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Ions in the LHC

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The LHC should make a “hot switch” from colliding protons to colliding lead nuclei in order to maximize the physics yield in a limited running time. I shall describe how we plan to achieve this and review the pre-conditions including the readiness of the RF system and beam instrumentation. The initial run should have the beam structure foreseen in the “Early beam” parameter list but the collision optics and beam energy may be different, depending on what has been achieved in proton operation. I shall show how the performance, including luminosity and lifetime, depends on these variables and discuss possible operating energies.

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