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Distribution Voltage Regulation using DER Grid-Support Functions

New Mexico Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (NM EPSCoR) Webinar

22 Nov, 2019

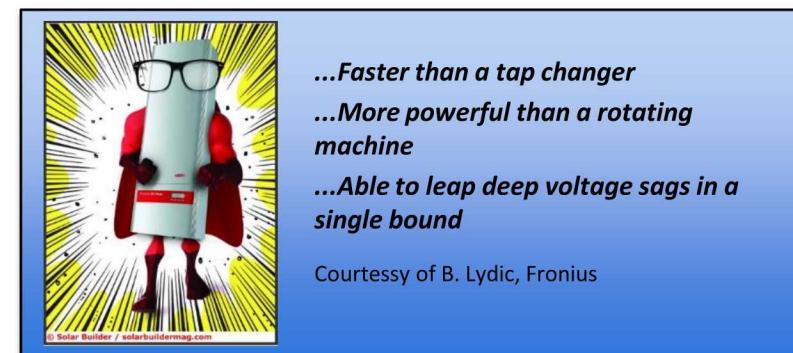
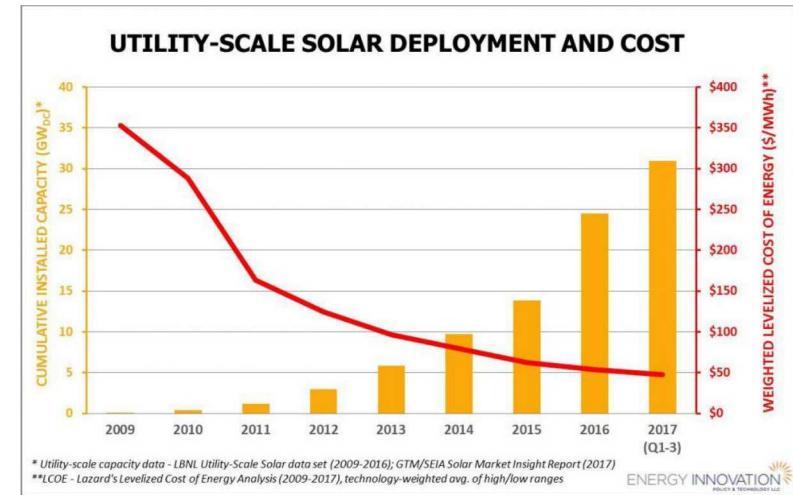
Jay Johnson

Renewable and Distributed Systems Integration

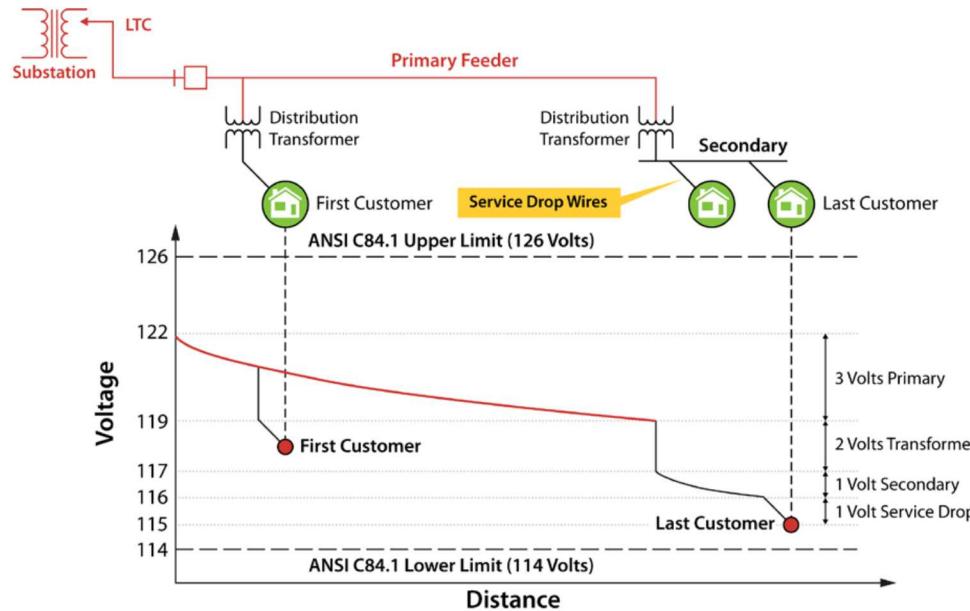
Sandia National Laboratories

Background

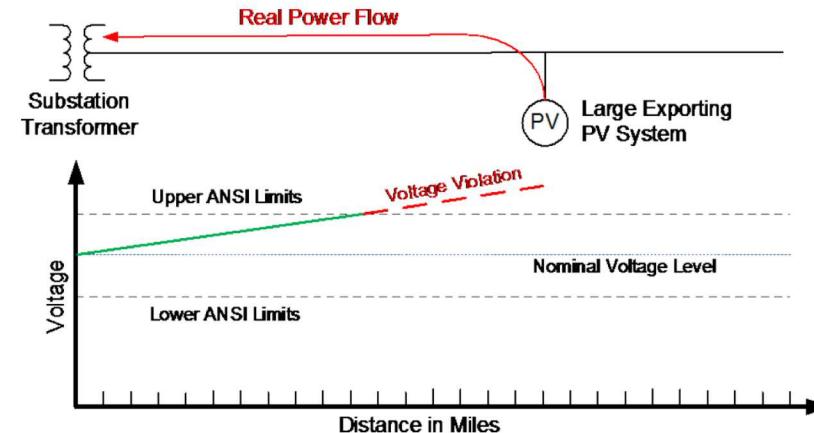
- Context
 - Total installed capacity of PV is growing fast
 - Large growth expected in distribution systems
- Problem
 - Grid is slow to evolve, we encounter technical challenges with voltage/frequency regulation, protection, etc.
 - Unless mitigated, these challenges will make it increasingly difficult and costly to continue integrating renewable energy
- Solution: advanced inverters
 - Actively support voltage and frequency by modulating output
 - Have high tolerance to grid disturbances
 - Interact with the system via communications
- Research questions
 - What is the best technique for providing voltage regulation?
 - How can the methods be evaluated with physical devices prior to field implementation?



Distribution Voltage Regulation



Voltage regulation on a feeder without distributed generation.



Voltage regulation on a feeder with distributed generation.

Solution: Use DER grid-support functions with reactive power capabilities.

- **Cost-effective:** no additional equipment required
- **Logical:** employs devices which are causing voltage rise to mitigate the problem

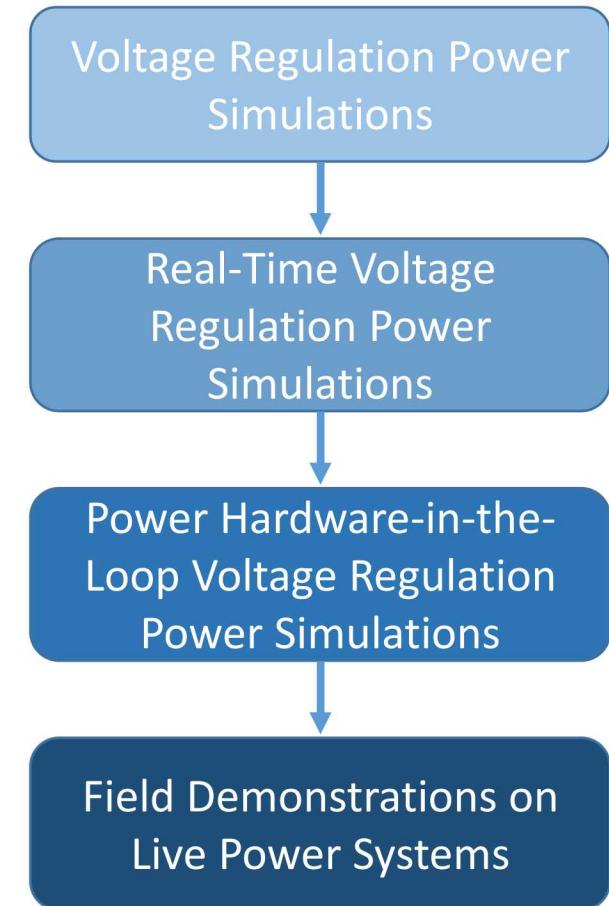
ENERGISE ProDROMOS Project

Programmable Distribution Resource Open Management Optimization System (ProDROMOS)¹

The project created an Advanced Distribution Management System (ADMS) that captures distribution circuit telemetry, performed state estimation, and issued optimal DER setpoints based on PV production forecasts.

