

# STRAIN GAGE INSTALLATION

## TECHNICAL DATA

### STRAIN GAGE MEASUREMENT

The most universal measuring device for the electrical measurement of mechanical quantities is the strain gage. Several types of strain gages depend for their operation on the proportional variance of electrical resistance to strain: the piezoresistive or semiconductor gage, the carbon resistive gage, the bonded metallic wire, and foil resistance gages. The bonded resistance strain gage is by far the most widely used in experimental stress analysis. This gage consists of a grid of very fine wire or foil bonded to a backing or carrier matrix. The electrical resistance of the grid varies linearly with strain. In use, the carrier matrix is bonded to the surface, force is applied, and the strain is found by measuring the change in resistance. The bonded resistance strain gage is low in cost, can be made with a short gage length, is only moderately affected by temperature changes, has small physical size and low mass, and has fairly high sensitivity to strain. In a strain gage application, the carrier matrix and the adhesive must work together to transmit the strain from the specimen to the grid. In addition, they combine to function as an electrical insulator and heat dissipator. The three primary factors influencing gage selection are: operating temperature, state of strain (gradient, magnitude, and time dependence), and the stability required.

Because of its outstanding sensitivity, the Wheatstone bridge circuit is the most frequently used circuit for static strain measurement. Ideally, the strain gage is the only resistor in the circuit that varies, and then only due to a change in strain on the surface. There are two main methods used to indicate the change in resistance caused by strain on a gage in a Wheatstone bridge. Often, an indicator will rebalance the bridge, displaying the change in resistance required in micro-strain. The second method calls for installation of an indicator, calibrated in micro-strain, that responds to the voltage output of the bridge. This method assumes a linear relationship between voltage out and strain, an initially balanced bridge, and a known VIN. In reality, the VOUT-strain relationship is nonlinear, but for strains up to a few thousand micro-strain, the error is not significant.

### POTENTIAL ERROR SOURCES

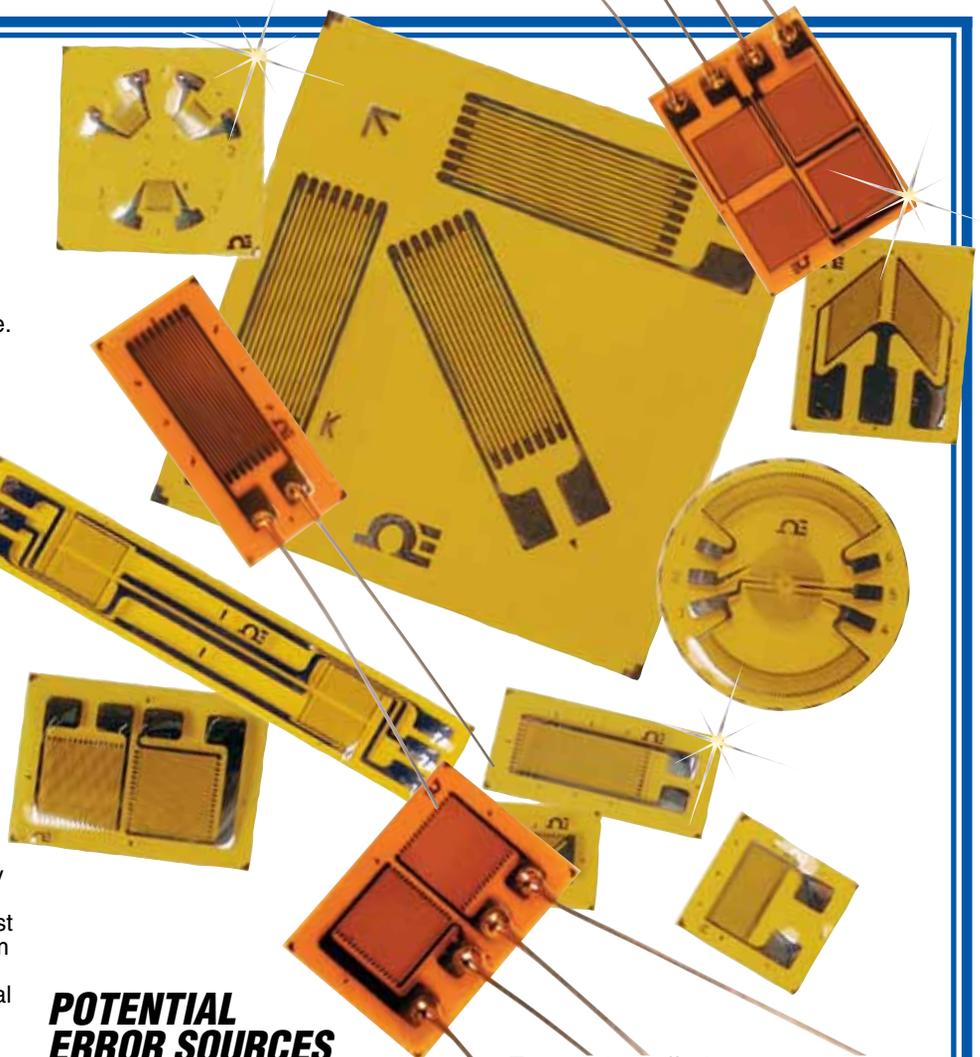
In a stress analysis application, the entire gage installation cannot be calibrated as can some pressure transducers. Therefore, it is important to examine potential error sources prior to taking data. Some gages may be damaged during installation. It is important therefore to check the resistance of the strain gage prior to applying stress. Electrical noise and interference may alter your readings. Shielded leads and adequately insulating coatings may prevent these problems. A value of less than 500 M $\Omega$  (using an ohmmeter) usually indicates surface contamination. Thermally induced voltages are caused by thermocouple effects at the junction of dissimilar metals within the measurement circuit. Magnetically induced voltages can occur when wiring is located in a time-varying magnetic field.

