



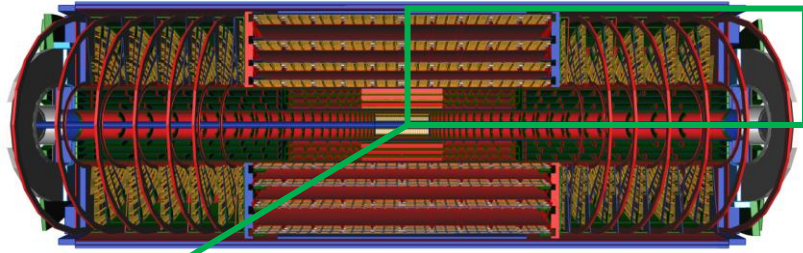
Serial Powering

System level ... challenges and caveats

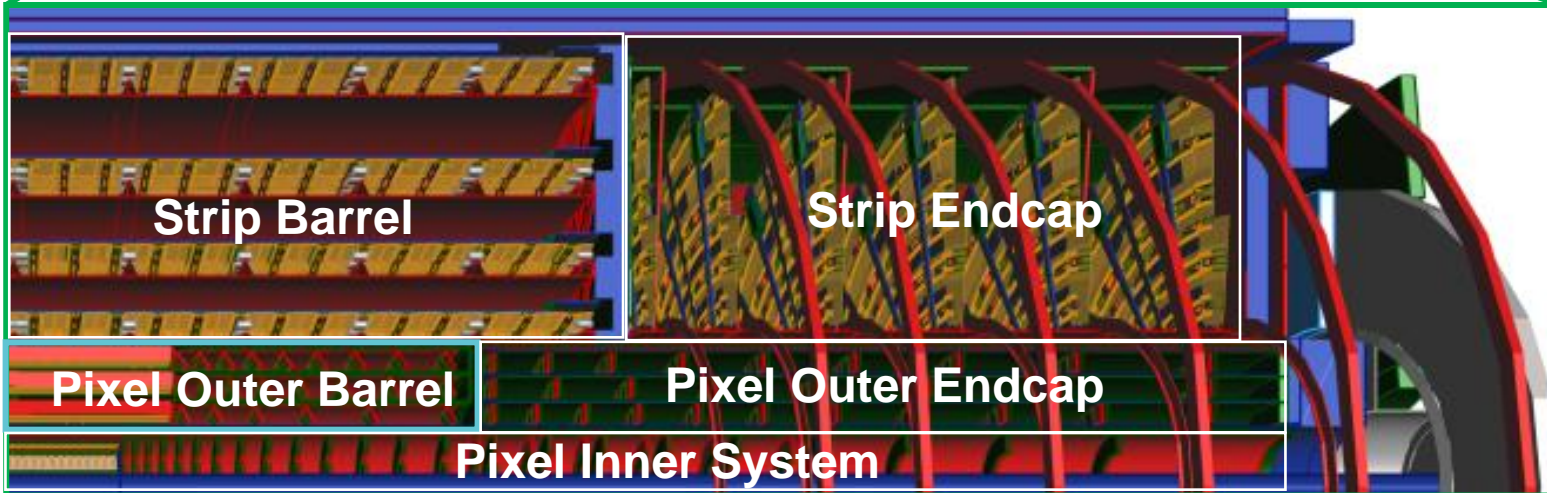
A. Zografos (EP-ESE-FE)

09/03/2026

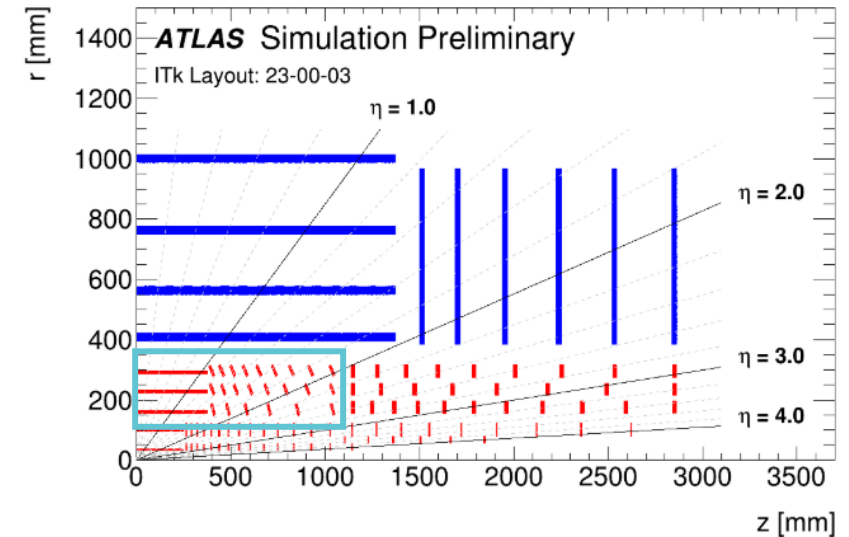
Background - ATLAS ITk and the Outer Barrel sub-system 1/2



ITk layout for HL-LHC



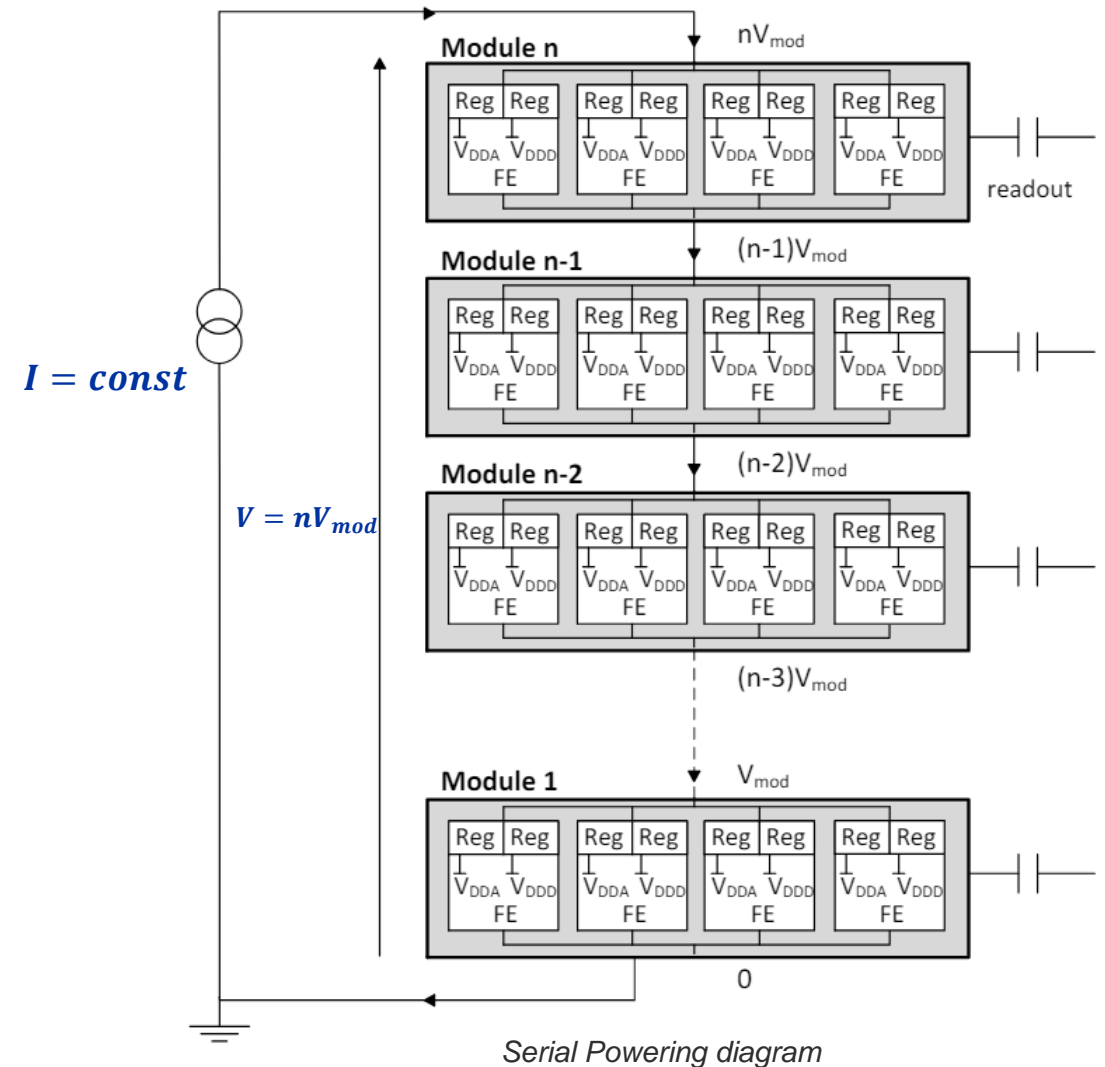
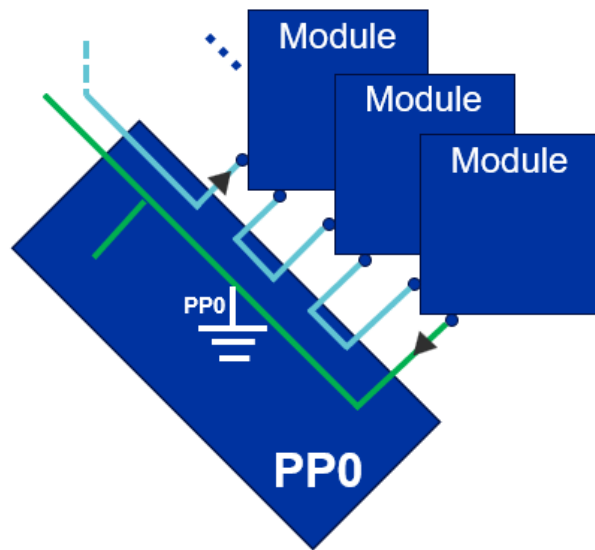
3D rendering – One quadrant



ITk Schematic layout – One quadrant, only active components shown
Pixel sensors in red, strip sensors in blue. The OB in light blue.

