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Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-96) Prescribed by ANSI Std. 235.19
MEMORANDUM FOR PRS (Contractor/In-House Publication)

FROM: PROI (TI) (STINFO)  

24 Oct 2000


Suri, Suresh; Tinnierlo, M. & Marcischak, J. (ERC), “Synthesis and Screening of Advanced Hydrocarbon Fuels”


1. This request has been reviewed by the Foreign Disclosure Office for: a.) appropriateness of distribution statement, b.) military/national critical technology, c.) export controls or distribution restrictions, d.) appropriateness for release to a foreign nation, and e.) technical sensitivity and/or economic sensitivity.

Comments: ____________________________________________________________

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________________________________________ Date

PHILIP A. KESSEL
Technical Advisor

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Synthesis & Screening of Advanced Hydrocarbon Fuels

Suresh C. Suri*, Michael Tinnirello¹ & Jacob Marcischak¹

*Air Force Research Laboratory/PRSP; ¹ERC Inc.
10 East Saturn Blvd., Edwards Air Force Base, CA 93536
Presentation Outline

- Goal
  - HEDM program
  - NASA program
  - IHPRPT program (propellant perspective)

- Criteria for fuel selection
- Approach
- Results
- Accomplishments (FY-2000)
- Planned Efforts (FY-2001)
HEDM Goal

- To Develop fuels with increased Isp over LOX/RP-1
  - LOX/RP-1 (Calculated Isp) = 300 sec
  - LOX/RP-1 (Delivered Isp) = 263 sec

Determined at sea level and 1000 psi chamber pressure
To Meet IHPRPT Phase II and Phase III Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Improvement Over SOTA* Isp (del)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>+ 5 Sec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>+ 11 Sec</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*SOTA: LOX/RP-1 Propellant Isp(del) = 263 Sec. Isp (calc) = 300 Sec.
NASA Goal

- FY-1999
  - Deliver three advanced hydrocarbon fuel in 8-
    10 lb quantity.
  - Quadricyclane
  - 1,7-Octadiyne
  - Bicyclopropyldiene

- FY-2000
  - Screen four hydrocarbons for their physical and
    hazardous properties.
Criteria for Fuel Selection

- Predicts better performance (Isp) over LOX/RP-1 system
- Most desirable physical properties
  - Lower vapor pressure compared to RP-1
  - Higher density ($\geq$ RP-1 = 0.801 g/ml)
  - Freezing point ($\leq$ -10 °C; RP-1 = -41.4 °C)
  - Boiling point $\geq$ B. P. Of RP-1
- Storable
- Compatible with the current system
Approach

- Structural requirements
- Survey of energetic hydrocarbons
- Selection of hydrocarbons based on improved theoretical performance
- Synthesis of target hydrocarbons at bench scale.
  - *Easy preparation, cost effective and safe*
- Translate bench-scale synthesis to pilot scale.
# Heat of Formation of Saturated Hydrocarbons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>$\Delta H_f$ (Obs)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethane</td>
<td>CH$_3$CH$_3$</td>
<td>-20.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Propane</td>
<td>CH$_3$CH$_2$CH$_3$</td>
<td>-25.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butane</td>
<td>CH$_3$(CH$_2$)$_2$CH$_3$</td>
<td>-30.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentane</td>
<td>CH$_3$(CH$_2$)$_3$CH$_3$</td>
<td>-35.08</td>
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</table>

$\Delta H_f$/added CH$_2$ $\approx$ -5 Kcal/mole
# Heat of Formation of Unsaturated Hydrocarbons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>ΔHf(Obs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethylene</td>
<td>CH₂=CH₂</td>
<td>+12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,3-Butadiene</td>
<td>CH₂=CH-CH=CH₂</td>
<td>+26.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ΔHf/C = ~ +6.25 Kcal/mole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acetylene</td>
<td>HC≡CH</td>
<td>+54.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ΔHf/C = ~ +27.1 Kcal/mole</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Structural Requirement for High Energy Contents (Cont..)

