Impact Measurement Using Accelerometers

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INTRODUCTION

This application note describes the concept of measuring impact of an object using an accelerometer, microcontroller hardware/software and a liquid crystal display. Due to the wide frequency response of the accelerometer from d.c. to 400 Hz, the device is able to measure both the static acceleration from the Earth's gravity and the shock or vibration from an impact. This design uses a 40g accelerometer and yields a minimum acceleration range of -40g to +40g.

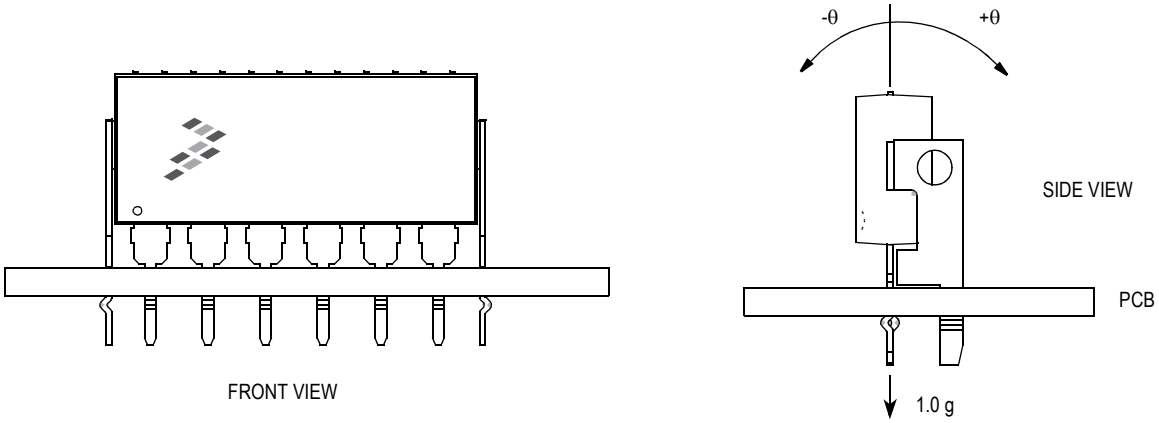

Figure 1. Orientation of Accelerometer

CONCEPT OF IMPACT MEASUREMENT

During an impact, the accelerometer will be oriented as shown in Figure 1 to measure the deceleration experienced by the object from dc to 400 Hz. Normally, the peak impact pulse is in the order of a few miniseconds. Figure 2 shows a typical crash waveform of a toy car having a stiff bumper.