Magnetic induction can be controlled by using twisted lead wires and forming minimum but equal loop areas in each side of the bridge.

Temperature effects on gage resistance and gage factor should be compensated for as well. This may require measurement of temperature at the gage itself, using thermocouples, thermistors, or RTDs. Most metallic gage alloys, however, exhibit a nearly linear gage factor variation with temperature over a broad range, which is less than  $\pm 1\%$  within  $\pm 100^\circ\text{C}/180^\circ\text{F}$ .

### PRIME STRAIN GAGE SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

- Gage Length
- Number of Gages in Gage Pattern
- Arrangement of Gages in Gage Pattern
- Grid Resistance
- Strain-Sensitive Alloy
- Carrier Material
- Gage Width
- Solder Tab Type
- Configuration of Solder Tab
- Availability



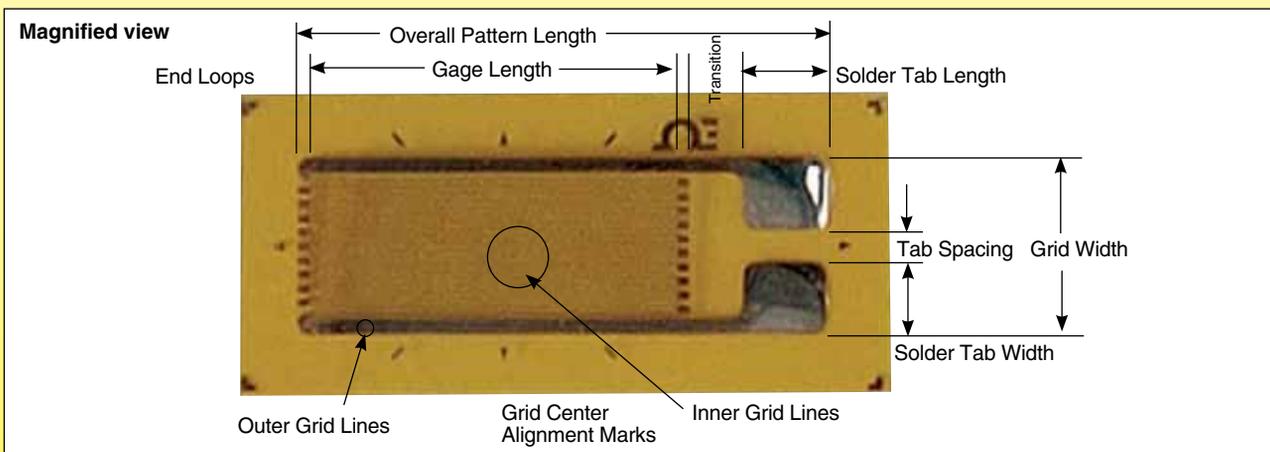
# STRAIN GAGE INSTALLATION

## THE STRAIN GAGE IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOLS

The strain gage is one of the most important tools used to apply electrical measurement techniques to the measurement of mechanical quantities. As their name indicates, they are used for the measurement of strain. As a technical term, "strain" is comprised of tensile and compressive strain, distinguished by a positive or negative sign. Thus, strain gages can be used to detect expansion as well as contraction.

The strain of a body is always caused by an external influence or an internal effect. Strain can be caused by forces, pressures, moments, heat, structural changes of the material and the like. If certain conditions are fulfilled, the amount or the value of the influencing quantity can be derived from the measured strain value. In experimental stress analysis, this feature is widely exploited. Experimental stress analysis uses the strain values measured on the

surface of a specimen or structural part to determine the stress in the material and also to predict its safety and endurance. Special transducers can be designed for the measurement of forces or other derived quantities, *e.g.*, moments, pressures, accelerations, displacements, vibrations and others. The transducer generally contains a pressure-sensitive diaphragm with strain gages bonded to it.



## STRAIN GAGE DIMENSIONS

The active grid length, in the case of foil gages, is the net grid length without the tabs, and includes the return loops of the wire gages.

Carrier dimensions are designed by OMEGA® for optimum function of the strain gage.

## STRAIN GAGE RESISTANCE

The resistance of a strain gage is defined as the electrical resistance measured between the two metal ribbons or contact areas intended for the connection of measurement cables. The range covers strain gages with nominal resistances of 120, 350, 600 and 700  $\Omega$ .

## GAGE FACTOR (STRAIN SENSITIVITY)

The strain sensitivity  $k$  of a strain gage is the proportionality factor between the relative change of the resistance.

Strain sensitivity is a figure without dimension and is generally called gage factor.

The gage factor of each production lot is determined by sample measurement and is given on each package as the nominal value with its tolerance.

## REFERENCE TEMPERATURE

The reference temperature is the ambient temperature for which the technical data concerning a strain gage are valid, unless temperature ranges are given. The technical data quoted for strain gages are based on a reference temperature of 23°C (73°F).

## TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTICS

Temperature-dependent changes in specific strain gage grid resistance occur in the applied gage owing to the linear thermal expansion coefficients of the grid and specimen materials. These resistance changes appear to be mechanical strain in the specimen. The representation of apparent strain as a function of temperature is called the temperature characteristic of the strain gage application.

In order to keep apparent strain through temperature changes as small as possible, each strain gage is matched during production to a certain linear thermal expansion coefficient. OMEGA offers strain gages with temperature characteristics matched to ferritic steel and aluminum.

## SERVICE TEMPERATURE RANGE

The service temperature range is the range of ambient temperature wherein the use of a strain gage is possible without permanent change in the measurement properties. Service temperature ranges are different, whether static or dynamic values are to be sensed.

