



# Coexistence of charge density wave and incommensurate antiferromagnetism in the cubic phase of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> synthesised under high pressure

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## ABSTRACT

A novel metastable phase of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> synthesised in the AuCu<sub>3</sub>-structure under high pressure, has been studied by means of the magnetic susceptibility and electrical resistivity measurements (under the pressure  $P \leq 3.1$  GPa), neutron powder diffraction and time-differential  $\gamma$ - $\gamma$  perturbed angular correlations (TDPAC) using <sup>111</sup>Cd nuclear probes. Two distinct phase transitions have been found in this compound as the temperature is lowered. We assign the first transition occurring at the temperature  $T_{CDW} = 80$  K with charge density wave formation and the second transition at  $T_N \approx 18$  K with an antiferromagnetic spiral ordering of Dy magnetic moments, and discuss a close relationship between them.

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## 1. Introduction

The interplay and interconnections between various interactions, which lead for example to the coexistence of magnetism and superconductivity [1,2], charge density wave (CDW) and superconductivity [3], ferroelectric and magnetic order in multi-ferroics [4], and different types of magnetic ordering [5,6], represent one of the most intriguing problems of the modern solid state physics.

In particular, recent studies have focused on physics of CDW in rare-earth compounds and its influence on periodic lattice distortions (PLD) and magnetic ordering [7–12]. In Refs. [8,9,11,12] it has been shown that CDW-PLD can coexist with antiferromagnetic (AFM) ordering, although the nature of this coexistence is not well understood.

The question about the formation of CDW in intermetallic compounds is also relevant [13]. Earlier, a series of new intermetallic compounds of the AuCu<sub>3</sub> cubic structure – REGe<sub>2.85</sub> where RE is a rare earth element (Tb, Dy or Yb) – has been synthesized at high pressure [19]. In TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> belonging to this series, two phase transitions have been reported in Ref. [20]. The first transition at the temperature  $T_{CDW} = 145$  K has been related with the CDW transition while the second at  $T_N = 19$  K with an AFM ordering, where Tb magnetic moments form incommensurate spiral [20]. While the

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Neel temperature  $T_N$  in TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> has been found to be approximately independent of the pressure,  $T_{CDW}$  decreases with increasing pressure, until the CDW transition is completely suppressed at  $P \geq 2.6$  GPa. The neutron powder diffraction at low temperature and high pressure reveals the appearance of the second magnetic commensurate phase at  $P \geq 1.2$  GPa. These experimental findings imply that CDW and the AFM structure in TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> are closely related, but the microscopic mechanism behind this effect is little understood.

To clarify the interconnection between CDW and magnetic ordering, we have undergone an experimental examination of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub>, belonging to the same series of the cubic rare-earth compounds REGe<sub>2.85</sub> as TbGe<sub>2.85</sub>. It should be noted that most of the AuCu<sub>3</sub> rare-earth compounds have commensurate magnetic structures [14–16] and only few of them display incommensurate magnetic ordering [15,17,18]. In this paper we present our experimental data and analysis, performed by macro-methods such as magnetic susceptibility and electrical resistivity, and by nuclear methods including time-differential  $\gamma$ - $\gamma$  perturbed angular correlations (TDPAC) and neutron powder diffraction (NPD).

## 2. Experiment details

Polycrystalline samples of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> were synthesised at a pressure of 8 GPa as described in Ref. [22].

The refinement of the x-ray diffraction (XRD) data have shown that the polycrystalline samples of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> have the AuCu<sub>3</sub> structure (*Pm*3*m* space group (No. 221)) with the lattice constant  $a = 4.286(4)$  Å at room temperature and ambient pressure [19].

The electrical resistivity was measured by four probe method. The sample and the pressure sensor (Pb) were placed in teflon ampoule filled with pressure transmitting liquid. The clamped toroid-type cell was used to generate high pressures [23].

The magnetic susceptibility  $\chi(T)$  of the sample was obtained using SQUID magnetometer.

The parameters of hyperfine interactions were obtained by the TDPAC spectroscopy on *In*/*Cd* nuclear probes. During the sample synthesis the probes were inserted into the DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> lattice, where as shown in Ref. [19] they occupied sites of Ge vacancies. Experimental data were analyzed with the DEPACK software [26]. Details of the TDPAC method and the used spectrometer are described in Refs. [24,25].

