



USB Nitric Oxide isoPod™ (Model EPU355)



- Software controlled
- Plug and play with Pod-Vu software
- Electrical isolation
- Input ranges, from 2 nA to 2 µA
- Offset control to zero background signal

Description

An electrically isolated, compact signal conditioner, with a USB/virtual serial port connection, for continuous monitoring of polarographic (Clark-style) nitric oxide electrodes.

Compatibility

This isoPod can be used with most types of nitric oxide sensor including:

- the eDAQ range of nitric oxide electrodes
- electrodes sold by Redbox Direct, Innovative Instruments, WPI Inc., etc.

Use with serial compatible software (RS232) or later, on Windows XP or later computers with a USB port. A virtual serial port is created. Can be used with serial compatible software such as such as:

- Connect™, www.labtronics.com/DI/RS232_Software.htm
- WinVWedge®, www.taltech.com/products/winwedge.html
- Tera Term, <http://logmett.com/>
- Pod-Vu, <http://www.edaq.com/>

or with your own software written in LabView, Visual Basic or C++ etc.

Applications

Ideal for chemical, biochemical, or physiological studies where continuous monitoring of a nitric oxide sensor is required. Electrical isolation minimizes interference with nearby pH, conductivity, ISE and similar sensors used in multi-parametric studies.

Theory of Operation

The Nitric Oxide isoPod applies a polarizing voltage across the internal electrodes (anode and cathode) of the sensor and measures the resulting current signal. At a sufficient polarizing voltage the oxidation of nitric oxide occurs at the working electrode (anode):



and the current flow is proportional to the nitric oxide concentration.

Polarization can be selected between 0 and +1000 mV but usually a value of +800 mV is close to optimal for nitric oxide.

There are four current signal gain settings, and recording is at least 16 bit resolution, which gives better than picoampere resolution. The isoPod runs on DC power and can be used inside a Faraday cage for lowest noise operation.

Pod-Vu Software

A demonstration version of eDAQ Pod-Vu software is included on the isoPod Installer USB stick. If you have purchased Pod-Vu then a license code will also have been provided to enable all Pod-Vu features.

Pod-Vu will automatically configure the virtual serial ports and locate all connected USB isoPods. Refer to the Pod-Vu manual for operating instructions.

Pod-Vu will communicate with up to eight isoPod units, calibrate sensors, log data, and graphically display the signals in real time.

Specifications

Input ranges (and resolution):	2 nA (625 aA) 20 nA (6.25 fA) 200 nA (62.5 fA) 2 µA (625 fA)
Polarization:	0 to +1000 mV
Zero offset:	±2 µA
Typical RMS noise:*	30 fA @ 1 /s or slower
Connectors:	BNC (input), mini USB
Output data:	ASCII or 32 bit binary IEEE floating point
Output rate:	Up to 100 /s
COM port settings:	115200 baud; 8 bits; 1 stopbit; no parity; flow NONE
Dimensions (l x w x h):	108 x 58 x 35 mm (4.25" x 2.28" x 1.38")
Weight:	200 g (7 oz)
Operating conditions:	0 – 40°C, 0 – 90% humidity (non condensing)

eDAQ Pty Ltd reserves the right to alter these specifications at any time.

* On 2 nA range, 1 Gohm load, inside a Faraday cage.

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Serial Communication

The isoPod is fitted with a USB port. This can be used as a virtual serial port with Windows, Mac OSX, and Linux computers. USB drivers for Windows XP and later computers are located on the eDAQ USB stick supplied with the isoPod. Otherwise you can download a suitable driver from

<http://www.ftdichip.com/Drivers/VCP.htm>

Software can then be written to communicate with the isoPod as a serial (RS232) device, for example using LabView, Visual Basic, or C++.

The serial port number must first be established. Serial Ports 1 and 2 on Windows computers are reserved for the mother board. Thus it is common to find that the isoPod is located on serial port 3 (COM3) or greater.

The virtual serial port should be configured as 115200 baud, 8 bits, 1 stopbit, no parity. Set the flow control to NONE.

