ANSI/AIAA s-081A
Pressure Vessel Standards
Implementation Guidelines
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The composite shell of a COPV shall be designed to meet the design life considering the time it is under sustained load. For the specified mission duration, there shall be no credible stress rupture failure modes based on the stress rupture data for the specified probability of survival. The probability of survival shall be selected by the user for the intended application. For vessels pressurized at the launch site, the stress rupture requirements for one year at 0.999 probability of survival shall be met.
5.2.9 - Stress Rupture Life
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AE Spectra

Impact-damaged COPV

Undamaged COPV
5.2.9 - Stress Rupture Life

Pressure and Events vs. Time
5.2.9 - Stress Rupture Life

Energy of Events vs. Time
A Mechanical Damage Control Plan (MDCP) shall be created and implemented that assures the COPV will not fail due to mechanical damage during manufacturing, testing, shipping, installation, or flight. The plan shall identify all credible mechanical damage threats starting from manufacture to the end-of-service life. Mechanical damage mitigation plans, procedures, and inspection points shall be defined. Comprehensive operating/handling/shipping procedures shall be prepared to ensure the COPV does not receive critical mechanical damage. These procedures shall be included or referenced in the MDCP.

- **Protective Covers**
  - Covers may be used to isolate and protect the COPV. This approach requires that the cover be tested to demonstrate that the worst-case credible mechanical damage threat results in 5 ft-lb or less energy imparted to the COPV. If the energy imparted to the COPV is greater than 5 ft-lbs, then an impacted dedicated test article vessel must be pressure tested to demonstrate that the burst factor requirement of Section 5.2.2 is met.
5.2.10 - Mechanical Damage Control Requirements

- **Damage Indicators**
  - Indicators may be used to clearly show whether a COPV has received critical damage. This approach requires that the indicators be tested to demonstrate that they can sense and indicate a mechanical damage event over the range of 5 ft-lbs to the maximum credible threat level. If the indicator’s minimum sensing energy is above 5 ft-lbs, then a dedicated test article COPV must be impacted at that energy level and pressure tested to demonstrate that the burst factor requirement of Section 5.2.2 is met.

- **Worst-case Threat Damage Tolerance**
  - A dedicated test article COPV may be tested to demonstrate it can withstand 1.25 x the worst-case credible mechanical damage and still meet the burst factor requirement of Section 5.2.2. If this approach is used, no covers or indicators are needed.

- **Visual Mechanical Damage Threshold Testing**
  - A dedicated test article COPV may be tested to demonstrate that the mechanical damage threshold energy creates a visually detectable damage indication that will survive the pressure test for the burst factor requirement of Section 5.2.2. If this approach is used, the COPV must be visually inspected after the threat exposure and prior to pressurization.
5.2.10 - Mechanical Damage Control Requirements

Impact Indicator/Protector Test Fixture

- Tup
- Composite hard shell
- Al mesh foam
- Force sensor film
- Clamp
- Gr/Ep plaque
- LVDT deflection
- Dyna-tup fixture
- Composite inner shell
- Ensolite foam
Overview of Impact Protectors

Hard-shell laminate cover shield

- Fiberglass/epoxy composite hardshell
- Aluminum mesh foam
- Resistive force sensor mounted on thin fiberglass board
- Ensolite® high-density foam

Impact indicator/protector cross section
5.2.10 - Mechanical Damage Control Requirements

Protector Mechanical Performance

35 ft-lb impact on protected Gr/Ep plaque

![Graph showing deflection and deformation of different materials after 35 ft-lb impact](image)

- 0.16 inches: Poorest performance
- 0.14 inches: Best performance

- 1/2 in. Ensolite foam
- 0.344 in. Fg/Ep & 1/2 in. Ensolite foam
- 0.344 in. Fg/Ep & 1/2 in. Al mesh foam & 1/16 in. PC board & 1/2 in. Ensolite foam

Deflection & Deformation
5.2.10 - Mechanical Damage Control Requirements

Spherical Protective Cover
5.2.10 - Mechanical Damage Control Requirements

**Damage Indicators**

- Indicators tested to demonstrate sense of damage over range of 5 ft-lb to the maximum credible threat level
- If the minimum sensing energy is above 5 ft-lb, then a dedicated COPV must be impacted at that energy level and pressure tested to demonstrate the burst factor requirement is met
Overview of Impact Indicators

- **Plexiglass/glass covers (foam-lined metal)**
  - Provides protection for 5 ft-lbf impacts
  - Indicates COPV impact by failed cover

- **Ensolite® foam with force-sensing films**
  - Provides protection for <1 ft-lbf impacts
  - Indicates COPV impact by electronic alarm

- **Micro-spheres**
  - Burst/break during impact event
• Dedicated COPV may be tested to demonstrate it can withstand 1.25 x the worst-case damage and still meet the burst factor requirement.

• If this approach is used, no covers or indicator are needed.
  – Visual inspection points should be identified in the Mechanical Damage Control Plan
5.2.10 - Mechanical Damage Control Requirements

Visual Mechanical Damage Threshold Testing

- Dedicated COPV may be tested to demonstrate damage energy creates visually detectable damage that will survive the pressure test and still meet the burst factor requirement.
- If this approach is used, the COPV must be visually inspected after the threat exposure and prior to pressurization.
  - Visual inspection points pre-determined in ICP
Proven processes and procedures for fabrication and repair shall be used to preclude damage or material degradation during material processing, manufacturing operations, and refurbishment. Special attention shall be given to ascertain that the melt process, thermal treatment, welding process, forming, joining, machining, drilling, grinding, and repair operations are state-of-the-art and have been used on similar items.
5.4.1 Liner Fabrication and Process Control

Laser Profilometry

Laser Profilometry of COPV’s interior surface quantifies liner buckling not inspectable by other methods and mirrors physical observation.

