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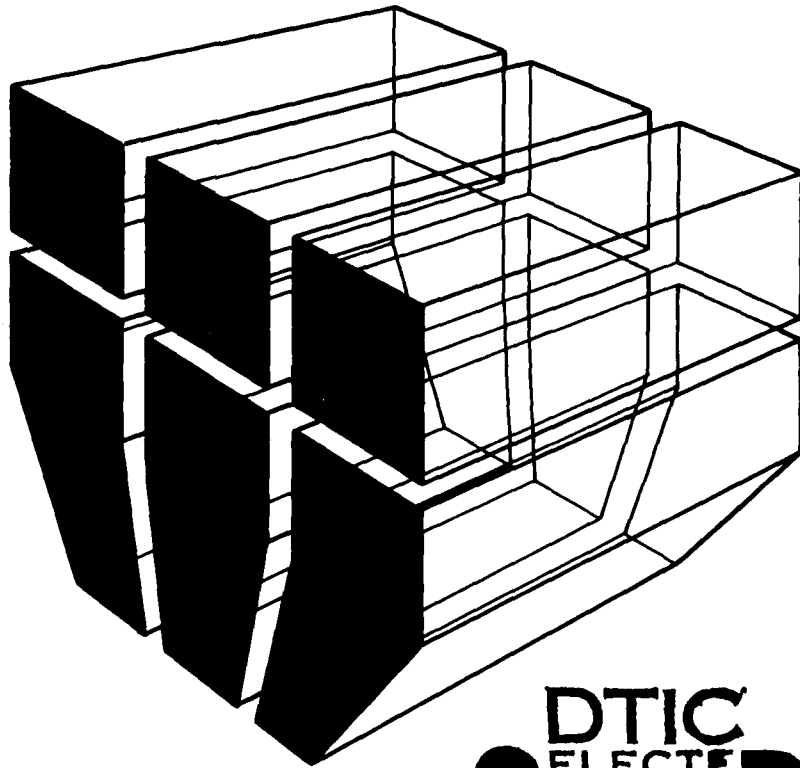
TECHNICAL REPORT N-186
August 1984

Standard Methods to Assess Rotary-Wing Aircraft Sound Decay With Distance

PREDICTION AND MODELING OF HELICOPTER NOISE

AD-A145 764

by
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In addition, the sideline decay data were studied using variables known to affect sound attenuation. The purpose was to gain further insight into the mechanisms of sideline decay with distance. Variations in the results suggest an unknown mechanism is contributing to this attenuation. ↗

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FOREWORD

This work was performed by the Environmental Division (EN) of the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (USA-CERL) for the Directorate of Engineering and Construction, Office of the Chief of Engineers (OCE), under Project 4A162720A896, "Environmental Quality Technology"; Technical Area A, "Installation Environmental Management Strategy"; Work Unit 028, "Standard Methods to Assess Rotary-Wing Aircraft Sound Decay With Distance." The OCE Technical Monitor was MAJ S. J. Stone, DAEN-ZCE.

Dr. R. K. Jain is Chief, EN. COL Paul J. Theuer is Commander and Director of USA-CERL, and Dr. L. R. Shaffer is Technical Director.

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PREDICTION AND MODELING OF HELICOPTER NOISE

1 INTRODUCTION

Background

The Army is the largest operator of helicopters in the United States. Since helicopters often operate at low altitude, they can contribute greatly to Army installations' noise impact on surrounding land uses.

The U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (USA-CERL) has been studying the noise effects of rotary-wing aircraft operations for 10 years as part of the Army's Installation Compatible Use Noise Zone (ICUZ) program.¹ These studies previously have concentrated on the source characterization of Army rotary wing aircraft--the source spectra, variations in spectrum and level with speed, and variations with loading.² These source data can be combined with sideline decay predictions to assess helicopter noise impact.

The propagation models used in the earlier studies were based on contouring techniques developed for fixed-wing aircraft. Working in this area, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the U.S. Air Force (USAF) have proposed changes to the duration factor used in calculating the sideline decay of fixed-wing aircraft.³ The revised procedure should be studied to see if this change improves predictions for rotary-wing aircraft or if a more detailed model of sound propagation is necessary. Moreover, the helicopter data studied in this work--UH-1H, UH-60A, and CH-47C--could provide valuable information on the mechanics of sideline noise decay with distance.

