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A real-time demonstrator of track reconstruction with FPGAs at LHCb

The upgraded LHCb detector has started its Run 3 of data taking in 2022, with a completely overhauled DAQ system, reading out and processing the full detector data at every LHC bunch crossing (30 MHz average rate). At the same, an intense R&D activity is taking place, with the aim of further improving the real-time data processing performance of LHCb, in view of a further luminosity upgrade of the experiment ("Upgrade II").

In this work, we describe the experience gained with a prototype device for a 30 MHz real-time tracking in the LHCb VELO detector, implemented in state-of-art PCIe-hosted FPGA cards interconnected by fast optical links.

The system is capable of processing live LHCb data opportunistically during physics data taking, thanks to a dedicated testbed facility fed by the experiment monitoring system. We describe, amongst other things, the system used to organize and optimize the high-speed distribution of data to the components, and the synchronization with the most updated alignment constants to be used in track reconstruction.

Primary authors: CONTU, Andrea (INFN); LAZZARI, Federico (Universita di Pisa & INFN Pisa (IT)); TERZUOLI, Francesco (Università di Siena & INFN Pisa (IT)); BASSI, Giovanni (SNS & INFN Pisa (IT)); PUNZI, Giovanni (Universita & INFN Pisa (IT)); TUCI, Giulia (Heidelberg University (DE)); MORELLO, Michael J. (SNS and INFN-Pisa (IT)); FANTECHI, Riccardo (INFN - Sezione di Pisa); KOTRIAKHOVA, Sofia (Universita e INFN, Ferrara (IT)); BALDINI, Wander (Universita e INFN, Ferrara (IT))

Presenter: TERZUOLI, Francesco (Università di Siena & INFN Pisa (IT))

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