DME/TACAN Multipath Impact on GNSS L5/E5a Airborne Receivers

Part I: C/N0 Degradation Model

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**This article is the first part of a two-part manuscript addressing the DME/TACAN multipath (MP) impact on the future airborne GNSS Dual-Frequency Multi-Constellation (DFMC) GNSS L5/E5a receiver correlator input. GNSS L5/E5a signals and DME/TACAN pulsed signals share the same Aeronautical Radionavigation Service (ARNS) frequency band with consequent interference between the two systems. The current GNSS signal degradation model for future airborne GNSS DFMC receivers due to DME/TACAN pulsed signals is expressed at the DMFC correlator input and is standardized in different civil aviation documents. This model considers the introduction of a temporal blanker at the DMFC Radio-Frequency Front-End (RFFE) block output to mitigate the DME/TACAN pulsed signals and thus, relies on the definition of the above blanker pulse width () and the below blanker equivalent pulse width (). However, this model did not consider the presence of DME/TACAN pulsed signals MP.**

**Indeed, the DME/TACAN MP impact on the GNSS signal degradation was never inspected while it could be significant, especially at low altitude. The objective of this paper is thus to update the degradation model by considering DME/TACAN MP impact generated by ground scatterers. This is done by updating and formulas which require the knowledge of the MP delays and Peak Envelope Powers. In particular, this paper proposes two models of the DME/TACAN MP impact, the statistical and the fixed environment models, where the main difference is the modelling of the additional phase generated by the channel environmental condition ; as an uniform variable in the statistical model and as a constant in the fixed environment model. As a consequence, the Pulse Independency Condition (PIC) is satisfied (power of the sum of received DME/TACAN pulses is equal to the sum of the received pulses power) for the statistical model, which is not always true for the fixed environment model. The two models are proposed to cover different needs. The statistical model is a low complexity model completely defined by closed-form formulas, and is proposed to be used for standardization purposes. The fixed environment model is a higher complexity model with two main purposes. First, the fixed environment model is able to provide the degradation for one specific set of DME/TACAN signal conditions. Second, the fixed environment model is used to inspect the limitations of the statistical model by identifying geographical zones where the received power of the DME/TACAN MP signals generated by the ground scatterers only loosely fulfills the PIC.**

1. INTRODUCTION

The nominal processing of Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) received signals can be affected by noise as well as received additive signals such as multipath (MP) and Radio Frequency Interference (RFI) [1]. GNSS L5/E5a interference environment is predominantly dominated by pulsed interferences such as DME/TACAN and JTIDS/MIDS [1], [2]. In the context of civil aviation, the RFI impact on a GNSS receiver is standardized in the United States by the Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics (RTCA), in Europe by the European Organization for Civil Aviation Equipment (EUROCAE) and internationally by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

In the standards of these standardization bodies, the RFI impact is usually modelled as the GNSS signal degradation induced by the RFI signals at the airborne GNSS receiver correlator input, which is determined as the difference between the nominal (where only the useful GNSS signal is present) and the effective , (where the GNSS and the RFI signals are present) [1]. The effective noise Power Spectrum Density (PSD), , is defined as the increased noise PSD due to the RFI signals presence with respect to the nominal noise PSD, at the GNSS correlator input. The first mathematical models of were provided for non-white PSD, for continuous waveform (CW) RFI as well as for pulsed CW RFI in [3],[4] and [5], respectively.

However, an additional effort was required to further adapt the for the future airborne GNSS Dual-Frequency Multi-Constellation (DFMC) receivers, where a temporal blanker is assumed to be implemented in the Radio-Frequency Front-End (RFFE) block of the GNSS DFMC receiver by the civil aviation standards to mitigate the impact of the pulsed RFI observed in the L5/E5a band [1]. The role of the temporal blanker is to set to zero the received signal samples having its instantaneous power envelope higher than a certain threshold (interference detection) [6]. In the process, the useful GNSS signal is also blanked, and thus, considering the loss of power on the useful GNSS signal, on the RFI signals and on the noise induced by the blanker, a statistical model of was proposed in the RTCA DO-292 standard [1], resulting from the efforts of [7],[8] and [9].

In this model, is defined as a function of the percentage of samples set to zero by the blanker, denoted as blanker duty cycle, (), and the below-blanker interfering-signal-to-thermal-noise ratio, , customized for DME/TACAN [1],[10] and JTIDS/MIDS [1],[11] RFI signals. The values of and depend on the RFI scenario (number of emitting beacons, interference received power at the aircraft antenna port, etc.) and a worst-case scenario was found at Harrisburg P.A, at high altitude (FL400), where the degradation was determined equal to 7.34 dB, after correcting the identified numerical error in [1].

Over the last years, in the RTCA DO-292 [1] updating process, the temporal blanker implementation, which mechanism was not clearly defined in [1], was addressed in [12] and a more accurate mathematical model, based on the exact derivation of the Spectral Separation Coefficient (SSC), which is defined as the integral of the multiplication between the local replica PSD and RFI signal PSD, was proposed in [13]. Moreover, this more accurate model was later used in [10] to refine the GNSS signal degradation induced by the DME/TACAN RFI signals only at the airborne GNSS receiver correlator input.

However, there is still remaining work to make the degradation model as accurate and realistic as possible. Indeed, two recent experimental studies from 2019 and 2021 have shown I/Q samples recordings exhibiting high blanking levels not predicted by the mathematical model developed in [1]; the reason for this increase was the presence of strong DME/TACAN multipath (MP) [14],[15]. The I/Q samples recordings were obtained by WAAS reference stations in the vicinity of Honolulu (Hawaii) and Palmdale (California) airports. The relevance of these two experiments is very important considering the stronger focus given to low altitude scenarios in the updated standards. Indeed, the DME/TACAN beacons/aircraft RFI scene considered in the standards is such that the DME/TACAN beacons situated on the ground transmit a signal near the L5 frequency (1176.45 MHz) to the aircraft situated at an altitude range from a few hundred of meters to several kilometers and a slant range from the beacons of a few tens of kilometers. In this scene, many elements (buildings, electric pylons, trees, etc.) situated in the Radio Line Of Sight (RLOS) of the emitting DME/TACAN beacons are generating MP and must be considered, even if the scattered power may be very small. The elements generating DME/TACAN MP are called scatterers and DME/TACAN pulses received from MP are referred to echoed pulses or echoes in this work. For a more complete characterization of the DME/TCAN beacons/aircraft propagation channel, the reader is referred to Part II of this work [16]. DME/TACAN pulses received from MP are referred to echoed pulses or echoes in this work.

Therefore, the findings of the experimental studies combined with the considered RFI scene show that there is a need for characterizing the DME/TACAN MP impact since echoed pulses affect the receiver in the same manner as the direct pulse: echoes could trigger the blanking threshold and thus increase or simply increase [15]. This characterization is all the more important as the GNSS L5/E5a RFI link budget margin is expected to be very small [13] and thus, all the physical effects impacting the degradation must be modelled as realistically as possible to guarantee that the link margin is still positive. Moreover, to the authors’ best knowledge, no GNSS signal degradation mathematical model considering DME/TACAN MP effect in the derivation has either been proposed in the literature or in the standard, where a simple propagation channel model only considering Line-of-Sight free-space loss was used [1].

For these reasons, the general objective of this two-part manuscript is to conduct a DME/TACAN MP impact analysis on the GNSS signal degradation computation at the GNSS DFMC correlator input. More specifically, this manuscript (part I) updates the and analytical models proposed in [1] to accurately consider echoes in the degradation computation. For a complete characterization of the DME/TACAN beacons/aircraft propagation channel model necessary to compute the final degradation, the reader is referred to Part II of this work [16].

In particular, two models are proposed in this manuscript to update and : the statistical and the fixed environment models. On one hand, the statistical model assumes that the additional received DME/TACAN signal phase offset generated by any physical effect such as the modification of the atmospheric refraction or the modification of the Dyadic Fresnel reflection and transmission coefficients of the scatterers (due to the DME/TACAN beacon/aircraft environment time dependent properties) [17], follows an uniform distribution on . The DME/TACAN beacon/aircraft environment time dependent properties are defined in this article as the atmosphere temperature, pressure or humidity, the weather or the time dependent scatterers properties (open windows, closed shutters, constructions, etc.). This model allows to find a statistical average of the degradation for a single aircraft position in a given aircraft trajectory assuming that the DME/TACAN beacon/aircraft environment time dependent properties at a specific given time are unknown. The strength of the statistical model is that it is a simple and low complex model to apply once the propagation channel model parameters have been obtained. Its weakness is that it may not be suitable to represent all phase offsets realizations since only a statistical average of the degradation is provided.

On the other hand, the fixed environment model assumes that the phase offset produced by the physical effects of the DME/TACAN beacon/aircraft environment time dependent properties can be assumed to be constant over a short time and thus that additional received DME/TACAN signal phase offset generated by the environment is also constant during that time. Therefore, this model allows to find a statistical average (conditioned on the known phase offset) of the degradation for a small segment of an aircraft trajectory which does not last longer than . The strength of the fixed environment model is that it is in theory able to provide the degradation for any phase offset realizations. However, its complexity may be too high to be applied in some RFI environments where the number of scatterers is large.

The statistical model presented in this work is later used in Part II of this two-parts manuscript to determine the additional degradation due to DME/TACAN only generated by echoed pulses at two low-altitude operational hot-spots: JALTO (USA) FAF and TIXAK (Europe) FAF, which are two single points of the approach of the Philadelphia and Frankfurt airports [16]. Note that the proposed statistical model was initially presented in [18] by the same authors but was never mathematically derived. Also note that, for concision purposes, the term degradation is used in this paper to designate the degradation to the useful GNSS signal in presence of DME/TACAN RFI signals at the GNSS DFMC correlator input of the airborne DMFC receiver. Likewise, the terms referring to MP (scatterers, echoed pulses, echoes) are always associated with DME/TACAN MP, since GNSS MP study is out of the scope of this paper.