Background - ATLAS ITk and the Outer Barrel sub-system 2/2

- Up to $n=14$ modules in series
- 4 FE-chips per module
- 2 Shunt-LDOs per FE-chip
- 6A nominal current (I), 1.6V per module (V_{mod})



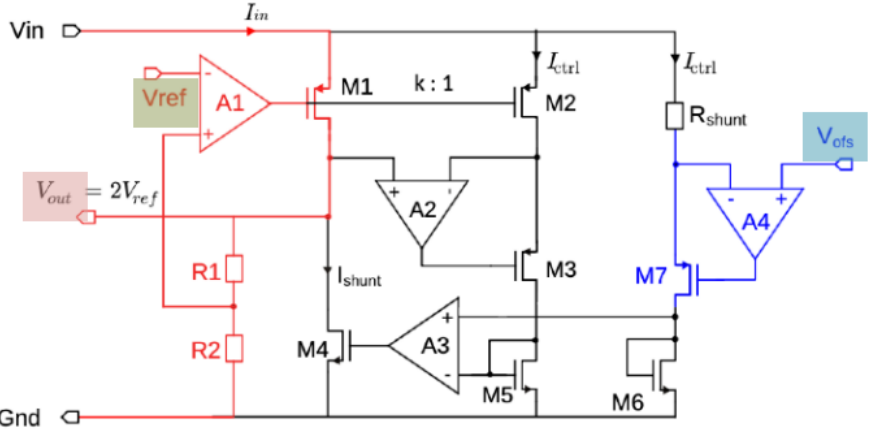
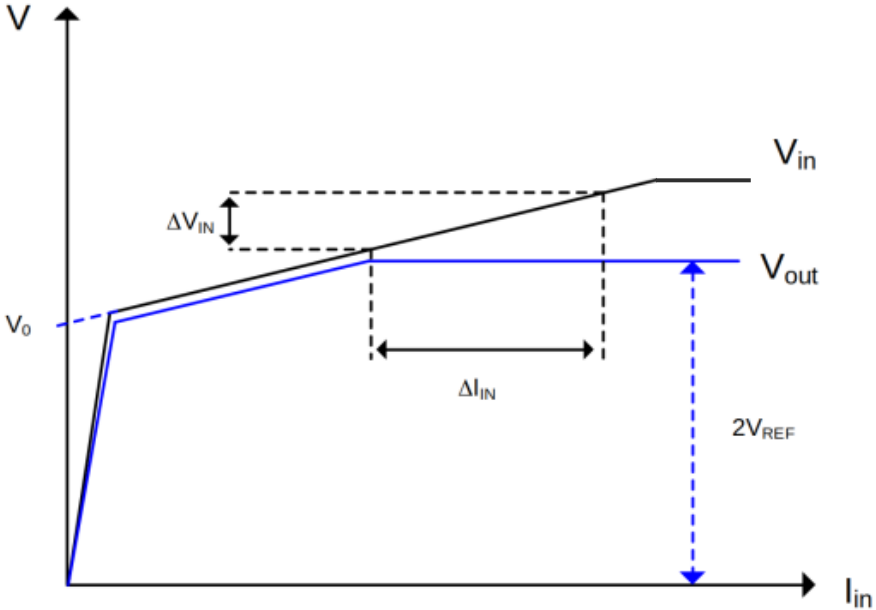
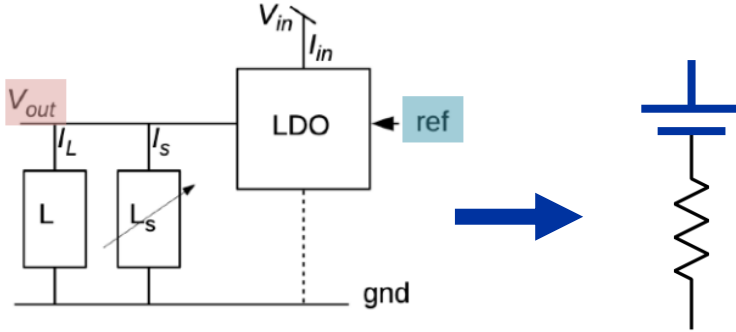
Serial Powering – Introduction

VIN: Input voltage by power supply

VOFFSET: Offset reference, programmable, constant, defines current draw

Reff: constant, programmable

$$I_{IN} = I_L + I_S = \frac{V_{IN} - V_O}{R_{eff}} = \text{const}^*$$



LDO Shunt OFFSET

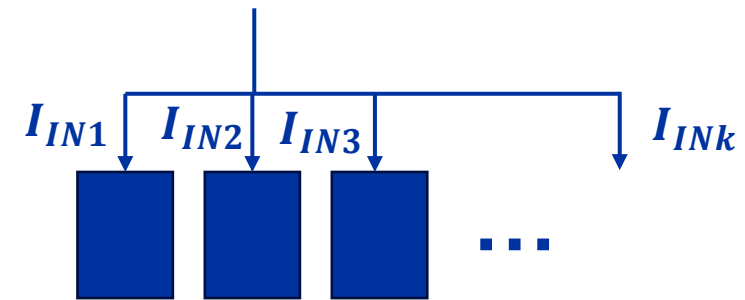
Serial Powering – SLDOs in parallel

Parallel SLDO design trades efficiency (low R_{eff}) vs current sharing robustness:

$$\frac{dI_{IN}}{dV_O} = -1/R_{eff}$$

Managing current sharing:

- Trim main current reference for Vofs
- Resistively tie Vofs to force a common one*.



$$I_{INk} = \frac{V_{IN} - V_O}{R_{eff}} = \text{const}^*$$

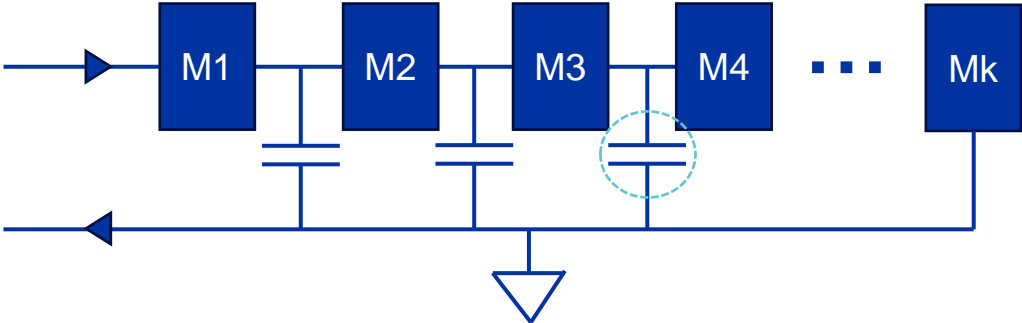
*ATLAS ITk config

Serial Powering – System specific details

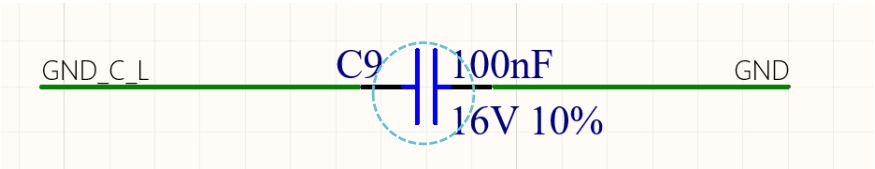
- Undershunt protection (disabled in ITk Pixel)
- Overvoltage protection (enabled in ITk Pixel)
- How much Shunt current is enough?
- ..
- ..

System level understanding – ESSENTIAL for all

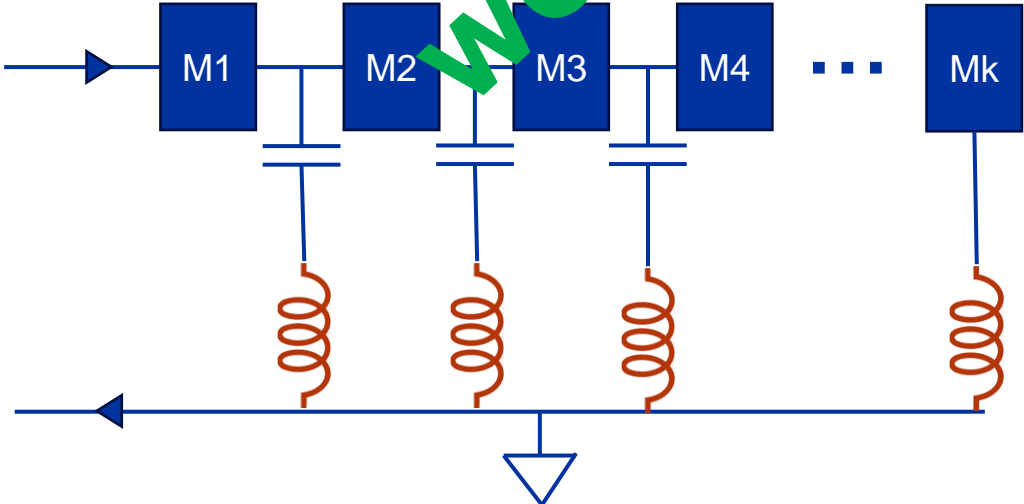
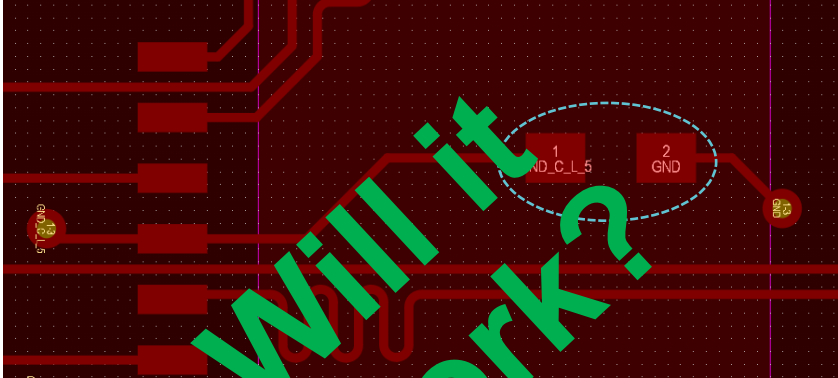
Shunt LDO simulations:



Module Schematic:

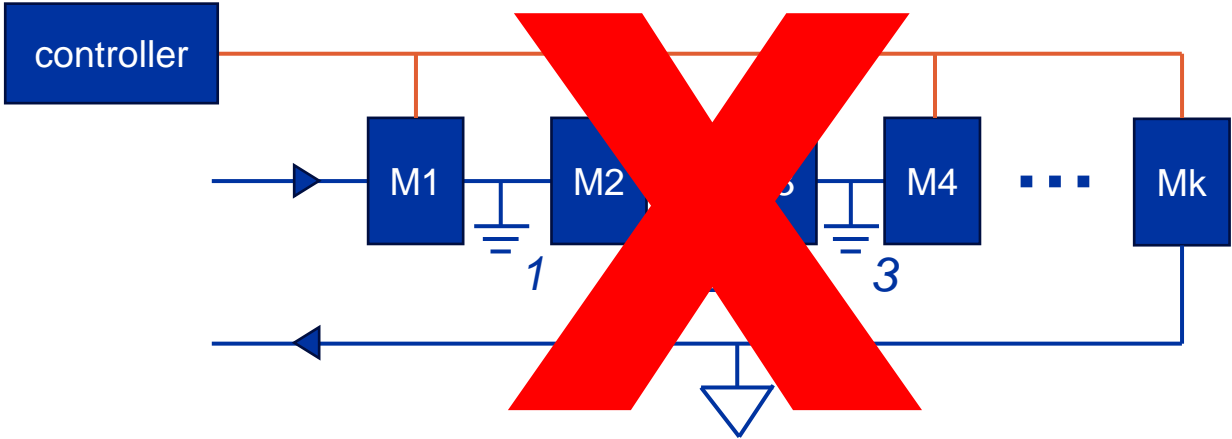


Misunderstandings can lead to “Ugly” reality:

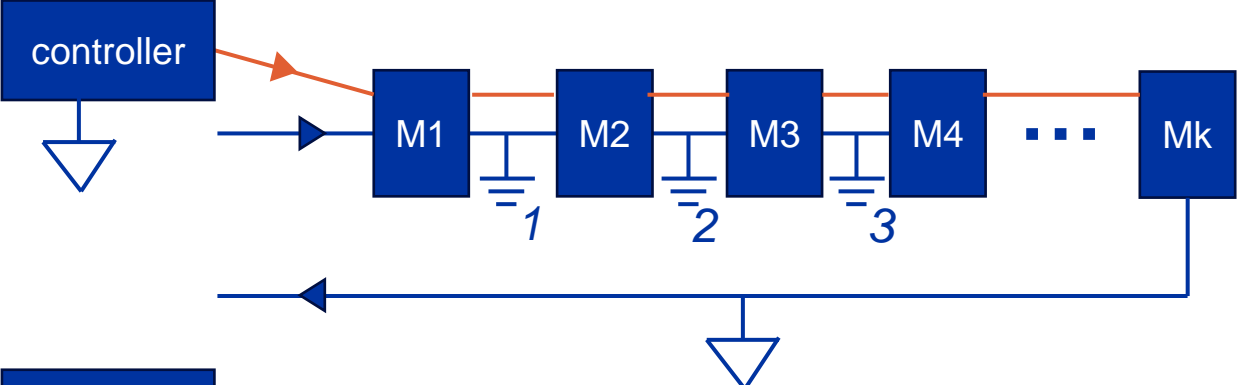


Simple Control Signals?

