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Variation in load factor experience - a re-analysis of Fokker F27 and F28 operational acceleration data -

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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Summary

Fatigue meter data obtained during operational flights of Fokker F27 and Fokker F28 aircraft were re-processed and analyzed to study the variation in load experience between different aircraft of the same type.

The Data covered about 470000 flights, made by 101 aircraft of 51 different operators. A simple algorithm was developed to quantify the load factor experience in terms of fatigue damage per flight. The data were subjected to a statistical analysis. Considerable variations in load experience were found. The results give an indication of the profits that can be gained from individual aircraft load monitoring.

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List of symbols

 $\sum_{k=1}^{N_{\text{LR}}}$

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1 Introduction

Design Fatigue Load Spectra, and the associated safe service lives and the inspection periods for transport aircraft are usually based on an estimated average usage of the aircraft. As the usage, and associated fatigue load experience of an individual aircraft may deviate from this average, adequate safety factors must be applied to the determined service lives in order to cover scatter in load experience.

Unfortunately, relatively little quantitative information about the magnitude of this load experience is available for civil transport aircraft.

In the mid-fifties, the Fokker F27 twin turboprop short haul transport aircraft entered service, followed at the end of the sixties by the Fokker F28 twin jet short haul aircraft. Both aircraft types were bound to be flown by a wide variety of operators with a variety of networks.

In order to check the validity of the Design Fatigue Spectra assumed for these aircraft, the Netherlands Civil Airworthiness Authorities required counting accelerometers to be installed in at least two aircraft of each operator. These meters were read out at weekly or monthly intervals and the results sent to Fokker for further processing and analysis.

The measurements started in 1961 and continued until 1976, when it became clear that the fatigue design assumptions for both aircraft types were conservative indeed: design spectra roughly corresponded with the load experience observed for the most severe operator.

By that time a very large set of recorded data had been accumulated. Although the information is limited (only cg vertical acceleration exceeding, number of flights and number of flight hours) it was felt that the data provide highly useful information about scatter in load experience occurring in service.

On request of the Netherlands Civil Airworthiness Authority RLD, the Fokker Aircraft Company made the original data available for re-analysis, within the framework of the FAA program on Continuing Airworthiness of aging aircraft.

The present report describes the re-analysis of these data, covering about 470000 flights, made by 101 different aircraft belonging to 51 different operators.

Chapter 2 gives an overview of the recorded data.

The data analysis procedures are presented in chapter 3, including the definition of a "damage index" related to a measured spectrum as a means to quantify the variation in observed usage in terms of fatigue damage.

The actual analysis is presented in chapter 4, followed by a discussion of the results.

It is concluded that even for typical short-haul aircraft considerable variations in load experience occur, resulting in differences in average damage per flight from operator to operator of about a factor up to ten.

The results support the usefulness of in-service load monitoring as a means to optimize maintenance and enhance safety.

The counting accelerometers used were of the so-called "Fatigue meter"-type, produced by Mechanism Ltd, UK. These devices count the number of exceeding of eight predetermined acceleration levels, four above the one-g level and for below the one-g level. These levels were 1.25g, 1.55g, 1.95g and 2.35g "upward" and 0.75g, 0.45g, 0.05g and -0.35g "downward" respectively. (A limited number of the earlier measurements were done with meters having only six counting levels: in that case no 2.35g and -0.35g exceedance counts were made).

The meters were read out at monthly or weekly intervals and the counts were filled out on special forms, together with the number of flight hours and the number of flights of the aircraft over that period.

These forms were sent to Fokker's for processing and analysis.

It should be noted that no information is recorded with regard to speed altitude and aircraft weight at the instant of acceleration occurrence, and that the acceleration data, as they refer to groups of flights, only present average data per flight.

In the present study, the original data forms were re-analyzed. Table 1 gives a general overview of the available data. As data capture for the F28 took place during about 5 years compared to 13 years for the F27, the total batch for the F28 is smaller but still covers 150000 flights, distributed over 38 aircraft, pertaining to 25 operators. For the F27, these figures are 320000 flights, 63 aircraft and 29 operators.

The tables 2 and 3 give a complete overview of the available data for the F27 and F28 respectively. Note that the data have been "sanitized" by replacing the name of the operator by a code. Information on the "Continent of operation", however, has been maintained (For two aircraft, the country of origin is unknown: their "continent" has been indicated in the tables as UNO).

In order to be statistically relevant, the data batch for each aircraft should be sufficiently large. The distributions of the number of recorded flights per aircraft are presented in the figure 1 . In case of the F27, for only three aircraft the batch is smaller than 1000 flights, while the median batch size is about 4000 flights.

For the F28, ten aircraft have a data batch smaller than 1000 flights, but the median batch size is also about 4000 flights.

A careful analysis of the data pertaining to these small batches led to the conclusion that they could be considered as representative, and hence they were included in the full statistical analysis.

