# SPONGENT: A Lightweight Hash Function[*]

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**Abstract.** This paper proposes SPONGENT – a family of lightweight
hash functions with hash sizes of 88 (for preimage resistance only), 128,
160, 224, and 256 bits based on a sponge construction instantiated with
a PRESENT-type permutation, following the hermetic sponge strategy.
Its smallest implementations in ASIC require 738, 1060, 1329, 1728,
and 1950 GE, respectively. To our best knowledge, at all security lev-
els attained, it is the hash function with the smallest footprint in hard-
ware published so far, the parameter being highly technology dependent.
SPONGENT offers a lot of flexibility in terms of serialization degree and
speed. We explore some of its numerous implementation trade-offs.

We furthermore present a security analysis of SPONGENT. Basing the
design on a PRESENT-type primitive provides confidence in its security
with respect to the most important attacks. Several dedicated attack
approaches are also investigated.

**Keywords:** hash function, lightweight cryptography, low-cost cryptogra-
phy, low-power design, sponge construction, PRESENT, SPONGENT, RFID

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Motivation

As crucial applications go pervasive, the need for security in RFID and
sensor networks is dramatically increasing, which requires secure yet ef-
ficiently implementable cryptographic primitives including secret-key ci-
phers and hash functions. In such constrained environments, the area and

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power consumption of a primitive usually comes to the fore and standard algorithms are often prohibitively expensive to implement.

Once this research problem was identified, the cryptographic community designed a number of tailored lightweight cryptographic algorithms to specifically address this challenge: stream ciphers like Trivium [12,10], Grain [13,14], and Mickey [2] as well as block ciphers like SEA [26], DESL, DESXL [21], HIGHT [16], mCrypton [22], KATAN/KTANTAN [11], and PRESENT [5] — to mention only a small selection of the lightweight designs.

Rather recently, some significant work on lightweight hash functions has been also performed: [6] describes ways of using the PRESENT block cipher in hashing modes of operation and [1] takes the approach of designing a dedicated lightweight hash function QUARK based on a sponge construction [9,3]. However, while for the stream and block ciphers, the designs have already closely approached the minimum ASIC hardware footprint theoretically attainable, it does not seem the case for lightweight hash functions so far. This paper illustrates this point by proposing the lightweight hash function SPONGENT with a considerably smaller footprint than SHA-2, SHA-3 finalists, PRESENT in hashing modes, and QUARK. Similarly to QUARK, a part of this advantage comes from a reduced level of preimage and second preimage security, while maintaining the standard level of collision resistance.

## 1.2 Design Considerations for a Lightweight Hash Function

The standard security requirements for a hash function with an $n$-bit output size are collision resistance of $2^{n/2}$ as well as preimage and second-preimage resistance of $2^n$.

The footprint of a hash function is mainly determined by
1. the number of state bits (incl. the key schedule for block cipher based designs) as well as
2. the size of functional and control logic used in a round function.

For highly serialized implementations (usually used to attain low area and power), the logic size is normally rather small and the state size dominates the total area requirements of the design.

As shown in [6], using a lightweight block cipher in a hashing mode (single block length such as Davies-Meyer or double block length such as Hirose) is not necessarily an optimal choice for reducing the footprint, the major restriction being the doubling of the datapath storage requirement due to the feed-forward operation. At the same time, no feed-forward is necessary for the sponge construction.

In a permutation-based sponge construction, let $r$ be the *rate* (the number of bits input or output per one permutation call) and $c$ be the *capacity* (internal state bits not used for input or output). The design of [1] as well as the works [3,4,9] convincingly demonstrate that a permutation-based sponge construction can allow to almost halve the state size for $n \geq c$ and reasonably small $r$. In this case, if the underlying permutation does not have any structural distinguishers (thus, the sponge construction being *hermetic*), the preimage and second-preimage resistances are reduced to $2^{n-r}$ and $2^{c/2}$, correspondingly, while the collision resistance remains at the level of $2^{c/2}$. As in most embedded scenarios, where a lightweight hash function is likely to be used, the full second-preimage security is not a necessary requirement, we will take this approach in the design of SPONGENT. For relatively small rate $r$, the loss of preimage security is limited.