How to send control signals (reset, power mode change etc.)

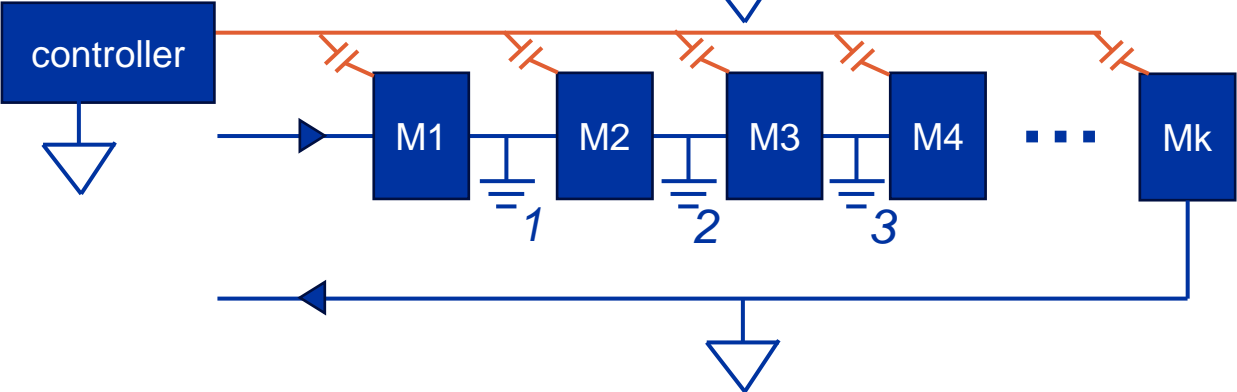


Send a current as a control signal



What can work?

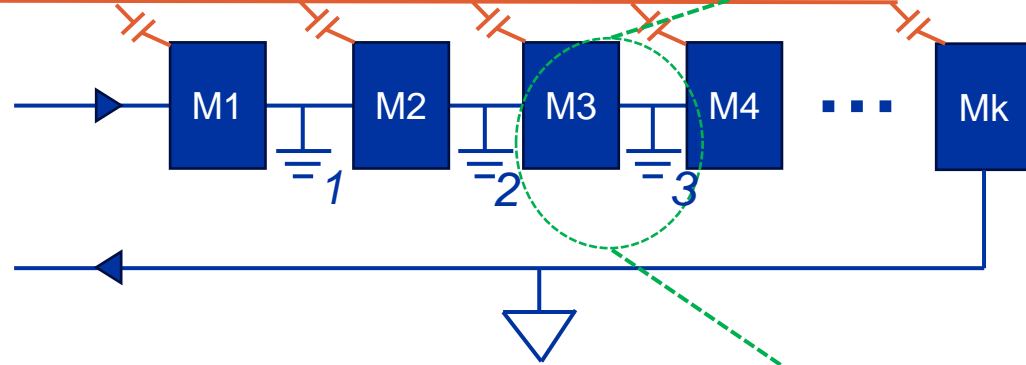
AC couple and send a wave



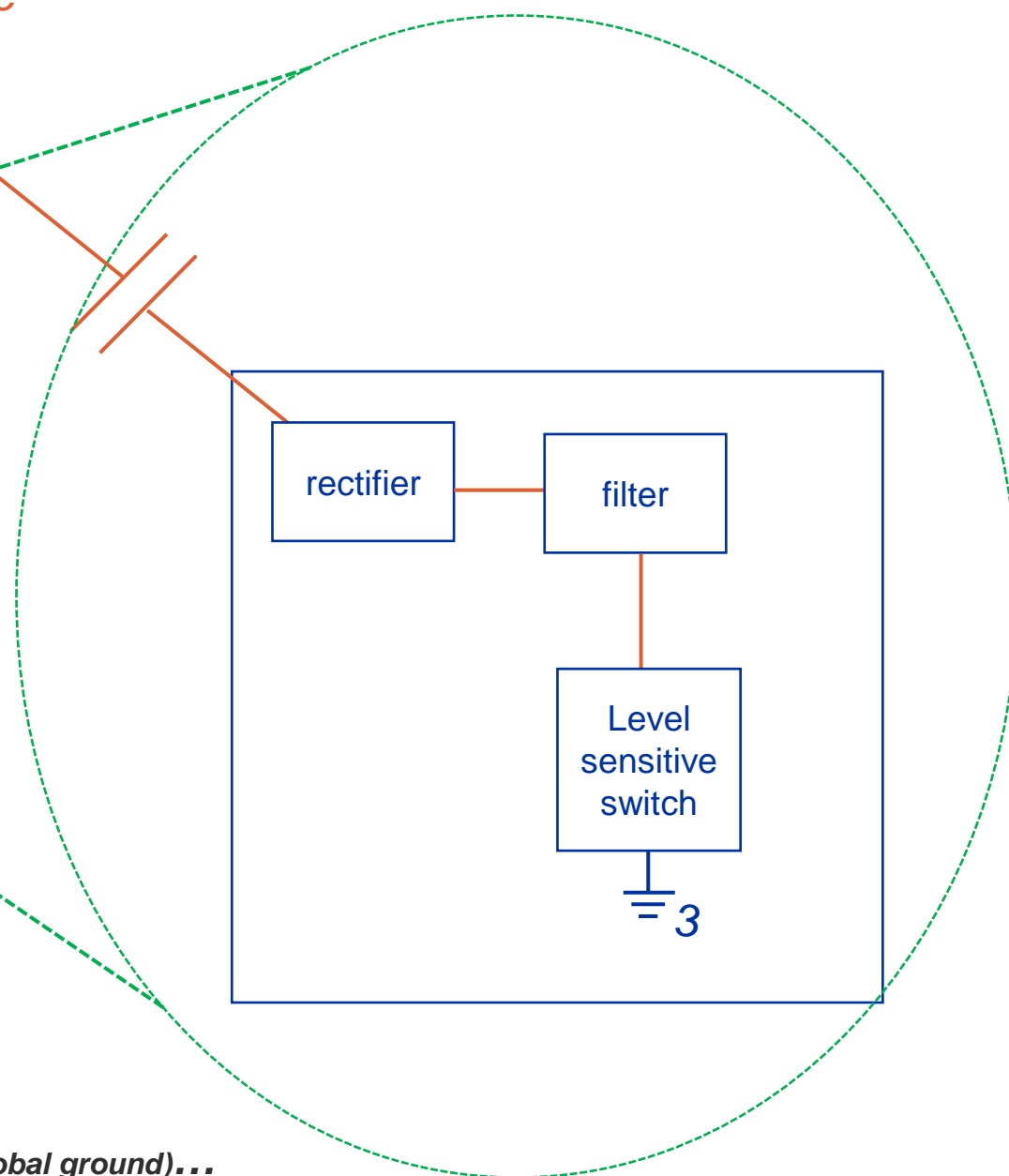
Simple control signals...