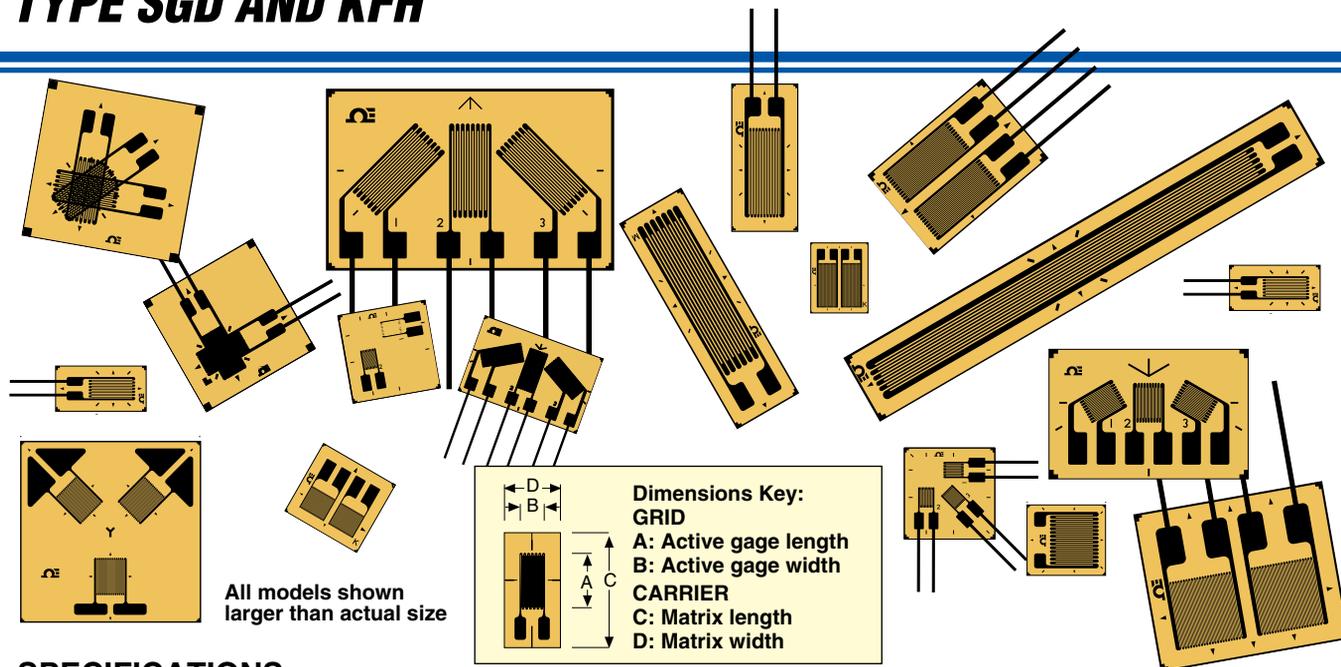
## MAXIMUM PERMITTED RMS BRIDGE ENERGIZING VOLTAGE

The maximum values quoted are permitted only for appropriate application on materials with good conduction (*e.g.*, steel of sufficient thickness) if room temperature is not exceeded. In other cases, temperature rise in the measuring grid area may lead to measurement error. Measurement on plastics and other materials with bad heat conduction requires reduction of the energizing voltage or of the duty cycle (pulsed operation).

