radiation Laboratory Series are surveys of radar system engineering, radar systems of navigation, and radar beacons. Like radar, the long-range system of navigation described in this volume depends upon the transmission and reception of pulsed radio signals, but it makes use of much lower radio frequencies and does not involve reflection from a target.

The Loran system was developed at the Radiation Laboratory during World War II to meet the needs of the Navy in convoy operations and to provide all-weather navigation for aircraft by day and night. At the close of the war, some 70 Loran transmitting stations were in operation, providing nighttime service over 60 million square miles, or three-tenths of the surface of the earth. About 75,000 shipborne and airborne navigation receiver-indicators had been delivered by various manufacturers, while the Hydrographic Office had prepared and shipped $2\frac{1}{4}$ million charts to the operating agencies.

The purposes of the present volume are to describe the Loran system, its principles and its equipment, as they existed at the end of the war and to offer suggestions for their adaptation and improvement for civilian service in time of peace. Since electronic time measurements are fully discussed in other volumes of this series, these techniques have not been treated in detail here. Similarly, relatively little space has been devoted to material found in the instruction books for various items of Loran equipment.

Wherever possible, the individual chapters have been written by those members of the group who have been most closely associated with the material concerned. However, many former members of the group who contributed greatly to the development of Loran concepts and equipment have been unable to describe their work in this volume. To Mr. Melville Eastham belongs the credit for the organization and administration of the Loran Group during the difficult early days. His leadership made the whole development possible and procured the needed support from the Services before the merit of the system had been fully demonstrated. Mr. Donald G. Fink and Professor J. C. Street made many

contributions and successively assumed the administrative burdens after the retirement of Mr. Eastham and before being called to more responsible duties elsewhere. Throughout the program Mr. Walter L. Tierney, who managed all field activities, was a source of strength to the entire group. Professor J. A. Stratton made valuable preliminary studies of propagation at Loran frequencies, but his knowledge and talents were soon demanded for other purposes. After the Loran system had been successfully demonstrated, Mr. Robert J. Dippy, the originator of the Gee system, brought the experience of the British laboratory, TRE, to bear upon Loran problems and helped the group especially in improving the designs of the receiver-indicator and the transmitter timer.

The U.S. Coast Guard, Bureau of Ships, General Electric Company, Sperry Gyroscope Company, Fada Radio and Electric Company, Radio Engineering Laboratories, and the Bartol Research Foundation have kindly supplied photographs and granted permission for their use as illustrations of Loran ground stations and equipment. The Hydrographic Office has granted permission for the reproduction, as Appendix A, of a summary report on its Loran program. Thanks are also due to Miss Constance Henderson for her aid in preparing the drawings and to Miss Corinne Susman for her capable service as editorial assistant.

The publishers have agreed that ten years after the date on which each volume of this series is issued, the copyright thereon shall be relinquished, and the work shall become part of the public domain.

THE AUTHORS.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.,
October, 1946.

Contents

FOREWORD BY L. A. DuBRIDGE	vii
--------------------------------------	-----

PREFACE.	ix
------------------	----

PART I. THE LORAN SYSTEM

CHAP. 1. INTRODUCTION	3
---------------------------------	---

NAVIGATION BY FIXING OF POSITION	3
--	---

1-1. Position from Measurement of Two Bearings	3
1-2. Position from Measurement of One Distance and One Bearing.	6
1-3. Position from Measurement of Two Distances.	8
1-4. Position from Measurement of Two Differences of Distance.	10

NAVIGATION BY TRACKING AND HOMING	15
---	----

1-5. Tracking	15
1-6. Homing.	16
1-7. General Comparison of Basic Techniques	17

CHAP. 2. HISTORY OF LORAN	19
-------------------------------------	----

2-1. Origin of Pulsed Hyperbolic Navigation in the United States	19
2-2. North Atlantic Standard Loran Chain	26
2-3. European Sky-wave Synchronized Loran	30
2-4. Loran in the China-Burma-India Theater.	34
2-5. Operations in the Pacific	35
2-6. Charting and Training	40
2-7. Service Areas	49

CHAP. 3. PRINCIPLES OF LORAN	52
--	----

3-1. Time Differences and Lines of Position	52
3-2. Propagation and Range.	59
3-3. Principles of Operation.	63
3-4. Loran Geometry: the Pair.	70
3-5. Loran Geometry: Triplets, Chains, and Quadrilaterals	76
3-6. Standard Loran	85
3-7. Sky-wave Synchronized Loran.	94
3-8. Low Frequency Loran	97
3-9. Procedure in Loran Navigation	102