Both the F27 and F28 are typical short haul transport aircraft, with an average recorded flight duration (airborne time) of 55 and 49 minutes respectively, but of course with very different

performance characteristics.

Figure 2 presents the average load factor spectrum as recorded for both aircraft. It is remarkable to note that these spectra largely coincide, at least for the load factor range between 2g and 0g.

It may be recalled that the data recorded for each individual aircraft j $(i=1,...m)$, consist of 10 figures, namely:

- 1. Total number of flights, fl(j)
- 2. Total number of flight hours, fh(j)
- 3. Total number of exceeding (level crossings) of:
	- a. four upward incremental load levels, $exp(x_i)$ _j (i=1...4)
	- b. four downward incremental load levels, $\exp(x_i)$ _j (i=1...4)

whereby $x_1=0.25g$, $x_2=0.55g$, $x_3=0.95g$ and $x_4=1.35g$.

The purpose of the present analysis is to study the difference in load experience between different aircraft. It is a known fact that generally speaking the load spectra of different aircraft types when expressed in terms of "per flight" show better agreement, that means less difference, than when expressed in terms of "per flight Hour". Also, most maintenance schedules are defined in terms of "flights" rather than flight hours.

Hence, it was decided to perform the comparative analysis in this report primarily on a "per flight" basis.

For this, the "overall" data recorded were first reduced to data per flight by division by the number of flights. This results for each aircraft j in:

- 1. Average flight duration dur(j)= $fh(i)/fl(i)$
- 2. Average number of exceeding per flight
	- a. for upward levels $yp(x_i)$ _j= $exp(x_i)$ _j/fl(j) (i=1...4)
	- b. for downward levels $yn(x_i)$ _j=exn(x_i)_j/fl(j) (i=1...4)

Usually, the number of crossings of a certain incremental load factor

is larger for the levels larger than 1g than for the levels below 1g: $yp(x_i) > yn(x_i)$ for all i.

The reason for this is that the total load factor experience consists of a combination of loads due to turbulence (largely symmetrical with respect to 1g), and manoeuvre loads, which are predominantly associated with positive incremental loads (all turning manoeuvres and pull-up manoeuvres go with positive load factor increments; only push-down manoeuvre cause a negative load factor increment).

In order eliminate the manoeuvre effect, it is often customary to "symmetrize" the spectrum by calculating the logarithmic mean of the exceeding of corresponding positive and negative load

factor increments:

$$
y(x_i)_j = \sqrt{yp(x_i)_j * yn(x_i)_j}
$$
 (i=1...4)

The relation between the quantities yp, yn, and y is illustrated in figure 3.

The statistical variables defined sofar describe the load factor spectrum, and the variation in severity of this spectrum from aircraft to aircraft.

In order to have a quantitative measure in terms of potential fatigue damage, a quantity has been defined, indicated as Damage Index or DI, which provides a relative figure for "the damage per flight" inflicted in the lower wing skin near the wing root. The derivation of this Damage Index is given in Appendix A. The Damage Index DI for aircraft j is a function of the spectrum variates defined above:

$$
DI(j)=Function(yp(x_i)_j, yn(x_i)_j, i=1...4).
$$

The Damage Index DI is a relative measure for the fatigue damage per flight. In addition, a variable DH, describing the fatigue damage per flight hour will be defined:

$$
DH(j)=DI(j)/dur(j)
$$

In summary, we have now defined 15 variables, defining the average load experience per flight for our set of aircraft.

In the next chapter, we will study the statistical behaviour of these variables .

For each variable, the mean and standard deviation are calculated.

For example, the mean and standard deviation for the average flight duration are calculated from:

$$
\mu(dur) = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^m \; \; dur(j)
$$

$$
\sigma(\text{dur}) = \sqrt{\frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^{m} (dur(j) - \mu(\text{dur}))^2}
$$

It should be realized that thus equal weight is given to the value dur(j) for each aircraft j, independent of the batch size (nr of recorded flights) of that aircraft j.

It may be recalled from the previous chapter that specifically for the F28 data a number of data batches were relatively small, but analysis of these small batches led to the conclusion that even

these small batches may be considered as representative samples to describe the average load experience of that individual aircraft.

Probability distributions of a variable will be determined by sorting the respective observed values in ascending order, and plotting these against their "plotting position" $j/(m+1)$. Correlation between variables will be studied by plotting the respective values of the variables against each other.

4 Data analysis

In the previous chapter, 15 statistical variables were defined. Thirteen of these are directly derived from the recorded data presented in the tables 2 and 3. The two damage parameters DI and DH are calculated using the algorithm derived in appendix A.

The tables 4 and 5 present the results of the damage calculations for all F27 aircraft and F28 aircraft respectively.

It may be recalled that the "total damage" of a flight is thought to consist of two parts, namely the "spectrum damage" and the "GAG" damage.

The "total damage" for each aircraft is normalized by division by the value found for "all aircraft", resulting in the damage index DI. The damage per hour is found by dividing DI by the average flight duration for that aircraft.