¹Army Regulation (AR) 200-1, Environmental Protection and Enhancement (Department of the Army [DA], 15 June 1982).

²P. D. Schomer and B. L. Homans, Technical Background: Interim Criteria for Planning Rotary-Wing Aircraft Patterns and Siting Noise Sensitive Land Uses, Interim Report N-9/ADA031449 (U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratory [USA-CERL], September 1976); P. D. Schomer and B. L. Homans, User Manual: Interim Procedure for Planning Rotary-Wing Aircraft Traffic Patterns and Siting Noise Sensitive Land Uses, Interim Report N-10/ADA031450 (USA-CERL, September 1976); B. Homans, L. Little, and P. Schomer, Rotary-Wing Aircraft Operational Noise Data, Technical Report N-38/ADA051999 (USA-CERL, February 1978).

³Jerry D. Speakman, Effect of Propagation Distance on Aircraft Flyover Duration, AFAMRL-TR-81-28 (U.S. Air Force Aerospace Medical Research Laboratory, 1981); J. Steven Newman, Edward J. Rickley, and Tyrone L. Bland, Helicopter Noise Exposure Curves for Use in Environmental Impact Assessments, DOT-FAA-EE-82-16 (Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, Office of Environment and Energy, 1982).

Objectives

The objectives of this research were to:

1. Determine if the FAA procedure is accurate for predicting rotary-wing aircraft noise decay with distance
2. Examine the physical mechanisms of sideline noise decay by comparing a detailed computer model to experimental results.

The second objective had three subtasks: (a) to perform a sensitivity analysis for effects of known variables on sideline decay; (b) identify if additional mechanisms contribute to attenuation; and (c) improve standard methods of calculating the sound exposure level for rotary-wing aircraft.

Approach

Experimental data were gathered at Fort Campbell for three rotary-wing aircraft types. The measurements were taken using techniques described in detail elsewhere.⁴ The data were analyzed to give the LEQ and SEL variations with slant distance. In addition, the one-third octave spectra for each aircraft during the maximum 0.5 sec were calculated and averaged over all altitudes, microphones, and airspeeds.

Next, the experimental results for SEL versus slant distance were compared with results using the FAA method. A detailed computer model was developed that includes finite ground impedance, atmospheric attenuation, and coherent or incoherent addition of the direct and reflected sound. Results using this model were compared with those from the experiments. The effects of spectral change and directivity of the noise pattern also were studied. Finally, helicopter flyby profiles were examined to determine if an unidentified mechanism contributes to attenuation.

Mode of Technology Transfer

The information in this report will be added to USA-CERL's integrated noise contour system (INCS) database.⁵ In addition, it will be used as input to future FAA and Department of Defense Standards meetings.

⁴P. D. Schomer, A. Averbuch, and R. Raspet, Operational Noise Data for UH-60A and CH-47C Army Helicopters, Technical Report N-131/A118796 (USA-CERL, July 1982).

⁵P. D. Schomer, A. Averbuch, and R. Raspet.

2 PREDICTION OF HELICOPTER SIDELINE DECAY

The sound measurements used in studying helicopter decay are the maximum equivalent level (LEQ) and the sound exposure level (SEL). All levels are A-weighted. The LEQ is given by:

$$\text{LEQ} = 10 \log_{10} \left[\int p^2 dt / [p_0^2 \frac{1}{2}] \right], \quad [\text{Eq 1}]$$

where p_0 is the reference pressure, t_0 is the reference time, p is the measured pressure, and the integral is performed over the maximum noise 0.5 sec of the flyby. Figure 1 shows an ideal flyby. The SEL is given by:

$$\text{SEL} = 10 \log_{10} \frac{\int_a^b p^2 dt}{p_0^2 t_0}, \quad [\text{Eq 2}]$$

where $p_0 = 20 \mu\text{Pa}$ and $t_0 = 1 \text{ sec}$. The integral is performed from the time the instantaneous level is 10 dB below the maximum level (a in Figure 1) until the level is again 10 dB below the maximum level (b in Figure 1).

A look at two ideal cases and the present FAA procedure will help explain the objectives. The first simple case is a flyby with no atmospheric attenuation and the second is one with a large exponential attenuation.