Team used PHIL experiments to gain confidence in control algorithms, verify communication interfaces, and predict performance prior to deploying the ADMS on a live feeder in Massachusetts.

¹Prodromos is Greek for "forerunner" and the prodromoi were a light cavalry army unit in ancient Greece used for scouting missions.



Options for Voltage Regulation using Grid-Support Functions

Distributed Autonomous Control

- Function: volt-var or volt-watt
- Pros: simple, requires little or no communications, DER locations not needed
- Cons: does not reach global optimum

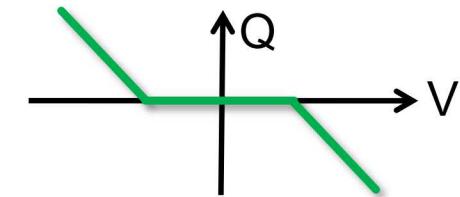
Extremum Seeking Control (ESC)

- Function: power factor or a new grid-support function
- Pros: can achieve global optimum
- Cons: requires fitness function broadcast or PF calculation by central entity

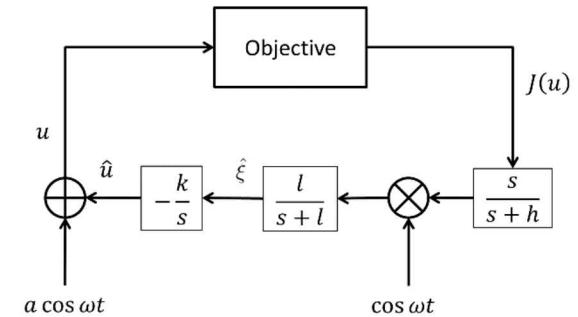
Optimal Power Factor Control

- Function: power factor or reactive power commands
- Pros: direct influence over DER equipment to achieve objective
- Cons: requires telemetry, knowledge of DER locations, and state estimator/feeder model

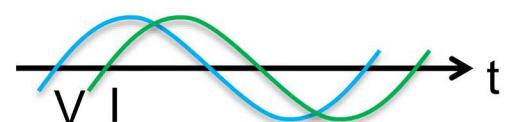
Volt-Var Mode



ESC



Optimal Power Factor

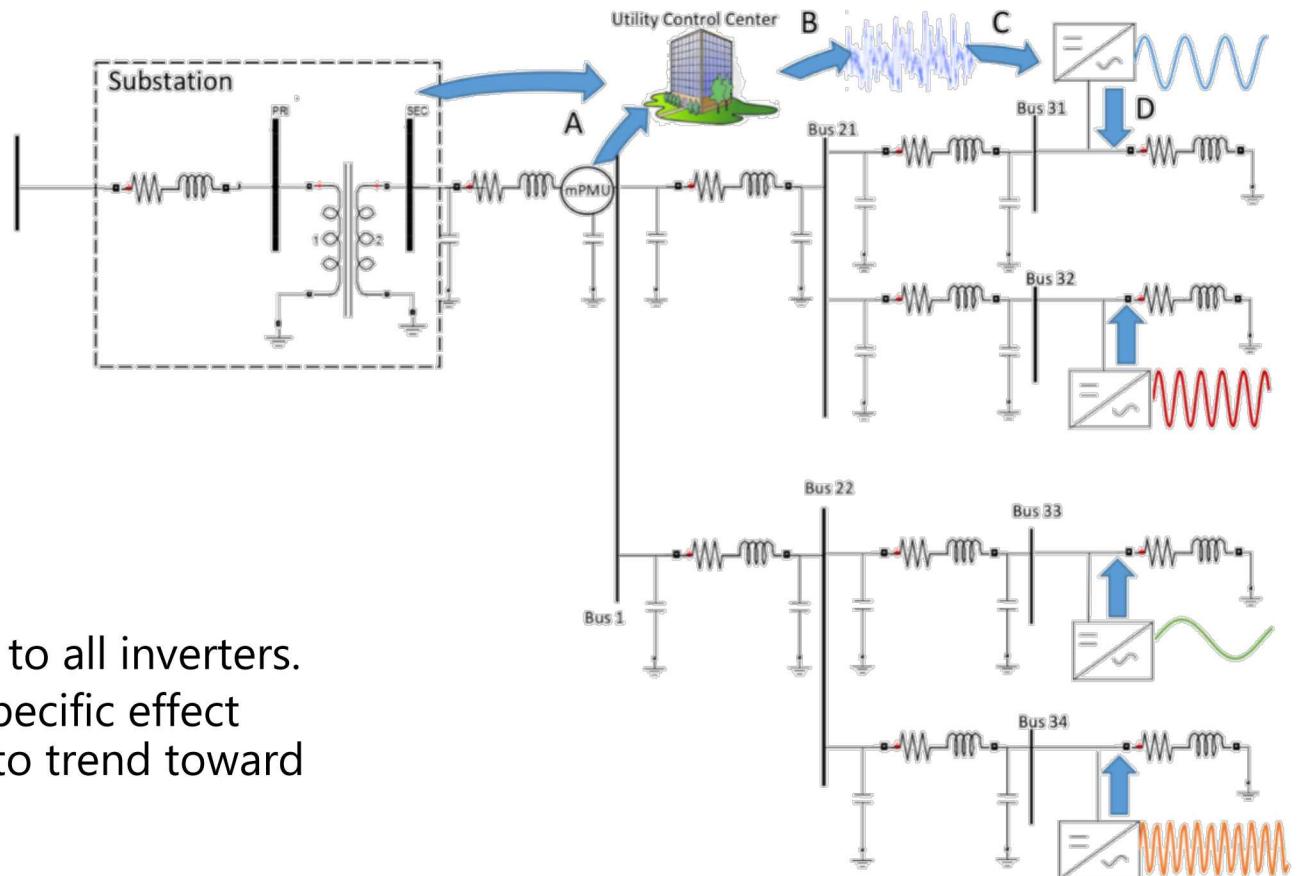


Extremum Seeking Control

Extremum Seeking Control (ESC) was used as a comparison to the PF optimization technique

Steps in ESC:

- A. Centralized control center collects data from the power system
- B. Control center calculates the objective function, e.g., $J = 1/n * \sum [(V_i - V_n)/V_n]^2$
- C. Control center broadcasts objective function to all inverters.
- D. Individual inverters extract their frequency-specific effect on the objective function and adjust output to trend toward the global optimum.



- D. B. Arnold, M. Negrete-Pincetic, M. D. Sankur, D. M. Auslander and D. S. Callaway, "Model-Free Optimal Control of VAR Resources in Distribution Systems: An Extremum Seeking Approach," *IEEE Transactions on Power Systems*, vol. 31, no. 5, pp. 3583-3593, Sept. 2016.
- J. Johnson, R. Darbali, J. Hernandez-Alvidrez, A. Summers, J. Quiroz, D. Arnold, J. Anandan, "Distribution Voltage Regulation using Extremum Seeking Control with Power Hardware-in-the-Loop," *IEEE Journal of Photovoltaics*, vol. 8, no. 6, pp. 1824-1832, 2018.
- J. Johnson, S. Gonzalez, and D.B. Arnold, "Experimental Distribution Circuit Voltage Regulation using DER Power Factor, Volt-Var, and Extremum Seeking Control Methods," *IEEE PVSC*, Washington, DC, 25-30 June, 2017.
- D. B. Arnold, M. D. Sankur, M. Negrete-Pincetic and D. Callaway, "Model-Free Optimal Coordination of Distributed Energy Resources for Provisioning Transmission-Level Services," in *IEEE Transactions on Power Systems*, vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 817-828, 2017.
- Code: https://github.com/sunspec/prodromos/blob/master/optimization/extremum_seeking_control.py

Particle Swarm Optimization (PSO) Optimal Power Flow (OPF)

In the PSO OPF method, time-series **OpenDSS** simulations were wrapped in an optimization to calculate the PF values for each PV inverter.

- RT power data for each of the buses and the PV forecasts were used to generate a time-series simulation by setting the active and reactive power levels of dynamic loads in the OpenDSS model.
- The OpenDSS load data was populated by a Georgia Tech Integrated Grounding System Analysis program for Windows (WinIGS) state estimation solution.
 - Active and reactive loads were assumed static.
- Future PV production estimations were populated by PV persistence forecasts.