Figure 4 presents the calculated damage values for each aircraft. It may be noted that the damage associated with the Ground-Air-Ground cycle constitutes more than 50 percent of the total damage: this is one of the reasons why the number of flights tends to be more descriptive for the accumulated fatigue damage than the number of flight hours.

The figures 5a and 5b show for F27 and F28 respectively the acceleration spectra per flight for the aircraft with the highest DI, the lowest DI, and

the average spectrum pertaining to all recorded flights.

Tables 6 and 7 summarize some statistical properties of the fifteen defined variables for the F27 and F28 respectively.

As expected, all variables display considerable scatter.

It is interesting to note that the variables dur, DI and DH all have a coefficient of variation of about 0.35 for both aircraft types.

In the following, some statistical properties will be analysed in more detail.

- a. Probability distributions: Probability distributions for the different variables were determined. Results for the most relevant parameters are presented in the following figures:
	- Figure 6: Average Flight Duration.

We may note that for the F27 only ten percent of the aircraft have an average flight duration of less than 0.7 hours; for about 60 percent, the flight duration lies in a relatively narrow band between 0.7 and 1.0 hours while about 25 percent have a relatively long flight duration of more than 1.4 hours. The flight duration distribution for the F28 appears more "smooth", the mean flight duration of 0.91 hours is slightly less than that of the F27 (1.03 hours).

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- Figure 7: Damage Index DI

Both for the F27 and the F28 the majority of aircraft have a DI which falls in a relatively narrow band. For the f27 e.g. about 70 percent of the aircraft have a DI between 0.8 and 1.2, for the F28 70 percent have a DI between 0.7 and 1.2. On the other hand, for both aircraft types a limited number of aircraft experienced considerably higher DI values, up to about 3 and 2 for F27 and F28 respectively. These "severely flown" aircraft will be subject to a detail review furtheron in this chapter

Figure 8: Damage per Hour DH

As expected, the DH appears to show more scatter than the DI. For example for the F28 70 percent of the aircraft have a DH between 0.7 and 1.6, thus covering a DH range with ratio $1.6/0.7 = 2.1$, compared to a DI range of $1.2/0.7=1.7$.

Specifically for the F28 the distribution curve approaches a straight line for DH values between 0.6 and 1.7, covering 85 percent of all aircraft. This means that over this range the probability density distribution is flat; all DI values in this range are equally probable.

Figure 9: Number of exceeding of 1.25g

The number of exceeding has been plotted on a logarithmic scale.

It may be observed that the distribution for the F27 is wider than for the F28. The shape of the distribution pertaining to the F27 slightly resembles the well-known shape pertaining to a normal distribution; for this reason the distribution for the F27 has also been plotted on log-normal probability paper, see figure 10. The resulting plot is still far away from a straight line, indicating that the resemblance with a normal distribution is only superficial.

Figure 11: Number of exceeding of 1.95g

These distributions have been presented for illustrative purposes only. Keeping in mind that the exceeding of 1.95g is a "rare" event, happening on the average say once in thousand flights in case of the F28, it must be clear that a data batch of at least a few thousand flights is required to get a reliable estimate of the average 1.95g exceedance frequency for a particular aircraft. As shown in figure 1 and figure 2, several aircraft in the data base do not comply with this requirement, and only limited value can be attributed to the derived 1.95g exceedance statistics.

b. Correlations: The statistical variables defined in this study are not necessarily independent: it may even be expected that several variables are highly correlated. In the following figures some of these correlations will be presented.

- Figure 12: Correlation between flight duration and damage index DI. The two variables are hardly correlated, with very low figures for the square of the correlation coefficient \mathbb{R}^2 . The "best fit" linear regression line suggests in accordance with expectations a certain positive correlation: an increase in flight duration by a factor 10 results in a DI increase of a factor 2.4 for the F27 and 1.9 for the F28.
- Figure 13: Correlation between flight duration and damage per hour DH. The correlation coefficient remains low, but is higher than in the previous case. Again in accordance with expectations, the linear regression curve indicates a negative correlation: e.g. for the F28 an increase of flight duration by a factor 10 leads to a decrease in DH from 1.8 to appr. 0.25
- Figure 14: Correlation between damage index DI and number of 1.25g exceeding per flight. As might be expected, the correlation coefficient is high, with a value $R^2 = 0.932$ in case of the F27 and 0.837 for the F28. The best fit regression line has an offset of about 0.5: even if the number of 1.25g exceeding is zero, the damage index is non-zero, because of the damage due to the ground-air-ground cycle.
- Figure 15: Correlation between number of 1.55g exceeding and 1.25g exceeding. In a flight with many 1.25 exceeding, one expects also a relatively large number of 1.55g exceeding. In other words, one expects these exceedance numbers to be correlated. The figure shows this expectation to be reasonably fulfilled: the correlation coefficient R being in the order of 0.8 for both aircraft types.
- Figure 16: Correlation between damage index DI and number of flights in badge. Fortunately, figure 16 shows that such a correlation does not exist: values for R^2 are very low and regression lines are practically horizontal. Yet, it may be observed that for the F27 aircraft with exceptionally high DI values only a relatively small data batch existed. This was not the case for the F28, where the high DI values were associated with medium sized batches. Furtheron, the properties of these data sets with high DI values will be further investigated.
- c. Variations per continent of operation.