The article is organized as follows. Section II provides an overview of the DME/TACAN system and signal description and the current (MP-free) degradation model as described in [1]. Section III introduces the theoretical derivation of the statistical degradation model considering MP. Section IV presents the fixed environment degradation model theoretical analysis considering MP. Section V is dedicated to the validation of the statistical and fixed-environment models by means of DME/TACAN RFI signals simulation. Section VI concludes the analysis.

1. CURRENT STATISTICAL DME/TACAN DEGRADATION MODEL

This section introduces a detailed tutorial for the statistical, MP-free, GNSS degradation when considering DME/TACAN as the only RFI source. Section II.A is a state-of-the-art review of DME and TACAN systems and signal description. Section II.B introduces the GNSS DFMC receiver generic structure, reviews the general MP-free model as provided in [1] and, in top of applying the model to the DME/TACAN RFI signals, presents a detailed list of the assumptions only provided at high-level in [1] in order to derive the and mathematical models.

1. DME/TACAN System and Signal Description

DME, and its military equivalent, TACAN, are two systems used by aircraft to determine their distance to a position-known ground beacon. The airborne interrogator sends interrogations to the beacons. Once the interrogation is detected, the beacon transponder replies to the interrogation. The slant range (distance between the two systems) is then determined by measuring the time elapsed between each pulse transmitted by the interrogator and the reception of its corresponding reply pulse from the transponder. This delay corresponds to twice the distance between the aircraft and the beacon, as well as a fixed processing time inside the ground station. DME and TACAN full systems operation are described in [19] and [20], respectively. The main difference between the two systems is the TACAN beacon rotating antenna allowing the aircraft to have an azimuth information in addition to the slant range. However, from an RFI signal analysis point of view, there is no difference in addition to the Pulse Repetition Frequency (PRF): 2700 and 3600 for DME and TACAN, respectively.

Among all the signals’ transmissions between the DME/TACAN system’s equipment, only the reply pulses emitted by ground beacon transponders operating in mode X are considered as a relevant RFI as they emit their signals between 962 and 1213 MHz, which overlaps the GNSS L5/E5a band, equal to [1166.45; 1186.45] MHz [1]. The other potential threats such as the DME/TACAN other operating modes (Y, W or Z) and DME/TACAN interrogations sent by nearby aircraft have been demonstrated to be insignificant: signals emissions in modes Y,W and Z are out of band (and thus attenuated by a 70dB rejection filter) and minimum allowable aircraft separation distances are sufficient to significantly reduce the impact of interrogations sent by nearby aircraft [1].

The beacon transponder replies are thus the RFI investigated in this work. Without MP, a single beacon emitted reply at baseband is a composite pulse composed of two Gaussian pulses such that

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|  | (1) |

where is a constant of pulse and = 12 𝜇𝑠 is the inter pulse time separation for mode X. Fig. 2 (green curve) provides an example of a baseband emitted pair. The signal is then modulated by a cosine before its broadcasting to the aircraft. Fig. 2 (blue curve) provides an example of a modulated emitted pair in presence of noise.

Multiple aircraft are simultaneously communicating with different beacons and therefore multiple replies may be received by a single aircraft. Therefore, the received signal at an aircraft’s receiving antenna port without considering multipath, during an observation period is mathematically modelled as

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|  | (2) |

The index is used to identify the different broadcasting beacons, where is the number of DME/TACAN emitting beacons in the aircraft Radio Line Of Sight (RLOS).

The index is used to identify the emitted pulse pair, where is the number of pulse pairs sent by beacon during and is assumed to be known. When the time of observation is long enough , tends to .

The scalars and are respectively the amplitude and peak envelope power of the received composite pulses from beacon assumed to be constant inside .

The random variable is the emitted time of pair from beacon and is modelled to follow an uniform distribution over (, as the emission of emitted pairs is assumed to follow a Poisson process [1] and is assumed to be known.

The scalar is the associated propagation time delay which evolves with time. For a short time (), can be approximated by its first-order Taylor’s expansion, as

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|  | (3) |

The frequencies and are the carrier and Doppler frequencies of beacon signal, respectively. The expression of is given by, from (3),

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|  | (4) |

The random variable is the carrier phase offset of emitted pair of beacon , modelled as

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|  | (5) |

where the initial phase is the phase generated at each pair of beacon generation. Assuming that the transponder is switched on and off each time a pulse pair is emitted, can be modelled as an uniform variable on and is independent for and . The phase is the additional carrier phase due to the initial propagation time delay , i.e., from (3),

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| --- | --- |
|  | (6) |

Finally, the additional phase offset is the offset introduced by the physical effects generated by the propagation channel environment (weather, atmosphere temperature, pressure and humidity, etc.). Physical effects are assumed not to change inside interval between pulse pair emissions (and thus does not to depend on ) given the relatively low time interval between pulse emission (as high as ms as specified in [19]). Its mathematical modelling depends on the targeted application/analysis; two different assumptions are considered in this work; the statistic assumption in Section III.A and the fixed environment assumption in Section IV.A, respectively.

1. Current RTCA DO-292 Statistical Degradation Model

In this section, a generic airborne GNSS DFMC receiver, the MP-free degradation model proposed in [1] as well as two important notions: the pulse independency condition and the BIA, are introduced and applied to the DME/TACAN MP-free RFI signal.

*Generic airborne GNSS DFMC receiver*: In order to understand the MP-free degradation model, first a generic airborne GNSS DFMC receiver, as well as a description of its components behavior and effect on the received useful and RFI signals are provided. The airborne GNSS DFMC generic structure block scheme is provided in Fig. 1.

Une image contenant texte, capture d’écran, diagramme, Police

Description générée automatiquement

Fig. 1. Airborne GNSS DFMC generic receiver block scheme.

First, the antenna is in charge of capturing all the in-band incoming signals, which is a mix of useful GNSS signals and RFI signals. At the antenna port, the received signal at point A of Fig. 1 is passed to the RFFE block.

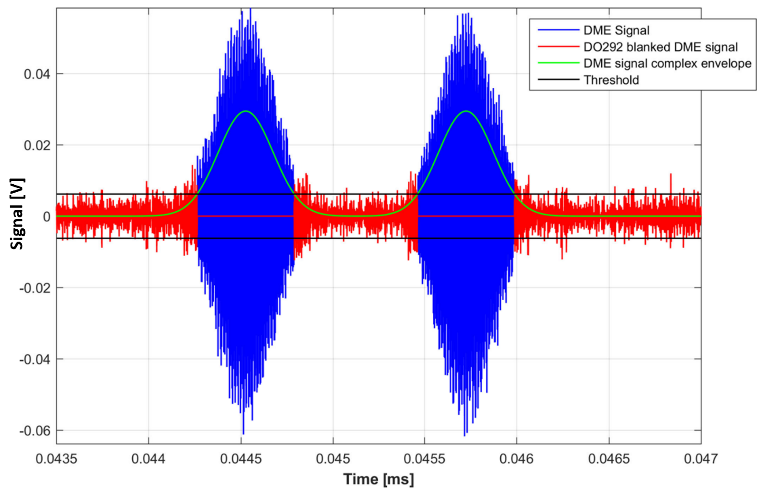
Multiple operations are performed in the RFFE block. First, the received signals are amplified, shifted from their original carrier frequency to a lower intermediate frequency and filtered to obtain the signal at point B of Fig. 1. The resulting signal is then digitalized by an Analog to Digital Converter (ADC) coupled with the Automatic Gain Controller (AGC), which is responsible for minimizing the losses brought by the quantization [21]. It is at this point that the temporal blanker is introduced [1].

The temporal blanker is the counter-measure selected by civil aviation standards to mitigate the pulsed RFI impact such as DME/TACAN or JTIDS/MIDS signals. Note that the final implementation depends on the receiver manufacturer since the temporal blanker exact structure is not standardized; three possible blanker implementations are provided in [12]. The temporal blanker is a device which blanks (puts to 0) the I/Q time samples of the incoming signal (mix of signals) which have an instantaneous power envelope over a given threshold, . The instantaneous power envelope, , of a single Gaussian pulse generated by beacon is defined as

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|  | (7) |

Note that for an optimal functioning of the GNSS receiver, AGC and temporal blanker must be coupled. Fig. 2 illustrates the instantaneous blanker application as defined in [1], where the blanking threshold is expressed in volts (V).

Fig. 2. Illustration of the RTCA DO-292 instantaneous blanker behavior over the DME signal.



At the RFFE block output, the digitized and blanked mix of GNSS and RFI signals at point C is fed to the correlator which multiplies the signal by two local replicas (the cosine and the incoming code), and coherently accumulates the resulting signal for seconds, where is the coherent integration time. At the output of the GNSS DMFC correlator (point D of Fig. 1), the basic operations of the GNSS receiver, i.e., the acquisition, tracking and demodulation of the GNSS signals are performed.

Note that, in the context of civil aviation, the GNSS signal must exceed a particular threshold to guarantee that the minimum requirements as defined in [22] on the acquisition, tracking and demodulation are met. The acquisition, tracking and demodulation thresholds are derived in [3],[23] and [4], respectively.

However, the GNSS signal is degraded by the presence of RFI signals and by the blanking mechanism. Therefore, a mathematical model of the degradation must be derived to ensure that, even in presence of RFI, the GNSS still exceeds the threshold.

*General degradation model*: The chosen figure of merit to measure the impact of the RFI signals and the blanking method on the GNSS signal is the effective , . represents the effective noise power spectrum density that a receiver will observe at the antenna port which generates the same power at the GNSS DFMC correlator output as the power generated by the nominal noise with PSD equal to plus the power generated by the analyzed interferences, when assuming that all RFFE elements and the correlator are ideal, and that no blanker is implemented.

