

# Sensor-Emulator-EVM System Reference Guide

## by Art Kay High-Precision Linear Products

SBOA102A





# Sensor-Emulator-EVM

- Simplifies Development of Voltage Excited Bridge Sensor Signal Conditioning Systems
- Provides Eleven Different Emulated Sensor Output Conditions
- Provides Three Different Emulated Temperature Signals for Diode or Series Resistor Methods of Bridge Sensor Temperature Monitoring
- Emulates Bridge Outputs
	- Cold Temp: 0%, 50%, 100%
	- Room Temp: 0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, 100%
	- Hot Temp: 0%, 50%, 100%
- LED Indicators for Emulation at a **Glance**



# **Sensor Emulator EVM**





Note: Some sections of this user's guide reference use of the PGA309EVM. This is done for ease of documenting features available on the Sensor-Emulator-EVM which will work with any bridge sensor signal conditioning chip which uses voltage bridge excitation.

## 1.0 Introduction to The Sensor Emulator



#### *Q: What is the sensor emulator?*

A: The sensor emulator is a design that uses rotary switches and potentiometers to emulate the operation of a resistive bridge sensor at discrete operating points, for voltage excitation applications.

#### *Q: Why use the sensor emulator?*

A: Once the sensor emulator has been programmed, it allows the user to cycle through a set of sensor output conditions very quickly. Doing this with a real sensor can be extremely time consuming because it can take several hours to cycle through various temperatures. Also, some sensors have non-repeatability issues. For example, pressure sensors can have pressure hysteresis and temperature hysteresis. The emulator does not have non-repeatability issues (repeatability errors are typically less then 0.03%). This approach allows the user to program the sensor signal conditioning chip many different ways to quickly and easily assess the optimal calibration settings for a given application.

## 1.0 Introduction to The Sensor Emulator



### *Q: Why not just use a precision voltage source to emulate a sensor?*

A: A precision voltage source is not affected by changing sensor excitation. Many sensor signal conditioning chips modulate the sensor excitation to compensate for sensor nonlinearity. In this case (and in the case of a ratiometric system), a precision voltage source would not work. Also, it is much more convenient to have all the different sensor conditions pre-programmed so that you can quickly transition from one condition to another without having to reprogram the source at each different condition.

## 2.0 Overview of Hardware Emulation of a Real World Sensor



- Description of real world bridge sensors
	- Temperature Drift and Nonlinearity versus applied stimulus
	- Measurement of the sensor temperature
- Description of how Sensor-Emulator-EVM circuitry produces signals equivalent to real world sensors
	- Emulates four different real world configurations

# Bridge Sensor Output



Output With No Stimulus Applied (Offset)

Output With Full Scale Stimulus Applied



Figure 2.1 is an example of a typical resistive bridge sensor with no applied stimulus. With no stimulus applied, the resistors ideally would be perfectly matched and the sensors' output ( $V_{IN-DE}$ ) would be zero. Most practical sensors, however, will have some output resulting from resistor mismatch. The output signal with no applied stimulus is called *offset*. Figure 2.2 is an example of a typical resistive bridge sensor with full scale stimulus applied. For the example sensor, the offset is 5mV (Figure 2.1) and the full scale output is 32mV (Figure 2.2). Span is defined as the difference between the full scale stimulus and the offset (Span = Full Scale Output – Offset).



## Drift and Nonlinearity with a Bridge Sensor





An important aspect of pressure sensors is how they drift with temperature. Figure 2.3 is an example of span and offset drift with temperature for a typical resistive bridge sensor. Note that the drift is fairly large and nonlinear. Figure 2.4 is an example of how a bridge sensor can be nonlinear with applied stimulus (in this example the stimulus is pressure). The sensor emulator can be configured to reproduce these characteristics for most sensors. Note that the graphs are shown in a normalized format. The normalized format allows the graph to be easily scaled by multiplying by the bridge excitation voltage.