Case 1: No Attenuation, Simple Point Source

Model the helicopter as a simple sound source. Consider a helicopter flyby according to the geometry of Figure 2.

The SEL(D') at any slant distance D' is given by:

$$\text{SEL}(D') = \text{SEL}(D) + \text{LEQ}(D') - \text{LEQ}(D) + 10 \log (D'/D), \quad [\text{Eq 3}]$$

where $\text{LEQ}(D')$ is determined from:

$$\text{LEQ}(D') = 10 \log_{10} \sum_{n=0}^{44} 10^{[L_{\frac{1}{3}}(n)/10]} - 20 \log_{10} (D'/D), \quad [\text{Eq 4}]$$

where $L_{\frac{1}{3}}(n)$ are the one-third-octave band levels at the reference distance D . The term $10 \log (D'/D)$ is called the "duration factor" and adjusts for the difference in decay with distance of the LEQ and SEL.

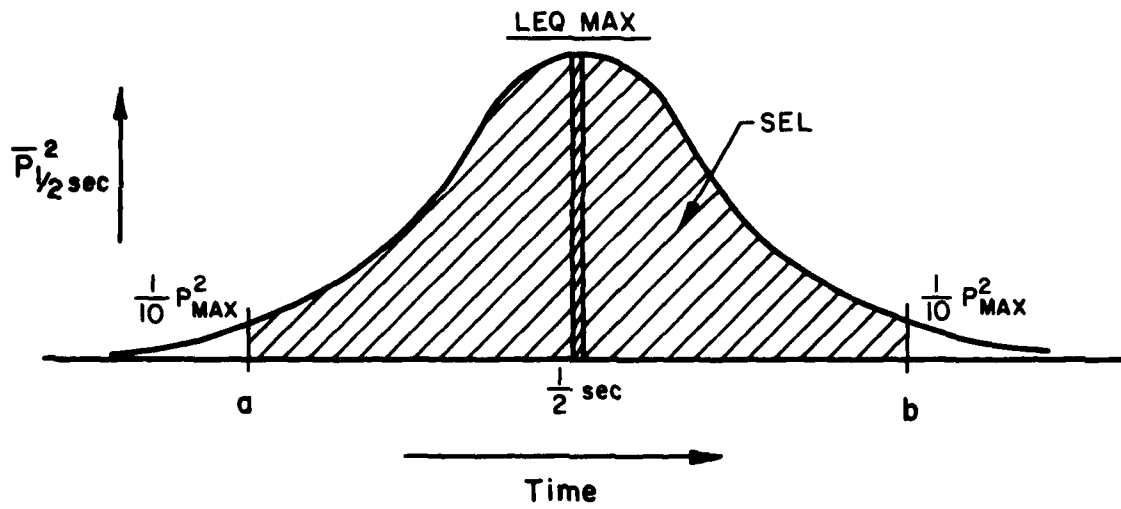


Figure 1. $\overline{P}_{1/2 \text{ sec}}^2$ versus time for an ideal flyby.

