RECONFIGURABLE BEAM ANTENNA FOR INTELSAT SATELLITE APPLICATIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Reconfigurable multi-beam antennas radiate multiple contoured beams whose beam shapes can be changed according to the desired coverage shapes. The new reconfigurability concept proposed by INTELSAT(1) provides a high degree of flexibility without requiring more BFN components. A large BFN is split into smaller subBFNs which are combined by a switching arrangement at the beam input ports. The switching components control the relative power fed to each subBFN. Thus, a large beam is split into smaller sub-beams. These sub-beams may be combined in a number of ways only limited by the number of states of the switching network to form useful beam shapes. Since the subBFNs consists of fixed components, they must be optimized for all selected useful beams simultaneously. Because of the sufficient beam reconfigurability with simple configuration, this reconfigurability concept is expected to be useful for future communications satellite applications.

2. DESIGN OF RECONFIGURABLE BFN:

In the design of reconfigurable antenna system, we considered the actual INTELSAT-VI C-band coverages. The reconfigurability of zone δ and zone γ beams and hemi beam which illuminates the coverage defined by combining two zones, which are defined as shown in Figure 1, was considered. The other two zone coverages α and β defined in Figure 1 are taken as the isolation areas. The antenna considered in this design consists of a single offset paraboloidal reflector whose aperture dia. is 2.44m, an array of 50 feed horns with polarizers and an associated reconfigurable BFN. To obtain the efficient and simple reconfigurable BFN system, 3-subBFNs and a variable BFN configuration was selected for this system based on the tradeoff study. The fixed subBFN was designed to realize the low dispersion characteristics by adopting the suitable hybrid couplers with the appropreate length of transmission lines.(2) The variable BFN which consists of 2 coaxial tarnsfer switches and 2 hybrid couplers provides 2 states,

i.e.,(i) Normal mode : zone δ and zone γ beams are generated, (ii) Combined hemi mode : combined hemi beam is generated. The excitation coefficients to provide above three beams effectively can be optimized simultaneously by using general minimax algorithm.(3)

3. ANTENNA PERFORMANCE:

Figure 3 shows a picture of the developed reconfigurable BFN. This BFN can be operated in 4GHz frequency band with circular polarization. The excitation coefficients of the BFN were measured directly at the output ports for each states and the low dispersion characteristics were confirmed. After assembling the BFN and the reflector system on the fixture, the secondary radiation pattern for each beam was measured by near field antenna measurement (NFAM) facility. The measured radiation contours are shown in Figures 4 thru 6 for each beam, respectively. The resulting measured antenna performance is summarized in Table 1, with the calculated performance based on the measured excitation coefficients of the BFN, as the reference. As shown in the figures and table, zone δ , zone γ and hemi beams were provided by simultaneous optimization with sufficient performance, and the measured radiation patterns showed good agreement with the calculated ones. Therefore, the validity of this reconfigurability concept was verified.

4. CONCLUSION:

New reconfigurability concept using subBFNs were proposed, and verified its validity by confirming that the measured performance of the developed reconfigurable BFN shows good agreement with the design.

REFERENCES:

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Figure 3. Developed Reconfigurable BFN



| able 1. Measure | Antenna Per | formance Summary |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|

| | | Zone & Beam | Zone γ Beam | Hemi Beam | |
|-----------------------|-------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--|
| Frequency/Pol. | | 3.7 - 4.075 GHz / LHCP | | | |
| No.of Ele | ments | 22 22 50 | | | |
| EOC Gain | Cal. | 24.5dBi | 24.7dBi | 18.7dBi | |
| | Meas. | 24.3dBi | 24.6dBi | 19.1dBi | |
| Sidelobe Isolation | Cal. | 27.8dB | 28.0dB | 27.2dB | |
| | Meas. | 24.4dB | 26.5dB | 25.3dB | |