The derivation of is based on a computation of the Signal to Noise plus Interference Power Ratio (SNIR) at the GNSS DFMC correlator output (point D of Fig. 1). The complete calculation of the SNIR in presence of the temporal blanker and pulsed interferences is provided in [9],[13] and, from this derivation, is simply retrieved by dividing the SNIR by . Under this rationale, the mathematical model for in presence of pulsed RFI for a receiver implementing a temporal blanker is [1],[9],[13]

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| --- | --- |
|  | (8) |

where is the thermal noise power spectrum density, is the blanker duty cycle which represents the percentage of time the RFI signals trigger the blanker, is the equivalent white noise contribution of wideband (non-pulsed) RFI and is the below-threshold interfering-signal-to-thermal-noise ratio which represents the contribution of the RFI signals unblanked part. Further discussion about this model can be found in [13].

The difference between the when only the useful signal is present, , and the when the useful signal and the RFI are present, , is called the degradation. In the framework of this manuscript, DME/TACAN are assumed to be the only RFI present at the antenna port and therefore . Finally, since and are equal to zero when no RFI is present (), the degradation in dB is expressed as

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|  | (9) |

The definition of and assuming only DME/TACAN and without MP are based on two important notions presented next.

*Pulse independency condition (PIC):* In this work, the PIC is said to be fulfilled when the power of the summation of the pulses is equal to the sum of the individual powers of each pulse, i.e.,

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|  | (10) |

where denotes the power of and is the temporal expression of pulse , In the remaining part of the article, if no set of pulses is specified for the PIC then it applies to any pulse irrespective of the source, emission and composite pulse.

*Blanker independency assumption (BIA):* Under the PIC, the triggering of the temporal blanker by pulse is assumed to be independent from the triggering of any other pulse coming from other source or even the same source by [1].

The MP-free degradation model proposed in [1] aims at providing a statistical average of the degradation generated by DME/TACAN for a single aircraft position. Therefore, the time of observation representing the time when the aircraft is in the same position is assumed to be very short (). Consequently, inside , since , propagation time delay is approximated as . In the remaining part of the paper, is used as an abusive notation for .

At the aircraft chosen position, the additional phase offset due to the propagation channel physical effects is assumed by [1] to be unknown and thus is modelled as a uniform variable over independent for (since the DME/TACAN beacons are not located at the same location). In other words, the degradation is derived by averaging all the possible additional phase outcomes in . Therefore, the modelling of the three random variables , and of the received signal assumed by [1] is

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|  | (11) |

where means that at least or and means independent. This modelling of and is referred as the statistical assumption in this article.

Under the statistical assumption (11), the PIC is fulfilled (see Section III.B) and therefore the BIA applies. The MP-free modelling of and under the BIA is provided next.

*Multipath-free DME/TACAN* *bdc* *mathematical model:* In this section,,,, and are defined and illustrated in Fig. 3 for an above-threshold composite pulse (two Gaussian pulses in the MP-free case). Note that the definition of is particularly important since its model will be updated with the introduction of MP.

Under the BIA, the DO-292 models the MP-free DME/TACAN mathematical model is based on Queueing Theory [24] as [8],

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|  | (12) |

where is the above blanker width generated by any received composite pulse in of source .

An important property of is that it is invariant by translation, i.e., the delay of the first received pulse of the composite pulse, , does not matter. It is thus chosen at 0 to simplify the derivation as represented in Fig. 3. In that case is expressed as

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|  | (13) |

where is the blanked interval generated by the received composite pulse and is the unidimensional Lebesgue measure, i.e., . Since the composite pulse is composed of two disjoint Gaussian pulses in the MP-free case (1), is decomposed in two disjoint blanked intervals as

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|  | (14) |

where and are the blanked intervals generated by the first and the second pair of the composite pulse, respectively. The blanked intervals generated by the first pulse are mathematically expressed as

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|  | (15) |

where is the blanking threshold and and respectively are the instants of time when the pulse starts and stops to be blanked. Assume that , the mathematical expression of and is obtained by equalizing the instantaneous peak power envelope (7) of the first pulse, to , i.e.,

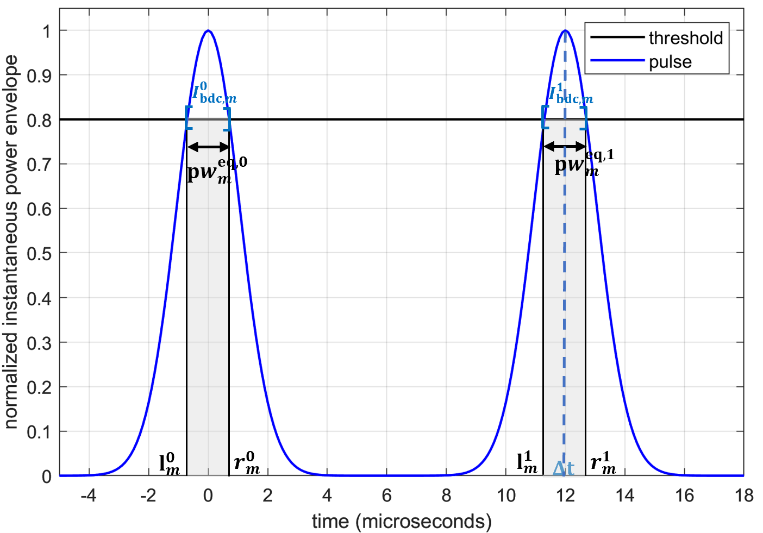
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|  | (16) |

and thus . The blanked interval is obtained by applying exactly the same methodology but to a pulse delayed by and thus . Finally, in the MP-free case, is given from (13), using the -additivity of the Lebesgue measure,

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|  | (17) |

which concludes the derivation of in the MP-free case.

Fig. 3. Graphical illustration of and parameters for an above-threshold composite pulse in the MP-free case.



*Multipath-free DME/TACAN* *mathematical model:* Under the BIA, the MP-free mathematical model of as proposed by [25] is given by

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|  | (18) |

where is the thermal noise power degradation due to RFFE filter and GNSS DMFC correlator, is the Spectral Separation Coefficient of the pulsed interfering source as expressed in [13] and is the post-blanker average power of the received RFI signal coming from beacon assuming that the blanker has been triggered by beacon only [1]. This last term is of particular importance since it can be decomposed to define a new quantity as

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|  | (19) |

where is the width of a rectangular pulse with amplitude and same energy as any post-blanker received composite pulse in of source . As for , is translation invariant, and therefore is chosen at 0 to simplify the derivation.

Since PIC is fulfilled, is modelled by [1] as

|  |  |
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|  | (20) |

where and are the equivalent pulse widths of the first and the second pulse of the received composite pulse, respectively.

With this definition, and are obtained by equalizing the energy of the first and the second pulse of the composite pulse to a rectangular pulse whose amplitude is , i.e., from (7),

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|  | (21) |

In (21), represents the temporal blanker generated by the received composite pulse under the BIA. Following the RTCA DO-292 blanker model [1], is expressed as, from (14),

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|  | (22) |

Note that is an artificial signal since only one DME/TACAN source is considered to trigger the blanker, whereas in reality, all sources can trigger the blanker [13]. Nevertheless, the impact of the other sources has already been accounted for in (18) and is approximated to [13].

Using expression (14) and assuming that the blanked interval () generated by the first (second) pulse impact on the second (first) pulse is negligible given the 12 separation [1], , and are given by

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|  | (23) |

A closed-form solution of (23) can be found by considering the two following cases:

1. Received PEP of beacon pulses are below-blanker. Then, and, by solving the Gaussian integral,

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|  | (24) |

1. Received PEP of beacon pulses are above-blanker. Then is given by

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|  | (25) |

where is the complementary error function,

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|  | (26) |

From the definition of , is the most important parameter as it must be updated with the MP introduction.

Note that definition (18) provided in this paper slightly differs from the one proposed in [1]. This is because the post-blanker RFI power spectrum density (PSD) used in the SSC term is assumed not to be perfectly spread as it is shown in [13], better modelling , contrary to the assumption of [1]. However, since the only modification assumed in this paper by the introduction of MP is for the formula of , both models from [1] and [13] are modified in the same manner.

1. STATISTICAL DEGRADATION MODEL CONSIDERING MULTIPATH

In this section, the current MP-free statistical degradation model is updated to account for echoes generated by scatterers in the Radio Line Of Sight (RLOS) of the DME/TACAN beacons. The proposed model aims at providing an average statistical value of the degradation for a single point of an aircraft trajectory. The MP collisions are tackled by the model and the models of (and thus ) and (and thus ) are updated to accurately consider MP. Note that the terms “echo” and “MP” are used interchangeably to designate multipath. Finally, note that the statistical degradation model considering multipath is a low complex model which is derived to be used for RFI environment analysis with a large number of scatterers.

1. Modelling of The Multipath Parameters

In this work, the MP are characterized by 5 parameters. First, there is the number of MP generated by one DME/TACAN beacon . Then, for each MP it is possible to define its amplitude , delay , Doppler frequency and additional phase .

While the parameters , and usually exhibit strong stochastic characteristics, they are assumed in this work to be the outputs of the air-ground propagation channel developed in Part II [16]. As such, they are assumed to be deterministic in this work. Furthermore, even if the Doppler frequency is not provided by the proposed air-ground propagation channel model, it is still assumed to be a deterministic parameter; its mathematical model is provided in (4). The reader is referred to Part II of this word for a more thorough explanation on the number, amplitude and additional delay , and of the MP [16].