NPD measurements were conducted on the DN-6 diffractometer at the IBR-2 high-flux pulsed reactor [Frank Laboratory of Neutron Physics, Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR), Dubna, Russia] [27]. NPD patterns were recorded at ambient pressure and the following temperatures:  $T = 300, 20, 16, 12, 8$  and 4 K. The low temperature was achieved with a closed-cycle helium cryostat. Diffraction patterns were collected at scattering angle  $2\theta = 90^\circ$  with resolution  $\Delta d/d = 0.011$ . The exposition time for one record was about 20 h. NPD patterns were analyzed with the Rietveld method using FULLPROF software [28].

## 3. Results and discussion

Temperature dependencies of the measured resistivity  $\rho(T)$  of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> at various pressures are shown in Fig. 1; at ambient conditions  $\rho(300\text{K}) = 90 \mu\Omega \cdot \text{cm}$ . These plots at  $T \geq 80$  K have a typical metallic behaviour linear in  $T$ , and the resistivity drops with applied external pressure. One of the reasons for this drop is the increase in the density of states at the Fermi level for DyGe<sub>2.85</sub>.

The temperature coefficient of resistivity at  $P = 0$  and 3.1 GPa is approximately the same which can point to an unaltered value of the electron-phonon coupling constant in DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> in this pressure range.

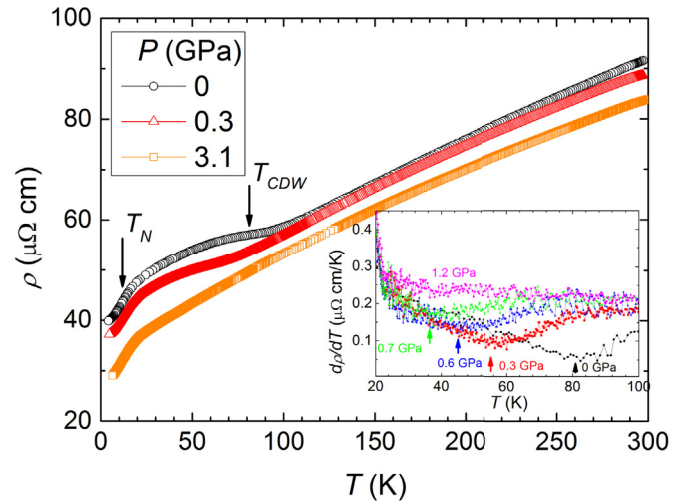


Fig. 1. Resistivity  $\rho(T)$  of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> versus temperature at different external pressures. Inset:  $\frac{d\rho}{dT}$  versus  $T$  at different pressures for DyGe<sub>2.85</sub>. The arrows mark the CDW anomaly.

The most important feature of the normal pressure plot is the appearance of two anomalies, at  $T_{CDW} = 80$  K and  $T_N \approx 20(2)$  K. Below we will demonstrate that the first anomaly (at  $T_{CDW}$ ) can be connected with a CDW formation, while the second smooth transition (at  $T_N$ ) with magnetic ordering. Exact values of  $T_{CDW}$  have been determined from the position of the minimum of  $\frac{d\rho}{dT}(T)$  (see inset of Fig. 1). At ambient pressure  $T_{CDW} = 80$  K.

With the application of pressure, the temperature  $T_{CDW}$  decreases at a rate of  $\frac{dT_{CDW}}{dP} \approx -65$  K/GPa and the CDW anomaly of resistivity is not observed at pressures above  $P = 1$  GPa. In contrast to  $T_{CDW}$ ,  $T_N$  is approximately pressure independent. We observed approximately the same rate of  $\frac{dT_{CDW}}{dP}$  for TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> and  $T_N$  was also pressure independent in this pressure range [21] (see Fig. 2).