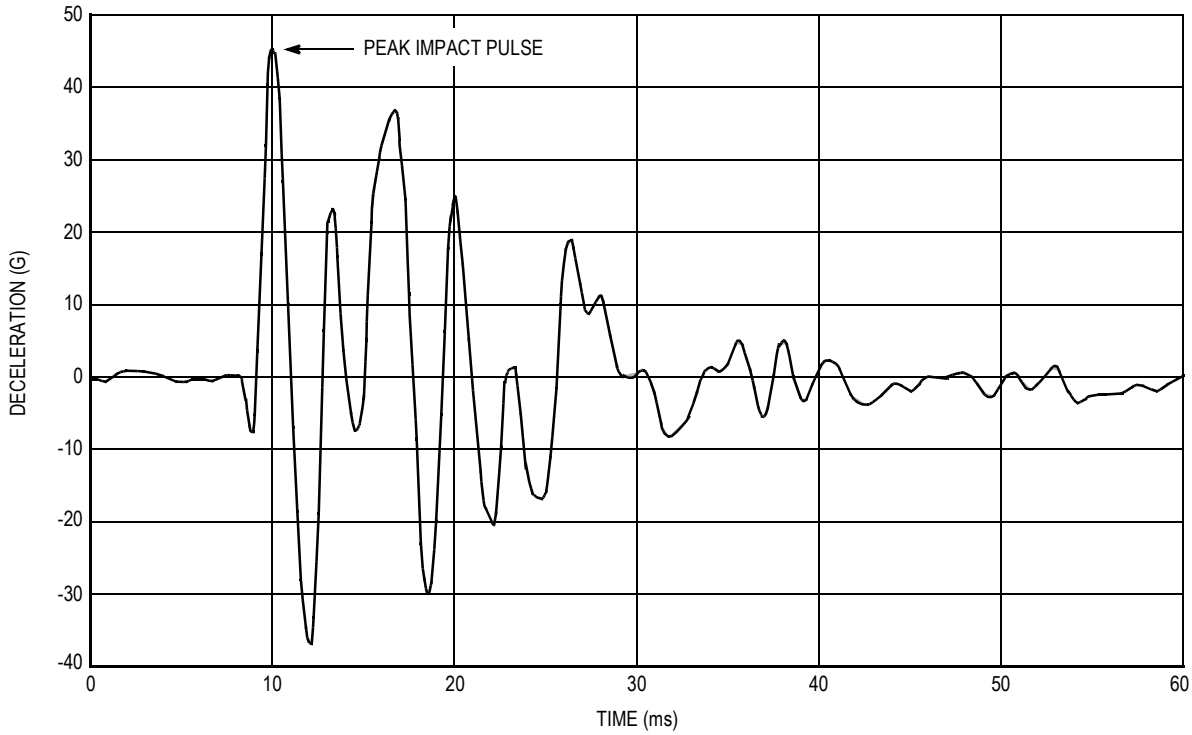

Figure 2. Typical Crash Pattern

HARDWARE DESCRIPTION AND OPERATION

Since the accelerometer is fully signal-conditioned by its internal op-amp and temperature compensation, the output of the accelerometer can be directly interfaced with an analog-to-digital (A/D) converter for digitization. A filter consists of one RC network should be added if the connection between the output of the accelerometer and the A/D converter is a long track or cable. This stray capacitance may change the position of the internal pole which would drive the output amplifier of the accelerometer into oscillation or unstability. In this design, the cut-off frequency is chosen to be 15.9 kHz which also acts as an anti-alias filter for the A/D converter. The 3 dB frequency can be approximated by the following equation.

$$f_{-3db} = \frac{1}{2\pi RC}$$

Referring to the schematic, Figure 3, the accelerometer is connected to PORT D bit 5 and the output of the amplifier is connected to PORT D bit 6 of the microcontroller. This port is an input to the on-chip 8-bit analog-to-digital (A/D) converter. Typically, the accelerometer provides a signal output to the microprocessor of approximately 0.3 Vdc at -55g to 4.7 Vdc at +55g of acceleration. However, Freescale only guarantees the accuracy within ±40g range. Using the same reference voltage for the A/D converter and accelerometer minimizes the number of additional components, but does sacrifice resolution. The resolution is defined by the following:

$$\text{count} = \frac{V_{out}}{5} \times 255$$

The count at 0g = [2.5/5] × 255 ∝ 128

The count at +25g = [3.5/5] × 255 ∝ 179

The count at -25g = [1.5/5] × 255 ∝ 77

Therefore the resolution 0.5g/count

The output of the accelerometer is ratiometric to the voltage applied to it. The accelerometer and the reference voltages are connected to a common supply; this yields a system that is ratiometric. By nature of this ratiometric system, variations in the voltage of the power supplied to the system will have no effect on the system accuracy.

The liquid crystal display (LCD) is directly driven from I/O ports A, B, and C on the microcontroller. The operation of a LCD requires that the data and backplane (BP) pins must be driven by an alternating signal. This function is provided by a software routine that toggles the data and backplane at approximately a 30 Hz rate. Other than the LCD, one light emitting diode (LED) are connected to the pulse length converter (PLM) of the microcontroller. This LED will light up for 3 seconds when an impact greater or equal to 7g is detected.

The microcontroller section of the system requires certain support hardware to allow it to function. The MC34064P-5 provides an undervoltage sense function which is used to reset the microprocessor at system power-up. The 4 MHz crystal provides the external portion of the oscillator function for clocking the microcontroller and provides a stable base for time bases functions, for instance calculation of pulse rate.

SOFTWARE DESCRIPTION

Upon power-up of the system, the LCD will display CAL for approximately four seconds. During this period, the output of the accelerometer are sampled and averaged to obtain the zero offset voltage or zero acceleration. This value will be saved in the RAM which is used by the equation below to calculate the impact in term of g-force. One point to note is that the accelerometer should remain stationary during the zero calibration.

$$\text{Impact} = [\text{count} - \text{count}_{\text{offset}}] \times \text{resolution}$$

In this software program, the output of the accelerometer is calculated every 650 μs. During an impact, the peak deceleration is measured and displayed on the LCD for three seconds before resetting it to zero. In the mean time, if a higher impact is detected, the value on the LCD will be updated accordingly.

However, when a low g is detected (e.g. 1.0g), the value will not be displayed. Instead, more samples will be taken for further averaging to eliminate the random noise and high frequency component. Due to the fact that tilting is a low g and low frequency signal, large number of sampling is preferred to avoid unstable display. Moreover, the display value will not hold for three seconds as in the case of an impact.

Figure 4 is a flowchart for the program that controls the system.

