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for the

Air Materiel Command, U. S. Air Force

PERFORMANCE OF COMPRESSOR OF XJ-41-V TURBOJET ENGINE

VI - ANALYSIS OF COMPRESSOR FLOW CHOKING

By John W. R. Creagh and Ambrose Ginsburg

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Cleveland, Ohio

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SUMMARY

An extended analysis was made of the previously reported
performance investigation of the original compressor from
the XJ-41-V turbojet engine and a similar compressor revised
to obtain a 33-percent increase in the geometric passage area
at the vaned-collector entrance. This analysis was based on
the concept of the vaned-collector entrance as the throat
section of a nozzle.

Because of nonuniform air distribution at the vaned-
collector entrance, approximately 90 percent of the available
flow area was utilized in the original compressor and 94
percent in the revised compressor. The increase in maximum
weight flow obtained with the revised compressor was dispro-
portionate to the increased effective critical throat area be-
cause the air density at the revised vaned-collector entrance
for maximum flow was lower than that obtained in the original
compressor. This reduction in density resulted from the large
pressure losses near the impeller inlet of the revised com-
pressor, which is indicative of impending flow choking in the
impeller. The calculated maximum corrected weight-flow capacity
of a compressor consisting of the revised vaneless diffuser and
vaned collector with a theoretical impeller that combined peak
impeller pressure ratio and peak impeller efficiency at the
maximum flow point would be 112 pounds per second for an equiva-
lent impeller speed of 11,500 rpm.

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Air Materiel Command, U.S. Air Forces, an investigation of the XJ-41-V turbojet-engine compressor was conducted at the NACA Cleveland laboratory. The objectives were to determine the performance of the compressor over a range of speeds and weight flows and to obtain fundamental information on the aerodynamic problems of large centrifugal compressors. It was shown in references 1 and 2 that the compressor air-flow choking point occurred in the vaned collector for both the original and the revised compressor. It was also shown in reference 2 that, because of the increase in maximum air flow resulting from the increased vaned-collector entrance area of the revised compressor, pressure losses indicative of flow choking occurred in the impeller near the inlet.

The present report is concerned with an elaboration of the previous analysis of the cause of flow choking in the vaned collector and introduces the concept of the vaned-collector entrance as the throat section of a nozzle. The continuity and the steady-flow energy equations as applied to a nozzle are used in an attempt to correlate the compressor maximum-flow performance over a range of impeller speeds. The related effect of impeller performance characteristics on compressor-maximum flow is brought out in a discussion of the calculated performance that might be obtained from a theoretical compressor consisting of the revised vaneless diffuser and vaned collector with an impeller capable of producing at maximum flow the peak pressure ratio and peak efficiency of the impeller in the revised compressor. The performance data for the original and the revised compressor presented in references 1 and 2 were used in the analysis presented herein.

ANALYSIS

The exact location of the choking point in the vaned collector is a function of the flow conditions and the flow-passage geometry. The choking point occurred at or near the entrance to the vaned collector (references 1 and 2). If it is assumed that the flow from the vaneless diffuser enters the vaned collector tangent to the passage walls and that the flow process takes place isentropically, the flow restriction would occur at the minimum passage area.

By assuming the vaned-collector entrance to be a nozzle and by using values of pressures and temperatures corresponding to maximum air flow at several corrected impeller speeds for

both the original and the revised compressor, it would be
possible to determine the effective critical throat or nozzle
area and to determine whether the geometric throat area could
be used as an index of the flow limitations of the compressor.
The steady-flow isentropic energy equation for a nozzle can
be expressed

$$W = 145.8 \frac{A_2 P_1}{\sqrt{T_1}} \sqrt{\left(\frac{p_2}{p_1}\right)^{2/\gamma} - \left(\frac{p_2}{p_1}\right)^{\frac{\gamma+1}{\gamma}}} \tag{1}$$

where

W   air weight flow, pounds per second
P_1 total pressure at nozzle entrance, inches mercury absolute
p_2 static pressure at nozzle throat, inches mercury absolute
T_1 total temperature at nozzle entrance, °F absolute
A_2 nozzle throat area, square feet
γ ratio of specific heats

