

## **Reference Board User's Manual for SiC403 (6 A), SiC402 (10 A), and SiC401 (15 A) Synchronous Buck Regulators**







**Note**

• External divider network needed

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The SiC401, SiC402, and SiC403 are high frequency voltage-mode constant-on-time (CM-COT) synchronous buck regulators with integrated high-side and low-side power MOSFETs. The SiC403 is capable of 6 A continuous current, the SiC402 is capable of 10 A and the SiC401 15 A. These regulators produce an adjustable output voltage which in standard setup can output 5 V down to 0.6 V and with the  $V_{\text{OUT}}$  divider network 75 % of  $V_{\text{IN}}$  down to 0.6 V to accommodate a variety of applications, including computing, consumer electronics, telecom, and industrial.

The CM-COT architecture delivers ultra-fast transient response with minimum output capacitance and tight ripple regulation at very light load. The parts are stable with any capacitor type and no ESR network is required for loop stability. The regulator integrates a full protection feature set, it also has UVLO for the input rail and an internal soft-start.

The SiC40X family is available in lead (Pb)-free power enhanced 5 mm x 5 mm MLP55-32L package.

### **FEATURES**

- SiC401A/B: 3 V to 17 V input range. SiC402A/B, SiC403A/B: 3 V to 28 V input range.
- Adjustable output voltage down to 0.6 V
- 6 A (SiC403), 10 A (SiC402), and 15 A (SiC401) continuous output current
- Selectable frequency from 200 kHz to 1 MHz with an external resistor
- 95 % peak efficiency
- Stable with any capacitor; no external ESR network required
- Ultrafast transient response
- Power saving scheme for increased light load efficiency
- $\bullet$  ± 1 % accuracy of V<sub>OUT</sub> setting
- Cycle-by-cycle current limit
- Fully protected with OTP, SCP, UVP, OVP
- P<sub>GOOD</sub> Indicator
- -40 °C to +125 °C operating junction temperature
- Output voltage tracking

#### **APPLICATIONS**

- Point of load regulation for low-power processors, network processors, DSPs, FPGAs, and ASICs
- Low voltage, distributed power architectures with 5 V or 12 V, or 24 V rails
- Computing, broadband, networking, LAN / WAN, optical, test, and measurement
- A / V, high density cards, storage, DSL, STB, DVR, DTV, industrial PC



**Notes**

• The only difference between HC and LC board is the O / P inductor size

<sup>•</sup> LC - low current inductor, HC - high current inductor

**VOUT SENSE, GNDOUT SENSE (P4):** This allows the user to measure the voltage at the output of the regulator and remove any losses generated due to the connections, from the measurement. This can also be used by an active load

**PGD (P9):** Is an open drain output and is pulled up with a 10 kΩ resistor to V<sub>IN</sub>. When FB or V<sub>OUT</sub> are within -10 % to +20 % percent of the set voltage this pin will go HI to indicate the output is okay. The pin will also follow EN/PSV

To turn-on the reference board, apply 12 V to  $V_{IN}$  with the P6 jumper is in Position 1. If the P7 jumper is in place the board will come up in power save mode, if not in place then

When applying higher than 12 V to the input it is reasonable to install a RC snubber from LX to GND. There are place holders on the reference board R9 and C11 for the snubber. Values of 10  $\Omega$  and 1 nF are a reasonable starting point.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO THE REFERENCE BOARD**

If a different output voltage is needed, simply change the value of  $V_{\text{OUT}}$  and solve for R12 based on the following

 $R_{12} = R_{13} \times \frac{V_{\text{OUT}} - V_{\text{FB}}}{V_{\text{--}}}$ 

 $\frac{V_{\text{F}}}{V_{\text{F}}}$ 

condition switching LO if the IC is disabled.

**OUTPUT VOLTAGE ADJUSTMENT**

**CHANGING SWITCHING FREQUENCY**

Where  $V_{FB}$  is 0.6 V for the SiC40X.

ON-time,  $V_{IN}$ ,  $V_{OUT}$ , and  $R_{ON}$  value:

**POWER UP PROCEDURE**

constant P<sub>WM</sub> will be observed.

formula:

**Output Voltage Sense**

with sense capability.



#### **SPECIFICATIONS**

This reference board allows the end user to evaluate the SiC401, SiC402, or the SiC403 chip for its features and all functionalities.

It can also be a reference design for a user's application.

