

Gamma ray diagnostics for high time resolution measurement in large helical device

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1 Gamma Ray Diagnostics for High Time Resolution 2 Measurement in Large Helical Device

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15 ABSTRACT: A 1-inch LaBr₃:Ce gamma ray scintillation detector, characterized by high time and
16 energy resolution, was installed to advance energetic particle physics studies in Large Helical
17 Device (LHD). We reduced the size of the scintillator from 3 inches to 1 inch to reinforce the
18 radiation shielding to reduce the unwanted signal in the detector induced by fast neutrons and
19 stray gamma rays according to the commissioning results. The radiation shielding composed of
20 10% borated polyethylene and lead was redesigned to suppress the gamma-ray induced signal
21 based on the Monte Carlo three-dimensional neutron and gamma-ray transport code MCNP6.
22 We increased the lead thickness from 50 mm to 77.5 mm to suppress the stray gamma ray effect.
23 The gamma ray spectrum was measured in the hydrogen neutral beam heated deuterium plasma
24 with ⁶LiF pellet injection. We might obtain a gamma ray peak near 0.48 MeV due to the
25 ⁶Li(d,p' γ)⁷Li reaction.

26 KEYWORDS: Large Helical Device; LaBr₃:Ce scintillator; Gamma ray detector; Nuclear fusion.

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39 1. Introduction

40 In the measurement and control of a fusion-burning plasma, gamma ray diagnostics are one of
41 the fundamental tools to measure energy production complementary to neutron flux
42 measurement in deuterium-tritium (D-T) plasmas [1]. In the current study performed in D or D-
43 T plasma experiments, gamma ray detectors were developed for fuel temperature or MeV ion
44 diagnostics [2, 3]. Measurement of ion temperature was performed by the measurement of
45 gamma-ray flux from the $^{10}\text{B}(\text{d},\text{n})^{11}\text{C}$ reaction in the CTR tokamak [4]. A two-dimensional
46 spatial profile of 3.5 MeV alpha particles in D-T plasmas was measured in the Joint European
47 Torus JET using 4.44 MeV gamma rays due to the $^9\text{Be}(\alpha,\text{n}\gamma)^{12}\text{C}$ reaction [5, 6]. Moreover, the
48 gamma ray detector is proposed as the confined alpha particle diagnostics [7] using neutron
49 attenuator [8, 9] as well as lost alpha particle diagnostics [10] in the ITER D-T phase. Gamma
50 ray diagnostics are also important in so-called aneutronic fusion. Previously, a gamma ray
51 detector was utilized to study the D- ^3He discharge in the Tokamak Fusion Test Reactor using
52 16.7 MeV gamma rays created by the $^3\text{He}(\text{d},\gamma)^5\text{Li}$ reaction [11, 12]. Recently, the study of
53 fusion reactors based on the p- ^{11}B reaction has again become popular, especially among startup
54 companies [13]. In an aneutronic fusion study, a gamma ray monitor is a potential candidate for
55 a fusion power monitor [14, 15].

56 Deuterium operation of the Large Helical Device (LHD) was performed from 2017 to 2022 [16].
57 Because the deuterium experiment is the first deuterium experiment in large stellarators/helical
58 devices, one of the targets of the experiment was to enhance the energetic ion confinement study
59 in helical systems toward helical-type fusion reactors [17-19]. The classical confinement of
60 energetic ions [20-23] as well as energetic ion transport due to magnetohydrodynamics [24-29]
61 have been studied using comprehensive neutron diagnostics [30-38]. The installation of gamma
62 ray systems was planned [39] to understand the MeV ion confinement created by the ion
63 cyclotron range of frequency wave heating experiments [40]. Additionally, gamma ray
64 diagnostics played an important role in knock-on tail observation [41-43] through the $^6\text{Li}(\text{d},$
65 $\text{p}'\gamma)^8\text{Be}$ reaction [44, 45] and a study toward aneutronic p- ^{11}B fusion [46]. In the commissioning

66 of gamma ray diagnostics based on a large volume LaBr₃:Ce detector conducted in LHD [47],
67 the gamma ray signal suffered from prompt gamma rays induced by neutrons. In this manuscript,
68 improvement of gamma ray diagnostics and initial results of gamma ray spectrum
69 measurements in ⁶LiF pellet injection discharge were reported.