Objective Function:

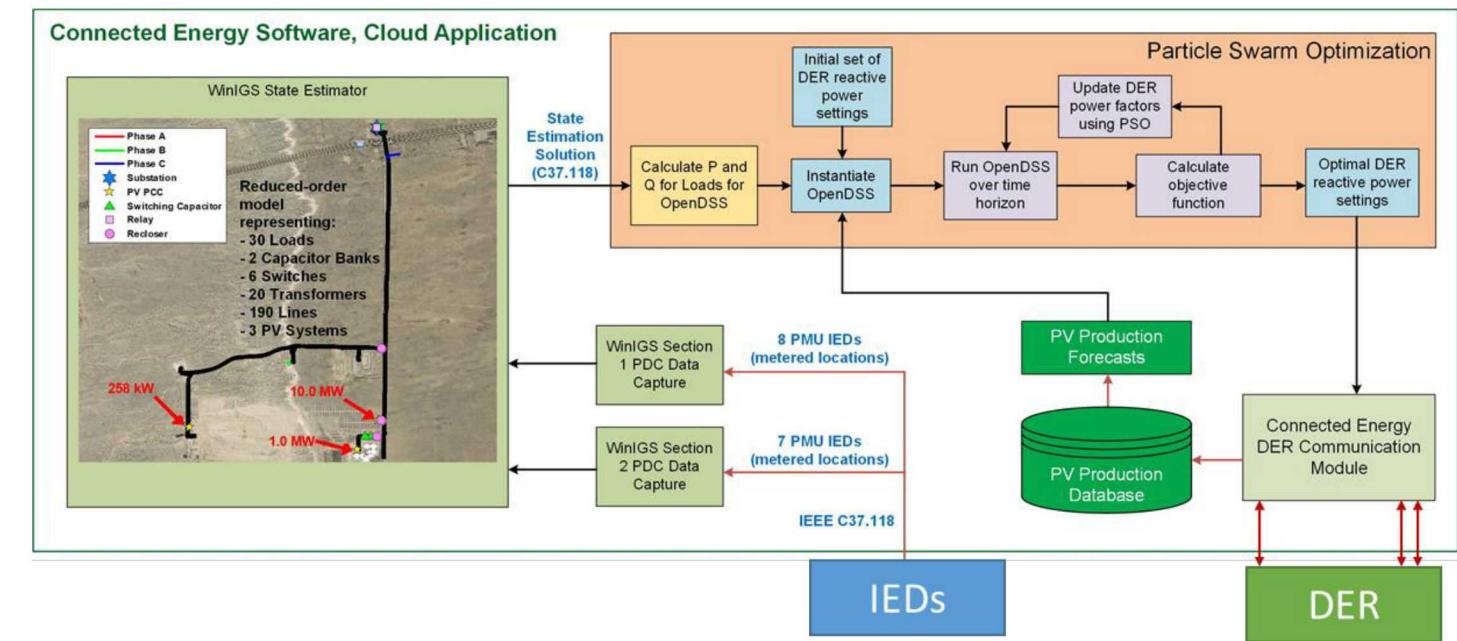
$$\min_{PF} w_0 \delta_{violation}(V) + w_1 \sigma(V - V_{base}) + w_2 C(PF)$$

$$\delta_{violation}(V) = 1 \text{ if any } |V| > V_{lim}$$

$\sigma(V - V_{base})$ is standard deviation of $V - V_{base}$

$$C(PF) = \sum 1 - |PF|$$

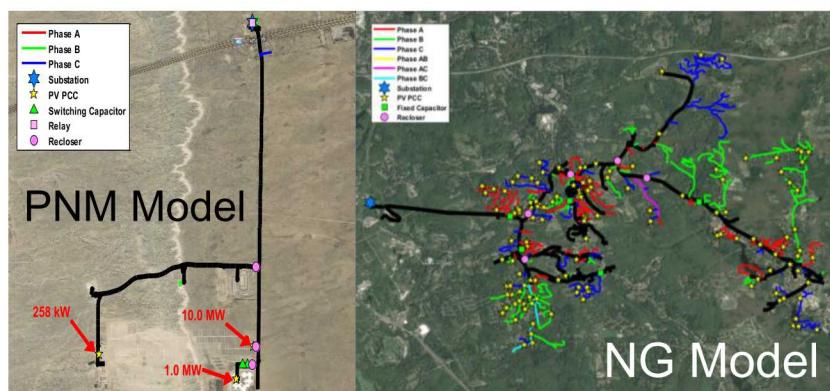
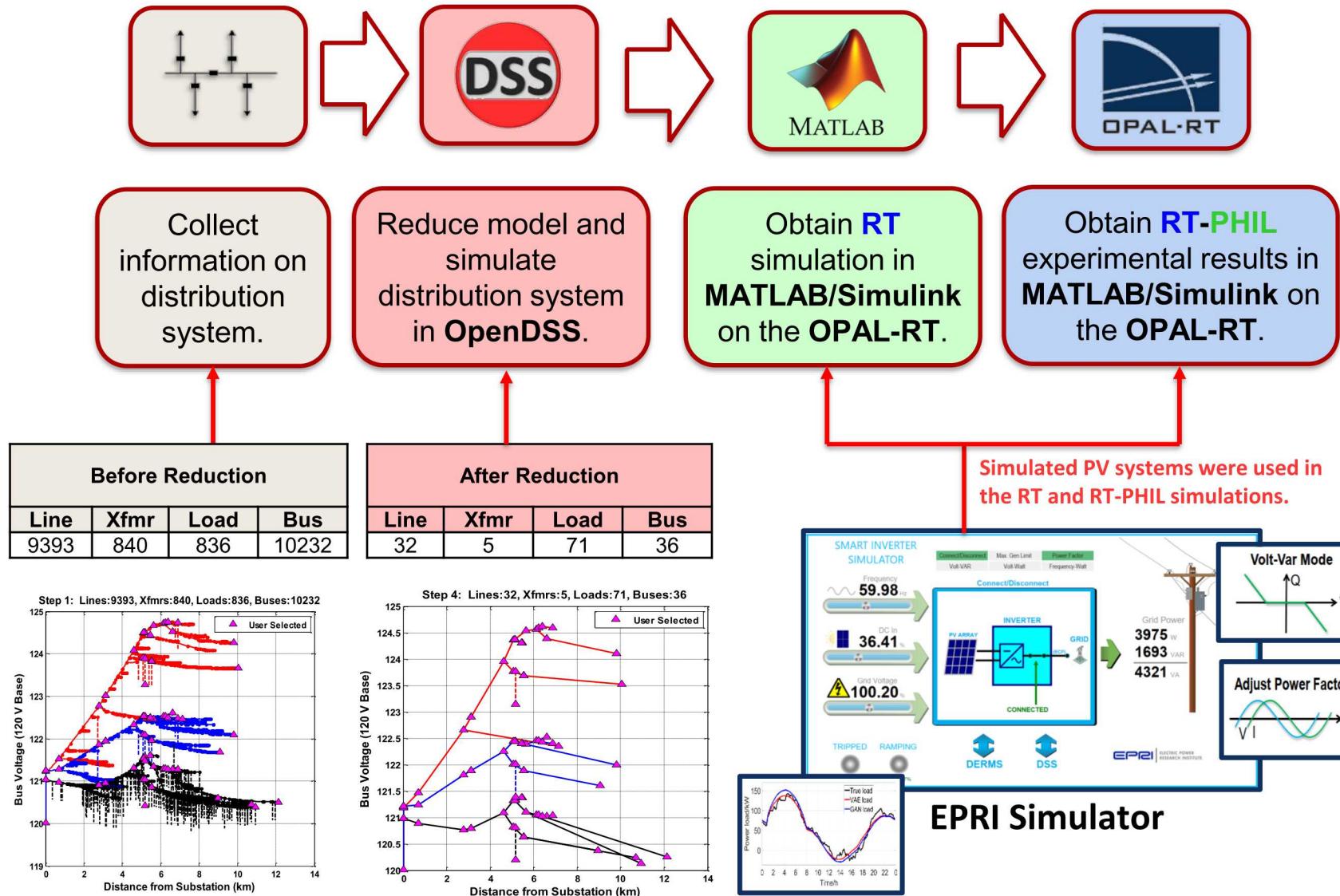
Cost minimized when voltage = V_{nom} and $PF=1$



Particle Swarm Optimization Block Diagram.