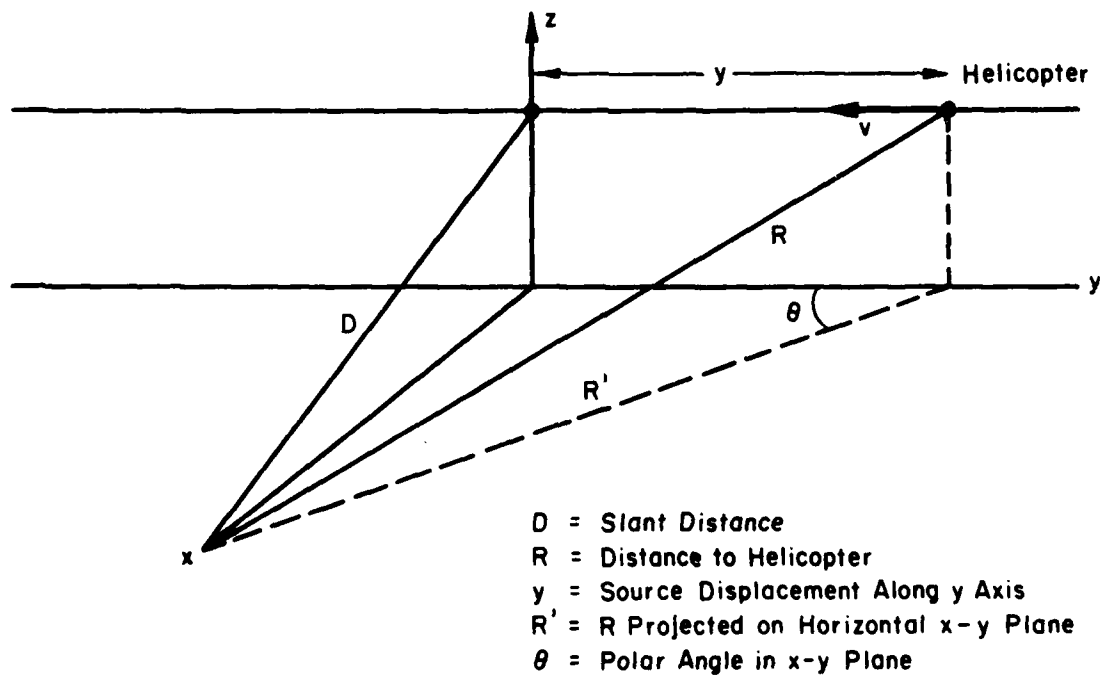


Figure 2. Geometry of a flyby.

Case 2: Large Attenuation, Simple Point Source

In the other extreme, large atmospheric attenuation, it can be shown that the factor relating the maximum LEQ and the SEL approaches $5 \log (D'/D)$. That is:

$$\text{SEL}(D') = \text{SEL}(D) + \text{LEQ}(D') - \text{LEQ}(D) + 5 \log_{10}(D'/D), \quad [\text{Eq 5}]$$

where:

$$\text{LEQ}(D') = 10 \log_{10} \sum_n 10^{[L \frac{1}{3}(n) - \alpha(n)(D'-D)]/10} - 20 \log_{10}(D'/D) \quad [\text{Eq 6}]$$

Pure exponential decay with no distance factor also gives a duration factor of 5 dB per decade.

FAA/USAF Method

The FAA/USAF standard for calculating the SEL of fixed-wing aircraft flybys modifies this distance factor to fit the data empirically. This procedure calculates the SEL by:

$$\text{SEL}(D') = \text{SEL}(D) + \text{LEQ}(D') - \text{LEQ}(D) + C \log_{10}(D'/D) \quad [\text{Eq 7}]$$

and

$$\text{LEQ}(D') = 10 \log_{10} \sum_n 10^{[L \frac{1}{3}(n) - \alpha(n)(D'-D)]} - 20 \log_{10} \left(\frac{D'}{D}\right), \quad [\text{Eq 8}]$$

where $\alpha(n)$ is the one-third octave attenuation from the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) standard 866A⁶ and $L \frac{1}{3}(n)$ are one-third octave levels at D for the maximum 0.5 sec.

Note the difference between Equations 3 and 4 and Equations 7 and 8. Attenuation has been introduced into the calculation of the LEQ(D) for Equations 7 and 8 and the distance factor is now:

$$C \log_{10}(D'/D).$$

Factor C is determined empirically by best fits of lines through distance decay data for a wide variety of aircraft. There is a great amount of scatter among aircraft types as indicated by FAA/USAF data. The USAF has chosen $C = 6.0$ as the best fit whereas the FAA recommends 7.0 dB. The 7.0-dB duration

⁶Standard Values of Atmosphere Absorption as a Function of Temperature and Humidity, ARP 866A (Society of Automotive Engineers, 1975).

factor was used in this report as it gives the best results for the data collected. Variation among aircraft indicates that care should be taken in applying this method--developed for fixed-wing aircraft--to a different class such as the rotary-wing aircraft.

3 DATA ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON WITH FAA PROCEDURE

Data Collection

The helicopter sideline decay data discussed in this report were collected in conjunction with helicopter source data measurements at Fort Campbell, KY. These tests are described in detail elsewhere.⁷ In addition to the source measurement microphones at 61 and 122 m from the centerline, portable recording systems were placed 244, 488, 732, and 976 m from the aircraft centerline (Figure 3). The microphones at 61 and 122 m were B&K 4921 outdoor microphone systems connected to an equipment van. These signals were recorded on an Ampex PR 2230 recorder for later analysis. The additional sideline microphones were B&K 4145 types powered by B&K 2209 Sound Level Meters. The a.c. output of these microphones was recorded on a Nagra DJ set to run at 7.5 ips.

