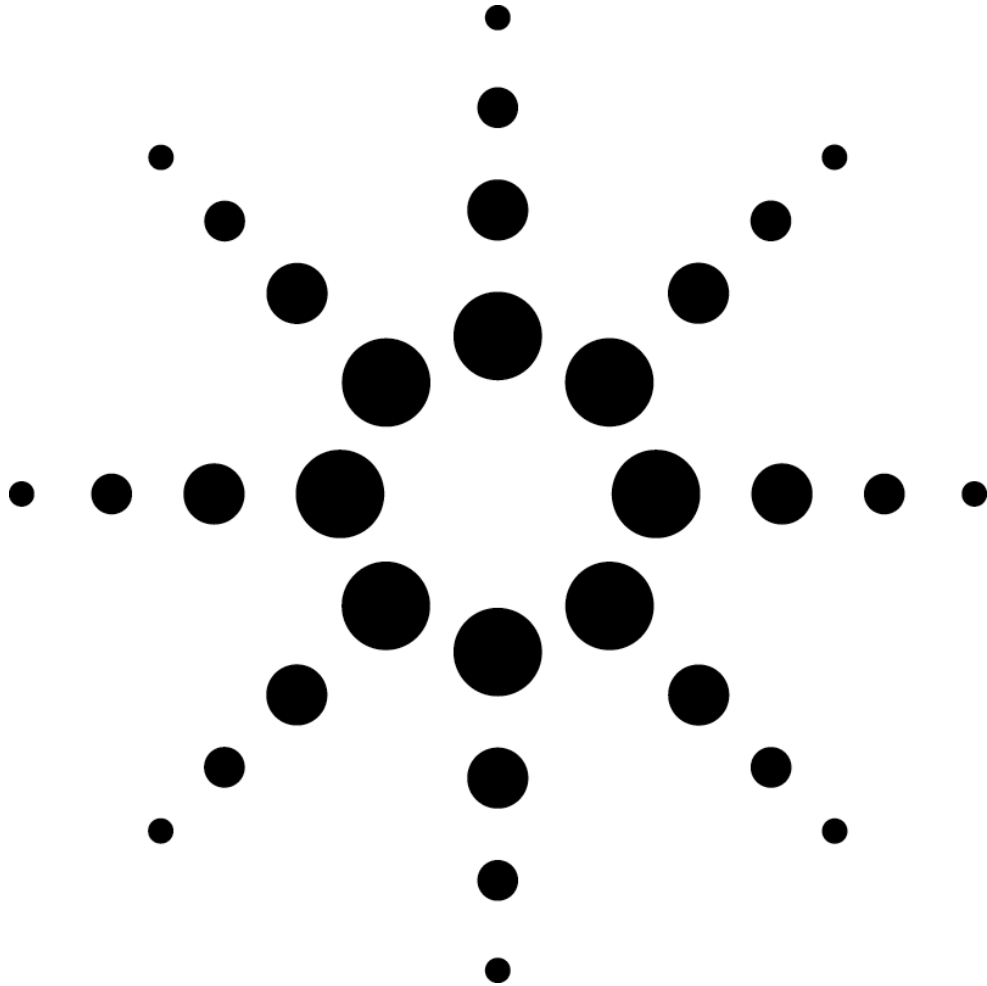


Agilent 8169A Polarization Controller

Technical Specifications
December 2004



Agilent's 8169A Polarization controller enables automatic polarization state adjustments for measurements of polarization dependent loss (PDL) and polarization mode dispersion (PMD), and for polarization synthesis applications.

Introduction

Developing and manufacturing competitive, high-value components and systems for today's optical industries require precise attention to polarization sensitivity. The Agilent 8169A Polarization Controller can help by saving time, money and effort when measuring and working with polarization sensitive devices.

Polarization sensitive devices include EDFAs, single-mode fiber, and polarization maintaining fiber, isolators, switches, lasers, couplers, modulators, interferometers, retardation plates and polarizers. Device performance will be affected by polarization dependent efficiency, loss, gain and polarization mode dispersion.

These polarization phenomena enhance or degrade performance depending on the application area, whether it is communications, sensors, optical computing or material analysis.

An Important Part of a Measurement System

A polarization controller is an important building block of an optical test system because it enables the creation of all possible states of polarization. The polarized signal stimulates the test device while the measurement system receiver monitors the test device's responses to changing polarization.

Sometimes polarization must be adjusted without changing the optical power. At other times, polarization must be precisely synthesized to one state of polarization (SOP) and then adjusted to another SOP according to a predetermined path. Each of these needs is met separately using the Agilent 8169A Polarization Controllers (refer to Table 1 for application details).