When correctly configured the unit will send the prompt **EPU355>** to indicate that a new command can be sent.

Interactive Communication

You can use terminal emulation software (eg Tera Term) to manually interact with the isoPod:

1. Download the Tera Term installer from <http://logmett.com>
2. Install Tera Term choosing the 'Compact Installation' option to reduce unnecessary extras.
3. Connect the isoPod and provide the computer with the isoPod Installer USB stick if a USB driver is requested.
4. Open the Windows device manager and find the isoPod and its corresponding COM port listed under 'Ports (COM & LPT)'. On first use there is no way to know in advance what COM port will be assigned to the isoPod, except that it will be COM3 or greater.
5. Start the Tera Term software, go to the Serial port... command in the Setup menu and configure the serial port as above. Click OK to return to the main Tera Term window and use the Return key to get the **EPU355>** prompt.

Once interactive communication is established you can be confident that the serial communications are working and can proceed to write your own software.

Serial Protocol

EPU355> help

EPU355> ?

Returns a list of commands

EPU355> set range <r>

Sets the range in nanoamperes where <r> = 2, 20, 200, or 2000. A confirmation string is returned.

EPU355> get range

Returns the range setting.

EPU355> set Vex <amount>

Set the excitation/poise voltage to <amount> between 0 and +1.000 V. A confirmation string is returned.

EPU355> get Vex

Returns the excitation/poise voltage in volts.

EPU355> set offset auto

Automatically set the incoming signal to zero nanoamperes.

EPU355> set offset <amount>

Applies an offset of <amount> nA up to 2000 nA to the signal.

EPU355> set offset 0

EPU355> set offset off

Removes any applied offset.

EPU355> set units

Sets the unit name, to be used after calibration. For example ppbNO, nM, ng/L.

EPU355> get units

Returns the unit name.

EPU355> r

Return a single reading. Can be repeated at up to 10 Hz.

EPU355> v

Return a single value. That is, the reading is returned as a number, without extraneous text such as unit name etc. Can be repeated at up to 10 Hz.

EPU355> sample ascii <freq> [N]

EPU355> sample binary <freq> [N]

Return readings at a frequency of <freq>, an integer between 1 and 100 Hz. Readings are returned as ASCII or 32 bit binary IEEE floating point data. Specify an optional integer, [N], to return that number of samples. Send ! to exit this mode. If <freq> is the character # then a single sample is returned every time # is sent.

EPU355> interval ascii <time> [N]

EPU355> interval binary <time> [N]

Return one sample every <time> seconds. Specify an optional integer, [N], to return a fixed number of samples. Send ! to exit this mode.

EPU355> cal set <N> <value>

Defines the Nth calibration point, <N>, by taking a signal reading and assigning it to the <value> which is in the defined units. Note that <N> has a range of 1 – 15. If there is only <N> = 1 (single point calibration) then it is assumed that zero signal corresponds to zero amount. Linear regression is used to determine the line of best fit as the response curve.

EPU355> cal set <N> <value> <current>

Defines the Nth calibration point, <N>, by assigning a signal value of <current> in nanoamperes to a <value> which is in the defined units. Note that <N> has a range of 1 – 15. If there is only <N> = 1 (single point calibration) then it is assumed that zero signal corresponds to zero amount. Linear regression is used to determine the line of best fit as the response curve.

EPU355> cal remove <N>

Remove the Nth calibration point, <N>. Any subsequent calibration points are decremented. Calibration is redetermined with existing calibration points.

EPU355> cal remove all

Remove all calibration points.

EPU355> cal get

Returns all calibration information.

EPU355> res

Takes a reading of the current signal, then uses it to divide Vex and calculate resistance. Returns a string showing this calculation.

EPU355> version

Returns the firmware version number.

EPU355> prompt off

Turns off the **EPU355>** prompt.

prompt on

Reinstates the **EPU355>** prompt.

How to start

If you intend to write your own software using these protocols then it is a good idea to commence by sending each command manually to the isoPod using a terminal emulation program for example Tera Term, see above. This will confirm the responses expected, so that you can be sure that any recent changes in the protocols will be accounted for.