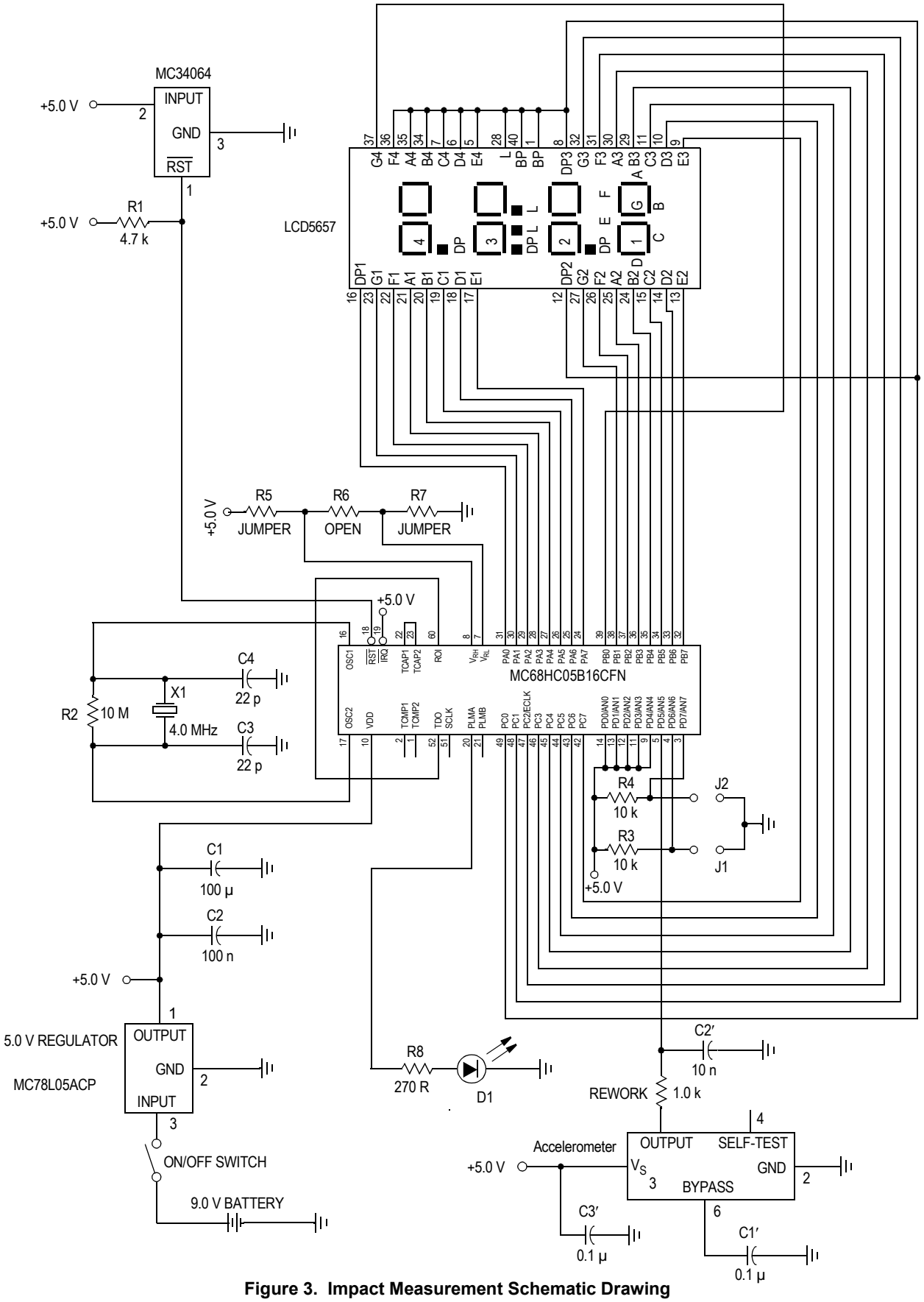

Figure 3. Impact Measurement Schematic Drawing

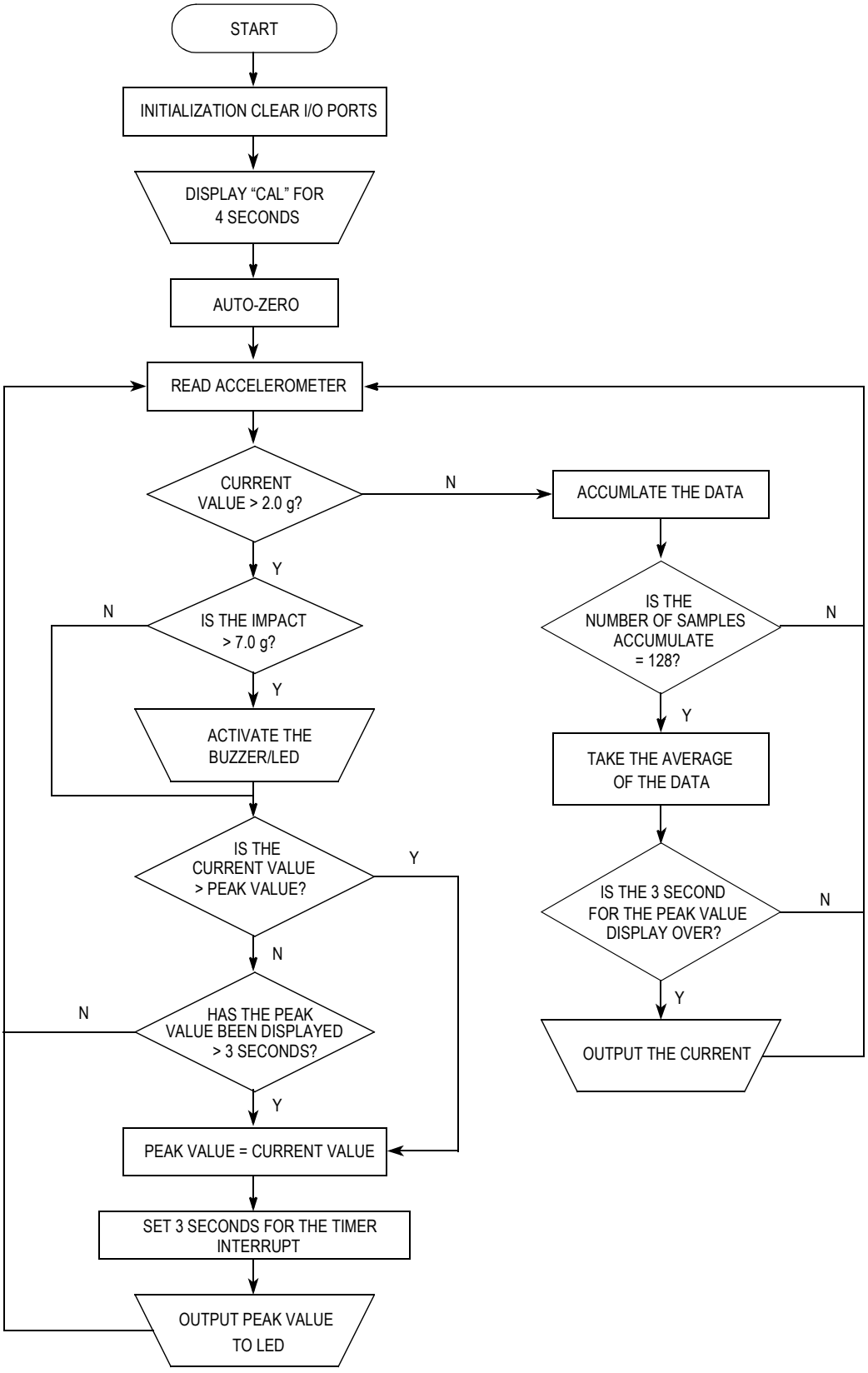

Figure 4. Main Program Flowchart

SOFTWARE SOURCE/ASSEMBLY PROGRAM CODE

```
*****************************************************************************
*                                                                           *
*                    Accelerometer Demo Car Version 2.0                     *
*                                                                           *
*   The following code is written for MC68HC705B16 using MMDS05 software    *
*   Version 1.01                                                            *
*   CASM05 - Command line assembler Version 3.04                            *
*   P & E Microcomputer Systems, Inc.                                       *
*                                                                           *
*                         Written by : C.S. Chua                            *
*                             29 August 1996                                *
*                                                                           *
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*****************************************************************************
*****************************************************************************
*                                                                           *
*                          Software Description                             *
*                                                                           *
*   This software is used to read the output of the accelerometer MMA2200W  *
*   and display it to a LCD as gravity force. It ranges from -55g to +55g   *
*   with 0g as zero acceleration or constant velocity. The resolution is    *
*   0.5g.                                                                   *
*                                                                           *
*   The program will read from the accelerometer and hold the maximum       *
*   deceleration value for about 3.0 seconds before resetting. At the same  *
*   time, the buzzer/LED is activated if the impact is more than 7.0g.      *
*   However, if the maximum deceleration changes before 3.0 seconds, it     *
*   will update the display using the new value. Note that positive value   *
*   implies deceleration whereas negative value implies acceleration        *
*                                                                           *
*****************************************************************************
*****************************************
*                                       *
*            Initialisation             *
*                                       *
*****************************************
PORTA       EQU     $00           ; Last digit

PORTB       EQU     $01           ; Second digit (and negative sign)
PORTC       EQU     $02           ; First digit (and decimal point)
ADDATA      EQU     $08           ; ADC Data
ADSTAT      EQU     $09           ; ADC Status
PLMA        EQU     $0A           ; Pulse Length Modulator (Output to Buzzer)
MISC        EQU     $0C           ; Miscellaneous Register (slow/fast mode)
TCONTROL    EQU     $12           ; Timer control register
TSTATUS     EQU     $13           ; Timer Status Register
OCMPHI1     EQU     $16           ; Output Compare Register 1 High Byte
```

```
OCMPLO1       EQU     $17           ; Output Compare Register 1 Low Byte
TCNTHI        EQU     $18           ; Timer Count Register High Byte
TCNTLO        EQU     $19           ; Timer Count Register Low Byte
OCMPHI2       EQU     $1E           ; Output Compare Register 2 High Byte
OCMPLO2       EQU     $1F           ; Output Compare Register 2 Low Byte
*****************************************
*                                       *