70 **2. Installation of high-time resolution gamma ray diagnostic**

71 **2.1 Experimental Setups**

72 A LaBr₃:Ce scintillation detector was installed on the outboard LHD diagnostic port, as
73 shown on the left side of Figure 1. The detector was immersed in the thick radiation shielding
74 (Figure 1 right). The size of the LaBr₃:Ce scintillator with 8% Ce dope had a cylindrical shape
75 with a height of 1 inch and a diameter of 1 inch. The LaBr₃:Ce scintillator [48] is relatively
76 sensitive to gamma rays compared with NaI:Tl due to its relatively heavy weight density of 5.2
77 g/cc [49]. The energy resolution of the detector was approximately 3% to the 662 keV gamma
78 ray, and the pulse width is 100 ns. The scintillator was directly coupled with the conventional 1-
79 inch photomultiplier tube (H10580-100, Hamamatsu K.K.), which could be operated in the
80 relatively high pulse counting rate region i.e., 10⁶ pulse per second. The shielding box was
81 composed of three layers: steel SS400 for the magnetic shield, lead for the gamma ray shield,
82 and 10% borated polyethylene for the fast neutron shield, as shown in Figure 1 right. The
83 thickness of steel was 10 mm to avoid the magnetic field effect on the photomultiplier tube
84 because the magnetic field at the detector position was up to 30 mT. The thickness of lead was
85 77.5 mm, which was 27.5 mm thicker than the previous design to reduce stray gamma rays.

86 The expected performance of shielding was evaluated using the Monte Carlo neutron
87 transport calculation MCNP6 [50] based on a simplified LHD model [51]. The model has been
88 utilized for evaluating neutron and gamma-ray distributions in the LHD torus hall and validated
89 with experiments using activation foil methods [52, 53]. In this calculation, the plasma neutron
90 source was assumed to be a simple torus with 99.5% deuterium-deuterium and 0.05%
91 deuterium-tritium neutrons based on a so-called triton burnup experiment conducted in LHD
92 [54], as performed in previous studies [55, 56]. Figure 2 shows the neutron and gamma ray flux
93 map obtained by the transport calculation. The expected neutron and gamma ray fluxes at the
94 detector at the total neutron emission rate of 1.9x10¹⁶ n/s are ~3x10⁸ and ~2x10⁹, respectively.
95 Here, the expected total neutron emission rate of 1.9x10¹⁶ n/s predicted in advance of the LHD
96 deuterium experiments [57] was selected as the reference. The gamma-ray flux from the side
97 and rear was slightly reduced compared with the 3-inch LaBr₃:Ce detector case due to the
98 increase in the thickness of lead.

99 The block diagram of the control and data acquisition of the LaBr₃:Ce detector is shown in
100 Figure 3. The LaBr₃:Ce detector signal is directly fed into the fast data acquisition systems with
101 a 60 m double shield coaxial cable (3D-FB). The fast data acquisition system is composed of a
102 14 bit 1 GHz digital-to-analog converter, field programmable gate array, and 1 GB dynamic
103 random access memory (APV8102-14MWPSAGb, Techno AP) developed for a vertical neutron
104 camera in LHD [58]. Note that the input impedance of the data acquisition system is 50 Ohm.
105 The trigger time and 64 points of the waveform were simultaneously stored in the memory
106 when the signal was over the threshold. The pulse height spectrum was obtained with
107 postprocessing using the trigger time and waveform data. The high voltage of the LaBr₃:Ce
108 detector was externally controlled by a 4 channel up to -3000 V high voltage module (APV3304,
109 Techno AP) via the LHD LABCOM service [59].

110 **2.2 In situ energy calibration and high voltage scan**

111 We performed an in situ energy calibration using a ^{60}Co gamma ray source. We placed the
112 gamma ray source in front of the $\text{LaBr}_3\text{:Ce}$ detector separated by a radiation shield. We changed
113 the high voltage from 800 V to 1200 V with 100 V steps. The two peaks corresponding to 1.173
114 MeV and 1.332 MeV were clearly obtained, as shown on the left side of Figure 4. Here, the
115 energy resolution of the $\text{LaBr}_3\text{:Ce}$ detector for 1.173 MeV was evaluated to be 6%. As expected,
116 the corresponding pulse height nonlinearly increased as the voltage increased (Figure 4 right).
117 By using both 1.173 MeV and 1.332 MeV peaks, the relationship between the gamma ray
118 energy and pulse height at a high voltage of 800 V was obtained as [Gamma ray energy (MeV)]
119 = $5.865 \times$ [Pulse height (V)].