However, while using this novel idea of reducing the state size to minimize (1), the QUARK hash function does not appear to provide an optimal logic size, which is mainly due to the Boolean functions with many inputs used in its round transform. SPONGENT keeps the round function very simple which reduces the logic size close to the smallest theoretically possible, thus, minimizing (2) and resulting in a significantly more compact design.

As to the output hash size $n$, we opt for 5 variants of SPONGENT covering most security applications in the field. SPONGENT-88 is designed for extremely restricted scenarios and low preimage security requirements. It can be used e.g. in some RFID protocols and for PRNGs. SPONGENT-128 and SPONGENT-160 might be used in highly constrained applications with low and middle requirements for collision security. The latter also provides compatibility to the SHA-1 interfaces. The parameters of SPONGENT-224 and SPONGENT-256 correspond to those of a subset of SHA-2 and SHA-3 to make SPONGENT compatible to the standard interfaces in usual lightweight embedded scenarios.

### 1.3 Organization of the Paper

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the design of SPONGENT and gives a design rationale. Section 3 presents some results of security analysis, including proven lower bounds on the number of differentially active S-boxes, best differential characteristics found, rebound attacks, and linear attacks. In Section 4, the implementation results are given for a range of trade-offs. We conclude in Section 5.

## 2 The Design of SPONGENT

SPONGENT is a sponge construction based on a wide PRESENT-type permutation. Given a finite number of input bits, it produces an $n$-bit hash value. A design goal for SPONGENT is to follow the hermetic sponge strategy (no structural distinguishers for the underlying permutation are allowed).

### 2.1 Permutation-based Sponge Construction
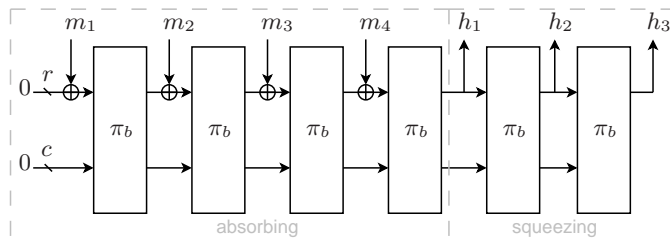


**Fig. 1.** Sponge construction based on a $b$-bit permutation $\pi_b$ with capacity $c$ bits and rate $r$ bits. $m_i$ are $r$-bit message blocks. $h_i$ are parts of the hash value.

SPONGENT relies on a sponge construction – a simple iterated design that takes a variable-length input and can produce an output of an arbitrary length based on a permutation $\pi_b$ operating on a state of a fixed number $b$ of bits. The size of the internal state $b = r + c \geq n$ is called *width*, where $r$ is the *rate* and $c$ the *capacity*.

The sponge construction proceeds in three phases (see also Figure 1):

- **Initialization phase:** the message is padded by a single bit 1 followed by a necessary number of 0 bits up to a multiple of $r$ bits (e.g., if $r = 8$, then the 1-bit message '0' is transformed to '01000000'). Then it is cut into blocks of $r$ bits.
- **Absorbing phase:** the $r$-bit input message blocks are xored into the first $r$ bits of the state, interleaved with applications of the permutation $\pi_b$.
- **Squeezing phase:** the first $r$ bits of the state are returned as output, interleaved with applications of the permutation $\pi_b$, until $n$ bits are returned.

In SPONGENT, the $b$-bit 0 is taken as the initial value before the absorbing phase. In all SPONGENT variants, except SPONGENT-88, the hash size $n$ equals capacity $c$. The message chunks are xored into the $r$ rightmost bit positions of the state. The same $r$ bit positions form parts of the hash output.

Let a permutation-based sponge construction have $n \geq c$ and $c/2 > r$ which is fulfilled for the parameter choices of all SPONGENT variants. Then the works [3,4,9] imply the preimage security of $2^{n-r}$ as well as the second preimage and collision securities of $2^{c/2}$ if this construction is hermetic (that is, if the underlying permutation does not have any structural distinguishers). The best preimage attack we are aware of in this case has a computational complexity of $2^{n-r} + 2^{c/2}$.