Finally, the additional phase is updated from (5) into

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| --- | --- |
|  | (27) |

where is the additional phase due to initial propagation time delay of pulse , i.e., . Since MP are now considered, the additional phase offset introduced by any physical effects generated by the environment must now also account for reflections and thus not only the weather but also any time dependent properties of the scatterer (open windows, closed shutters, constructions, etc.) must be considered. Since MP are generated from different scatterers, now depends on .

Note that the limitations of such modelling of the MP parameters is provided in Section III.F.

1. Received Signal Model Under the Statistical Assumption Considering Multipath

Considering MP, the main difference for the received signal is that the received composite pulse is no longer composed of one pair of pulses but of pair of pulses, where and is the number of scatterers in the RLOS of the DME/TACAN beacon. Artificially imposing that composite pulses coming from a source can only be blanked by themselves and not by the other sources [1], the expression of the received signal at the output of the blanker (and not only at the output of the antenna) is expressed as, still considering a single aircraft position,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (28) |

where the index is associated with the direct (LOS) composite pulse.

For this section (and this section only), it is more convenient to express each received composite pulse with the individual Gaussian pulses provided in (1), considering that the second pulse of the MP-free composite pulse is also an echo. In that case, the received composite pulse is composed of Gaussian pulses where is the number of echoed pulses, . Under this rationale, is expressed in its most concise manner as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (29) |

where , and . Note that, with this rationale, there always exists an such that .

The function represents the temporal blanker triggered by a received composite pulse of beacon . The function is simply delayed to match with the time of reception of the composite pulses but is always the same: since only a single aircraft trajectory point is analyzed, the received composite pulse is always the same and so the additional delay of the echoes with respect to the LOS is the same no matter .

Furthermore, assuming a single point of an aircraft trajectory, environmental conditions and scatterers time dependent properties can be assumed unknown, and thus (27) is modelled as a uniform distribution over , independent for different beacons () and, without loss of generality since , scatterers . This assumption is referred as the statistical assumption in this article.

To summarize, the three random variables of are modelled as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (30) |

1. Average Power of the Received Signal at Blanker Output

In order to derive from (18), the average post-blanker (where only beacon can trigger the blanker) power of the composite pulses received from a source under the statistical assumption, it is necessary to derive the average power of the post blanker received signal . As a random and real signal, the average received power of under the statistical assumption is given by

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (31) |

Note that in the integral of (31), a change in the value of does not represent a change of the aircraft position (the aircraft is always fixed to one position), but rather the time period when the aircraft is able to be in the analyzed fixed position of the trajectory. The integral must thus divide its result by to get an average value. Moreover, since all instants of time are possible and thus are inspected, the analyzed time period tends to the infinite, ().

The expectation can be expressed as, from (29),

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (32) |

by the linearity of the expectation. Let be . Then, since ,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (33) |

where

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (34) |

The value of is investigated regarding the triplets and :

1. Assume emitting sources to be different, i.e., then , and thus can be separated into two expectations that both equal 0 by the law of total expectation since and are uniform on . Thus, if then .
2. Assume emitting sources are the same () but emitted pulses come from different pairs, i.e., . Then, if , the product of the two gaussian pulses in is assumed to be zero since pulse pairs are at least separated by as specified in [19]. If , the product of the two gaussian pulses is still zero since MP having an additional delay close to are expected to have an extremely small PEP (see numerical results in [16]). Therefore, if and then .
3. Assume emitted pairs of the same emitting source ( and ) but different echoes, i.e., then and by the law of total expectation, assuming known, since and . Thus, if , and then .

To conclude, is not zero only if , and . Thus,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (35) |

The complete derivation of (35) is conducted in Appendix A. The final expression of is obtained from by identification as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (36) |

Finally, from (36), the power of the summation of all the received pulses is equal to the summation of the power of all the individual pulses and thus under the statistical assumption, the PIC as presented in Section II.B is fulfilled. Therefore, the BIA as presented in Section II.B applies and the definition of with is justified for the purposes of calculating ; note that the introduction of does not affect the fulfillment of the PIC but rather the exact expression of as seen in (36).The derivation of and considering MP under blanker independency is provided in Sections III.C and III.D, respectively.

1. Mathematical Model Considering Multipath

In this section, the mathematical expression of (13) under blanker independency is updated to accurately account for echoed pulses under the BIA.

With the introduction of echoes, the received composite pulse is no longer constituted of two disjoint Gaussian pulses but is composed of the LOS and the MP, that can potentially collide. Therefore, considering MP, , the blanked interval generated by one received composite pulse must also account for the blanked intervals generated by the echoed pulses.

As for the MP-free case, is still invariant by translation, and therefore the delay of the first received pulse can be chosen at 0 to simplify the derivations. Fig. 4 provides a graphical example of the blanked intervals generated by a direct pulse (in red) received at and an echoed pulse (in green) above-threshold, where the blanked interval generated by the echo must clearly be accounted for.

Therefore, in presence of echoes, is updated from (14) into

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (37) |

where is the blanked interval generated by echo and is expressed as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (38) |

where is the PEP of echo with respect to beacon . Note that equation (37) is only valid in case of the BIA (and thus is only valid if pulse independency is fulfilled). If blanker independency was not assumed, the sum of the individual pulses should first be derived and then could be calculated.

Furthermore, it is more convenient to express only with disjoint blanked intervals since some may overlap. Let be the disjoint blanked intervals and the number of disjoint blanked intervals generated by source , then

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (39) |

The bounds and of can be retrieved recursively using , ordering the such that , as:

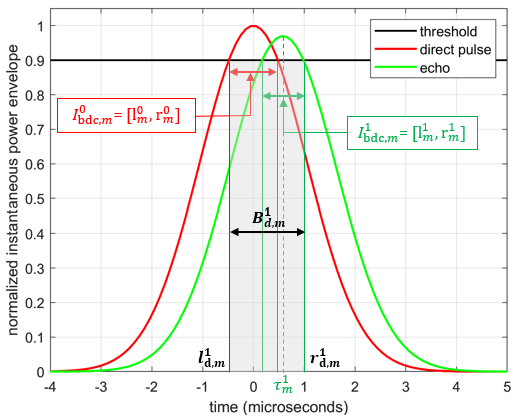
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (40) |

Finally, under the statistical assumption, is updated in presence of MP into, from (17) and by the -additivity of ,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (41) |

Therefore, in presence of MP, from (12) is simply updated by using the expression (41) of . Fig. 4provides a graphical representation of the union of the overlapping and overlapping blanked intervals from the direct (in red) and the echoed pulses (in green), to generate one disjoint blanked interval .

Fig. 4. Graphical representation of the overlapping blanked intervals generated by the direct pulse (in red) with an echoed pulse (in green) and the resulting disjoint blanked interval (in grey) at the output of the algorithm (40).



1. Mathematical Model Considering Multipath

In this subsection, the mathematical expressions of (20) under the BIA are updated to accurately account for echoes. First, the expression of is provided based on the expression of the average post-blanker received power (36). Then, a closed-form of is obtained accounting for the three possible scenarios, by means of functions.

*Update of considering multipath:* In presence of MP, the mathematical expression of is retrieved from (19) and from the expression of the average post blanker received power (36) as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (42) |

is the equivalent pulse width which energy is the same as the energy of the post-blanker echo relatively to beacon , i.e.,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (43) |

As for the MP-free case, is translation invariant and therefore can be chosen equal to 0. In that case in the MP case from (39) can be used and

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (44) |

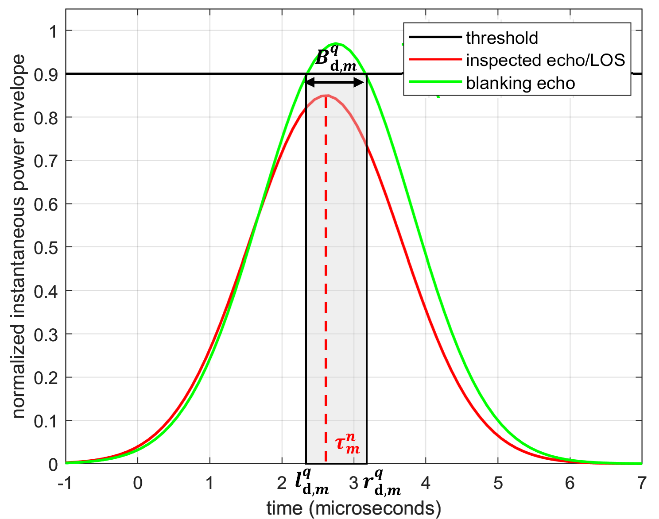
as the are disjoints. Therefore, the integrals are expressed as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (45) |

The sign of and varies according to three possible scenarios that are detailed below.

*Scenario 1:* Echo is being blanked by disjoint blanked interval in its center, i.e., . A graphical representation of this scenario is provided in Fig. 5, where (red) inspected echo is blanked at its center by the disjoint interval generated by, for example, another (green) echo.

Fig. 5. Graphical representation of scenario 1: (red) echo is being blanked at its center by the disjoint blanked interval generated by, for example, another (green) echo.



Note that this scenario differs from the MP-free case (25) since is not necessarily centered in . In that case, and . Therefore, since , is expressed as, using the absolute value for convenience and from (45)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (46) |

*Scenario 2:* Echo is being blanked by disjoint blanked interval on its left side, i.e., . A graphical representation of this scenario is provided in Fig. 6, where (red) inspected echo is blanked on its left side by the disjoint interval generated by another, for example, (green) echo.

