

INSTRUCTIONS

MODEL AVL-2A-B

0 TO 170 VOLTS, 2 ns RISE TIME

HIGH PERFORMANCE PULSE GENERATOR  
WITH IEEE 488.2 AND RS-232 CONTROL

SERIAL NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

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Manual Reference: /fileserver1/officefiles/instructword/avl/obs/AVL-2A-B,edition3.doc, created May 5, 2003

## INTRODUCTION

The AVL-2A-B is a high performance, GPIB and RS232-equipped instrument capable of generating 170V into 50 $\Omega$  loads at repetition rates up to 5 kHz. The output pulse width is variable from 3 to 100 ns, and the sync delay is variable up to  $\pm 200$  ns. The rise time is fixed at less than 2 ns.

Instruments with the "-P" model suffix can generate 0 to +170V, whereas instruments with the "-N" model suffix can generate 0 to -170V. Instruments with the "-PN" suffix can generate both polarities.

The AVL-2A-B is a highly flexible instrument. Aside from the internal trigger source, it can also be triggered or gated by external TTL-level signals. A front-panel pushbutton or a computer command can also be used to trigger the instrument.

The AVL-2A-B features front panel keyboard and adjust knob control of the output pulse parameters along with a four line by 40-character backlit LCD display of the output amplitude, pulse width, pulse repetition frequency, and delay. The instrument includes memory to store up to four complete instrument setups. The operator may use the front panel or the computer interface to store a complete "snapshot" of all key instrument settings, and recall this setup at a later time.

## AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The AVL-2A-B is available with several options:

"-OS" Option: an externally generated DC offset can be added to the output.

"-EA" Option: the amplitude can be controlled by an externally generated 0 to +10V analog control voltage.

"-M" Option: a monitor output is provided.

## SPECIFICATIONS

Model:	AVL-2A-B <sup>2</sup>
Amplitude <sup>3,4</sup> : (50 Ohm load)	0 to 170 Volts
Rise time (20%-80%):	< 2 ns (typically 1 ns)
Fall time (80%-20%):	< 2 ns
Pulse width (FWHM):	3 to 100 ns
PRF:	0 to 5 kHz
Polarity <sup>6</sup> :	Positive or negative or both (specify)
GPIO and RS-232 control <sup>2</sup> :	Standard on -B units.
LabView drivers:	check <a href="http://www.avtechpulse.com/labview">http://www.avtechpulse.com/labview</a> for availability and downloads
Propagation delay:	< 350 ns (100 ns optional <sup>7</sup> ) (Ext trig in to pulse out)
Jitter: (Ext trig in to pulse out)	± 100 ps ± 0.03% of sync delay
DC offset or bias insertion:	Option available. Apply required DC offset or bias in the range of ± 50 Volts (250 mA max) to back panel solder terminal. See note 8.
Trigger required:	External trigger mode: + 5 Volts, 50 to 500 ns (TTL)
Sync delay:	Variable 0 to 200 ns, sync out to pulse out
Sync output:	+ 3 Volt, 200 ns, will drive 50 Ohm loads
Gate input:	Synchronous or asynchronous, active high or low, switchable. Suppresses triggering when active.
Monitor output option <sup>9</sup> :	Provides a 20 dB attenuated coincident replica of main output
Connectors: OUT	BNC
TRIG	BNC
SYNC	BNC
MONITOR	BNC
GATE	BNC
Power requirements:	120/240 Volts (switchable) 50-60 Hz
Dimensions: (H x W x D)	100 mm x 430 mm x 375 mm (3.9" x 17" x 14.8")
Chassis material:	Cast aluminum frame & handles, blue vinyl on aluminum cover plates
Mounting:	Any
Temperature range:	+ 15° to + 40° C

- 1) -C suffix indicates stand-alone lab instrument with internal clock and line powering. (See page 112 for additional details of the four basic instrument formats).
- 2) -B suffix indicates IEEE-488.2 GPIO and RS-232 control of amplitude, pulse width, PRF and delay (See page 8).
- 3) For analog electronic control (0 to +10V) of the amplitude, suffix model number with -EA. Electronic control units also include standard front-panel controls.
- 4) For operation at amplitudes of less than 10% of full-scale, best results will be obtained by setting the amplitude near full-scale and using external attenuators on the output.
- 5) For rise time variable up to 10 ns in 1 ns increments via a ten-position switch suffix model number with -T. Not available on -B units.
- 6) Indicate desired polarity by suffixing model number with -P or -N (i.e. positive or negative) or -PN for dual polarity option. Polarity reversal achieved by means of a two-position switch that controls the polarity of the signal output port on -C units and via keypad control on -B units.
- 7) For 100 ns propagation delay option, add suffix -TN. Not available on -B units.
- 8) For DC offset option suffix model number with -OS.
- 9) For monitor option add suffix -M.

