

system, where several parallel converters regulate the bus voltage [16], following the block diagram in Fig 1. Each of these converters acts as a current source. A main supervisor decides how much power is provided by each converter, so it is possible to adjust these levels based on the detected degradation of the converters. In this way, a prognostic method is implemented to predict when one of the modules has undergone excessive degradation based on the estimation of the R_{on} resistance value of the switching elements, allowing less power to be drawn from the module and extending its useful lifetime. Although it is a very specific application, a general methodology is proposed, and the estimation system could be adapted to almost any controlled DC/DC converter.

This article is organized into the following sections. Section II analyzes the operation of the boost converter used. Section III focuses on the application of the extended Kalman filter to said converter. Section IV collects the experimental results obtained. Finally, Section V includes the main conclusions of this work.

II. APPLICATION TO A BOOST CONVERTER

The power converter analyzed in this paper is the boost converter, following the schematics in Fig.2. In this paper the use case for this topology is a modular space power system where several converters regulate the main bus. Then the output voltage V_o is defined as a constant voltage source. All these converters are digitally current controlled adjusting the duty cycle d so a sample of the current through the inductor I_L matches a certain value, defined as I_{ref} . By wisely taking this sample at the middle of the switching period this sample corresponds to the average current through the inductor [17]. In this paper the EKF has two states, which are related to each other. One of them could not be measured, only estimated thus it is a hidden state. This will be the parasitic resistance r_l . This resistance models all the parasitic resistances of the circuit which affect the current flow through the inductor. Therefore, it is affected by other parasitic elements in the circuit, such as

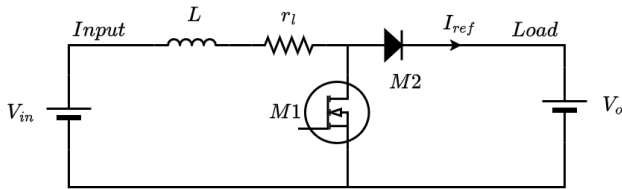


Fig. 2. Boost converter schematics

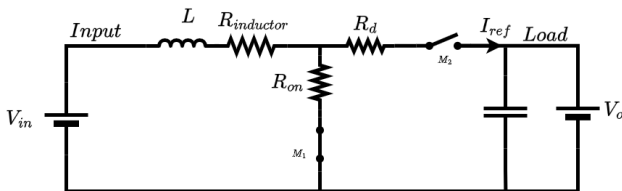


Fig. 3. Equivalent circuit to showcase the effects of R_{on} on r_l

the inductor series resistance $R_{inductor}$ or the diode resistance R_D , as it is shown in Fig 3. By taking into consideration these two parasitic resistances, apart from the R_{on} , the effects of the latter over r_l can be considered as

$$r_l = (R_{inductor} + R_{on}) \cdot d + (R_{inductor} + R_D) \cdot (1 - d) \quad (1)$$

where d is the duty cycle applied at the given switching period. The other state could be measured, therefore this is an observable state. This state is based in the current ripple through the inductor. An additional sample of the inductor current, defined as I_{rip} , is taken during the same switching cycle T_s as the one used to control the inductor current I_{ref} . The difference between I_{rip} and I_{ref} results in the observable state Δi , which will be used by the EKF to estimate r_l . The converter that has been studied has two switching states, one when M_1 is conducting, during $d \cdot T_s$, and a second one when M_1 is off, during $(1 - d) \cdot T_s$. Thus, a system state space description could be defined as

$$\dot{\Delta i} = \begin{cases} \frac{V_{in}}{L} - \frac{r_l}{L} \cdot \Delta i - \frac{r_l}{L} \cdot I_{ref} & \text{if } 0 < t < d \cdot T_s \\ \frac{V_{in}}{L} - \frac{V_o}{L} - \frac{r_l}{L} \cdot \Delta i - \frac{r_l}{L} \cdot I_{ref} & \text{if } d \cdot T_s < t < T_s \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

This state space description can be utilized by the EKF in the state prediction for the next switching cycles. In this description V_{in}, V_o and I_{ref} are the inputs to the system.