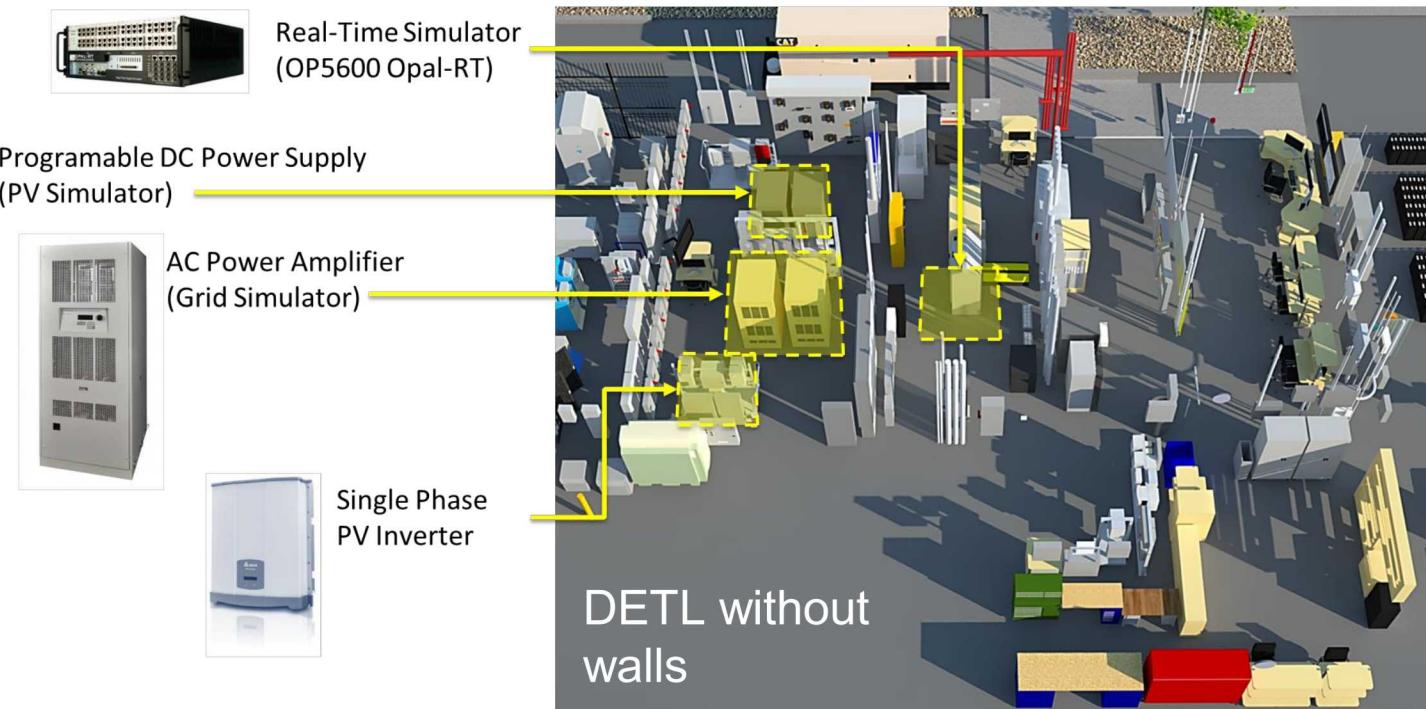
Creating Realistic Power Simulations

- Feeder models, based on existing distribution systems were reduced to smaller equivalent distribution systems using the **OpenDSS**.
- These models were migrated into **MATLAB/Simulink** and simulated in RT with a simulated PV inverter.
- The **OPAL-RT** platform was used to demonstrate the capabilities of RT-PHIL.



Distributed Energy Technology Laboratory at SNL

- The **Distributed Energy Technologies Laboratory (DETL)**, located at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, NM, provides power systems and power electronics testing capabilities.
- DETL includes a 480 V, 3-phase microgrid, with interconnections to the utility grid and several DER devices (PV inverters, microturbines, fuel cells, reciprocating engine-generators, and energy storage systems).
- The laboratory also has an OPAL-RT real-time simulator used to perform RT-PHIL tests with 1 ϕ or 3 ϕ PV inverters, a 100 microinverter testbed, and other DER.
- DETL researchers have extensive expertise in **DER grid-integration**.



PSO OPF Real-Time Power Hardware-in-the-Loop Setup

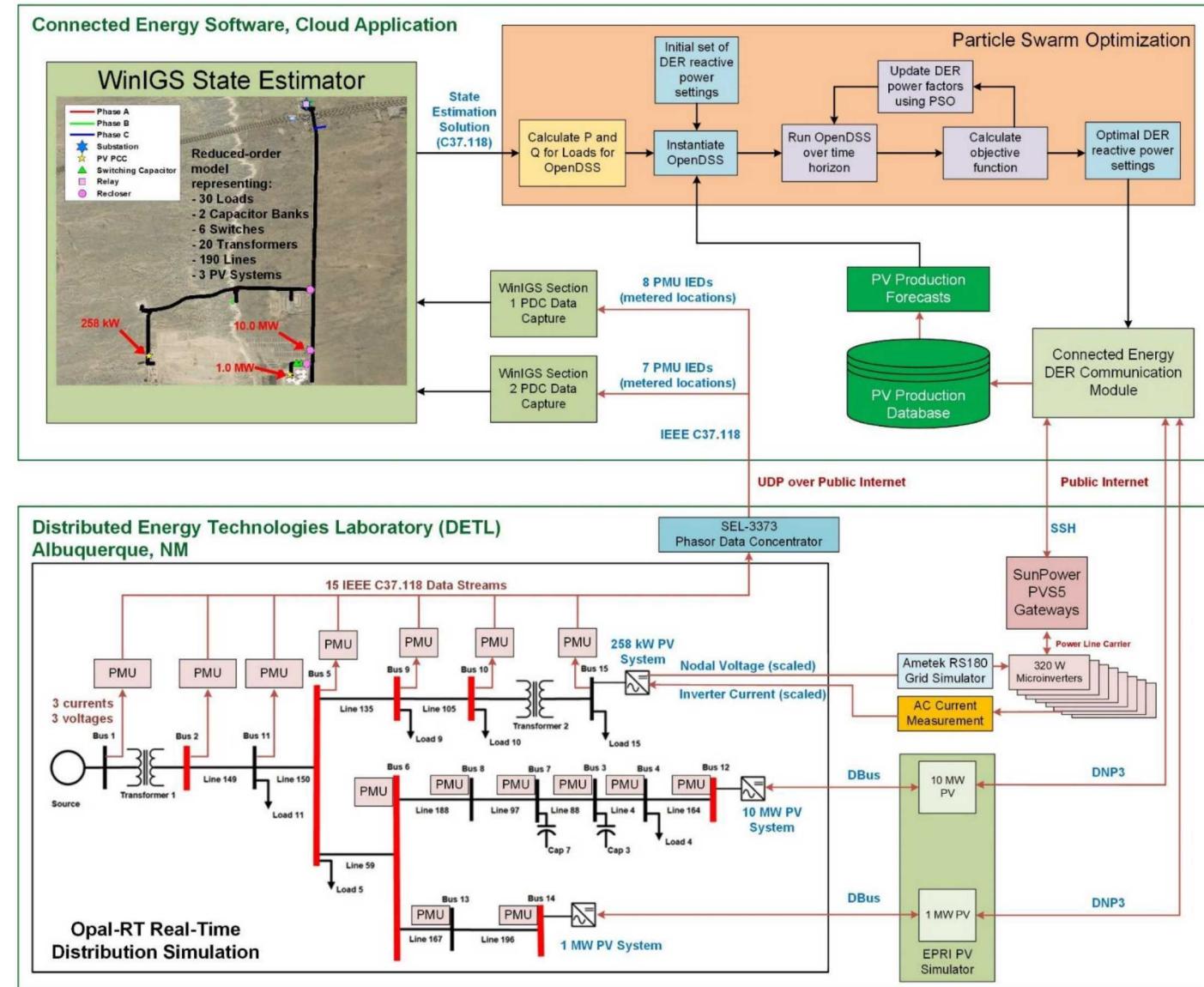
OPAL-RT Communication Interfaces

- PMU C37.118 to state estimator
- OPAL-RT DataBus Interface receives P/Q values from EPRI DER simulators and transmits bus voltages and frequency

Information Flow

- The State Estimator ingests PMU data to produce current/voltage estimates for the distribution system
- State estimation data and PV generation forecasts populate an OpenDSS model.
- PSO wraps the OpenDSS model to calculate the optimal PF setpoints for each of the DER devices.
- DER PF settings were issued through Modbus and IEEE 1815 (DNP3) commands.