## INSTALLATION

### VISUAL CHECK

After unpacking the instrument, examine to ensure that it has not been damaged in shipment. Visually inspect all connectors, knobs, liquid crystal displays (LCDs), and the handles. Confirm that a power cord, a GPIB cable, and two instrumentation manuals (this manual and the “OP1B Interface Programming Manual”) are with the instrument. If the instrument has been damaged, file a claim immediately with the company that transported the instrument.

### PLUGGING IN THE INSTRUMENT

Examine the rear of the instrument. There will be a male power receptacle, a fuse holder and the edge of the power selector card visible. Confirm that the power selector card is in the correct orientation.

For AC line voltages of 110-120V, the power selector card should be installed so that the “120” marking is visible from the rear of the instrument, as shown below:

For AC line voltages of 220-240V, the power selector card should be installed so that the “240” marking is visible from the rear of the instrument, as shown below:

If it is not set for the proper voltage, remove the fuse and then grasp the card with a pair of pliers and remove it. Rotate horizontally through 180 degrees. Reinstall the card and the correct fuse.

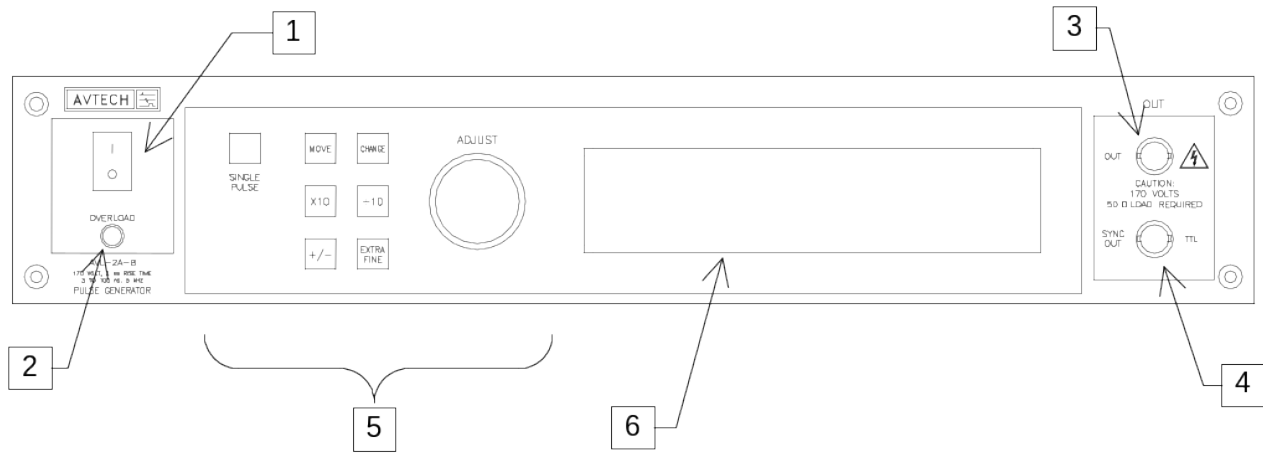
In the 120V setting, a 1.0A slow blow fuse is required. In the 240V setting, a 0.5A slow blow fuse is required.

### LABVIEW DRIVERS

A LabVIEW driver for this instrument is available for download on the Avtech web site, at <http://www.avtechpulse.com/labview>. A copy is also available in National Instruments' Instrument Driver Library at <http://www.natinst.com/>.



## FRONT PANEL CONTROLS



1. **POWER Switch.** The POWER push button switch applies AC prime power to the primaries of the transformer, turning the instrument on.
2. **OVERLOAD.** The AVL-2A-B is protected in its internal software against conflicting or dangerous settings. As an additional protective measure, an automatic overload circuit exists, which controls the front panel overload light. If the unit is overloaded (by operating at an exceedingly high duty cycle or by operating into a very low impedance), the protective circuit will turn the output of the instrument OFF and turn the indicator light ON. The light will stay ON (i.e. output OFF) for about 5 seconds after which the instrument will attempt to turn ON (i.e. light OFF) for about 1 second. If the overload condition persists, the instrument will turn OFF again (i.e. light ON) for another 5 seconds. If the overload condition has been removed, the instrument will turn on and resume normal operation.