Data Reduction

Data reduction for the 61- and 122-m microphones is described in detail in USA-CERL Technical Report N-131. Data reduction for the sideline tapes was done differently, however. The tapes were played into a system composed of a USA-CERL True-Integrating Environmental Noise Monitor and Sound Exposure Level Meter⁸ and a WANG Model 600 Programmable Calculator. The USA-CERL monitor took buffered 0.5-sec samples of an A-weighted sound pressure level. After the WANG was interfaced to the monitor, it read the data arrays, found the maximum 0.5-sec level and calculated the SEL of the flyby from the 0.5-sec samples.* These levels were then read out on paper tape.

All cases in which the sound flyby did not reach 10 dB down were eliminated. For averaging, only complete sets were used. The 91.5-m flybys at 100 knots were selected for detailed analysis since this minimizes problems with the vertical directivity of the helicopter noise and with signal-to-noise ratios. In addition, the 91.5-m altitude is more typical of helicopter operations on military installations. However, results were also obtained from the 305 m altitude and for different flyby speeds, and these provide some useful information.

Comparative Analysis

Data were averaged for all similar aircraft flybys for which full data sets existed. The first question to be addressed was, "How well does the FAA procedure work in predicting sideline noise decay?" The helicopter spectra developed in USA-CERL Technical Report N-131 were selected for analysis. The

⁷P. D. Schomer, A. Averbuch, and R. Raspet.

⁸P. D. Schomer, A. Averbuch, M. W. Weisberg, R. Brown, and L. M. Little, True-Integrating Environmental Noise Monitor and Sound Exposure Level Meter, USA-CERL TR N-41/ADA060958 (USA-CERL, May 1978).

*Note that this measurement is slightly different from the standard 0.5-sec slow measurement. The difference between the measurements will be small for the slowly varying helicopter sound levels.