RT-PHIL allows for an **affordable and repeatable alternative** to testing physical devices under real operating conditions before they are connected to an actual system.



PNM RT Simulation Results

There is only a small improvement in bus voltage when implementing Volt-Var with a relatively passive curve.

ESC and PSO improve voltage regulation at the PCC of PV inverter 2 and globally.

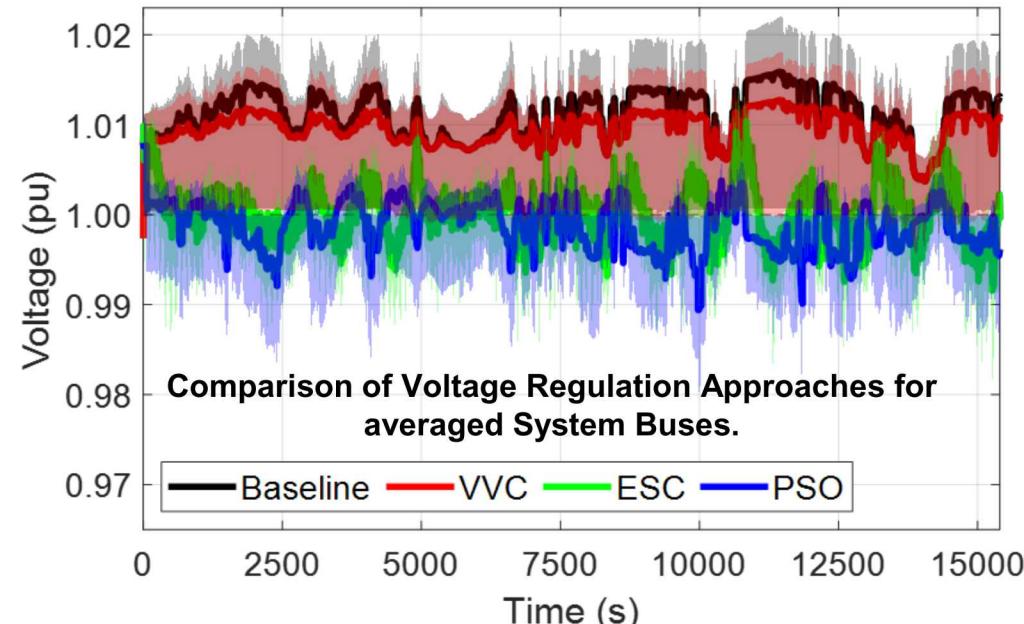
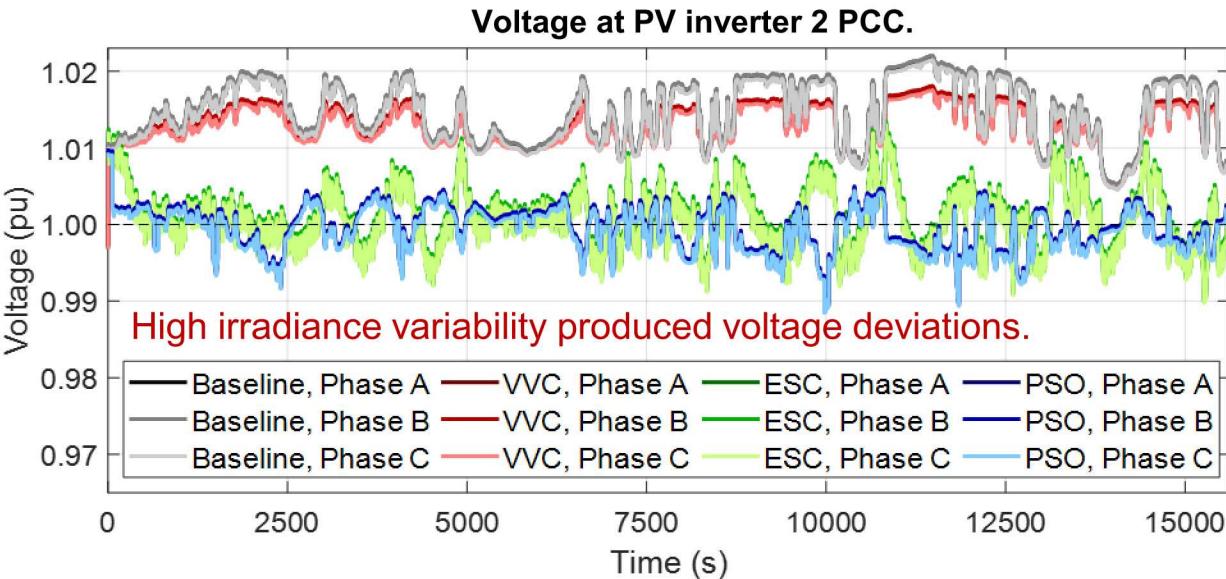
- The average bus voltage is close to nominal (good)
- The maximum voltage is reduced substantially (good)
- The minimum voltage is reduced (bad)

$$score = \frac{1}{T} \int_{t=0}^{t_{end}} \sum_{b=1}^N (|v_{bl} - v_{nom}| - |v_{reg} - v_{nom}|) dt$$

where:

- v_{bl} Baseline Voltage
- v_{nom} Target Voltage
- v_{reg} Voltage with control applied
- T Time Period
- b bus
- t time

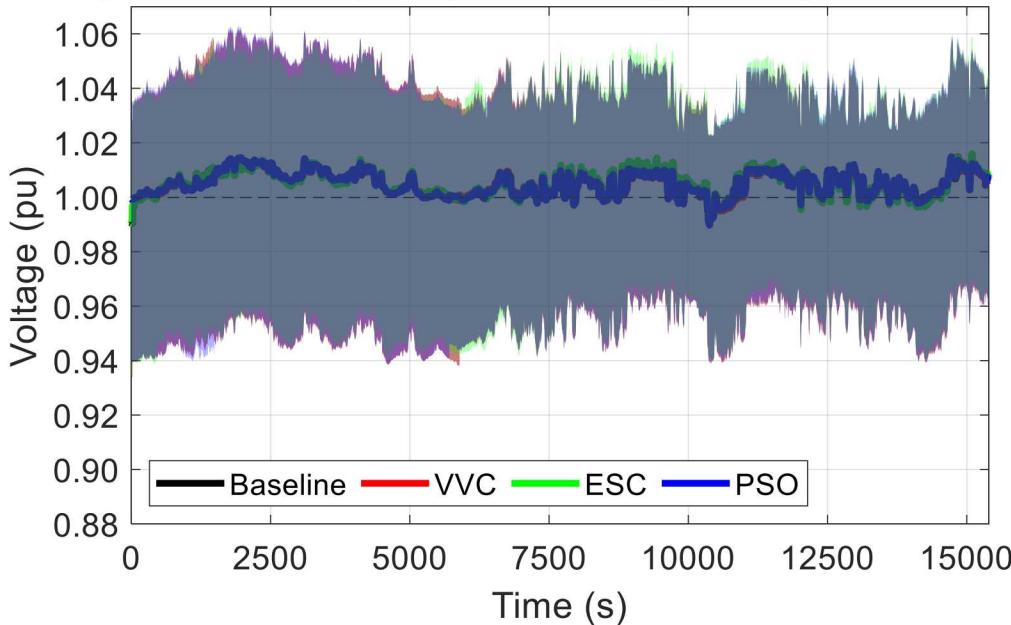
PNM Feeder Score					
	Phase A	Phase B	Phase C	Average	Improvement (%)
VV	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.071	12.9%
ESC	0.140	0.140	0.132	0.412	74.5%
PSO	0.139	0.139	0.130	0.408	73.7%
Best Score	0.186	0.188	0.179	0.553	



