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# Behavior of Over-Deformed Shield Tunnel Lining under Grouting Treatment: Field Experiment

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## Abstract:

Shield tunnel structures are commonly found to be over-deformed in Eastern China soft ground due to adjacent engineering activities. Grouting treatment could serve as a viable solution to reduce the excessive diametrical expansion of tunnel linings actively. However, understanding the grouting-induced effects on adjacent tunnel structures remains preliminary due to the scarcity of well-documented case histories. In this study, a field experiment was conducted to explore a shield metro tunnel's real performance during grouting treatments. An extensive monitoring scheme was deployed while varied geometrical grouting arrangements were carried out. The tests provided a comprehensive database of the tunnel responses in multiple temporal resolution levels, both during the entire course of the grouting treatment and within single grouting operations. Investigations are carried out over the influencing factors of the grouting efficiency. The experimental observations suggest that grouting efficiency tends to evolve with time and can be affected by various geometrical grouting parameters. Observations are also presented and discussed in detail for the influence of grouting history on the convergence distribution and the tunnel's performance after the termination of all grouting operations.

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34 Time-variant behaviors of the tunnel are depicted in detail, such as the convergence recovery and  
35 rebound during the grouting process. Overall, this case study brings new insights into understanding  
36 the grouting-induced tunnel lining response. It can also serve as a benchmark for further theoretical and  
37 numerical studies.

38

39 **Author keywords:** Field experiment; Shield tunnel structure; Real performance; Grouting treatment;  
40 Deformation mitigation

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## 42 **Introduction**

43 Recent years have seen a massive development of metro networks in major cities worldwide as an  
44 efficient way to enhance urban transit capabilities and alleviate the stress of traffic congestions (Shen,  
45 et al., 2014). It also helps promote further development of the urban area, bringing more buildings to be  
46 constructed along the metro corridors. As a result, more engineering operations tend to occur adjacent  
47 to the metro tunnels. Segmental shield tunnel established in soft grounds can be especially problematic  
48 and is frequently observed to suffer from excessive deformation due to the weak strength of soil or  
49 environmental changes (Shen, et al., 2014).

50 Due to the adjacent engineering activities, such as deep excavations (Chang, et al., 2001, Chen, et al.,  
51 2016, Cheng, et al., 2018, Huang, et al., 2013, Li, et al., 2017, Liu, et al., 2016, Tan, et al., 2015),  
52 tunneling (Cooper, et al., 2002, Mohamad, et al., 2012), or extreme surcharges (Huang and Zhang,  
53 2016, Huang, et al., 2017), the current tunnel structures can be further distorted, which can adversely  
54 impact the integrity of the structures. For example, because of the excavation of the Shell Center  
55 project, the Bakerloo metro line beneath the excavation experienced a heave motion by 50 mm in a 27-  
56 year time period (Burford, 1988). In Taipei, a portion of the shield tunnel in the Panchiao Line was  
57 over-deformed and damaged because of nearby excavation. Cracks were found in the reinforced  
58 concrete segments, and the concrete slab on the tunnel invert was displaced (Chang, et al., 2001). Due  
59 to the influence of the adjacent excavation, a tunnel section in Ningbo Metro Line 1 reached a  
60 horizontal displacement of 33.5 mm, with cracks and leakages appearing in the left-line tunnel (Chen,  
61 et al., 2016). In Zhengzhou, a similar case was reported concerning the impact of excavations on the  
62 existing tunnel, and the cumulative uplift and lateral displacement of the tunnel was measured to reach

63 22.9 mm and 77.9 mm, respectively, as the excavations progressed to their final depth (Cheng, et al.,  
64 2018). In London, the construction of three station tunnels at the Heathrow Express Central Terminal  
65 was reported to create an additional settlement, distortion, and rotation movement to the Piccadilly  
66 Line tunnel. Subsequently, compensation grouting was undertaken to achieve settlement mitigation  
67 (Cooper, et al., 2002). Similarly, an operating shield metro tunnel in Shanghai, China, was reported to  
68 be heavily disrupted by an unexpected extreme surcharge (Huang and Zhang, 2016, Huang, et al.,  
69 2017).

70 Among the potential impacts from the adjacent engineering activities, the large circumferential  
71 deformation of the tunnel is the one that arouses the gravest safety concern. For the circumferential  
72 deformation, the increase in the tunnel's horizontal diameter (horizontal convergence,  $\Delta D$ , as  
73 illustrated in Fig.3), is usually adopted as the key performance indicator (Liu, et al., 2016, Mair, 2008,  
74 Pinto and Whittle, 2014). In some soft ground cases, the tunnel convergence was reported to nearly  
75 reach the level of the ultimate bearing capacity of the segmental linings (Liu, et al., 2016). Excessive  
76 tunnel convergence can result in structural issues such as spalling, cracking, leakages, and segment  
77 dislocation (Huang, et al., 2013, Shi and Li, 2015). Therefore, effective mitigation measures are  
78 imperative to maintain the safety and sustainability of tunnel structures (Han, et al., 2020).

79 In recent years, various methods to tackle these problems have been developed in engineering  
80 practice. Reinforcement measures using aramid fiber-reinforced polymer (AFRP) reinforcement  
81 (Huang and Zhang, 2016, Huang, et al., 2017) and bonded steel plates are the most commonly used  
82 methods from the structural strengthening point of view (Ai, et al., 2017, Chang, et al., 2001, Kiriyama,  
83 et al., 2005, Zhao, et al., 2016). However, these passive control measures cannot alleviate the  
84 deformation that already occurred. Besides, the work can only be carried out in the mid-night hours if  
85 significant disruption to the metro service is to be avoided, leading to reduced construction efficiency.

86 Differing from the passive reinforcement-type deformational control approaches, treatment methods  
87 based on grouting introduce control mechanisms to actively restore the excessively deformed lining  
88 rings to an acceptable level. Traditionally, compensation grouting has been used worldwide for  
89 deformational control of geo-structures and the ground (Farrell, 2015, Komiya, et al., 2001, Lee, 2002).  
90 However, the grouting operations may generate substantial disturbance to the surrounding soil,  
91 especially when the ground consists of sensitive soft deposits.

92 A grouting-based technique has recently been developed to achieve minimal disturbance to the  
93 surrounding soil (Zhang, et al., 2018). The technique adopts a dual-fluid system with the use of  
94 associated innovative grouting equipment. Fast-setting grout is injected into the soil during the grouting  
95 treatment, creating a soil-concrete mixture with improved ground resistance to the deformational  
96 movements of tunnel linings (Zhi-jun, 2011). In the meantime, the treatment also creates counter-  
97 pressure against the imbalanced pressure induced by neighboring engineering operations. Successful  
98 implementations of this technique have been reported from a number of grouting projects, especially in  
99 soft soil areas in Eastern China (Huang and Zhang, 2016, Jin, et al., 2018, Li and Chen, 2012, Li and  
100 Yuan, 2016, Zhang, et al., 2018, Zhou, et al., 2018, Zhu, et al., 2019). The grouting technique proved to  
101 be effective in the mitigation of excessive deformation for tunnels, both longitudinally and  
102 circumferentially. For instance, for the longitudinal deformational control, a reduction in the settlement  
103 rate and uplifting of the tunnel back to a safe state were achieved in Shanghai-based projects (Zhang, et  
104 al., 2018). Elsewhere, the technique was used to achieve active control for the excessive horizontal  
105 displacement of the tunnel due to nearby excavations (Zheng, et al., 2020). Similarly, the technique  
106 was applied to rehabilitate a circumferentially over-deformed tunnel due to extreme surcharges, and on  
107 average, 25% of the original large convergence reduction was attained (Zhang, et al., 2019). Although  
108 these reported case histories illustrate the effectiveness of the grouting technique, they tend to focus on  
109 the total effects of the deformational control rather than detailed observation of the temporal and spatial  
110 evolution of the tunnel structural response. From this point of view, further investigation is still needed  
111 to provide insights into the real performance of tunnels under the effects of grouting.

112 This paper describes a full-scale field experiment of grouting treatment based in Eastern China soft  
113 ground. The experiment provides detailed observations from varied grouting arrangements, which were  
114 designed in an attempt to reduce existing tunnel convergence. A systematic investigation is conducted  
115 into various effects of grouting operations and their influencing factors, such as the time-variant  
116 response of tunnel linings, effects of grouting history, influencing factors of grouting efficiency, and  
117 characteristics of the tunnel lining rebounding after grouting. The study provides new insights into the  
118 understanding of the grouting-induced tunnel lining responses, and it also provides benchmark cases  
119 for further theoretical and numerical studies.

# 120 Large Metro Tunnel Deformation Due to Nearby Excavations: A Case in Eastern 121 China Soft Ground

## 122 *Engineering Background*

123 This section will discuss a case where a section of the shield metro tunnel was seriously disturbed by  
124 large deep excavations nearby. The disrupted part of the tunnel is located in the soft soil area in a  
125 recently re-developed city area in Nanjing, China. Excavations caused excessive cross-sectional  
126 deformation of the tunnel, and consequently, active mitigating methods were adopted, and in particular,  
127 a grouting technique was employed to retrofit the tunnel lining structures.

128 The twin tunnels under consideration were placed into operation in the year 2010. After two years of  
129 service, massive excavations took place in the close vicinity of the tunnels on both sides as part of the  
130 construction for the substructure of ten high-rise towers (office buildings of 120 m to 200 m in height)  
131 in the city's financial center. The entire excavation site was split into four major zones, where Zone I  
132 and Zone III, being the ones adjacent to the tunnels, were recognized to be the primary reason for the  
133 over-deformation of the tunnels. Therefore, this paper will focus the attention on these two zones.

134 The geology of this area is distinguished by a typical layer-structured soft deposit of the Yangtze  
135 river delta. The stratum comprises primarily of the made-ground, muddy silty clay, and fine sand. A  
136 thick layer of muddy silty clay comprises a significant proportion of the upper stratum, which is high in  
137 water content (around 40 %), low in strength (the undrained shear strength commonly below 35kPa)  
138 and permeability (in the order of  $10^{-6}$ - $10^{-5}$  mm/s), and high in compressibility (the compression  
139 coefficient  $\alpha_{0.1-0.2}$  ranges between 0.6 and 0.8  $\text{MPa}^{-1}$ ). These characteristic values are comparable with  
140 that of the soft deposits in Shanghai (Zhang, et al., 2018), and thus the soil shares similar engineering  
141 properties. Engineering experience suggests that these soils tend to decrease significantly in strength  
142 once disturbed, resulting in prolonged deformational behaviors (Tan and Li, 2011, Tan and Wei, 2012,  
143 Yin and Chang, 2009). Under the muddy silty clay, the fine sand constitutes another major thick layer  
144 with much higher permeability (in the order of  $10^{-2}$  mm/s). Beneath the fine sand layer, layers of coarse  
145 sand and weathered mudstone find their places. Fig. 1 demonstrates the spatial relationship between the  
146 two tunnels and Zone I and Zone III of the excavation. Fig. 1(b) presents the representative geological  
147 profile at the construction site corresponding to the cross-section of A-A, which is derived from the  
148 borehole results. At the grouting test region, the soil layer thicknesses of the made-ground and the

149 muddy silty clay were estimated to be around 4.7 to 5.7 m, and 24 to 26 m, respectively. Detailed soil  
150 parameters are summarized in Table 1.

151 Fig. 2 displays the design of the segmental tunnel lining. The lining ring is staggered-assembled by  
152 six pre-fabricated RC segments, measured 6.2 m in outer diameter, 1.2 m in width, and 0.35 m in  
153 thickness. The neighboring pieces are jointed using 400 MPa curved steel bolts both in the longitudinal  
154 and circumferential directions.

155 (Table 1)

156 (Fig.1)

157  
158 (Fig.2)

### 159 ***Adjacent Excavations and Rehabilitation of the Over-deformed Tunnel***

160 The excavation activities of Zone I were started in February 2012 and completed in July 2013,  
161 marked by the bottom concrete slab casting. In November 2013, the construction of the entire  
162 substructure of Zone I came to an end. Shortly after completing the bottom slab casting in Zone I,  
163 excavation in Zone III continued to proceed from July 2013. By October 2013, the impact of the  
164 excavations became identifiably evident from the pronounced cross-sectional response of the tunnel in  
165 terms of considerable convergence.

166 The deep excavations strongly influenced approximately 300 rings (ring 460 to 760) in the left-line  
167 tunnel, with a horizontal convergence ratio ( $\Delta D/D$ ) greater than 0.5 percent, where D is the initial outer  
168 diameter of the tunnel (Fig.3). As illustrated in Fig. 4 (a), the tunnel sections under the most severe  
169 impact, namely ring 508 to 666 corresponding to Zone I, exhibited a  $\Delta D/D$  ratio ranging from 1.02  
170 percent to 1.40 percent, well above the relevant design regulations of 0.3 to 0.5 percent as the  
171 serviceability limit for a shield tunnel under normal operating condition (Committee, 2007, GB50157,  
172 2013, Society, 2004).

173 To maintain the metro line's operational safety, the metro company determined to tackle this  
174 problem by adopting grouting procedures at both sides of the over-deformed tunnel to correct the  
175 tunnel deformation back to an acceptable level and increase ground resistance. However, the  
176 engineering knowledge was quite restricted at that time regarding the grouting treatment's achievable  
177 effect in reducing the excessive tunnel deformation and the refinement of grouting parameters for the

178 region's particular geological condition. Moreover, understanding the tunnel's detailed spatial and  
179 temporal response under the grouting impact was of particular interest, which was rarely reported in the  
180 existing literature. In view of these, a field grouting test on a particular section of the left-line tunnel  
181 (ring 580 to 588) was performed before the full-scale implementation of the technique.