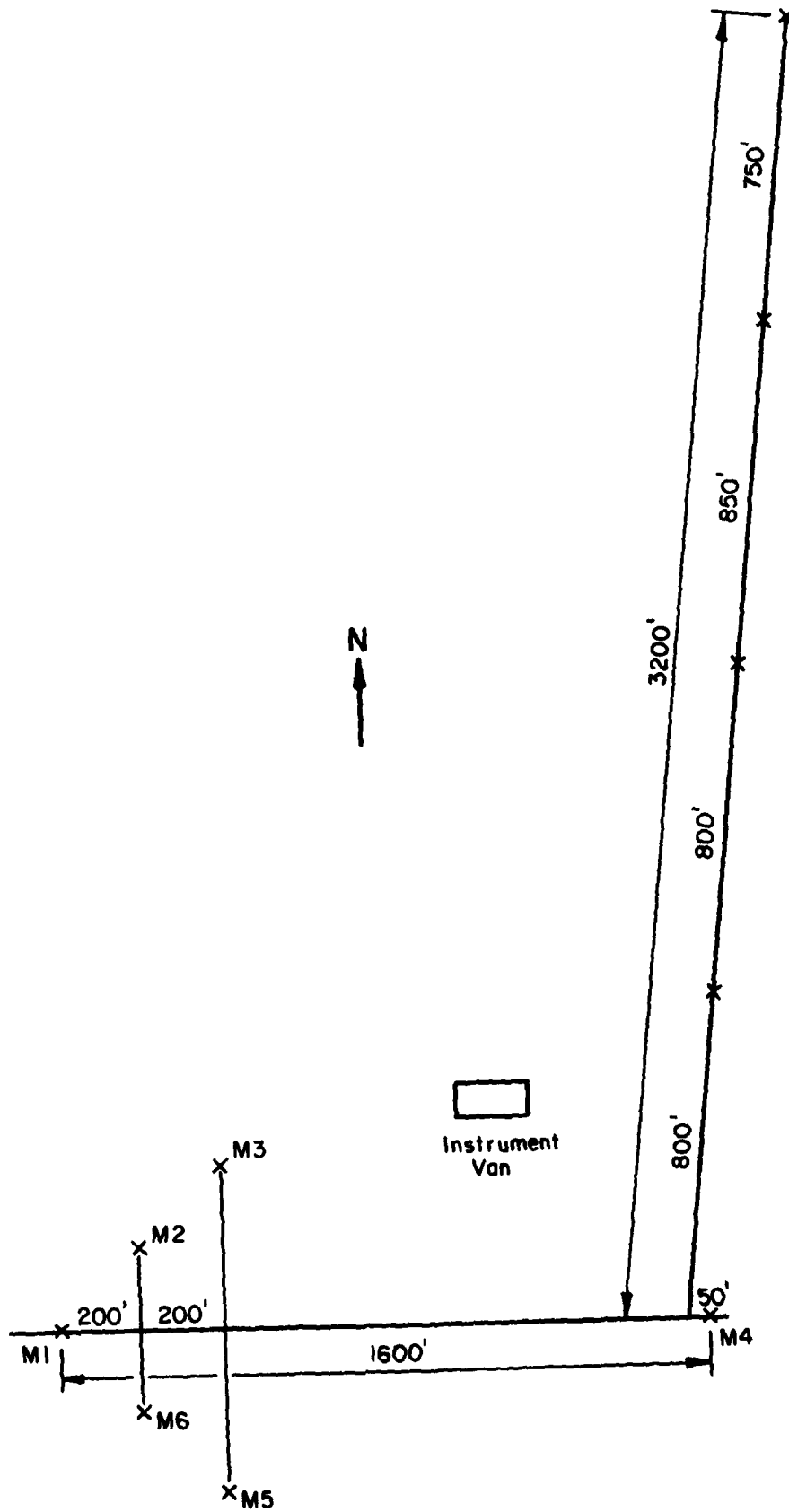


Figure 3. Sideline microphones at Fort Campbell.

spectra for loaded and unloaded UH-60A were very similar, so those from the unloaded helicopter were used to represent both cases with little error.

Figures 4 through 6 display the LEQ and the SEL for the flybys versus slant distance for the three helicopters studied--UH-1H, UH-60A, and CH-47C. These figures are prepared from the average data for 91.5 m AGL and 100-knot airspeed flights. The error bars represent one standard error. The LEQ predicted by the FAA procedure is derived from the source data (correcting the geometrical spreading), from atmospheric attenuation using the SAE standard,⁹ and assuming a hard surface and incoherent sound addition reflection (Equation 8). This prediction is quite accurate up to a 300-m slant distance; beyond this distance, the predicted level is higher than the measured level.

The SEL calculated by Equation 7 begins to deviate from the measured level much more rapidly since it is an integrated level over distances up to three times the slant distance. The predicted level is above the error bars by 300 m slant distance and is 6 to 7 dB above the measured level at 1000 m slant distance.

Figures 4 through 6 also show the results of another calculation. The integral described in Equation 1 has been performed with the level calculated using the SAE standard for atmospheric attenuation. The actual steps in this computer calculation are described in Chapter 4. If only geometrical spreading and atmospheric attenuation are included in a calculation of the flyby SEL, the results are worse than the empirical FAA procedure. The results at 1000 m are about 2 dB greater than with the FAA procedure. In a rough sense, this calculation would correspond to a duration factor of about 9 dB.

Figure 7 plots the average SEL-LEQ versus distance for the three helicopters. The UH-1H displays the closest behavior to the $7 \log(D'/D)$ rule. At short distances, the CH-47C is close to a slope of 7 dB per decade, then levels out. The UH-60A begins with a moderate slope and flattens out. The lines on this figure are fitted to all data points except for those at 738 m since the data points at this distance appear to be systematically low. In addition, the correlation coefficients, r^2 , are low, ranging from .68 to .37.