The two anomalies found in resistivity, manifest themselves in

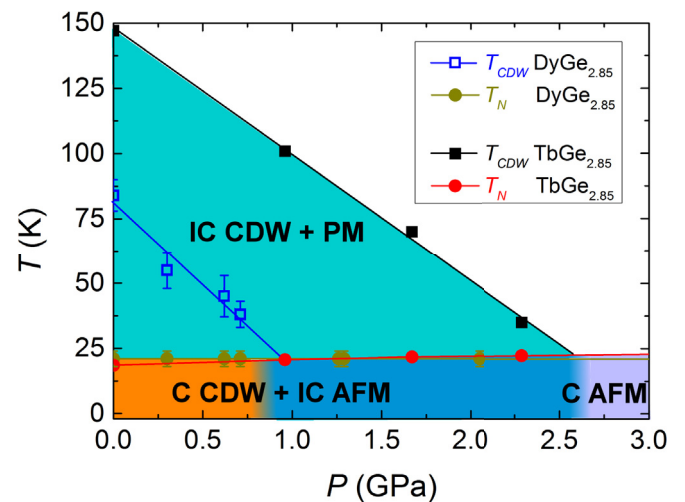


Fig. 2. The phase diagram for TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> and DyGe<sub>2.85</sub>. Antiferromagnetic transition temperature  $T_N$  and CDW transition temperature  $T_{CDW}$  versus pressure. The region of turquoise color highlights the region with incommensurate (IC) CDW and paramagnetism (PM); orange color highlights the region with commensurate (C) CDW and IC AFM for DyGe<sub>2.85</sub>; blue color highlights the region with C CDW and IC AFM for TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> (no CDW transition in DyGe<sub>2.85</sub>); purple color highlights the region with C AFM for TbGe<sub>2.85</sub>. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)

all other experiments, in particular, in magnetic susceptibility  $\chi(T)$ , Fig. 3. In Fig. 3 we also plot  $\chi^{-1}(T)$  with the Curie-Weiss fit (straight line), whose parameters are quoted in the inset. As in TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> [20], one can see a small deviation from the Curie-Weiss law, which sets in at approximately  $T \sim 100$  K (which is slightly higher the anomaly on the  $\rho(T)$  curve) and continues at lower temperatures. At  $T_N = 18(1)$  K there is a magnetic transition to AFM phase, with the effective magnetic moment of dysprosium,  $\mu_{\text{eff}} = 10.60 \mu_B$ . This magnetic moment is consistent with the value of the Dy<sup>3+</sup> free ion,  $\mu_{\text{Dy}^{3+}} = 10.62 \mu_B$ .

The Néel temperature ( $T_N$ ) for TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> is 1 K higher than that for DyGe<sub>2.85</sub>. This is consistent with the well-known dependence of  $T_N$  on de Gennes factor  $(g_j - 1)^2 J(J + 1)$  (which is 10.5 for Tb and 7.08 for Dy). This dependence however is weak, which is an indication that in addition to the Ruderman - Kittel - Kasuya - Yosida (RKKY) coupling some other interactions can be involved.

Peculiarities of the electronic and magnetic structure of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> have been also studied by TDPAC spectroscopy, whose spectra  $R(t)$  at  $T = 300, 30$  and 4 K at ambient pressure are presented in Fig. 4. The  $T = 300$  K spectrum is refined with the single quadrupolar frequency  $\nu_Q = 39.6(5)$  MHz (the electric field gradient (EFG)  $V_{zz} = \frac{h\nu_Q}{eQ} = 1.98(2)$  V/sm<sup>2</sup>) and a small asymmetry parameter  $\eta = (V_{xx} - V_{yy})/V_{zz} = 0.06(8)$ . The Ge lattice site in the perfect cubic structure is axially symmetric, which implies  $\eta = 0$ , but in our case the presence of vacancies in Ge sites and also inserted In/Cd probes lead to a small deviation from the axial symmetry, resulted in a small value of  $\eta \neq 0$ . It is worth mentioning that approximately the same value of  $\eta$  has been observed for other high pressure cubic compounds with Yb and Tb at normal conditions [19].