*           User-defined RAM            *
*                                       *
*****************************************
SIGN          EQU     $54           ; Acceleration (-) or deceleration (+)
PRESHI2       EQU     $55           ; MSB of accumulated acceleration
PRESHI        EQU     $56
PRESLO        EQU     $57           ; LSB of accumulated acceleration
PTEMPHI       EQU     $58           ; Acceleration High Byte (Temp storage)
PTEMPLO       EQU     $59           ; Acceleration Low Byte (Temp storage)
ACCHI         EQU     $5A           ; Temp storage of acc value (High byte)
ACCLO         EQU     $5B           ;                           (Low byte)
ADCOUNTER     EQU     $5C           ; Sampling Counter
AVERAGE_H     EQU     $5D           ; MSB of the accumulated data of low g
AVERAGE_M     EQU     $5E
AVERAGE_L     EQU     $5F           ; LSB of the accumulated data of low g
SHIFT_CNT     EQU     $60           ; Counter for shifting the accumulated data
AVE_CNT1      EQU     $61           ; Number of samples in the accumulated data
AVE_CNT2      EQU     $75
TEMPTCNTHI    EQU     $62           ; Temp storage for Timer count register
TEMPTCNTLO    EQU     $63           ; Temp storage for Timer count register
DECHI         EQU     $64           ; Decimal digit high byte
DECLO         EQU     $65           ; Decimal digit low byte
DCOFFSETHI    EQU     $66           ; DC offset of the output (high byte)
DCOFFSETLO    EQU     $67           ; DC offset of the output (low byte)
MAXACC        EQU     $68           ; Maximum acceleration
TEMPHI        EQU     $69
TEMPLO        EQU     $6A
TEMP1         EQU     $6B           ; Temporary location for ACC during delay
TEMP2         EQU     $6C           ; Temporary location for ACC during ISR
DIV_LO        EQU     $6D           ; No of sampling (low byte)
DIV_HI        EQU     $6E           ; No of sampling (high byte)
NO_SHIFT      EQU     $6F           ; No of right shift to get average value
ZERO_ACC      EQU     $70           ; Zero acceleration in no of ADC steps
HOLD_CNT      EQU     $71           ; Hold time counter
HOLD_DONE     EQU     $72           ; Hold time up flag
START_TIME    EQU     $73           ; Start of count down flag
RSHIFT        EQU     $74           ; No of shifting required for division
              ORG     $300          ; ROM space 0300 to 3DFE (15,104 bytes)
              DB      $FC           ; Display "0"
              DB      $30           ; Display "1"
              DB      $DA           ; Display "2"
              DB      $7A           ; Display "3"
              DB      $36           ; Display "4"
              DB      $6E           ; Display "5"
              DB      $EE           ; Display "6"
              DB      $38           ; Display "7"
              DB      $FE           ; Display "8"
              DB      $7E           ; Display "9"
HUNDREDHI     DB      $00           ; High byte of hundreds
HUNDREDLO     DB      $64           ; Low byte of hundreds
TENHI         DB      $00           ; High byte of tens
TENLO         DB      $0A           ; Low byte of tens
*****************************************
*                                       *
*   Program starts here upon hard reset *
*                                       *
*****************************************
RESET         CLR     PORTC         ; Port C = 0
              CLR     PORTB         ; Port B = 0
              CLR     PORTA         ; Port A = 0
              LDA     #$FF
              STA     $06           ; Port C as output
              STA     $05           ; Port B as output
              STA     $04           ; Port A as output
              LDA     TSTATUS       ; Dummy read the timer status register
              CLR     OCMPHI2       ; so as to clear the OCF
              CLR     OCMPHI1
              LDA     OCMPLO2