ATLAS ITk Low Power mode enable solution

Control line



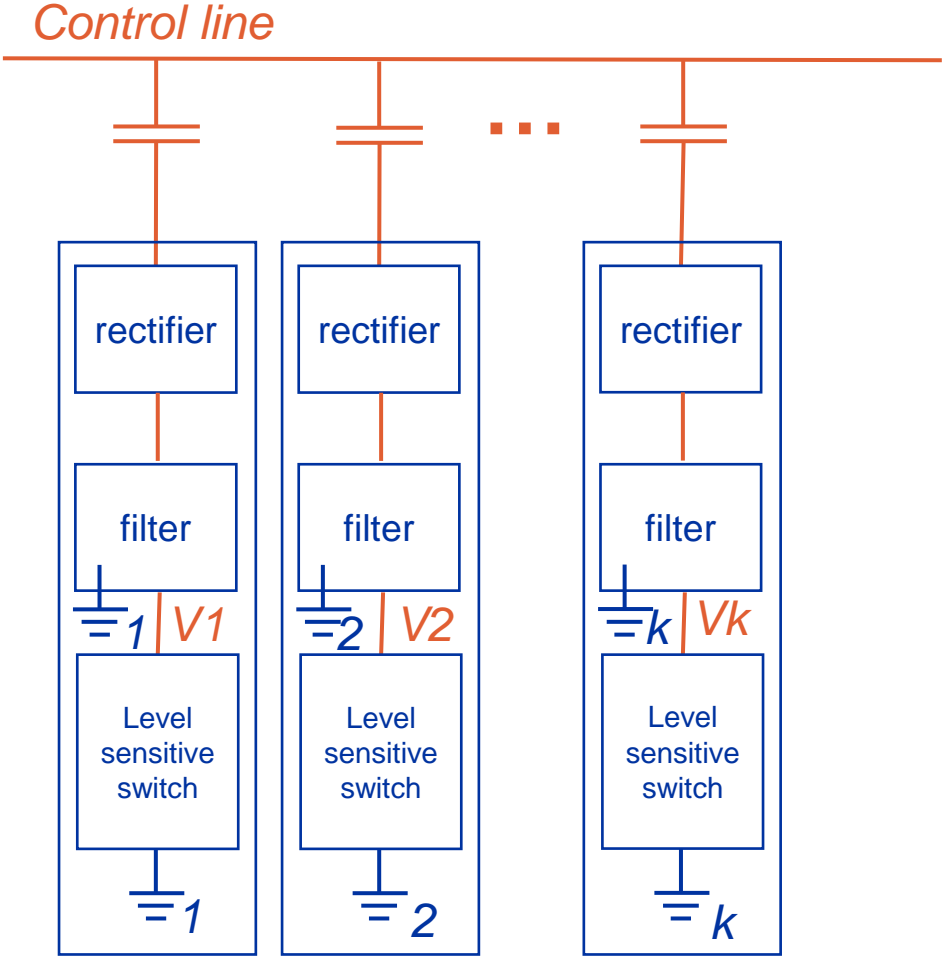
Control line



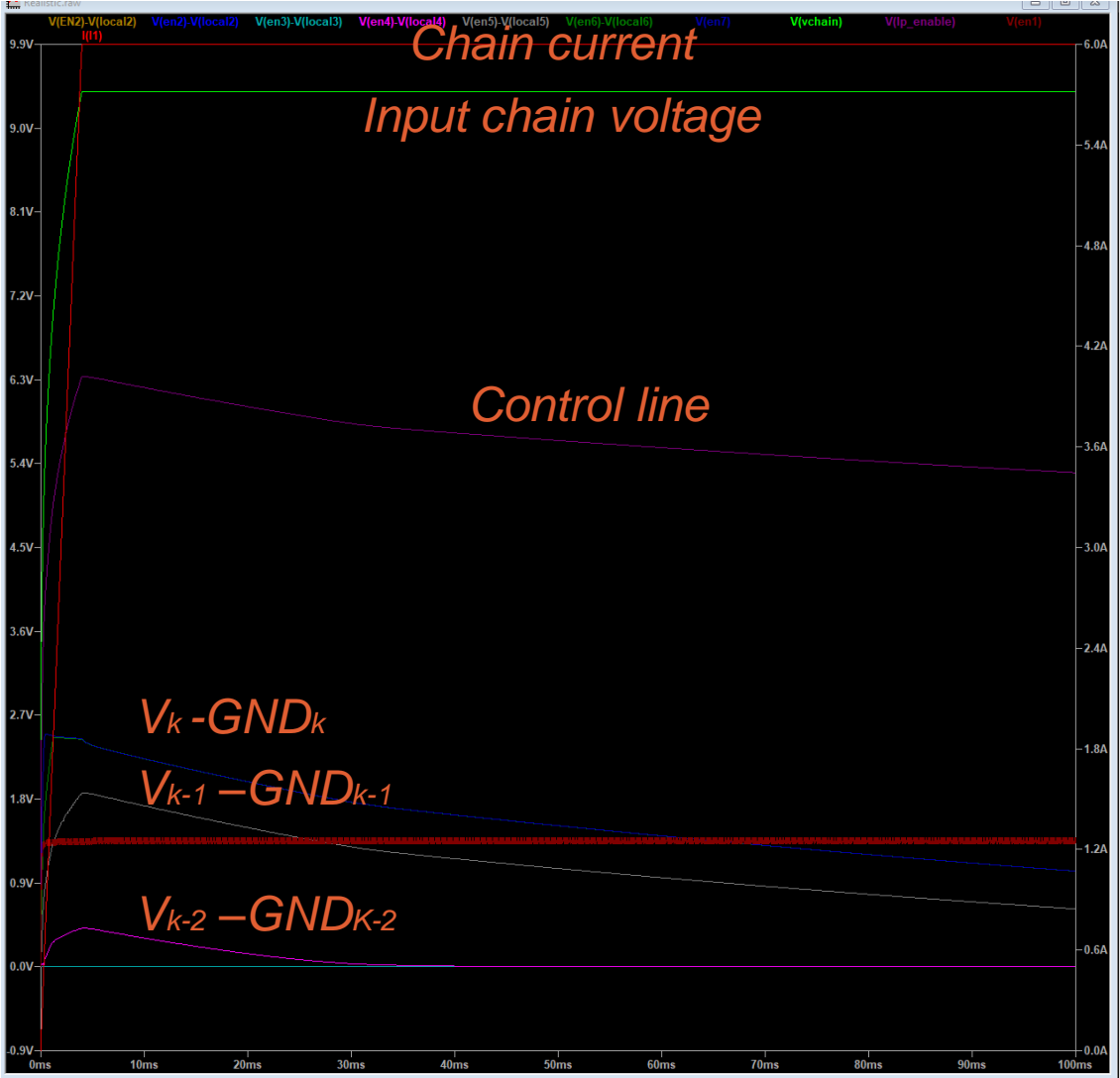
During start-up...

If control line is floating (or high resistance to global ground)...

Simple control signals...



Last modules in the chain see a logic “high” during startup – headache/catastrophe

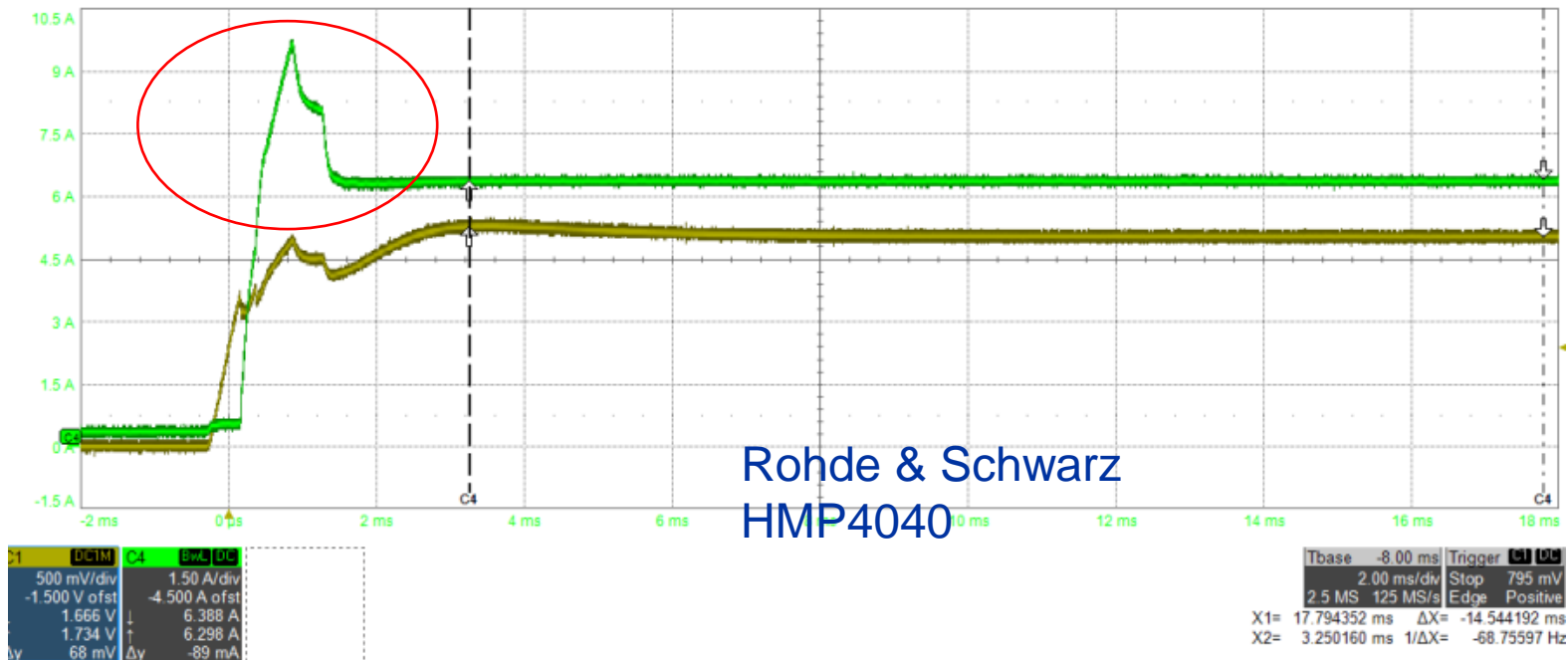


Fix requires low resistance to ground on control line so, also high driving capability of control source

Power Supplies 1/2

Proper Current supplies are a must

- Current stability
- Transient response
- Predictability during faults



- ATLAS vs future LHCb MightyTrk

- What to use during testing?

Power Supplies 2/2

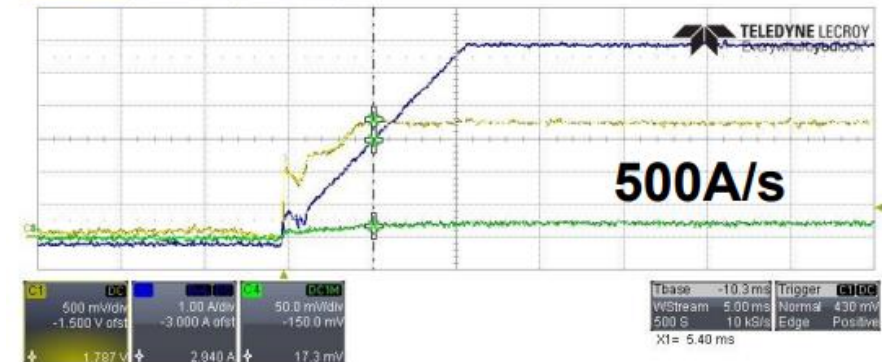
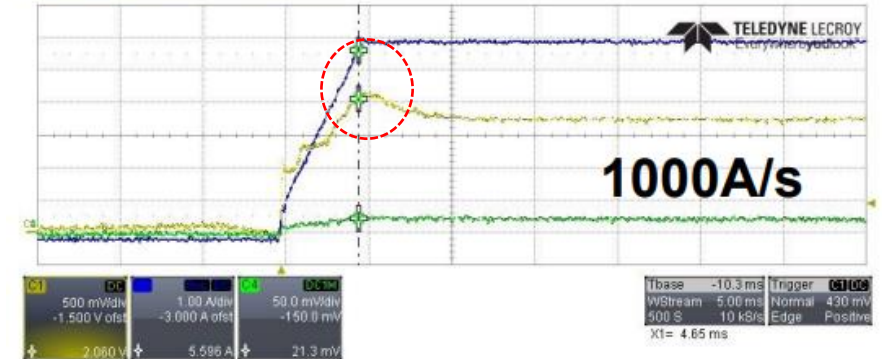
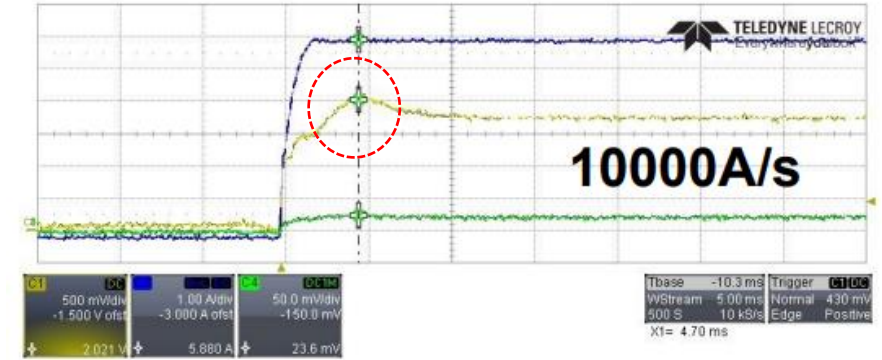
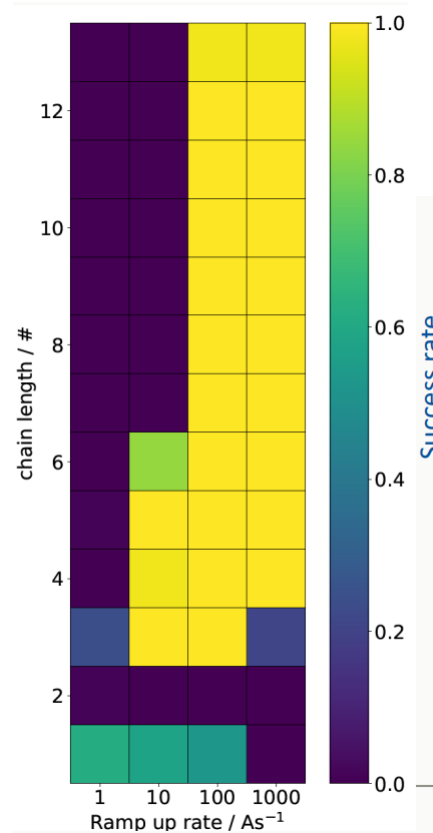
1. Production RD53 SLDO –when P.S. had μA of leakage in off state