## Emulating Bridge Sensor Outputs

This is a simplified diagram of how the sensor emulator generates a bridge output voltage. The potentiometer R102 is adjusted to set the output voltage of the emulated bridge ( $V_{in+}$  with respect to  $V_{in-}$ ). The potentiometer R103 is used to make fine adjustments in the output value. R8 and R9 set a common mode voltage for the other leg of the bridge. R101 and R104 set the adjustable output range of the emulated bridge. For the configuration shown, the output range is -25mV to +26mV ( $V_{\text{dif}} = V_{\text{in-}} - V_{\text{in+}}$ ). Selecting a different value for R101 and R104 can expand this range. On the Sensor-Emulator-EVM, 11 channels like this one are selectable using a rotary switch.



**Positive full scale of the emulator**  $V_{\text{exc}} := 5 \quad R_{104} := 10 \cdot 10^3 \quad R_{102} := 200 \quad R_{101} := 10 \cdot 10^3$  $R_{102a} = 200$  Wiper position at top of POT  $R_{103} := 10$  Pot set to maximum Resistance Vdif  $V_{\text{exc}} (R_{104} + R_{103} + R_{102a})$  $R_{101} + R_{104} + R_{103} + R_{102}$ Vexc  $=\frac{200 \times 10^{1} \times 10^{10}}{R_{101} + R_{104} + R_{103} + R_{102}} - \frac{20}{2}$  $V_{\text{diff}} = 0.026$  Positive full scale output of emulator **Negative full scale of the emulator**  $V_{\text{exc}} := 5 \quad R_{104} := 10 \cdot 10^3 \quad R_{102} := 200 \quad R_{101} := 10 \cdot 10^3$  $R_{102a} = 0$  Wiper position at bottom of POT  $R_{103} := 0$  Pot set to Minimum Resistance Vdif  $V_{\text{exc}} (R_{104} + R_{103} + R_{102a})$  $R_{101} + R_{104} + R_{103} + R_{102}$ Vexc  $=\frac{200 \times 10^{1} \text{ kg}}{R_{101} + R_{104} + R_{103} + R_{102}} - \frac{20}{2}$  $V_{\text{diff}} = -0.025$  Negative full scale output of emulator

Figure 2.5

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## Emulating a Temperature Sensor with a Series Bridge Resistor





Figure 2.6 illustrates one method for monitoring the temperature of a real world bridge sensor. In this type of circuit the resistance of the bridge has a strong temperature coefficient. The bridge resistance generates a bridge current with a strong temperature coefficient, which generates a voltage across the temperature sensing resistor (Rt). Rt is typically located remotely from the bridge and should not have a strong temperature coefficient. Note that Rt can be connected to the top or bottom of the bridge. This diagram illustrates the case where it is connected to the bottom of the bridge. The sensor emulator circuit has three channels to emulate the Rt temperature signal that are selectable through a rotary switch.

An important aspect of the Rt method of temperature sensing is the reduction of the excitation voltage across the bridge by the series Rt resistance. For example, if Vt = 1V and Vexc = 5V, then only 4V remains for the bridge excitation. This phenomena is modeled by the sensor emulator and the detail of how this works are described in Figure 2.15.

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## Emulating a Temperature Sensor with a Series Bridge Resistor





The sensor emulator circuit can also emulate the case where the temperature sense resistor is connected to the top of the bridge. This is done using an instrumentation amplifier to translate the voltage signal to be referenced to Vexc rather then ground. This mode of operation is selected by a jumper (JUMP1). This circuit also feeds the temperature signal back to the bridge emulator to adjust the excitation across the bridge, as in the real world case. The details of how this feedback works are described in Figure 2.15.

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## Diode Temperature Sensor Emulator





Figure 2.12 illustrates another method for monitoring the temperature of a real world sensor. In this type of circuit a diode is placed in close thermal contact with the bridge and a constant current is driven through the diode. The diode voltage is a reasonably linear function with temperature (the slope is approximately -2mV /  $°C$ ). The emulator circuit shown in Figure 2.13 uses resistors to develop a voltage equivalent to the diode voltage. Figure 2.14 shows how the emulator can be used to develop an equivalent diode drop if an external current source is not available.