#### **CONNECTION AND SIGNAL / TEST POINTS**

#### **Power Sockets**

 $V_{IN}$ , GND (P1): Input voltage source with  $V_{IN}$  to be positive. Connect to a voltage source:

- SiC401A/BCD 3 V to 17 V
- SiC402A/BCD 3 V to 28 V
- SiC403A/BCD 3 V to 28 V

**V<sub>OUT</sub>, GND (P3):** Output voltage with V<sub>OUT</sub> to be positive. Connect to a load that draws no more than:

- SiC401A/BCD 15 A
- SiC402A/BCD 10 A
- SiC403A/BCD 6 A

**5 V, GND (P5):** External 5 V voltage source with 5 V to be positive. Connect to a 5 V source when this option is selected.

#### **SELECTION JUMPERS**

#### **Mode Select**

**P7:** This is a 2 way header which allows the user to select either power save mode or constant  $P_{WM}$  mode.

**OPEN** - forced P<sub>WM</sub>, the pin is floating

**SHORT** - power save mode, the pin is at 5 V

A third option is available whereby pin 2 is shorted to 0 V to disable the part.

#### **UVLO Option**

**P8:** This is a 2 way header that will enable the UVLO function when selected. The divider resistors R1 and R2 can be changed depending on the required turn on voltage level, the pin requires a voltage greater than 3 V to enable.

**OPEN** - UVLO disabled

**SHORT** - UVLO enabled

#### **V<sub>DD</sub>** Select

**P6:** This is a 3 way header that will enable the user to select between internal LDO and an external 5 V supply.

**Position 1 - SHORT PIN 1-2** - internal LDO

**Position 2 - SHORT PIN 2-3** - external 5 V

#### **SIGNALS AND TEST LEADS**

#### **Input Voltage Sense**

V<sub>IN</sub> SENSE, GND<sub>IN</sub> SENSE (P2): This allows the user to measure the voltage at the input of the regulator and remove any losses generated due to the, connections from the measurement. This can also be used by a power source with sense capability.

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$$
R_{\text{tON}} = \frac{k}{25 \text{ pF} \times F_{\text{SW}}}
$$

The following equation illustrates the relationship between

Where k equals 1 when  $V_{DD}$  is greater than 3.6 V. When k is less than 3.6 V and V<sub>IN</sub> is greater than  $((V_{DD} - 1.75 V) \times 10)$ , k is shown by the following equation:

$$
k = \frac{(V_{DD} - 1.75 V) \times 10}{V_{IN}}
$$

The maximum  $R_{ton}$  value allowed is shown:

# $R_{\text{ION MAX.}} = \frac{V_{\text{IN min.}}}{15 \mu A}$

#### **OUTPUT RIPPLE VOLTAGE**

Output ripple voltage is measured with a tip and barrel measurement across  $C_{\text{OUT}}$ . Typically output ripple voltage is set to 3 % to 5 % of the output voltage, but an all ceramic output solution can bring output ripple voltage to a much lower level since the ESR of ceramics is very small.

If ceramics or a combination of ceramics and bulk capacitors are used it may be necessary to add a voltage injection network.

#### **VOLTAGE INJECTION NETWORK**

This is the network seen placed across the output inductor in the schematic consisting of R8, C9, and C10. A quick method to add or remove injection is to reduce or increase R4.

The time constant of the inductor  $(\tau_{\text{IND}})$  and voltage injection network are as follows:

$$
\tau_{\text{IND}} = \frac{L}{DCR}
$$

and

$$
\tau_{\text{RIN}} = \mathsf{R}_{\text{L}} \times \mathsf{C}_{\text{L}}
$$

In (1) the recommended value of **C9 = 10 nF**.

The injection voltage can be checked for magnitude next using the following equation,

$$
V_{\text{INJ}} = (V_{\text{IN MIN.}} - V_{\text{OUT}}) \times \left(1 - \frac{1}{\frac{t}{e^{t_{\text{RIN}}}}}\right)
$$

Where t is the ON period. This required magnitude is  $> 20$  mV<sub>pp</sub> for stable operation, when the ripple injection voltage is smaller than 20 mV $_{\text{pp}}$  then double pulsing may be observed as the thresholds are not correctly triggered within the SiC40X.

The injection voltage will be DC decoupled from the FB pin via a capacitor, the calculation for this part is as follows:

$$
C_{10} = \frac{1}{\frac{R_{12}}{R_{13}}} \times \frac{3}{2 \times \pi \times F_{SW}}
$$

#### **INDUCTOR SELECTION**

The choice of inductor is specific to each application and quickly determined with the following equations:

$$
t_{ON} = \frac{V_{OUT}}{V_{IN \, MAX.} \times f_{SW}}
$$

$$
L = \frac{(V_{IN} - V_{OUT}) \times t_{ON}}{I_{OUT \, MAX.} \times K_2}
$$

Where  $k_2$  is a percentage of maximum output current ripple required. The designer can quickly make a choice if the ripple percentage is decided, usually no more than 30 % however higher or lower percentages of  $I<sub>OUT</sub>$  can be acceptable depending on application.