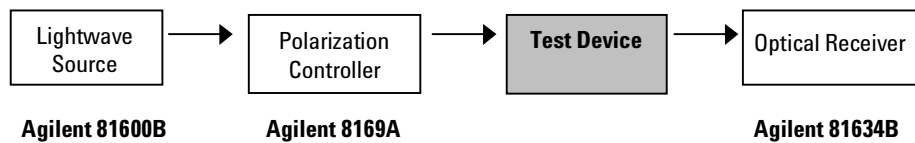


Figure 1: Conceptual block diagram of polarization measurements.

The Agilent 8169A Polarization Controller

The Agilent 8169A provides polarization synthesis relative to a built-in linear polarizer. The quarter-wave plate and half-wave plate are individually adjusted to create all possible states of polarization. Pre-deterministic algorithms within the Agilent 8169A enable the transition path from one state of polarization on the Poincare¹ sphere to another to be specified along orthogonal great circles. These features are important because device response data can be correlated to specific states of polarization input to the test device.

PDL measurement of DWDM components using Mueller method is one of the main applications. The Mueller method stimulates the test path with four precisely known states. Precise measurement of the corresponding output intensities allows calculation of the upper row of the Mueller matrix, from which PDL is in turn calculated. This method is fast, and ideal for swept wavelength testing of PDL.

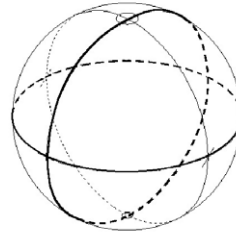


Figure 2: Orthogonal circles on the Poincare sphere¹ show how the Agilent 8169A synthesizes relative state-of-polarization points according to a specified path.

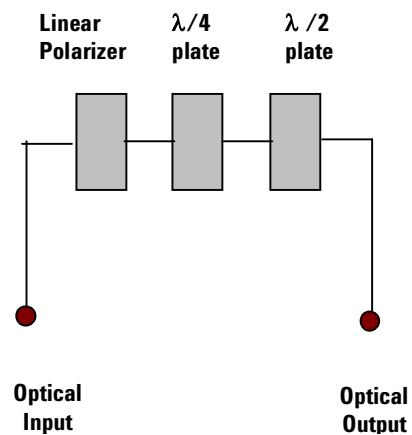


Figure 3: Agilent 8169A block diagram

¹The Poincare Sphere is a three-dimensional graphing system for viewing all possible states of polarization.

To Match Your Application Requirements

Ease of Use, Flexibility and Speed

Four adjustment techniques enhance the ease of use, flexibility and speed of the Agilent 8169A.

- Precise manual adjustments are made while watching the front-panel display and adjusting the front panel knobs.
- Nine Save/Recall registers enable random and rapid SOP hopping between nine different, user-set states of polarization.
- Autoscanning continuously sweeps over all states of polarization, tuning the SOP across the entire Poincare sphere. Multiple polarization scan rates are available to match the speed of the application; be it a five-second, single-wave PDL measurement or a three-minute, wavelength-scanning PDL measurement.
- Autoscanning rates are also fast enough to produce polarization scrambling for some applications.

Remote interrogation of all instrument settings and remote control of all adjustment procedures are provided via GPIB.

General-Purpose Polarization Controller For a Wide Range of Applications

The Agilent 8169A Polarization Controller offers general-purpose performance for a variety of applications:

- Polarization synthesis
- Complete and automatically stepped adjustments of polarization over the entire Poincare sphere
- Swept wavelength polarization-dependent loss measurement (Mueller method)
- Fixed-wavelength “min-max” PDL measurements
- Polarization-dependent gain measurements for EDFA
- Polarization sensitivity measurements
- Optical waveguide TE/TM mode testing
- Polarization adjustment of optical launch conditions for polarization mode dispersion measurements

Measurement systems are created by combining the Agilent 8169A with other Agilent instruments.