182 The experiment was performed between Oct 30, 2013, and Nov 10, 2013. It should be mentioned  
183 that as the grouting tests were performed, excavation in Zone I had already been completed, and  
184 excavation in Zone III was constructed at its third level. Due to the long distance between the  
185 excavation pit to the testing tunnel, the excavation-induced effect on the tunnel was anticipated to be  
186 negligible in the short term. Therefore, the grouting effects were considered the governing factor of the  
187 tunnel's deformational response.

## 188 **Grouting Experiment**

### 189 ***Grouting Procedures***

190 Fig. 3 illustrates the composition of the grouting system. The general idea was to extend grouting  
191 conductors from the ground surface to the designated grouting position in the vicinity of the tunnel to  
192 achieve grout injection. Before the grouting procedures, the tunnel's exact position was measured in  
193 terms of its burial depth and the exterior surface (extrados) coordinates. Afterward, holes were drilled  
194 from the ground to the bottom level of the tunnel lining extrados (hereafter referred to as the tunnel  
195 invert). Casing pipes of similar diameter with the drilled holes were subsequently placed in position  
196 inside the holes to prevent soil cave-in and facilitate an easier installation of grouting pipes. After this,  
197 a grouting pipe was pushed within the casing pipe to the depth where the lower end of the grouting pipe  
198 reached the tunnel's invert elevation. The key components of the grouting system were then assembled  
199 to form an effective grouting injection system, which comprises of grouting pumps, flow meter,  
200 grouting mixer, and grouting pipes. After successfully installing the grouting injection system,  
201 preparation of the cement slurry and sodium silicate was conducted. The grouting operation was carried  
202 out utilizing two pumps simultaneously, each responsible for injecting cement (ordinary Portland  
203 cement 42.5) and sodium silicate (baume degree (°Be') 35). Initial setting time of the grout slurry  
204 affects both the grouting effect and the grouting operability. By changing the mixture ratio of the  
205 sodium silicate and Portland cement, the initial setting time of the grouting slurry can be flexibly



206 adjusted. Mixture ratios rendering optimum initial setting time were obtained via a series of laboratory  
207 testing, so that plugging of the injection pipe can be avoided and an intended diffusion radius of grout  
208 in soil can be reached. The water-cement ratio for the cement slurry was 0.6 to 0.7, and the volume  
209 ratio of about (2 to 3):1 was adopted when mixing the cement slurry and sodium silicate. These  
210 formulas generated grout slurry with an initial setting time around 10 minutes. Grouting pressure for  
211 the site was set around 0.5 MPa, which was constantly monitored by a grouting pressure gauge, and  
212 carefully controlled by experienced technicians to avoid pressure anomalies. The grouting flow rate  
213 was controlled between 14 to 16 L/min for the cement slurry, and 5 to 10 L/min for the sodium silicate,  
214 resulting in a 20 L/min total flow rate. The liquid flow rate was monitored in real-time by a flow meter.

215 The grouting procedure was established to achieve reduced disruption to the surrounding ground.  
216 During the grout injection, the grouting pipe was raised upwards steadily and slowly at a consistent  
217 pace by a pipe-lifting system. As such, the uniformity of grout spreading with respect to depth was  
218 ensured. At the beginning of the pipe-lifting process, the grouting nozzles at the end of the grouting  
219 pipe were automatically exposed to release grout when the front-end hat covering those nozzles was  
220 removed (see Fig. 3). The grouting pipe experienced continued lifting until the lower end of the casing  
221 pipe. It was kept still for around ten minutes so that the grouting material could experience initial  
222 setting. After the setting period, the grouting pipe was raised from the ground by the pipe lifting system  
223 to conclude the grouting procedure for one hole.

224 (Fig.3)

### 225 ***Grouting Testing Arrangements***

226 The grout was injected in a double-row array scheme. The specific dimensions of array positions,  
227 named A1, A2, B1, and B2, for installing grouting pipes are illustrated in Fig. 7. The rows were  
228 symmetrically positioned with respect to the longitudinal centerline of the left line tunnel, with A2 and  
229 B1 positioned nearer to the tunnel.

230 The grouting zone positions relative to the ground surface can be represented by two individual  
231 positioning parameters: the grouting elevation (GE) and the grouting height (GH), as demonstrated in  
232 Fig. 7. In this field experiment, various positioning parameters were adopted for different grouting  
233 operations to obtain a diverse range of testing cases to observe position-related sensitive effects.

234 Fig. 7 summarizes the details of the grouting schedules and the corresponding positioning  
235 parameters from Oct 30, 2013, to Nov 10, 2013, for tunnel ring 580 to 599. Circles of three distinct  
236 colors represent the grouting position to the left line tunnel and the grouting status.

237 For convenience and simplicity, in this paper, we will name the  $i^{\text{th}}$  grouting operation in the  
238 experiment as stage  $G_i$ , and the grouting-free period before the next grouting injection as  $R_i$ , instead of  
239 referring them by their time of occurrences. We also define the starting time of  $G_1$  as time 0, which  
240 corresponded to the midnight of Oct 30, 2013 (Fig. 5(a) and Fig.7). In Fig. 7, circles in pink represent  
241 inner grout injections at A2 and B1, blue represents outer injections at A1 and B2, and grey circles  
242 represent the existing grout injections where consolidation has occurred. Total grouting volumes in  
243 liters are also listed for new grout injections of the current grouting operation.

244 As for the grouting arrangement, the grouting elevations from  $G_1$  to  $G_7$  (Oct 30 to Nov 6) were 2.7  
245 m higher than the tunnel invert elevation, and the corresponding grouting heights were 5.2 m.  
246 However, starting from  $G_8$  (Nov 7), the grouting elevation was lowered to match the tunnel invert  
247 elevation. Besides, the grouting height was set to 4.2 m in  $G_8$  (Nov 7), creating a case with a shorter  
248 grouting zone.

### 249 **Monitoring Scheme**

250 An automatic monitoring scheme was adopted to obtain comprehensive information on the tunnel  
251 lining response during the grouting operations. The system comprises a combination of robotic total  
252 stations (Type Leica TM30) and reflection prisms, which were mounted to the tunnel lining inner  
253 surface at its spring line level (Fig. 2(b)). These monitoring systems can be used to measure the  
254 tunnel's deformational response in both longitudinal and circumferential directions. In this study, the  
255 system was mainly used to obtain horizontal convergence of the tunnel for the rings under testing. The  
256 accuracy of the aforementioned monitoring system was estimated to be around  $\pm 0.5$  mm, based on the  
257 calibration tests from similar projects in Nanjing.

258 The monitoring system allowed the interrogation of the tunnel convergence response in a timely  
259 fashion at intended time intervals. During the grouting operations, the time intervals of data acquisition  
260 were set to be 5 or 10 minutes, based on the convergence changing rate in the field observation. This  
261 time intervals were selected empirically to capture sufficiently detailed tunnel deformational responses

262 during the grouting operations and form coherent deformation curves. During the experiment, real-time  
263 monitoring data of the tunnel convergence were obtained and forwarded to the grouting team on the  
264 ground surface to facilitate their grouting control judgments. Meanwhile, structural damage in the  
265 forms of spalling, cracking, or leakages were also under close inspection by inspectors inside the tunnel  
266 during the grouting operations. During the grouting process, alerts were delivered to the grouting team  
267 if the convergence reaction surpassed 1.0 mm or minor structural damage was observed during the  
268 grouting process. In contrast, the immediate termination of the grouting injection was demanded if a  
269 change in convergence exceeded 5.0 mm, or significant structural damage was detected.

## 270 **Monitoring Results**

### 271 ***Overall Deformational Response***

272 The robotic total station began to monitor the convergence evolution of the tunnel on Oct 30, 2013,  
273 for the grouting-impacted lining rings (581 to 589). Data were obtained during the grouting-treatment  
274 period (Oct 30, 2013, to Nov 10, 2013) and several days after these grouting operations (between Nov  
275 11, 2013, to Dec 7, 2013). The overall change in convergence, relative to the start of the experiment, is  
276 shown in Fig. 4(b). It should be mentioned that the convergence time histories presented in Fig. 4(b)  
277 are, in fact, the net convergence variation that accumulated between different grouting operations,  
278 where the dynamics within a single grouting operation are ignored. It is noticeable that the evolution of  
279 the convergence from different rings shares a typical pattern consisting of a recovery stage during the  
280 grouting process and a rebound stage following the completion of the grouting treatment. The grouting  
281 injections tended to cause the soil's expansion movement around the grouting nozzles during the  
282 grouting operations, thus introducing thrust pressure onto the nearby tunnel linings, pushing the rings  
283 to retract to a smaller convergence. However, after completing the grouting process, dissipation of  
284 positive excess pore pressure and solidification of grout inevitably follows (Soga, et al., 2004).  
285 Therefore, the recovered deformation cannot be 100% maintained, and a certain amount of  
286 convergence rebound took place.

287 The convergence recovery and rebound values of all the rings directly under the grouting impact  
288 during the entire field experiment are illustrated in Fig. 4(d), where the maximum, minimum, and mean  
289 values for each item are also highlighted. Effects of grouting were proved to be remarkable and useful.

290 Specifically, the average recovered convergence of the rings under testing right after the last grouting  
291 operation was reduced by 19.1 mm, about 25% of their average absolute convergence measured before  
292 the grouting treatment. Following the completion of the grouting treatment, the rebounding  
293 phenomenon led to an increment of the average convergence by 6.5 mm during 20 days. Thus a 12.6  
294 mm average net convergence recovery was measured for the tunnel rings under testing at the  
295 termination of the experiment. The convergence rebound may be subjected to the influence of various  
296 aspects such as soil permeability and grout properties. An in-depth study of these aspects is beyond the  
297 scope of this paper. However, it is worth noting that the ratios of the total rebound values over the  
298 recovery values for rings under testing fall into a relatively narrow range, with an average value of  
299 34.3%, as shown in Fig. 4(d). This means, on average, about 65% of the recovered convergence was  
300 retained at the completion of the experiment. This observation suggests that the convergence rebound  
301 may be estimated in proportion to the convergence recovery response in the engineering practice.

302 Fig. 4(c) depicts the spatial distribution of the cumulative grout volume injected and the  
303 corresponding total convergence recovery response observed at the termination of the selected grouting  
304 operations, showing that as more grout was injected and accumulated in the ground, the convergence  
305 recovery increased accordingly. It is noticeable that the cumulative grout volume distribution among  
306 different rings was substantially uneven for all selected cases. For example, after G11, for the majority  
307 of the testing rings, the grout injected was around 3000 liters. However, this amount was doubled for  
308 rings 583 and 587. Interestingly, the doubled grouting volume at ring 587 did not seem to result in a  
309 greater recovery response as one would normally anticipate. However, a large amount of grout at ring  
310 583 appeared to facilitate the recovery peak formation at ring 584. Similar effects can also be observed  
311 for G5 and G7. These observations tend to suggest a less direct correlation between the grouting  
312 volume of individual rings and their convergence recovery values. However, the convergence recovery  
313 tends to be larger in the grouting zone center (rings 581 to 585) and much smaller around its rim (rings  
314 586 to 589), even if a more considerable amount of grout was injected (for example, in the case of ring  
315 587). Therefore, tunnel convergence response resembled the deflection curve of a beam under  
316 distributed pressure, where the most prominent displacement would usually occur around its middle  
317 portion, and the details of fluctuations in the pressure distribution would become less critical.

318

**(Fig.4)**

### **Evolution of the Tunnel Lining Response During the Grouting Treatment**

While the overall behavior of the tunnel linings during the grouting-treatment stage tends to experience net convergence recovery, as introduced in the previous section, detailed monitoring records with shorter time intervals reveal a dynamical evolution of the convergence accumulating process during the grouting operations.

Fig. 5 demonstrates how the grouting-induced convergence recovery accumulates in time for all rings under testing during the grouting-treatment stage. Fig. 5(b) depicts the evolutionary histories of the relative convergence. The values shown are relative convergence comparing to the start of the grouting treatment. It is noticeable that those convergence time histories are featured in similar configurations, taking an upwards zig-zag recovery profiles. The evolutionary history curves also suggest that much larger transient tunnel convergence recoveries were achieved within a relatively short period of the grouting operations, which generally only lasted 2 to 3 hours a day around midnight. Afterward, a much longer and slower rebounding phase took over due to the absence of grouting activities, as indicated by the portion of the negative-sloped branches of the convergence recovery curves (Fig. 5(c)). Therefore, the convergence recovery accumulation behaviors in the grouting treatment are observed to resemble the inhale and exhale behavior of a person. This phenomenon is termed the 'breathing effect' in this paper. The net convergence accumulation over one round of grouting operation is the difference between the grouting-induced recovery and the reversal movement in the rebounding phase (Fig. 5(c)).

By separately presenting the effect of grouting and the subsequent rebound for each grouting operation in terms of convergence increments (recovery movement taken as negative), Fig. 5(a) demonstrates the temporal and spatial distribution of the convergence increment for all rings during the grouting treatment, with grouting rings highlighted for clearer observation of the correlation between the grouting location and the tunnel deformation response. The  $i^{\text{th}}$  grouting stage  $G_i$  spans over the initiation and the completion of the  $i^{\text{th}}$  grouting operation, while the  $i^{\text{th}}$  rebounding stage  $R_i$  starts right after the completion of  $G_i$  and terminates at the start of  $G_{i+1}$ . In total, 11 of these stage pairs exist according to the field testing record. The incremental convergences at each operational stage in Fig. 5(a) and Fig. 7 are the differential values between the corresponding stage's starting and ending values.

347 As indicated in Fig. 5(a), it is apparent that the spatial distribution of the grouting-induced  
348 convergence response relies on the spatial layout of the grouting injections. Although a clear  
349 correlation between the grouting arrangements and the induced tunnel deformational response remains  
350 to be further examined, a tendency becomes clear that the rings close to the grouting positions tend to  
351 experience a more prominent recovery effect. The columns in Fig. 5(a) that alternate in colors of red  
352 and blue indicate the existence of the 'breathing effect'. Meanwhile, the figure also suggests a specific  
353 correlation between the recovery and rebound effects of convergence variations: the more significant  
354 the convergence recovery, the more likely the tunnel will experience a more considerable subsequent  
355 rebound.