# PRECISION STRAIN GAGE

## PRECISION SPECIFICATIONS CHART

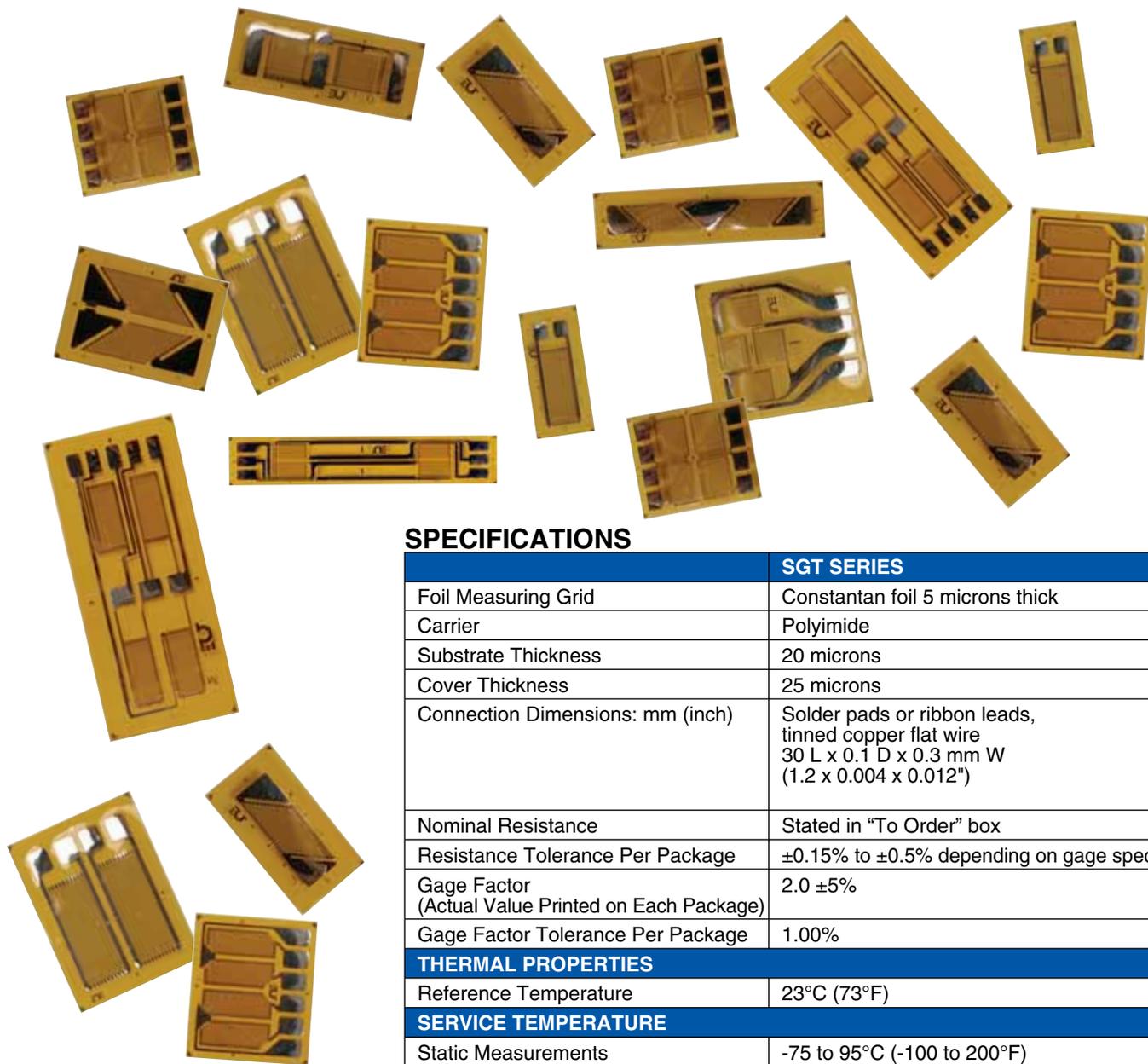
### TYPE SGD AND KFH



## SPECIFICATIONS

	SGD SERIES	KFH SERIES—PRE-WIRED
Foil Measuring Grid	Constantan foil 5 microns thick	Constantan foil 3.8 or 5 microns thick
Carrier	Polyimide	Polyimide
Substrate Thickness	20 microns	45 ± 10 microns
Cover Thickness	25 microns	45 ± 10 microns
Connection Dimensions: mm (inch)	Solder pads or ribbon leads, tinned copper flat wire 30 L x 0.1 D x 0.3 mm W (1.2 x 0.004 x 0.012")	Pre-wired, 2 or 3 leads connected to 28 AWG PTFE wire, 50 mm long ribbon cable (PVC insulated) through solder sleeves
Nominal Resistance	Stated in "To Order" box	120 or 350
Resistance Tolerance Per Package	±0.15% to ±0.5% depending on gage spec	± 0.35 or ± 1
Gage Factor (Actual Value Printed on Each Package)	2.0 ±5%	Approximately 2 (stated on package)
Gage Factor Tolerance Per Package	1.00%	± 1.00% or ± 1.5%