              JSR     COMPRGT
              CLR     START_TIME
```

```
            LDA     #$40            ; Enable the output compare interrupt
            STA     TCONTROL
            CLI                     ; Interrupt begins here
            LDA     #$CC            ; Port C = 1100 1100   Letter "C"
            STA     PORTC
            LDA     #$BE            ; Port B = 1011 1110   Letter "A"
            STA     PORTB
            LDA     #$C4            ; Port A = 1100 0100   Letter "L"
            STA     PORTA
            LDA     #16
IDLE        JSR     DLY20           ; Idling for a while (16*0.125 = 2 sec)
            DECA                    ; for the zero offset to stabilize
            BNE     IDLE            ; before perform auto-zero
            LDA     #$00            ; Sample the data 32,768 times and take
            STA     DIV_LO          ; the average 8000 H = 32,768
            LDA     #$80            ; Right shift of 15 equivalent to divide
            STA     DIV_HI          ; by 32,768
            LDA     #!15            ; Overall sampling time = 1.033 s)
            STA     NO_SHIFT
            JSR     READAD          ; Zero acceleration calibration
            LDX     #5              ; Calculate the zero offset
            LDA     PTEMPLO         ; DC offset = PTEMPLO * 5
            STA     ZERO_ACC
            MUL
            STA     DCOFFSETLO      ; Save the zero offset in the RAM
            TXA
            STA     DCOFFSETHI
            CLR     HOLD_CNT
            LDA     #$10          ; Sample the data 16 times and take
            STA     DIV_LO        ; the average 0100 H = 16
            LDA     #$00          ; Right shift of 4 equivalent to divide
            STA     DIV_HI        ; by 16
            LDA     #$4           ; Overall sampling time = 650 us
            STA     NO_SHIFT
            LDA     ZERO_ACC      ; Display 0.0g at the start
            STA     MAXACC
            JSR     ADTOLCD
            CLR     START_TIME
            CLR     AVE_CNT1
            CLR     AVE_CNT2
            CLR     SHIFT_CNT
            CLR     AVERAGE_L
            CLR     AVERAGE_M
            CLR     AVERAGE_H
REPEAT      JSR     READAD          ; Read acceleration from ADC
            LDA     ZERO_ACC
            ADD     #$04
            CMP     PTEMPLO
            BLO     CRASH           ; If the acceleration < 2.0g
            LDA     PTEMPLO         ; Accumulate the averaged results
            ADD     AVERAGE_L       ; for 128 times and take the averaging
            STA     AVERAGE_L       ; again to achieve more stable
            CLRA                    ; reading at low g
            ADC     AVERAGE_M
            STA     AVERAGE_M
            CLRA
            ADC     AVERAGE_H
            STA     AVERAGE_H
            LDA     #$01
            ADD     AVE_CNT1
            STA     AVE_CNT1
            CLRA
            ADC     AVE_CNT2
            STA     AVE_CNT2
            CMP     #$04
            BNE     REPEAT
            LDA     AVE_CNT1
            CMP     #$00
            BNE     REPEAT
SHIFTING    INC     SHIFT_CNT       ; Take the average of the 128 samples
            LSR     AVERAGE_H
            ROR     AVERAGE_M
            ROR     AVERAGE_L
            LDA     SHIFT_CNT
            CMP     #$0A
            BLO     SHIFTING
            LDA     AVERAGE_L
```

```
            STA     PTEMPLO
            LDA     HOLD_CNT        ; Check if the hold time of crash data
            CMP     #$00            ; is up
            BNE     NON-CRASH
            LDA     PTEMPLO         ; If yes, display the current acceleration
            STA     MAXACC          ; value
            JSR     ADTOLCD
            BRA     NON-CRASH
CRASH       LDA     ZERO_ACC
            ADD     #$0E            ; If the crash is more than 7g
            CMP     PTEMPLO         ; 7g = 0E H * 0.5