The maximum weight flow through the nozzle will be reached when
the critical pressure occurs in the throat section and equation
(1) reduces to

$$W_c = 37.6 \frac{A_2 P_1}{\sqrt{T_1}} \tag{2}$$

where W_c is the maximum weight flow. Because the air-flow
data presented in references 1 and 2 are corrected to standard
sea-level pressure and temperature at the compressor inlet,
the same procedure will be followed herein. Equation (2) is
then expressed

$$(W_c)_s = \frac{49.5 \ (P_1/P_0) \ A_2}{\sqrt{T_1/T_0}} \tag{3}$$

where

$(W_c)_s$ maximum weight flow corrected to standard sea-level tem-
         perature and pressure, pounds per second

T_0 compressor inlet total temperature, $^\circ F$ absolute

P_0 compressor inlet total pressure, inches mercury absolute

and A_2 is hereinafter designated as the effective critical throat area.

In applying equation (3) to the data of references 1 and 2, T_1 is the total temperature measured in the simulated burner annulus and P_1 is the total pressure at the impeller tip calculated according to the method given in reference 1. The results of several check runs at maximum-flow conditions with a total-pressure probe in the vaneless diffuser near the vaned-collector entrance of both the original and the revised compressor showed that a negligible difference existed between the calculated impeller-discharge pressures and the pressure-probe readings. Table I shows the experimental values of temperatures, pressures, and maximum air flows used to calculate the effective critical throat areas of the original and the revised compressors at several equivalent impeller speeds. The compressor pressure ratio is included in the table as a convenient reference to the data in references 1 and 2.

Figure 1 shows the approximate passage-area variation through a section of the vaned collector formed by planes perpendicular to a geometric mean flow path. The area values shown are the totals for the 12 vaned-collector passages. The minimum geometric area occurred at the vane entrance; a value of 0.51 square foot was obtained for the original compressor and 0.68 square foot for the revised compressor.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The calculated effective critical throat areas for the original and revised compressors at maximum weight flow over a range of equivalent impeller speeds from 7,000 to 11,500 rpm are shown in figure 2. A constant effective critical throat area of 0.46 square foot was obtained for the original compressor and 0.64 square foot for the revised compressor regardless of variations in impeller speed and maximum weight flow. These values approximate the values of geometric throat areas shown in figure 1 and indicate that the conception of the vaned-collector entrance as the throat of a nozzle is valuable in establishing a useful index of the ultimate air-flow capacity of this compressor. For each compressor a constant percentage of the geometric throat area was available to the flow when sonic velocity was reached at the vaned-collector

entrance. As a result of nonuniform air-flow distribution at
the vaned-collector entrance, the original compressor utilized
approximately 90 percent of the geometric area and the revised
compressor, approximately 94 percent.

The ratio of the maximum corrected weight flows of the
revised compressor to the maximum corrected weight flows of
the original compressor is shown in figure 3 over a range of
equivalent impeller speeds from 7,000 to 10,000 rpm together
with the ratio of the effective critical throat areas of the
two compressors. The weight-flow-ratio curve is considerably
lower than the area-ratio curve at 7000 rpm and the difference
between the two curves increases rapidly as the speed is in-
creased. This fact together with a study of equation (3) sug-
gested that either the total-pressure ratios or the total-tem-
perature ratios at the throat of the revised vaned collector
had been adversely affected at some point in the compressor
system prior to the throat section.

Figure 4 shows the impeller-discharge total-pressure
ratios and total-temperature ratios for both compressors over
a range of equivalent impeller speeds at maximum flow. The
curves show slightly lower impeller-discharge temperature ratios
for the revised compressor but these are accompanied by large
reductions in impeller-discharge total-pressure ratios. The
difference between the impeller-discharge total-pressure ratios
of the two compressors was comparatively small at the low speeds
but increased rapidly as the speed increased. At an equivalent
impeller speed of 10,000 rpm, the impeller-discharge total-
pressure ratio for the revised compressor was 78 percent of
that obtained for the original compressor. These reductions
in total pressure were due to pressure losses in the impeller
near the impeller inlet at high flows and explain why the in-
crease in weight flow with the revised compressor was dispro-
portionate to the increased effective critical throat area
(fig. 3).

