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The ALMY Sensor Modules

F. Bauer [a1], V .Danielyan [a,b], S .Horvat [a2], H.Kroha [a]

a) Max-Planck-Institut für Physik, Munich, Germany
b) Yerevan Physics Institute, Yerevan, Armenia

[1]Also at CEA Saclay, DSM, DAPNIA, Gif-sur-Yvette, France
[2]On leave of absence from Ruđer Bošković Institute, Zagreb, Croatia

INTRODUCTION

The desired performance of modern large area tracking detectors can only be achieved by precise monitoring of the relative positions of the detector components. For example in the muon spectrometer of the ATLAS experiment at the LHC, an optical alignment system has to provide the misalignment corrections to the track curvature with an accuracy of 30 μm (RMS).

A novel optical laser alignment monitoring system ("ALMY System"), developed for such applications, monitors the alignment of several semi-transparent optical position sensors along a collimated laser beam. The principle is shown in Fig.1.

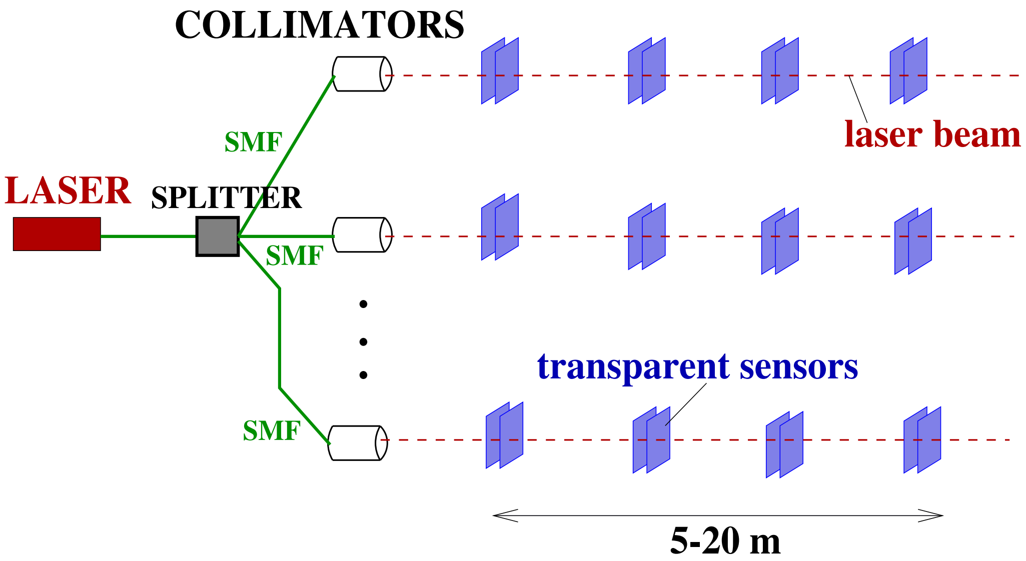


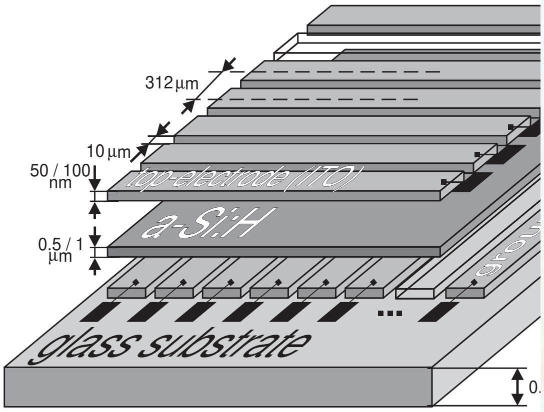
Fig.1. Principle of the ALMY laser alignment monitoring system with semi-transparent position sensors and a light distribution system with single-mode optical fibers (SMF).

The GaAlAs laser diodes emit the visible light at 690 nm and 780 nm wavelength. The beams are collimated via single-mode optical fibers and have a Gaussian beam profile with 2-5 mm diameter over a 15 m distance. The laboratory tests and the tests at the TESLA Free Electron Laser facility demonstrate that more than 10 sensors can be aligned along a 780 nm laser beam.