A. State propagation

As aforementioned, the system consists of two states: an observable one, Δi , defined as the difference between I_{ref} and I_{rip} , which is used as baseline for the prediction of the other state, in this case unobservable, r_l . Changes in Δi , without changes in the inputs (V_{in}, V_o and I_{ref}), will show that there has been a change in r_l . This unobserved state is considered an augmented state and has no dynamics, hence $\dot{r}_l = 0$.

To determine how Δi , evolves through the next switching period, it is propagated one switching cycle, following

$$\Delta i(T_s) = e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} T_s} \cdot \Delta i(0) + \int_0^{T_s} e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} (T_s - \tau)} \cdot B(\tau) \cdot \begin{bmatrix} V_{in} \\ V_{out} \\ I_{ref} \end{bmatrix} d\tau \quad (3)$$

As it can be seen in Fig 4, if $I_{rip}[n-1]$ is taken as a reference it must be propagated through the different switching states of the converter. This allows to calculate the evolution of $\Delta i[n-1]$ at the switching state changes at t_1 and t_3 . Then, the temporal evolution at the next sample (which takes place at t_4) is

$$\Delta i(t_1) = e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} t_1} \cdot \Delta i(0) + \left[\frac{V_{in}}{r_l} - I_{ref} - \frac{V_o}{r_l} \right] \cdot \left[1 - e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} t_1} \right] \quad (4)$$

$$\Delta i(t_3) = e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} (t_3 - t_1)} \cdot \Delta i(t_1) + \left[\frac{V_{in}}{r_l} - I_{ref} \right] \cdot \left[1 - e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} (t_3 - t_1)} \right] \quad (5)$$

$$\Delta i(t_4) = e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} (t_4 - t_3)} \cdot \Delta i(t_3) + \left[\frac{V_{in}}{r_l} - I_{ref} - \frac{V_o}{r_l} \right] \cdot \left[1 - e^{-\frac{r_l}{L} (t_4 - t_3)} \right] \quad (6)$$

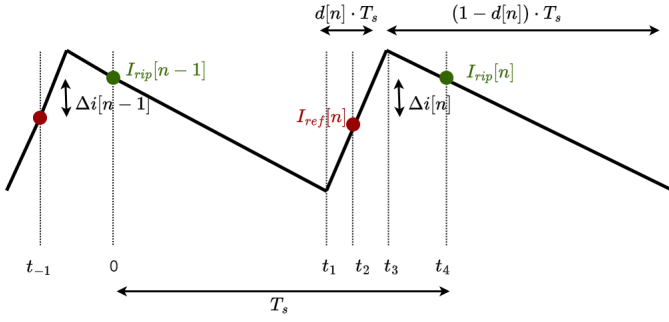


Fig. 4. Inductor current sampling

Given the approximation $e^{-\frac{r_l}{L}T_s} \approx (1 - \frac{r_l}{L}T_s)$

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta i(t_4) &= \left(1 - \frac{r_l}{L}t_4\right) \Delta i(0) \\ &+ t_4 \left(\frac{V_{in}}{L} - I_{ref} \frac{r_l}{L} - \frac{V_o}{L}\right) + (t_3 - t_1) \frac{V_o}{L} \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

Considering now that $t_4 = T_s$ and that $t_3 - t_1 = d \cdot T_s$,

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta i(T_s) &= \left(1 - \frac{r_l}{L}T_s\right) \cdot \Delta i(0) \\ &+ \left(\frac{V_{in}}{L} + \frac{V_o}{L}(d-1)\right) \cdot T_s - I_{ref} \cdot \frac{r_l}{L}T_s \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

(8) provides the value of the next sample of $\Delta i[n]$, which is part of the state transition function $F(X[n], U[n])$.

III. EKF DEVELOPMENT

Using the previous equations, all the parameters needed to compute the EKF can be calculated. The states are

$$X[n] = \begin{bmatrix} \Delta i[n] \\ r_l[n] \end{bmatrix} \quad (9)$$

The input control variables can be reformulated into

$$U[n] = \begin{bmatrix} \Delta V[n] \\ I_{ref}[n] \end{bmatrix} \quad (10)$$

where

$$V[n] = V_{in}[n] - (1 - d[n]) \cdot V_o[n] \quad (11)$$

The state transition function $F(X[n], U[n]) = X[n+1]$ is

$$F(X[n], U[n]) = \begin{bmatrix} \left(1 - \frac{r_l[n]}{L}T_s\right) \Delta i[n] + \left(V[n] \frac{T_s}{L} - I_{ref}[n] \frac{r_l}{L}T_s\right) \\ r_l[n] \end{bmatrix} \quad (12)$$