<b>THERMAL PROPERTIES</b>		
Reference Temperature	23°C (73°F)	23°C (73°F)
<b>SERVICE TEMPERATURE</b>		
Static Measurements	-75 to 200°C (-100 to 392°F)	-10 to 155°C (-14 to 320°F)
Dynamic Measurements	-75 to 200°C (-100 to 392°F)	-10 to 155°C (-14 to 320°F)
<b>TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTICS</b>		
Steel (and Certain Stainless Steels)	11 ppm/°C (6.1 ppm/°F)	10.8 ppm/°C (6 ppm/°F)
Aluminum	23 ppm/°C (12.8 ppm/°F)	—
Uncompensated	±20 ppm/°C (11.1 ppm/°F)	—
Temperature Compensated Range	-5 to 120°C (5 to 248°F)	-10 to 120°C (-14 to 248°F)
Tolerance of Temp Compensation	2 ppm/°C (1.0 ppm/°F)	—
<b>MECHANICAL PROPERTIES</b>		
Maximum Strain	3% or 30,000 microstrain	2% or 20,000 microstrain
Hysteresis	Negligible	Negligible
Fatigue (at ±1500 microstrain)	>10,000,000 cycles	>10,000,000 cycles
Smallest Bending Radius	3 mm (1/8")	—
Transverse Sensitivity	—	± 0.2%