Startup issues

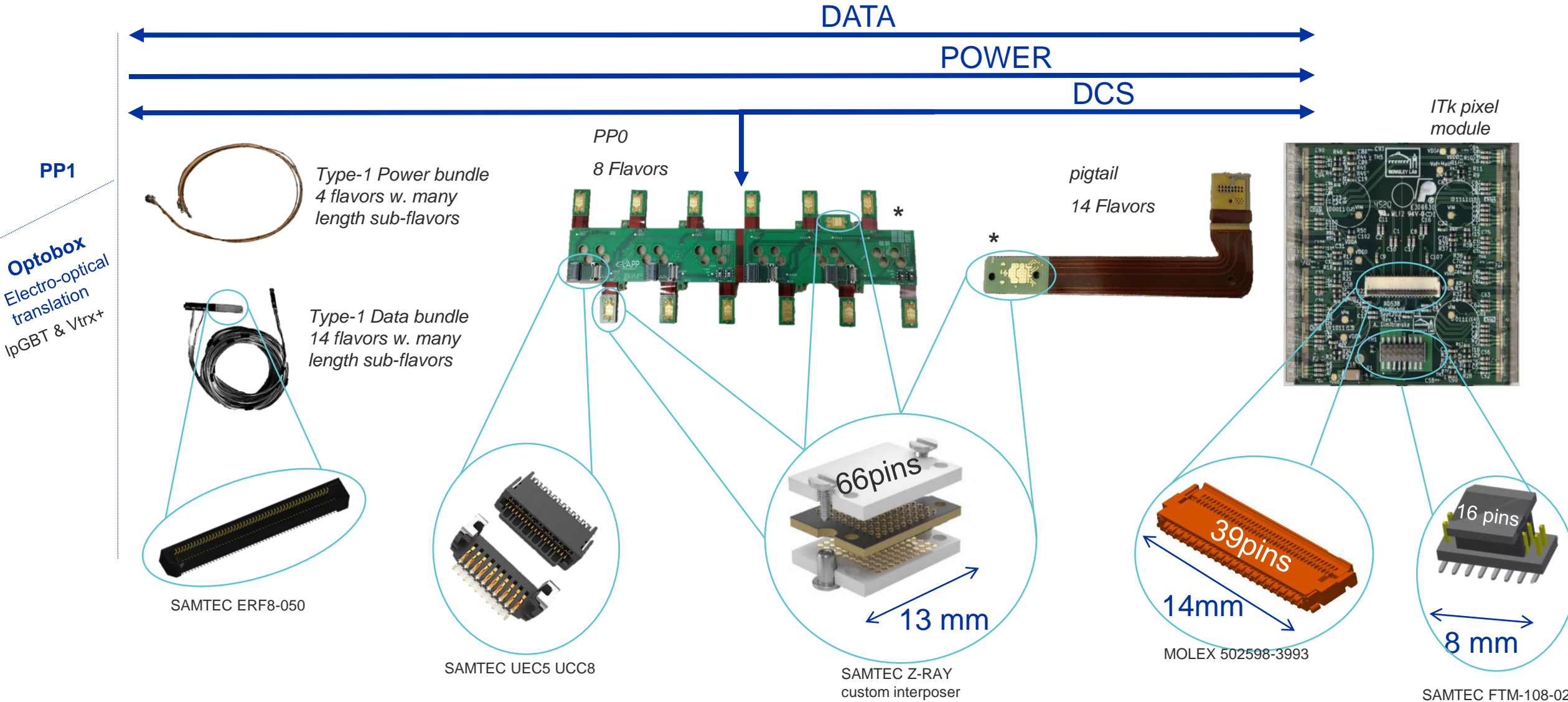
2. Ramp-up rate

- Before issues with slow ramps, now issues with fast ramp
- Current advice: need configurable ramps for testing and detector operation

3. Conducted emissions testing?



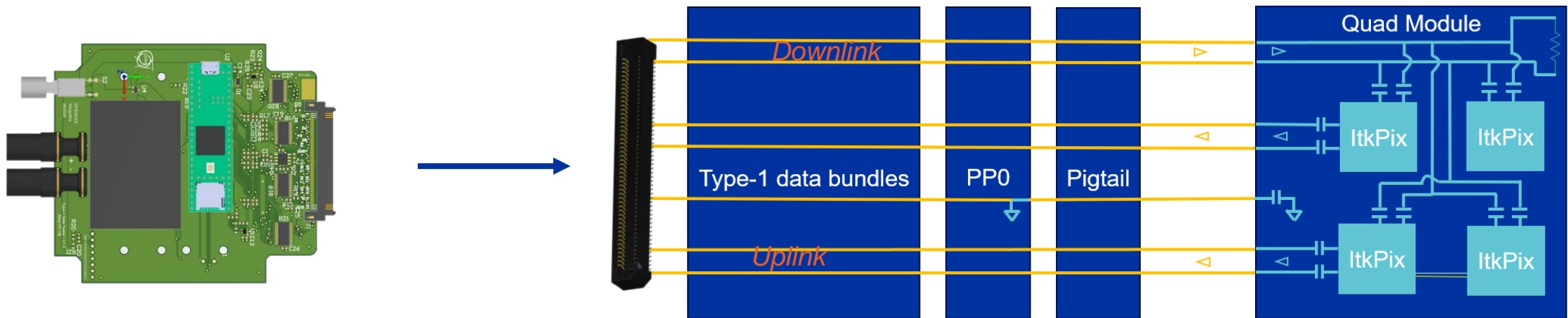
Connectivity testing complications – ATLAS ITk example



Connectivity testing complications – ATLAS ITk example

Lines AC coupled → Need to check capacitance instead of resistance and associate it with a healthy line
→ Distinguish services vs services + module

*ATLAS ITk developed specialized tool to perform these tests easily**



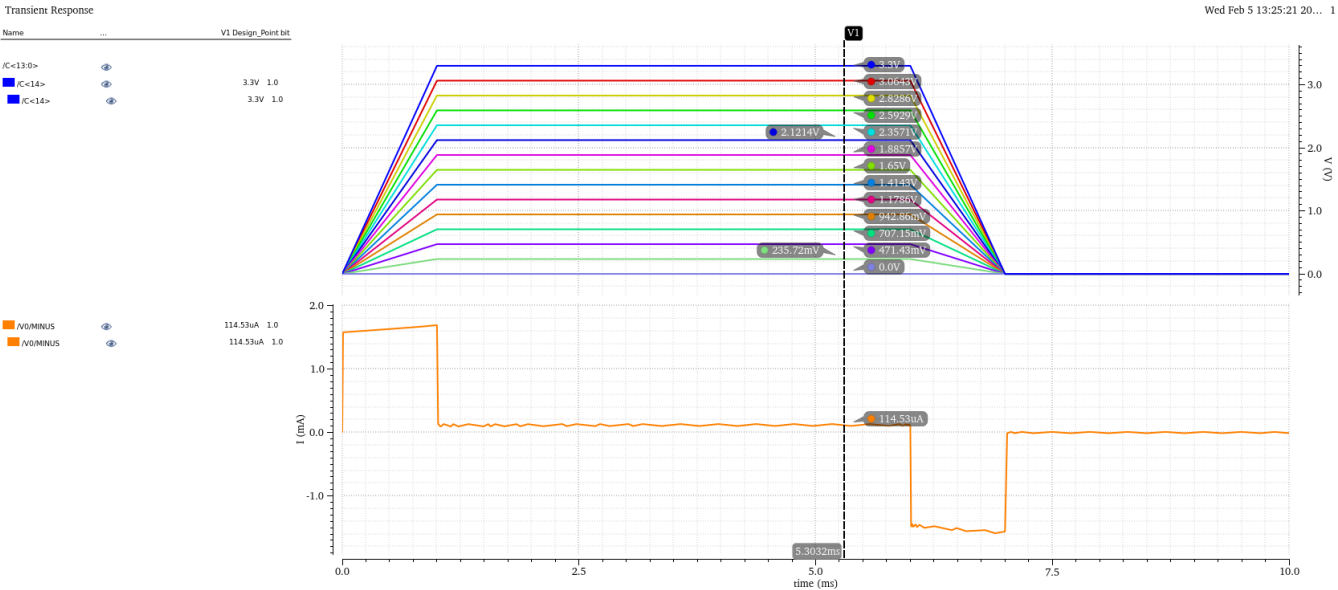
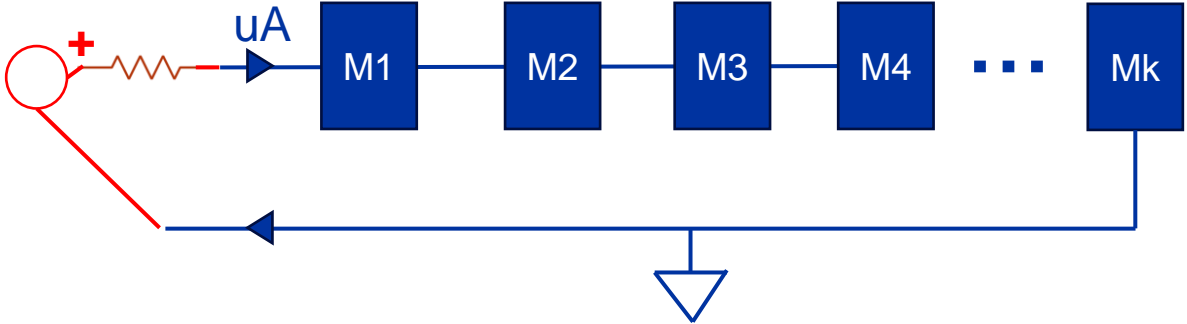
**<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-0221/20/01/C01012/pdf>*

Connectivity testing complications – SLDO is.. delicate?