            BHS     NO_INFLATE
            LDA     #$FF            ; activate the LED
            STA     PLMA
NO_INFLATE  JSR     MAXVALUE        ; Display the peak acceleration
            JSR     ADTOLCD
NON-CRASH   CLR     SHIFT_CNT
            CLR     AVE_CNT1
            CLR     AVE_CNT2
            CLR     AVERAGE_L
            CLR     AVERAGE_M
            CLR     AVERAGE_H
            BRA     REPEAT          ; Repeat the whole process
*****************************************
*                                       *
*           Delay Subroutine            *
*     (162 * 0.7725 ms = 0.125 sec)     *
*                                       *
*****************************************
DLY20       STA     TEMP1
            LDA     #!162             ; 1 unit = 0.7725 ms
OUTLP       CLRX
INNRLP      DECX
            BNE     INNRLP
            DECA
            BNE     OUTLP
            LDA     TEMP1
            RTS
*****************************************
*                                       *
*     Reading the ADC data X times      *
*        and take the average           *
*   X is defined by DIV_HI and DIV_LO   *
*                                       *
*****************************************
READAD      LDA     #$25
            STA     ADSTAT          ; AD status = 25H
            CLR     PRESHI2
            CLR     PRESHI          ; Clear the memory
            CLR     PRESLO
            CLRX
            CLR     ADCOUNTER
LOOP128     TXA
            CMP     #$FF
            BEQ     INC_COUNT
            BRA     CONT
INC_COUNT   INC     ADCOUNTER
CONT        LDA     ADCOUNTER       ; If ADCOUNTER = X
            CMP     DIV_HI          ; Clear bit = 0
            BEQ     CHECK_X         ; Branch to END100
            BRA     ENDREAD
CHECK_X     TXA
            CMP     DIV_LO
            BEQ     END128
ENDREAD     BRCLR   7,ADSTAT,ENDREAD ; Halt here till AD read is finished
            LDA     ADDATA          ; Read the AD register
            ADD     PRESLO          ; PRES = PRES + ADDATA
            STA     PRESLO
            CLRA
            ADC     PRESHI
            STA     PRESHI
            CLRA
            ADC     PRESHI2
            STA     PRESHI2
            INCX                    ; Increase the AD counter by 1
            BRA     LOOP128         ; Branch to Loop128
END128      CLR     RSHIFT          ; Reset the right shift counter
```

```
DIVIDE      INC     RSHIFT          ; Increase the right counter
            LSR     PRESHI2
            ROR     PRESHI          ; Right shift the high byte
            ROR     PRESLO          ; Right shift the low byte
            LDA     RSHIFT
            CMP     NO_SHIFT        ; If the right shift counter >= NO_SHIFT
            BHS     ENDDIVIDE       ; End the shifting
            JMP     DIVIDE          ; otherwise continue the shifting
ENDDIVIDE   LDA     PRESLO
            STA     PTEMPLO
            RTS
*****************************************
*                                       *
*       Timer service interrupt         *
*     Alternates the Port data and      *
*          backplane of LCD             *
*                                       *
*****************************************
TIMERCMP    STA     TEMP2           ; Push Accumulator
            COM     PORTC           ; Port C = - (Port C)
            COM     PORTB           ; Port B = - (Port B)
            COM     PORTA           ; Port A = - (Port A)
            LDA     START_TIME      ; Start to count down the hold time
            CMP     #$FF            ; if START_TIME = FF
            BNE     SKIP_TIME
            JSR     CHECK_HOLD
SKIP_TIME   BSR     COMPRGT         ; Branch to subroutine compare register
            LDA     TEMP2           ; Pop Accumulator
            RTI
*****************************************
*                                       *
