This is a repository copy of *Reply to: On the observation of photo-excitation effects in molecules using muon spin spectroscopy*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/174065/>

Version: Accepted Version

Article:

Jingliang, M., Wang, K., Murahari, P. et al. (16 more authors) (2021) Reply to: On the observation of photo-excitation effects in molecules using muon spin spectroscopy. Nature Materials. ISSN 1476-1122

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41563-021-01003-5>

This is a post-peer-review, pre-copyedit version of an article published in Nature Materials. The final authenticated version is available online at: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41563-021-01003-5>

Reuse

Items deposited in White Rose Research Online are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved unless indicated otherwise. They may be downloaded and/or printed for private study, or other acts as permitted by national copyright laws. The publisher or other rights holders may allow further reproduction and re-use of the full text version. This is indicated by the licence information on the White Rose Research Online record for the item.

Takedown

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.

eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>

Reply to “On the observation of photo-excitation effects in molecules using muon spin spectroscopy”

M. Jingliang¹, K. Wang^{1,2}, P. Murahari¹, K. Yokoyama^{1,3}, J. S. Lord³, F. L. Pratt³, J. He², L. Schulz², M. Willis², J. E. Anthony⁴, N. A. Morley⁵, L. Nuccio⁶, A. Misquitta¹, D. J. Dunstan¹, K. Shimomura⁷, I. Watanabe⁸, S. Zhang², P. Heathcote^{9*}, A. J. Drew^{1,2,3,*}

We reported [1] changes in the muonium (Mu) addition rate to different sites in 6,13-bis(tri(isopropyl)silylethynyl)pentacene (TIPS-Pn) in CH_2Cl_2 when it is photo-excited compared with the ground electronic state. Scheuermann and McKenzie report in a comment [2] that their independent analysis of the transverse-field (TF)- μSR and avoided level crossing (ALC)- μSR spectra in [1] indicate that there is no statistically significant effect of photo-excitation on this rate.

One of the main criticisms from Scheuermann and McKenzie [2] is that effective rate constants for muon addition in other smaller molecules are in excess of $10^9 \text{ M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$, and that this is too large to be compatible with our interpretation of our TIPS-Pn data. For example, one would expect significant effects to amplitude when the muon $\rightarrow$ muoniated radical conversion rate is between about 0.1 and $10 \mu\text{s}^{-1}$, which would correspond to a rate constant between about $10^6 - 10^8 \text{ M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$ in the TIPS-Pn concentration measured in our experiment (see supplementary information). We note that McKenzie et al. are assuming that the rate constant for this reaction in TIPS-Pn is the same as the smaller molecules, as this has not been measured in TIPS-Pn. We have provided (see supplementary information) a comprehensive set of data that all indicate that the effective rate constant for these reactions is below $10^9 \text{ M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$, and probably between $10^7 - 10^8 \text{ M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$, within the range required for our interpretation to be correct.

Scheuermann and McKenzie argue that Fourier-transformed TF μSR spectra presented in [1] cannot establish and quantify any effect of illumination with statistical significance. They were unable to reproduce some of the analysis presented by Wang *et al.*, [1] using a standard methodology for the interpretation of muonium chemistry experiments. As discussed in supplementary information Scheuermann and McKenzie [2] have fitted two overlapping ALC resonances to a double Lorentzian, where fit parameters will have significant covariance and there are insufficient points to reliably fit the number of parameters in their fits, resulting in significant uncertainties on the extracted parameters. We note that the TF fits by Scheuermann and McKenzie also appear to be all-parameter fits, which may be physically unrealistic. For example, the applied field in both light-on and light-off data is identical and so the frequency, amplitude and phase of the low-frequency component will have shared parameters.

We agree, some of our data is challenging to analyze, and we already considered the alternative interpretation and analysis methods presented by Scheuermann and McKenzie. Wang *et al.* [1] as detailed in the supplementary information have demonstrated a set of analyses that are consistent across multiple μ SR experimental geometries and techniques, with the key results agreeing with independent results from optical spectroscopy [3] following photoexcitation of TIPS-Pn. In particular there is a match between the decay rate of a triplet detected by optical spectroscopy [3], and that detected by μ SR (Figure 2c in Wang *et al.* [1] and 13a of the supplementary information), confirming μ SR is measuring photoexcitation and the light-induced changes are not an artefact induced by data analysis.

We believe that the body of evidence indicates the initial conclusions and interpretation of Wang *et al.* [1] are correct, but that clearly further work is needed to develop the photo μ SR technique, which is in progress.

References:

- 1] K.Wang, P.Murahari, K.Yokoyama, J. S. Lord, F. L.Pratt, J.He, L. Schulz, M.Willis, J.E.Anthony, N.A.Morley, L.Nuccio, A.Misquitta, D. J.Dunstan, K. Shimomura, I.Watanabe, S. Zhang, P.Heathcote and A. J.Drew: Temporal mapping of photochemical reactions and molecular excited states with carbon specificity *Nature Materials* **16**, 467 (2017).
- 2] R. Scheuermann and I. McKenzie. Comment “On the observation of photo-excitation effects in molecules using muon spin spectroscopy”
- 3] B.J. Walker, A.J. Musser, D. Beljonne and R.H. Friend. Singlet exciton fission in solution. *Nature Chemistry* **5**, 1019_1024 (2013).

The authors declare no competing interests.