The layout of an ALMY sensor is shown in Fig.2. The sensor consists of a 0.3-1 μm thick layer of hydrogenated amorphous silicon (a-Si:H) between the two orthogonally segmented indium-tin-oxide (ITO) electrode layers which cover the sensitive area of 20x20 mm^2. The top 64 strip electrodes act as Schottky contacts, with 64 ground electrodes at the bottom. Such a layout allows for a two-dimensional position measurement. The active sensor layer is deposited on the 0.5-1 mm thick glass substrate, with an additional anti-reflective coating on the back side of the glass (10 cm diameter glass wafers are cut into 7 sensor substrates). A transmittance of 90%(75%) has been achieved with the 780 nm (690 nm) lasers. In the last several years extensive tests have been performed on 150 ALMY I and ALMY II sensor modules with integrated readout electronics (see Fig.3.). The results are described in the first section of this note. The system with ALMY II modules has been tested for the performance in the ATLAS end-cap muon spectrometer (section II). Section III describes the performance of the new, recently developed, readout electronics (ALMY III modules).

The recent changes also include the improvements in the production of the glass substrates.

Deposition of the active a-Si:H cell onto the new substrates is under development, the thicknesses of various layers still to be optimized. The most recent results and the performance of the new sensor cells with ALMY III electronics is outlined in the section IV. Section V describes the influence of the long-term laser illumination of a sensor on the changes in its sensitivity and the position resolution. The results of the radiation hardness tests are outlined in the section VI.



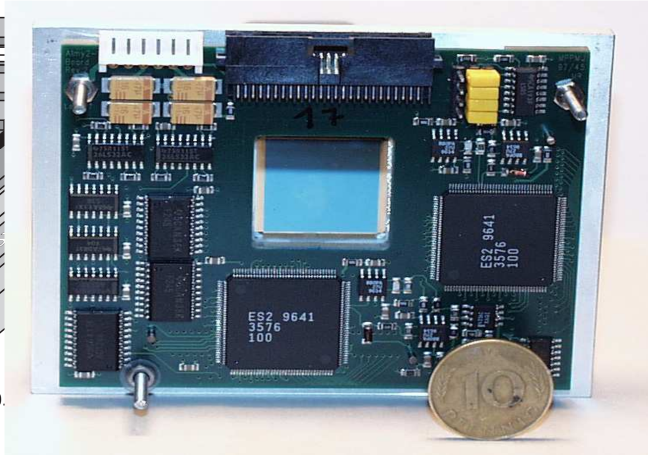


Fig.2. Layout of an amorphous silicon strip sensor.

Fig.3. ALMY sensor module with integrated readout electronics.

I. ALMY II SENSOR PERFORMANCE

Fig.4. shows the typical current-voltage characteristics of the ALMY II sensor diodes, characterized by a low dark current of 10^{-9} to 10^{-7}A/cm^2.