356 To reveal the correlation between the behaviors of convergence recovery and rebound, averaged  
357 convergence variation rates (mm/day) are calculated. These data are collectively presented in Fig. 5(f),  
358 which illustrates a largely positive correlation between the two variables. Although the data tend to fall  
359 into a relative wide band, a linear correlation between the convergence recovery rate and the rebound  
360 rate appears to be identifiable up to a certain limit (around 50 mm/day). However, as the convergence  
361 recovery grows greater than this limit, the corresponding rebound appears to become stabilized,  
362 maintaining at a rate around 0.8 mm/day.

363 Fig. 5(d) and Fig. 5(e) display selected grouting operations for exemplifying the correlation of the  
364 convergence recovery rate and the rebound rate of all rings. As shown in Fig. 5(d), in the 2<sup>nd</sup> routing  
365 operation, the convergence recovery rate and subsequent rebound rate demonstrate relatively consistent  
366 distribution profiles over the testing rings. The phenomenon seems reasonable in that the tunnel  
367 experienced a relatively small magnitude of the convergence recovery rates during this grouting  
368 operation (over a range of 11.2 mm/day to 32.0 mm/day), and all data fall into the linear region  
369 categorized in Fig. 5(f). In the case of the 8<sup>th</sup> grouting operation, the rate of grouting-induced  
370 convergence recovery spanned a much broader range from 3.2 mm/day to 89.6 mm/day. The  
371 convergence recovery rate profile and the corresponding rebound rate experience a particular difficulty  
372 in matching each other. In Fig. 5(e), a close match is attained for the two variables' profiles between  
373 the rings 586 to 589, where the convergence recovery rates are relatively low. However, for rings  
374 experiencing larger convergence recovery rates, the rebound rate tends to be more stagnant, therefore

375 featuring a departure of the twin curves. This observation also complies with the conclusion drawn  
376 from the overall data distribution in Fig. 5(f).

377 The equation in Fig. 5(f) is arrived to approximate the correlation of the convergence recovery rate  
378 and rebound rate when convergence is smaller than 50 mm. The resulting equation could predict the  
379 rebounding behavior of the tunnel lining for sites of similar conditions.

380 (Fig.5)

### 381 ***Tunnel Lining Response During a Single Grouting Operation***

382 A close-up view of the tunnel deformational behaviors during the grouting injection period can be  
383 obtained, owing to the availability of the convergence records every 5 to 10 minutes during the grout  
384 operations. These observations would be meaningful to understand the evolutionary characteristics of the  
385 grouting efficiency during a single grouting operation.

386 Fig. 6 presents the convergence response to the varying grouting injection volume for selected  
387 grouting operations. In order to obtain a more precise correlation between the grouting volume and the  
388 convergence response, only the single ring grouting results are selected for analysis in this section.  
389 Specifically, testing results corresponding to stage G1, G8, and G11 represent single-sided grouting  
390 operations, while G3 a double-sided process. These grouting operations adopted varied geometrical  
391 arrangements, which are illustrated in detail in Fig. 7.

392 The grouting volume injected and the corresponding convergence reaction of the tunnel in Fig. 6  
393 have been normalized for a more straightforward comparison between different cases. The normalized  
394 grouting volume sequence is the ratio of the grouting volume sequence over the total grouting volume  
395 of a particular grouting operation. Similarly, the normalized convergence recovery is obtained by  
396 dividing the convergence recovery time history by the maximum measurement value in a specific  
397 grouting operation. Despite differences in the grouting geometrical configuration, all convergence  
398 responses of the selected cases seem to experience two different stages indicating varied grouting  
399 efficiency. Specifically, when the grout injection volume is relatively low, a relatively high grouting  
400 efficiency can be attained, featuring a steep slope of the convergence response curve. However, as the  
401 grout volume exceeds a specific limit, the effectiveness of the grout injection markedly decreases, and  
402 the convergence response curve tends to become increasingly flat. Therefore, a critical grouting volume

403 exists between the high-efficiency grouting stage and the low-efficiency grouting stage, depending on  
404 various grouting parameters and geotechnical properties.

405 Based on the testing results, for the single-sided grouting operations, the critical grouting volume  
406 ranges from 300 to 600 liters, while for the double-sided process, this value reaches about 1000 liters.  
407 This enhancement is reasonable in that the soil at the other side of the tunnel (opposite to the grouting  
408 side) needs to supply enough resistance to facilitate an effective reduction of the convergence. As the  
409 double-sided approach can enhance the ground resistance at both sides of the tunnel, the effect  
410 translates into the increase of the critical grouting volume, resulting in greater effectiveness in  
411 convergence reduction.

412 **(Fig.6)**

### 413 ***Spatial Distribution of Grouting-induced Deformational Reaction***

414 As previously mentioned, the grouting effects on the tunnel will gradually diminish with increased  
415 grouting distance. However, further understanding of this effect would require information on the  
416 specific geometrical details of the grouting operations. Fig. 7 presents the detailed grouting operation  
417 history and the corresponding convergence response of the tunnel lining during both the convergence  
418 recovering stages and the subsequent rebounding stages. The geometrical arrangement of the grouting  
419 operations is elaborated in detail, with the detailed grout injection volumes of each operation displayed.

420 As illustrated in Fig. 7, grouting operations were conducted to treat single rings, double or triple  
421 rings simultaneously during the entire grouting experiment. These arrangements inevitably gave rise to  
422 a complex deformational response of the tunnel convergence. The single-ring operations could best  
423 serve for observing the spatial distribution of grouting-induced tunnel convergence response. The  
424 single ring operations selected as examples for demonstrating the grouting-induced tunnel  
425 deformational pattern include grouting operations at one side of the tunnel (G1 and G8) and those  
426 conducted at both sides concurrently (as in G3).

427 These single ring cases actually demonstrate varied deformational patterns. For some cases, a  
428 convergence distribution can be clearly identified that resembles the shape of a bell, such as G3 and  
429 G8. However, although the most heavily affected rings tend to locate adjacent to the grouting position,  
430 they may not necessarily be the ones that are closest to the exact grouting position. One particular



431 example is the case of G11, where the peak of the distribution curve appears to be around 581 to 583,  
432 corresponding to the grout injection at 584. In the case of G1, the distribution of the convergence  
433 response even featured no apparent bell shape. These phenomena suggest that the attenuation of the  
434 grouting effect possesses considerable variability due to the complex migration behavior of the  
435 grouting material in the ground. Therefore, the grouting-induced pressure distribution, reflected by the  
436 convergence recovery behavior of the tunnel, can be challenging to predict with certainty.

437 For the multi-ring grouting operations, the superposition of the grouting effect on single rings seems  
438 applicable for some cases, such as the case G5 and G7, where the largest convergence recovery occurs  
439 right in the middle of the grouted rings. Whereas, for cases such as G9 and G10, direct superposition  
440 seems unable to explain the peak location in the grouting-induced convergence distribution.

441 Apart from the variability arisen from the inherent complexity of the soil medium, another possible  
442 reason to affect the structural response of the tunnel could be the distribution of the existing grouting,  
443 which could block or alter the migration behaviors of the current grouting. One such example can be  
444 demonstrated in G9, where the inner consolidated grout surrounding ring 580 and 582 may well likely  
445 act as a barrier for the current grout injection conducted at ring 581, leading to a smaller convergence  
446 recovery response comparing with that induced by the free grouting at ring 585. Likewise, this kind of  
447 blocking effect can also be observed for case G6, where the pre-existing grout injections at ring 586  
448 and 587 seemed to block the current grouting at ring 587. This gave rise to a much smaller convergence  
449 response in comparison with ring 581 and 583.

450 The existing grouting may also lead to the redirection of the current grouting flow, as can be  
451 observed from the tunnel convergence distribution configurations, such as in the cases of G8 and G11.  
452 In G8, the existing grouting injections at ring 583 and 584 tended to steer the current grouting pressure  
453 to focus on ring 581 rather than the current grouting ring 582. Similarly, in G11, the existing grouting  
454 may be the main reason to cause the peak of the convergence profile to shift from the grouting ring  
455 584. This kind of deviation seemed more likely to occur as more grouting accumulated in the ground.  
456 The effect on the tunnel response became more complicated to predict than a ground condition with  
457 fewer existing grout injections. One such example can be illustrated by G10, where the convergence  
458 response of ring 582 was unexpectedly smaller than that of ring 585.

459

**(Fig.7)**

## **Grouting Efficiency and Influencing Factors**

The field data suggests that the grouting efficiency in terms of convergence reduction would vary with different grouting parameters, including the grouting history and various geometrical settings.

In section 2.4.3, we introduced the evolution of the grouting efficiency during single grouting operations, where a consistent pattern of the grouting efficiency evolution has been revealed. In the whole course of the grouting project, the grouting efficiency also seems to experience different stages that vary with time and grouting history.

The experimental dataset tends to suggest an increasing grouting efficiency as more grouts were injected into the ground. These can be demonstrated by observing the convergence response from G1 to G7 when the individual grouting parameters, namely the grouting elevation and grouting height, remained constant (see Fig. 7). As can be seen, when a relatively small amount of grouting injections were carried out, the convergence recovery per grouting volume is relatively low. We hereby adopt a simplified grouting efficiency indicator to quantify the grouting efficiency, which equals the largest convergence recovery over the total grouting volume in the corresponding grouting operations. This value is calculated to range from 0.5mm/ 1000 L to 0.7mm/ 1000 L for operations G1 to G4. Thereafter, for operations G5 to G7, as the grout was injected continuously into the ground to reach a certain level of grouting spatial density, the efficiency of grouting start to see a substantial increase, as the grouting efficiency indicator raises to the range of 1.0 mm/1000 L to 1.5 mm/1000 L. This phenomenon may be related to the modified soil properties due to the penetration and consolidation of the existing grouting. The details of related mechanisms are subject to further research beyond the scope of the current paper.

Another aspect that is deemed to contribute to determining the grouting efficiency is the geometrical arrangement of the grouting operations. One particular example can be seen from case G8, which was associated with a shorter grouting height (4.2 m) than the other cases (5.2 m). This grouting arrangement resulted in a marked effect on the tunnel deformational response, with the grouting efficiency indicator increased up to 4.6 mm/1000 L. Due to this shortened grouting height, the grouting zone at G8 tended to be more localized, leading to a more concentrated pressure distribution to the adjacent tunnel linings, and this was also clearly reflected by the fast-diminishing bell-shape configuration of the convergence distribution as distance increased. The grouting setting of G8, though

489 exhibiting high grouting efficiency, may also accompany high structural safety risks due to intensified  
490 pressure localization, thus should be judged with care in grouting practice.

491 The grouting elevation effect can be analyzed by comparing cases G5 to G7 with G9 to G11, as they  
492 share the same grouting height but different grouting elevations. Meanwhile, they belong to a similar  
493 grouting stage, having surpassed the early low-efficiency stage. The grouting efficiency indicator for  
494 G5, G6, and G7 is calculated to be 1.47 mm/ 1000 L, 1.04 mm/1000 L, and 1.02 mm/1000 L. The  
495 corresponding values for G9, G10, and G11 are 1.28, 1.22, and 1.45, respectively. These results  
496 suggest that a lowered grouting elevation tends to yield a slightly higher grouting efficiency in terms of  
497 the tunnel deformational response.

498 A more detailed analysis of the geometrical factors over the efficiency of the grouting operations  
499 would require appropriate numerical and theoretical analyses, as the influences of the individual  
500 grouting parameters are difficult to decouple based on the field testing dataset alone. These analyses  
501 will be presented separately as our continued research.

### 502 ***The Convergence Rebounding after Grouting Treatment***

503 As introduced in the previous sections, the tunnel lining convergence rebound occurred right after  
504 completing the grouting operations. The rebounding movements of the lining rings were constantly  
505 interrupted by the subsequent grouting-induced convergence recoveries during the grouting treatment  
506 period. However, after completing all the grouting operations (starting from stage R11), the continued  
507 recording of the tunnel deformation provided an opportunity to observe the undisturbed rebounding  
508 performance of the tunnel lining response.

509 Fig. 8(a) depicts the rebounded convergence evolution for all rings under testing right after the  
510 completion of all grouting operations. Overall, these curves demonstrate a similar evolvement pattern  
511 where the convergence rebound tends to experience faster incremental rates at the early phase of the  
512 rebound, followed by a gradually decaying rate over time. The spatial and temporal distribution of the  
513 daily-averaged convergence rebounding rate is calculated and summarized in Fig. 8(b) based on the  
514 convergence data. Interestingly, the convergence rebounding rate of all rings only peaked at time 2.0 to  
515 2.5 days after completing the grouting treatment (peaking at 0.8 mm/day), before the decaying process.

516 Before the peak value, the lining rings experienced a lower rebounding rate right after all grouting  
517 treatment.

518 The time history of the convergence rebounding rate after G11 for rings 583 to 585 is presented in  
519 Fig. 8(c), corresponding to the last grouting operation conducted at ring 584. Recordings of other rings  
520 are found to share a similar evolution pattern. It is noticeable that the initial rebounding rate,  
521 measured by the convergence change over the first 24 hours after grouting, was only about 0.3  
522 mm/day. This value experienced a speed-up on day two to reach about 0.7 mm/day. After this, it started  
523 to decrease. Although the convergence rate peaks vary in magnitudes among rings 583 to 585, a  
524 remarkably consistent evolutionary pattern can be uncovered of the convergence response during the  
525 post-grouting-treatment period when normalization was applied to the data using the respective peak  
526 values. Fig. 8(d) demonstrates the evolution of the normalized convergence rate of these rings during  
527 the post-peak period. An exponential curve is found to fit the data best and adequately characterize the  
528 decaying process. A nonlinear curve fitting program is introduced to obtain the fitted equation  
529 employing the Marquardt-Levenburg algorithm (Press, et al., 1992). The relevant statistic parameters  
530 are also illustrated in the figure. The fit curve may be expressed by the following formula:

$$y = e^{-0.13682t} \quad (1)$$

531 The above decay formula may be used for the prediction of tunnel lining responses in grouting  
532 projects carried out in muddy silty clay having a similar geological history. It is noticeable that the  
533 rebounding rate did not reduce to zero within the observed period. However, using the decay curve in  
534 Eq. 1, an estimate of the duration for a given convergence rebounding level can be easily obtained. For  
535 example, in the current case, it would take 17 days for 90% of the rebounding rate to disappear.