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Other than the inductance the DCR and saturation current parameters are key values. The DCR causes an I<sup>2</sup>R loss which will decrease the system efficiency and generate heat. The saturation current has to be higher than the maximum output current plus 1/2 the ripple current. In over current condition the inductor current may be very high. All this needs to be considered when selecting the inductor.

On this board Vishay IHLP series inductors are used to meet cost requirement and high efficiency, a part that utilizes a material that has incredible saturation levels compared to competing products.

#### **OUTPUT CAPACITOR SELECTION**

Voltage rating, ESR, transient response, overall PCB area and cost are requirements for selecting output capacitors. The types of capacitors and there general advantages and disadvantages are covered next.

Electrolytic have high ESR, dry out over time so ripple current rating must be examined and have slower transient response, but are fairly inexpensive for the amount of overall capacitance.

Tantalums can come in low ESR varieties and high capacitance value for its overall size, but they fail short when damaged and also have slower transient response.

Ceramics have very low ESR, fast transient response and overall small size, but come in low capacitance values compared to the others above. A combination of technology is sensible.

#### **LDO SETTING**

In order that the LDO is programmed to 5 V the divider resistors from the  $V_{DD}$  pin to the FBL pin need to be set in order that 0.75 V is present on FBL. They can be set as follows:

$$
V_{LDO} = \frac{V_{DD} \times R_8}{R_2 + R_8}
$$

#### **ENABLE PIN VOLTAGE**

The ENL pin will need to be set to enable the LDO. This pin accepts an input voltage up to  $V_{\text{IN}}$  however it can also be set as an under voltage trigger. The operation for this pin can be seen in Table 1.



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The UVLO will be activated if the voltage present at this pin is below 2.6 V. This can be set using the following equation. If under voltage is not a consideration then this can be connected to  $V_{IN}$ . The divider values for this pin can be set using the following equation:

$$
V_{\text{ENL}} = \frac{V_{\text{IN}} \times R_9}{R_1 + R_9}
$$

#### **SOFT START SETTING**

Soft start is a useful function helping to limit the current draw from the source at switch on. This is simply set with a ceramic capacitor using the following equation:

$$
C_{SS} = \frac{t_{SS}}{500\,000}
$$

A 2. 2 nF capacitor will provide  $\sim$  1 ms soft start time.

#### **BOOTSTRAP CIRCUIT**

A bootstrap capacitor of 100 nF will be sufficient for this circuit with switching frequencies from 200 kHz to 500 kHz. A series resistor has been added in order to slow down the low side switch in and minimize overshoot without adding a snubber. This is user adjustable.

#### **V<sub>DD</sub> DECOUPLING**

The  $V_{DD}$  pin will need to be decoupled in order to provide a stable voltage internally and externally. The value for this capacitor is recommended as  $\geq 1$  µF.

#### **CURRENT LIMIT RESISTOR**

The current limit is set by placing a resistor between pins LXS and ILIM. The values can be found using the following equations.

#### **SiC401:**

$$
R_{ILIM} = 792 \times I_{LIM} \times [0.101 \times (5 V - V_{DD}) + 1]
$$

**SiC402:**

 $R_{\text{IIIM}} = 446 \times I_{\text{IIM}} \times [0.099 \times (5 \text{ V} - \text{V}_{\text{DD}}) + 1]$ 

**SiC403:**

$$
R_{ILIM} = 1176 \times I_{LIM} \times [0.112 \times (5 V - V_{DD}) + 1]
$$

#### **OUTPUT CAPACITANCE**

The output capacitance will be determined by the ripple voltage requirement. Voltage mode COT topology can work with very small values of capacitor ESR however a ripple injection network will also be required for stable operation.

The overall capacitance needs to be calculated next. The following equations are used to calculate the size needed to meet a transient load response:

$$
I_{LPK} = I_{MAX.} + 0.5 \times I_{RIPPLE MAX,}
$$

$$
L \times \frac{I_{LPK}}{V_{OUT}} - \frac{I_{MAX.}}{dI_{LOAD}} \times dt
$$

$$
C_{OUT MIN.} = I_{LPK} \times \frac{2 \times (V_{PK} - V_{OUT})}{dI_{UAD}}
$$

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Where  $I_{LPK}$  is the peak inductor current,  $I_{MAX}$  is the maximum output current, dl<sub>LOAD</sub> is the current step in μF and  $V_{PK}$  is the peak voltage, the output voltage summed with the specified over and under shoot.

