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Performance and aging of OPERA bakelite RPCs

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OPERA is an experiment dedicated to the observation of numu into nutau oscillations through tau appearance on the CNGS beam. The experiment is composed by two identical super-modules, each with a target section (made of emulsion/lead bricks alternated to a scintillator Target Tracker) and a muon spectrometer (instrumented with bakelite RPCs and drift tubes).
The RPCs are operated in streamer mode with the gas mixture Ar/C2H2F4/isoC4H10/SF6=75.4/20/4/0.6. The performances of the RPC system are presented. The sample of events induced by the CNGS neutrino beams as well as a large sample of cosmic rays have been used to study general properties of streamer-operated RPCs. The aging status of the detector, after four years of operation, is also described.

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