536 **(Fig.8)**

## 537 **Summary and Conclusions**

538 A large-scale field experiment has been conducted to investigate the effects of grouting treatment on  
539 the convergence recovery of the lining structures for an operational shield metro tunnel in Eastern  
540 China soft ground. Thanks to the comprehensive monitoring records, the real performance of the tunnel  
541 lining has been evaluated both during and after the grouting treatment period. The grouting-induced  
542 tunnel response is examined in multiple temporal resolution levels, and this has been made possible by

543 the short measurement intervals (5 to 10 minutes) of the monitoring data. During the experiment,  
544 varied geometrical grouting parameters were adopted, enabling a comparison of the effects of different  
545 spatial factors. Key findings from the experiment can be summarized below.

546 (a) The grouting treatment was proved effective in terms of rehabilitating the over deformed tunnel.  
547 During the overall course of the grouting experiment, two phases of the tunnel lining deformational  
548 response were observed, namely a convergence recovery during the grouting treatment and a  
549 convergence rebound after the termination of the grouting treatment. On average, about 25% of the  
550 absolute convergence was recovered during the grouting treatment period, and 65% of the recovered  
551 convergence was retained after the convergence rebounding stage. Data analysis also reveals that the  
552 rebounded convergence tends to be proportional to the recovered convergence, with an average value  
553 of 35 % approximately.

554 (b) Detailed monitoring records with shorter time intervals reveal a dynamic evolution of the  
555 convergence accumulating process during the grouting operations. In a single grouting operation, the  
556 tunnel convergence is observed to experience a swift recovery followed by a much slower rebound.  
557 The accumulation of the convergence recovery over time resembles an upward zig-zag pattern. Further  
558 data analysis suggests that the recovery and rebound movements tend to be linearly correlated up to a  
559 certain threshold. After surpassing this threshold, the nonlinear response starts to kick in.

560 (c) The grouting efficiency tends to evolve with time, both for the single grouting operations and for  
561 the entire process of the grouting treatment. For single grouting operations, grouting tends to be more  
562 effective at the early phase of injections and becomes less effective as a specific grouting volume limit  
563 is exceeded. This phenomenon would suggest that it is possible to reduce the amount of the grout  
564 injected in the engineering practice, thus the associating costs, while still achieving a similar effect in  
565 rehabilitating the tunnel by avoiding the injected grouting volume to enter the low-efficiency zone. The  
566 opposite trend is observed for the entire process of the grouting treatment, with a relatively low  
567 grouting effect at the start of the grouting treatment and higher efficiency as more grouts are injected,  
568 most likely owing to the grouting-induced soil modification.

569 (d) The specific grouting geometrical layout and grouting history tend to play a critical role in  
570 determining the grouting-induced convergence recovery profile. A single ring grouting tends to form a  
571 convergence distribution that resembles the shape of a bell. However, the actual convergence

572 distribution may be altered by the barrier or redirecting effects due to the presence of existing grout  
573 injections. These observed phenomena could be leveraged to achieve a better grouting effect in  
574 practice. For example, grouting at the far-side array first before carrying on at the near-side would  
575 potentially enhance the grouting effect in reducing tunnel convergence.

576 (e) The testing data suggests that for the undisturbed convergence rebound, the convergence  
577 rebounding rate only peaked at 2.0 to 2.5 days after the termination of grouting treatment, and the rate  
578 over the first 24 hours after the grouting completion was relatively lower. After the peak, the  
579 convergence rebounding rate tended to decay exponentially. The test revealed that it would take 17  
580 days for 90% of the rebounding rate to disappear for tunnels buried in muddy silty clay.

581 Overall, this paper presents a comprehensive case study with new insights into the grouting-induced  
582 effects on the temporal and spatial responses of the tunnel lining rings. The detailed information,  
583 analysis, and suggestions from this study could serve as a reference for similar grouting projects  
584 conducted in the geological context of muddy silty clay. Moreover, the case study also forms a  
585 benchmark for further theoretical and numerical studies. It should be noted that some of the  
586 characteristics observed would require further research to understand and quantify better.

## 587 **Data Availability Statement**

588 All data, models, and code generated or used during the study appear in the submitted article.

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715 **List of Table**

716 **Table 1.** Soil parameters.

Soil layer	w	$\gamma$	$e_o$	c	$\phi$	$I_p$	$I_L$	$E_{s0.1-0.2}$	N
Muddy silty clay	41.8	17.3	1.210	19	12.3	15.3	1.17	3.03	1.8
Fine sand	26.8	18.2	0.838	10	33.8	-	-	10.58	12.0

717 w water content (%);  $\gamma$  unit weight (kN/m<sup>3</sup>);  $e_o$  void ratio; cohesion c (kPa);  $\phi$  friction angle (°);  $I_p$   
 718 plastic index (%);  $I_L$  liquid index (%);  $E_{s0.1-0.2}$  compressive modulus (MPa); N, corrected SPT N value

719 **List of Figures**

720 **Fig. 1.** (Color) Excavation project and the operating tunnels: (a) plain view; and (b) side view at A-A.

721 **Fig. 2.** (Color) Lining structure and field monitoring system: (a) lining ring design; and (b) robotic total  
722 station and reflection prism inside the tunnel.

723 **Fig. 3.** (Color) Schematics of the grouting system and its field deployment.

724 **Fig. 4.** (Color) The response of tunnel convergence: (a) absolute horizontal convergence ratio of the  
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726 initiation of the grouting experiment during and after the grouting treatment; (c) the cumulative  
727 grouting injection volume and the associating convergence recovery distribution of selected grouting  
728 operations; and (d) the convergence recovery and rebound values for testing rings.

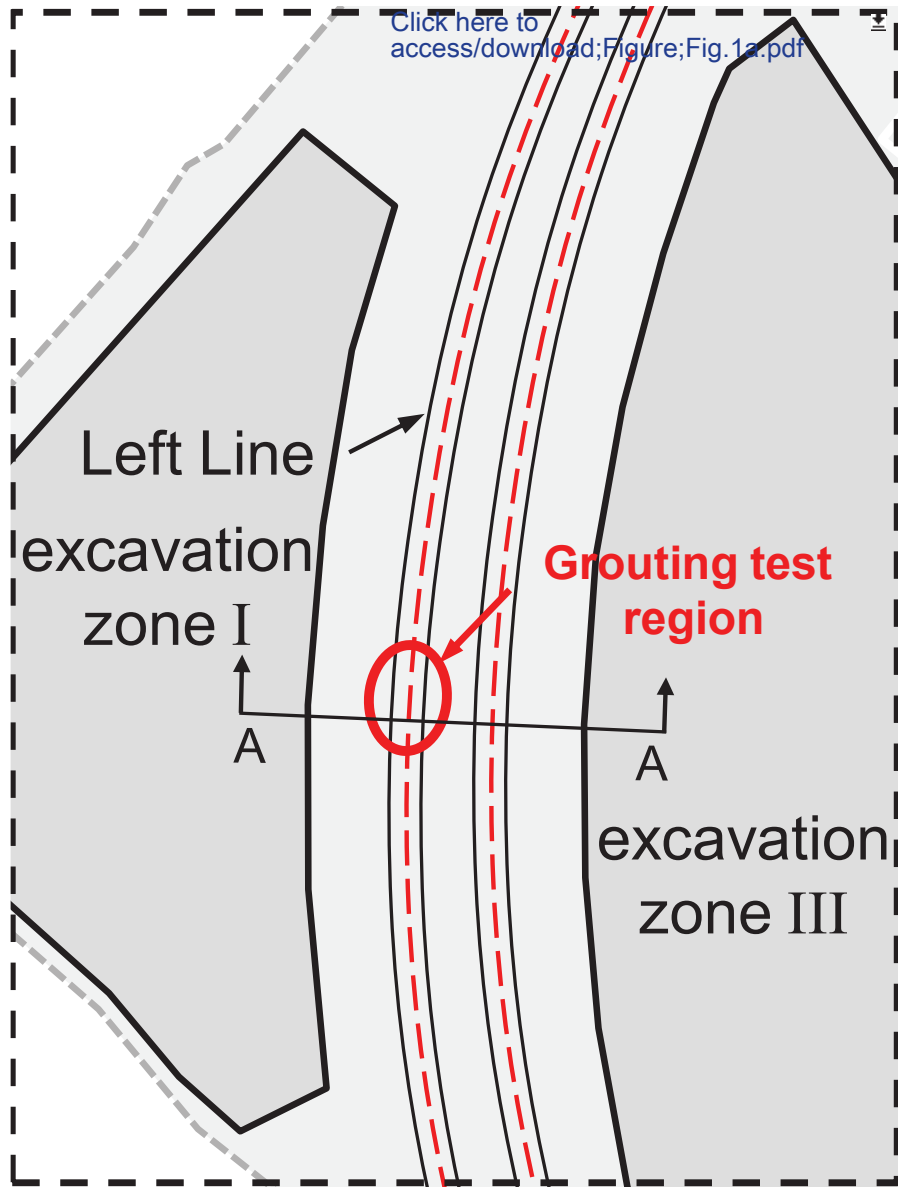
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733 all testing rings in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grouting operation; (e) comparison of convergence recovery and rebound for  
734 all testing rings in the 8<sup>th</sup> grouting operation; and (f) correlation between the convergence recovery rate  
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737 during single-ring grouting operations: (a) G1 and G3; and (b) G8 and G11.

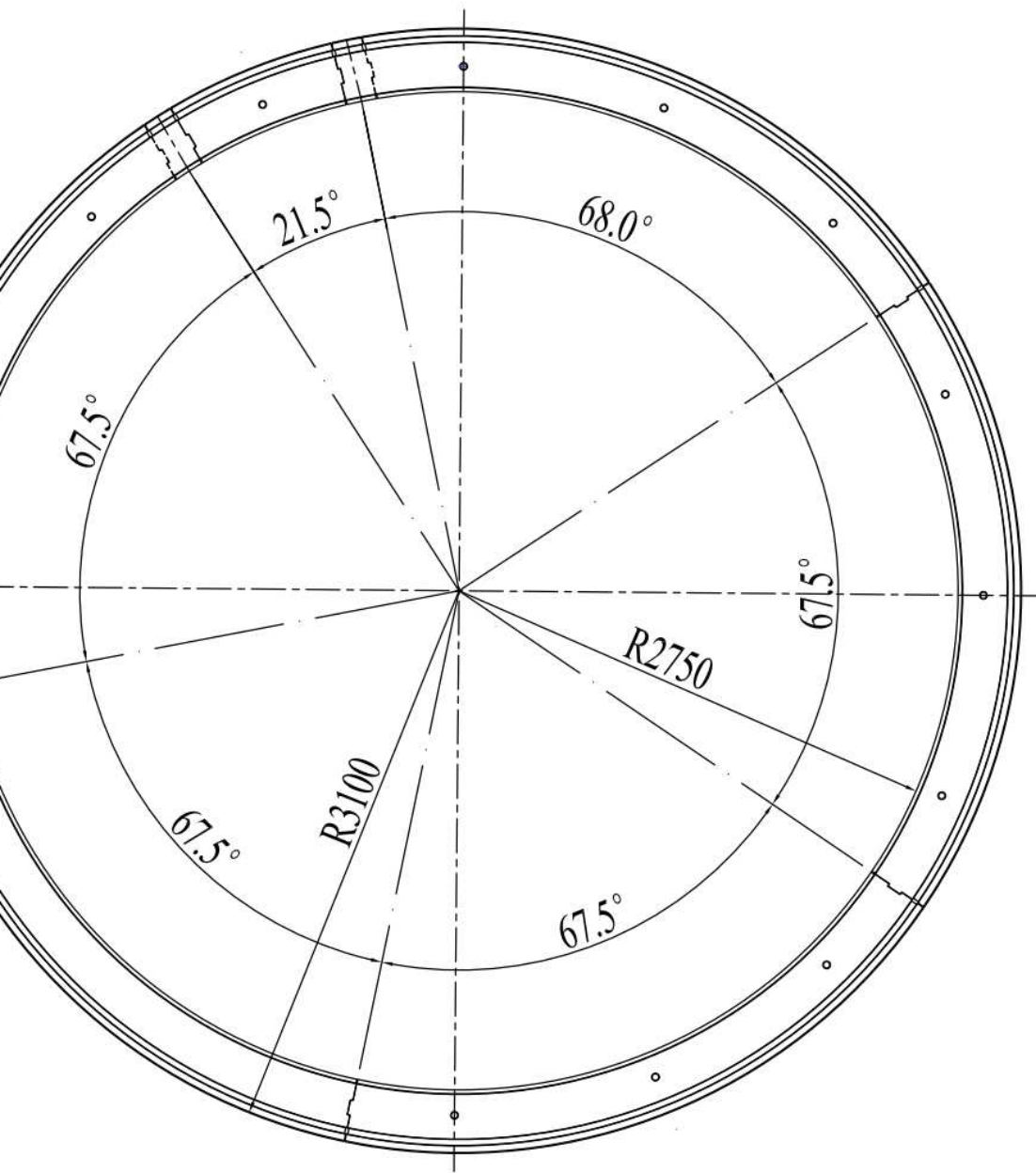
738 **Fig. 7.** (Color) Detailed grouting geometrical arrangement, grouting procedures, and tunnel lining  
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743 rebounding rate evolution near the grouting ring (ring 584); and (d) the exponential decay of the  
744 convergence rebound during the post-peak period for rings near the last grout injection in terms of  
745 normalized convergence rate (ring 583 to 585).