The  $T = 30$  K TDPAC spectrum is fitted with single quadrupolar frequency  $\nu_Q = 39.8(5)$  MHz ( $V_{zz} = 1.98(2)$  V/sm<sup>2</sup>) and  $\eta = 0.2(1)$ . At this temperature a small frequency broadening was observed,  $\delta = 0.14(3)$ . Notice, that in the AFM phase (i.e. at  $T < T_N$ ) the TDPAC spectrum is very different from that in the paramagnetic phase, see Fig. 4. Thus, the  $T = 4$  K spectrum has been fit with two quadrupolar frequencies:  $\nu_{Q1} = 10(1)$  MHz ( $V_{zz} = 0.49(4)$  V/sm<sup>2</sup>),  $\nu_{Q2} = 16(1)$  MHz ( $V_{zz} = 0.78(4)$  V/sm<sup>2</sup>) and two Larmor precession frequencies  $\nu_{L1} = 9(1)$  MHz (hyperfine magnetic field  $B_{\text{hf}1} = \frac{h\nu_{L1}}{g\mu_N} = 3.9(4)$  T),  $\nu_{L2} = 6(1)$  MHz ( $B_{\text{hf}2} = 2.4(4)$  T) with the approximate occupation ratio 2:1. This indicates that below the

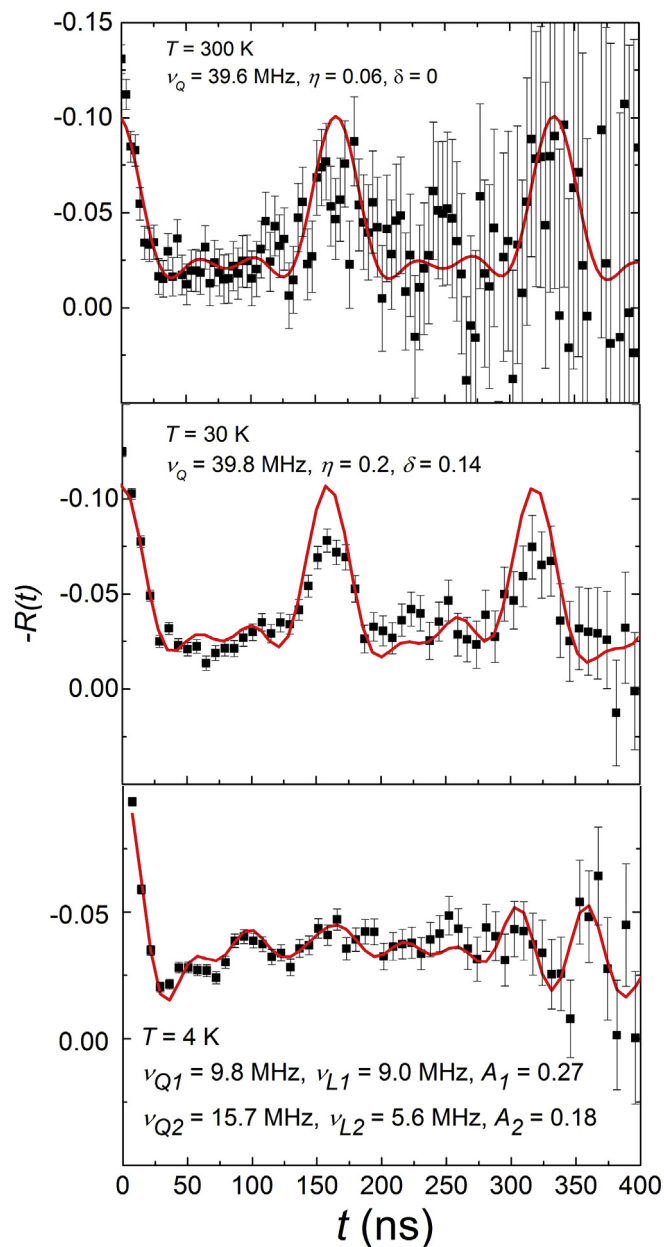


Fig. 4. TDPAC spectra  $R(t)$  of <sup>111</sup>Cd probes in DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> (black squares) at  $T = 300, 30$  and 4 K at ambient pressure, with their fits (red lines) and some fitting parameters (quadrupolar frequency  $\nu_Q$ , asymmetry parameter  $\eta$ , frequency distribution  $\delta$ , Larmor frequency  $\nu_L$  and amplitudes  $A$ ). (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)

AFM transition temperature Ge sites become electronically and magnetically nonequivalent.

To account for the existence of a single broad quadrupolar frequency line  $\nu_Q$  above the  $T_N$  (i.e. in paramagnetic phase) and two sharp quadrupolar frequencies  $\nu_{Q1}$  and  $\nu_{Q2}$  below  $T_N$  (i.e. in the AFM phase), we are led to conclude that CDW is accompanied by an incommensurate lattice modulation in the paramagnetic phase and a commensurate lattice modulation in the magnetic phase.