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## Emulation Case 1: Rt- (Resistance in the Bottom of The Bridge)



This diagram illustrates how the emulator generates the bridge output and temperature signals for the circuit where the sense resistor is connected to the bottom of the bridge. Note how the output voltage of the temperature emulator (0.415V) is fed back to the bottom of the bridge emulator via the buffer circuit (U5 and U1c), to emulate the bridge excitation change due to Rt in series with the bridge in the real world.

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## Emulation Case 2: Rt+ (Resistance in the Top of The Bridge)



This diagram illustrates how the emulator generates the bridge output and temperature signal for the circuit where the sense resistor is connected to the top of the bridge. Note how the output voltage of the temperature emulator (0.415V) is fed back to the bottom of the bridge emulator via the buffer circuit (U5 and U1c) to emulate the bridge excitation change due to Rt in series with the bridge in the real world. Also, note how the instrumentation amplifier (U2) is used to translate the temperature signal voltage so that it is referenced to the excitation voltage (Vexc).

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### Emulation Case 3: Diode Temperature Sensor with External Current Source



This diagram illustrates how the emulator generates the bridge output and temperature signal for the diode temperature measurement. Note that in this case JUMP1 is set so that the bottom of the bridge emulator is at ground potential. Also note that this configuration requires an external current source to operate (in this example,  $7\mu$ A).



### Emulation Case 4: Diode Temperature Sensor with On-Board Voltage Reference



This diagram illustrates how the emulator generates the bridge output and temperature signal for the diode temperature measurement. Note that in this case JUMP1 is set so that the bottom of the bridge emulator is at ground potential. Also note that this uses an on-board voltage reference (REF102) to set the diode voltage (JUMP2 selects this option).

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## **3.0 Changing the Programmable Range of the Emulator**

Figure 3.1 illustrates how the range of the bridge emulator can be adjusted by putting a resistor in parallel with R101 and R104. This needs to be done for each channel of the emulator (11 channels x 2 resistors = 22 resistors total). The examples illustrates how the range is increased using a 1kΩ parallel resistor. In general, it is best to select a parallel resistance value that scales your range so that the full scale output of the emulator is slightly larger than what is required for your emulator. Scaling the emulator in this manner will provide the optimal resolution and lowest noise. Note that holes are provided for a parallel through-hole resistor to simplify the process of adjusting the emulator scale.



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STRI IMENTS

## 4.0 Required Electrical Connections & TEXAS to Sensor-Emulator-EVM**INSTRUMENTS**



#### Example of a Typical Engineering Bench Setup  $\bigtriangledown$  TEXAS Using the Sensor Emulator**INSTRUMENTS**



This diagram illustrates an example of how the sensor emulator would be used in an engineering bench setup. The PGA309 is a programmable sensor signal conditioning chip. The Sensor-Emulator-EVM can be used in conjunction with the PGA309EVM to facilitate the development of a PGA309 application.

## Note on the Buf\_Temp Banana Jacks



The Buf\_Temp banana jacks are used to monitor the temperature signal with a DVM. It is important to monitor temperature at this point because the non-buffered temperature signal is a high impedance output, and the DVM can load this output.



## Note on the Vin- and Vin+ Banana Jacks



The Vin- and Vin+ banana jacks are used to monitor the sensor output signal with a DVM. The Vin banana jacks are connected to the Vin signal through a standard RC filter. This filter helps to reduce the coupling of noise (from ground loops) into the sensor output circuit, and into high gain sensor signal conditioner inputs.