The data for F27 and F28 pertain to operations in all parts of the world. It is useful to investigate whether a systematic difference in usage severity between different part of the world exists.

Figure 17 shows the DI values per aircraft, arranged in ascending order, per continent of operation.

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For the F27, the differences per continent are remarkably small but the average DI value for Australia is about 20 percent higher than in other continents due to the high DI values observed for four specific aircraft. For the F28, the DI-values for Europe appear a little bit higher than for other parts of the world, but this effect is largely due to three specific aircraft included in the data that have a DI value higher than 1.5.

In the following paragraph, the data batches associated with high DI values will be considered in some more detail.

d. Very severe data batches:

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Figure 18 shows the Identification numbers of the 10 aircraft in each data set having the highest damage index DI as shown already in figure 17, the four F27 aircraft with a DI value larger than 2 were operated in Australia. For these aircraft the data batches are of a relatively limited size. These aircraft were flown by operators, indicated in table 2 under the code AUS2 and NZE2 respectively. Actually, these were not "normal" commercial operators, but government agencies: the aircraft were used to check the ILS systems at various airports. This obviously explains the very high load experience: the operation will have been characterized by many turns, and a relatively high proportion of the total flight time was spent at low altitude. At the same time, the utilization of these aircraft was relatively low, in the order of 50 flights per month. This explains the relatively small batch sizes. It is interesting to note that a third aircraft of AUS2, aircraft 10120, experienced a DI of 1.28 which is not extremely high. However, this aircraft made flights of relatively short duration (40 minutes), resulting in a relatively very high damage per hour DH of 1.93.

For the F28, three aircraft operated in Europe have a damage index which is well above the fleet average. These three aircraft belong to the same (commercial) operator, and the data batches for each aircraft are larger than 5000 flights. A review of the original data showed that the high load experience was not "incidental", but remained relatively high throughout the whole recording period for this aircraft. The explanation for this relatively severe usage is that these aircraft were probably used for a specific (relatively long) inland stretch over a mountaneous area with high turbulence activity, in combination with a relatively long average flight duration of about 1.2 hours compared to the average of 0.8 hours.

5 Discussion

The main purpose of the present investigation was to get quantitative information about the difference in load experience between aircraft of the same type, but operated by different operators. The only loading parameter for which statistical data were available is the cg. acceleration and although this may be a very relevant parameter one must keep in mind that for certain parts of the structure c.g. acceleration has no relevance at all. For example for the pressure cabin the pressurization cycle is the determining fatigue loading case. For other parts like the wing the aircraft weight, weight distribution, speed etc. also determine the actual loading severity. Hence, one must be careful not to attach absolute value to the damage figures derived in this report. Yet it is felt that the information obtained is very relevant, specifically because of the very large size in terms of flights of the data batch available.

For the pressure cabin the number of pressurization cycles and hence the total number of flights determines the accumulated fatigue damage. Hence, the damage per flight for such structure may be considered as a constant. It is interesting to note from figure 6 that even for typical short haul aircraft like F27 and F28 considerable differences in average flight duration occur; for the F28 all durations between 0.6 and 1.2 hours have about the same probability. In other words, the damage per hour may easily vary from aircraft to aircraft over a factor 2!

Loading in flight of the wing structure is due to gusts and manoeuvres. It is well known that the frequency of these loads does not increase proportionally with flight duration: the majority of gust- and manoeuvre loads occur at low altitude, during climb and descent, and the time spent in these flight phases hardly changes with total flight duration (except for very short flights). Hence, the cg-acceleration experience variation per flight may be expected to be smaller than per flight hour, and this expectation was confirmed by the present data. Still, the difference in average c.g acceleration experience per flight from aircraft to aircraft is considerable, as shown in figure 5. An interesting fact to be noted is that the differences in load factor experience between aircraft operated by the same operator appear small: differences between operators are a result of the differences in network (e.g. mountainous versus overseas stretches) and possibly differences in loading. The latter factor, however, is expected to be of minor importance for the type of aircraft involved.

In this study, a damage index DI was defined to get a quantitative "one figure" measure of the severity of a measured spectrum in terms of fatigue damage. The underlying algorithm is simple, and no absolute accuracy should be expected, but it is felt the DI value is a fair measure. In the derivation of the DI, and in the selection of the material constant k, care was taken not to "overestimate" the variation in damage with variation of acceleration experience. Hence, the

following figures are felt to be no "exaggerations":

- Both for the F27 and the F28, about 80 percent of the aircraft have DI between approximately 0.7 and 1.3, thus covering a range with a width of nearly a factor 2.
- A limited number of F27 aircraft, being used in a very specific role, were subject to a load experience resulting in a DI- value more than two times the fleet average.
- One specific "normal" F28 operator was subjected to a load experience resulting in DI values about 1.8 times the fleet average.