# OMEGA® TRANSDUCER-QUALITY STRAIN GAGES SPECIFICATION CHART



OMEGA's transducer-quality strain gages are high-quality encapsulated foil strain gages that are available in many configurations. They are commonly used in transducer technology as well as in experimental analysis. The gages come in a variety of lengths, patterns, thermal expansion coefficients (matched to stainless steel, carbon steel, and aluminum), alloy materials, and solder configurations. Resistors and resistor wire, used for zero temperature compensation, span temperature compensation, and zero balance, are also available for use with these gages.

## SPECIFICATIONS

SGT SERIES	
Foil Measuring Grid	Constantan foil 5 microns thick
Carrier	Polyimide
Substrate Thickness	20 microns
Cover Thickness	25 microns
Connection Dimensions: mm (inch)	Solder pads or ribbon leads, tinned copper flat wire 30 L x 0.1 D x 0.3 mm W (1.2 x 0.004 x 0.012")
Nominal Resistance	Stated in "To Order" box
Resistance Tolerance Per Package	±0.15% to ±0.5% depending on gage spec
Gage Factor (Actual Value Printed on Each Package)	2.0 ±5%
Gage Factor Tolerance Per Package	1.00%
THERMAL PROPERTIES	
Reference Temperature	23°C (73°F)
SERVICE TEMPERATURE	
Static Measurements	-75 to 95°C (-100 to 200°F)
Dynamic Measurements	-75 to 95°C (-100 to 200°F)
TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTICS	
Steel (and Certain Stainless Steels)	11 ppm/°C (6.1 ppm/°F)
Aluminum	23 ppm/°C (12.8 ppm/°F)
Uncompensated	±20 ppm/°C (11.1 ppm/°F)
Temperature Compensated Range	-5 to 120°C (5 to 248°F)
Tolerance of Temp Compensation	2 ppm/°C (1.0 ppm/°F)
MECHANICAL PROPERTIES	
Maximum Strain	3% or 30,000 microstrain
Hysteresis	Negligible
Fatigue (at ±1500 microstrain)	>10,000,000 cycles
Smallest Bending Radius	3 mm (1/8")

# KARMA STRAIN GAGES

## SPECIFICATION CHART

### OMEGA® K-Series Karma Strain Gages Specifications Chart

OMEGA now offers a full line of Karma strain gages. The K-Series strain gages are often used for OEM transducer applications where transducers with exacting specifications must be produced. K-Series strain gages are designed with optimum backing thickness tolerance. Creep variations from one strain gage to another are kept to a minimum. For batch production, this will keep bridge output differences between strain gage installations to a minimum. The K-Series gages have very uniform matrix or carrier dimensions. These tight trim dimensions allow for the carrier edge to be used for strain gage alignment. Consistent strain gage placement will keep bridge output differences among the transducers to a minimum.