The measurement matrix $H(X[n])$ represents how the state is seen by the measurement sensors. In this case

$$H(X[n]) = \Delta i[n] \quad (13)$$

As the system is nonlinear, the state transition function is linearized around the previous state. To do that, the Jacobian matrix is computed

$$J_F[n] = \frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta X[n]} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\delta \Delta i[n]}{\delta \Delta i[n]} & \frac{\delta \Delta i[n]}{\delta r_l[n]} \\ \frac{\delta r_l[n]}{\delta \Delta i[n]} & \frac{\delta r_l[n]}{\delta r_l[n]} \end{bmatrix} \quad (14)$$

In a similar way, the Jacobian matrix of the measurement matrix is

$$J_H[n] = \frac{\delta H[n]}{\delta X[n]} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\delta \Delta i[n]}{\delta \Delta i[n]} & \frac{\delta \Delta i[n]}{\delta r_l[n]} \end{bmatrix} \quad (15)$$

These Jacobian matrices are used to predict the state covariance.

The process error covariance matrix Q , and the measurement error covariance matrix R , model the system noise. Q indicates the error in the model that represents the dynamic evolution of the system. These values are calculated empirically [18] [19]. It is, in this case

$$Q = \begin{bmatrix} Q_{\Delta i \Delta i} & Q_{\Delta i r_l} \\ Q_{r_l \Delta i} & Q_{r_l r_l} \end{bmatrix} \quad (16)$$

The measurement error covariance matrix R models the noise present in the sensors. Just as with Q , it is obtained through calibration processes. It is

$$R = R_0 \quad (17)$$

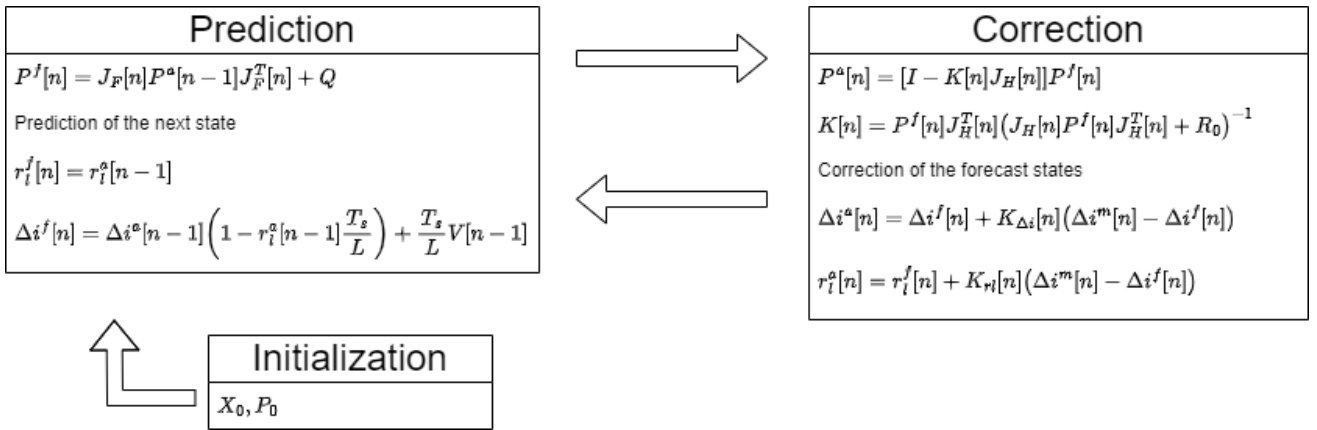


Fig. 5. Kalman filter algorithm block diagram.

where R_0 is the sensor error.

The covariance matrix P indicates the confidence in the state estimates of the EKF at a given moment. This matrix is updated in each iteration during the prediction stage, incorporating the process error (matrix Q). In the correction stage, P is further adjusted by adding information from the measurements through the Kalman gain. The Kalman gain determines how much weight is given to the measurements with respect to the prediction.

In this way, the iterative process of the EKF can be initiated, consisting of: initialization, prediction, and correction of values. Fig 5 shows the iterative process of this algorithm.