120 **3. Initial result of gamma ray measurement**

121 **3.1 Operation limit of the detector**

122 We performed the experiment to determine the operation limit of the $\text{LaBr}_3\text{:Ce}$ detector
123 under relatively low total neutron emission rate (S_n) experiments (Figure 5 top). Here, both fast
124 neutrons and prompt gamma rays induced signals [60, 61]. The experiment was performed with
125 extremely low density plasma in a relatively low magnetic field strength with an outward
126 shifted configuration to achieve S_n on the order of 10^{12} to 10^{13} n/s. Here, a low-density plasma
127 was used for less deposition of the neutral beam injection. The low magnetic field strength and
128 outward shifted configuration were due to the relatively poor confinement of beam ions and
129 relatively low electron temperature inducing a short slowing time of beam ions. Figure 5 bottom
130 shows the pulse count rate of the $\text{LaBr}_3\text{:Ce}$ detector as a function of S_n . The relationship is
131 different in tangential negative ion source and perpendicular positive ion source phases. The
132 difference could potentially cause by the difference in neutron energy or neutron anisotropy [62-
133 65]. The limitation of the pulse count rate of the $\text{LaBr}_3\text{:Ce}$ detector was approximately 200 kcps,
134 where S_n was below 10^{13} n/s.

135 **3.2 Gamma ray spectrum measurement**

136 We measured the gamma ray spectrum in hydrogen-neutral-beam-heated deuterium plasma
137 discharge with ^6LiF pellet injection (Figure 6 top). The plasma was initiated by electron
138 cyclotron resonance heating (ECRH) [66] and sustained by negative ion based neutral beam
139 injections (NB1, NB2 and NB3) [67]. Positive ion-based neutral beam injections (NB4 and
140 NB5) were utilized to measure the ion temperature and Li density profile by charge exchange
141 recombination spectroscopy [68]. Here, the Li in the ^6LiF pellet contained 95% enriched ^6Li to
142 avoid the $^7\text{Li}(d,t)^6\text{Li}$ reaction. The significant increase in electron density measured by an
143 interferometer [69] and significant decrease in the central electron temperature measured by
144 Thomson scattering diagnostics [70] were observed by ^6LiF pellet injection at a t of ~ 3.87 s. The
145 ^3He proportional counter placed at the 4-O port of the neutron flux monitor [71, 72] showed that
146 S_n at this discharge was below 3×10^9 n/s. Therefore, the expected pulse count rate of the
147 $\text{LaBr}_3\text{:Ce}$ detector due to the neutron effect was negligibly small below 0.2 counts per 10 ms.
148 Figure 6 bottom shows the gamma ray spectrum obtained at t of 3.9 to 4.1 s with 20 shot
149 accumulations. The observed gamma ray peak at ~ 0.48 MeV was potentially due to the $^6\text{Li}(d,$
150 $p'\gamma)^7\text{Li}$ reaction.

151 **4. Summary**

152 Fast-response gamma ray diagnostics based on a 1-inch diameter and 1-inch height
153 LaBr₃:Ce scintillator were installed in the LHD to advance energetic ion physics research in
154 fusion plasmas. The radiation shield for the LaBr₃:Ce detector was redesigned based on the
155 three-dimensional radiation transport code to suppress the unwanted neutron and gamma ray
156 effect on the detector. In situ calibration of the LaBr₃:Ce detector was performed using a ⁶⁰Co
157 gamma ray source. The LaBr₃:Ce detector could be operated under S_n below 10^{13} n/s. The
158 operation limit was expanded by more than two orders of magnitude compared with the
159 previous large volume LaBr₃:Ce detector due to the decrease in LaBr₃:Ce scintillator size and
160 increase in lead thickness. A gamma ray peak at ~0.48 MeV, possibly induced by the ⁶Li(d,
161 $p'\gamma$)⁷Li reaction, was observed in the ⁶LiF pellet injection hydrogen neutral beam heated
162 deuterium plasmas.

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168 University, S. Nozaki of Gifu University, and S. Takasu of Fukui University.

169 **Data availability**

170 The data supporting the findings of this study are available in the LHD experiment data
171 repository at <https://doi.org/10.57451/lhd.analyzed-data>.