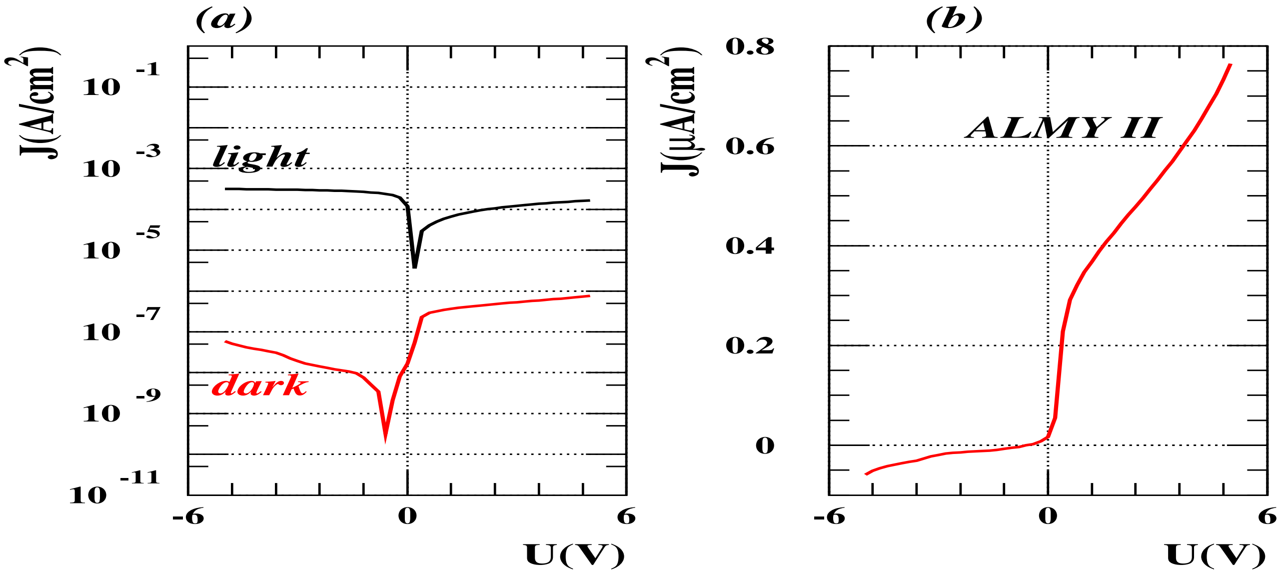


Fig.4. Current-voltage characteristics of the ALMY II Schottky diodes. (a) Measurements on the illuminated cell (light) and non-illuminated cell (dark) are shown in a logarithmic scale. (b) Measurement on a non-illuminated cell is also presented in a linear scale.

The anti-reflective coating on the back side of the glass substrate reduces the reflectivity of the glass surface to less than 0.5%, thus making the interference effects negligible. In this way the variations in the sensors position measurement are avoided. A uniform position resolution of 1 μm has been achieved over the whole active surface (see Fig.5.)