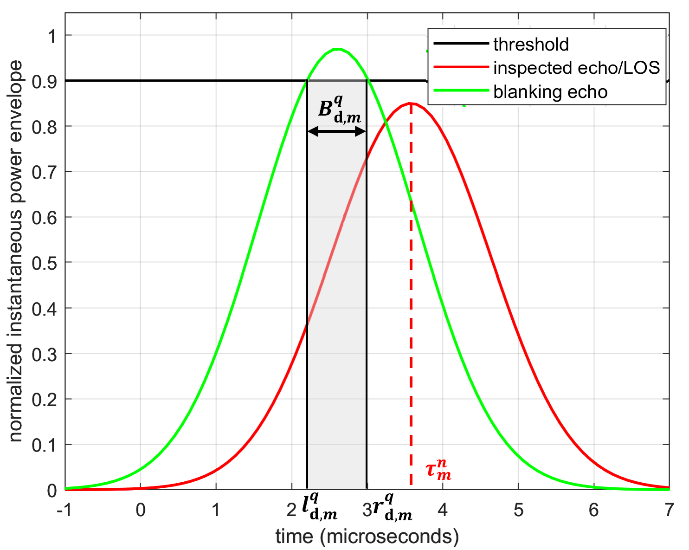


Fig. 6. Graphical representation of scenario 2: (red) echo is being blanked by, for example, the disjoint blanked interval generated by another (green) echo on its left side.

In this scenario, and . Therefore, in scenario 2,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (47) |

*Scenario 3:* Echo is being blanked by disjoint blanked interval on its right side, i.e., . A graphical representation of this scenario is provided in Fig. 7, where (red) inspected echo is blanked on its right side by the disjoint interval generated by another, for example, (green) echo.

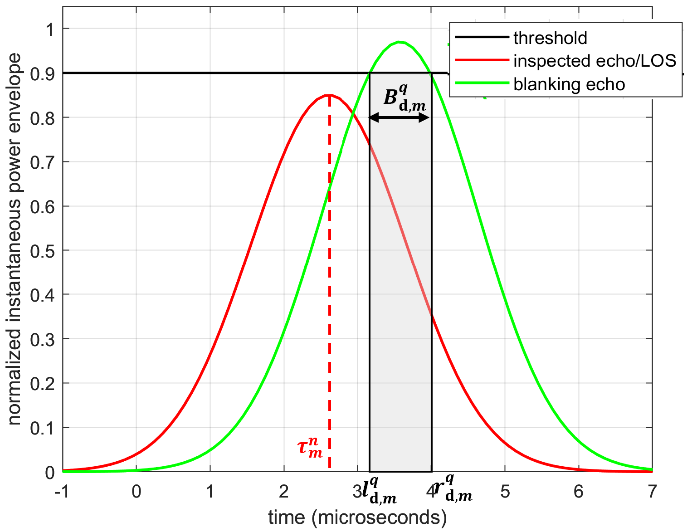


Fig. 7. Graphical representation of scenario 3: (red) echo is being blanked by, for example, the disjoint blanked interval generated by another (green) echo on its right side.

In this scenario, and . Therefore, in scenario 3,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (48) |

Note that in Fig. 5, Fig. 6 and Fig. 7, the disjoint interval is only generated by one green echo for visualization purposes, and could be generated by any combination of more than one echo in reality.

The three formulas obtained for from the three scenarios can be reunited into one equation using the indicator and the functions. In that case, from (44) is expressed as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (49) |

Furthermore, since , the final expression of is given by

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (50) |

is thus updated in the presence of MP by using expression (50) of in (43). Note that formula (42), using (50), is validated by simulations in Section V.A.

Also note that it is assumed in this paper that even with the introduction of MP, is the same for each received pulse (MP or LOS) in (18). However, with the introduction of MP, should not be the same across pulses, since the pulses are not blanked in the same manner. The study of the variations of in the MP case is left for future work.

1. Model Necessary Inputs and Limitations

To compute (12) and (18) in presence of MP, only the values of (41) and (50) updated for the presence of MP under the statistical assumption, are necessary. To derive these quantities, the precise knowledge of the blanked interval (39) is mandatory. More specifically, the knowledge of the disjoint blanked intervals is required and thus, the values of all (38) must be known. Therefore, the necessary inputs for the degradation model are the values of and of all the additional delays and received PEP, , in order to compute , (41) and finally the degradation (9) in presence of MP.

There are two limitations associated with the determination of deterministic values for , and . First, it requires an air-ground propagation channel model to be associated with a highly detailed scene to completely determine and , and to limit the range of values of (and potentially its probability density function). Second, since not all the uncertainty of can be removed by the scene and the propagation channel model, a final selection of the value of must be performed, which limits the representativity of the signal model; for example, the value could be equal to the statistical (or a worst-case statistical) mean limiting the signal representation to a mean amplitude signal; this choice is made in this two-part manuscript.

Part II of this work addresses these requirements by proposing a complete propagation channel model specifically designed to provide the values of , and for any MP generated by the scatterers in the RLOS of the visible DME/TACAN beacons [16].

1. FIXED ENVIRONMENT DEGRADATION MODEL CONSIDERING MULTIPATH

In this section, the degradation model in presence of MP is investigated under the fixed environment assumption. This model provides an average statistical value of the degradation for a short aircraft trajectory under the condition that the channel propagation physical effects offset phase, , is known (a signal realization with respect to ). Therefore, the proposed fixed environment degradation model considering multipath is a high complex model which is mainly derived to be used for RFI environments analysis with a low number of scatters and to verify the limits of the statistical environment. Thus, the analysis conducted in this section focuses on the additional calculations and limitations with respect to the statistical model.

The section is organized as follows. The fixed environment assumption is provided in Section IV.A. Section IV.B develops the average post-blanker received power under the fixed-environment assumption. Section IV.C discusses the PIC under the fixed environment assumption. Section IV.D mathematically defines the pulse independency zones where blanker independencies are evaluated. Finally, Section IV.E provides a summary comparison between the fixed environment model and the statistical model in terms of strengths and weaknesses, applicable scopes, and performance disparities.

1. Fixed Environment Assumption

The fixed environment assumption is defined as short periods of time (i.e., less than a second) during an aircraft trajectory where environmental conditions can be assumed to be constant. In other words, the phase offset produced by the physical effects generated by the environment, , is assumed to have an initial unknown random value which remains constant for this short period of time; scatterers or the weather are unlikely to change during .

Therefore, under the fixed environment assumption, is modelled as the addition of two terms, i.e.,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (51) |

In (51), is a first random term which follows a uniform distribution, which models the unknown initial value of the pulses. The second term, , is deterministic and remains constant irrespective of the value of for each MP pulse of the composite pulse. Note that keeping constant irrespective of is the mathematical modelling proposed in this work to represent the analysis of a short segment of an aircraft trajectory where the environment conditions remain fixed once the initial unknown value, , is randomly sampled.

Moreover, concerning the propagation delay, under the fixed environment assumption, for a fixed source , the difference between two rays delays and , , =, is assumed to be constant over since is very short.

Therefore, the artificial post-blanker received signal under the fixed environment assumption, defined by assuming that blanker impact on received signal from source is only triggered by source and not by any other sources , is defined as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (52) |

where is used in (52) for the received signal definition (instead of using the gaussian pulse and considering the second pulse of the initial composite pulse (1) as an echo in (29)) and thus, the number of received MP is simply . This approach simplifies the derivation of the average received power in this case. Furthermore, the random variables in (52) defined for the statistical assumption in (30) are updated for the environment fixed assumption into

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (53) |

Note that, for simplification purposes, is assumed to be equal to zero.

1. Average Received Power at The Blanker Output

The derivation of the average received power under the fixed environment assumption at the blanker output follows the exact same step as the derivation of under the statistical assumption as provided in Section III.B. The main difference is that under the fixed environment assumption, the expectation is not zero when , since is not a random variable anymore (59) and therefore pulse independency is only fulfilled between sources and emissions but not in terms of composite pulse. In that case, can be expressed with two terms and as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (54) |

where “d” stands for “direct” and “c” for cross-terms. The power is exactly (42) as provided in Section III.B. The complete derivation of is conducted in Appendix B and final expression is given in (93). Therefore, is expressed as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (55) |
|  |  |

where , and are the difference in delay, Doppler frequency and phase between echoes and of beacon , provided in equations (83) and (85), respectively. The expression of is given by

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (56) |

where is the Fourier Transform () of the product of two composite pulses delayed by . The final expression of is given by (without proof)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (57) |

Finally, in (55) is the argument of the complex number . Note that formula (55) is validated by simulations in Section V.B.

1. Pulse Independency Discussion and Impact on and

Under the fixed environment assumption, the cross terms in the average received power (55) are not zero and thus the PIC as presented in Section II.B is not fulfilled, since the power of the sum of pulses is not equal to the sum of the individual pulse powers, unless is negligible with respect to . Consequently, if is not negligible with respect to , the blanker independency as presented in Section II.B does not apply.

If blanker independency does not apply, then it is not possible to express as the reunion of the blanked intervals generated by the individual pulses as it was expressed in (37). Indeed, without blanker independency, the sum of the complex envelopes must first be performed, and then must be retrieved by numerical simulation, comparing the envelope of the pulses sum to the blanking threshold at each instant. The consequences of being numerically obtained for and are presented next.

First, for , the closed-form formula found for the statistical assumption (41) still holds. However, if does not have a mathematical expression, a numerical simulation must be performed to find the final value of .

Second, for , a closed-form formula under the fixed environment assumption which differs from the statistical one (42), is retrieved by identification from (19) and from the expression of the average post blanker received power (55) as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (58) |

The closed-form is thus composed of two terms, provided in (50) and given in (55), which both depend on the blanked interval : depends on and and depends on . Therefore, as for , and additional simulation step must be performed in order to obtain the final value of in the case where the PIC is not fulfilled.

1. Definition of Pulse Independency Zones

Since numerical simulations are required where is not negligible with respect to , zones where can be neglected (and only a numerical evaluation of the closed-formula is required to obtain and ), should be defined. In particular, three pulse independency zones where pulse independencies are evaluated, are defined.