This overload indicator may come on briefly at startup. This is not a cause for concern.

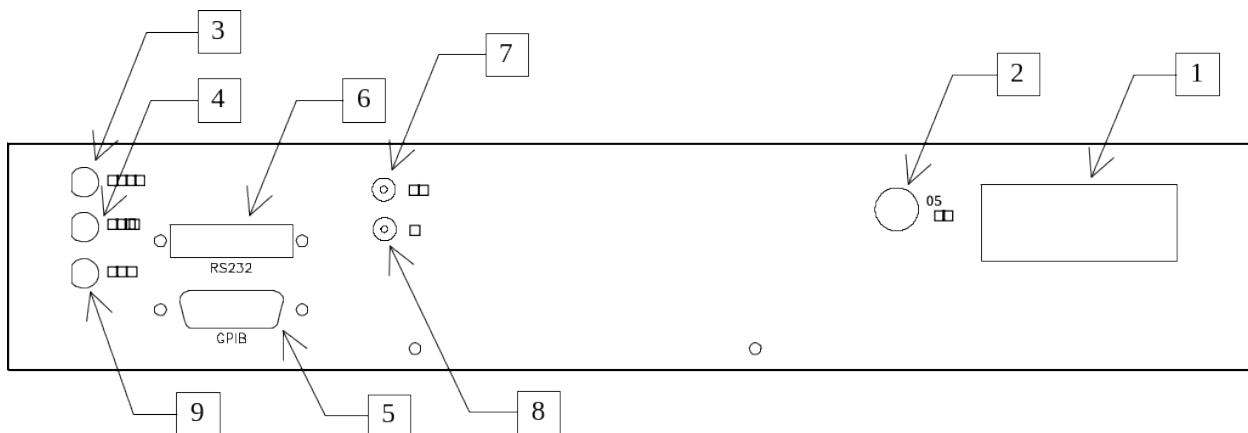
Note that the output circuit can withstand an infinite VSWR on the output port but is intended for operation with 50Ω loads.

3. **OUT CONNECTOR.** This BNC connector provides the main output signal, into load impedances of 50Ω.
4. **SYNC OUT.** This connector supplies a SYNC output that can be used to trigger other equipment, particularly oscilloscopes. This signal leads (or lags) the main output by a duration set by the "DELAY" controls and has an approximate amplitude of +3 Volts to  $R_L > 1k\Omega$  with a pulse width of approximately 50 ns.

5. LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY (LCD). This LCD is used in conjunction with the keypad to change the instrument settings. Normally, the main menu is displayed, which lists the key adjustable parameters and their current values. The "OP1B Interface Programming Manual" describes the menus and submenus in detail.
6. KEYPAD.

Control Name	Function
MOVE	This moves the arrow pointer on the display.
CHANGE	This is used to enter the submenu, or to select the operating mode, pointed to by the arrow pointer.
×10	If one of the adjustable numeric parameters is displayed, this increases the setting by a factor of ten.
÷10	If one of the adjustable numeric parameters is displayed, this decreases the setting by a factor of ten.
+/-	If one of the adjustable numeric parameters is displayed, and this parameter can be both positive or negative, this changes the sign of the parameter.
EXTRA FINE	This changes the step size of the ADJUST knob. In the extra-fine mode, the step size is twenty times finer than in the normal mode. This button switches between the two step sizes.
ADJUST	This large knob adjusts the value of any displayed numeric adjustable values, such as frequency, pulse width, etc. The adjust step size is set by the "EXTRA FINE" button.  When the main menu is displayed, this knob can be used to move the arrow pointer.

## REAR PANEL CONTROLS



1. **AC POWER INPUT.** A three-pronged recessed male connector is provided on the back panel for AC power connection to the instrument. Also contained in this assembly is a slow-blow fuse and a removable card that can be removed and repositioned to switch between 120V AC in and 240V AC in.

For AC line voltages of 110-120V, the power selector card should be installed so that the “120” marking is visible from the rear of the instrument.