Fig. 1(a)  
(a)

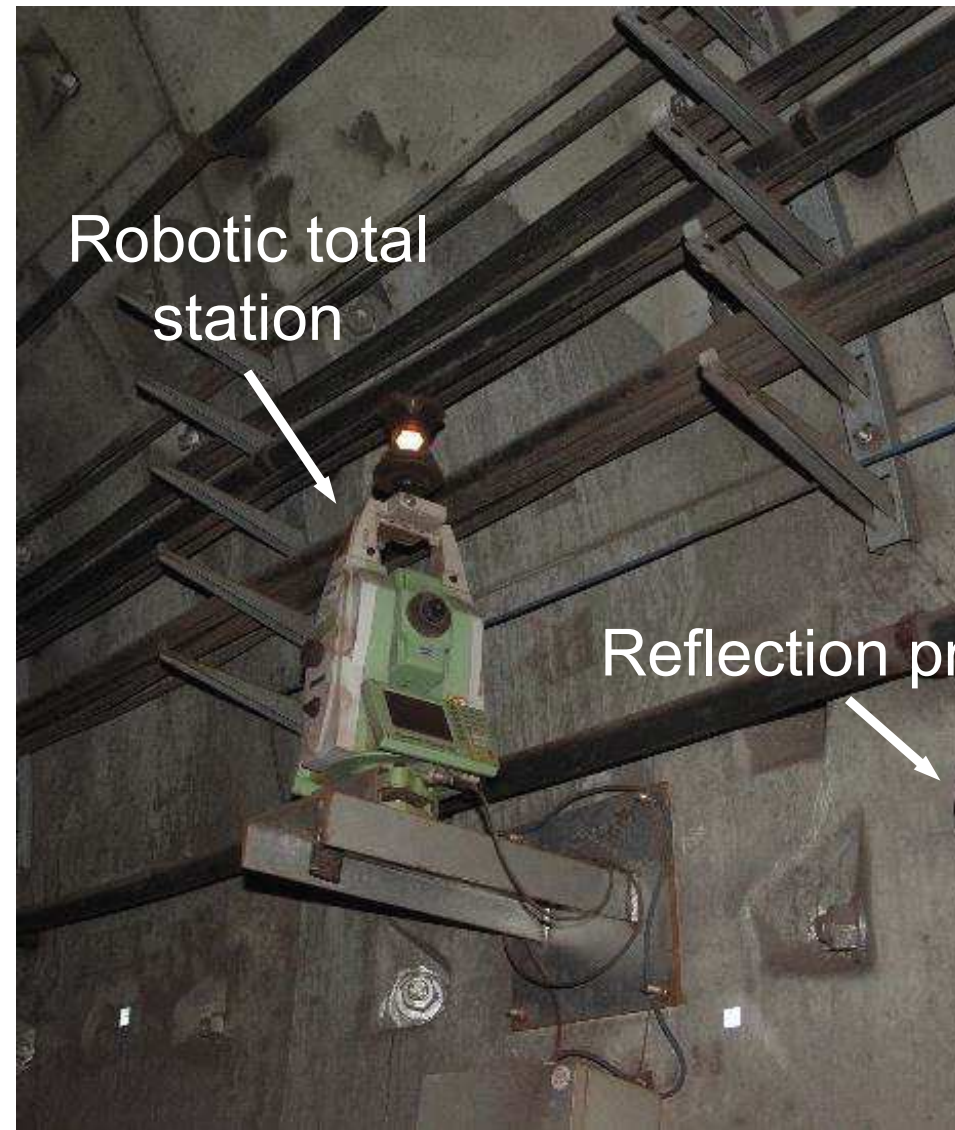






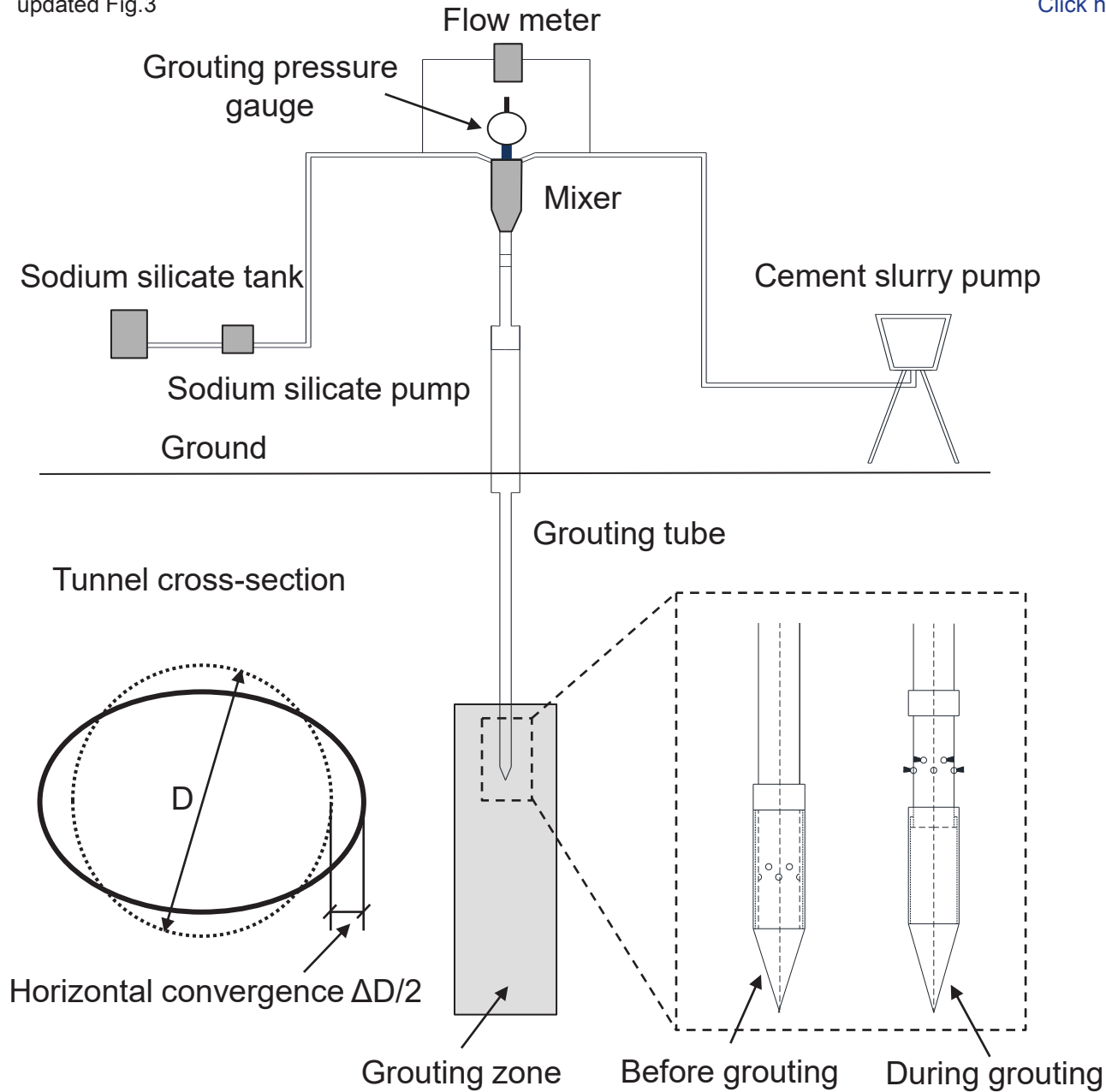
(b)

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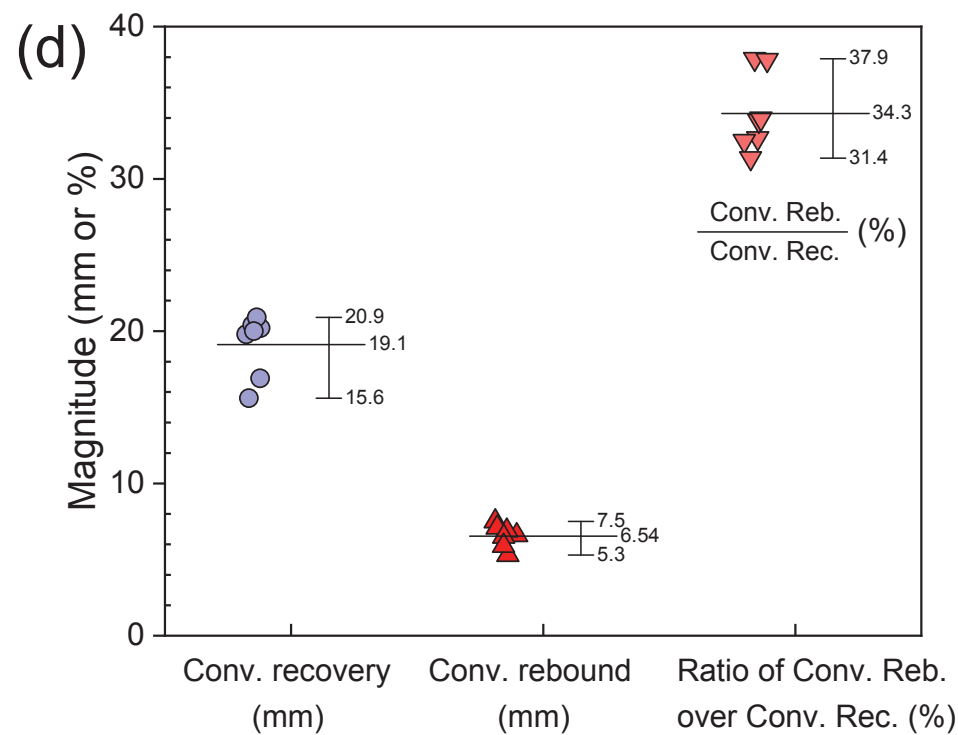
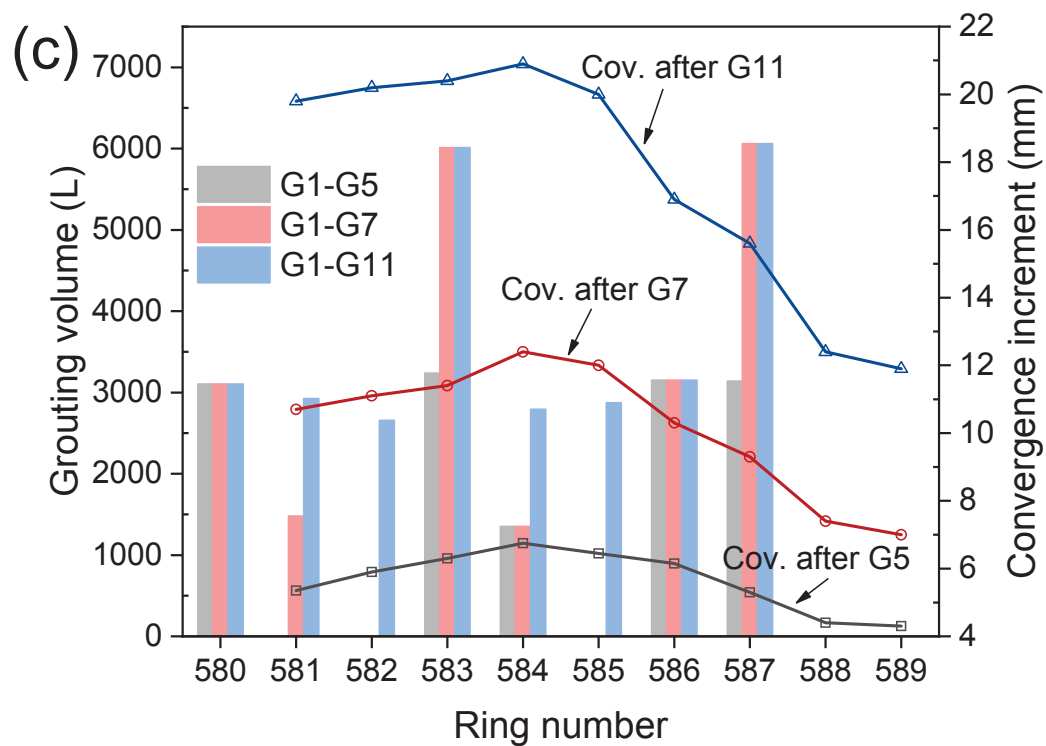
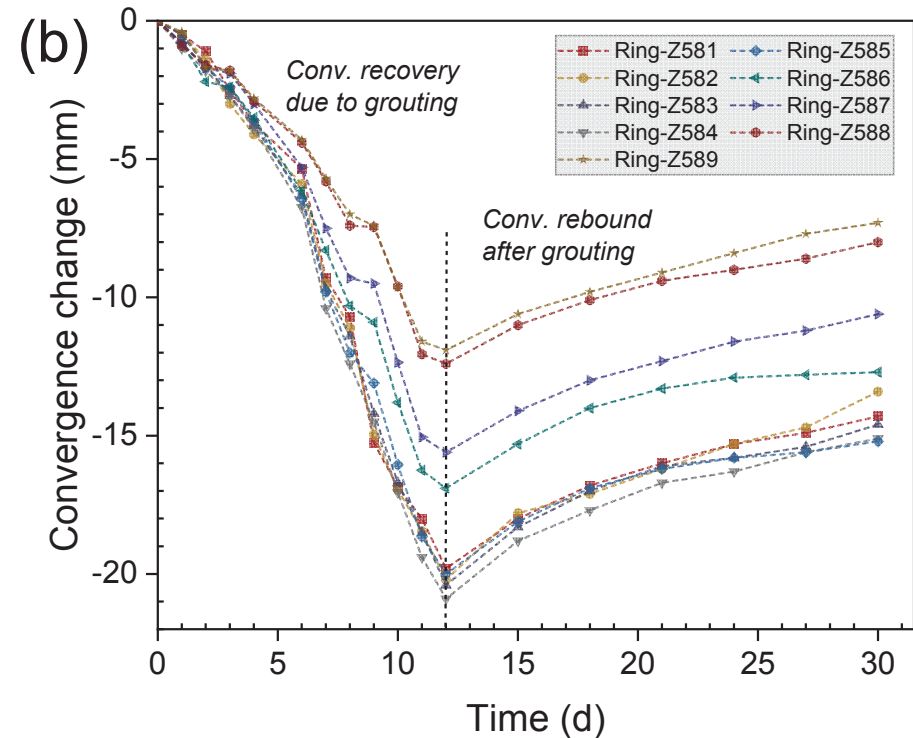
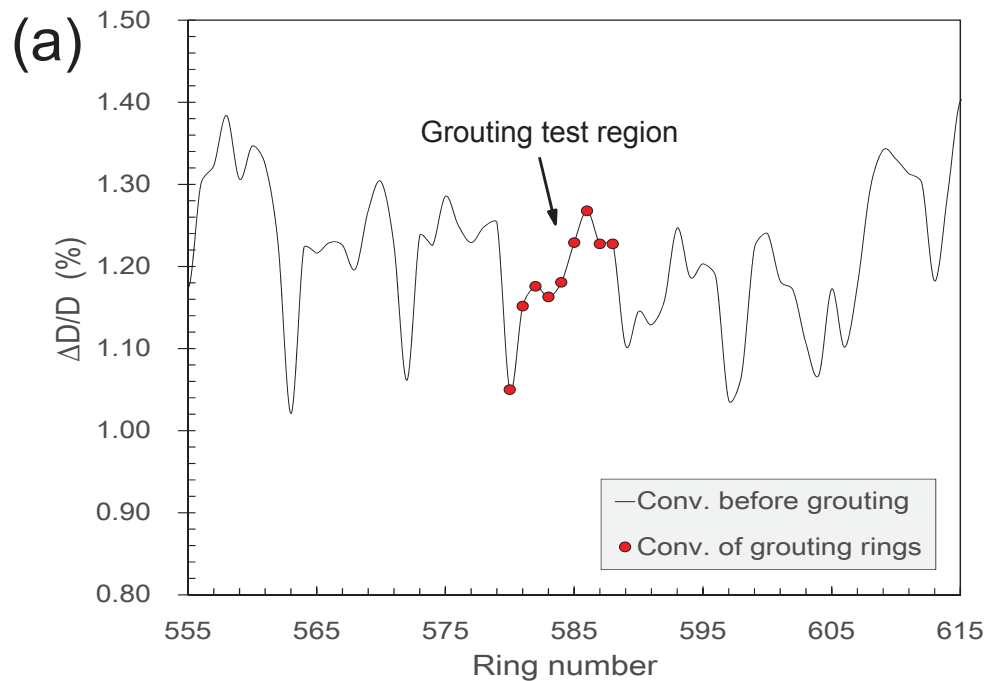