*Zone 1:* is negligible with respect to and thus PIC is fulfilled. In that case, (41) and (50) of the statistical model can be used, even under the environment fixed assumption.

*Zone 2:* is not negligible with respect to but the addition of and is equal to the power of a resulting a composite pulse with complex amplitude calculated from the sum of the complex amplitudes of the inspected composite pulse. Therefore, (41) and (50) of the statistical model can still be used in that zone.

*Zone 3:* is neither negligible with respect to nor an equivalent composite pulse, with amplitude equal to the complex amplitude sum of the individual pulses, exists. In that case, (41) and under the fixed environment must be used (58) and thus numerical simulations must be performed to obtain their final values.

To simplify the mathematical definition of the three zones, the notation of from (42) is updated into

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (59) |

Zones are always defined by fixing a reference scatterer in the set of the scatterers in the RLOS of beacon . Once the reference scatterer is set, zones are determined by investigating the average received power as if only two echoes ( were received (average pairwise received power), where goes through since . Note that this restriction to only two echoes is made to facilitate the zones mathematical definitions.

The average pairwise received power under the fixed environment assumptions when two echoes ( are received using (59) notation is simply expressed as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (60) |

Moreover, a new quantity, , is defined as the power of a composite pulse which complex amplitude is the sum of the complex amplitudes of pulses and as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (61) |

where is the equivalent pulse width of the resulting equivalent gaussian pulse.

Finally, from (60) and (61), two conditions and are used to define the zones,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (62) |

where and are the threshold fixed by the user representing the tolerance to the condition.

Therefore, by applying the literal definition of the zones and considering the two specified conditions, the three zones are mathematically defined as follows,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (63) |

where means that condition is not fulfilled. Note that a graphical illustration of the pulse independency zones is provided in section V.C, for a simple DME/aircraft scene.

1. Comparison Between the Statistical and the Fixed Environment Models

The statistical and the fixed environment models are compared in terms of strength, weakness, applicable scope and performance disparities.

*Strength:* The strength of the statistical model is that closed-formulas of and have been obtained, thanks to the statistical averaging of all possible carrier phases generated by the environment, as provided in (30). Therefore, Therefore, the model is simple and low complex to apply once the propagation channel model parameters have been obtained.

On the contrary, the fixed environment model does not statistically average all the possible outcomes for but it is rather able to provide the degradation for any DME/TACAN RFI environment and for small parts of aircraft trajectories during which can be considered fixed and equal to a given initial value (no modification of the canal environment), as provided in (51). Therefore, the strength of the fixed environment model is its capacity to represent the outcome of any realization of the carrier phase (any possible initial value).

*Weakness:* For the statistical model, for some DME/TACAN RFI environments, although the model presents the average case, some (or even all) individual realizations (different values) may not be equal to the statistical average case; and thus, the statistical average value may not cover the impact of all the realizations.

For the fixed environment model, in some pulse independency zones, which must first be identified as defined in (63), the closed-form formulas of and obtained under the statistical model are not applicable and an additional numerical simulation is required. Therefore, the complexity of the model may be too high to be applied in some RFI environments where the number of scatterers is large.

*Applicable scope:* The statistical model is designed to be applicable for safety-of-life standardization purposes. Indeed, a worst but probable (the worst average) case must be analyzed to ensure that minimum requirements are met [22]. The worst average case scenario is determined by searching for the worst geographical point (in terms of degradation and operational constraints), setting the DME/TACAN PRF at its maximum (worst) possible value, and by calculating the average degradation.

The fixed environment model applies, on one hand, to specific DME/TACAN RFI environment with a moderate number of scatterers and, on the other hand, to investigate the degradation deviation of one DME/TACAN RFI signal realization with respect to the statistical average degradation provided by statistical model based on the pulse independency zones analysis (zones where pulse independency condition is not fulfilled in the fixed environment model whereas in the statistical model, pulse independency condition was always demonstrated to be satisfied by assuming that all received DME/TACAN RFI signals were uniformly distributed).

*Performance disparity*: Up to now, the fixed environment model has only been used to identify the pulse independency zones creating a degradation deviation of one DME/TACAN RFI realization with respect to the average degradation provided by statistical model (see Section V.C).. Furthermore, numerical disparity between the statistical model proposed in this article and the MP-free degradation model are provided for two low-altitude hot-spots, JALTO (Philadelphia) and TIXAK (Frankfurt) in the second part of this two-part manuscript [16]. It is shown that the range of the additional 𝐶/𝑁0 degradation generated by the DME/TACAN MP RFI signal ranges from 0.1 to 0.3 dB [16].

1. SIMULATIONS

In this section, the average received power formula under the statistical (36) and the fixed environment (55) assumption are validated by means of Monte-Carlo simulations. The validation is done by generating time series realizations of the DME/TACAN received RFI signal in presence of MP in Sections V.B and V.C, respectively. Furthermore, a graphical analysis of the Pulse Independency Zones (as developed in Section IV.D is provided) in Section V.D.

1. Preliminary Discussion

In this section, the mathematical models of the average received power formula under the statistical (36) and the fixed environment (55) assumptions are validated. These models are based on the use of the MP parameters as inputs and accept any realistic set of values: any positive number of received MP , and for each MP, any positive PEP, , delay, , Doppler frequency, and additional phase . Therefore, to validate the models, it is only necessary to ensure that, for different sets of realistic MP parameter values, the average received power predicted by the proposed mathematical models (36) and (55) matches with the average received power obtained through simulations. Therefore, different configurations of MP parameters are tested through Monte-Carlo simulations to validate both models.

Note that in Part II of this companion paper, a propagation channel model is developed to predict the set of MP parameters generated by a given scene [16]; in Part II propagation channel model verification, it would thus be ideal to compare the theoretical prediction with MP parameters extracted from measurements. For a discussion on the measurement acquisition and MP parameters extraction, the reader is referred to [16].

1. Validation of the Average Received Power Formula Under the Statistical Assumption

Formula of the post-blanker average received power (42) using the expressions of provided in (50) and given in (41) is validated by means of Monte-Carlo simulations.

The objective of the Monte-Carlo simulations is to demonstrate that for each pair , the maximum ratio considering all triplets of PEPs , (in dB), between the average received powers computed by the Monte-Carlo simulation, , with respect to the received power formula provided in (42) and (50), is below 0.1 dB, i.e.,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (64) |

The deterministic and random parameters of the Monte-Carlo simulation are summarized in the first column of Table I. A single DME beacon, three pairs of pulses, with two being MP (, and ) with PEPs ranging from -118 and -121 dBW and one pulse emission are considered with emission time , and thus the sub-index and the upper-index are discarded from the notation of , and . The Doppler frequency of each pair is assumed to be equal to 0. Furthermore, since , the emitted pair can be assumed to be received at .

The delay of the two MP varies from 0 to 22 and for each pair and thus, for the verification of the post-blanker average received power under the statistical assumption, a matrix where each line represents one value of the delay of the MP 1 , and each column represents one value of the delay of the MP 2 is provided.

Table I

Parameters definition for the Monte-Carlo simulations under the statistical and fixed environment assumptions. The sub-index is discarded since only one beacon () is considered.

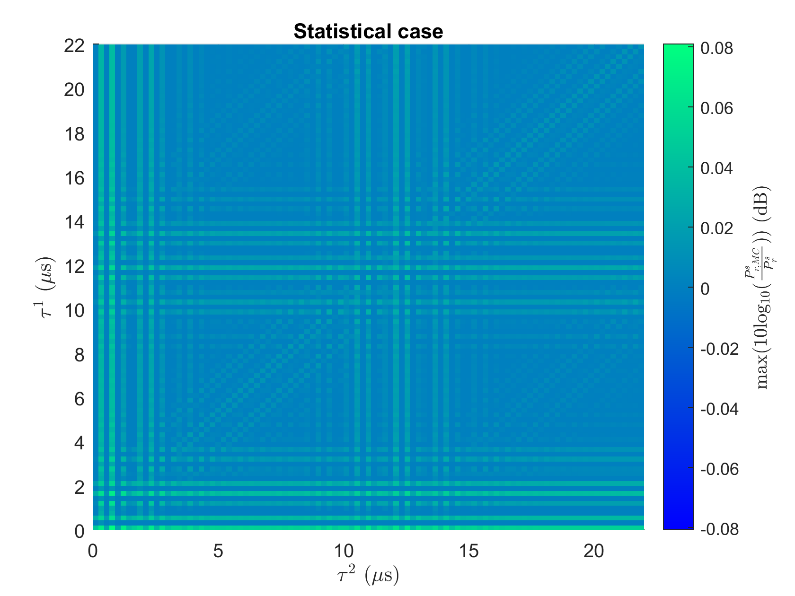
|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | Statistical  Section V.A | Fixed Environment  Section V.B |
| Deterministic Parameters |  | 10 000 | 10 000 |
|  | 2 | 1 |
| (ms) | - | 20 |
|  | 1 | 54 |
| () | [-121,-118]  Step = 1 | [-130,-121]  Step = 3 |
| (s) | Step = 0.4 | Step = 1 |
| (s) | Step = 0.4 | - |
|  | - |  |
|  | 0 | 0 |
|  | 0 | - |
| Random Parameters |  |  |  |

The methodology to obtain is as follows.

First, one triplet is selected and draws of the random vector are realized. contains all the random parameters which allow to obtain one realization of the random signal expressed in (29).

Second, for one draw , of , and using the deterministic parameters of the simulation, one complex representation of the pre-blanker RFI signal is determined as

Fig. 8. Results of the Monte-Carlo simulations for the average received power under the statistical assumption.



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (65) |

where represents the complex representation of MP of draw . Note that the carrier frequency chosen in this study does not matter since each direct and MP pairs are assumed to come from the same beacon and thus have the same carrier frequency that is to be removed when taking the modulus of .