## Emulation Case 1: Resistance in the Bottom of the Bridge Rt-



### Emulation Case 2: Resistance in the Top of the Bridge Rt+





#### Emulation Case 3: Diode Temperature Sensor with External Current Source

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**IEXAS INSTRUMENTS** 

#### Emulation Case 4: Diode Temperature Sensor with Onboard Voltage Reference



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# 5.0 Configuring the Sensor-Emulator-EVM to Emulate a



## Real World Sensor

If the raw output of the sensor is not known, the *generate\_emu\_values.xls* spreadsheet (SBOC065, available for download at [www.ti.com](http://www.ti.com)) can be used to translate the specifications of your bridge sensor and temperature sensor to system voltage levels. The spreadsheet contains five sections:

- 1. Offset and Span: Generates the bridge output voltages.
- 2. Diode Vo: Generates the temperature sensor output voltages for the diode method.
- 3. Rt-: Generates the temperature sensor voltages for the Rt- method.
- 4. Rt+: Generates the temperature sensor voltages for the Rt- method.
- 5. PGA309 Error: Allows you to read the PGA309 via the ADS1100.



#### Offset and Span: Generates the bridge **LAS** TEXAS output voltages from sensor specifications INSTRUMENTS

All the areas shown in light blue are either sensor specifications or system requirements. Enter these values and the spreadsheet will generate output voltage settings for each channel on the sensor emulator. The next several pages will show how the voltages listed in the spreadsheet are used to program the sensor emulator.





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#### Diode Vo: Generate Diode Voltages TEXAS based on Operating Temperature Range**INSTRUMENTS**

The second tab in the spreadsheet allows the user to enter the temperature range and room temperature diode voltage (light blue areas). The spreadsheet calculates the diode voltages and displays the results in the yellow areas. Note that the Temp ADC area is specific to the PGA309 sensor signal conditioning chip. The Temp ADC values will be used in the computation of the *Counts* for the temp ADC. The next several pages will show how the diode voltages are used to program the sensor emulator.







The temperature output signal at room temperature (25°C) is emulated by this channel. The rotary switch S2 is used to select this channel. When the channel is selected, LED D202 will light to indicate that the correct channel is selected.





Temp(degC) Diode Vbe (V) Counts  $-45.00$  $0.81$ 25920 20.00  $0.68$ 21760 0.54  $90.00$ 17280

The temperature output signal at hot temperature (85°C) is emulated by this channel. The rotary switch S2 is used to select this channel. When the channel is selected, LED D203 will light to indicate that the correct channel is selected.





## Generate Rt Voltages based on Operating Temperature Range and System Parameters



The third tab in the spreadsheet allows the user to enter the temperature range and other system parameters in the light blue areas. The spreadsheet calculates the voltage level of the temperature signal and displays this in the yellow areas. Note that the Temp ADC area is specific to the PGA309 sensor signal conditioning chip. The Temp ADC values will be used in the computation of the *Counts* for the Temp ADC. The next several pages will show how the Rt voltages are used to program the sensor emulator.



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The temperature output signal at cold temperature (-45°C) is emulated by this channel. The rotary switch S2 is used to select this channel. When the channel is selected, LED D204 will light to indicate that the correct channel is selected.





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The temperature output signal at room temperature (20°C) is emulated by this channel. The rotary switch S2 is used to select this channel. When the channel is selected, LED D204 will light to indicate that the correct channel is selected.





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The temperature output signal at hot temperature (90°C) is emulated by this channel. The rotary switch S2 is used to select this channel. When the channel is selected, LED D204 will light to indicate that the correct channel is selected.