## 2.2 Parameters

We propose five variants of SPONGENT with five different security levels:

| | $n$ (bit) | $b$ (bit) | $c$ (bit) | $r$ (bit) | $R$ number of rounds | security(bit) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | preimage | 2nd preimage | collision |
| SPONGENT-88 | 88 | 88 | 80 | 8 | 45 | 80 | 40 | 40 |
| SPONGENT-128 | 128 | 136 | 128 | 8 | 70 | 120 | 64 | 64 |
| SPONGENT-160 | 160 | 176 | 160 | 16 | 90 | 144 | 80 | 80 |
| SPONGENT-224 | 224 | 240 | 224 | 16 | 120 | 208 | 112 | 112 |
| SPONGENT-256 | 256 | 272 | 256 | 16 | 140 | 240 | 128 | 128 |

## 2.3 PRESENT-type Permutation

The permutation $\pi_b : \mathbb{F}_2^b \to \mathbb{F}_2^b$ is an $R$-round transform of the input STATE of $b$ bits that can be outlined at a top-level as:

**for** $i = 1$ to $R$ **do**
    STATE $\leftarrow$ retnuoCl$_b(i) \oplus$ STATE $\oplus$ lCounter$_b(i)$
    STATE $\leftarrow$ sBoxLayer$_b$(STATE)
    STATE $\leftarrow$ pLayer$_b$(STATE)
**end for**

where sBoxLayer$_b$ and pLayer$_b$ describe how the STATE evolves. For ease of design, only widths $b$ with $4|b$ are allowed. The number $R$ of rounds depends on block size $b$ and can be found in Subsection 2.2. lCounter$_b(i)$ is the state of an LFSR dependent on $b$ at time $i$ which yields the round constant in round $i$ and is added to the rightmost bits of STATE. retnuoCl$_b(i)$

is the value of $\text{lCounter}_b(i)$ with its bits in reversed order and is added to the leftmost bits of STATE.

The following building blocks are generalizations of the PRESENT structure to larger $b$-bit widths:

1. sBoxLayer$_b$: This denotes the use of a 4-bit to 4-bit S-box $S : \mathbb{F}_2^4 \to \mathbb{F}_2^4$ which is applied $b/4$ times in parallel. The S-box fulfills the PRESENT S-box criteria [5]. The action of the S-box in hexadecimal notation is given by the following table:

| $x$ | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | A | B | C | D | E | F |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $S[x]$ | E | D | B | 0 | 2 | 1 | 4 | F | 7 | A | 8 | 5 | 9 | C | 3 | 6 |

2. pLayer$_b$: This is an extension of the (inverse) PRESENT bit-permutation and moves bit $j$ of STATE to bit position $P_b(j)$, where

$$P_b(j) = \begin{cases} j \cdot b/4 \mod b - 1, & \text{if } j \in \{0, \dots, b-2\} \\ b - 1, & \text{if } j = b - 1. \end{cases}$$

3. lCounter$_b$: This is one of the three $\lceil \log_2 R \rceil$-bit LFSRs. The LFSR is clocked once every time its state has been used and its final value is all ones. If $\zeta$ is the root of unity in the corresponding binary finite field, the 6-bit LFSR used in SPONGENT-88 is defined by the primitive trinomial $\zeta^6 + \zeta^5 + 1$ (initialized with '000101'). The 7-bit LFSR with a primitive trinomial of $\zeta^7 + \zeta^6 + 1$ is used in SPONGENT-128, SPONGENT-160, and SPONGENT-224 and respectively initialized with '1111010', '1000101', and '0000001'. SPONGENT-256 uses an 8-bit LFSR based on the pentanomial $\zeta^8 + \zeta^4 + \zeta^3 + \zeta^2 + 1$ and it is initialized with '10011110'.

### 2.4 Design Rationale

**Permutation.** The 4-bit S-box is the major block of functional logic in a serial low-area implementation of SPONGENT, the bit permutation requiring some additional space in silicon. Its simplicity and small size minimize the area and power consumption on the logic side. The structures of the bit permutation and the S-box in SPONGENT make it possible to prove

**Theorem 1.** *Any 5-round differential characteristic of the underlying permutation in SPONGENT-{88, 128, 160, 224, 256} has a minimum of 10 active S-boxes.*

*Proof.* The statements for SPONGENT-{88, 128, 160, 224, 256} can directly be proven by applying the same technique used in [5, Appendix III].