Third, the complex envelope of is derived by taking the squared modulus of , i.e., .

Fourth, from , the post-blanker complex envelope is obtained by deriving the blanked intervals generated by the direct and the two MP pairs according to (41).

Fifth, from the temporal expression of , the time series of are generated in MATLAB, with a sampling frequency of 100 MHz. Note that in the blanked intervals are derived under the BIA, i.e., the blanked intervals generated by each pair have been derived as if the only received pair was pair .

Sixth, the simulated received power , , is obtained by integrating the generated time series of in MATLAB by means of the classical trapeze integration method. Once all the have been determined, the value of is obtained by averaging all the , i.e.,

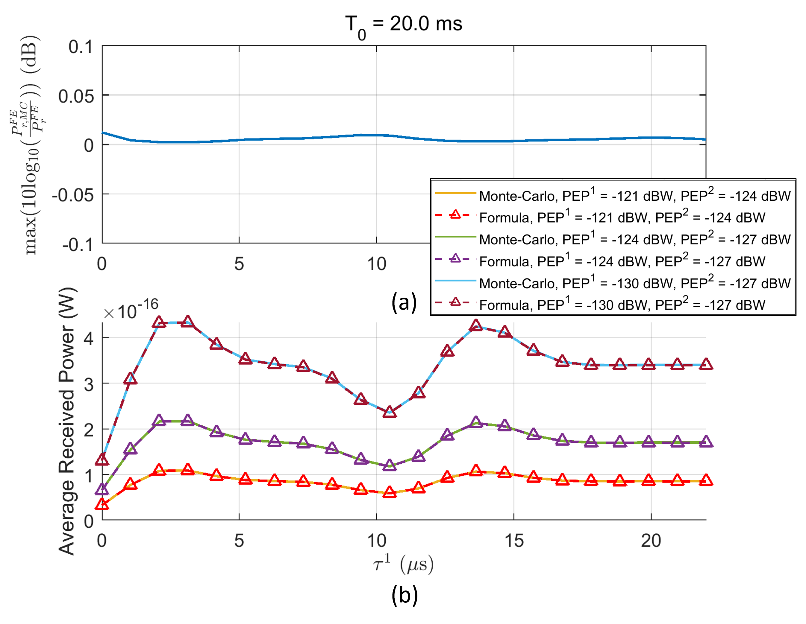
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (66) |

where the integral in (66) is only obtained numerically.

Finally, the value of obtained by simulation is compared to the theoretical value of determined from (42) and (50) by calculating the ratio between and . The process is repeated for each possible triplet and the value of is determined by taking the maximum of all the obtained ratios. The final validation matrix composed of all is provided in Fig. 8.

Fig. 8 shows that the ratio between (42) and never exceed 0.08 dB and thus the formulas of the average received power under the statistical assumption (42) and (50) are validated.

Fig. 9. (a) Results of the validation vector for the Monte-Carlo simulations under the fixed environment assumption and (b) outputs of (in straight line) and (in dashed line) in W, for three different pairs .



1. Validation of the Average Received Power Formula Under the Fixed Environment Assumption

The formula of the post-blanker average received power (55) is validated by means of Monte-Carlo simulations.

The objective of the Monte-Carlo simulations is to demonstrate that, for each delay , the maximum ratio considering all pairs of PEPs , (in dB), between an average received power computed by the Monte-Carlo simulation, with respect to the received power formula provided in (55) is below 0.1 dB, i.e.,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (67) |

The deterministic and random parameters of the Monte-Carlo simulation are provided in the second column of Table I. In comparison with the statistical case (see Section V.A), a single DME beacon, one LOS and one MP (, and ) with PEP = -121 dBW PEPs ranging from -121 and -130 dBW and 54 pulse pair emissions , since the time of observation is ms, are considered. is set to 20 ms to simulate a short time when the channel time dependent properties can be assumed to be unchanged. Therefore, for this simulation, and are just two constants derived from two draws of an uniform law on

The additional delay of the unique MP spans from 0 to 22 with a 1 step and thus, for the verification of the post-blanker average received power under the FEA, is a line vector of size the number of possible values of .

The methodology to obtain is exactly the same as for the statistical case, except for the blanking step since all the received pulses are assumed to have a PEP below the blanking threshold: for each draw of , , the time series of the complex envelope of a realization of the received signal as provided in (52) is generated in MATLAB. Then, is obtained by averaging all the determined by the numerical trapeze integration of the complex envelopes. The process is repeated for each possible pair and the value of is determined by taking the maximum of all the obtained ratios.

Fig. 9 provides (a) the validation vector and (b) the outputs of (in straight line) and (in dashed line) in W, for three different pairs .

Fig. 9 (a) shows that the ratio between and (55) never exceeds 0.05 dB and thus the formula obtained for the average power under the fixed environment assumption (55) is validated.

1. Illustration of Pulse Independency Zones

In this section, four graphical analyses of the pulse independency zones are provided for a single DME beacon/aircraft scene. This scene is representative of the single DME beacon/aircraft scene that can be found at the two low-altitude operational hot-spots JALTO (Philadelphia, US) and TIXAK (Frankfurt, Germany); note that these operational hot-spots scenes are investigated in the second part of this two part manuscript [16]. First, the objective of the simulation is introduced. Second, a description of the scene and the different illustration parameters are given. Third, the methodology to determine the pulse independency zones is introduced. Finally, the four analyses are provided and the results are discussed.

*Objective*: The objective of this simulation is to provide a graphical illustration of the pulse independency zones, defined in Section IV.D in a representative real-world scenario. The pulse independency zones provide the set of scatterers where, relatively to a reference scatterer, the closed-form formulas of (41) and (50) obtained for the statistical assumption (53) are applicable (Zone 1), are applicable after combining pulses into one composite pulse (Zone 2) or are not directly applicable (Zone 3).

*Scene description and parameters definition*: The scene is composed of a single DME beacon and an aircraft separated by a distance of 50 km in the horizontal plane. A single beacon/aircraft scene is considered since the contribution to the statistical average received power for the fixed environment assumption of one individual DME/TACAN beacon is independent from the contribution of the remaining DME/TACAN beacons inside the aircraft RLOS (58) (note that this statement also holds for the statistical assumption case). The aircraft is supposed to be in a real-world approach phase, that is, at 2100 feet above ground, its velocity is set to 115 knots and its glide angle to 5° [26]. The aircraft speed vector direction in the azimuthal plane is set to be either North or East. Note that, since only one beacon is considered, the subindex is removed from the remaining part of the section.

The set of scatterers generating a MP is all the points on the ground within the RLOS of the DME beacon, defined as a circle around the beacon with a radius of 25 km which is the average value of the RLOS found for JALTO and TIXAK [16]. Therefore, there are as many scatterers as the number of discrete points covered during the full sweep of the RLOS. The PEP of any scatterers within the RLOS is set to -122 dBW and thus the blanker is never triggered.

The beacon carrier frequency is set to the mode X carrier frequency 1176 MHz and the pulse repetition frequency is set to 2700. The tolerance and are set to be equal to , i.e., and can take two different values, 0.01 or 0.05. The difference in additional phase is set to 45°. Note that only one value of is chosen for these analyses since the influence of was found to only have a small impact on the final results.

The value of is discussed next. A short value implies a larger zone 3, because the potential full sweep of the phase difference (statistical assumption) is unlikely to happen during that short time; for a given , a larger time allows for a larger phase sweep, . Therefore, zone 3 is expected to shrink and zone 1 is expected to grow as increases. Therefore, two values of , 20 ms and 1 s, are investigated to illustrate this phenomenon.

*Methodology*: The methodology for identifying the pulse independency zones of each analyzed reference scatter is as follows.

First, the zone matrix is determined for generic values of and . Matrix is defined as the matrix where each element represents the pulse independency zone (Zone 1,2 or 3) of a scatterer whose additional delay and Doppler frequency with respect to the direct pair is . The determination of the pulse independency zones is obtained by the derivation , , and from and the inputs of the simulations using equations (61),(59) and (55). The sets of values of and over which is computed is conservatively chosen to be for (with a step of 0.5 ) and Hz for (with a step of 0.5 ) to ensure that every scatterer additional delay and Doppler frequency in the RLOS lies within that range.

Second, the position of the reference scatterers is chosen. For this illustration, 4 different reference scatterers are defined and situated at the coordinates , respectively.

Third, a full sweep of the RLOS is realized using two parameters and , where and span from m and radians, with a step of 50 m and 0.01 rad, respectively, which means that, in total, 250 000 scatterers (with respect to each reference scatterer) are investigated. For each scatterer, the pair is determined and the scatterer is assigned to one zone by looking at the closest pair in **.**

*Results*: Using the presented methodology, the simulations are processed and the illustration results are provided in Fig. 10 and Fig. 11 for and , respectively. For each illustration, the aircraft velocity azimuth angle is directed either to (a) North or to (b) East. Two different sets of colors are assigned to the 3 pulse independency zones for the two different values of . For , Zones 1, 2 and 3 are respectively displayed in white, blue and red. For , Zone 1, 2 and 3 are respectively displayed in white, cyan and orange. The DME beacon, the aircraft and the four reference scatterers are represented by a green dot, a red dot and black squares, respectively. Finally, the RLOS and the aircraft speed vector are shown as a black line and a red arrow.

Fig. 10. Graphical illustration of the pulse independency zones for , ms or 1 s and aircraft velocity (a) North and (b) East.