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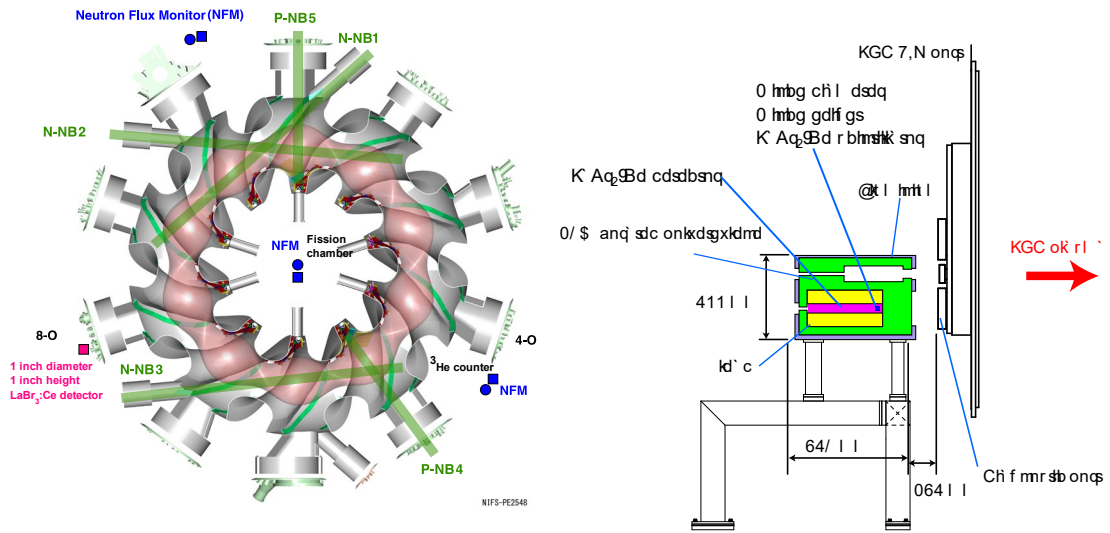


Figure 1. (left) Top view of the LHD, LaBr₃:Ce detector, neutral beam injections, and neutron flux monitor. (right) Cross section of gamma ray diagnostics and diagnostic port. LaBr₃:Ce detector is immersed into the radiation shielding composed of 72.5 mm thick lead and 10% borated polyethylene.

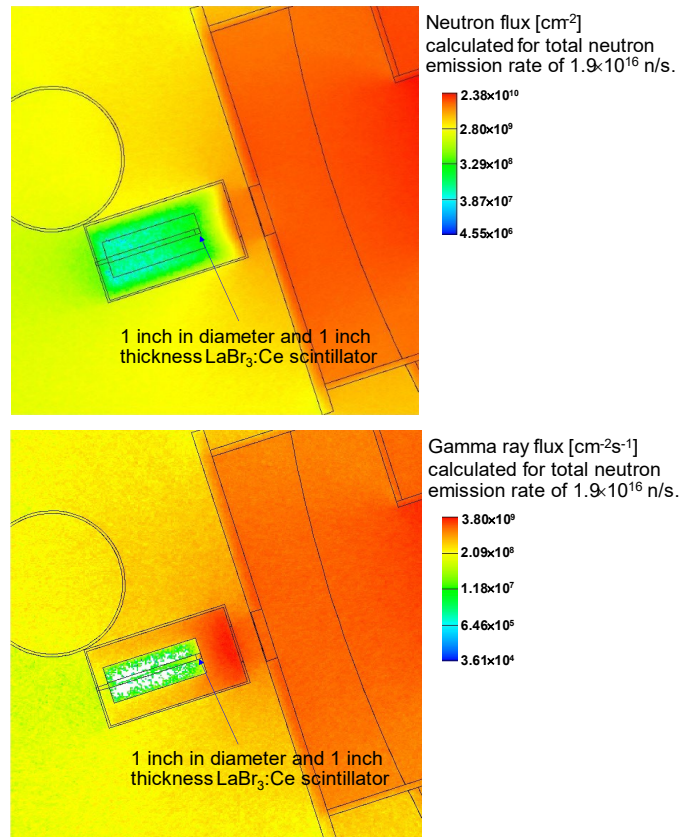


Figure 2. Two dimensional flux maps of the three dimensional radiation transport calculation for (left) neutron and (right) gamma ray. Here, total neutron emission rate was set to 1.9×10^{16} n/s.

