

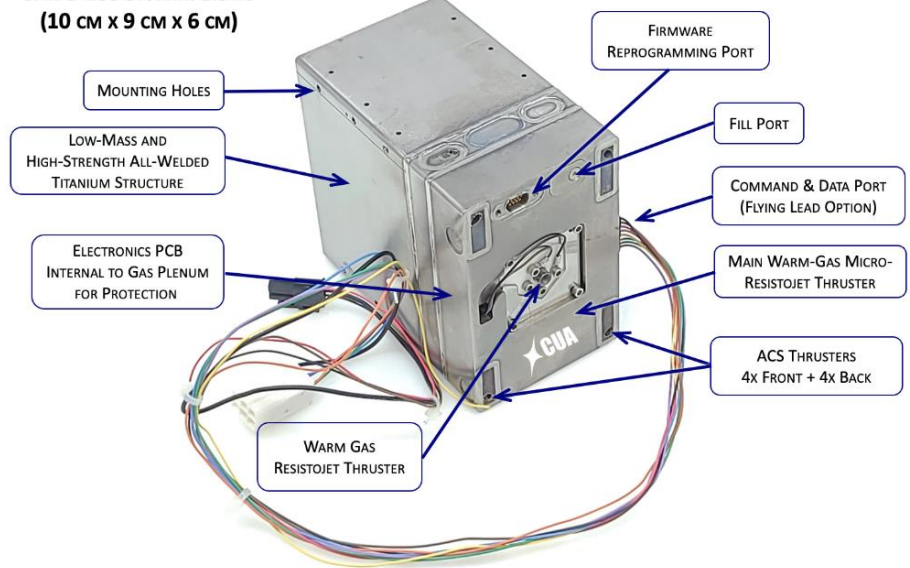


CUBESAT HIGH IMPULSE PROPULSION SYSTEM (CHIPS) WARM GAS PROPELLANT JULY 2025



The CU Aerospace (CUA) Cubesat High Impulse Propulsion System (CHIPS) is a miniaturized, well-integrated propulsion solution tailored for small satellites, combining both a main thruster and a three-axis attitude control system (ACS). Utilizing CUA's high efficiency resistojet (superheater) technology and non-toxic, inert propellants, CHIPS offers impressive performance in a compact package. Proven valving has been cycled to >120 million actuations and can be used with self-pressurizing, non-toxic, and inert propellants. Waste heat from the electronics and resistojet is efficiently and regeneratively recovered to evaporate propellant, resulting in low system temperature rise ($\sim 1^{\circ}\text{C}$) over 10-minute operating cycles.

**CHIPS-180 SYSTEM: 0.54U
(10 cm x 9 cm x 6 cm)**



The illustrated CHIPS-180 is an ultra-compact 0.54U fully-throttleable system (10 cm x 9 cm x 6 cm package size) having 180 N-s of total impulse with self-pressurizing R134a propellant. System set-points, system status, and firing telemetry are all accessible and configurable through a customizable interface port. CHIPS technology can be customized in size to meet customer-specific mission requirements. While CHIPS' warm-gas resistojet Isp is 40-50% higher than cold-gas Isp, CHIPS can also be packaged as a cold-gas-only system requiring reduced power. The CHIPS package can incorporate up to 8 ACS thrusters for 6 degree-of-freedom (6DOF) operation.

Performance Specifications

Parameter	CHIPS-180		CHIPS-500		CHIPS-1000		Units
Mode	Warm gas	Cold gas	Warm	Cold	Warm	Cold	
Thruster System Volume	540 (6 x 9 x 10)		1,300 (13 x 10 x 10)		2,500 (12.5 x 20 x 10)		cm ³
Propellant Mass	277		770		1,513		g
System Wet Mass	1,027		1,835		3,130		g
Power Draw (when thrusting)	20		25		30		W
Thrust	15	15	25	18	31	21	mN
Specific Impulse	67	45	69	46	70	46	s
Total Impulse	176	118	505	350	1,030	715	N-s
Volumetric Impulse	326	218	387	270	410	285	N-s/liter
Maximum Continuous Thrust Time	10		10		10		min
Minimum Impulse Bit	< 0.1		< 0.1		< 0.1		mN-s

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Operation:

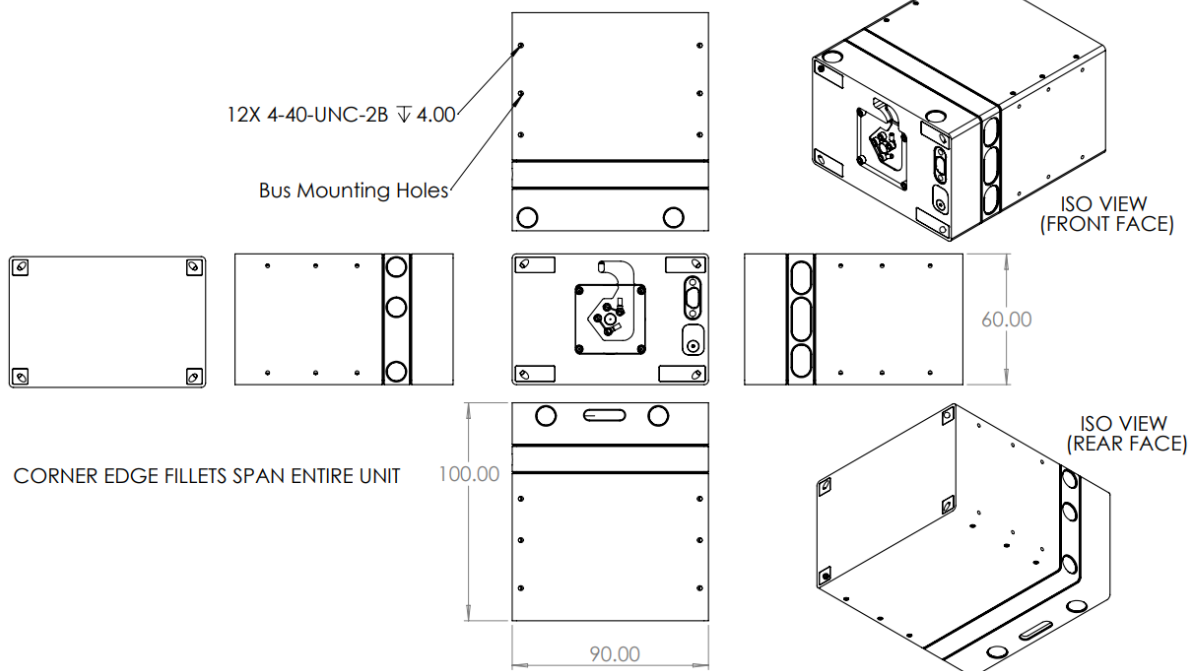
- Two operational modes:
 - Warm gas mode for higher specific impulse, large total impulse or collision avoidance maneuvers
 - Cold gas mode for minimum or small total impulse maneuvers (attitude & roll control)
- Overall control authority: roll, pitch, yaw, $\pm X/Y/Z$
 - 6 Degree of Freedom (6DOF) achievable with 8 ACS thrusters
- Highly configurable controller for on-orbit update of system parameters, including:
 - Thrust duration
 - Plenum pressure (thrust)
 - Superheater power level
 - Temperature set-points
 - Fault set-points
- Telemetry and system status packets for health monitoring
- Dedicated propellant heaters for continuous operation below 0°C ambient temperature
- Propellant temperature sensor for closed-loop propellant temperature regulation
- Propellant vaporizer ensuring 100% vapor delivered from liquid storage

- Pressure sensor for closed-loop propellant mass flow control and thrust throttling
- Voltage and current sensors for closed-loop power regulation, monitoring, troubleshooting, and over-current protection
- Life span: 3+ years from propellant load

Mechanical:

- Low mass, high strength all-welded Ti-6Al-4V (Grade 5) propellant tank
- Reliable valve technology:
 - Valves tested to >120,000,000+ cold gas firings retaining low leak rate $\leq 1 \times 10^{-4}$ scc/sec for GHe
- System is two-fault-tolerant against leakage
- Volume optimized:
 - All mechanical and electrical subsystems highly integrated into tank structure
 - Miniaturized system only 0.54U
 - Custom tank sizes available
 - Self-contained electronics control board enclosed in gas plenum
- High-density, self-pressurizing R134a baseline (R236fa alternate) propellant
 - Green, non-toxic, non-flammable and inert
 - Chemically stable, high critical temperature, low freezing point, and low vapor pressure

0.54U CHIPS WITH 1 PRIMARY & 8 ACS THRUSTERS



Dimensions are for illustrative purposes only. CHIPS is highly adaptable to a wide range of customer-specific geometries. Inquire to see how CUA can adapt CHIPS to meet your mission requirements.