How to check serial powering chain is connected correctly?

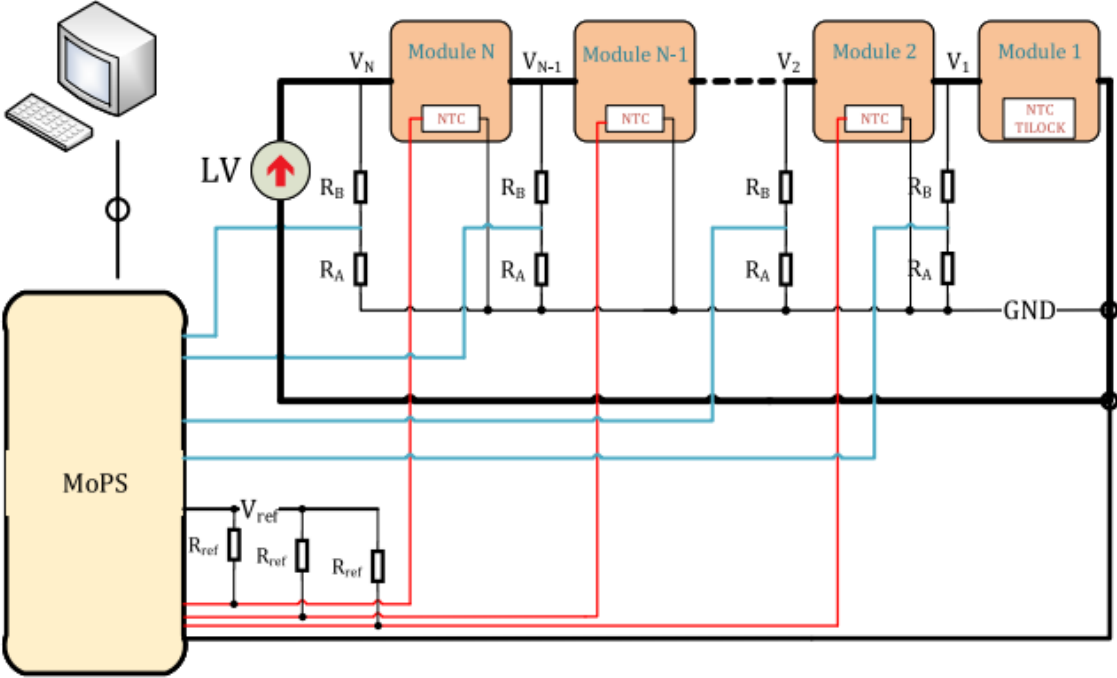
→ Let's pass a small current to measure the resistance of the chain

SLDO designer was not comfortable with running the system in this manner
 → long discussions and simulations



Monitoring

Local monitoring is required to observe SP chain operation.
→ *Monitoring from the Power Supply is, probably, not sufficient.*



<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1742-6596/2374/1/012094/pdf>

Testing complications

- Full System tests require A LOT of hardware in working condition → Difficult to achieve early.
- Hardware required: PCBs to be able to complete chains of different sizes, special power supplies

Case of ITk: System test reveals issue → too late for Services to adapt, we live with suboptimal case (potentially floating control line)



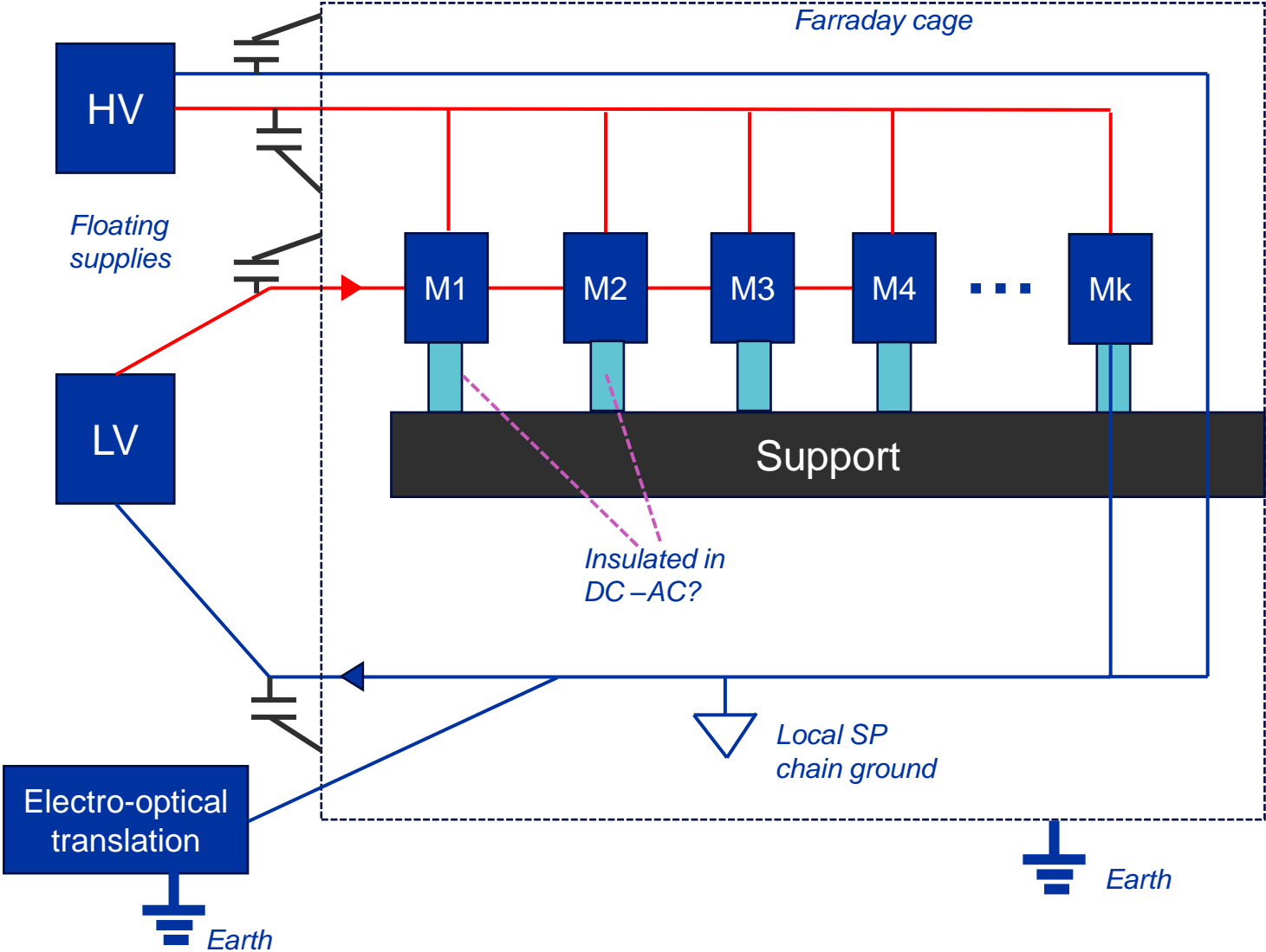
Grounding

No EMC rules/standards to guide designs. Noise?

→ Prototype characterizations, how?

→ Different solutions implemented by different sub-detectors

Complicated ESD safety, support structure grounding.



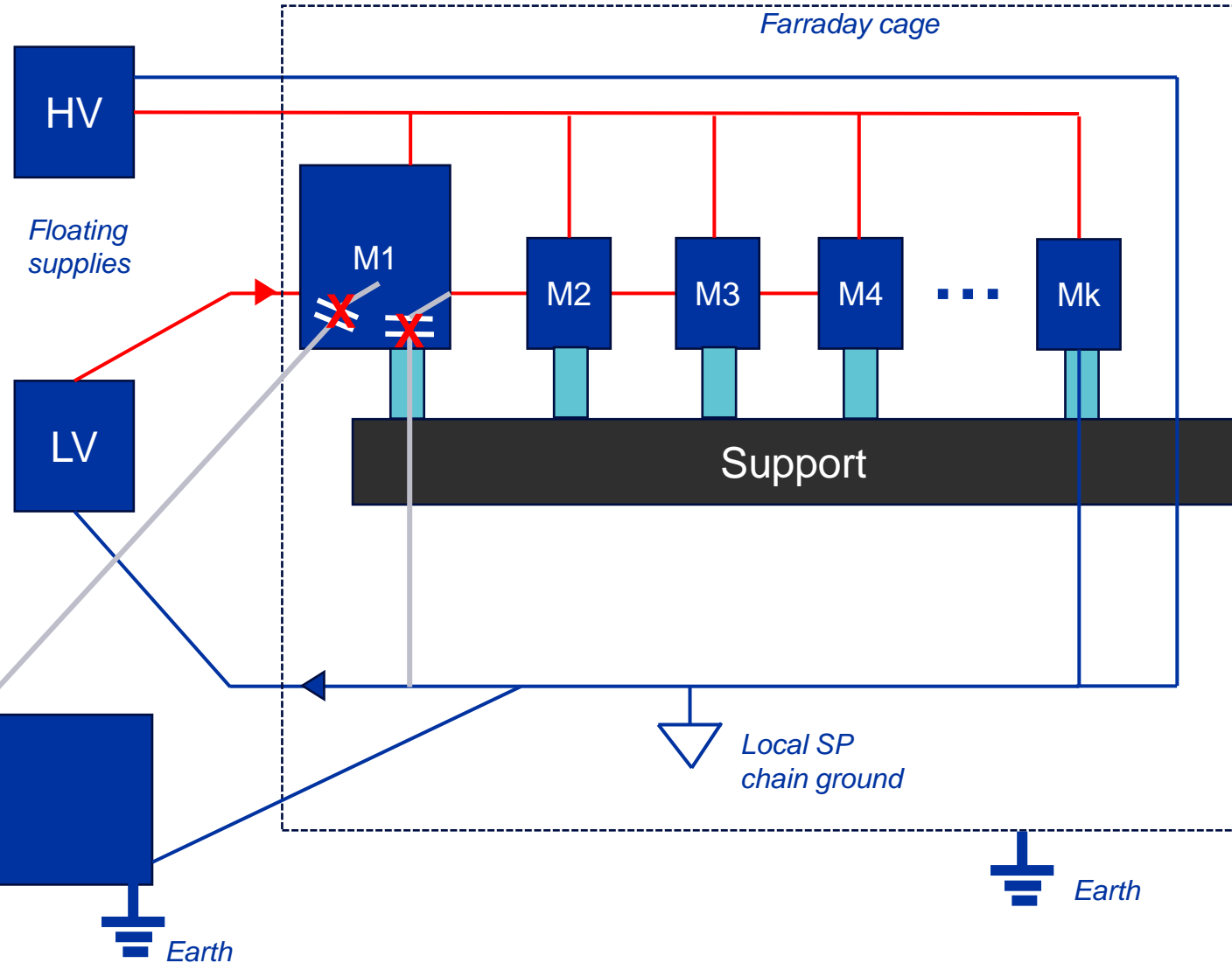
Failure modes..

What happens if a capacitor (e.g. data AC coupling, Ground decoupling) fails?