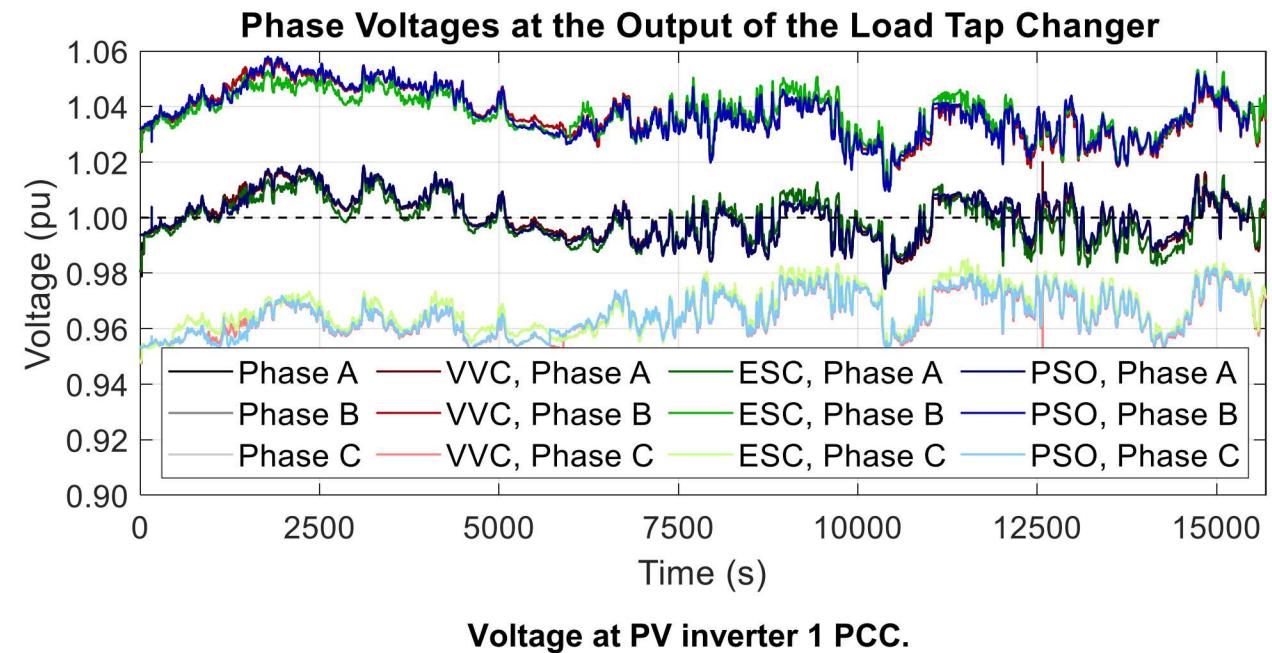
NG Simulations with 3 ϕ inverters at Old Upton Road

- The National Grid system was highly unbalanced.
- None of the voltage regulation techniques were capable of correcting the voltage deviations using the 3 ϕ inverters at Old Upton Rd.

Comparison of Min, Max, and Average Voltages for All Buses



Comparison of Voltage Regulation Approaches for averaged System Buses.



- Question: if all the PV systems on this feeder were used for voltage regulation (not just Old Upton Rd) would there be a big improvement?

NG Simulations with All Inverters

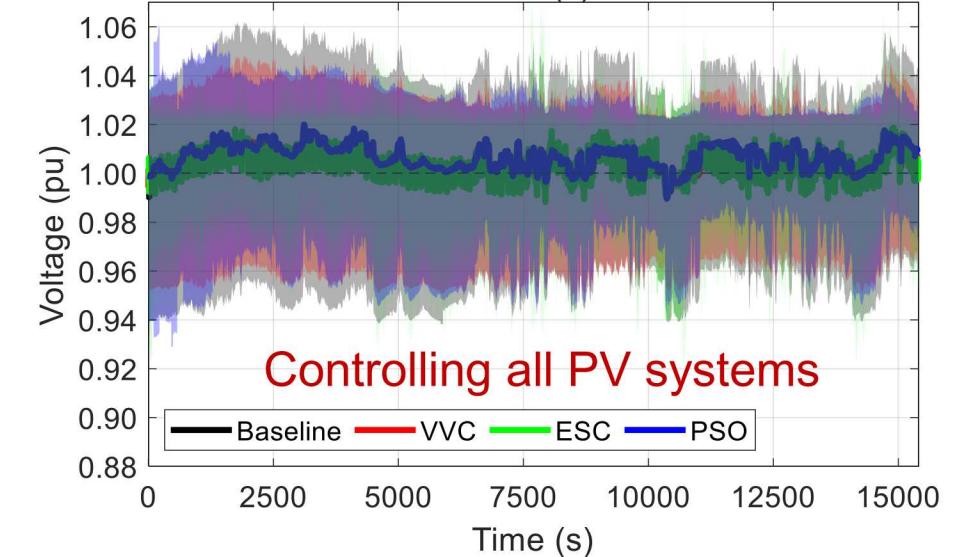
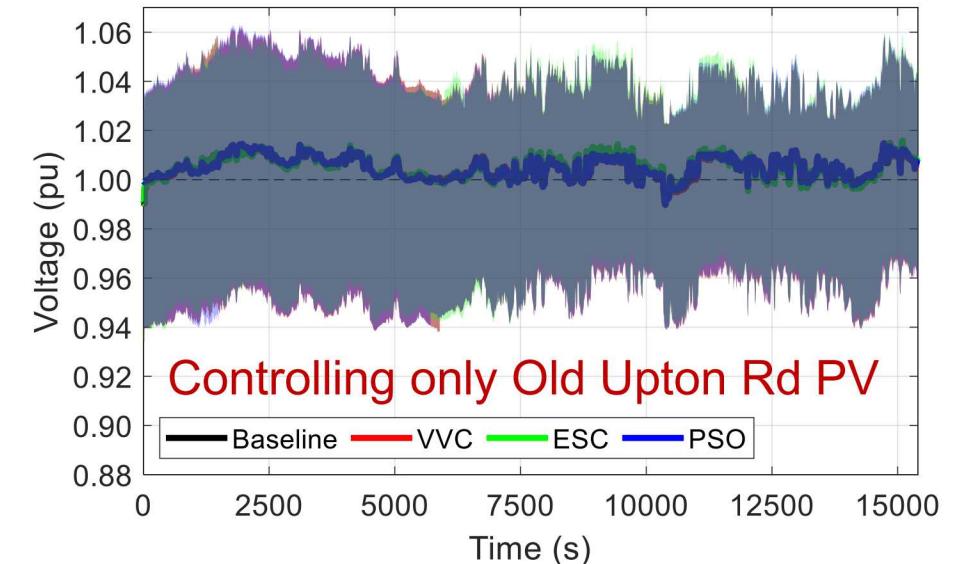
- PV size, location, and rating of the PV inverters are important for the control.
- Controlling all PV generated larger excursions, but in general kept the voltages closer to nominal.
 - The improvement is clear in the feeder scoring results.

$$score = \frac{1}{T} \int_{t=0}^{t_{end}} \sum_{b=1}^N (|v_{bl} - v_{nom}| - |v_{reg} - v_{nom}|) dt$$

NG Feeder Score Controlling a Single PV Site					
	Phase A	Phase B	Phase C	Average	Improvement (%)
VV	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.001	0.0%
ESC	0.012	0.000	0.031	0.043	3.2%
PSO	-0.001	0.000	0.004	0.002	0.2%
Best Score	0.194	0.635	0.507	1.336	

NG Feeder Score Controlling All PV System (including 1φ devices)					
	Phase A	Phase B	Phase C	Average	Improvement (%)
VV	-0.004	0.122	0.085	0.203	15.2%
ESC	-0.023	0.328	0.202	0.508	38.0%
PSO	-0.023	0.124	0.137	0.238	17.8%
Best Score	0.194	0.635	0.507	1.336	