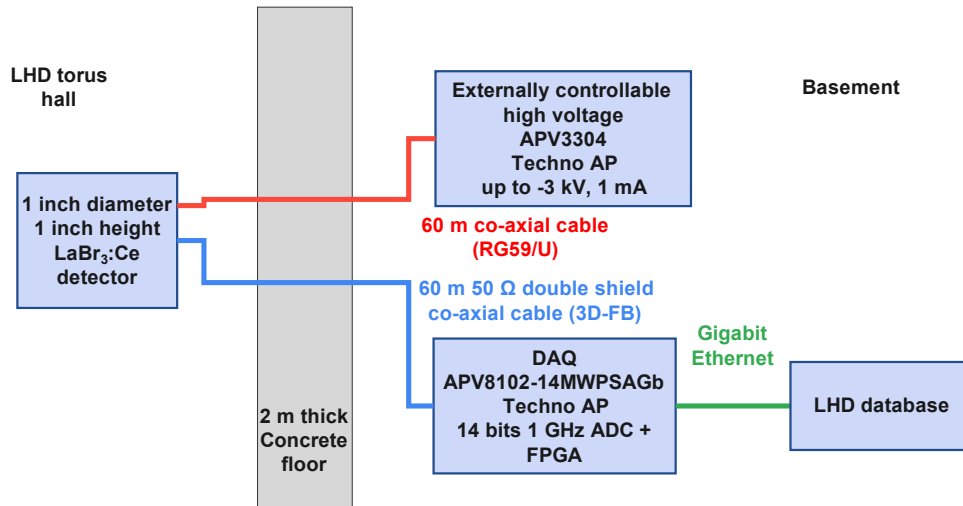


Figure 3. Block diagram of the gamma ray diagnostics.

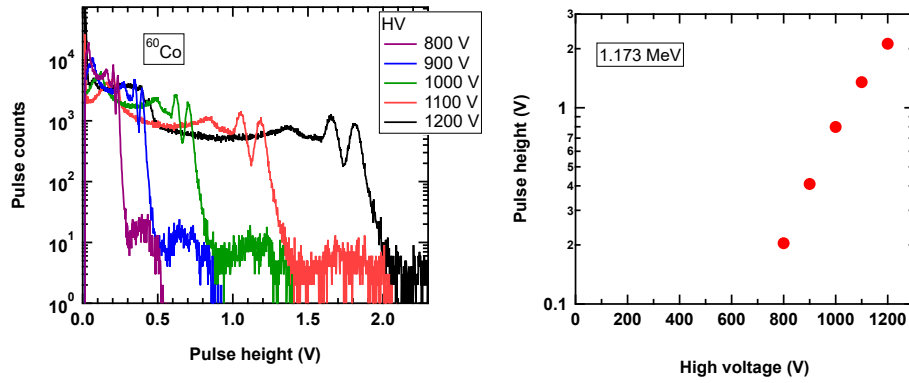


Figure 4. (left) Pulse height spectrum obtained in an in situ calibration of $\text{LaBr}_3:\text{Ce}$ detector using ^{60}Co gamma ray source with changing high voltage. (right) Pulse height due to 1.173 MeV gamma ray as a function of high voltage applied to the detector.