These figures show that inspection intervals and component replacement times, if they are based on an "average" load experience plus an adequate "safety factor" to cover also severely loaded aircraft, must necessarily be very conservative for a large part of the fleet that is subjected to average or "below average" load experience. This implies that considerable advantage could be obtained if inspection schedules for individual aircraft are adapted on the basis of individual aircraft load monitoring data.

6 Conclusions

- Fatigue meter data, obtained during operational flights of Fokker F27 and Fokker F28 aircraft were analysed to study variation in load experience between aircraft.
- The data covered about 470000 flights, made by 101 aircraft owned by 51 operators in different parts of the world.
- The measured average load factor experience per flight was expressed in terms of fatigue damage by means of a derived Damage Index DI. The Damage Index found showed considerable variations from aircraft to aircraft: eighty percent of all aircraft had a DI-value between 0.7 and 1.3, thus covering a range of a factor of about two.
- A limited number of aircraft experienced a DI- value that was more than two times the fleet average.
- The data illustrate the reduction in inspection effort that could be obtained if inspection schemes are be adapted on the basis of individual aircraft load monitoring.

7 Reference

1. Schijve, J., The significance of Flight-Simulation Fatigue Tests. Proceedings of the 13th ICAF Symposium, 22-24 May 1985, Pisa, Italy.

Table 1 General Overview of recorded data

| Aircraft Type | Fokker F27 | Fokker F28 |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|
| number of operators | 29 | 25 |
| number of aircraft | 63 | 38 |
| number of recorded flights | 319259 | 149744 |
| number of flight hours | 291357 | 122298 |

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Table 2 Overview of F27 fatigue meter data

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Table 3 Overview of F28 fatigue meter data

| Aircraft | Operator | Cont | Damage GAG | Damage SPEC | Damage TOT | Damage Index | Damage/hour |
|----------|------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| 10192 | SUD1 | AFR | 0.3277 | 0.2688 | 0.5964 | 0.9251 | 0.6707 |
| 10193 | SUD1 | AFR | 0.1877 | 0.0600 | 0.2476 | 0.3841 | 0.2483 |
| 10204 | ANG1 | AFR | 0.3262 | 0.2222 | 0.5484 | 0.8505 | 0.5932 |
| 10205 | ANG1 | AFR | 0.3410 | 0.2687 | 0.6098 | 0.9457 | 0.6151 |
| 10207 | ANG ₂ | ${\sf AFR}$ | 0.3508 | 0.3539 | 0.7047 | 1.0930 | 0.9609 |
| 10217 | NIG1 | AFR | 0.3035 | 0.1567 | 0.4602 | 0.7137 | 0.8145 |
| 10275 | LIB1 | AFR | 0.3499 | 0.3462 | 0.6961 | 1.0796 | 0.7312 |
| 10342 | LIB ₂ | AFR | 0.3450 | 0.4052 | 0.7503 | 1.1636 | 0.6739 |
| 10436 | LIB1 | AFR | 0.3544 | 0.4132 | 0.7676 | 1.1905 | 2.0627 |
| 10450 | IVC1 | AFR | 0.3147 | 0.2254 | 0.5401 | 0.8377 | 0.5881 |
| 10469 | IVC1 | AFR | 0.3288 | 0.2441 | 0.5729 | 0.8885 | 0.6216 |
| 10150 | JOR1 | ASI | 0.3780 | 0.3802 | 0.7582 | 1.1759 | 2.2264 |
| 10226 | SIN1 | $\boldsymbol{\mathrm{ASI}}$ | 0.3176 | 0.1875 | 0.5051 | 0.7834 | 1.0523 |
| 10239 | KOR1 | $\boldsymbol{\mathsf{ASI}}$ | 0.3772 | 0.3025 | 0.6798 | 1.0543 | 1.1046 |
| 10240 | KOR1 | ASI | 0.3705 | 0.3647 | 0.7353 | 1.1404 | 1.1914 |
| 10290 | NEP1 | ASI | 0.3532 | 0.3371 | 0.6903 | 1.0707 | 0.6062 |
| 10316 | EMI1 | ASI | 0.3126 | 0.2024 | 0.5150 | 0.7987 | 1.0917 |
| 10325 | EMI1 | $\boldsymbol{\mathsf{ASI}}$ | 0.2822 | 0.1052 | 0.3873 | 0.6007 | 0.8481 |
| 10111 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.3292 | 0.2837 | 0.6129 | 0.9506 | 1.2727 |
| 10113 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.3257 | 0.2244 | 0.5501 | 0.8532 | 1.0395 |
| 10114 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.3378 | 0.2421 | 0.5799 | 0.8994 | 1.1572 |
| 10120 | AUS ₂ | AUS | 0.3922 | 0.4344 | 0.8267 | 1.2822 | 1.9340 |
| 10121 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.3394 | 0.2548 | 0.5942 | 0.9216 | 1.1239 |
| 10122 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.3333 | 0.2391 | 0.5723 | 0.8877 | 1.1102 |
| 10127 | AUS3 | $\mathbf{A}\mathbf{U}\mathbf{S}$ | 0.3324 | 0.1661 | 0.4985 | 0.7732 | 1.0283 |
| 10131 | AUS ₂ | AUS | 0.4465 | 1.0561 | 1.5026 | 2.3305 | 1.4734 |
| 10132 | AUS ₂ | $\mathbf{A}\mathbf{U}\mathbf{S}$ | 0.4391 | 0.9795 | 1.4186 | 2.2002 | 1.3476 |
| 10134 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.2801 | 0.0932 | 0.3733 | 0.5790 | 0.5847 |
| 10135 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.2430 | 0.0556 | 0.2986 | 0.4631 | 0.4770 |
| 10138 | AUS1 | AUS | 0.3559 | 0.2809 | 0.6369 | 0.9878 | 1.0081 |
| 10139 | AUS4 | AUS | 0.3242 | 0.2430 | 0.5672 | 0.8797 | 0.5086 |
| 10166 | NZE1 | AUS | 0.3392 | 0.3168 | 0.6561 | 1.0175 | 1.1989 |
| 10167 | NZE1 | AUS | 0.3402 | 0.3563 | 0.6965 | 1.0803 | 1.2511 |
| 10168 | NZE1 | AUS | 0.3377 | 0.3051 | 0.6428 | 0.9970 | 1.1593 |
| 10169 | NZE1 | AUS | 0.3448 | 0.2989 | 0.6437 | 0.9983 | 1.4064 |
| 10184 | NZE1 | AUS | 0.3633 | 0.3548 | 0.7181 | 1.1137 | 1.2805 |
| 10185 | NZE1 | AUS | 0.3614 | 0.3774 | 0.7387 | 1.1457 | 1.3215 |
| 10189 | NZE1 | AUS | 0.3397 | 0.3257 | 0.6654 | 1.0321 | 1.1566 |

