

linear elements (straight lengths of rod or wire which are resonant and connected to the feed point) the polarization of the electric field will be linear and polarized parallel to the elements. If the elements are not consistently parallel with each other, then the polarization cannot easily be assumed. The following techniques are directed to antennas having polarization that is essentially linear (in one plane), although the method can be extended to include all forms of elliptic polarization.

Feed-Point Mismatch

The feed-point mismatch, although affected to some degree by the immediate environment of the antenna, does *not* affect the gain or radiation characteristics of an antenna. If the immediate environment of the antenna does not affect the feed-point impedance, then any mismatch intrinsic to the antenna tuning reflects a portion of the incident power back to the source. In a receiving antenna this reflected power is reradiated back into the environment, "free space," and can be lost entirely. In a transmitting antenna, the reflected power goes back to the final amplifier of the transmitter. In general an amplifier is *not* a matched source to the feed line, and, if the feed line has very low loss, the amplifier output controls are customarily altered during the normal tuning procedure to obtain maximum power transfer to the antenna. The power which has been reflected from the antenna combines with the source power to travel again to the antenna. This procedure is called conjugate matching, and the feed line is now part of a resonant system consisting of the mismatched antenna, feed line, and amplifier tuning circuits. It is therefore possible to use a mismatched antenna to its full gain potential, provided the mismatch is not so severe as to cause heating losses in the system, especially the feed line and matching devices. Similarly, a mismatched receiving antenna may be conjugately matched into the receiver front end for maximum power transfer. In any case it should be clearly kept in mind that the feed-point mismatch does *not* affect the radiation characteristics of an antenna. It can only affect the system efficiency wherein heating losses are concerned.

Why then do we include feed-point mismatch as part of the antenna characteristics? The reason is that for efficient system performance most antennas are resonant transducers and present a reasonable match over a relatively narrow frequency range. It is therefore desirable to design an antenna, whether it be a simple dipole or an array of Yagis, such that the final single feed-point impedance be essentially resistive and of magnitude consistent with the impedance of the feed line which is to be used. Furthermore, in order to make accurate, absolute gain measurements, it is vital that the antenna under test accept all the power

losses may be determined from information contained in Chapter Three.

While on the subject of feed-point impedance, mention should be made of the use of baluns in antennas. A balun is simply a device which permits a lossless transition between a balanced system — feed line or antenna — and an unbalanced feed line or system. If the feed point of an antenna is symmetric such as with a dipole and it is desired to feed this antenna with an unbalanced feed line such as coax, it is necessary to provide a balun between the line and the feed point. Without the balun, current will be allowed to flow on the outside of the coax. The current on the outside of the feed line will cause radiation and thus the feed line becomes part of the antenna radiation system. In the case of beam antennas where it is desired to concentrate the radiated energy in a specific direction, this extra radiation from the feed line will be detrimental, causing distortion of the expected antenna pattern.

ANTENNA TEST SITE SET-UP AND EVALUATION

Since an antenna is a reciprocal device, measurements of gain and radiation patterns can be made with the test antenna used either as a transmitting or as a receiving antenna. In general and for practical reasons, the test antenna is used in the receiving mode, and the source or transmitting antenna is located at a specified fixed remote site and unattended. In other words the source antenna, energized by a suitable transmitter, is simply required to illuminate or flood the receiving site in a controlled and constant manner.

As mentioned earlier, antenna measurements ideally should be made under "free-space" conditions. A further restriction is that the illumination from the source antenna be a plane wave over the effective aperture (capture area) of the test antenna. A plane wave by definition is one in which the magnitude and phase of the fields are uniform, and in the test-antenna situation, *uniform over the effective area plane of the test antenna*. Since it is the nature of all radiation to expand in a spherical manner at great distance from the source, it would seem to be most desirable to locate the source antenna as far from the test site as possible. However, since for practical reasons the test site and source location will have to be near the earth and not in outer space, the environment must include the effects of the ground surface and other obstacles in the vicinity of both antennas. These effects almost always dictate that the test range (spacing between source and test antennas) be as short as possible consistent with maintaining a nearly error-free plane wave illuminating the test aperture.

A nearly error-free plane wave can be specified as one in which the phase and amplitude, from center to edge of the illuminating field over the