updated Fig.3

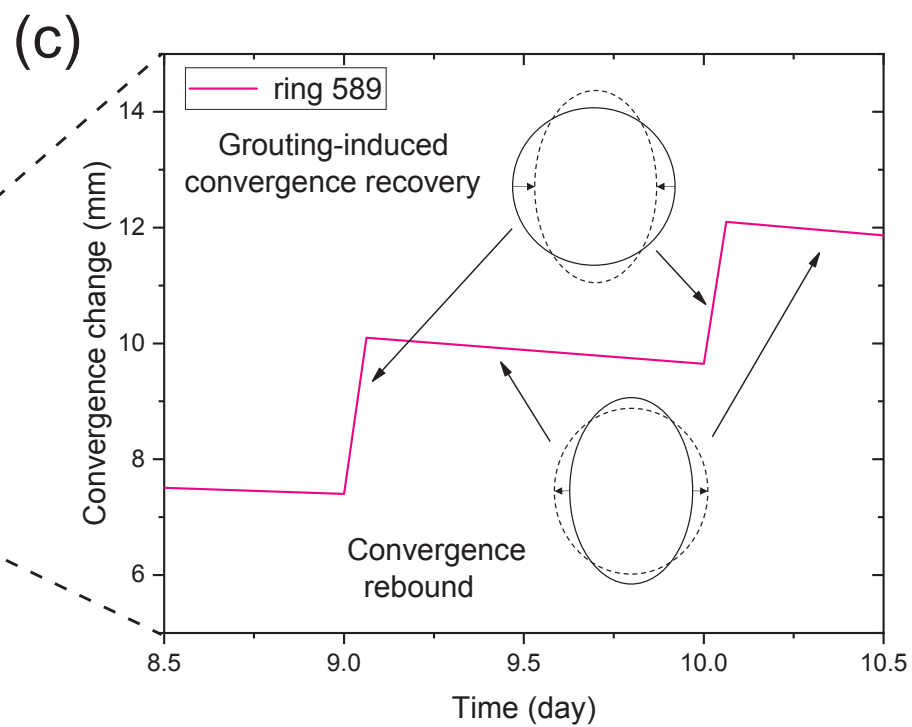
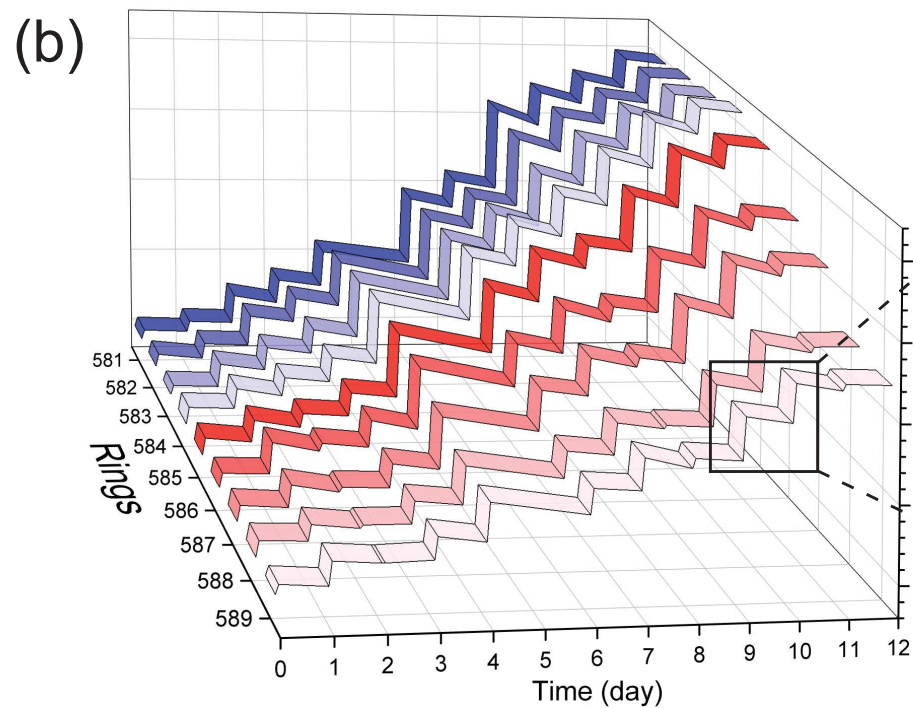
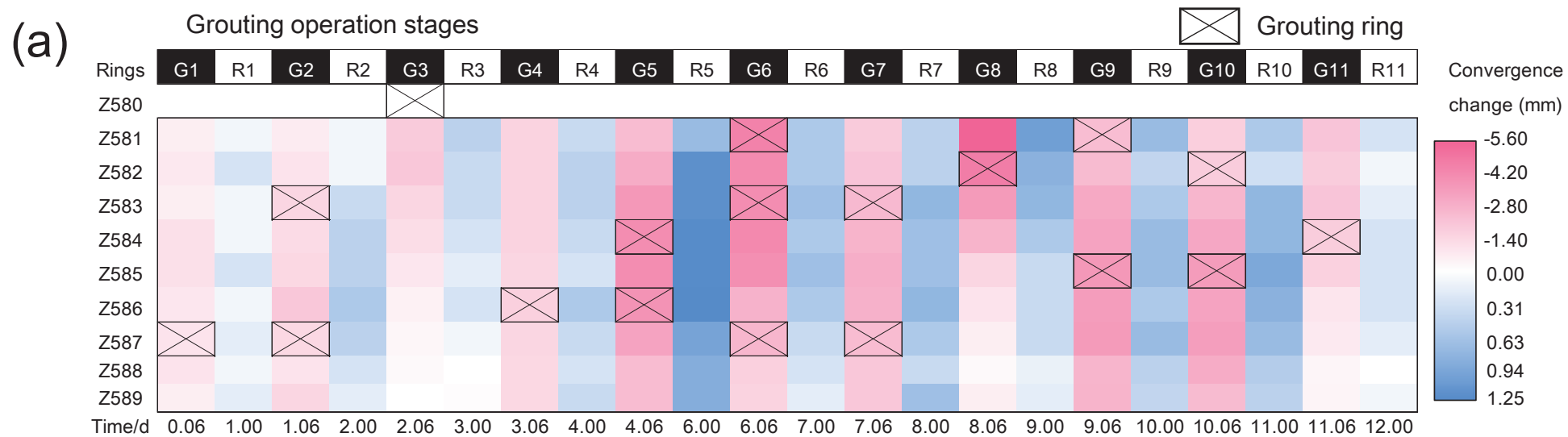
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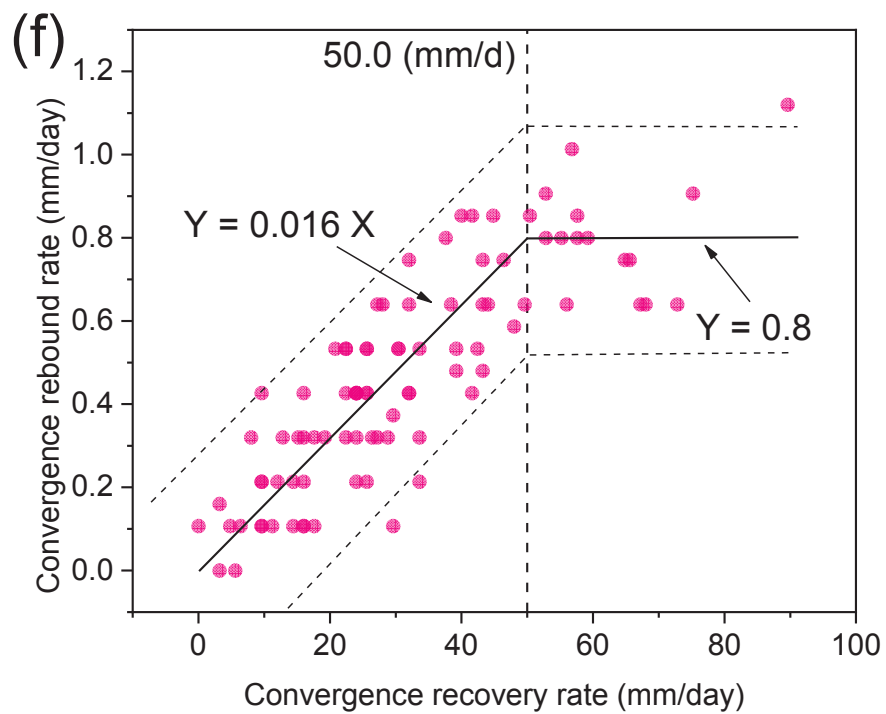
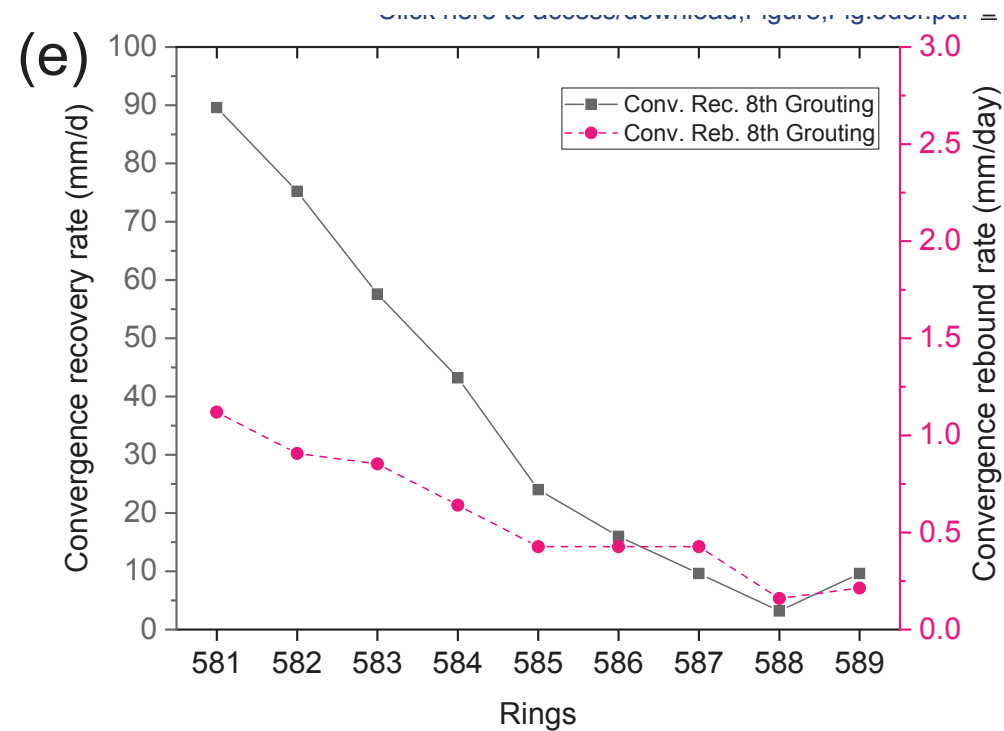
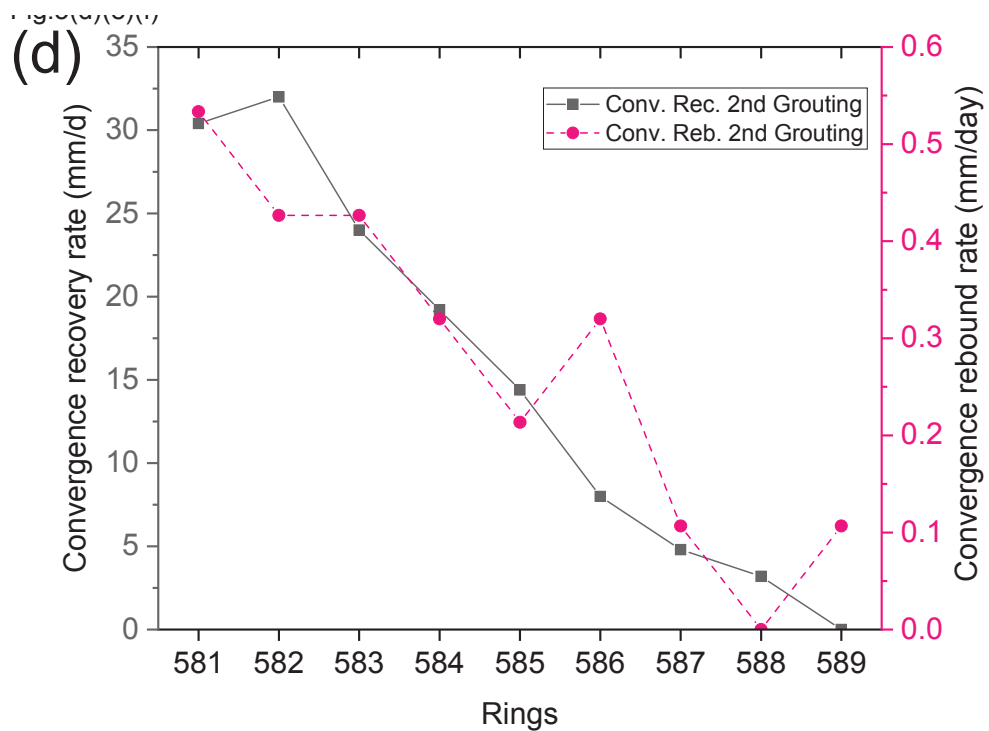