CHAP. 4. FUTURE TRENDS	107
4-1. Potential Accuracy and Range.	107
4-2. Automatic Data Analysis.	108
4-3. Right-left Indicators	110
4-4. The Lorchumb Line.	112
4-5. Relayed Fixes.	115
4-6. Guidance of Pilotless Aircraft	116
4-7. Hyperbolic Surveying.	117
4-8. The Current Problem.	119
CHAP. 5. PROPAGATION	121
INTRODUCTION	121
5-1. Ground-wave Transmission at 2 Mc/sec	121
5-2. Signal-to-noise Factors at 180 kc/sec.	123
LORAN SKY-WAVE TRANSMISSION AT 2 MC/SEC	126
5-3. The Ionosphere	126
5-4. Reflection.	129
5-5. Absorption	131
5-6. E-layer Transmission.	133
5-7. The Loran Sky-wave Delay Curve.	137
LORAN SKY-WAVE TRANSMISSION ERRORS AT 2 MC/SEC.	139
5-8. Normal Variations in the Sky-wave Delay.	139
5-9. Sky-wave Accuracy Patterns	142
5-10. Sporadic E-region Ionization	144
5-11. Magnetic Activity	145
LORAN TRANSMISSION AT 180 KC/SEC	148
5-12. Low Frequency Loran Pulse Shapes	149
5-13. Observations on the Experimental Low Frequency Loran Triplet	157
CHAP. 6. METHODS OF COMPUTATION OF LORAN TABLES AND CHARTS	170
6-1. Equations for Distance over the Earth	170
6-2. Equations for a Loran Line of Position	173
6-3. The Three Basic Methods of Computation	177
6-4. The Standard Inverse Method.	179
6-5. The Direct Method, Using Plane Hyperbolas	180
6-6. A Mechanical Tracer of Plane Hyperbolas.	186
6-7. The Direct Method, Using Spherical Hyperbolas.	188
6-8. Factors Affecting the Correctness of Computed Loran Time Differences	192

PART II. LORAN EQUIPMENT

CHAP. 7. TIMERS.	197
7-1. General Requirements	197
7-2. Timer Models A, B, and B-1	199
MODEL C-1 TIMER	205
7-3. General Description of Timer Models C, C-1, and UJ.	205
7-4. Block Diagram of Model C-1 Timer	207
7-5. Model C-1 Oscillator.	215
7-6. Model C-1 Divider Unit	219
7-7. Model C-1 Selector Unit	226
7-8. Model C-1 Synchronizer	229
MODEL UE-1 TIMER.	232
7-9. General Description of Model UE-1 Timer	232
7-10. Model UE-1 Oscillator	237
7-11. Model UE-1 Phase-control Unit	240
7-12. Model UE-1 Receiver.	243
7-13. Model UE-1 Synchronizer.	245
LOW FREQUENCY TIMER	249
7-14. General Requirements	249
7-15. Block Diagram of Low Frequency Timer	253
CHAP. 8. SWITCHING EQUIPMENT.	258
8-1. General Requirements	258
8-2. The Switching Equipment Used with Model A, B, and B-1 Timers	261
8-3. Model C-1 Switching Equipment.	261
8-4. Model UM Switching Equipment	265
8-5. Low Frequency Switching Equipment	271
CHAP. 9. TRANSMITTERS	275
9-1. General Requirements	275
9-2. Standard Loran Transmitters	277
9-3. Transmitter Test Oscilloscope.	285
9-4. Low Frequency Transmitter Requirements	288
9-5. Low Frequency Transmitter.	291
CHAP. 10. ANTENNA SYSTEMS	301
10-1. Requirements for Ground-station Antennas	301
10-2. Antenna Coupling Units	303
10-3. Prediction and Simulation of Antenna Characteristics	314
10-4. Ground-station Antennas for 2-Mc/sec Loran	323
10-5. Ground-station Antennas for 180-kc/sec Loran.	329
10-6. Receiver-indicator Antennas.	342

CHAP. 11. RECEIVER-INDICATORS.	345
SHIPBOARD RECEIVER-INDICATORS.	345
11-1. Requirements and General Description.	345
11-2. Model DAS-1 Receiver-indicator.	350
11-3. Model DAS-2 Receiver-indicator.	355
11-4. Model DBE Receiver-indicator	358
AIRBORNE RECEIVER-INDICATORS	363
11-5. General Description and Trends in Design	363
11-6. Model AN/APN-4 Receiver-indicator.	367
11-7. Model AN/APN-9 Receiver-indicator.	374
TEST AND TRAINING EQUIPMENT	381
11-8. Pulse-signal Generators.	381
11-9. The Supersonic Trainer.	382
CHAP. 12. SPECIAL TECHNIQUES AND MEASUREMENTS	386
12-1. Receiver-design Notes	386
12-2. Differential-gain Principles	390
12-3. Pulse-signal Generator	395
12-4. Pulse-bandwidth Measurements	396
12-5. Spectrum Measurements	397
12-6. Cycle-matching Receivers.	398
APPENDIX A. THE LORAN PROGRAM IN THE HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE	403
APPENDIX B. LORAN GROUND STATIONS.	419
APPENDIX C. DEMONSTRATIONS CONCERNING THE GEOMETRY OF LORAN LINES.	425
C-1. The Factor of Geometrical Precision	425
C-2. The Probable Ellipse	427
C-3. The Probable Error of a Fix.	429
APPENDIX D. DETERMINATION OF ERRORS IN THE POSITIONS OF LORAN TRANSMITTING STATIONS.	432
BIBLIOGRAPHY	457
INDEX.	469