- *Initialization*

The EKF requires an estimate of the initial states X_0 as well as the covariance matrix P_0 that indicates the certainty of this estimate. These values can be obtained by simulation. Then,

$$X_0 = \begin{bmatrix} \Delta i_0 \\ r_{l0} \end{bmatrix} \quad (18)$$

$$P_0 = \begin{bmatrix} P_{\Delta i \Delta i_0} & P_{\Delta i r_{l0}} \\ P_{r_l \Delta i_0} & P_{r_l r_{l0}} \end{bmatrix} \quad (19)$$

The EKF aims to predict the state values $\Delta i^f[n]$ and $r_l^f[n]$ from the corrected samples of the previous cycle $\Delta i^a[n-1]$ and $r_l^a[n-1]$. Since $\Delta i^m[n] = I_{ref}[n] - I_{rip}[n]$, this state will be used to correct the predictions with the Kalman gain. In this study, it is assumed that the EKF operates in a steady state, which implies that the input variables (V_o, I_{ref}, V_{in}) do not change during a switching period. The state Δi has a dynamic behavior that depends on V_{in}, V_o, I_{ref} , duty cycle d , and state r_l .

- *Prediction*

In this step, the EKF makes predictions of the states $\Delta i^f[n]$ and $r_l^f[n]$ and the covariance matrix $P^f[n]$, from the matrix of the corrected states of the previous instant, where

$$\Delta i^f[n] = \Delta i^a[n-1] \cdot \left(1 - r_l^a[n-1] \cdot \frac{T_s}{L} \right) + \frac{T_s}{L} V[n-1] - I_{ref}[n-1] \frac{T_s}{L} r_l^a[n-1] \quad (20)$$

$$r_l^f[n] = r_l^a[n-1] \quad (21)$$

The prediction of the covariance matrix is made from the Jacobian $J_F[n]$, where

$$P^f[n] = J_F[n] \cdot P^a[n-1] \cdot J_F^T[n] + Q \quad (22)$$

- *Correction*

In this stage, the Kalman gain is calculated from the predicted covariance matrix $P^f[n]$. Thus,

$$K[n] = \begin{bmatrix} K_{\Delta i}[n] \\ K_{r_l}[n] \end{bmatrix} = P^f[n] \cdot J_H^T[n] \cdot \left(J_H[n] \cdot P^f[n] \cdot J_H^T[n] + R_0 \right)^{-1} \quad (23)$$

The values of the covariance matrix $P^a[n]$ are updated to correct the estimated values with measurement information through

$$P^a[n] = (I - K[n] \cdot J_H[n]) \cdot P^f[n] \quad (24)$$

In this stage, the mean of the states is also corrected using the Kalman gain and the difference between the measured and predicted values. Therefore,

$$\Delta i^a[n] = \Delta i^f[n] + K_{\Delta i}[n] \cdot (\Delta i^m[n] - \Delta i^f[n]) \quad (25)$$

$$r_l^a[n] = r_l^f[n] + K_{r_l}[n] \cdot (\Delta i^m[n] - \Delta i^f[n]) \quad (26)$$

The description of the correction of the states provides the framework which updates the unobservable state r_l . This one is updated through the corrections between the prediction and the measurements of state Δi .

IV. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

A. EKF implementation

Making use of the Texas Instruments C2000 Microcontroller Blockset, a version of the EKF was implemented on Simulink that allows it to be programmed onto the controller, along the control stage of the DC/DC converter. This provides an online r_l estimation system. Table I gathers all the main components of this implementation, requiring very few resources and resulting in an adequate solution with a compact computational cost. The Simulink block diagram is depicted in Fig 6.

