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Michael Hippke, Paul Leyland, John G. Learned

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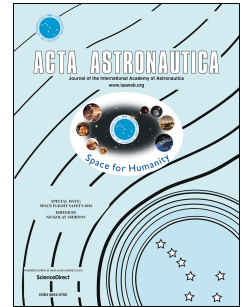
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# Benchmarking inscribed matter probes

Michael Hippke

*Sonneberg Observatory, Sternwartestr. 32, 96515 Sonneberg, Germany*

Paul Leyland

*Brnikat Ltd, 19a Hauxton Road, Little Shelford, Cambridge, CB22 5HJ, United Kingdom*

John G. Learned

*High Energy Physics Group, Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Hawaii, Manoa 327 Watanabe Hall, 2505 Correa Road Honolulu, Hawaii 96822 USA*

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## Abstract

We have explored the optimal frequency of interstellar photon communications and benchmarked other particles as information carriers in previous papers of this series. We now compare the latency and bandwidth of sending probes with inscribed matter. Durability requirements such as shields against dust and radiation, as well as data duplication, add negligible weight overhead at velocities  $v < 0.2c$ . Probes may arrive in full, while most of a photon beam is lost to diffraction. Probes can be more energy efficient per bit, and can have higher bandwidth, compared to classical communication, unless a photon receiver is placed in a stellar gravitational lens. The probe's advantage dominates by order of magnitude for long distances (kpc) and low velocities ( $< 0.1c$ ) at the cost of higher latency.

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## 1. Introduction

Sending a physical artifact can be the most energy-efficient choice for interstellar communications, because it can be done at almost arbitrarily low velocities, and thus low energies. An artifact can arrive at the destination in total, in contrast to a particle beam which is wider than the receiver in all

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*Email addresses:* michael@hippke.org (Michael Hippke), paul@brnikat.com (Paul Leyland), jgl@phys.hawaii.edu (John G. Learned)

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