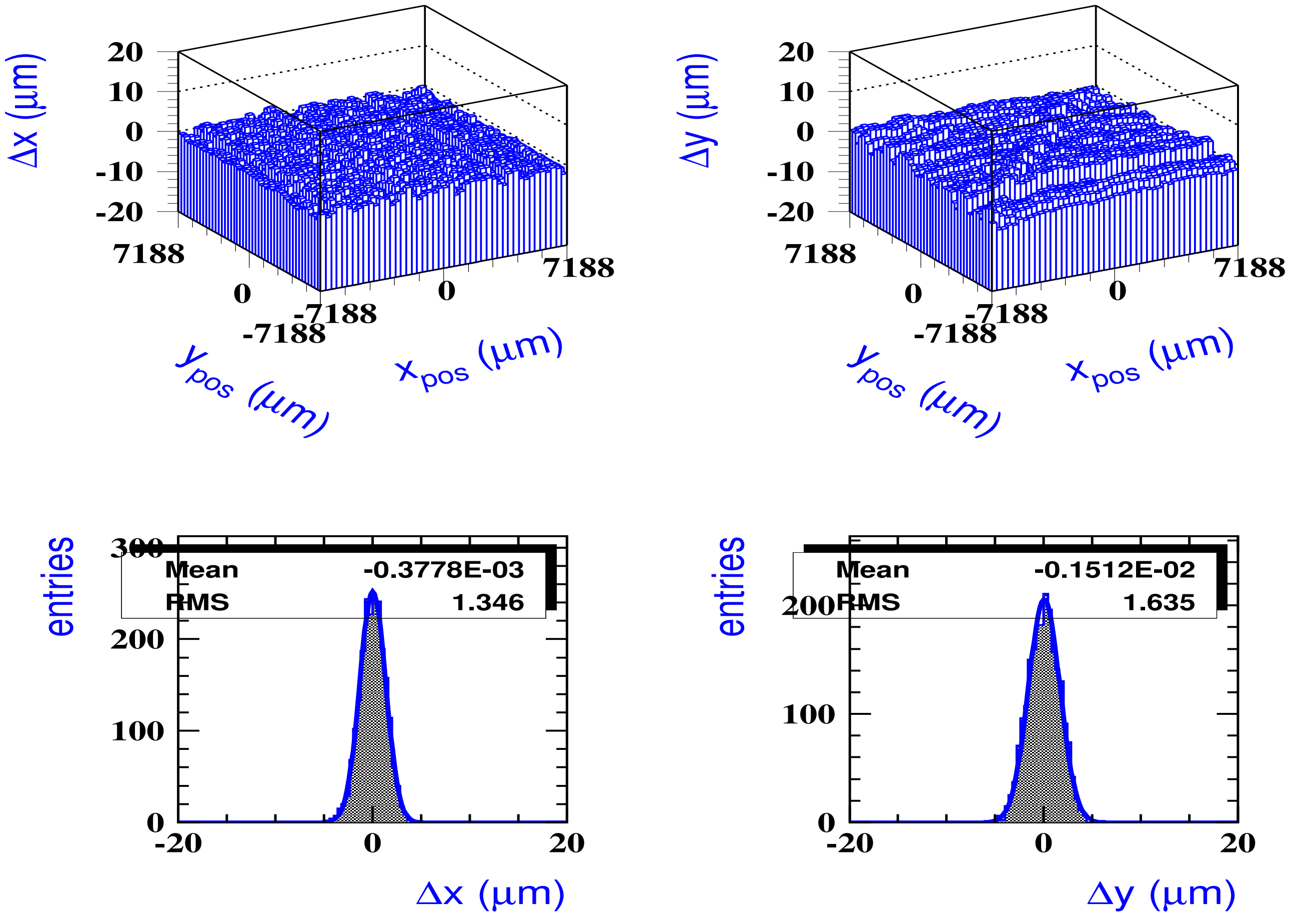


Fig.5. Position resolution (Δx, Δy) of an a-Si:H sensor with anti-reflective coating in the two coordinates (x_{pos}, y_{pos}).

The position resolution is insensitive to high magnetic fields due to the low Hall conductivity of amorphous silicon ($\mu_n^H = 10^{-2} - 10^{-3}$ cm^2/Vs).

The finite wedge angle and the curvature of the glass substrate can introduce the uncertainties in the refraction of the traversing laser beam. However, the beam refraction angle can be measured in a scan of the sensor surface and used as a senor parameter. The uncertainties are then reduced to less than 3 μrad (see Fig.6.).

II. PERFORMANCE IN ATLAS END-CAP MUON SPECTROMETER

Fig.7. shows the polar alignment rays connecting the MDT chambers in three to four different stations of the ATLAS end-cap muon spectrometer.

The rays have to provide the misalignment corrections of $\sim$30 μm to muon track sagitta, as well as to measure the angular displacements with the precision of $\sim$ 50 μrad. The performance of an ALMY system along one of such alignment rays (the polar monitor) has been extensively tested.