TABLE I
EKF IMPLEMENTATION SIZE

Operation	Value
Additions	23
Registers	8
Multiplications	19
Divisions	2

B. Results

The validation was carried out with a custom platform based on a boost converter. Input and output voltage values, duty cycle, and inductor currents are captured. Additionally, this platform includes additional circuitry to measure the voltages and currents of the switching MOSFET, that allow to calculate the R_{on} . This value is compared with the EKF estimation. All these data are acquired using a Texas Instruments TMS320F28379 DSP, which is also responsible for controlling the converter. In this case, average current mode control

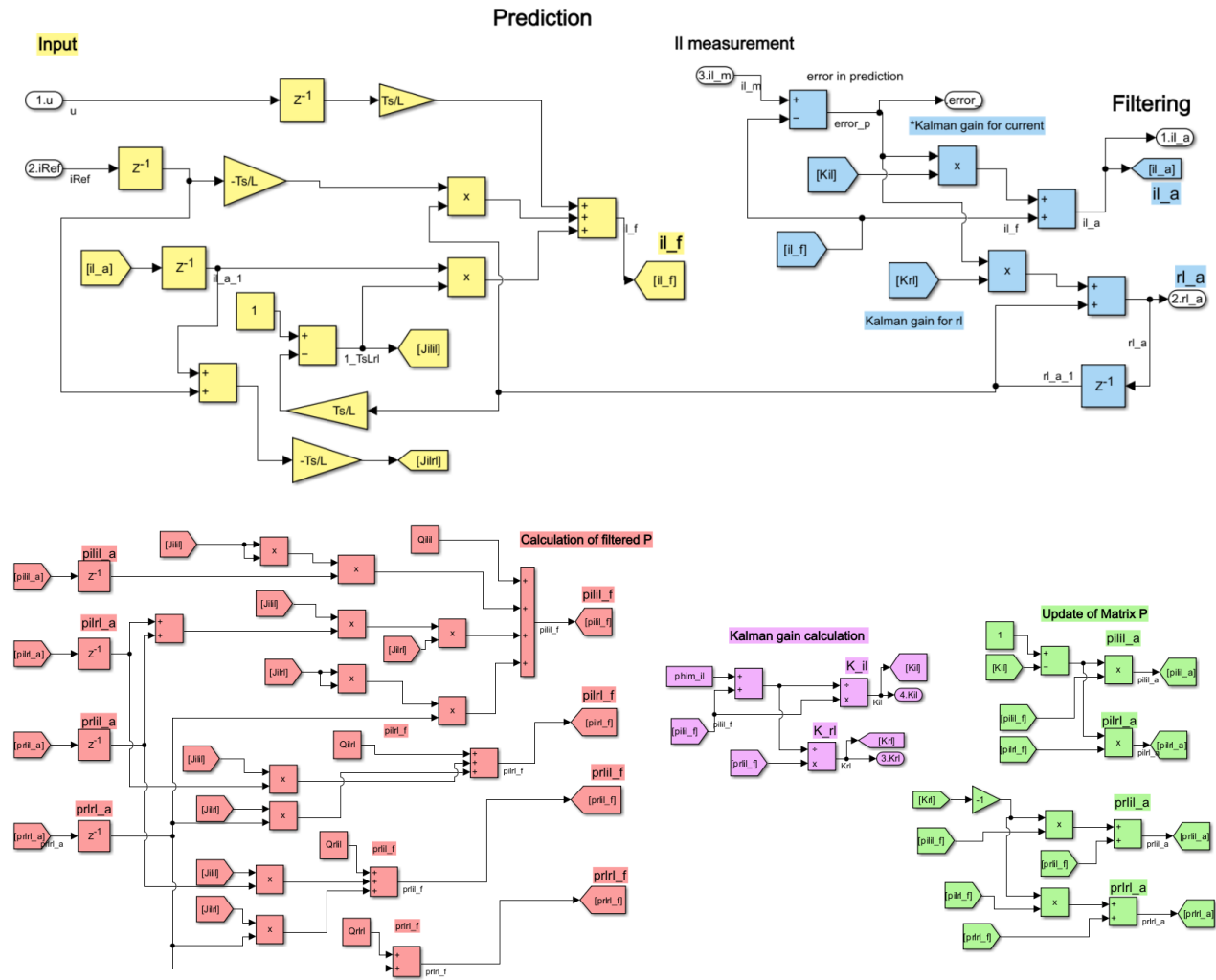


Fig. 6. Kalman filter algorithm Simulink block diagram.

is performed, where the inductor reference current is fixed to 2.5 A. Current sensing is performed using Hall sensors, specifically the ACS730 models from Allegro Microsystems, with a bandwidth of 1 MHz. The block diagram of the experimental implementation is depicted in Fig 7, while the experimental setup is shown in Fig 8. The selected MOSFET is the SPP20N60S5 with an R_{on} of $0.19\ m\Omega$. A switching frequency of 10 kHz was chosen to avoid data losses during data transmission to the PC with MATLAB which records the data for representation. This computer is also used to program the DSP. Other parameters of interest used in the experimentation are collected in Table II.