Table 4 Calculation of damage index F27 fatigue meter damage

| Aircraft | Operator | Cont | Damage GAG | Damage SPEC | Damage TOT | Damage Index | Damage/hour |
|----------|------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| 11053 | $\rm NIG1$ | ${\sf AFR}$ | 0.2965 | 0.1546 | 0.4511 | 0.7579 | 0.9749 |
| 11079 | UNO ₂ | AFR | 0.4118 | 0.1667 | 0.5784 | 0.9718 | 1.7140 |
| 11993 | NIG1 | AFR | 0.3203 | 0.1813 | 0.5016 | 0.8428 | 1.0775 |
| 12001 | GHA1 | AFR | 0.3032 | 0.1746 | 0.4778 | 0.8027 | 1.2400 |
| 12002 | GHA1 | AFR | 0.3391 | 0.2822 | 0.6212 | 1.0437 | 0.7717 |
| 12003 | NIG1 | AFR | 0.3532 | 0.2117 | 0.5649 | 0.9490 | 0.6129 |
| 12005 | GAB1 | AFR | 0.3110 | 0.1620 | 0.4730 | 0.7946 | 1.5596 |
| 12006 | GAB1 | AFR | 0.3006 | 0.1433 | 0.4439 | 0.7458 | 1.4577 |
| 12007 | GAB1 | ${\sf AFR}$ | 0.3069 | 0.2204 | 0.5273 | 0.8859 | 0.5397 |
| 11033 | CAN1 | AME | 0.2769 | 0.0998 | 0.3767 | 0.6330 | 0.7143 |
| 11038 | CAN1 | AME | 0.3010 | 0.1348 | 0.4358 | 0.7321 | 0.8371 |
| 11059 | PER1 | AME | 0.3149 | 0.1920 | 0.5069 | 0.8516 | 0.8899 |
| 11085 | ARG1 | \mathbf{AME} | 0.3215 | 0.2111 | 0.5326 | 0.8949 | 1.4696 |
| 12010 | PER1 | AME | 0.3086 | 0.2106 | 0.5192 | 0.8723 | 0.7287 |
| 12011 | UNO ₂ | AME | 0.3857 | 0.4619 | 0.8476 | 1.4241 | 1.5531 |
| 11035 | INO1 | ASI | 0.2848 | 0.1207 | 0.4055 | 0.6813 | 0.6921 |
| 11042 | INO ₂ | ASI | 0.3349 | 0.1562 | 0.4911 | 0.8251 | 0.9503 |
| 12004 | BIR1 | ASI | 0.3287 | 0.2207 | 0.5494 | 0.9231 | 1.0040 |
| 12008 | BAD1 | ASI | 0.3047 | 0.2047 | 0.5094 | 0.8559 | 1.3454 |
| 12009 | BAD1 | ASI | 0.3059 | 0.0943 | 0.4003 | 0.6725 | 1.1988 |
| 11026 | AUS5 | AUS | 0.3452 | 0.3356 | 0.6808 | 1.1439 | 1.7592 |
| 11001 | HOL1 | EUR | 0.3968 | 0.3470 | 0.7438 | 1.2497 | 2.9981 |
| 11003 | HOL1 | EUR | 0.3353 | 0.2304 | 0.5658 | 0.9505 | 1.3261 |
| 11004 | GER1 | EUR | 0.3421 | 0.3496 | 0.6917 | 1.1620 | 0.8256 |
| 11008 | HOL ₂ | EUR | 0.3780 | 0.2804 | 0.6584 | 1.1061 | 0.9216 |
| 11009 | NOR1 | EUR | 0.3167 | 0.1863 | 0.5030 | 0.8451 | 1.7024 |
| 11014 | ITA1 | EUR | 0.3620 | 0.3318 | 0.6939 | 1.1657 | 1.3711 |
| 11017 | SPA1 | EUR | 0.4307 | 0.6825 | 1.1132 | 1.8703 | 1.4761 |