Figure 5 shows the maximum corrected weight flow obtained
over a range of equivalent impeller speeds for the original
compressor, the revised compressor, and a theoretical com-
pressor consisting of the revised vaned collector and vane-
less diffuser with a hypothetical impeller. This impeller com-
ponent was assumed to have, at maximum flow, the peak impeller
pressure ratio and peak impeller efficiency obtained experi-
mentally on the revised compressor. From equation (3), the
pressures and temperatures corresponding to peak impeller effi-
ciency and pressure ratio, and the effective critical throat
area of 0.64 square foot (fig. 2), the maximum corrected weight
flows were determined for the theoretical compressor. At the

rated speed of 11,500 rpm with the theoretical compressor,
the weight-flow capacity could be increased from 76 pounds per
second with the revised compressor to 112 pounds per second,
a 47-percent increase. This optimum value of 112 pounds per
second at 11,500 rpm would require that the impeller have the
extraordinarily high specific flow capacity value of 12,300 cubic
feet per minute per square foot. Any attempt to increase the
pressure ratio and maximum weight flow of the XJ-41-V compressor
must include modifications to the impeller component to eliminate .
the pressure losses therein.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

From an analysis of the compressor flow-choking character-
istics based on the concept of the vaned-collector entrance as
the throat section of a nozzle, the following results were ob-
tained:

1. A constant effective critical throat area of 0.46 square
foot was obtained for the original compressor and 0.64 square
foot for the revised compressor regardless of impeller speed
and weight flow. These values approximate the geometric throat
areas and indicate that the nozzle concept can be used as an
index of the ultimate air-flow capacity of this compressor.

2. Owing to nonuniform flow distribution at the vaned-
collector entrance, the original compressor utilized approxi-
mately 90 percent of the available geometric passage throat
area and the revised compressor utilized approximately
94 percent.

3. Above an equivalent impeller speed of 7000 rpm, the
ratio of the maximum weight flows of the revised and orignal
compressors were less than the ratio of effective critical .
throat areas of the two compressors and the difference in-
creased with an increase in impeller speed.

4. The increase in maximum weight flow of the revised
compressor was disproportionate to the increased effective
critical throat area because of large pressure losses in the
impeller near the impeller inlet. In any attempt to increase
the pressure ratio and maximum weight flow of the compressor,
the impeller must be modified to eliminate these losses.

5. A theoretical compressor consisting of the revised
vaned collector and vaneless diffuser with an impeller ad-
vantageously combining peak impeller pressure ratio and peak

impoller efficiency at maximum flow would be capable of pro-
ducing a maximum corrected air flow of 112 pounds per second
at rated speed of 11,500 rpm.

Flight Propulsion Research Laboratory,
    National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics,
        Cleveland, Ohio, March 12, 1948.

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                          REFERENCES

1. Creagh, John W. R., and Ginsburg, Ambrose: Performance of
       Compressor of XJ-41-V Turbojet Engine. IV - Performance
       Analysis over Range of Compressor Speeds from 5000 to
       10,000 rpm. NACA RM No. SE7L12, Army Air Forces, 1948.

2. Ginsburg, Ambrose, Creagh, John W. R., and Michel, Donald:
       Performance of Compressor of XJ-41-V Turbojet Engine.
       V - Performance Analysis of Compressor with Revised Vaned
       Collector over Range of Compressor Speeds from 3600 to
       11,500 rpm. NACA RM No. SE8A22, Army Air Forces, 1948.