- The energy content is also increased by incorporating strain in the molecule
  - Ring compound \( \Delta H_f \)  
    - Cyclopropane  
      + 12.73 kcal/mole
    - Cyclobutane  
      + 6.78 kcal/mole
    - Cyclopentane  
      - 18.44 kcal/mole
Incorporation of small ring (strain) and unsaturation in a molecule increases its energy contents
# Performance Comparison of Energetic Hydrocarbons (Theoretical)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hydrocarbons</th>
<th>H/C ratio</th>
<th>Density (g/ml)</th>
<th>Calc. ΔHₚ (Kcal/mole)</th>
<th>Calc. Isp (sec)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RP-1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>-5.76</td>
<td>300.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>307.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCP</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>312.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRL-1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>311.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFRL-2</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>307.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRL-3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>123.6</td>
<td>307.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRL-4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>129.6</td>
<td>321.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRL-5</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>308.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

Synthetic Sequence of BCP

1. EtMgBr/cat.Ti(OPr-i)_4/Ether
2. 10% Aq. H_2SO_4

Ph_3P/Br_2

# Characterization of BCP

**Physical properties**
- B.P. = 101 °C
- M.P. = -12 °C
- F.P. = -6.4 °C
- Density = 0.8454 g/ml
- ΔHf (exp.) = 67.4 kcal/mole
- ΔHf (calc.) = 76.1 kcal/mole

**Hazardous properties**
- Zero card gap (negative)
- Drop test > 200 kg/cm
- Friction test 133 newton
  - **Toxicity**
    - (Inhalation LC50) 1.95 mg/L
- Adiabatic Compression (psi)
  - 3000 Neg.
Is BCP Hypergolic?

- **Qualitative Test**
  - BCP is found to be hypergolic using nitrogen tetroxide (NTO). Spontaneous reaction with visible flame.
  - Hypergolic with inhibited red fuming nitric acid (IRFNA) as oxidizers. (Darren M. Thompson, U.S. Army missile command).

- **Ignition Delay**
  - The work is in progress under SBIR phase-1 with TDA Research, Inc.
Synthesis of AFRL-1

- Two steps synthesis
- Involves readily available materials
- Yield in both steps is > 90 %
Characterization of AFRL-1

Physical Properties
B.P. = 52- 55 °C
Density = 0.77 g/ml
$\Delta H_f$ (Exp.) = 67.4 Kcal/mole
$\Delta H_f$ (Calc.) = 64.0 Kcal/mole

Hazardous Properties
“0” card gap (Negative)
Liq. Impact test > 200 Kg-cm
Friction Test 78 Newtons
Adiabatic Compression (psi)

3000  Neg.
Synthesis of AFRL-3

- One step synthesis from AFRL-1.
- Requires oxidative coupling of AFRL-1.
- Yield is 92%.
Characterization of AFRL-3

Hazardous Properties

- "0" card gap (negative)
- Liq Impact test <20 kg-cm
- Friction Test = 64.8 Newton

Adiabatic Compression (psi)

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000</td>
<td></td>
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Physical Properties

B.P. = 102 °C
M.P. = -13 °C
Density = 0.93 g/ml

ΔHf (Calc.) = 123.6 kcal/mole
ΔHf (Exp.) = 117.0 kcal/mole
Synthesis of AFRL-5

- Higher homologue of AFRL-1
- Two step synthesis
- Yield in both steps is greater than 90%
Characterization of AFRL-5

Hazardous properties

"0" card gap (TBD)
Liq. Impact Test > 200 kg-cm
Friction Test = 43.12 newton
Adiabatic Compression (psi)
3000 Neg.

Physical properties

B.P. = 78 °C
M.P. = -92.8 °C
Density = 0.7957 g/ml
\( \Delta H_f \) (Exp.) = 50.39 kcal/mole
\( \Delta H_f \) (Calc.) = 56.3 kcal/mole
Accomplishments (FY 00)

- Delivered four hydrocarbons to NASA/Marshall.
  - Cyclopropyl acetylene (AFRL-1).
  - Bicyclopropylidene
  - Quadricyclane
  - 1,7-Octadiyne
- Synthesized two advanced hydrocarbons (AFRL-1 & AFRL-3) at bench-scale level.
- 200 gm of AFRL-3 was synthesized in the laboratory.
Planned Efforts of Fiscal Year 2001 (Technical)

- To continue exploring bench scale synthesis of advanced hydrocarbon (AFRL-4).

- Evaluate physical & hazardous properties of AFRL-4 & AFRL-2.
Alliances

- Industry
  - Boeing
  - TRW
  - Kistler
  - Aerojet
- NASA
  - Marshall
  - Glenn
- DOD
  - Navy- China Lake
  - Army- Huntsville
Team Efforts

Research
- Suresh C. Suri
- Michael Tinnirello
- Jacob Marcischak

Theoretical Efforts
- Jeffrey Mills

Physical Properties
- Paul Jones, JoAnne Larue, Jeff Yinn

Hazardous Properties
- Tommy W. Hawkins, Adam Brand, Milton Mckay, Ismail Ismail
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- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)/MSFC