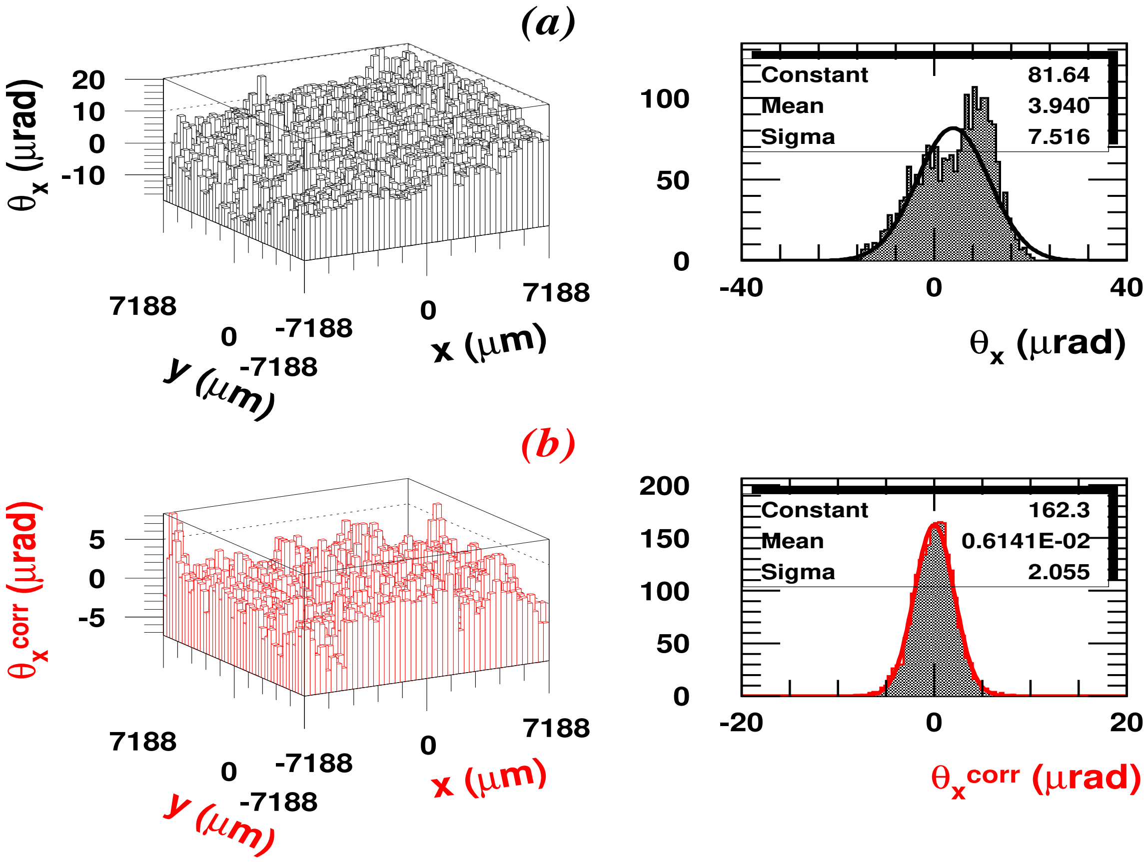


Fig.6. Laser beam refraction angle for a sensor with the glass substrate of a finite wedge angle (a) ϑ_x before and (b) $\vartheta_x{}^{corr}$ after the calibration parameters are applied. Similar result is also obtained for the y-component.

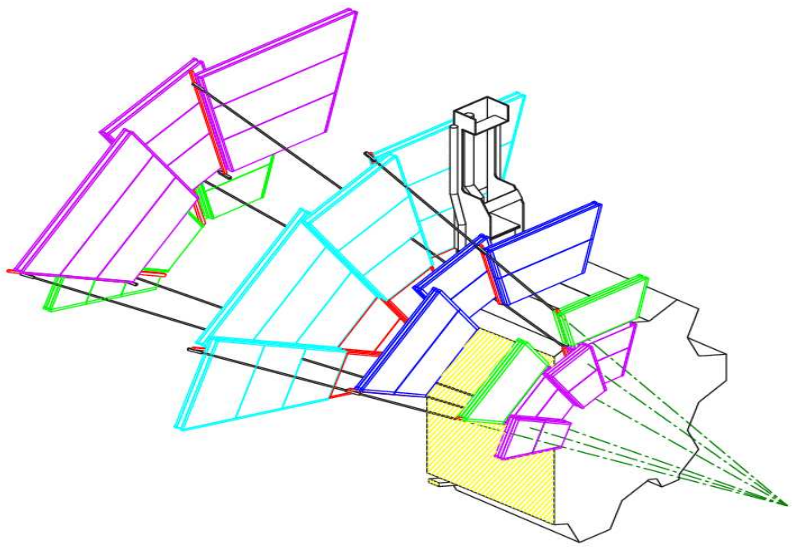


Fig.7. Polar alignment rays in one octant of the ATLAS end-cap muon spectrometer, connecting the MDT chambers of all three (four) muon stations.

The polar monitor consists of three ALMY telescopes along one laser beam, one for each of the muon stations. ALMY telescope (see Fig.8.) is assembled of two ALMY modules mounted parallel to each other at distance of 10 cm. It measures the laser beam position and the angular direction of the beam.