For AC line voltages of 220-240V, the power selector card should be installed so that the “240” marking is visible from the rear of the instrument.

If it is not set for the proper voltage, remove the fuse and then grasp the card with a pair of pliers and remove it. Rotate horizontally through 180 degrees. Reinstall the card and the correct fuse.

In the 120V setting, a 1.0A slow blow fuse is required. In the 240V setting, a 0.5A slow blow fuse is required.

2. **0.5A SB.** This fuse protects the DC power supply to the output stage.
3. **GATE.** This TTL-level (0 and +5V) logic input can be used to gate the triggering of the instrument. This input can be either active high or active low, depending on the front panel settings or programming commands. (The instrument triggers normally when this input is unconnected). When set to active high mode, this input is pulled-down to ground by a 1 k $\Omega$  resistor. When set to active low mode, this input is pulled-up to +5V by a 1 k $\Omega$  resistor.
4. **TRIG.** This TTL-level (0 and +5V) logic input can be used to trigger the instrument, if the instrument is set to triggering externally. The instrument triggers on the rising edge of this input. The input impedance of this input is 1 k $\Omega$ . (Depending on the length of cable attached to this input, and the source driving it, it may be desirable to

add a coaxial 50 Ohm terminator to this input to provide a proper transmission line termination. The Pasternack ([www.pasternack.com](http://www.pasternack.com)) PE6008-50 BNC feed-thru 50 Ohm terminator is suggested for this purpose.)

5. GPIB Connector. A standard GPIB cable can be attached to this connector to allow the instrument to be computer-controlled. See the "OP1B Interface Programming Manual" for more details on GPIB control.
6. RS-232 Connector. A standard serial cable with a 25-pin male connector can be attached to this connector to allow the instrument to be computer-controlled. See the "OP1B Interface Programming Manual" for more details on RS-232 control.
7. OS Connector. (Optional feature. Present on "-OS" units only.) The desired DC offset is applied to this connector. Internally, it is connected to the output centre conductor via a high quality RF inductor. Do not exceed  $\pm 50\text{V}$ , 250 mA.
8. M Connector. (Optional feature. Present on "-M" units only.) The monitor output provides an attenuated replica (20 dB down) of the voltage on the main output. The monitor output is designed to operate into a 50 Ohm load.
9. AMP Connector. (Optional feature. Present on "-EA" units only.) The output amplitude can be set to track the voltage on this input. Zero Volts in corresponds to zero amplitude output, and +10V in corresponds to maximum amplitude out. This mode is activated by selecting "Ext Control" on the front-panel amplitude menu, or with the "source:voltage external" command.

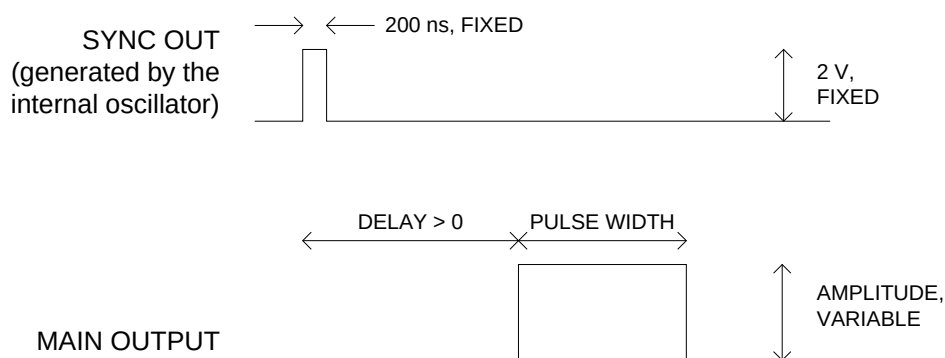
## GENERAL INFORMATION

### BASIC PULSE CONTROL

This instrument can be triggered by its own internal clock or by an external TTL trigger signal. In either case, two output channels respond to the trigger: OUT and SYNC.