The concept of counting active S-boxes is central to the differential cryptanalysis. The minimum number of active S-boxes relates to the maximum differential characteristic probability of the construction. Since in the hash setting there are no random and independent key values added between the rounds, this relation is not exact (in fact that it is even not exact for most practical keyed block ciphers). However, differentially active S-boxes are still the major technique used to evaluate the security of SPN-based hash functions.

An important property of the SPONGENT S-box is that its maximum differential probability is $2^{-2}$. This fact and the assumption of the independency of difference propagation in different rounds yield an upper bound on the differential characteristic probability of $2^{-20}$ over 5 rounds for SPONGENT-{88, 128, 160, 224, 256}, which follows from the claims of Theorem 1.

Theorem 1 is used to determine the number $R$ of rounds in permutation $\pi_b$: $R$ is chosen in a way that $\pi_b$ provides at least $b$ active S-boxes. Other types of analysis are performed in the next section.

## 3  Security Analysis

In this section, we discuss the security of SPONGENT against the currently known cryptanalytic attacks by applying the most important state-of-the-art methods of cryptanalysis and investigating their complexity.

### 3.1  Resistance Against Differential Cryptanalysis

Here we analyze the resistance of SPONGENT against differential attacks where Theorem 1 plays a key role providing a lower bound on the number of active S-boxes in a differential characteristic. The similarities of the SPONGENT permutations and the basic PRESENT cipher allow to reuse some of the results obtained for PRESENT in [5]. More precisely, the results on the number of differentially active S-boxes over 5 rounds will hold for all SPONGENT variants which is reflected in Theorem 1.

For all SPONGENT variants, we found that those 5-round bounds are actually tight. We present the characteristics attaining them in Table 1 as well as in Appendix A.

**Table 1.** Differential characteristics with lowest numbers of differentially active S-boxes (ASN). The probabilities are calculated assuming the independency of round computations.

| # of rounds | SPONGENT-88 ASN | Prob | SPONGENT-128 ASN | Prob | SPONGENT-160 ASN | Prob | SPONGENT-224 ASN | Prob | SPONGENT-256 ASN | Prob |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 10 | $2^{-21}$ | 10 | $2^{-22}$ | 10 | $2^{-21}$ | 10 | $2^{-21}$ | 10 | $2^{-20}$ |
| 10 | 20 | $2^{-47}$ | 29 | $2^{-68}$ | 20 | $2^{-50}$ | 20 | $2^{-43}$ | – | – |
| 15 | 30 | $2^{-74}$ | - | - | 30 | $2^{-79}$ | 30 | $2^{-66}$ | – | – |

### 3.2 Collision Attacks

A natural approach to obtain a collision for a sponge construction is to inject a difference in a message block and then cancel the propagated difference by a difference in the next message block, i.e., $(0\ldots0\|\Delta m_i) \xrightarrow{\pi}$ $(0\ldots0\|\Delta m_{i+1})$. For this purpose, we follow a narrow trail strategy using truncated differential characteristics. We start from a given input difference (some difference restricted to S-boxes that the message block is xored into) and look for all paths that go to a fixed output difference (also located in the bitrate part of the state). Based on our experiments, even by using truncated differential characteristics, the probability of such a path is quite low and it is not possible to attack the full number of rounds (see Appendix A).

The rebound attack [24], a recent technique for cryptanalysis of hash functions, is applicable to both block cipher based and permutation based hash constructions. It consists of two main steps: the inbound phase where the freedom is used to connect the middle rounds by using the match-in-the-middle technique and the outbound phase where the connected truncated differentials are calculated in both forward and backward directions.

**Dedicated rebound attack on 6 rounds of** SPONGENT-88. Here we describe a dedicated rebound attack on SPONGENT-88. For other hash sizes, a similar method is applicable. The path for this attack is shown in Figure 2.