*      Check whether the hold time      *
*        of crash impact is due         *
*                                       *
*****************************************
CHECK_HOLD  DEC     HOLD_CNT
            LDA     HOLD_CNT
            CMP     #$00            ; Is the hold time up?
            BNE     NOT_YET
            LDA     #$00            ; If yes,
            STA     PLMA            ; stop buzzer
            LDA     #$FF            ; Set HOLD_DONE to FF indicate that the
            STA     HOLD_DONE       ; hold time is up
            CLR     START_TIME      ; Stop the counting down of hold time
NOT_YET     RTS
*****************************************
*                                       *
*          Subroutine reset             *
*      the timer compare register       *
*                                       *
*****************************************
COMPRGT     LDA     TCNTHI          ; Read Timer count register
            STA     TEMPTCNTHI      ; and store it in the RAM
            LDA     TCNTLO
            STA     TEMPTCNTLO
            ADD     #$4C            ; Add 1D4C H = 7500 periods
            STA     TEMPTCNTLO      ; with the current timer count
            LDA     TEMPTCNTHI      ; 1 period = 2 us
            ADC     #$1D
            STA     TEMPTCNTHI      ; Save the next count to the register
            STA     OCMPHI1
            LDA     TSTATUS         ; Clear the output compare flag
            LDA     TEMPTCNTLO      ; by access the timer status register
            STA     OCMPLO1         ; and then access the output compare
            RTS                     ; register
*****************************************
*                                       *
*      Determine which is the next      *
*    acceleration value to be display   *
*                                       *
*****************************************
MAXVALUE    LDA     PTEMPLO
            CMP     MAXACC          ; Compare the current acceleration with
            BLS     OLDMAX          ; the memory, branch if it is <= maxacc
            BRA     NEWMAX1
OLDMAX      LDA     HOLD_DONE       ; Decrease the Holdtime when
            CMP     #$FF            ; the maximum value remain unchanged
```

```
            BEQ     NEWMAX1         ; Branch if the Holdtime is due
            LDA     MAXACC          ; otherwise use the current value
            BRA     NEWMAX2
NEWMAX1     LDA     #$C8            ; Hold time = 200 * 15 ms = 3 sec
            STA     HOLD_CNT        ; Reload the hold time for the next
            CLR     HOLD_DONE       ; maximum value
            LDA     #$FF
            STA     START_TIME      ; Start to count down the hold time
            LDA     PTEMPLO         ; Take the current value as maximum
NEWMAX2     STA     MAXACC
            RTS
****************************************
*                                      *
*     This subroutine is to convert    *
*        the AD data to the LCD        *
*    Save the data to be diaplayed     *
*             in MAXACC                *
*                                      *
****************************************
ADTOLCD     SEI                     ; Disable the Timer Interrupt !!
            LDA     #$00            ; Load 0000 into the memory
            STA     DECHI
            LDA     #$00
            STA     DECLO
            LDA     MAXACC
            LDX     #5
            MUL                     ; Acceleration = AD x 5
            ADD     DECLO           ; Acceleration is stored as DECHI
            STA     DECLO           ; and DECLO
            STA     ACCLO           ; Temporary storage
            LDA     #$00            ; Assume positive deceleration
            STA     SIGN            ; "00" positive ; "01" negative
            CLRA
            TXA
            ADC     DECHI
            STA     DECHI