Further refinement of the magnetic order in the low-temperature AFM phase has been performed with neutron powder diffraction studies of the DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> sample. The room-temperature analysis has confirmed that the sample has single phase with the space group  $Pm\bar{3}m$  and the lattice constant

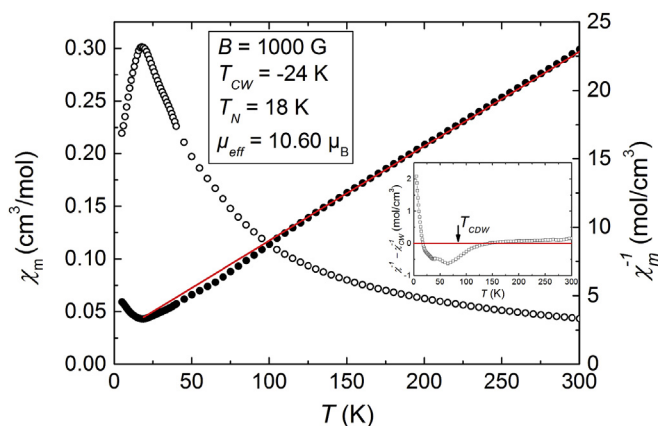
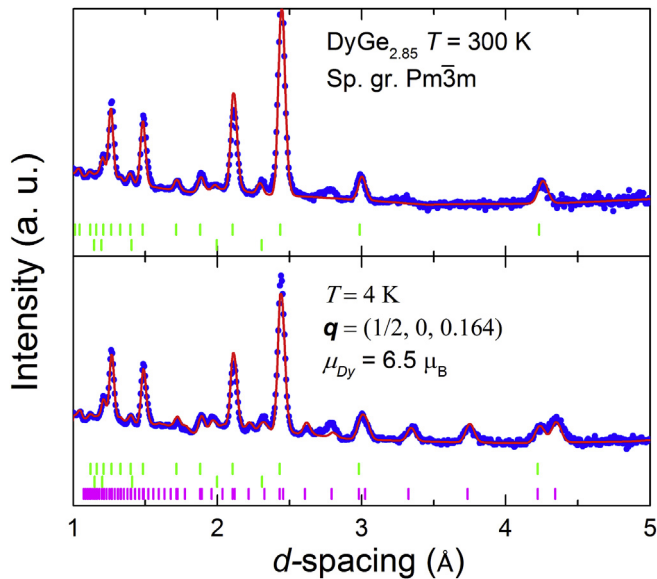
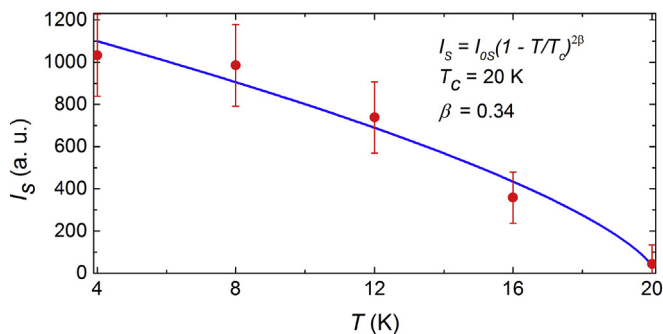


Fig. 3. The magnetic susceptibility  $\chi(T)$  (empty circles) and inverse magnetic susceptibility  $\chi^{-1}(T) = \frac{1}{\chi(T)}$  (filled circles) of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> versus temperature at ambient pressure. The red line is Curie-Weiss approximation of  $\chi^{-1}(T)$ . The data are obtained in a field of 1000 G. Inset: Difference between the experimental data for  $\chi^{-1}(T)$  and the Curie-Weiss fit ( $\chi_{\text{CW}}^{-1}(T)$ ). The arrow marks the CDW anomaly. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)



**Fig. 5.** Refined neutron powder diffraction pattern of DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> at 300 and 4 K at ambient pressure. Experimental points (blue points) and calculated profiles (red lines) are shown. Tick marks at the bottom represent the calculated positions of nuclear peaks for the  $Pm\bar{3}m$  space group (upper row, green color), peaks from aluminum container (medium row, green color) and peaks from incommensurate magnetic phase (lower row, magenta color). (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)



**Fig. 6.** Integral intensity  $I_S$  of the magnetic peak  $q = (q_x, -1 + q_y, -1 + q_z)$  versus temperature (red points). Blue line is the  $I_{0S}(1 - T/T_C)^{2\beta}$  approximation ( $I_{0S} = 1279$ ,  $T_C = 20$  K,  $\beta = 0.34$ ). (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)

$a = 4.285(1)$  Å, Fig. 5. These data are in good agreement with previous XRD study [19].

