

GW150914: FACTSHEET

BACKGROUND IMAGES: TIME-FREQUENCY TRACE (TOP) AND TIME-SERIES (BOTTOM) IN THE TWO LIGO DETECTORS; SIMULATION OF BLACK HOLE HORIZONS (MIDDLE-TOP), BEST FIT WAVEFORM (MIDDLE-BOTTOM)

first direct detection of gravitational waves (GW) and first direct observation of a black hole binary

observed by	LIGO L1, H1	duration from 30 Hz	~ 200 ms
source type	black hole (BH) binary	# cycles from 30 Hz	~10
date	14 Sept 2015	peak GW strain	1×10^{-21}
time	09:50:45 UTC	peak displacement of interferometers arms	± 0.002 fm
likely distance	0.75 to 1.9 Gly 230 to 570 Mpc	frequency/wavelength at peak GW strain	150 Hz, 2000 km
redshift	0.054 to 0.136	peak speed of BHs	~ 0.6 c
signal-to-noise ratio	24	peak GW luminosity	3.6×10^{56} erg s ⁻¹
false alarm prob.	< 1 in 5 million	radiated GW energy	2.5-3.5 M _⊙
false alarm rate	< 1 in 200,000 yr	remnant ringdown freq.	~ 250 Hz
Source Masses	M _⊙	remnant damping time	~ 4 ms
total mass	60 to 70	remnant size, area	180 km, 3.5×10^5 km ²
primary BH	32 to 41	consistent with general relativity?	passes all tests performed
secondary BH	25 to 33	graviton mass bound	< 1.2×10^{-22} eV
remnant BH	58 to 67	coalescence rate of binary black holes	2 to 400 Gpc ⁻³ yr ⁻¹
mass ratio	0.6 to 1	online trigger latency	~ 3 min
primary BH spin	< 0.7	# offline analysis pipelines	5
secondary BH spin	< 0.9	CPU hours consumed	~ 50 million (=20,000 PCs run for 100 days)
remnant BH spin	0.57 to 0.72	papers on Feb 11, 2016	13
signal arrival time delay	arrived in L1 7 ms before H1	# researchers	~1000, 80 institutions in 15 countries
likely sky position	Southern Hemisphere		
likely orientation resolved to	face-on/off ~600 sq. deg.		

Detector noise introduces errors in measurement. Parameter ranges correspond to 90% credible bounds.

Acronyms: L1=LIGO Livingston, H1=LIGO Hanford; Gly=giga lightyear= 9.46×10^{21} km; Mpc=mega parsec=3.2 million lightyear, Gpc= 10^3 Mpc, fm=femtometer= 10^{-15} m, M_⊙=1 solar mass= 2×10^{30} kg