– **Inbound phase:** In the forward direction, we start from the input of the second round. We generate $2^{28}$ structures as follows: We restrict the input of the active S-boxes to the eight values such that the difference $\Delta S : [\{0x2, 0x3\} \rightarrow 0xf]$ and to the four values such that the difference $\Delta S : [0x4 \rightarrow 0xf]$ and we generate the passive bits at random. For each fixed value of the passive part, we can obtain
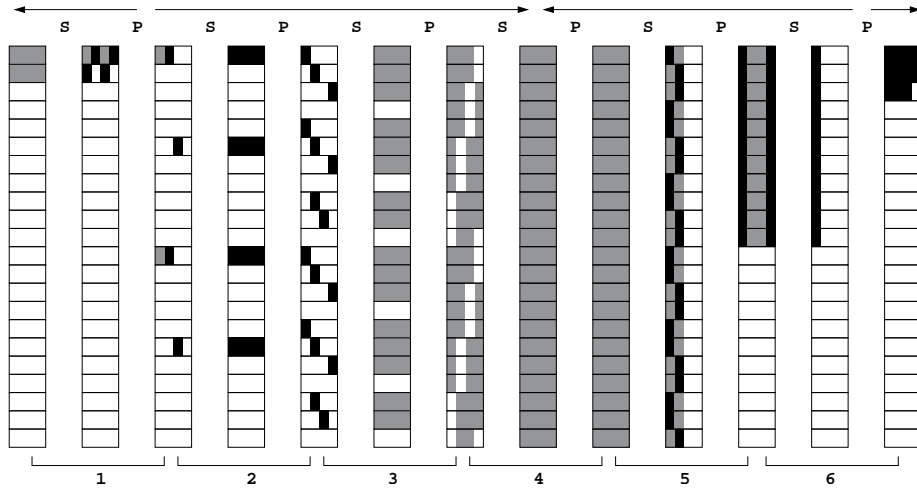
**Fig. 2.** Differential path for the rebound attack (black: starting S-boxes with conditions, grey: active S-boxes, S: sBoxLayer$_{88}$, P: pLayer$_{88}$ )

$(2^3)^2 \cdot (2^2)^2 = 2^{10}$ pairs, so we repeat the procedure $2^{18}$ times. At the input of round 3, we have 16 active S-boxes and 6 passive S-boxes, and it is guaranteed to have all S-boxes active at the input of round 4. In the backward direction, we start from the input of the S-boxes in round 6. Similarly, we generate $2^{28}$ structures by restricting the values of the active S-boxes to four values such that the difference $\Delta S^{-1} : [\texttt{0x1} \rightarrow \{\texttt{0xb}, \texttt{0xd}\}]$. Again, we can generate $(2^2)^{11} = 2^{22}$ pairs for each value of the passive part, hence we choose random $2^6$ values. Then at the input of the fifth round all S-boxes are active and with high probability they will still be active after the permutation layer.

- **Merging phase:** We look for a matching input/output difference of the S-box layer in round 4 using the precomputed difference distribution table. We can find a match with probability of $2^{-2.4}$ for each word that has one fixed bit with zero difference and a match with probability $2^{3.6}$ for each word that has two fixed bit zero. Therefore, we can find an entire differential path with probability $(2^{-2.4})^{20} \cdot (2^{-3.6})^2 = 2^{-55.2}$. Hence we expect to find at least one solution.
- **Outbound phase:** We further extend the differential path backwards (from round 2 to round 1) and forwards (to the end of round 6) with probability 1.

### 3.3 Linear Attacks

The most successful attacks, the attacks that can break the highest number of rounds, for the block cipher PRESENT are attacks based on linear

approximations. In particular the multi-dimensional linear attack [7] and the statistical saturation attack [8] claim to break up to 26 rounds. It was shown in [20] that both attacks are closely related. Moreover, the main reason why these attacks are the most successful attacks on PRESENT so far, is the existence of many linear trails with only one active S-box in each round. It is not immediately clear how linear distinguishers on the SPONGENT permutation $\pi_b$ could be transferred into collision or (second) pre-image attacks on the hash function. However, as we claim that SPONGENT is a hermetic sponge construction, the existence of such distinguishers has to be excluded. So the SPONGENT S-box was chosen in a way that allows for at most one trail with this property given a linear approximation.