The relative spectra of the three helicopters were plotted in an attempt to gain some understanding of the flybys' behavior (Figure 8). The spectra shown are normalized to the measured LEQ levels at 110 m slant range and were taken during the maximum 0.5 sec. The UH-1H has a relatively smooth spectra peaking at 315 Hz, the UH-60A has a more narrow high-frequency spectra peaking at 630 Hz, and the CH-47C has a broad spectra with a low-frequency peak at 160 Hz. The CH-47C has much more high-frequency energy above 1250 Hz than either the UH-1H or UH-60A. No strong systematic relationship can be observed between decay rate and spectral type. However, the two lower frequency helicopters displayed decays nearer to 7 dB per decade, whereas the CH-47C, which has more energy at high frequencies, shows a more slowly increasing difference

⁹Standard Values of Atmosphere Absorption as a Function of Temperature and Humidity.

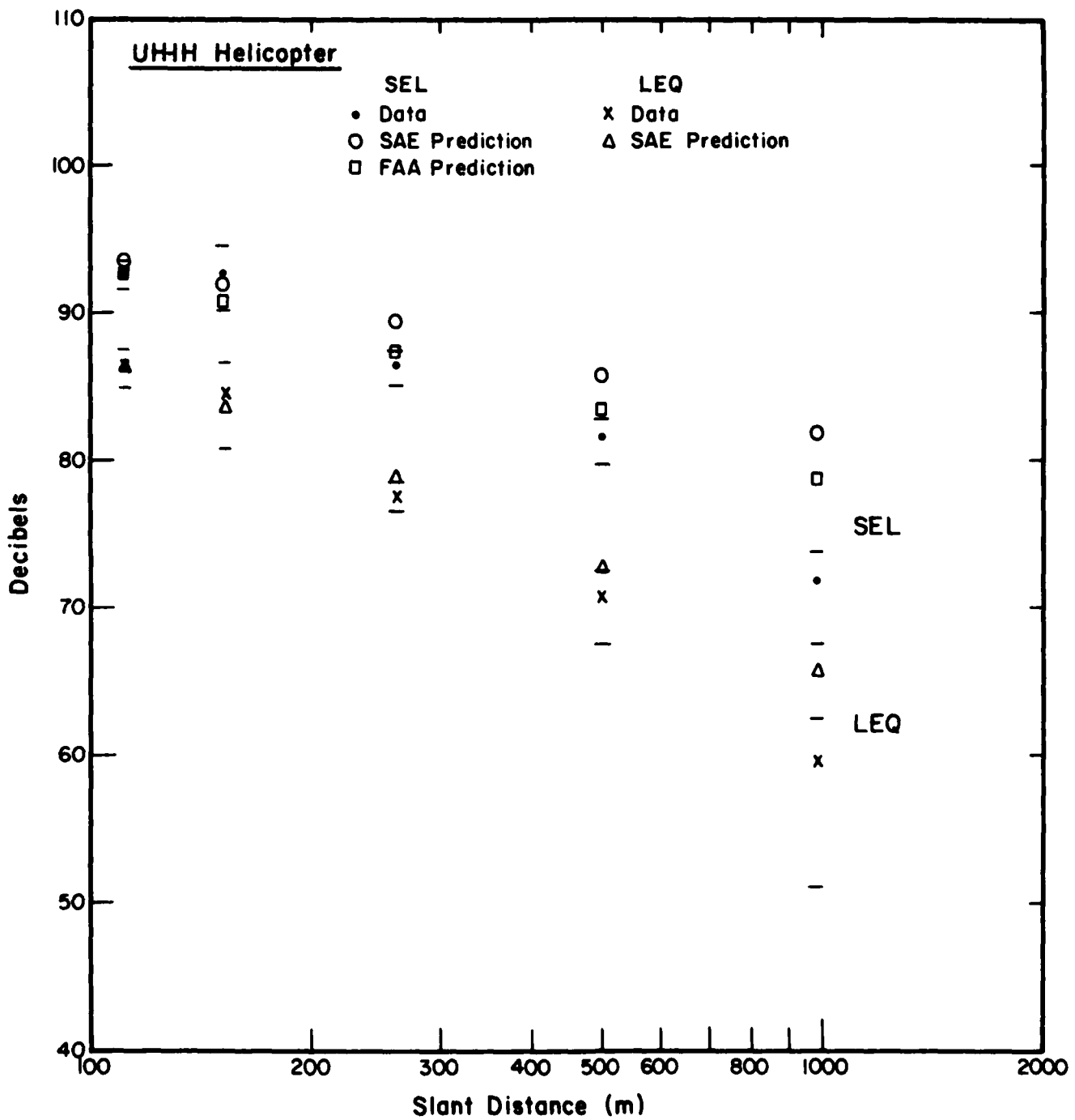


Figure 4. FAA method versus measured levels for UH-1H.