TABLE I - MAXIMUM-FLOW DATA USED IN DETERMINING EFFECTIVE

CRITICAL THROAT AREAS OF VANED COLLECTOR

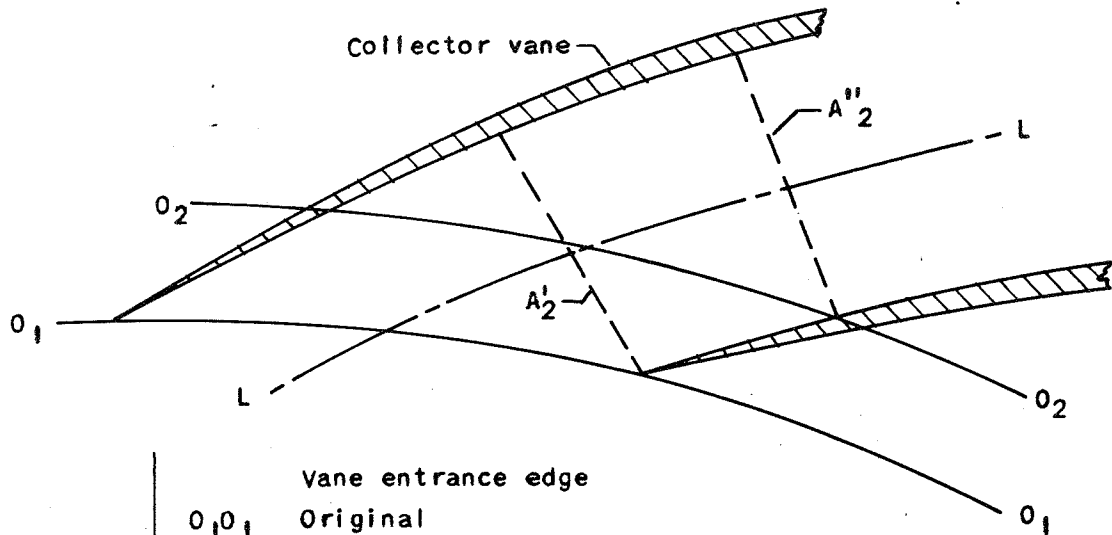| Com-pressor	Equivalent impeller speed (rpm)	Compressor total-pressure ratio	Compressor inlet total pressure, P_0 (in. Hg abs.)	Compressor inlet total-tem-perature, T_0 ($^\circ$F abs.)	Impeller total pressure ratio, P_1/P_0	Impeller total tem-perature ratio, T_1/T_0	Corrected maximum weight flow, $(W_c)_s$ (lb/sec)
Original	7,000	1.41	13.9	528	1.98	1.24	40.8
	8,000	1.81	14.0	534	2.38	1.31	47.4
	9,000	1.52	14.0	541	2.88	1.38	55.7
	10,000	2.11	13.9	541	3.38	1.48	63.3
Revised	7,000	1.36	14.4	541	1.86	1.21	52.0
	8,000	1.59	14.1	535	2.13	1.28	59.9
	9,000	1.77	13.9	533	2.43	1.35	66.5
	10,000	2.00	14.0	541	2.65	1.43	70.9
	11,500	2.29	5.8	428	3.01	1.58	76.1