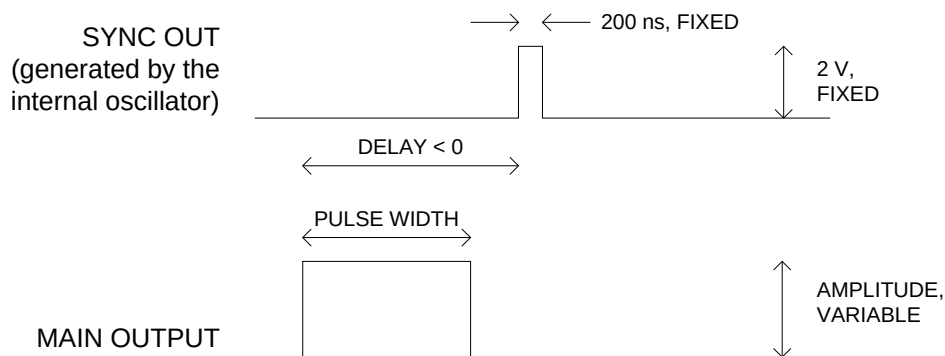
- **OUT.** This is the main output. The maximum output voltage is 170V.
- **SYNC.** The SYNC pulse is a fixed-width TTL-level reference pulse used to trigger oscilloscopes or other measurement systems. When the delay is set to a positive value the SYNC pulse precedes the OUT pulse. When the delay is set to a negative value the SYNC pulse follows the OUT pulse.

These pulses are illustrated below, assuming internal triggering and a positive delay. All waveforms are shown with positive amplitudes.



*Figure A*

If the delay is negative, the order of the SYNC and OUT pulses is reversed:



*Figure B*

The next figure illustrates the relationship between the signal when an external TTL-level trigger is used:

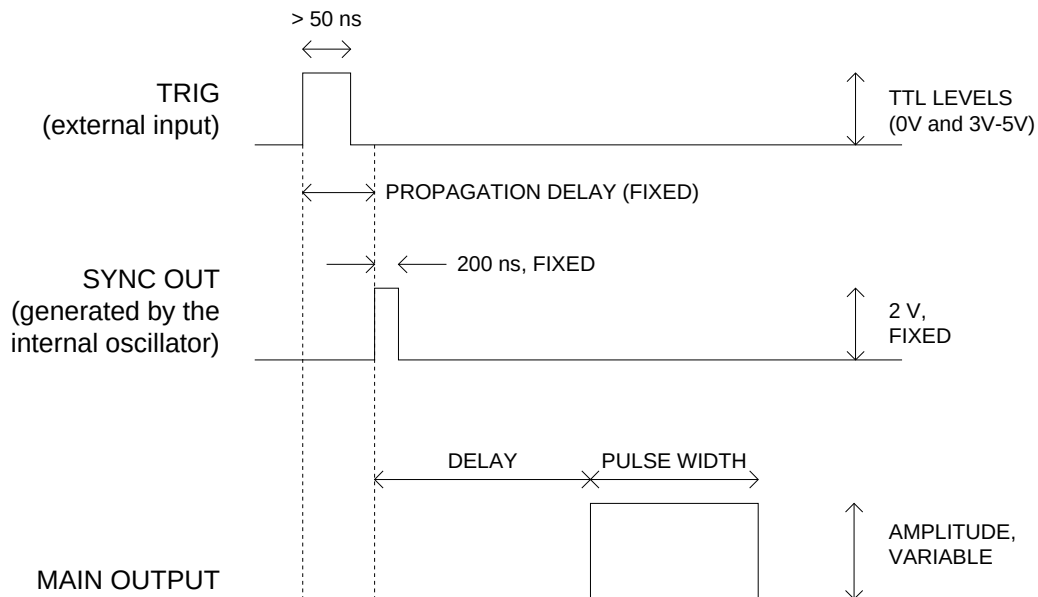


Figure C

As before, if the delay is negative, the order of the SYNC and OUT pulses is reversed.

In general, the delay, pulse width, and frequency (when in the internal mode), of the OUT pulse can be varied with front panel controls or via the GPIB or RS-232 computer interfaces.

### TRIGGER MODES

This instrument has four trigger modes:

- Internal Trigger: the instrument controls the trigger frequency, and generates the clock internally.
- External Trigger: the instrument is triggered by an external TTL-level clock on the back-panel TRIG connector.
- Manual Trigger: the instrument is triggered by the front-panel "SINGLE PULSE" pushbutton.
- Hold Trigger: the instrument is set to not trigger at all.

These modes can be selected using the front panel trigger menu, or by using the appropriate programming commands. (See the “OP1B Interface Programming Manual” for more details.)