## 4 Hardware Implementations

Using the most serialized implementation, the hash functions SPONGENT-{88, 128, 160, 224, 256} can be implemented with 738 GE, 1060 GE, 1329 GE, 1728 GE, and 1950 GE, respectively, which is smaller than the most compact QUARK designs [1] of respective sizes. Furthermore, even the SPONGENT-256 hash function is more compact than S-QUARK having a hash output of 224 bits. Though some of this advantage is at the expense of a performance reduction, also less serialized (and, thus, faster) implementations result in area requirements significantly lower than those of the corresponding QUARK variants.

In order to provide very compact implementations, we first focus on serialized designs. We explore different datapath sizes ($d$) for each of the SPONGENT variants: for SPONGENT-{88, 128, 160} we implement $d \in \{4, 8, 16, 32\}$, $d \in \{4, 8, 16, 68\}$, $d \in \{4, 8, 16, 44, 88\}$, respectively, while for SPONGENT-{224, 256} we implement $d \in \{4, 8, 16, 32, 64\}$. An architecture representing our serialized datapath is depicted in Fig. 3(a). The control logic consists of a single counter for the cycle count and some extra combinational logic to drive the select signals of the multiplexers. In order to further reduce the area we use so-called scan registers (6.25 GE in our library), which act as a combination of two input multiplexer and an ordinary register[4]. Instead of providing a reset signal to each register separately, we use two zero inputs at the multiplexers $M_1$ and $M_2$ to correctly initialize all the registers. This additionally reduces hard-

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[4] Scan registers are typically used to provide scan-chain based testability of the circuit. Due to the security issues of scan-chain based testing [28], other methods such as Built-In-Self-Test (BIST) are recommended for testing the cryptographic hardware.

ware resources, as the scan registers with a reset input approximately require additional GE per bit of storage. With $g_i$ we denote the value of lCounter$_b(i)$ in round $i$. lCounter$_b(i)$ is implemented as an LFSR as explained in Subsection 2.3. The input of the message block $m$, denoted with dashed line, is omitted in some cases, i.e. $d \geq r$. The pLayer module requires no additional logic except some extra wiring.



**Fig. 3.** Hardware architecture representing (a) serial datapath (b) parallel datapath of the SPONGENT variants.

Additionally, we implement all the SPONGENT variants as depicted in Fig. 3(b). Every round now requires a single clock cycle, therefore resulting in faster, yet rather compact designs.

Next, we present our hardware figures of all the SPONGENT variants. For the purpose of extensive hardware evaluation we use Synopsys Design Compiler version D-2010.03-SP4 and target the High-Speed UMC 0.13 $\mu$m CMOS process provided by Faraday Technology Corporation (fsc0h_d_tc). We provide synthesis results only. Our reasoning follows a simple design decision: we provide a large design space, focusing on multitude of design choices and discuss in detail our implementation strategy. Therefore, we rather spend our efforts by exploring a large set of hardware designs than by performing a time-consuming place and route process for each of the design separately. Moreover, the physical size of the designs (in terms of gate equivalences) is expected to remain the same even after the place and route is performed. We expect slightly worse results only with respect to the overall power consumption.

The power is estimated by observing the internal switching activity of the complete design. Using Mentor Graphics ModelSim version 10.0 SE, we simulate the circuits' behavior for very long messages and generate the VCD (Value Change Dump) files. The VCD files are then converted to the backward SAIF (Switching Activity Interchange Format) files and

**Table 2.** Hardware performance of the SPONGENT family and comparison with state-of-the-art lightweight hash designs. The nominal frequency of 100 kHz is assumed in all cases and the power consumption is therefore adjusted accordingly.

