

When I replace obsolete products in my equipment with modern replacements, do I need to replace all the devices in parallel?

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Figure 1 shows a simple 3 phase bridge where one thyristor (per arm) is capable of carrying the current that is required to obtain the full output rating of the bridge.

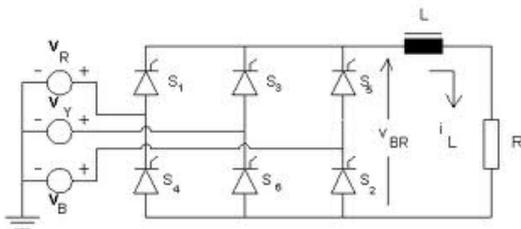


Figure 1. 3phase fully controlled rectifier

If a higher current rating is required then either larger devices are used, if available, or devices are used in parallel. These devices are specially selected to have similar forward voltage drops at the operating current so that they each take approximately the same current. A modern replacement for an obsolete thyristor will not have the same forward voltage drop characteristic and so if it is the only device replaced in multi-parallel device arrangement then it will upset the current sharing. In all probability the modern device will have a lower forward voltage drop at the operating current and so it will take a disproportionate amount of

the current and may well burn out. Therefore in the case where the thyristors S1 to S6 in figure 1 are actually parallel connected thyristors then all the devices in any individual switch (arm) must be of the same type.

Bridges connected in parallel usually have phase shifted inputs to produce a smoother output and are fed from different secondary windings of a transformer. In this way the thyristors in any corresponding arm in each bridge are NOT directly connected in parallel.

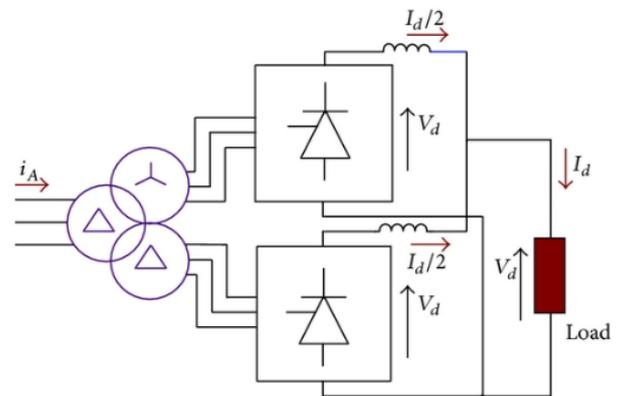


Figure 2. A 12 pulse bridge rectifier consisting of two phase shifted 6 pulse bridges with connected outputs

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