Grouting operation at the site









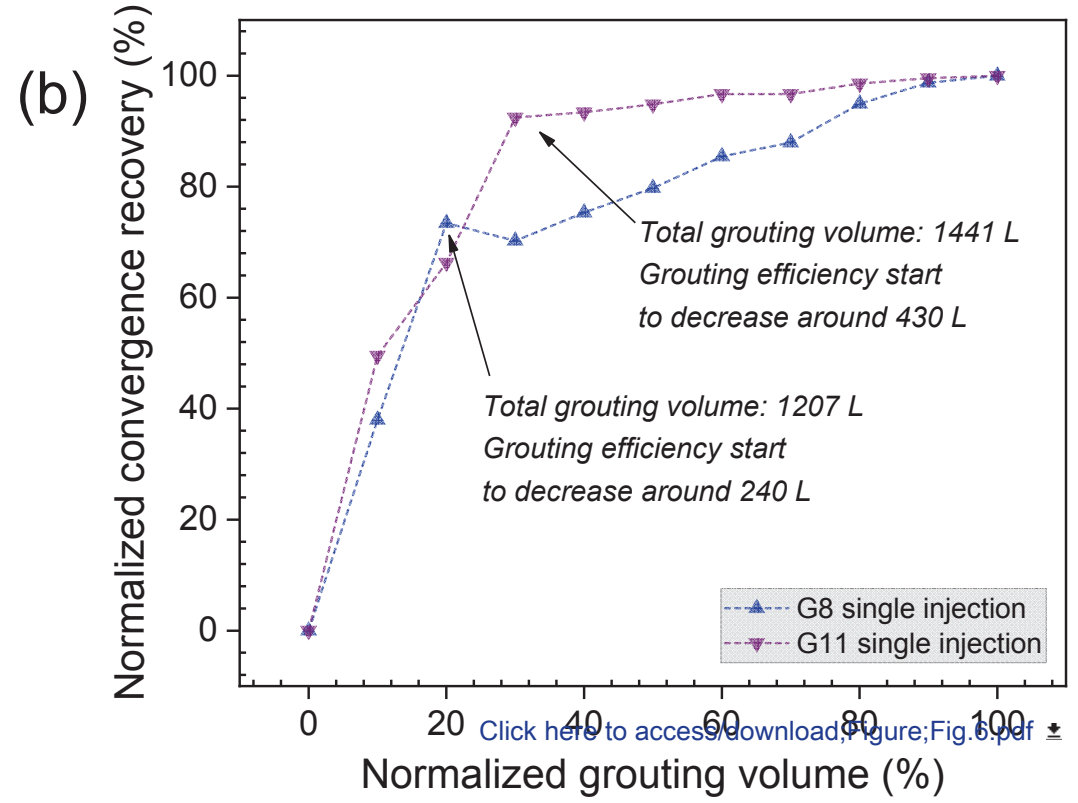
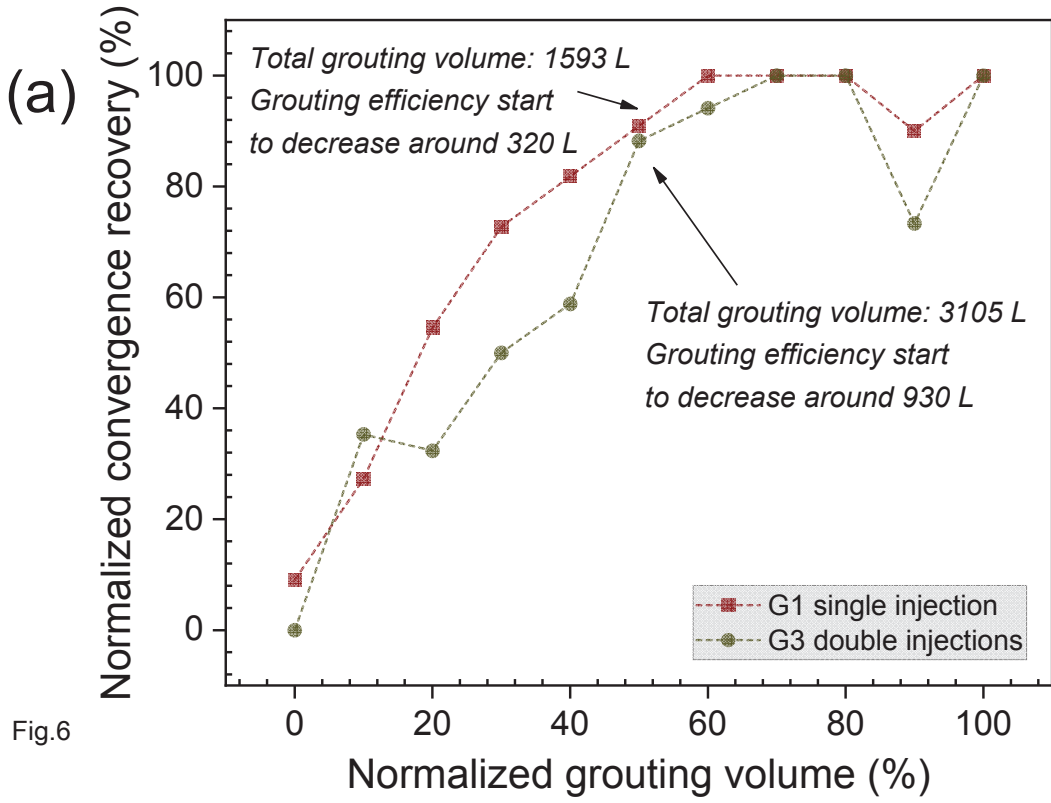
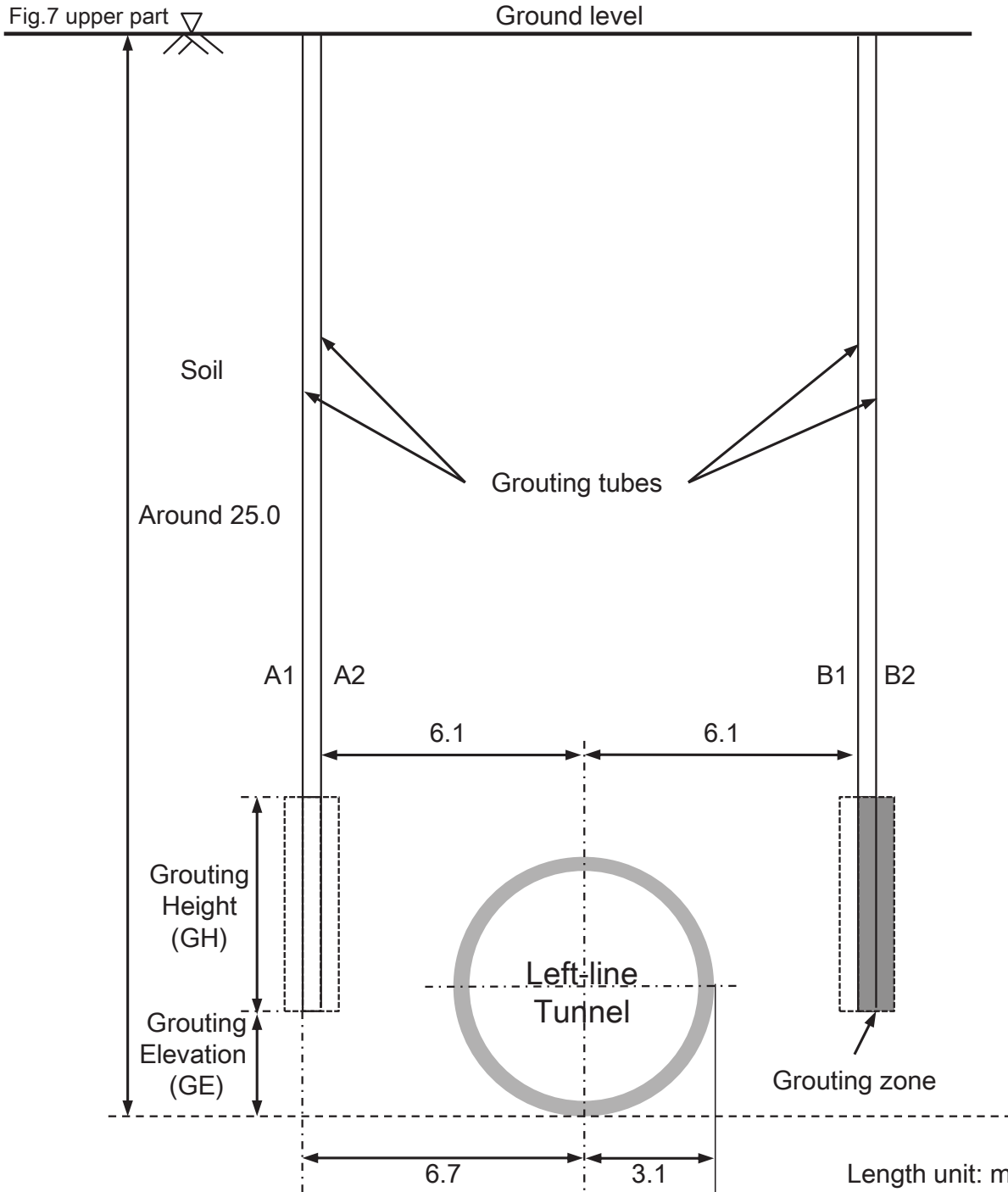


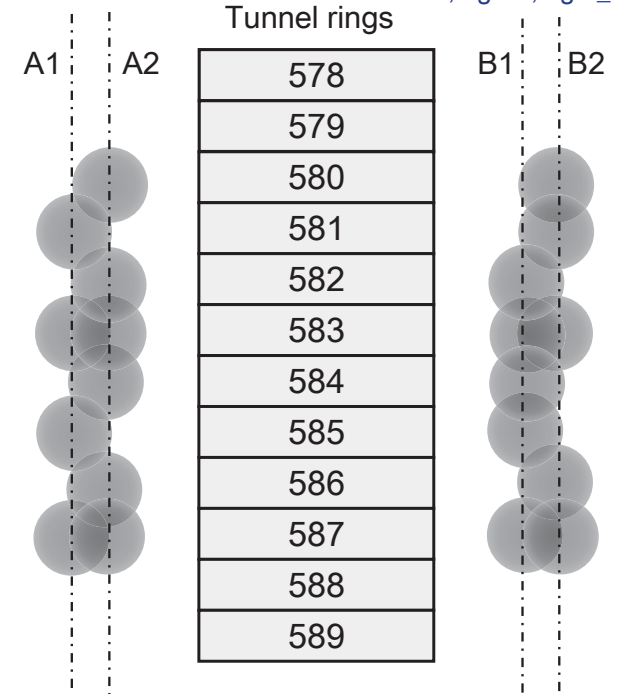
Fig.6

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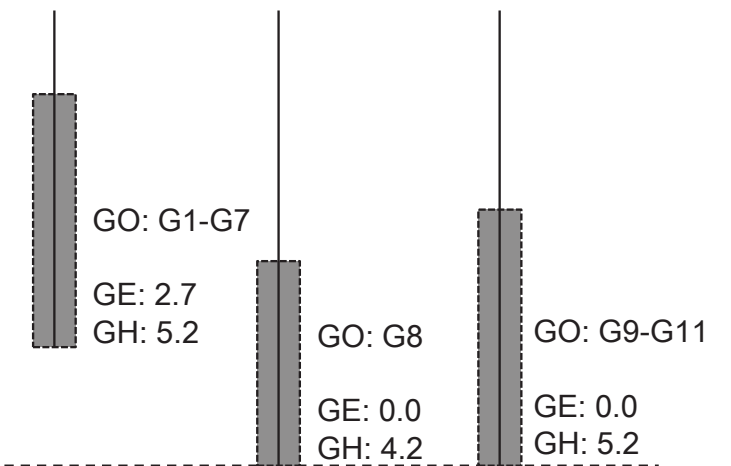
Fig.7 upper part