| 11019 | SPA ₁ | EUR | 0.4257 | 0.7756 | 1.2013 | 2.0183 | 1.6585 |
| 11023 | SPA1 | EUR | 0.4314 | 0.5925 | 1.0239 | 1.7203 | 1.4955 |
| 11027 | GER4 | EUR | 0.3992 | 0.3062 | 0.7054 | 1.1852 | 0.8080 |
| 11046 | GER3 | EUR | 0.3017 | 0.1307 | 0.4324 | 0.7265 | 0.7264 |
| 11057 | TUR1 | EUR | 0.3371 | 0.2181 | 0.5552 | 0.9327 | 1.3014 |
| 11067 | SWE1 | EUR | 0.3189 | 0.1665 | 0.4854 | 0.8155 | 1.2363 |
| 12013 | SWE1 | EUR | 0.2871 | 0.1167 | 0.4038 | 0.6784 | 0.9743 |
| 12014 | SWE1 | EUR | 0.3174 | 0.2270 | 0.5444 | 0.9147 | 1.1551 |
| 11041 | UNO1 | UNO | 0.3328 | 0.2397 | 0.5725 | 0.9619 | 0.5831 |
| 12012 | UNO3 | UNO | 0.3651 | 0.3999 | 0.7650 | 1.2853 | 1.9959 |
| all a/c | | | 0.3434 | 0.2518 | 0.5952 | 1.0000 | 1.2243 |

Table 5 Calculation of damage index F28 fatigue meter data

| Variable | Average | Standard dev | Coef. of var | Maximum | Minimum |
|-----------------|---------|--------------|--------------|---------|----------|
| Flight duration | 0.9141 | 0.3359 | 0.3674 | 1.6492 | 0.4167 |
| $-0.35g/fl$ | 0.0004 | 0.0007 | 1.6592 | 0.0031 | Ω |
| 0.05 g/fl | 0.0036 | 0.0035 | 0.9744 | 0.0154 | θ |
| 0.45g/fl | 0.0778 | 0.0714 | 0.9177 | 0.3569 | 0.0142 |
| 0.75 g/fl | 2.7052 | 1.6404 | 0.6064 | 8.8430 | 0.6096 |
| 1.25 g/fl | 5.3075 | 3.0820 | 0.5807 | 13.9167 | 1.8476 |
| 1.55g/fl | 0.2164 | 0.1820 | 0.8408 | 0.6975 | 0.0308 |
| 1.95g/fl | 0.0100 | 0.0148 | 1.4773 | 0.0643 | Ω |
| 2.35g/fl | 0.0010 | 0.0020 | 2.0278 | 0.0072 | θ |
| 0.25g /f1 | 3.7032 | 2.0755 | 0.5605 | 11.0634 | 1.4783 |
| 0.55g /f1 | 0.1239 | 0.1042 | 0.8406 | 0.4297 | 0.0290 |
| 0.95g /f1 | 0.0050 | 0.0063 | 1.2523 | 0.0261 | Ω |
| 1.35g /f1 | 0.0003 | 0.0006 | 1.6992 | 0.0020 | Ω |
| Damage Index | 0.9969 | 0.3152 | 0.3162 | 2.0178 | 0.6328 |
| Damage/hour | 1.2012 | 0.4770 | 0.3971 | 2.9981 | 0.5397 |

Table 7 Statistical properties F28 fatigue meter data

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Appendix

A Development of a damage index DI

In the following, an algorithm will be derived to calculate a relative damage figure associated with a measured load factor spectrum per flight.