| Hash function | Security (bit) Pre. | Coll. | 2nd Pre. | Hash (bit) | Cycles | Datapath (bit) | Process (μm) | **Area** (GE) | **Throughput** (kbps) | **Power** (μW) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SPONGENT-88 | 80 | 40 | 40 | 88 | 990 | 4 | 0.13 | 738 | 0.81 | 1.57 |
| | | | | | 45 | 88 | 0.13 | 1127 | 17.78 | 2.31 |
| SPONGENT-128 | 120 | 64 | 64 | 128 | 2380 | 4 | 0.13 | 1060 | 0.34 | 2.20 |
| | | | | | 70 | 136 | 0.13 | 1687 | 11.43 | 3.58 |
| SPONGENT-160 | 144 | 80 | 80 | 160 | 3960 | 4 | 0.13 | 1329 | 0.40 | 2.85 |
| | | | | | 90 | 176 | 0.13 | 2190 | 17.78 | 4.47 |
| SPONGENT-224 | 208 | 112 | 112 | 224 | 7200 | 4 | 0.13 | 1728 | 0.22 | 3.73 |
| | | | | | 120 | 240 | 0.13 | 2903 | 13.33 | 5.97 |
| SPONGENT-256 | 240 | 128 | 128 | 256 | 9520 | 4 | 0.13 | 1950 | 0.17 | 4.21 |
| | | | | | 140 | 272 | 0.13 | 3281 | 11.43 | 6.62 |
| U-QUARK [1] | 120 | 64 | 64 | 128 | 544 | 1 | 0.18 | 1379 | 1.47 | 2.44 |
| | | | | | 68 | 8 | 0.18 | 2392 | 11.76 | 4.07 |
| D-QUARK [1] | 144 | 80 | 80 | 160 | 704 | 1 | 0.18 | 1702 | 2.27 | 3.10 |
| | | | | | 88 | 8 | 0.18 | 2819 | 18.18 | 4.76 |
| S-QUARK [1] | 192 | 112 | 112 | 224 | 1024 | 1 | 0.18 | 2296 | 3.13 | 4.35 |
| | | | | | 64 | 16 | 0.18 | 4640 | 50.00 | 8.39 |
| DM-PRESENT-80 [6] | 64 | 32 | 64 | 64 | 547 | 4 | 0.18 | 1600 | 14.63 | 1.83 |
| | | | | | 33 | 64 | 0.18 | 2213 | 242.42 | 6.28 |
| DM-PRESENT-128 [6] | 64 | 32 | 64 | 64 | 559 | 4 | 0.18 | 1886 | 22.90 | 2.94 |
| | | | | | 33 | 128 | 0.18 | 2530 | 387.88 | 7.49 |
| H-PRESENT-128 [6] | 128 | 64 | 64 | 128 | 559 | 8 | 0.18 | 2330 | 11.45 | 6.44 |
| | | | | | 32 | 128 | 0.18 | 4256 | 200.00 | 8.09 |
| C-PRESENT-192 [6] | 192 | 96 | 192 | 192 | 3338 | 12 | 0.18 | 4600 | 1.90 | - |
| | | | | | 108 | 192 | 0.18 | 8048 | 59.26 | 9.31 |
| KECCAK-f[400] [17] | 160 | 80 | 160 | 160 | 1000 | 16 | 0.13 | 5090 | 14.40 | 11.50 |
| | | | | | 20 | 16 | 0.13 | 10560 | 720.00 | 78.10 |
| KECCAK-f[200] [17] | 128 | 64 | 128 | 128 | 900 | 8 | 0.13 | 2520 | 8.00 | 5.60 |
| | | | | | 18 | 8 | 0.13 | 4900 | 400.00 | 27.60 |
| SHA-1 [18] | 160 | 80 | 160 | 160 | 450 | 32 | 0.25 | 6812 | 113.78 | 11.00 |
| SHA-256 [19] | 256 | 128 | 256 | 256 | 490 | 32 | 0.25 | 8588 | 104.48 | 11.20 |
| BLAKE [15] | 256 | 128 | 256 | 256 | 816 | 32 | 0.18 | 13575 | 62.79 | 11.16 |
| Grøstl [27] | 256 | 128 | 256 | 256 | 196 | 64 | 0.18 | 14622 | 261.14 | 221.00 |
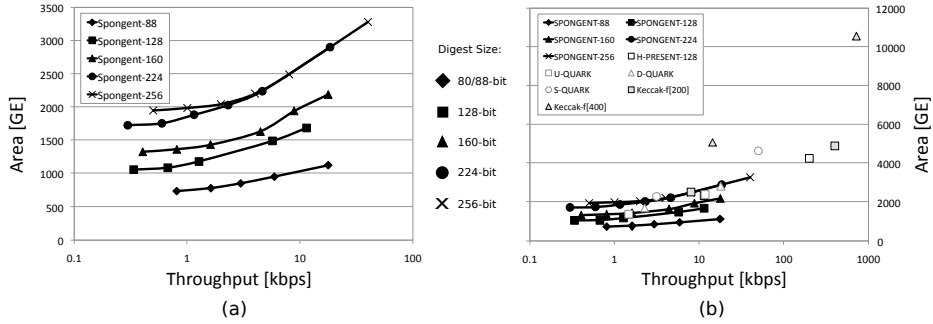
**Fig. 4.** (a) Area versus throughput trade-off of the SPONGENT hash family. (b) Comparison with state-of-the-art lightweight hash functions.