            STA     ACCHI           ; Temporary storage
            LDA     DECLO
            SUB     DCOFFSETLO      ; Deceleration = Dec - DC offset
            STA     DECLO
            LDA     DECHI
            SBC     DCOFFSETHI
            STA     DECHI
            BCS     NEGATIVE        ; Branch if the result is negative
            BRA     SEARCH
NEGATIVE    LDA     DCOFFSETLO      ; Acceleration = DC offset - Dec
            SUB     ACCLO
            STA     DECLO
            LDA     DCOFFSETHI
            SBC     ACCHI
            STA     DECHI
            LDA     #$01            ; Assign a negative sign
            STA     SIGN
SEARCH      CLRX                    ; Start the search for hundred digit
LOOP100     LDA     DECLO           ; Acceleration = Acceleration - 100
            SUB     HUNDREDLO
            STA     DECLO
            LDA     DECHI
            SBC     HUNDREDHI
            STA     DECHI
            INCX                    ; X = X + 1
            BCC     LOOP100         ; if acceleration >= 100, continue the
            DECX                    ; loop100, otherwise X = X - 1
            LDA     DECLO           ; Acceleration = Acceleration + 100
            ADD     HUNDREDLO
            STA     DECLO
            LDA     DECHI
            ADC     HUNDREDHI
            STA     DECHI
            TXA                     ; Check if the MSD is zero
            AND     #$FF
            BEQ     NOZERO          ; If MSD is zero, branch to NOZERO
            LDA     $0300,X         ; Output the first second digit
            STA     PORTC
            BRA     STARTTEN
NOZERO      LDA     #$00            ; Display blank if MSD is zero
            STA     PORTC
```

```
STARTTEN    CLRX                    ; Start to search for ten digit
LOOP10      LDA     DECLO           ; acceleration = acceleration - 10
            SUB     TENLO
            STA     DECLO
            LDA     DECHI
            SBC     TENHI
            STA     DECHI
            INCX
            BCC     LOOP10          ; if acceleration >= 10 continue the
            DECX                    ; loop, otherwise end
            LDA     DECLO           ; acceleration = acceleration + 10
            ADD     TENLO
            STA     DECLO
            LDA     DECHI
            ADC     TENHI
            STA     DECHI
            LDA     $0300,X         ; Output the last second digit
            EOR     SIGN            ; Display the sign
            STA     PORTB
            CLRX                    ; Start to search for the last digit
            LDA     DECLO           ; declo = declo - 1
            TAX
            LDA     $0300,X         ; Output the last digit
            EOR     #$01            ; Add a decimal point in the display
            STA     PORTA
            CLI                     ; Enable Interrupt again !
            RTS
*****************************************
*                                       *
*   This subroutine provides services   *
*    for those unintended interrupts    *
*                                       *
*****************************************
SWI         RTI                     ; Software interrupt return
IRQ         RTI                     ; Hardware interrupt
TIMERCAP    RTI                     ; Timer input capture
TIMERROV    RTI                     ; Timer overflow
SCI         RTI                     ; Serial communication Interface
                                    ; Interrupt
            ORG     $3FF2           ; For 68HC05B16, the vector location
            FDB     SCI             ; starts at 3FF2
            FDB     TIMERROV        ; For 68HC05B5, the address starts
            FDB     TIMERCMP        ; 1FF2
            FDB     TIMERCAP
            FDB     IRQ
            FDB     SWI
            FDB     RESET
```

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