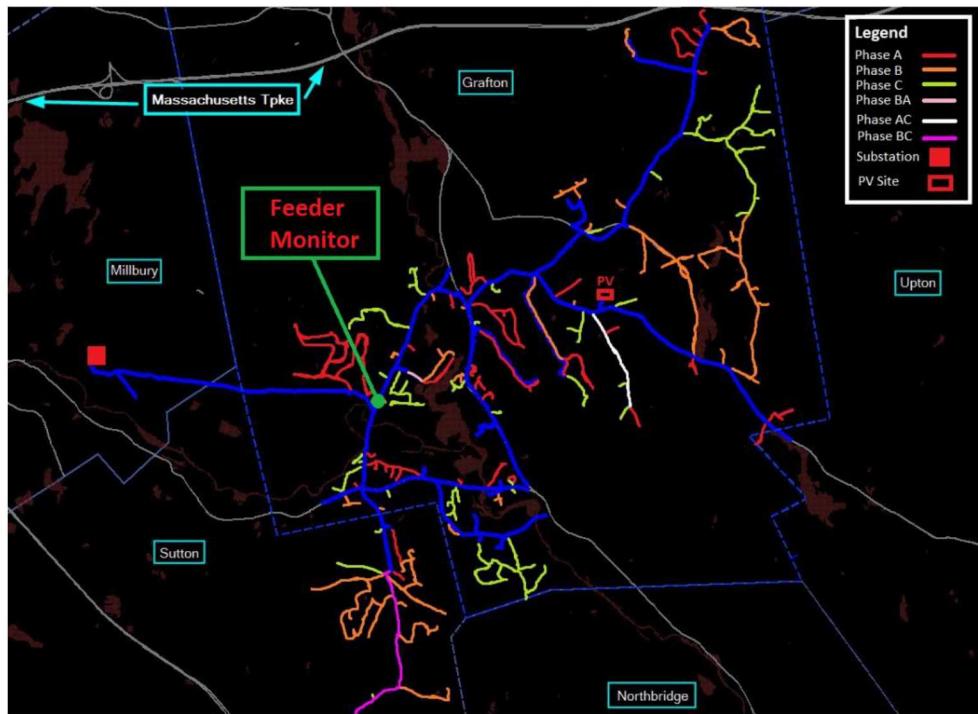
NG Bus Voltage Range and Average



National Grid PV System

The team ran Volt-Var, ESC, and PSO OPF control techniques on the live National Grid feeder in Grafton, MA.

- 28 PV inverters were controlled at the 672 kVA PV site
- A feeder monitor located at a separate location on the feeder was used to collect feeder voltages
- Data was collected for multiple days for each control technique to compare the techniques



684 kW_{dc}/672 kW_{ac} Old Upton Rd PV Installation



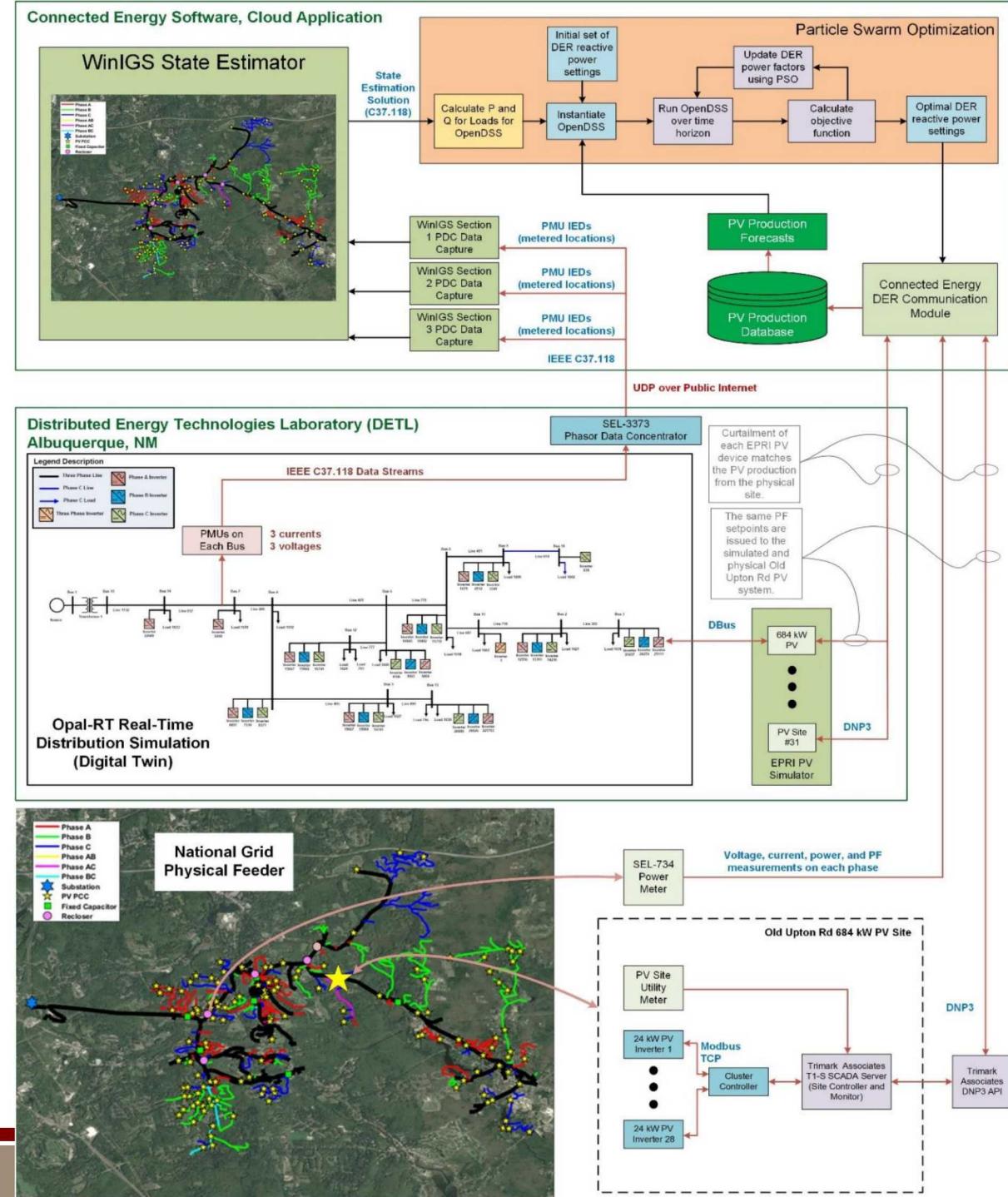
Digital Twin Concept for PSO

Problem

- Not enough Intelligent Electronic Devices (IEDs, i.e., PMUs, DERs, meters, etc.) to make state estimation observable for the field demonstration feeder
- Short-term load forecasts or historical data is often used as "pseudo-measurements" to get a solution, but the team didn't have access to this data

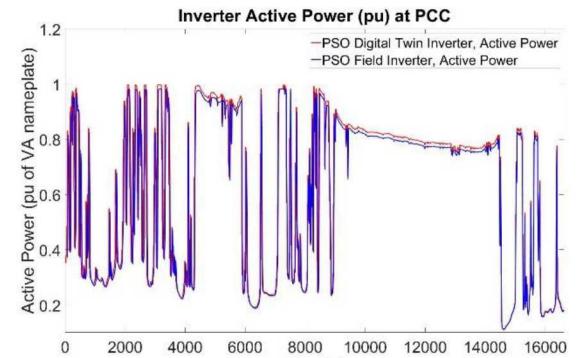
Implementation

- Use a real-time digital twin of the feeder to estimate the system operations
 - If general behavior of digital twin is similar to the physical feeder, the "optimal" PF settings should support feeder voltages
- PV power was mapped from physical system to simulated DER device using the curtailment function.
- PV PF setpoints are sent to the physical and virtual PV system.
- This does not account for the current load (only pre-recorded versions).