**WARNING:** The output stage may be damaged if triggered by an external signal at a pulse repetition frequency greater than 5 kHz.

### GATING MODES

Triggering can be suppressed by a TTL-level signal on the rear-panel GATE connector. The instrument can be set to stop triggering when this input high or low, using the front-panel gate menu or the appropriate programming commands. When gated, the output will complete the full pulse width if the output is high, and then stop triggering. Pulses are not truncated.

### TOP COVER REMOVAL

The interior of the instrument may be accessed by removing the four Phillips screws on the top panel. With the four screws removed, the top cover may be slid back (and off).

### ELECTROMAGNETIC INTERFERENCE

To prevent electromagnetic interference with other equipment, all used outputs should be connected to shielded  $50\Omega$  loads using shielded  $50\Omega$  coaxial cables. Unused outputs should be terminated with shielded  $50\Omega$  BNC terminators or with shielded BNC dust caps, to prevent unintentional electromagnetic radiation. All cords and cables should be less than 3m in length.

## OPTIONAL FEATURES

### RACK MOUNTING, "-R5" OPTION

A rack mounting kit is available. The "-R5" rack mount kit may be installed after first removing the one Phillips screw on the side panel adjacent to the front handle.

### DC OFFSET, "-OS" OPTION

A DC offset can be added to the output signal by applying a DC voltage to the rear-panel OS connector. Internally, it is connected to the output centre conductor via a high quality RF inductor. Do not exceed  $\pm 50\text{V}$ , 250 mA.

### MONITOR OUTPUT, "-M" OPTION

The monitor output provides an attenuated replica (20 dB down) of the voltage on the main output. The monitor output is designed to operate into a 50 Ohm load.

### ELECTRONIC AMPLITUDE CONTROL, "-EA" OPTION

The output amplitude can be set to track the voltage on this input. Zero Volts in corresponds to zero amplitude output, and +10V in corresponds to maximum amplitude out. This mode is activated by selecting "Ext Control" on the front-panel amplitude menu, or with the "source:voltage external" command.



## PROTECTING YOUR INSTRUMENT

### TURN OFF INSTRUMENT WHEN NOT IN USE

The lifetime of the switching elements in the pulse generator module is proportional to the running time of the instrument. For this reason the prime power to the instrument should be turned off when the instrument is not in use. In the case of failure, the switching elements are easily replaced following the procedure described in a following section.

### DO NOT EXCEED 5 kHz

The output stage may be damaged if triggered by an external signal at a pulse repetition frequency greater than 5 kHz.

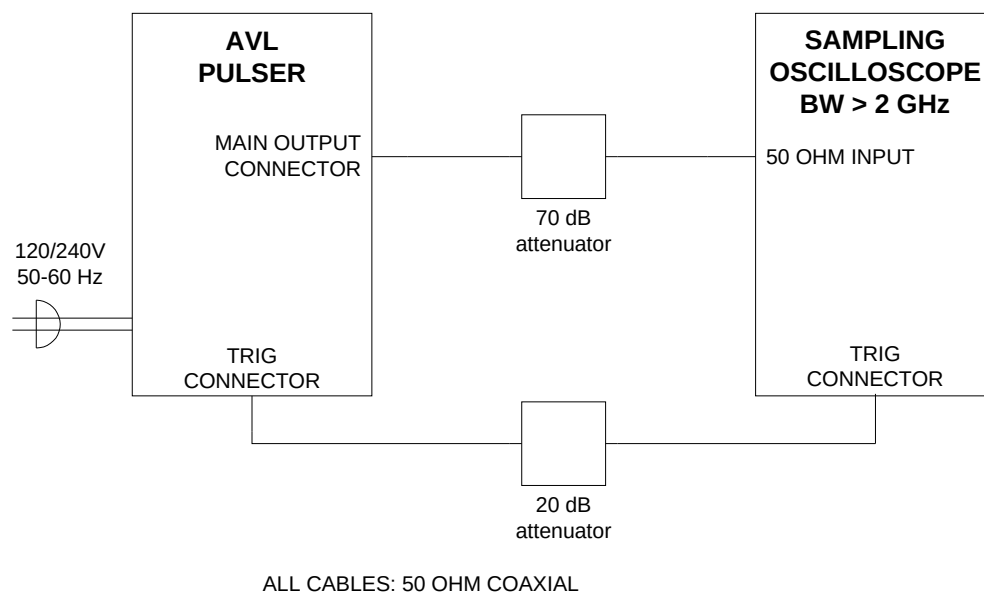
### USE A 50 $\Omega$ LOAD

The output stage may be damaged if the output is not terminated into a 50 $\Omega$  load.