Apart from samples of the inductor current, I_{ref} used for the current control loop, which determines d , and I_{rip} for the EKF, samples of V_{in} and V_o are also taken for the EKF. Additionally the DSP also takes measurements of the current through the MOSFET and its drain to source voltage while on. These data are used by the DSP to calculate the prediction of r_l , r_{l_est} ,

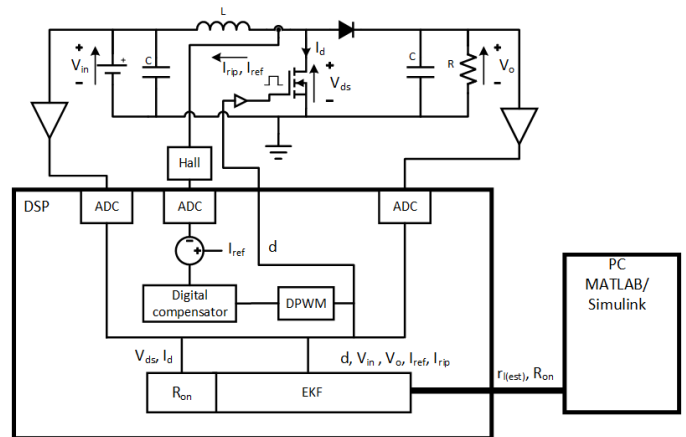


Fig. 7. Setup block diagram.

with the switching MOSFET measured resistance R_{on} . This is made for visualizing data in real time. All the processing is

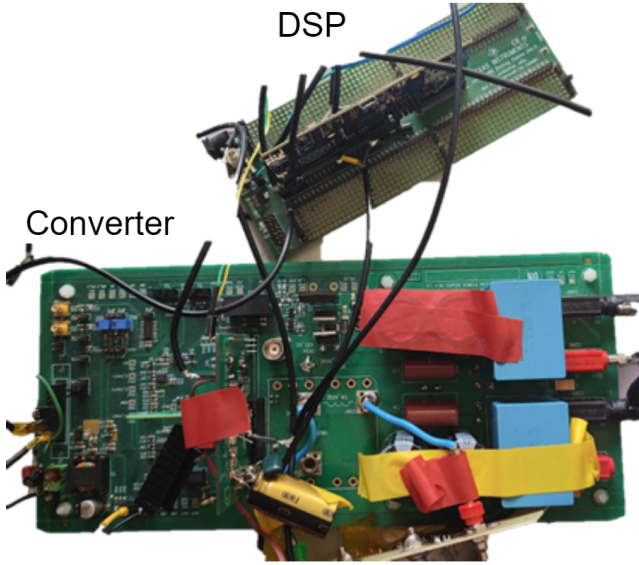


Fig. 8. Experimental setup.

done by the DSP.

Fig. 9 shows the data used as input for the EKF. It includes a fixed output voltage V_o of 30 V, an input voltage V_{in} ranging from 15-17 V, the current samples I_{ref} and I_{rip} , with I_{ref} being the reference current for the control, and duty cycle d . With these data, the prediction is made. Fig. 10 shows the estimated difference between the two current samples through the inductor $\Delta i_{(est)}$ versus the real value Δi , and the augmented state $r_{l(est)}$ corresponding to the estimated parasitic resistance of the system, versus the real R_{on} . The changes in R_{on} were artificially introduced by lowering the driving voltage of the MOSFET between 17 V for the lower R_{on} values and 12 V

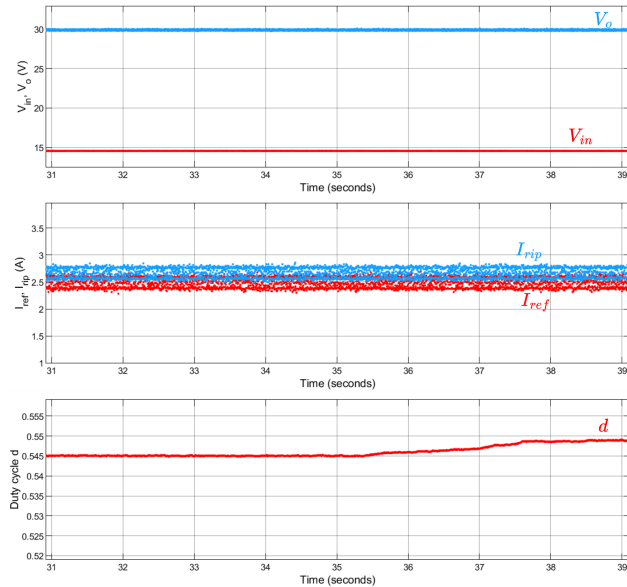


Fig. 9. EKF input values.