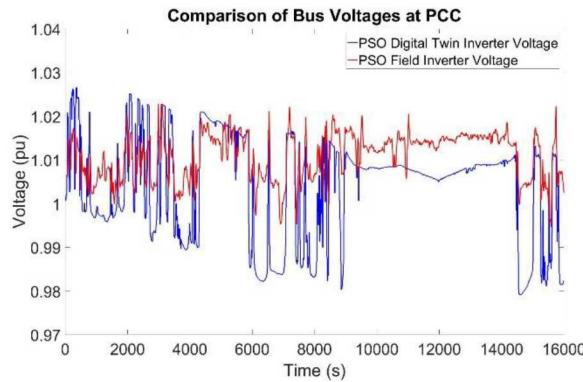


PSO on NG Feeder

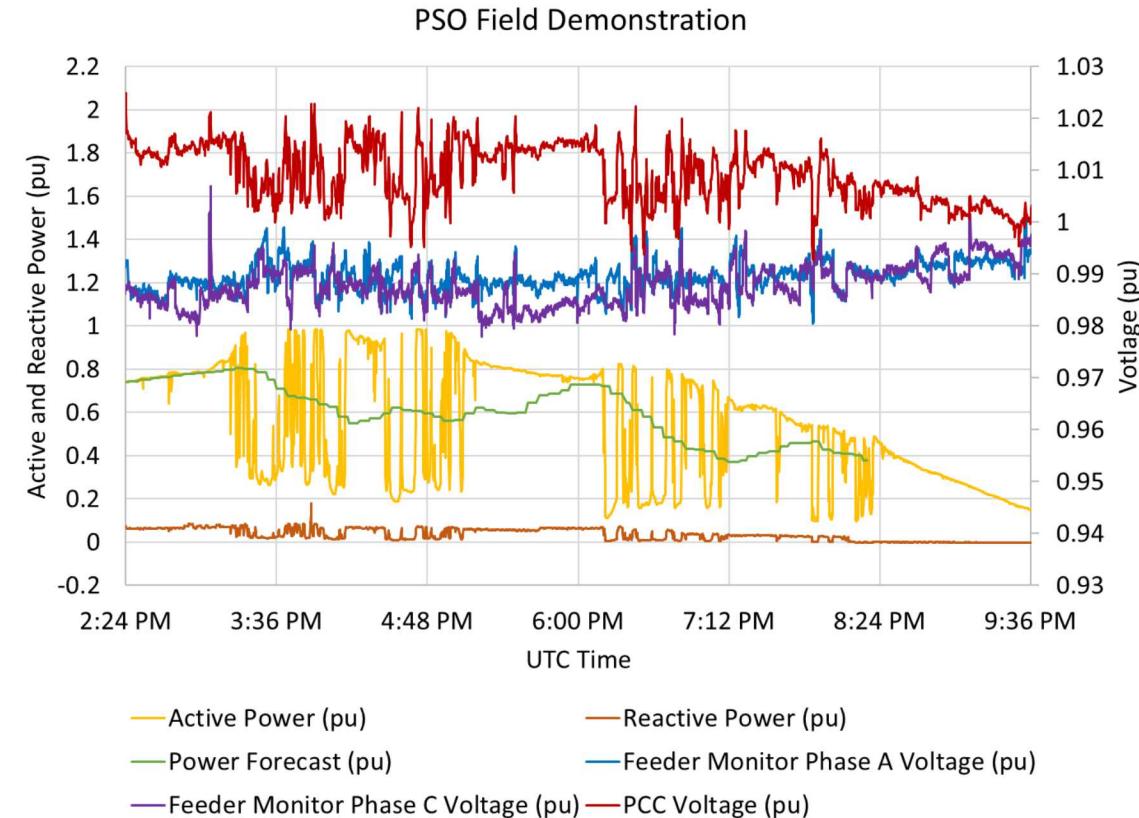
- Forecast matched PV production
- Line drop compensation should be disabled so that voltage regulation is completed with a single controller
- PSO operated near unity and could do little to help the voltage imbalance of the feeder—just like the other methods.
- Since Old Upton Rd only included three-phase inverters it was not possible to help the phase imbalance but did attempt to move the feeder voltages toward nominal.
- Digital twin method appears to work well!



Comparison of PV power from the Old Upton Rd site and the digital twin represented by the curtailed EPRI DER simulator.



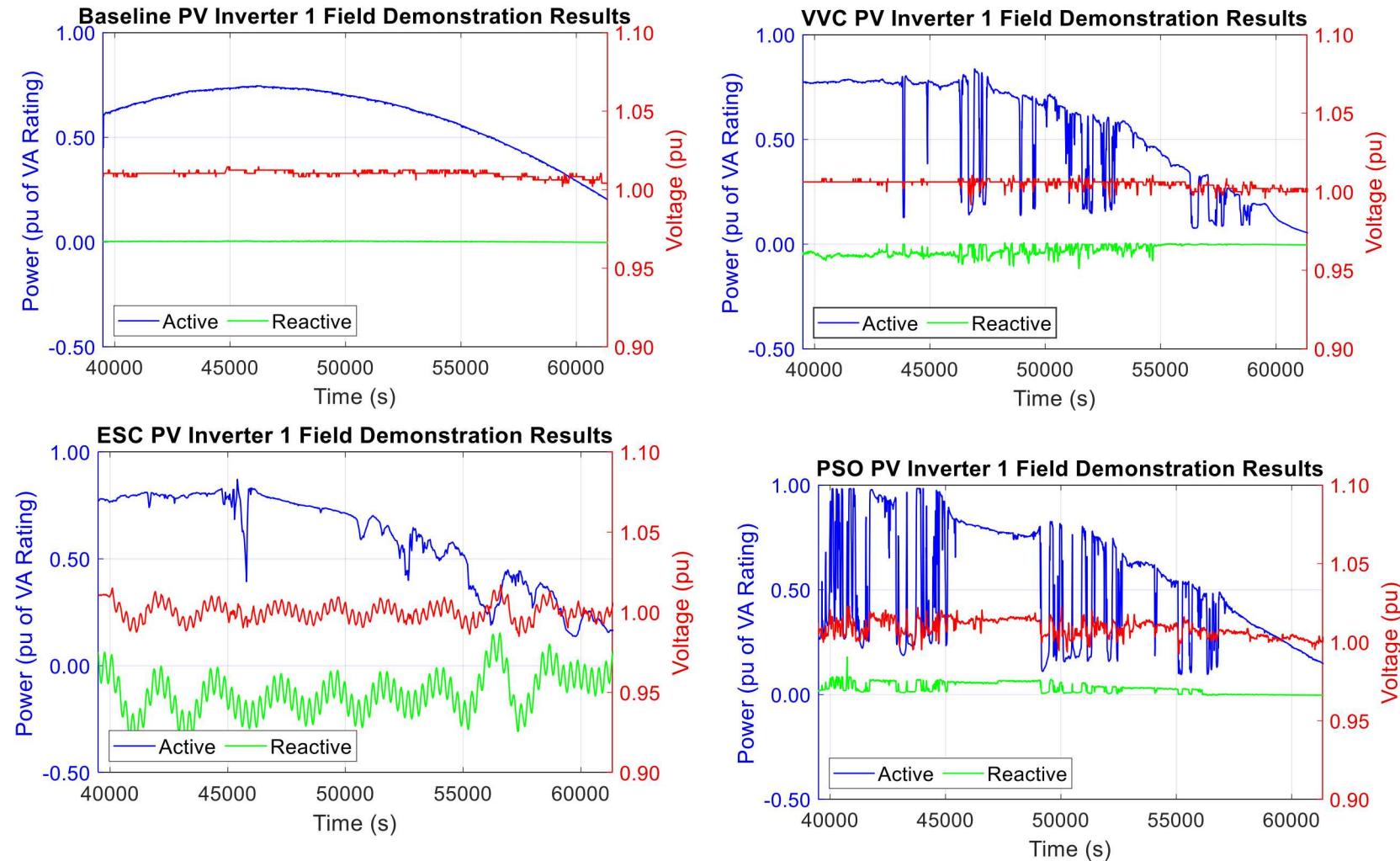
PCC RT-Lab and PCC Field Voltage Comparison.



When PV output is high, there is low voltage because there is a voltage regulator with line drop compensation on this feeder.

NG Field Demonstration

- All the voltage regulation methods were deployed on the live feeder by programming the volt-var or power factor setpoints in the 28 PV inverters at Old Upton Rd.
- Difficult (impossible?) to compare voltage regulation methods in the field because of different irradiance profiles and other voltage regulation equipment on the feeder.



Project Conclusions and Accomplishments

- **Demonstrated Incremental development approach was effective** (simulation to real time to PHIL to field)
 - Communications between measurement equipment, ADMS controllers, and DER devices can be verified.
 - Build confidence in controls before field deployment.
- **Digital twin was necessary during development** to overcome sparse measurements for state estimation
- **Observations about control options**
 - **Volt-var** functionality provides some DER voltage regulation without communications.
 - In low communication environments, **extremum seeking control** is a viable means to control a fleet of DER devices to track toward optimal PF setpoints, but it is relatively slow and the system must be tolerant of probing signal ripple.
 - State estimation-fed, model-based **DER optimization** is a viable control strategy with sufficient telemetry.
 - None of the methods were capable of solving the phase imbalance issue with three-phase inverters.
- **Open question and observations:**
 - How well could negative and zero sequence current from inverters regulate voltage on unbalanced feeders?
 - Available telemetry and communications will rarely supply what is assumed during ADMS development.
 - Software interoperability continues to be challenging.

Thank You

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