Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research A 662 (2012) S85–S88

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research A

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/nima

Investigations of the radio signal of inclined showers with LOPES

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ARTICLE INFO

Available online 16 December 2010

Keywords:
Radio emission
Air shower
Antenna

ABSTRACT

We report in this paper on an analysis of 20 months of data taken with LOPES. LOPES is radio antenna array set-up in coincidence with the Grande array, both located at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany. The data used in this analysis were taken with an antenna configuration composed of 30 inverted V-shape dipole antennas.

We have restricted the analysis to a special selection of inclined showers—with zenith angle $\theta > 40^{\circ}$. These inclined showers are of particular interest because they are the events with the largest geomagnetic angles and are therefore suitable to test emission models based on geomagnetic effects.The reconstruction procedure of the emitted radio signal in EAS uses as one ingredient the frequency-dependent antenna gain pattern which is obtained from simulations. Effects of the applied antenna model in the calibration procedure of LOPES are studied. In particular, we have focused on one component of the antenna, a metal pedestal, which generates a resonance effect, a peak in the amplification pattern where it is the most affecting high zenith angles, i.e. inclined showers.

In addition, polarization characteristics of inclined showers were studied in detail and compared with the features of more vertical showers for the two cases of antenna models, with and without the pedestal.

1. Introduction

The goal of LOPES (LOFAR Prototype Station) [1] is to establish the possibility and explore the efficiency of detection of radio waves coming from extensive air showers believed to be generated through a geosynchrotron mechanism [2]. The experimental set-up is placed within the area covered by the particle detector array, KASCADE-Grande [3], a choice made because certain air shower parameters, taken from particle detectors, can be used to establish

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0168-9002/$ - see front matter
doi:10.1016/j.nima.2010.11.141

radio emission properties and parametrization of the pulse height. The present analysis is concerned with the LOPES set-up consisting of 30 inverted V-shaped antennas detecting radio waves in the range of 40–80 MHz, 15 oriented along the East–West direction and 15 in the North–South direction. The set-up is absolutely amplitude calibrated.

The radio signal from an air shower recorded by the 30 antennas is obtained by performing a beamforming procedure. Afterwards analysis is performed to establish the correlation between various parameters of the air showers and the pulse height. More details on the general analysis procedure are given in Ref. [4], these proceedings]. In this study we investigate the effect of one of the antenna components on the analysis results.

2. LOPES antennas

The LOPES dual-polarization antennas are composed of two V-shaped rods, one for each polarization, and a metal pedestal.

The amplification factor used during the analysis of LOPES events to calculate the absolute field strength is given by [5]

$$V(\nu) = \frac{P_M(\nu)}{P_R(\nu)} = \left(\frac{4\pi r\nu}{c}\right)^2 \frac{P_M(\nu)}{G_r(\theta,\phi,\nu)G_t P_t(\nu)\cos^2(\beta)} \quad (1)$$

where P_M is the power measured with the LOPES antenna and calculated in the frequency domain, P_R is the (calculated) incoming power to the LOPES electronic chain, ν is the frequency of the emitted signal, and r the distance between the external source and the LOPES antenna. $G_r(\theta,\phi,\nu)$ is the gain of the LOPES antenna taken from simulation, G_t is the reference source antenna gain, $P_t(\nu)$ is the power of the reference source and β is the angle between the polarization axis of the reference source and the field antenna, aligned during the measurements.

It can be seen from the above formula that the gain of the LOPES antenna taken from simulation is employed in the calculation of the absolute field strength.

Simulations performed so far for the real antenna, [5] show that a resonance effect induced by the metal pedestal appears around the frequency of 58 MHz. This effect is small for near vertical angles, becomes larger for zenith angles close to 45° and is negligible again for higher inclinations. Fig. 1(a) shows a simulation result when the pedestal is taken into account.The range from 40° to 50° zenith angles is where most of the inclined radio events are recorded and therefore it is important to study the possible influence of the resonance to the obtained results. Fig. 1(b) shows the amplification factor without the pedestal effect. It can be seen that the peak is no longer present.