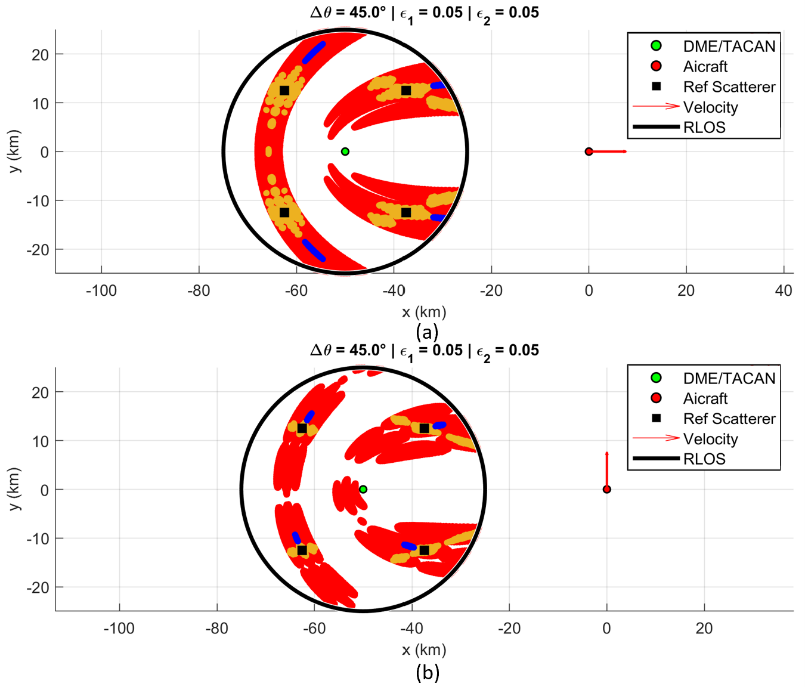
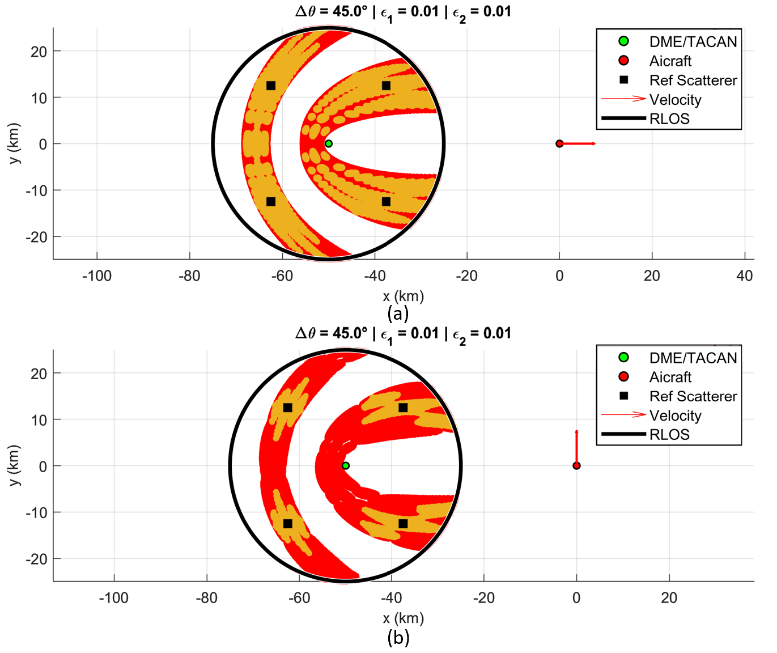


Fig. 11. Graphical illustration of the pulse independency zones for , ms or 1 s and aircraft velocity (a) North and (b) East.



Three concluding remarks can be made regarding Fig. 10 and Fig. 11:

1. Zone 2 associated with (cyan) is not visible in both figures since only scatterers extremely close to the reference scatterers can be combined to create a composite pulse which complex amplitude is the sum of original pulses complex amplitudes. Therefore, zone 2 is too small to be seen in the plot.
2. The decrease of thresholds implies a smaller tolerance to expressed in (62). Therefore, less scatterer verify and thus zone 3 increases for with respect to .
3. The increase of implies a decrease of zones 2 and 3. The reason is that the full sweep of the phase difference is more likely to happen when increases (as previously explained).
4. CONCLUSION

In this manuscript (part I), two models of the GNSS signal degradation at the correlator input of the future airborne GNSS DMFC receiver have been introduced to account for the degradation generated by the received DME/TACAN MP RFI signals in addition to the DME/TACAN LOS RFI signals (already provided in [1]). The derivation of the formulas is done by updating the general original MP-free formulas of and with the presence of multiple DME/TACAN echoed pulses.

The first derived model is the statistical model. In this model, the additional phase generated by the propagation channel environment (atmospheric and weather conditions, composition and temporal properties of the scatterers facades, etc.), , is considered unknown and thus is assumed to follow a uniform distribution. Therefore, this model provides a statistical average of the GNSS signal degradation by averaging all the possible outcomes of in ; as a consequence, while this model may not be able to capture the degradation of one individual carrier phase situation (only the average is provided), it can be used to find the worst but probable average case of the degradation generated by DME/TACAN RFI LOS and MP signals if other parameters, such as the geographical location and the signal PRF are set to their worst values.

Under the statical modelling of , it has been shown that the PIC (power of the sum of multiple pulses is equal to the sum of the individual power generated by each pulse) was fulfilled and thus closed-form formulas of and were derived. Therefore, the main strength of this model is its low complexity due to the use of and closed-form formulas, once its inputs are determined by a propagation channel model.

As a conclusion, this model is particularly suitable for safety-of-life standardization when analyzing RFI environment with a very large number of scatters. An example of GNSS signal degradation statistical model application is given in the second part of this two-part manuscript to determine the degradation generated by DME/TACAN RFI LOS and MP signals at two operational hot-spots: JALTO (Philadelphia) and TIXAK (Frankfurt) [16].

The second derived model is the fixed environment model. In this model, is assumed to be constant and equal to his initial value for a short time , where environmental conditions can be assumed constant. The strength of this model is that it can be used to calculate any degradation of any individual carrier phase situation (any initial and constant value of ).

Under this modelling of , it has been shown that the PIC was not always perfectly fulfilled and thus closed-form formulas of and can just provide a loose approximation of the true value (the accuracy of the approximation depending on the observation time). Therefore, pulse independency zones, where the closed-form formulas from the statistical model can be used with a given degree of accuracy have been mathematically defined.

However, when a higher degree of degradation accuracy is demanded, the fixed environment model requires an additional simulation step to be performed outside the PIC. Therefore, the complexity of this model is probably too high to be applied in RFI environments where the number of scatterers is large if high precision is required; if not, its application and result are equivalent to the statistical model. Therefore, for now, the fixed environment model is only used to identify zones creating a degradation deviation (equivalent to a loss of accuracy) of one DME/TACAN RFI realization with respect to the average degradation provided by statistical model.

In this manuscript, the number of MP and the additional delay and amplitude of each MP have been assumed to be provided by the air-ground propagation channel developed in Part II of this two part manuscript [16] for both models. As such, they have been assumed to be deterministic in this work (partial reduction of the uncertainty of the MP parameters). The limitations associated with the deterministic modelling of and are that it requires a highly detailed scene to be given as an input of the air-ground propagation channel [16] and to select a final value of (all the uncertainty of can not be removed by the scene and the propagation channel model); in this work, the statistical mean for has been chosen.

Both models have been validated by means of Monte-Carlo simulations, by generating time series realizations of the received DME/TACAN RFI signals. Furthermore, a graphical illustration of the pulse independency zones have been presented for a simple scene composed of a single DME beacon and the aircraft.

Future works include the analysis of the coupling between the ADC/AGC and the blanker, and the exact modelling of SSC in presence of the temporal blanker and the MP.

APPENDIX A

Average Power Derivation – Statistical Assumption

In this appendix, the derivation of the average power of (29) under the statistical assumption (30) is conducted. In the statistic case, the average power from (35) is given by

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (68) |

where

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (69) |

Furthermore, , and . Therefore,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (70) |

since, by the law of total expectation,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (71) |

Furthermore, since

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (72) |

Assume to be the number of received pulse pairs during , then, interchanging sums (where now ) and integral and using Fubini’s theorem,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (73) |

Therefore, there is no term inside the sum which depends on since dependency on is removed by the integral. This yields,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (74) |

where

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (75) |

Assuming that both limits of and are finites (which will be shown later in the derivation), the limit can be linearized into

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (76) |

where

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (77) |

as PRF is defined as an average pulse repetition frequency and

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (78) |

Furthermore,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (79) |

which does not depend on . Therefore, from (76), the final expression of is given by

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (80) |
|  |  |

APPENDIX B

Average Power Derivation – Fixed Environment Assumption

In this appendix, the derivation of the average power of (52) under the fixed environment assumption (53) is conducted. In the fixed environment case, the average received power (54) is given by

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (81) |

where is provided in (80). Let be then, since ,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (82) |

where is the product of two pulse pairs delayed by and is the additional delay difference between echo and , i.e.,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (83) |

Furthermore, since , and using trigonometry formula for ,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (84) |

where and are the difference Doppler frequency and phase between echoes and of beacon , i.e.,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (85) |

Note that is deterministic. Assume that the number of pulse pairs emitted during is then, interchanging sums (where now ) and integral

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (86) |

Since and using Fubini’s theorem,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (87) |

Therefore, there is no term inside the sum which depends on since dependency on is removed by the integral. This yields,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (88) |

Assuming that both limits of and are finites (which will be shown later in the derivation), the limit can be linearized into, as explained in Appendix A,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (89) |

Furthermore, using Parseval’s identity and the Hermitian property of the Fourier transform () of a real signal,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (90) |

Where is the of and the function is the argument of . Therefore, using the definition of (87) and the change of variable , from (90) is identified as and as . This yields

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (91) |

where

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (92) |

Finally, does not depend on and therefore the integral in (91) has a well-known closed-form from typical GNSS correlator output derivation such that [27]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (93) |

which concludes the derivation of .

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