## OPERATIONAL CHECK

This section describes a sequence to confirm the basic operation of the instrument. It should be performed after receiving the instrument. It is a useful learning exercise as well.

Before proceeding with this procedure, finish reading this instruction manual thoroughly. Then read the “Local Control” section of the “OP1B Interface Programming Manual” thoroughly. The “Local Control” section describes the front panel controls used in this operational check - in particular, the MOVE, CHANGE, and ADJUST controls.



### *BASIC TEST ARRANGEMENT*

1. Connect the pulse generator to a sampling oscilloscope as shown above. Note that:
  - a) The use of 70 dB attenuator at the sampling scope vertical input channel will insure a peak input signal to the sampling scope of less than 1 Volt. **WARNING:** This model may provide a peak output power in excess of 580 Watts. The peak power rating of the attenuator must exceed this limit. Factory tests are conducted using a Midwest Microwave model ATT-0527-20-SMA-07 attenuator.
  - b) The TRIG output channel provides TTL level signals (approximately 0 and +3V). To avoid overdriving the TRIG input channel of some scopes, a 20 dB attenuator should be placed at the input to the scope trigger channel.

- c) The bandwidth capability of components and instruments used to display the pulse generator output signal (attenuators, cables, connectors, etc.) should exceed 1 GHz.
  - d) Set the oscilloscope to trigger externally with the vertical setting at 100 mV/div and the horizontal setting at 20 ns/div.
2. Turn on the AVL-2A-B. The main menu will appear on the LCD.
  3. To set the AVL-2A-B to trigger from the internal clock at a PRF of 2 kHz:
    - a) The arrow pointer should be pointing at the frequency menu item. If it is not, press the MOVE button until it is.
    - b) Press the CHANGE button. The frequency submenu will appear. Rotate the ADJUST knob until the frequency is set at 2 kHz.
    - c) The arrow pointer should be pointing at the "Internal" choice. If it is not, press MOVE until it is.
    - d) Press CHANGE to return to the main menu.
  4. To set the delay to 100 ns:
    - a) Press the MOVE button until the arrow pointer is pointing at the delay menu item.
    - b) Press the CHANGE button. The delay submenu will appear. Rotate the ADJUST knob until the delay is set at 100 ns.
    - c) The arrow pointer should be pointing at the "Normal" choice. If it is not, press MOVE until it is.
    - d) Press CHANGE to return to the main menu.
  5. To set the pulse width to 50 ns:
    - a) Press the MOVE button until the arrow pointer is pointing at the pulse width menu item.
    - b) Press the CHANGE button. The pulse width submenu will appear. Rotate the ADJUST knob until the pulse width is set at 50 ns.
    - c) The arrow pointer should be pointing at the "Normal" choice. If it is not, press MOVE until it is.

- d) Press CHANGE to return to the main menu.
6. At this point, nothing should appear on the oscilloscope.
  7. To enable the output:
    - a) Press the MOVE button until the arrow pointer is pointing at the output menu item.
    - b) Press the CHANGE button. The output submenu will appear.
    - c) Press MOVE until the arrow pointer is pointing at the "ON" choice.
    - d) Press CHANGE to return to the main menu.
  8. To change the output amplitude:
    - a) Press the MOVE button until the arrow pointer is pointing at the amplitude menu item.
    - b) Press the CHANGE button. The amplitude submenu will appear. Rotate the ADJUST knob until the amplitude is set at +150V (or -150V for "-N" models).
    - c) Observe the oscilloscope. You should see 50 ns wide, 150V pulses. If you do not, you may need to adjust the delay setting to a value more compatible with your sampling oscilloscope. Repeat step 4 if required. You may also need to adjust the sampling scope controls.
    - d) Rotate the ADJUST knob. The amplitude as seen on the oscilloscope should vary. Return it to 150V.
    - e) ("-PN" units only) Press the +/- button on the front panel. The amplitude as seen on the oscilloscope should flip polarity, to -150V.
    - f) Press CHANGE to return to the main menu.
  9. Try varying the pulse width, by repeating step (5). As you rotate the ADJUST knob, the pulse width on the oscilloscope will change. It should agree with the displayed value.