- Does the optosystem survive?
- Do you lose the full chain?

Leakage currents through capacitors in weird configurations (Optoboard OFF, SP chain ON)

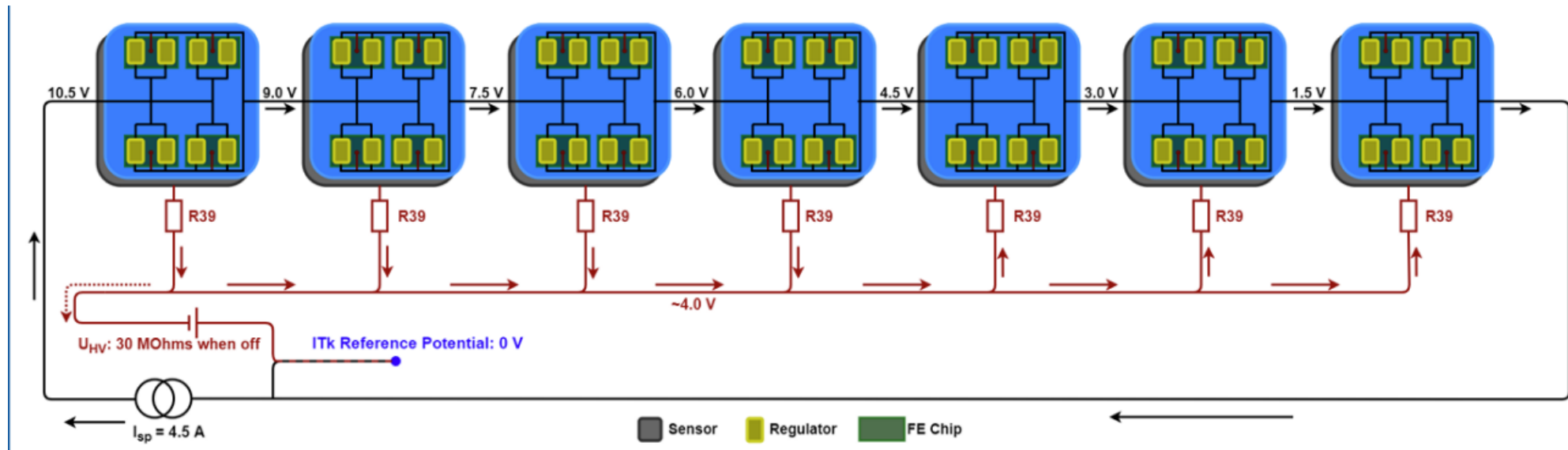
- Need to think about all possibilities and prevent them!



Sensor Biasing

If you share HV channels:

- Sensors will not be biased with identical levels
- HV power supplies: High impedance when off → some sensors are forward biased in this condition

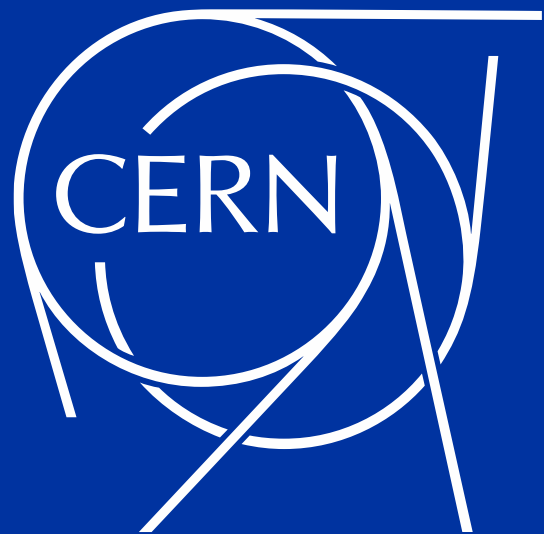


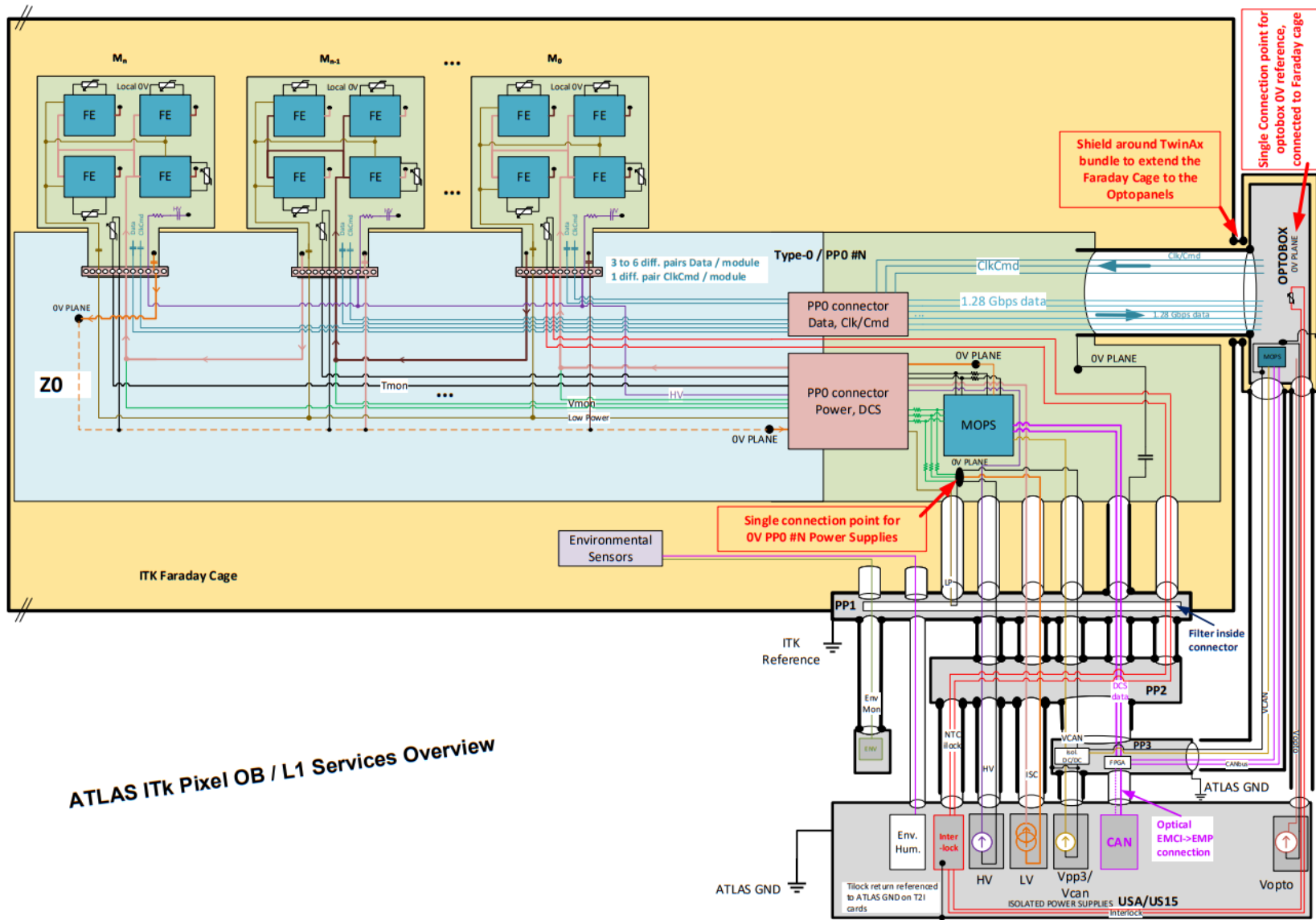
Bonus: No way to *not* bias *all* sensors even with HV off!

Conclusion

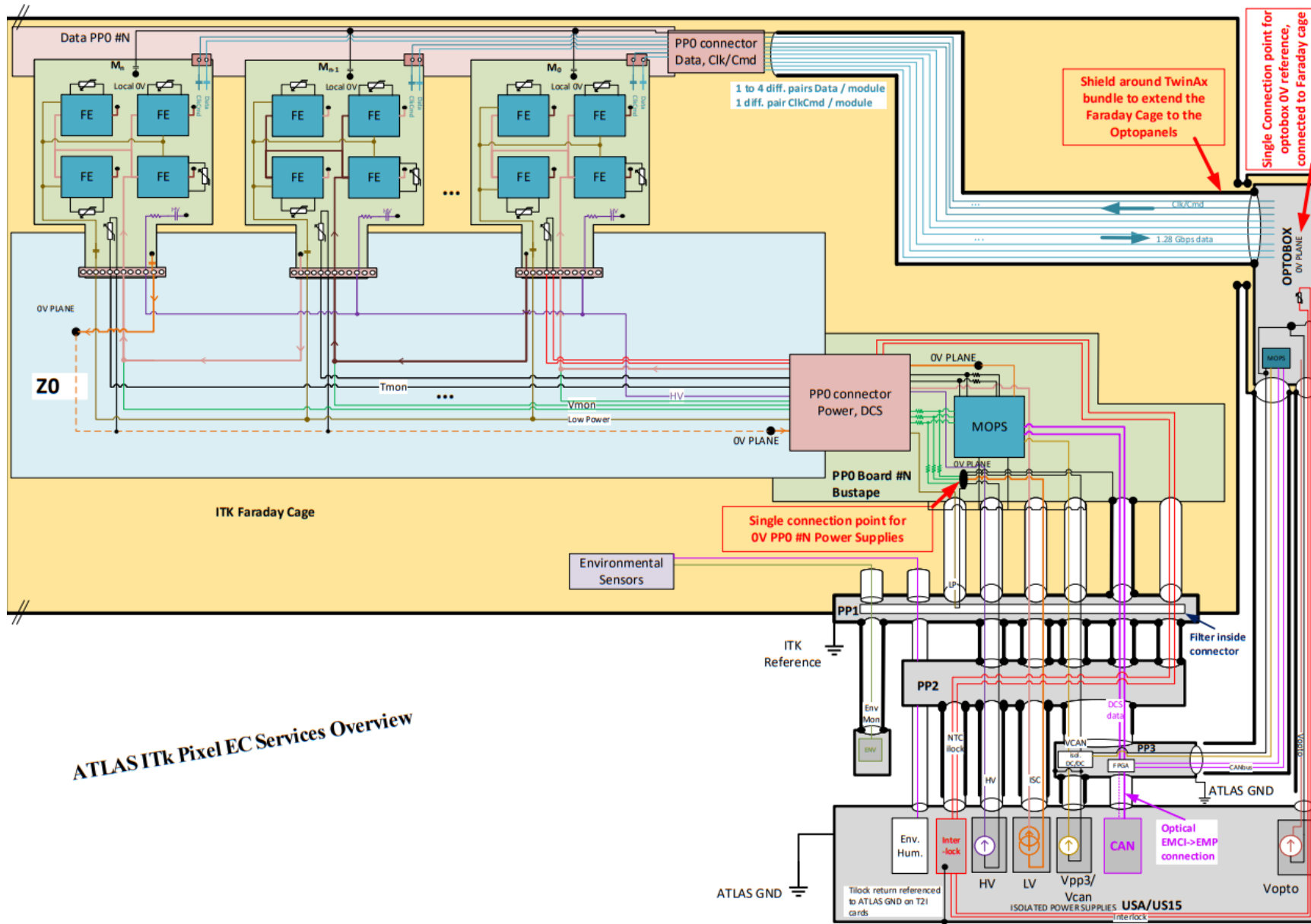
- **Right now, it seems to be working/ can work – Issues are still being uncovered.**
- **It's very complicated: If you want to leave nothing to chance, it is a major undertaking.**
- **M. Karagounis: “Serial Powering is an experiment in an experiment” – valid to this day, will/would be valid for you too.**
- **Be careful, foresee... have fun 😊**