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# 6.0 Schematic







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# 7.0 Parts List

#### **Sensor Emulator Board Parts List** Qty/EVM Ref Des **Description** Part No. Mfr. Disti Disti Part No. POST BINDING INSUL GROUNDED RED 111-0702-001 111-0702-001-ND  $2$ J<sub>1</sub>, J<sub>3</sub> Johnson Components Digikey POST BINDING INSUL GROUNDED 2 J<sub>2</sub>, J<sub>4</sub> 111-0703-001 111-0703-001-ND **BLACK** Johnson Components Digikey 3-Position Terminal Strip, Cage Clamp,  $3$ T<sub>1</sub>-T<sub>3</sub> 45°, 15A, Dove-tailed ED300/3 On-Shore Technology Inc Digikey ED1620-ND C1, C2, C5, C6, C7, C9, C10, C11, 11 C12, C18, C19 CAP.1UF 25V CERAMIC X7R 0805 ECJ-2VB1E104K PCC1828CT-ND Yageo America Digikey 2 C8, C17 CAP 0.01uF 50V CERAMIC X7R 0805 C0805C103K5RACTU Kemet Digikey 399-1158-1-ND  $1|C13$ CAP CERAMIC 1UF 25V X5R 0805 ECJ-2FB1E105K Panasonic - ECG Digikey PCC2319CT-ND CAPACITOR TANT 10UF 20V 10% SMD 2 C<sub>3</sub>, C<sub>4</sub> Size C T491C106K020AS Digikey 399-1614-1-ND <emet 2 C14, C15, C16 OMIT (LEAVE BLANK ON PCB) R103, R203, R303, R403, R503, R603, R703, R803, R903, R1003, 11 R1103 10ohm 25turn pot 3296Y-1-100 Bourns Inc Digikey 3296Y-100-ND R102, R202, R302, R402, R502, R602, R702, R802, R902, R1002. 11 R1102 200ohm 25turn pot 3296Y-1-201 3296Y-201-ND Bourns Inc. Digikey 3 R2102, R2202, R2302 100k 25 turn pot 3296Y-1-104 Bourns Inc Digikey 3296Y-104-ND 3 R2103, R2203, R2303 5k 25 turn pot 3296Y-1-502 3296Y-502-ND Bourns Inc Digikey 3 R2403, R2503, R2603 2k 25 turn pot 3296Y-1-202 Bourns Inc Digikey 3296Y-202-ND 3 R2402, R2502, R2602 50k 25 turn pot 3296Y-1-503 Bourns Inc Digikey 3296Y-503-ND R101, R201, R301, R401, R501, R601, R701, R801, R901, R1001, R1101, R104, R204, R304, R404, R504, R604, R704, R804, R904, R1004, R1104, R8, R9, R2401, R2501, R2601, R2101, R2201. 30 R2301 RES 10K OHM 1/16W .1% 0603 SMD ERA-3YEB103V Panasonic - ECG P10KYCT-ND Digikey 3 R2404, R2504, R2604 RES 2.0K OHM 1/16W .1% 0603 SMD ERA-3YEB202V P2.0KYCT-ND Panasonic - ECG Digikey 2 R6, R7 Yageo America 311-4.02KHCT-ND 4.02k 1/16W 1% 0603 SMD 9C06031A4021FKHFT Digikey 2 R<sub>10</sub>, R<sub>11</sub> RES 10.0 OHM 1/16W 1% 0603 SMD ERJ-3EKF10R0V Yageo America P10.0HCT-ND Digikey 4 R1, R2, R12, R13 RES 100 OHM 1/16W .1% 0603 SMD ERA-3YEB101V Panasonic - ECG Digikey P100YCT-ND 3 R3, R4, R5 RESISTOR 1.20M OHM 1/16W 1% 0603 ERJ-3EKF1204V Panasonic - ECG P1.20MHCT-ND Digikey SWITCH ROTARY DP-12POS 2 S1-S2 **ENCLOSED** C3P0212N-A Bourns Inc Digikey 451-1007-ND 5 JUMP1-JUMP5 3-Position Pin Strip Header PEG03SS-GBR **Crane Connectors Bisco Industries** 5 Jumpers for JUMP1-JUMP5 Jumper Shorting Units 881545-2 A26242-ND Amp Digikey D101, D102, D103, D104, D105, D106, D107, D108, D109, D110, D201, D202, D203, D204, D205, 17 D206 Ultra Bright Red Diffused LED, 0603 pkg |LNJ208R8ARA Digikey P524CT-ND Panasonic

Matches PR1217 Rev G



# Parts List, *cont'd*

#### **Sensor Emulator Board Parts List**

#### Matches PR1217 Rev G



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