used within Synopsys Design Compiler for the accurate estimation of the mean power consumption. A typical frequency of 100 kHz is used for all measurements.

Table 2 reports hardware figures obtained using the aforementioned methodology. Besides having a very small footprint, another remarkable result is that the most serialized versions of SPONGENT-{88, 128, 160, 224, 256} are built of 89.3%, 92.5%, 93.8%, 95%, and 96% sequential logic, respectively. For the sake of comparison, we include figures for several state-of-the-art lightweight hash functions. We also include two out of five SHA-3 finalists for which the data of compact hardware implementations is publicly available. We do not compare our design with software-like solutions that benefit from using an external memory for storing the intermediate data. Figure 4(a) illustrates the wide spectrum of our explored design space, where a typical trade-off between speed and area is scrutinized. Using the same metrics, we compare our design with state-of-the-art lightweight hash functions (Fig. 4(b)). For the same level of security, the SPONGENT family tends to require much smaller area than its counterparts.

## 5    Conclusion

In this paper, we have proposed the family of lightweight hash functions SPONGENT with hash sizes 88, 128, 160, 224, and 256 bits. Its serialized implementations in ASIC hardware require 738, 1060, 1329, 1728, and 1950 GE, respectively. Thus, SPONGENT has the smallest footprint among all hash functions published so far at all security levels it attains, though area requirements are highly dependent on technology used.

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# A Some Differential Paths

**Table 3.** Sample differential paths for SPONGENT$-\{88, 128\}$

| | SPONGENT-88 | | SPONGENT-128 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Round | Difference | Prob | Difference | Prob |
| 0<br>5 | 05000000000000009000000<br>000000040080000000000000 | $2^{-21}$ | 0000000000000000900090000000000000<br>0000000000000800040000000000000000 | $2^{-22}$ |
| 0<br>10 | 90009000000000000000000<br>20000000000080000A0000 | $2^{-47}$ | 0000000055000000000000003300000000000<br>000004004000000001000000000000001010 | $2^{-68}$ |
| 0<br>15 | 90009000000000000000000<br>000000000801000000000000 | $2^{-74}$ | | |

**Table 4.** Sample differential paths for SPONGENT$-\{160, 224, 256\}$

| | SPONGENT-160 | |
|---|---|---|
| Round | Difference | Prob |
| 0<br>5 | 060000000600000000000000000000000000000000000<br>000000000000000004008000000000000000000000000 | $2^{-21}$ |
| 0<br>10 | 900000000000900000000000000000000000000000000<br>008000000000000000000000020000000000A00000000 | $2^{-50}$ |
| 0<br>15 | 000000000000000000000000000003000300000000000<br>000000000000000000801000000000000000000000000 | $2^{-79}$ |

| | SPONGENT-224 | |
|---|---|---|
| Round | Difference | Prob |
| 0<br>5 | 0900000000000090000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000<br>0000000200040000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 | $2^{-21}$ |
| 0<br>10 | 0000000000000000000000000000000000009000000000009000000000000000<br>0080000000000000000000000000000001000000000000009000000000000000 | $2^{-43}$ |
| 0<br>15 | 0000000010010000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000<br>0080000000000000000000000000000001000000000000009000000000000000 | $2^{-66}$ |

| | SPONGENT-256 | |
|---|---|---|
| Round | Difference | Prob |
| 0<br>5 | 000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000006600000000000660<br>0000000000200010000000000000000000000000000000000000000000020001000 | $2^{-20}$ |