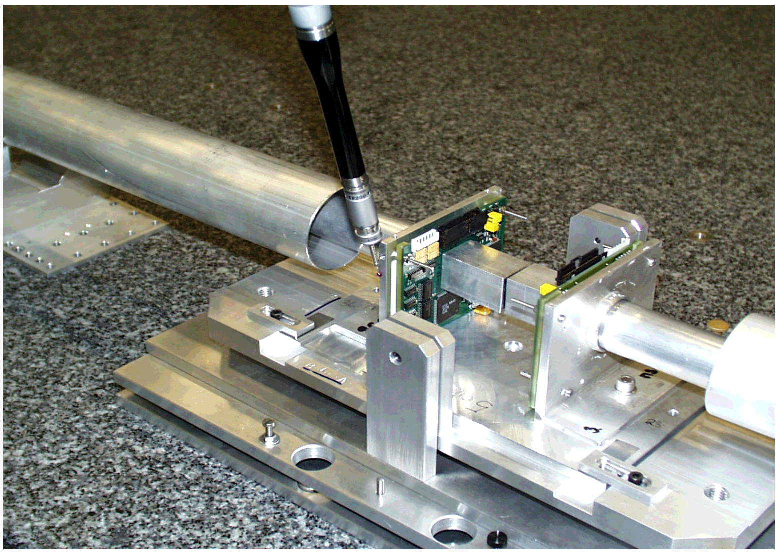


Fig.8. ALMY telescope for the measurement of the laser beam position and direction. It consists of two ALMY sensors mounted parallel to each other at the distance of 10 cm.

Fig.9 shows the setup for the performance tests.

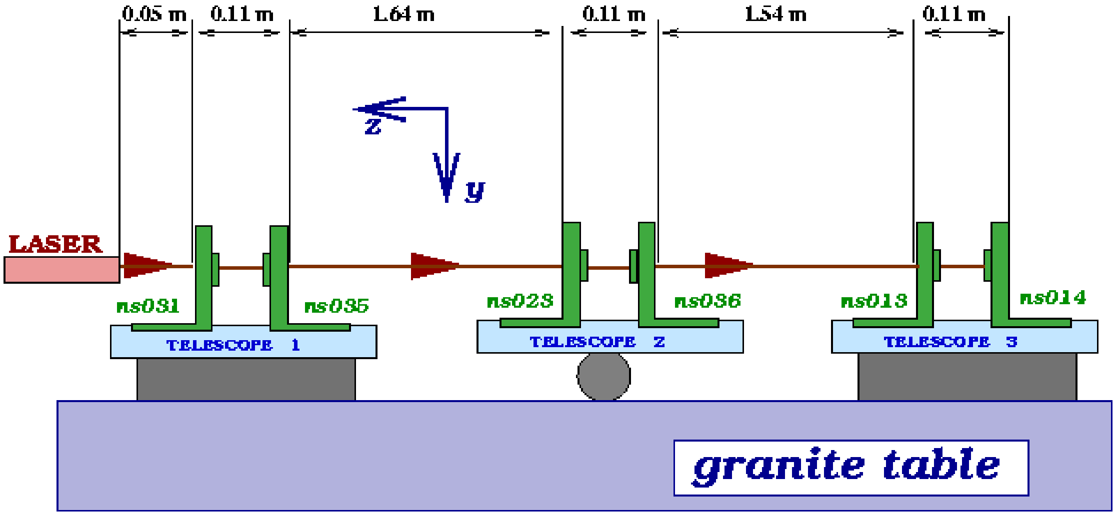


Fig.9. Setup for the absolute performance test of an ALMY polar monitoring system for ATLAS end-cap muon spectrometer.

Two independent measurements are made: the local laser beam position is measured by the ALMY sensors, and the global sensor coordinates are determined using the 3D Coordinate Measuring Machine. The comparison of these two measurements gives the information about the absolute sensor performance. The middle telescope can be tilted around the x- and y-axis, allowing to test the angular resolution of the telescope. Eight different angular orientations are tested, each using nine different laser beam directions. Fig.10. shows the outcome for the sagitta resolution and an angular resolution of a described setup.