945
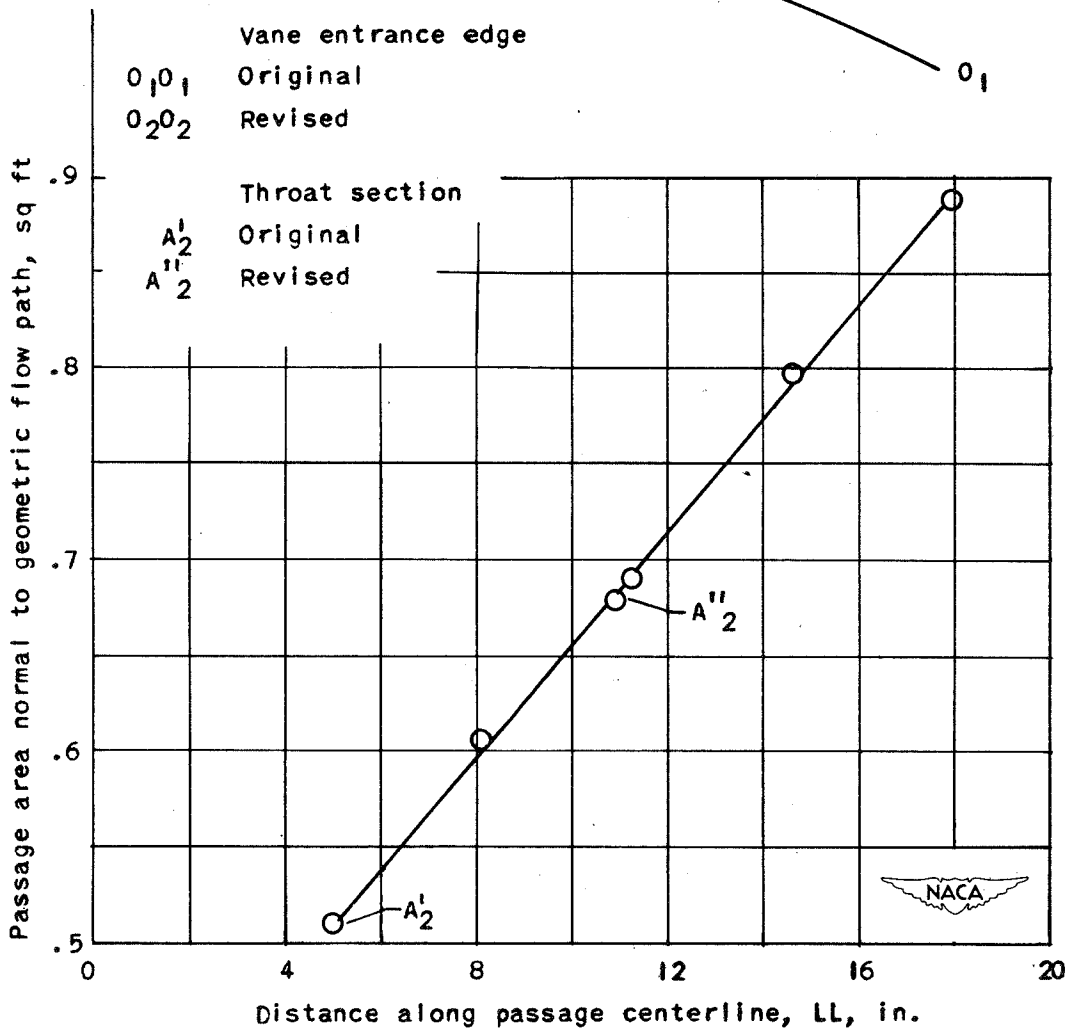
Figure 1. – Variation of passage area normal to geometric mean
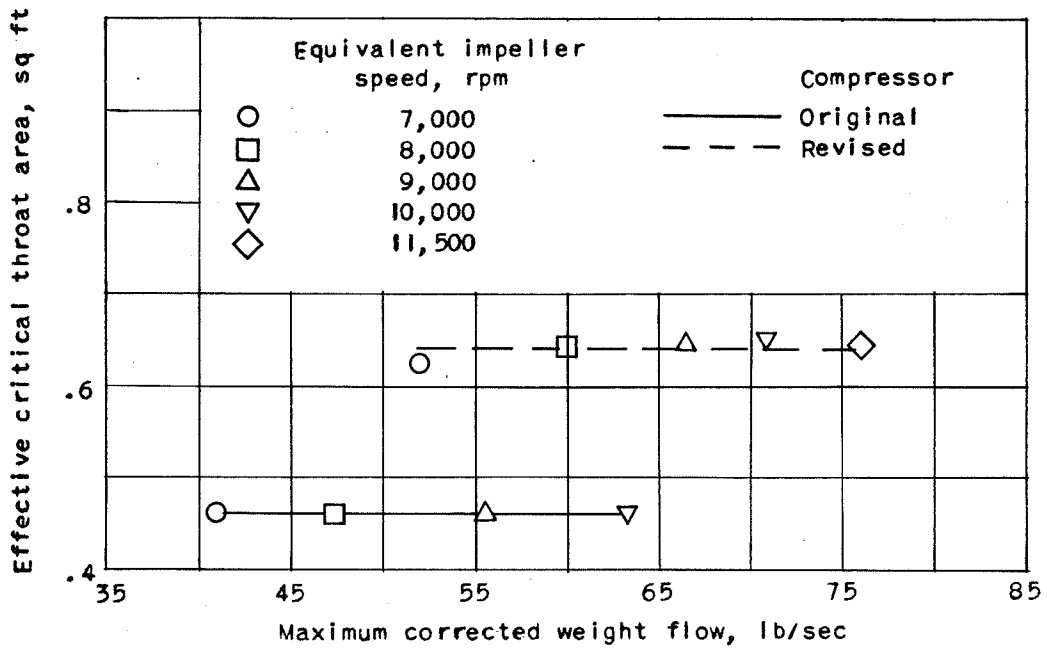flow path with distance along vaned collector centerline.