The basic assumptions that underlay this derivation are as follows:

a. "Damage rule": The fatigue damage (or inherent crack growth damage) of a load cycle is proportional to the amplitude to the power k:

$$
D(cycle dS) \div (dS)^{\wedge} k. \tag{A.1}
$$

The value of the slope factor k is a material-dependent constant.

b. "Load cycle content": The load cycle content of a flight consists of two parts, namely the "gspectrum loads", associated with gusts and manoeuvres, and the "Ground-Air-Ground" or GAG cycle.

The GAG cycle is defined by the lowest stress occurring once per flight while the aircraft is standing on the ground (S_{gr}) , and the highest stress reached on the average once per flight (S_{once}) .

The load cycles associated with the g-spectrum are defined by the "symmetrized" load factor exceedance data. The number of load cycles with an amplitude equal to dn or larger is taken equal to the symmetrized number of exceedings of dn, y(dn).

The smallest load cycles to be included in the damage calculation have an amplitude corresponding with $dn=0.1$

- c. "Normalization": The Damage Index must give a relative measure of the damage associated with a specific load spectrum: its absolute value is irrelevant: For this reason, calculated damages will be "normalized" by division by the Damage corresponding to the average spectrum pertaining to "all flights" for the specific aircraft type.
- d. "Structural Location": In principle, the Damage Index refers to one specific structural location. In the present study, the DI-values for both the F27 and the F28 refer to the lower wing skin near the wing root.

In the present study, the following numerical values were adopted:

Ground stress level: The lowest stress reached on the ground is just equal to zero.

The slope factor k has been taken as $k=3$; this value lies in the lower band of the values found in flight simulation fatigue and crack growth tests under transport aircraft wing test spectra (ref. 1)

The mathematical derivation of the DI- equation is given below

i) Calculation of GAG damage

Load factor level exceeded once per flight:

X_{once} is found by log-linear interpolation between the exceedance frequencies of the acceleration levels x_1 ($\Delta n = 0.25$) and x_2 ($\Delta n = 0.55$):

$$
x_{\text{once}} = \frac{x_2 \cdot \log yp(x_1) - x_1 \cdot \log yp(x_2)}{\log yp(x_1) - \log yp(x_2)}\tag{A.2}
$$

Amplitude of the GAG cycle:

$$
S_{GAG} = \frac{x_{\text{once}} + 1 - x_{\text{ground}}}{2} \tag{A.3}
$$

With $x_{ground} = 0$

Damage due to GAG cycle: $D_{GAG} = (S_{GAG})^k$ $k \tag{A.4}$

ii) Calculation of damage of spectrum loads

Number of cycles with amplitude equal to or larger than $x = y(x)$.

Number of cycles with amplitude x^* , $x < x^* < x + dx$ is equal to

$$
y'(x) = -\frac{d(y)}{dx}
$$

Damage due to cycles with amplitude between x_{ℓ} and x_{u} :

$$
SD = \int_{x_{\ell}}^{x_{\mathrm{u}}} D(x) y'(x) dx
$$
 (A.5)

with $D(x) = x^k$

 $y(x)$ is an exponential function between x_i and x_{i+1}

 $x_{i+1} - x_i$

$$
\log y(x) = \log y(x_i) + a_i(x - x_i)
$$
\n
$$
a_i = \frac{\log y(x_{i+1}) - \log y(x_i)}{x - x_i}
$$
\n(A.6)

 $y'(x)$ between x_i and x_{i+1} can be written:

$$
y'(x) = -y(x_i)e^{-a_ix_i} \cdot a_i e^{a_{ix}}
$$
 (A.7)

or $y'(x) = b_i e^{a_i x}$

with
$$
b_i = -a_i e^{-a_i x_i} y(x_i)
$$
 (A.8)

NLR

The spectrum damage SD may now be calculated from:

$$
SD = \sum_{i=1}^{3} SD_i
$$

NLR

$$
SD_1 = b_1 \int_{x_{\ell}}^{x_2} x^k e^{+a_1 x} dx, \qquad x_{\ell} = 0.10
$$

$$
SD_2 = b_2 \int_{x_2}^{x_3} x^k e^{+a_2x} dx
$$
, if $y(x_3) \neq 0$

$$
SD_2 = b_1 \int_{x_2}^{x_3} x^k e^{+a_1x} dx
$$
, if $y(x_3) = 0$ (A.9)

$$
SD_3 = b_3 \int_{x_3}^{x_4} x^k e^{+a_3x} dx
$$
, if $y(x_4) \neq 0$

$$
SD_3 = 0 \qquad \qquad \text{if } y(x_4) = 0
$$

iii) Calculation of total damage

The total damage is equal to

$$
D_{\text{tot}} = SD + D_{\text{GAG}} \tag{A.10}
$$

iv) Calculation of damage index DI

The total damage per flight pertaining to $\frac{\text{all}}{\text{all}}$ aircraft is called $D_{\text{tot,all}}$. The **Damage Index** for aircraft j is calculated from:

$$
DI_j = \frac{(D_{\text{tot}})_j}{D_{\text{tot,all}}}
$$
(A.11)