This completes the operational check.

## PROGRAMMING YOUR PULSE GENERATOR

### KEY PROGRAMMING COMMANDS

The "OP1B Interface Programming Manual" describes in detail how to connect the pulse generator to your computer, and the programming commands themselves. A large number of commands are available; however, normally you will only need a few of these. Here is a basic sample sequence of commands that might be sent to the instrument after power-up:

*rst	(resets the instrument)
trigger:source internal	(selects internal triggering)
frequency 1000 Hz	(sets the frequency to 1000 Hz)
pulse:width 50 ns	(sets the pulse width to 50 ns)
pulse:delay 20 ns	(sets the delay to 20 ns)
volt:ampl 150	(sets the amplitude to +150 V)
	("-N" units should use "volt:ampl -150)
output on	(turns on the output)

For triggering a single event, this sequence would be more appropriate:

*rst	(resets the instrument)
trigger:source hold	(turns off all triggering)
pulse:width 50 ns	(sets the pulse width to 50 ns)
output on	(turns on the output)
volt:ampl 150	(sets the amplitude to +150 V)
	("-N" units should use "volt:ampl -150)
trigger:source immediate	(generates a single non-repetitive trigger event)
trigger:source hold	(turns off all triggering)
output off	(turns off the output)

To set the instrument to trigger from an external TTL signal applied to the rear-panel TRIG connector, use:

*rst	(resets the instrument)
trigger:source external	(selects external triggering)
pulse:width 50 ns	(sets the pulse width to 50 ns)
pulse:delay 1 us	(sets the delay to 1 us)
volt:ampl 150	(sets the amplitude to +150 V)
	("-N" units should use "volt:ampl -150)
output on	(turns on the output)

These commands will satisfy 90% of your programming needs.

## ALL PROGRAMMING COMMANDS

For more advanced programmers, a complete list of the available commands is given below. These commands are described in detail in the “OP1B Interface Programming Manual”. (Note: this manual also includes some commands that are not implemented in this instrument. They can be ignored.)

<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Parameter</u>	<u>Notes</u>
LOCAL		
OUTPut:		
:[STATe]	<boolean value>	
:PROTection		
:TRIPped?		[query only]
REMOTE		
[SOURce]:		
:FREQuency		
[:CW   FIXed]	<numeric value>	
[SOURce]:		
:PULSe		
:PERiod	<numeric value>	
:WIDTh	<numeric value>	
:DCYClE	<numeric value>	
:HOLD	WIDTh   DCYClE	
:DELay	<numeric value>	
:GATE		
:TYPE	ASYNc   SYNc	
:LEVel	HIgh   LOw	
[SOURce]:		
:VOLTage		
[:LEVel]		
[:IMMediate]		
[:AMPLitude]	<numeric value>   EXTeRnal	
:PROTection		
:TRIPped?		[query only]
STATUS:		
:OPERation		
:[EVENT]?		[query only, always returns "0"]
:CONDition?		[query only, always returns "0"]
:ENABle	<numeric value>	[implemented but not useful]
:QUEStionable		
:[EVENT]?		[query only, always returns "0"]
:CONDition?		[query only, always returns "0"]
:ENABle	<numeric value>	[implemented but not useful]
SYSTEM:		
:COMMunicate		
:GPIB		
:ADDReSS	<numeric value>	
:SERial		
:CONTRol		
:RTS	ON   IBFull   RFR	
:[RECeive]		

	:BAUD	1200   2400   4800   9600	
	:BITS	7   8	
	:ECHO	<boolean value>	
	:PARity		
	:[TYPE]	EVEN   ODD   NONE	
	:SBITS	1   2	
	:ERRor		
	:[NEXT]?		[query only]
	:COUNT?		[query only]
	:VERSion?		[query only]
TRIGger:			
	:SOURce	INTernal   EXTernal   MANual   HOLD   IMMEDIATE	
*CLS			[no query form]
*ESE		<numeric value>	
*ESR?			[query only]
*IDN?			[query only]
*OPC			
*SAV		0   1   2   3	[no query form]
*RCL		0   1   2   3	[no query form]
*RST			[no query form]
*SRE		<numeric value>	
*STB?			[query only]
*TST?			[query only]
*WAI			[no query form]

PERFORMANCE CHECKSHEET