Experimental study of fast fluctuations and turbulence during magnetic reconnection events on the VTF experiment\(^1\) W. FOX, M. PORKOLAB, J. EGEDAL, N. KATZ, A. LE, MIT PSFC — We present measurements of electrostatic fluctuations during reconnection events on the VTF experiment at MIT. Because we have found a regime in VTF where the reconnection is “bursty” in time \([1]\), it is an ideal experiment for answering the long-standing question of whether current-driven turbulence plays an important role in the reconnection process. Our measurement system consists of high-bandwidth, impedance-matched Langmuir probes, digitized by a fast oscilloscope. Broadband fluctuations are observed, extending up to \(f_{ce}\) \((\simeq 1.5 \text{ GHz}, f_{pe}/f_{ce} \simeq 10)\), coincident with reconnection events both in time and space. Arrays of probes and standard cross-correlation analysis provide wavelength measurements. Non-linear phenomena, such as discrete positive potential spikes, traveling at \(\sim 2-3 v_{te}\) and with spatial width 1-2 mm \((\simeq 50-100 \lambda_{De})\) are also observed coincident with large reconnection events. Finally, we will discuss various instability mechanisms, with insight from a recently-installed electron energy analyzer.


\(^1\)Support from CMPD (DOE contract DE-FC02-04ER54786), DOE (DE-FG02-06ER54878), and NSF/DOE (PHY-0613734)