945

Figure 2. – Variation of effective critical throat area with
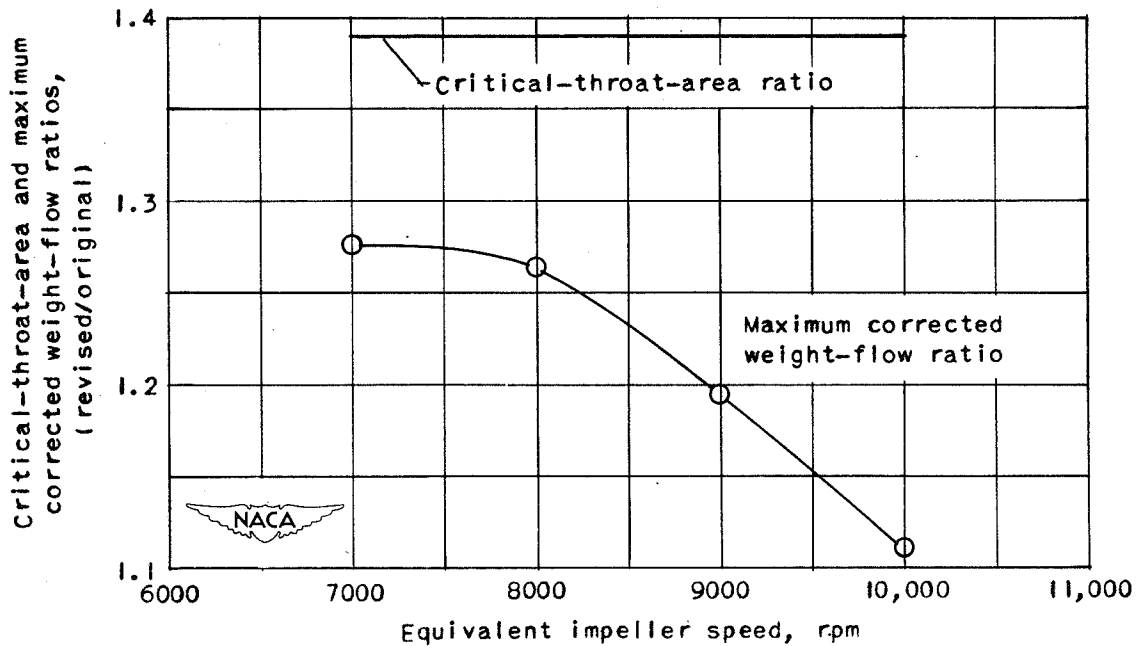maximum corrected weight flow for original and revised com-
pressor.

Figure 3. – Comparison of increase in critical throat area
with increase in maximum corrected weight flow for original
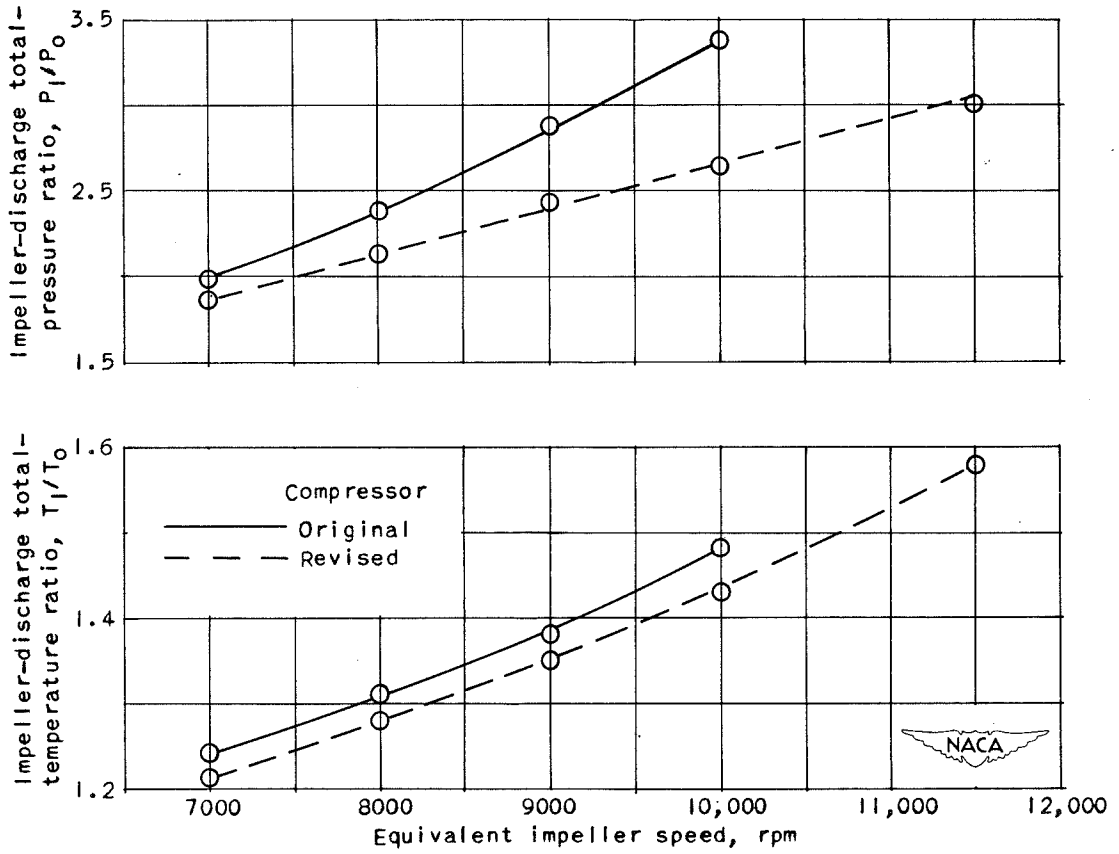and revised compressor.