Karma material is a nickel chromium alloy which can be used for strain sensing. The characteristics of the alloy compared with standard constantan alloy strain gages are as follows:

- **Improved fatigue life.**
- **Excellent Stability over a wide temperature range.**
- **A much flatter thermal output curve which provides for more accurate thermal correction over a wider temperature range.**
- **A higher resistivity which enables higher resistance strain gages for the same size or same resistance in a smaller size.**

Karma gages are available with temperature characteristics matched to stainless steel or aluminum. Karma is known to be difficult to solder, even with special flux. OMEGA is offering ribbon leads or copper plated solder pads, so that standard soldering techniques can be used, making wiring easier.

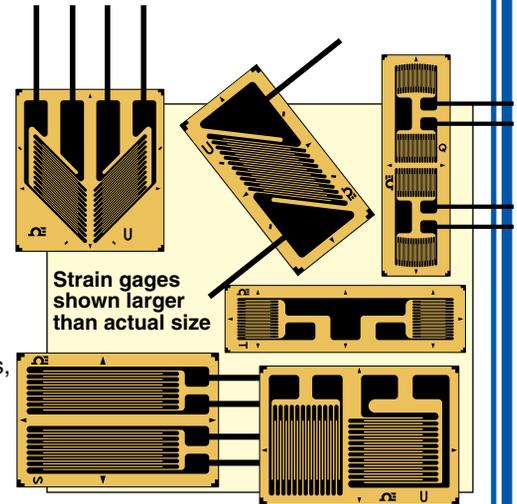
Creep compensation is available for Karma strain gages. It may be necessary in transducer design to match the strain gage transducer creep characteristics to the spring element. Karma strain gages are labeled with a letter code which identifies a creep code value. The creep characteristics of a strain gage pattern can be modified by varying the length of the end loops and the limb or strand width. Creep codes are a ratio of the end loop length to the limb width. An increasing ratio will give a longer end loop and a more positive

creep characteristic. OMEGA will work with you to develop the custom creep value needed for your application. K-Series strain gages are suggested for static strain measurement over a wide temperature range from -75 to 200°C (-100 to 392°F) due to their good linearity over this wide temperature range.

K-Series strain gages are often used for fatigue-rated transducer designs. The fatigue life of Karma alloy tends to be much better than constantan, and so transducers using Karma strain gages provide good fatigue life. You will notice if you compare the fatigue specifications that Karma is rated at ±1800 micro strain, >10,000,000 cycles, and constantan is rated at SGD series is rated at ±1500 micro strain, >10,000,000 cycles.

A transducer designed at ±1500 micro

strain or below, using Karma strain gages will have improved fatigue life.



For specific Gages visit us online

### SPECIFICATIONS

SGK SERIES	
Foil Measuring Grid	Karma foil 5 microns thick
Carrier	Polyimide
Substrate Thickness	20 microns
Cover Thickness	25 microns
Connection Dimensions: mm (in)	Pre tinned copper plated solder pads
Nominal Resistance	Stated in "To Order" box
Resistance Tolerance Per Package	±0.15% to ±0.5% depending on gage spec
Gage Factor (Actual Value Printed on Each Package)	2.1 ±5%
Gage Factor Tolerance Per Package	1.00%
THERMAL PROPERTIES	
Reference Temperature	23°C (73°F)
SERVICE TEMPERATURE	
Static Measurements	-75 to 200°C (-100 to 392°F)
Dynamic Measurements	-75 to 200°C (-100 to 392°F)
TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTICS	
Steel (and Certain Stainless Steels)	11 ppm/°C (6.1 ppm/°F)
Aluminum	23 ppm/°C (12.8 ppm/°F)
Temperature Compensated Range	-10 to 180°C (14 to 356°F)
Tolerance of Temp Compensation	1 ppm/°C (0.5 ppm/°F)
MECHANICAL PROPERTIES	
Maximum Strain	1.5% or 15,000 microstrain
Hysteresis	Negligible
Fatigue (at ±1800 microstrain)	>10,000,000 cycles
Smallest Bending Radius	3 mm (1/8")