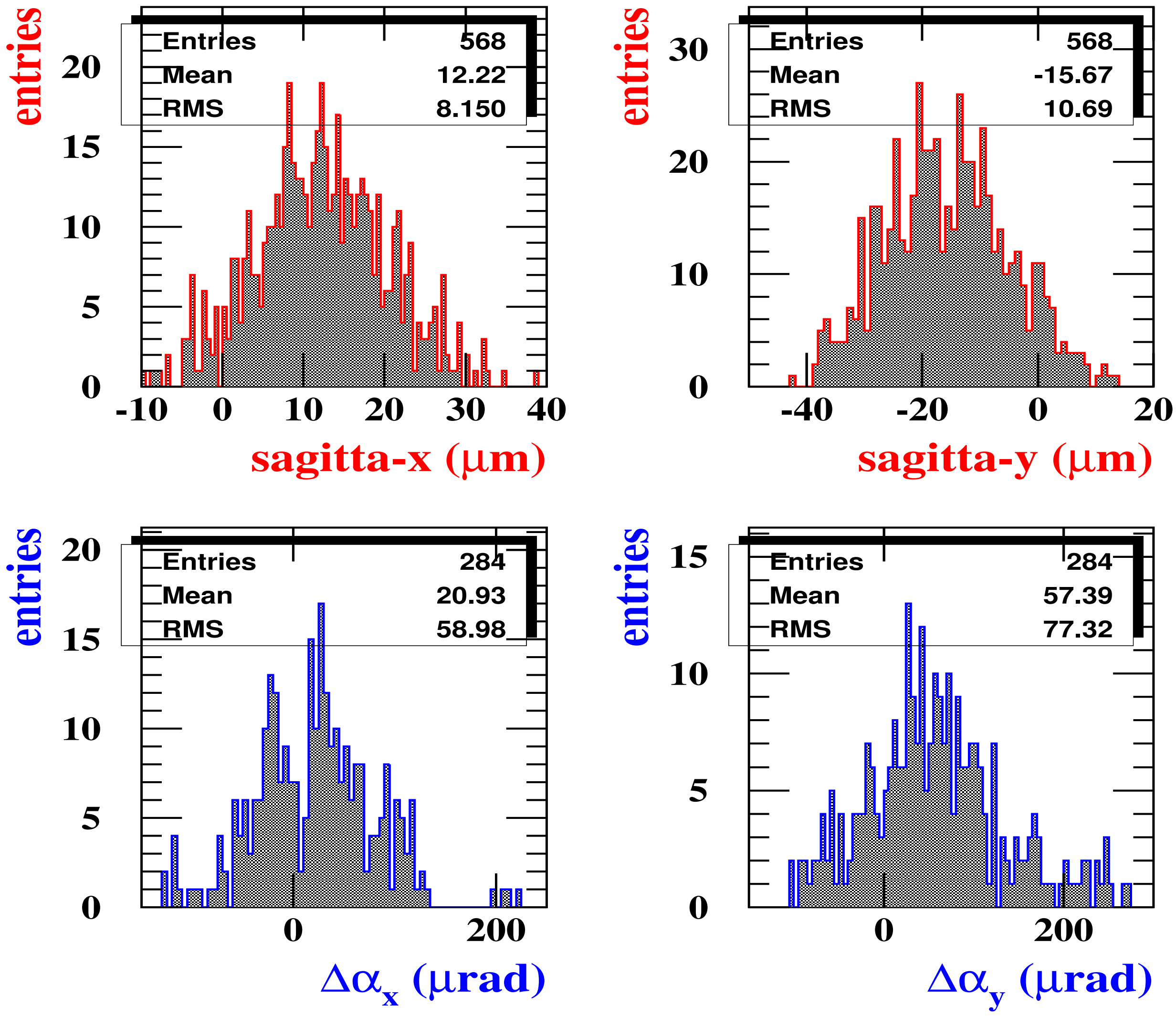


Fig.10. Sagitta resolution (μm) and the angular resolution $\Delta\alpha_x$, $\Delta\alpha_y$ (μrad) of an ALMY polar monitor in the ATLAS end-cap muon spectrometer.

The false sagitta resolution is ~20 μm, which is well within the specified requirements. The angular resolution of 60-80 μrad still has to be improved (50 μrad r.m.s. required) by using a twice larger telescope lever arm. The test has also demonstrated the efficiency of the calibration procedure (i.e. corrections due to the the laser beam refraction).

Additional test performed with a 14m long laser beam demonstrated the stability and the straightness of the beam, independent of the air turbulence around it.