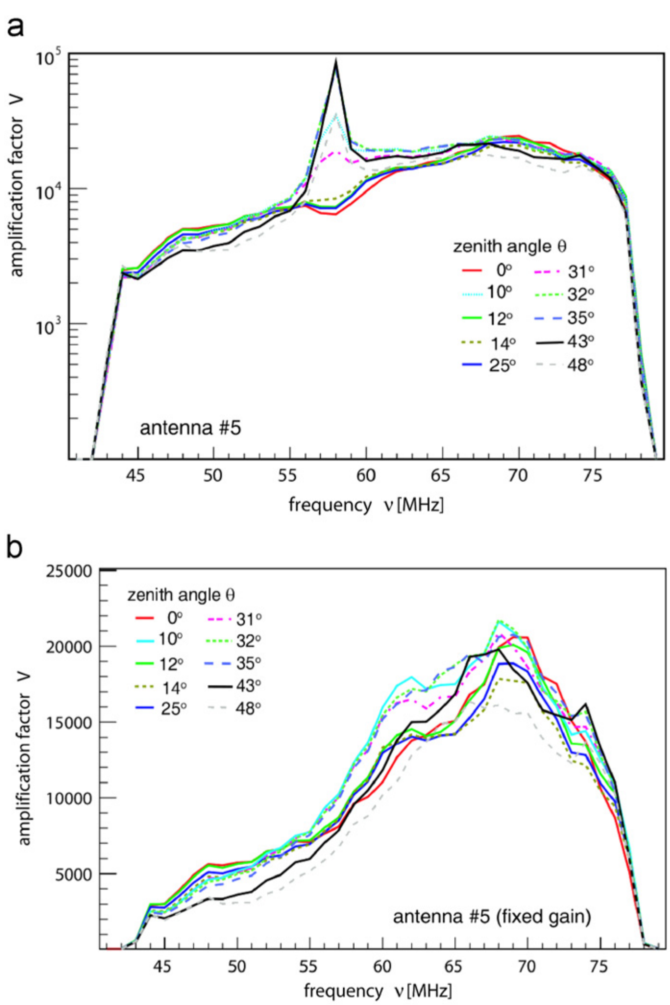

Fig. 1. Amplification factor distribution for one antenna for different zenith angles, with the metal pedestal included in the simulation (a), and without metal pedestal included in which case G_t is fixed to 4.0 [5].

3. Data processing and correlations

In the present study we use dual-polarization data recorded in 2007 and 2008 in coincidence with KASCADE-Grande. For the purpose of studying only bright and inclined events we have made a cut for zenith angle $\theta > 40^\circ$ and muon number, $N_\mu > 10^6$, corresponding to a primary energy of above $\approx 10^{17}$ eV. We also impose an area cut for the events reconstructed from Grande data. This leaves us with 5582 events where LOPES data are recorded. In order to be clear of any atmospheric electric field contribution we ignored the events which occurred during thunderstorms which rejects 12 events.

The errors employed in the analysis are: 50% error for muon number, 0.6° for direction, 20 m error for core coordinates and 20% error on the radio amplitude calibration.

Due to the high level of noise in KIT and to the fact that LOPES events are distant (Grande triggered) we impose an additional cuts on the pulse height. After performing the selection cuts only 49 events remain.

The correlations we are usually investigating with LOPES data are:

- pulse height, ε, vs. the cross product of the direction of the incoming shower and Earth's magnetic field, $P = |\vec{v} \times \vec{B}|$,
- pulse height vs. distance from antennas to shower axis, R, and
- pulse height vs. the number of muons in the respective air shower which is an estimator for primary energy, N_μ.

$$\varepsilon = const1(P + const2)\exp\left(\frac{-R}{R_0}\right)\left(\frac{N_\mu}{10^5}\right)^{const3}\left[\frac{\mu\mathrm{V}}{\mathrm{m\,MHz}}\right]. \quad (2)$$

The constants, $const1$, $const2$ and $const3$ are obtained from iterative separation of parameters and we will discuss their values in the next section. R_0 is the scaling radius parameter.

4. Results

In order to investigate the influence of the presence of the pedestal in the simulations we perform the standard LOPES processing and then the analysis described above for the two cases: with and without taking into account the effect induced by the pedestal.

The dependencies between pulse height and various shower parameters obtained as described in the previous section are displayed in Fig. 2(a)–(c).