At temperatures  $T < 16$  K new peaks appear in the NPD patterns which have been fit using a model of incommensurate spiral structure of Dy magnetic moments. At  $T = 4$  K the fit results in the wave vector  $\mathbf{q} = (1/2, 0, 0.164(1))$  and the Dy magnetic moment  $\mu_{Dy} = 6.5(1)$   $\mu_B$ , Fig. 5. It should be noted that approximately the same wave vector was found for TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> compound [20]. Therefore we conclude that the modulation period of CDW-PLD in both DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> and TbGe<sub>2.85</sub> is approximately the same which stabilizes the periodicity of magnetic modulation in z-direction. The obtained magnetic moment of Dy from NPD is almost half of the value for free ion Dy<sup>3+</sup>. This deviation is probably caused by crystalline field effects (CFE) and molecular field. It is also in agreement with *ab initio* density functional calculations for isostructural compound DySn<sub>3</sub> [29], which give  $\mu_{Dy} \approx 4.7$   $\mu_B$ .

It should be also noted that at  $T = 4$  K we have not observed a symmetry change of the room temperature crystallographic

structure (AuCu<sub>3</sub>), only a small decrease of the lattice constant has been detected,  $a = 4.248(2)$  Å.

Finally, Fig. 6 shows the temperature evolution of the integral intensity  $I_S$  of the magnetic peak  $(q_x, -1 + q_y, -1 + q_z)$ , appeared at low temperatures. This dependency has been approximated by the function  $I_{0S}(1 - T/T_C)^{2\beta}$  with the critical temperature  $T_C = 20(3)$  K and the critical exponent  $\beta = 0.34(8)$ . The critical temperature virtually coincides with the values obtained from resistivity and magnetic susceptibility measurements.

#### 4. Conclusion

Thus, both electrical resistivity  $\rho(T)$  and magnetic susceptibility  $\chi(T)$  in DyGe<sub>2.85</sub> display two anomalies at temperatures  $T_{CDW} = 80$  K and  $T_N \approx 18$  K. The first anomaly is associated with the formation of CDW while the second with an AFM ordering. The measurements of  $\rho(T)$  at different external pressures up to 3.1 GPa have shown that  $T_{CDW}$  decreases with increasing pressure and the CDW transition is not observed at  $P \geq 1.2$  GPa.  $T_N$  is approximately pressure independent.

Based on our experimental data we have assumed that in REGe<sub>2.85</sub> compounds (RE = Tb, Dy)  $T_{CDW}$  depends on the de Gennes factor of the rare earth element. To check this assertion we plan to synthesize new metastable compounds from the REGe<sub>2.85</sub> family (for example, GdGe<sub>2.85</sub> etc.).

TDPAC spectroscopy on *In/Cd* nuclear probes has been used to determine EFGs and magnetic hyperfine fields at probe atoms inserted in Ge lattice sites. The CDW formation in the paramagnetic phase ( $T_N < T < T_{CDW}$ ) is accompanied by incommensurate lattice modulation, which becomes commensurate in the AFM phase ( $T < T_N$ ). In the AFM phase Ge sites are nonequivalent, and as follows from the neutron powder diffraction, magnetic moments of Dy ions form an AFM spiral with the wave vector  $\mathbf{q} = (1/2, 0, 0.164(1))$  with  $\mu_{Dy} = 6.5(1)$   $\mu_B$ .

We assume that the CDW-PLD can lead to the distortion of the crystal structure which leads to the change of local symmetry and appearance of the antisymmetric Dzyaloshinskii-Moria exchange interaction. This interaction in turn stabilizes the spiral structure of Dy magnetic moments.

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