Specifications

Specifications describe the instruments' warranted performance over the 0° C to + 55° C temperature range after a one-hour warm-up period. Characteristics provide information about non-warranted instrument performance. Specifications are given in normal type. Characteristics are stated in italicized type. Spliced fiber pigtail interfaces are assumed for all cases except where stated otherwise.

| Description | Agilent 8169A |
|--|--|
| Operating Wavelength Range | 1400 nm to 1640 nm |
| Insertion loss ^{1,2} | < 1.5 dB |
| Variation over 1 full rotation | $\leq \pm 0.03\text{dB}$ ² |
| Variation over complete wavelength range | $\leq \pm 0.1\text{ dB}$ |
| Polarization Extinction Ratio ³ | > 45 dB (1530 nm to 1560 nm) |
| Characteristic | > 40dB (1470 nm to 1570 nm) > 30dB (1400 nm to 1640 nm) |
| Polarization Adjustment | |
| Resolution ³ | 0.18° (360/2048 encoder positions) |
| Fast axis alignment accuracy at home position ^{4,5} | $\pm 0.2^\circ$ |
| Angular adjustment accuracy: minimum step size | $\pm 0.09^\circ$ |
| Greater than minimum step size ⁴ | $\leq \pm 0.5^\circ$ |
| Settling time (characteristic) | < 200 ms |
| Memory Save /recall registers | 9 |
| Angular repeatability after Save/Recall ^{4,5} | $\pm 0.09^\circ$ |
| Number of scan rate settings | 2 |
| Maximum rotation rate ⁵ | 3600 /sec |
| Maximum Operating Power Limitation | + 23 dBm |
| Operating Port Return Loss (characteristic): | |
| Individual reflections | > 60 dB |
| Power requirements | 48 Hz to 60 Hz, 100/120/220/240 V rms 45 VA max |
| Weight: | 9 kg (20 lbs) |
| Dimensions: (H x W x D) | 10 cm x 42.6 cm x 44.5 cm (3.9 in 16.8 in x 17.5 in) |

¹ Guaranteed over a wavelength range from 1470 nm to 1570 nm; characteristic for a wavelength range from 1400 nm to 1640 nm

² Only with 8169A #020 option

³ Extinction ration only refers to polarized portion of the optical signal

⁴ Guaranteed by design (DAC resolution)

⁵ Angles are mechanical rotation angles of the wave plates

Ordering Information

Agilent 8169A Lightwave Polarization Controller

Connector Options (One of the following is required)

8169A #020 Pigtailed fiber ports

8169A #021 Straight contact connectors¹

8169A #022 Angled contact connectors¹

¹ Two Agilent 81000xl-series connector interfaces are required for options 021 and 022.

Agilent Technologies' Test and Measurement Support, Services, and Assistance

Agilent Technologies aims to maximize the value you receive, while minimizing your risk and problems. We strive to ensure that you get the test and measurement capabilities you paid for and obtain the support you need. Our extensive support resources and services can help you choose the right Agilent products for your applications and apply them successfully. Every instrument and system we sell has a global warranty. Support is available for at least five years beyond the production life of the product. Two concepts underlie Agilent's overall support policy: "Our Promise" and "Your Advantage."

Our Promise

Our Promise means your Agilent test and measurement equipment will meet its advertised performance and functionality. When you are choosing new equipment, we will help you with product information, including realistic performance specifications and practical recommendations from experienced test engineers. When you use Agilent equipment, we can verify that it works properly, help with product operation, and provide basic measurement assistance for the use of specified capabilities, at no extra cost upon request. Many self-help tools are available.

Your Advantage

Your Advantage means that Agilent offers a wide range of additional expert test and measurement services, which you can purchase according to your unique technical and business needs. Solve problems efficiently and gain a competitive edge by contracting with us for calibration, extra-cost upgrades, out-of-warranty repairs, and on-site education and training, as well as design, system integration, project management, and other professional engineering services. Experienced Agilent engineers and technicians worldwide can help you maximize your productivity, optimize the return on investment of your Agilent instruments and systems, and obtain dependable measurement accuracy for the life of those products.

By Internet, phone, or fax, get assistance with all your test & measurement needs

Online assistance:

www.agilent.com/comms/lightwave

For related literature, please visit:

www.agilent.com/comms/octcondition

Phone or Fax

United States:

(tel) 1 800 829 4444
(fax) 1 800 829 4433

Canada:

(tel) 1 877 894 4414
(fax) 1 888 900 8921

Europe:

(tel) +31 20 547 2111
(fax) +31 20 547 2190

Japan:

(tel) 120 421 345
(fax) 120 421 678

Latin America:

(tel) +55 11 4197 3600
(fax) +55 11 4197 3800

Australia:

(tel) 800 629 485
(fax) 800 142 134

Asia Pacific:

(tel) +852 800 930 871
(fax) +852 800 908 476

Product specifications and descriptions in this document subject to change without notice.

Copyright © 2004 Agilent Technologies

December 23, 2004

5988-5659EN