Calibration traceable to National Standard and demonstrated better than 0.001 accuracy/repeatability on 26-in. and better than 0.002 accuracy/repeatability on 40-in.
Figure 2: T-1000

LVI - Volts

Profile Radius - Inches
5.5.2 - Inspection Techniques

- The selected NDI techniques for the liner and/or boss(es) shall be performed before overwrapping with composite materials.
- NDI techniques for liners shall have the capability to determine the size, geometry, location, and orientation of all significant flaws. The detection capability of each selected NDI technique shall be capable of detecting initial flaw sizes corresponding to 90% probability of detection at 95% confidence level.
- After composite overwrapping and curing, the COPV shall be visually inspected by a trained COPV inspector per 5.5.3 at the points defined by the damage control plan.
5.5.2 - Inspection Techniques

Radiography

- Radiographic examination
  - Identify cracks in liner
  - Image discontinuities in the weldments
  - Thickness of the weldment heat-affected zones
- Identify Liner buckles or ripples
5.5.2 - Inspection Techniques

Example Radiographs of S/N 001 26-in.

Overwrap

Liner OD (with rippling on 26-in. S/N 005)

0.50 in. (0.001 in.)
5.5.3 Inspector Certification Program

- WSTF Training Course fulfills training requirements.
- Company is responsible for ensuring that trained personnel have been certified. A trained inspector’s skills should be comparable to a Level II visual inspector.
5.6.4 - Inspection and Maintenance

- NDE shall be performed per the mechanical damage control plan.
- Allowable damage limits shall be used to determine inspection frequency.
- Records of inspection shall be collected and maintained.
5.6.4 - Inspection and Maintenance

Sample WSTF VT Report

- Date
- COPV description
- VT observations
- Key observations
- Sketch
- Digital photo(s)
- Signature/stamp
When visual inspection reveals mechanical damage or defects exceeding manufacturing specification levels (and standard repair procedures), the damaged COPV shall be submitted to a material review board (MRB) for disposition.

If repair or refurbishment is allowed by the procuring authority, any repaired or refurbished COPV shall be recertified afterward by the applicable acceptance test procedure for new COPVs to verify structural integrity and establish suitability for continued service.
5.6.5 - Repair and Refurbishment

- To determine if vessel is acceptable for reuse due to mechanical damage (MRB required)
  - COPV manufacturer should be involved in MRB
  - Qualified materials representatives
  - Recertification by acceptance testing
  - AHJ (procuring authority)
- Health checks may be required
5.6.5 - Repair and Refurbishment

Passive Listening - Burst Sound File

Time, Seconds

- T-4.99s
- T-3.17s
- T-1.62s
- T-0s (burst)
Team mapped all the instrumentation data to the video record to determine the chronological sequence of the burst events:

- Found that all data were consistent
- Acoustic emission system became saturated and was not usable late in the burst
- At T-8 sec, visual evidence of fiber failure at the outer surface with minimal response from other onboard instrumentation
- The timeline from T-5 onward was a flurry of activity from most of the onboard instrumentation

**Chronological Mapping of Tank Failure**

**EC** = Eddy Current  
**ARAMIS** = Digital Image  
**SG** = Strain Gauge  
**BB** = Belly Bands

**NOTE:**
- Stable tow  

**NOTE:**
- Steady tow breakage on video towards burst point.
Flaw sizes shall be predetermined to ensure NDE is acceptable at Probability of Detection (POD) requirements.
• Every COPV shall be subjected to visual and other non-destructive inspection (NDI), per the inspection plan of Section 5.5.1, to establish the initial condition of the fabricated vessel.

• Inspection shall include a volumetric and surface inspection by selected NDI techniques.

• An internal liner inspection for buckles or other gross internal defects shall be conducted on all COPVs after autofrettage and proof pressure cycles.
6.3.1 - Non-Destructive Inspection

Example of Visual Inspection
6.3.1 - Non-Destructive Inspection

Borescope Inspection
6.3.1 - Non-Destructive Inspection

Shearography Inspection

1. Shearography detected small damage sites below the visual detection threshold

2. Shearography indicated damage much more extensive than visually evident

3. Damage area increases with impact energy for all COPVs
6.3.1 - Non-Destructive Inspection

6 x 22-in. Graphite COPV Shearography Inspected with 10 psid

Centered at 30

Centered at 60

Unprogrammed Damage
1-5 psi. Shows broken fibers at center with a large delamination.

20-24 psi. Shows more detail.

150-154 psi. Image of delamination not detected, broken fibers in center.
6.3.1 - Non-Destructive Inspection

Flash Thermography Setup

Data Acquisition Station

Camera

Hood containing 2 high intensity flash bulbs
6.3.1 - Non-Destructive Inspection

Bottom Boss 0 deg TDC

2nd Derivative
2.5 Sec.

RAW
2.5 Sec.
6.3.1 - Non-Destructive Inspection

COPV 47 at 135°, 2.5 sec, Raw, 25 mm