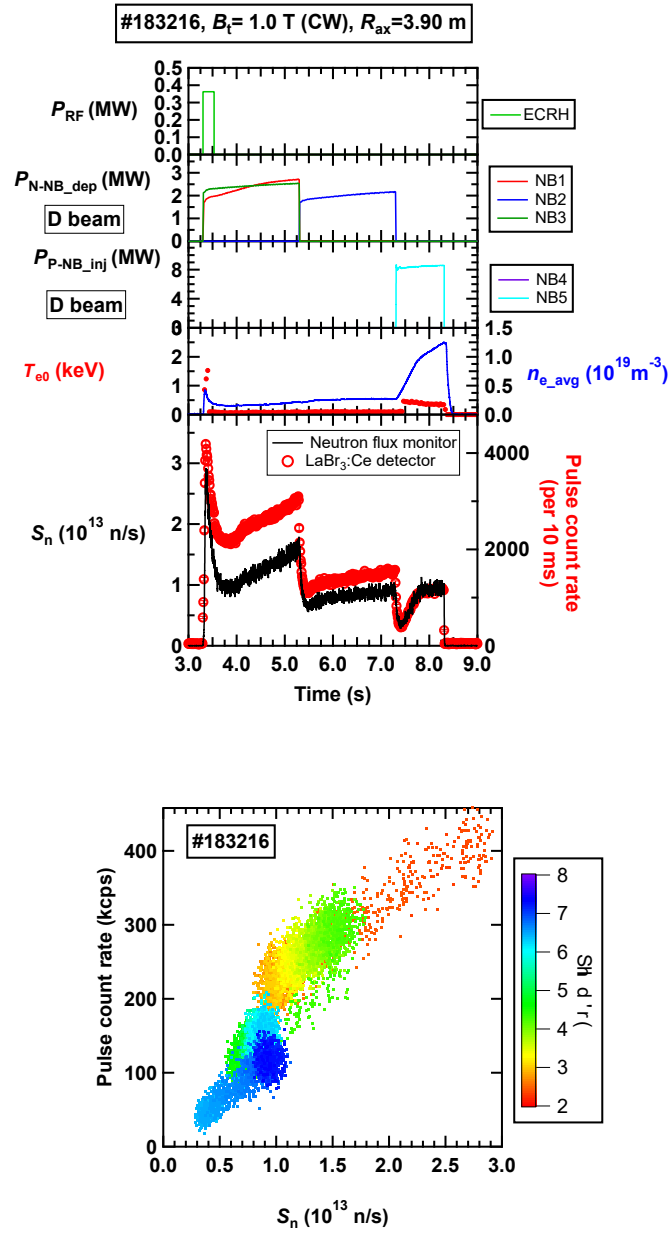


Figure 5. (top) Time evolution of relatively low total neutron emission discharge. (bottom) Pulse count rate as a function of total neutron emission rate. Pulse count rate linearly increases with S_n below an S_n value of 1.0×10^{13} n/s.

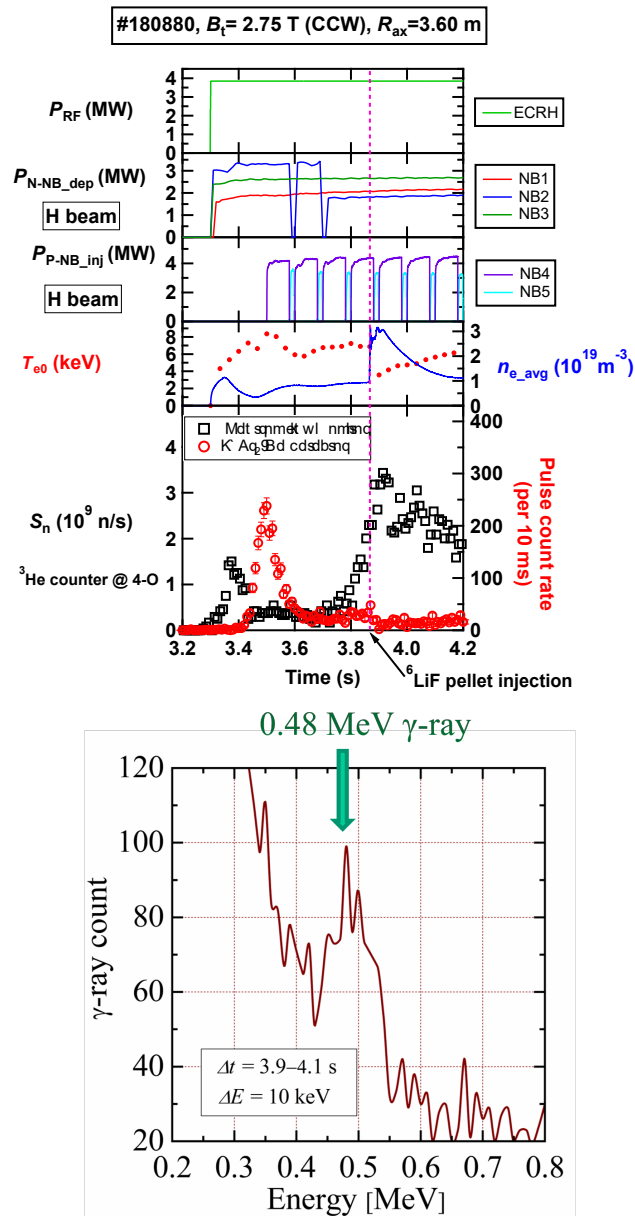


Figure 6. (top) Time evolution of the ${}^6\text{LiF}$ pellet injection discharge. Here, all neutral beam injection (NB) injects a hydrogen beam into the deuterium plasmas. (bottom) Gamma ray spectrum obtained by summation of 20 discharges.

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