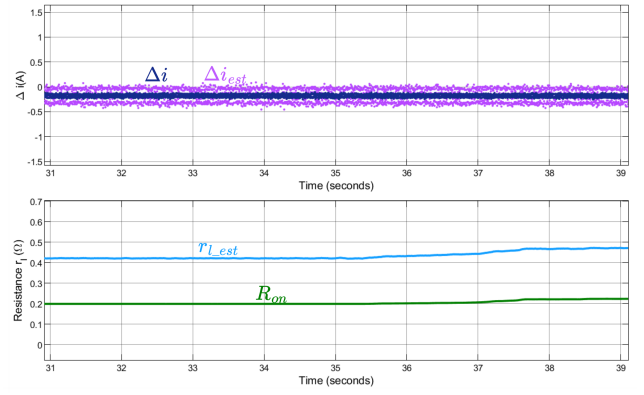


Fig. 10. EKF output, comparison with measurements.

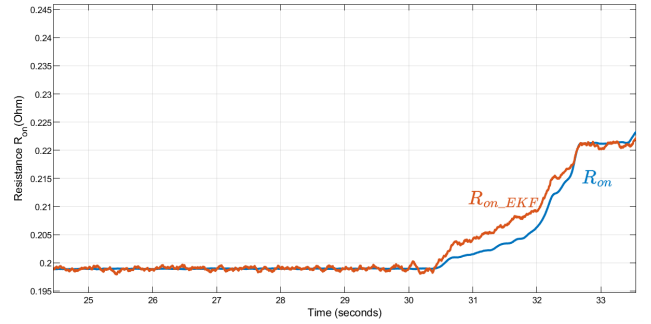


Fig. 11. Output of the EKF: R_{on} estimation comparison with measurement.

for the higher ones. The change in the driving voltage takes place approximately at time $t = 35$ s. It can be seen how d increases a little bit to keep the current constant in spite of the increased resistance. Figure 11 focuses in more detail on the differences between the measured resistance, R_{on} , and the predicted one, R_{on_EKF} based on the predicted r_l and separating the different elements, as per (1). It can be seen that during the transient, the EKF doesn't have enough time to converge, providing a different value estimation, which then diminishes once the final resistance value has reached.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In this work, a method is presented to predict the conduction resistance R_{on} of switching MOSFETs in power converters with the objective of preventing catastrophic failures and extending their useful lifetime. This method is based on the use of an extended Kalman filter, providing a feasible solution that doesn't require any invasive measurement. By measuring input voltage V_{in} , output voltage V_o , inductor current at two samples within the same switching period I_{ref} and I_{rip} , and duty cycle d , it is possible to obtain a prediction of the parasitic resistance r_l , which can then be extrapolated to the detection of an increase in conduction resistance R_{on} of the switching MOSFET. The validation of this method has been carried out experimentally using a boost converter with 15 V input voltage and 30 V output voltage. By comparing the augmented output of the extended Kalman filter, which represents the parasitic

TABLE II
PARAMETERS AND VALUES

Parameter	Value
V_{in}	15 V
V_o	30 V
I_{ref}	2.5 A
f_s	10 kHz
L	275 μ H
ΔR_{on}	10%

resistance of the circuit r_l , with the measured R_{on} of the switching MOSFET it has been shown that changes in R_{on} value, artificially increased by changing the driver's supply voltage, are properly tracked by the EKF output. The EKF has been implemented on the DSP controlling the boost converter. By allowing it to be implemented on the controller, there is no need for external data processing. The results show it is possible to detect an increase in the conduction resistance of the switching element, that is, the R_{on} of the switching MOSFET, which is sufficient to determine premature aging in the component.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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