Personal views and experience – not exhaustive

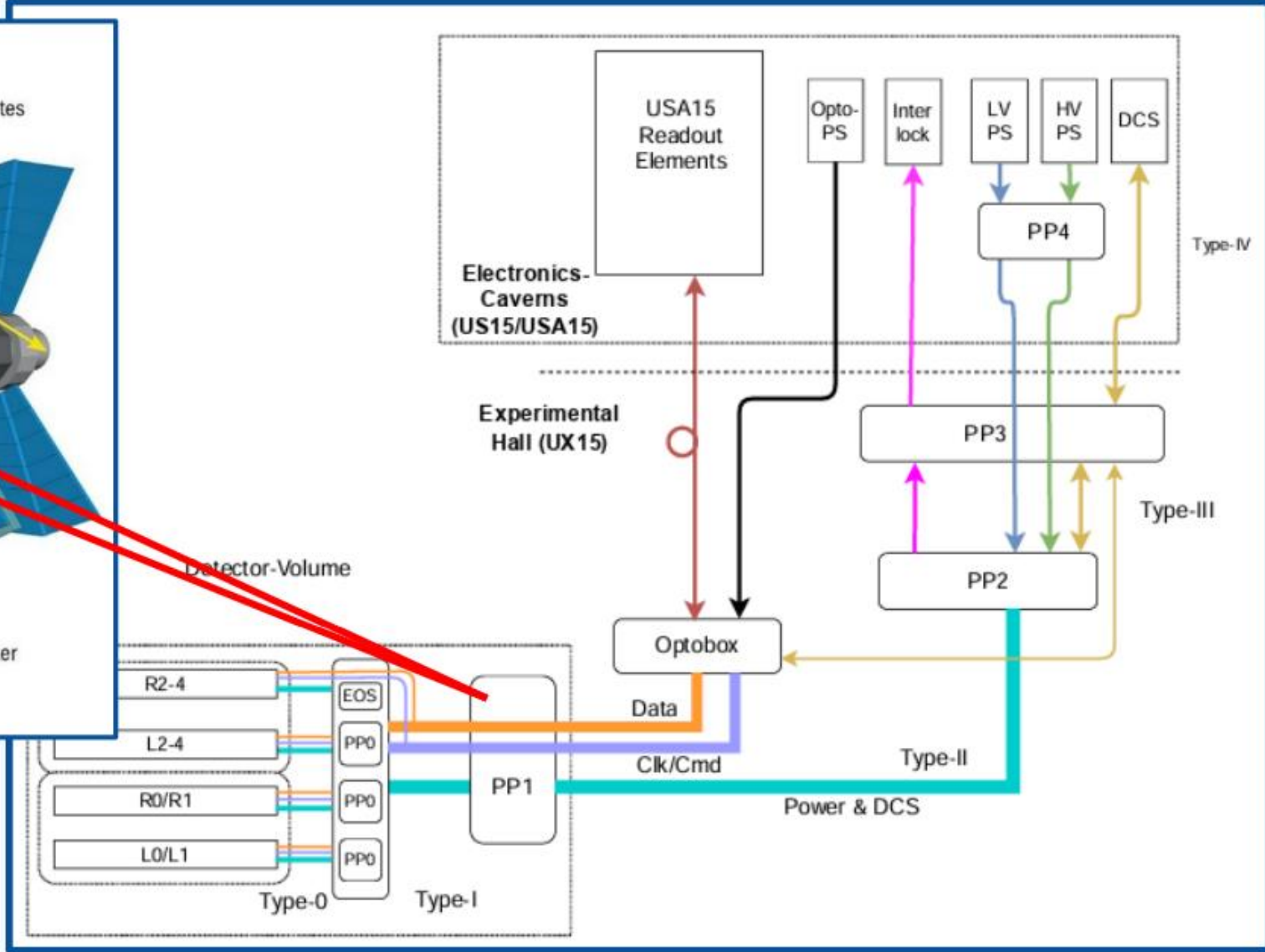
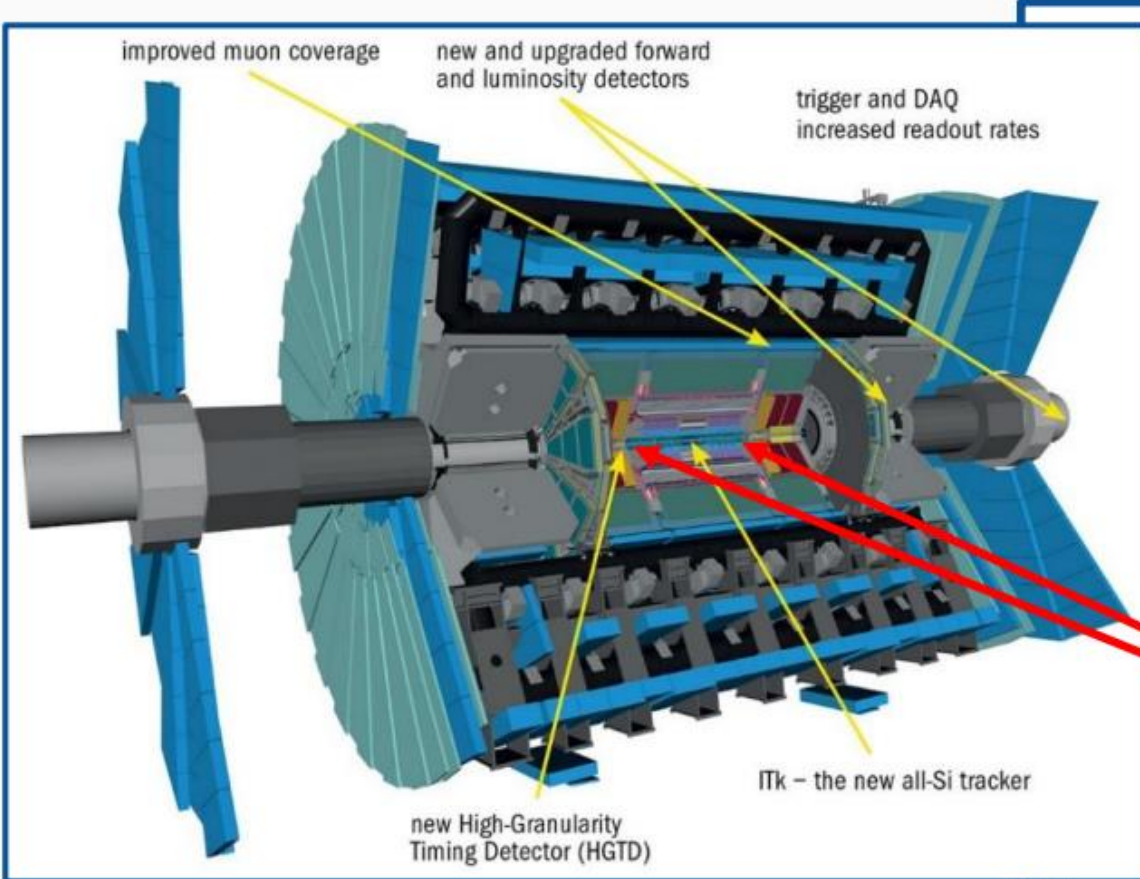




ATLAS ITk Pixel OB / L1 Services Overview



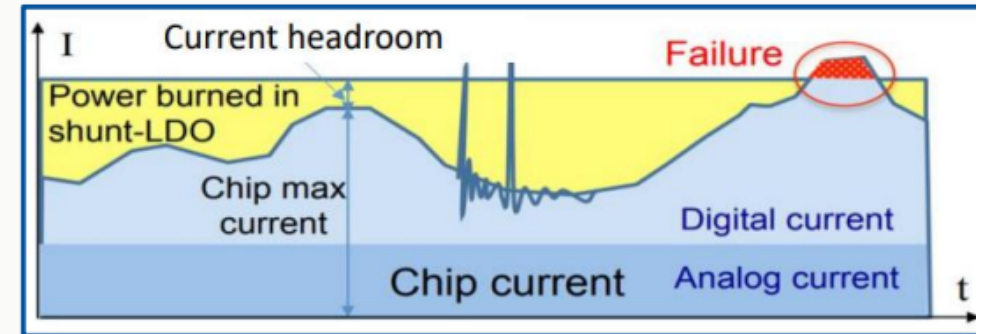
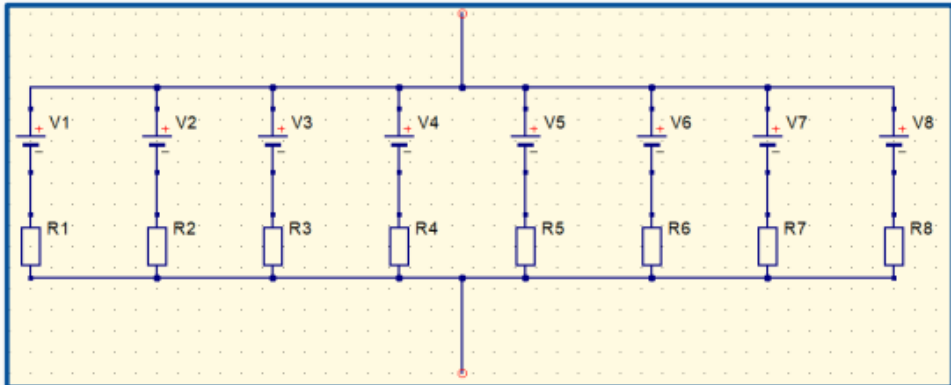
ATLAS ITk Pixel EC Services Overview



Matthias Hamer – Serial powering

https://indico.gsi.de/event/23364/attachments/53645/80986/SerialPowering_GSISeminar_17112025_v2.pdf

- can determine 'nominal' input current per chip
 - add a little overhead for 'unusual events'
- consider current distribution on module
 - analyse configuration phase space and add appropriate overhead current!
 - tolerances, process variation, manufacturing variability!



$$I_{in} = (1 + s_{global}) \sum_i I_{Load,i}$$

$$I_j = \frac{I_{in}}{\sum_i \frac{R_j}{R_i}} + \frac{\sum_i \frac{V_i}{R_i}}{\sum_i \frac{R_j}{R_i}} - \frac{V_j}{R_j}$$

$$I_i \geq I_{Load,i} \cdot (1 + s_{min,i})$$