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Figure 4. — Comparison of impeller–discharge total–temperature ratio
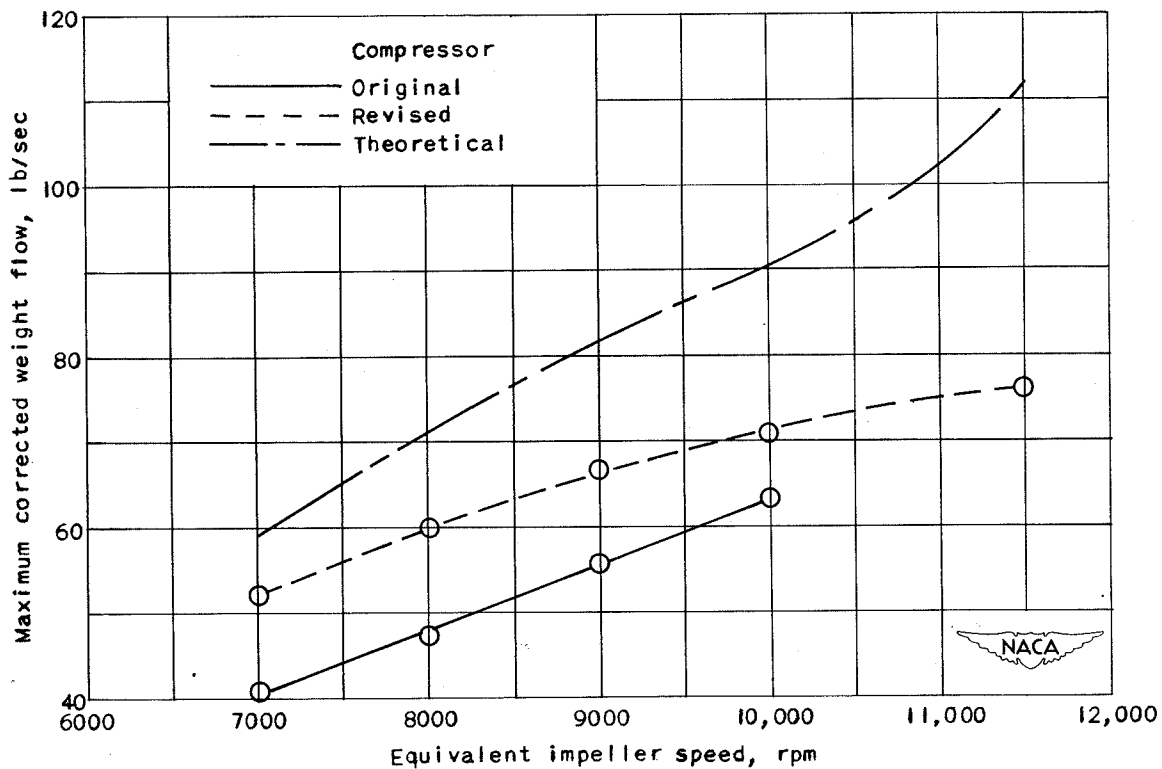and total–pressure ratio for original and revised compressor.

945

Figure 5. — Comparative values of maximum corrected weight flow for three compressors.