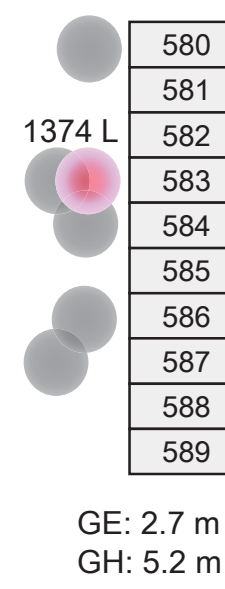
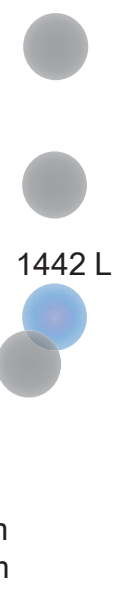
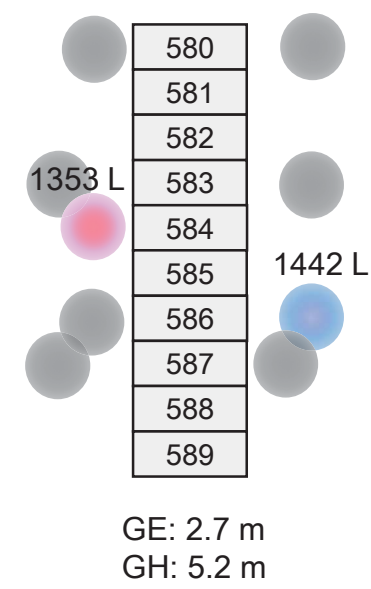
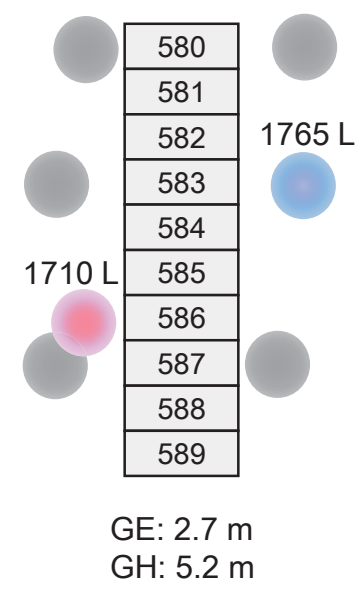
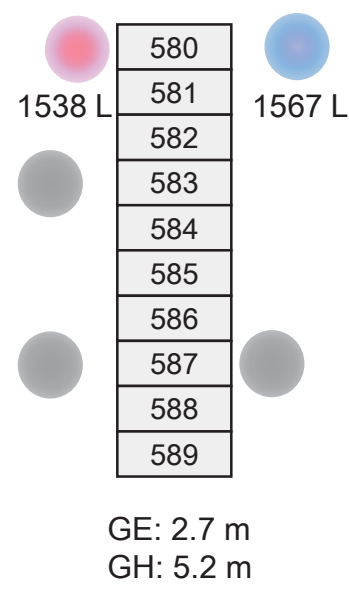
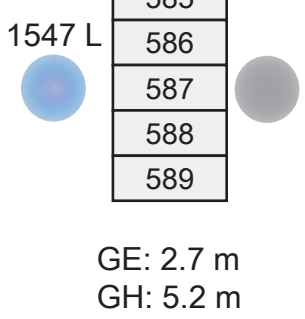
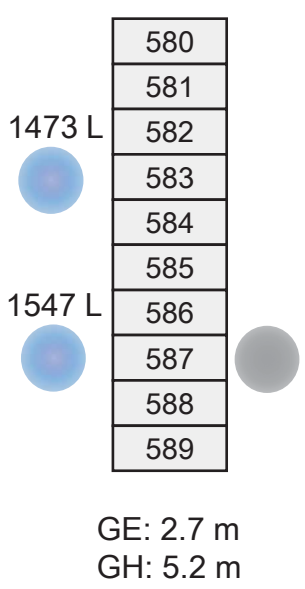
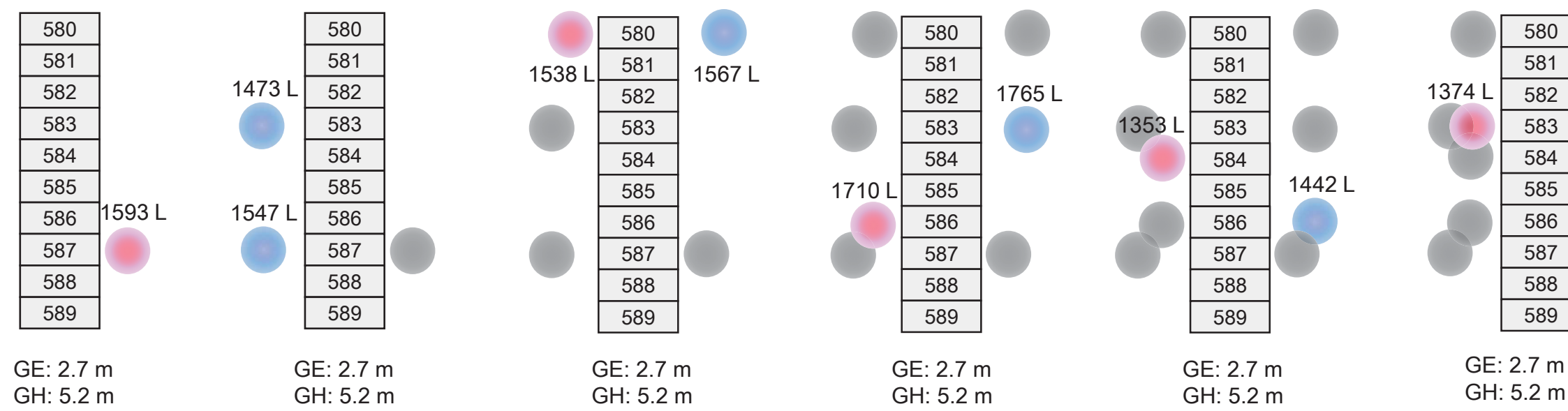
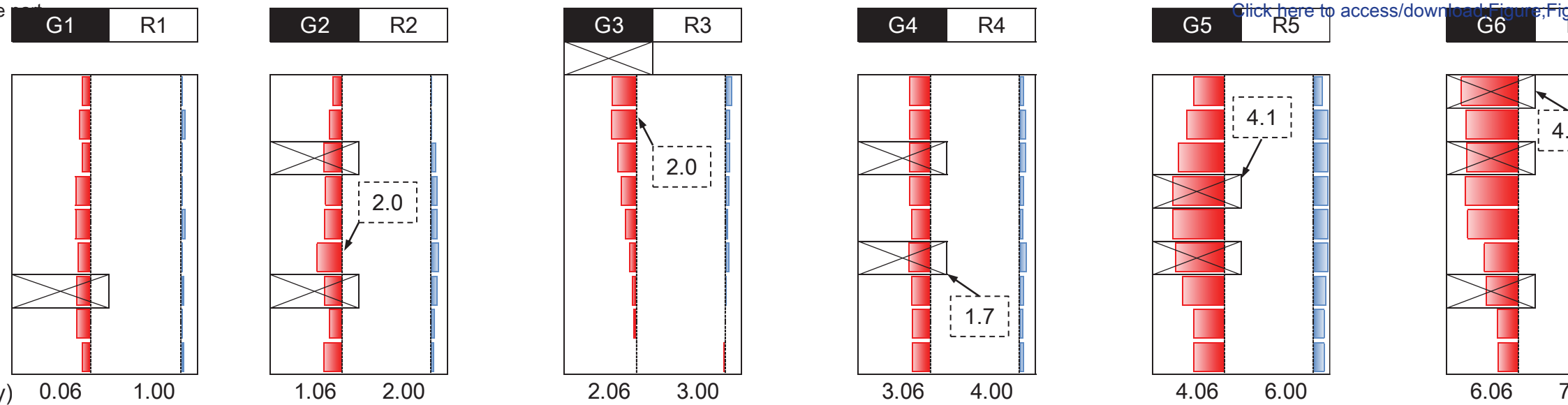
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Plan view of the geometrical arrangement of grouting operations

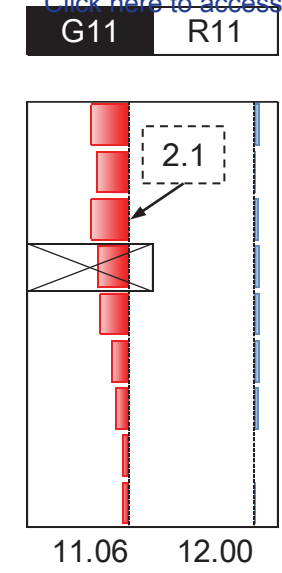
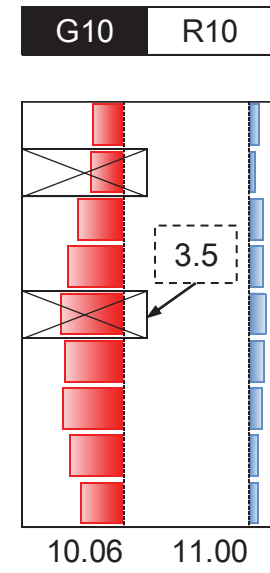
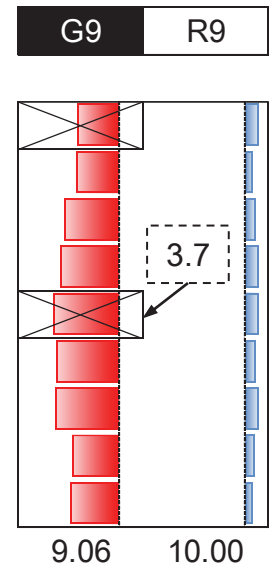
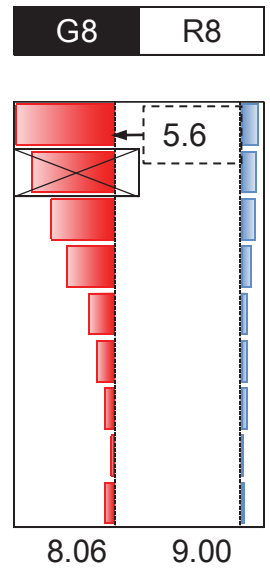
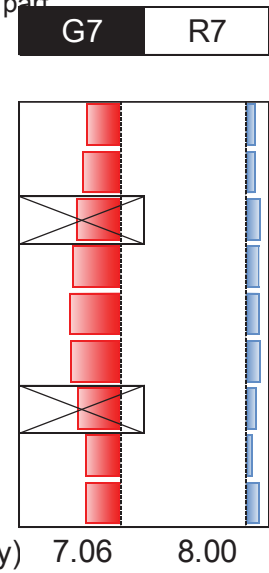


Grouting elevation (GE) and routing height (GH) in different grouting operations (GO)



part

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- Inner grout
- Outer grout
- Grouting ring
- Max. Retraction (mm)

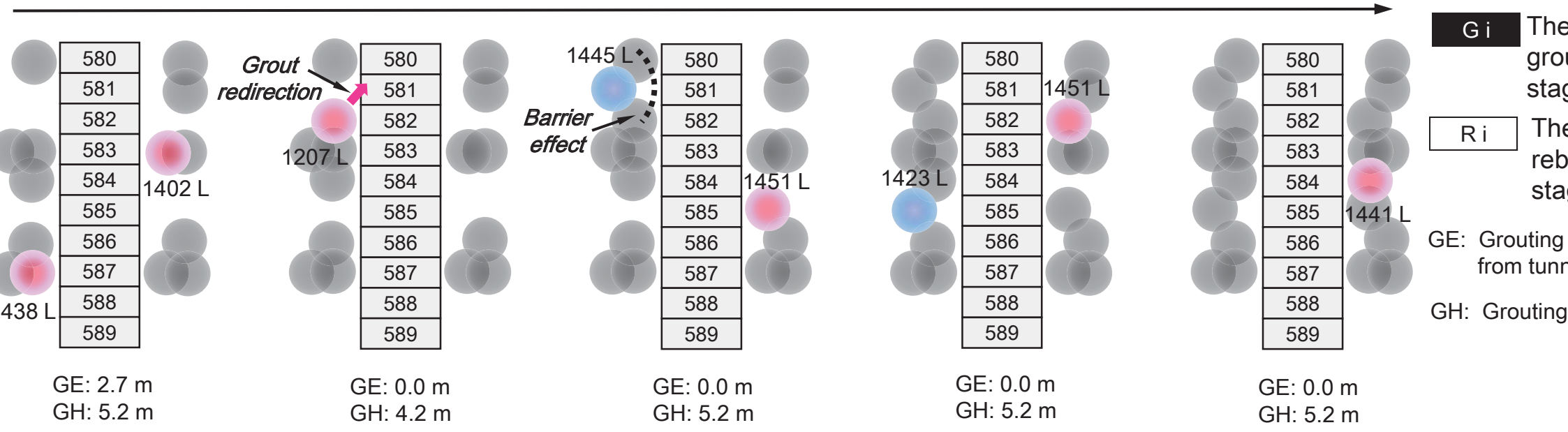


Fig.8