#### **INPUT CAPACITANCE**

In order to keep the design compact and minimize parasitic elements, ceramic capacitors will be chosen. The initial requirement for the input capacitance is decided by the maximum input voltage, 16 V in this case however a 35 V rated capacitor will be chosen of the X7R variety. The footprint will be a compact 1206.

In order to determine the minimum capacitance the input voltage ripple needs to be specified;  $V_{CIMPP} \le 150$  mV is a suitable starting point. This magnitude is determined by the final application specification. The input current needs to be determined for the lowest operating input voltage:

$$
I_{\text{CIN(RMS)}} = \frac{I_{\text{OUT}}}{V_{\text{IN}}} \times \sqrt{V_{\text{OUT}} \times (V_{\text{IN}} - V_{\text{OUT}})}
$$

The minimum input capacitance can then be found,

$$
C_{IN \, MIN.} = I_{OUT} \times \frac{DC - (1 - DC)}{V_{CINPP} \times F_{SW}}
$$

#### **HIGH OUTPUT VOLTAGE OPERATION**

For the SiC40X family the recommended maximum output voltage of no more than 75 % of  $V_{IN}$ .

For applications where an output voltage greater than 5 V is required a resistive network should be used to step down the output voltage in order to provide the  $V_{\text{OUT}}$  pin with 4.5 V.

$$
R_1 = \frac{R_2 \times (V_{OUT} - V_{OUT PIN})}{V_{OUT PIN}}
$$

For example, if an output voltage of  $V_{\text{OUT}} = 8.5$  V is required, setting R<sub>2</sub> = 10 kΩ and V<sub>OUT PIN</sub> = 4.5 V results in  $R_1 = 8870 \Omega$ .

The switching frequency will also need recalculating using a V<sub>OUT PIN</sub> magnitude of 4.5 V.

$$
F_{SW} = \frac{V_{OUT PIN}}{t_{ON} \times V_{IN}}
$$



**Fig. 1 - Resistor Divider Network Allows 4.5 V at the VOUT PIN** 

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### **LAYOUT CONSIDERATIONS**

The SiC40x family of footprint compatible 15 A, 10 A, and 6 A products offers the designer a scalable buck regulator solution. If the below layout recommendations are followed, the same layout can be used to cover a wide range of output currents and voltages without any changes to the board design and only minor changes to the component values in the schematic.

The reference design has a majority of the components placed on the top layer. This allows for easy assembly and straightforward layout.

Figure 2 outlines the pointers for the layout considerations and the explanations follow.



Fig. 2 - Resistor Divider Network Allows 4.5 V at the V<sub>OUT PIN</sub>

- 1. Place input ceramic capacitors close to the voltage input pins with a small 10 nF / 100 nF placed as close as the design rules will allow. This will help reduce the size of the input high frequency current loop and consequently reduce the high frequency ripple noise seen at the input and the LX node.
- 2. Place the setup and control passive devices logically around the IC with the intention of placing a quiet ground plane beneath them on a secondary layer.
- 3. It is advisable to use ceramic capacitors at the output to reduce impedance. Place these as close to the IC  $P_{GND}$ and output voltage node as design will allow. Place a small 10 nF / 100 nF ceramic capacitor closest to the IC and inductor loop.
- 4. The loop between LX,  $V_{\text{OUT}}$  and the IC GND should be as compact as possible. This will lower series resistance and also make the current loop smaller enabling the high frequency response of the output capacitors to take effect.
- 5. The output impedance should be small when high current is required; use high current traces, multiple layers can be used with many vias.
- 6. Use many vias when multiple layers are involved. This will have the effect of lowering the resistance between layers and reducing the via inductance of the PCB nets.
- 7. If a voltage injection network is needed then place it near to the inductor LX node.
- 8.  $P_{GND}$  can be used on internal layers if the resistance of the PCB is to be small; this will also help remove heat. Use extra vias if needed but be mindful to allow a path between the vias.
- 9. A quiet plane should be employed for the  $A_{GND}$ , this is placed under the small signal passives. This can be placed on multiple layers if needed for heat removal. This should be connected to the P<sub>GND</sub> plane near to the input GND at one connection only of at least 1mm width.
- 10. The LX copper can also be used on multiple layers, use a number of vias.
- 11. The copper area beneath the inductor has been removed (on all layers) in this design to reduce the inductive coupling that occurs between the inductor and the GND trace. No other voltage planes should be placed under this area.



#### **PCB LAYOUT**



 **Fig. 3 - Top Layer**



 **Fig. 4 - Inner Layer 1**

# **SiC401, SiC402, SiC403**



 **Fig. 5 - Inner Layer 2**



 **Fig. 6 - Bottom Layer**



### **SCHEMATIC - COMMON TO ALL BOARDS**



# **SiC401, SiC402, SiC403**



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