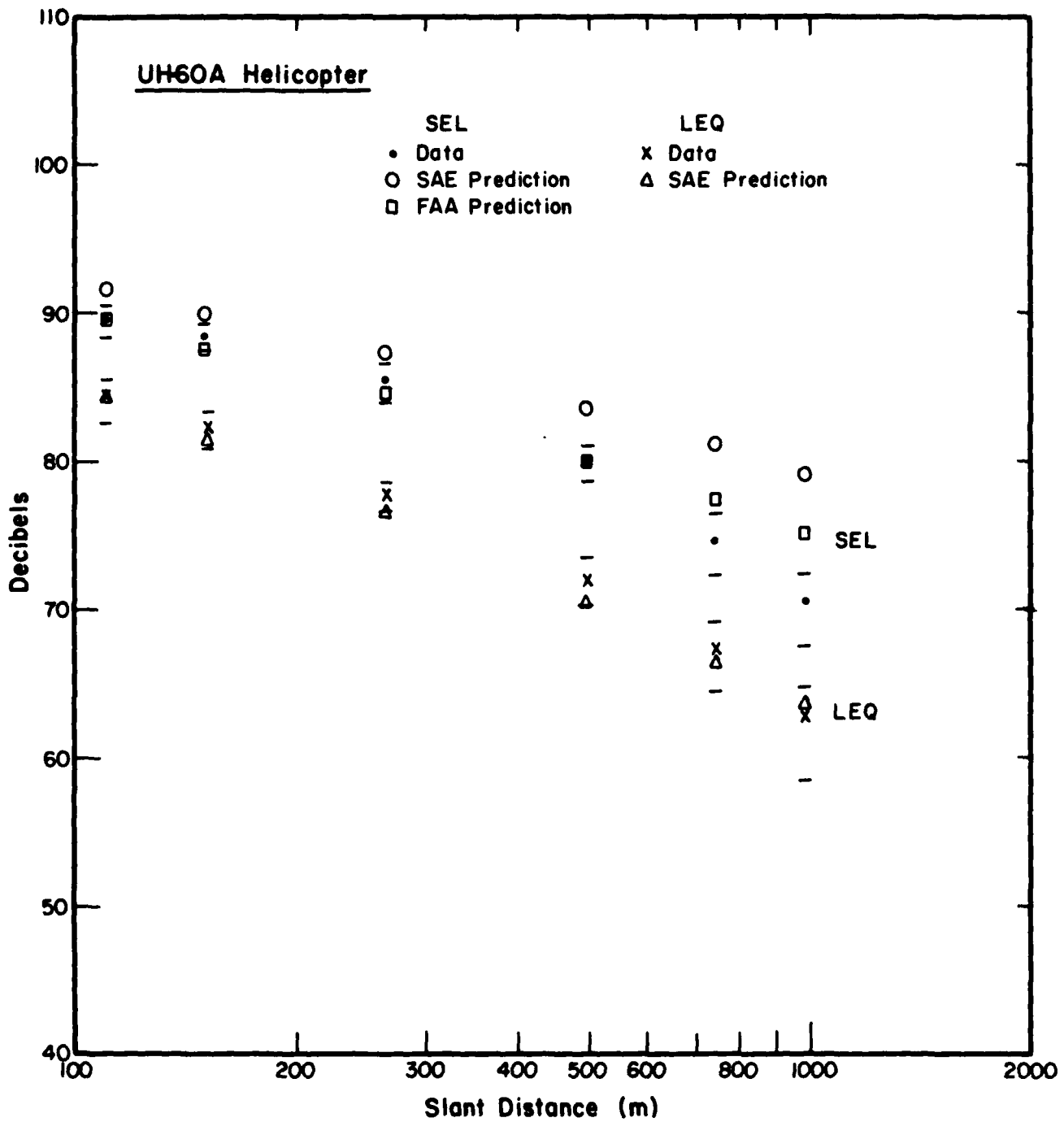


Figure 5. FAA method versus measured levels for UH-60A.

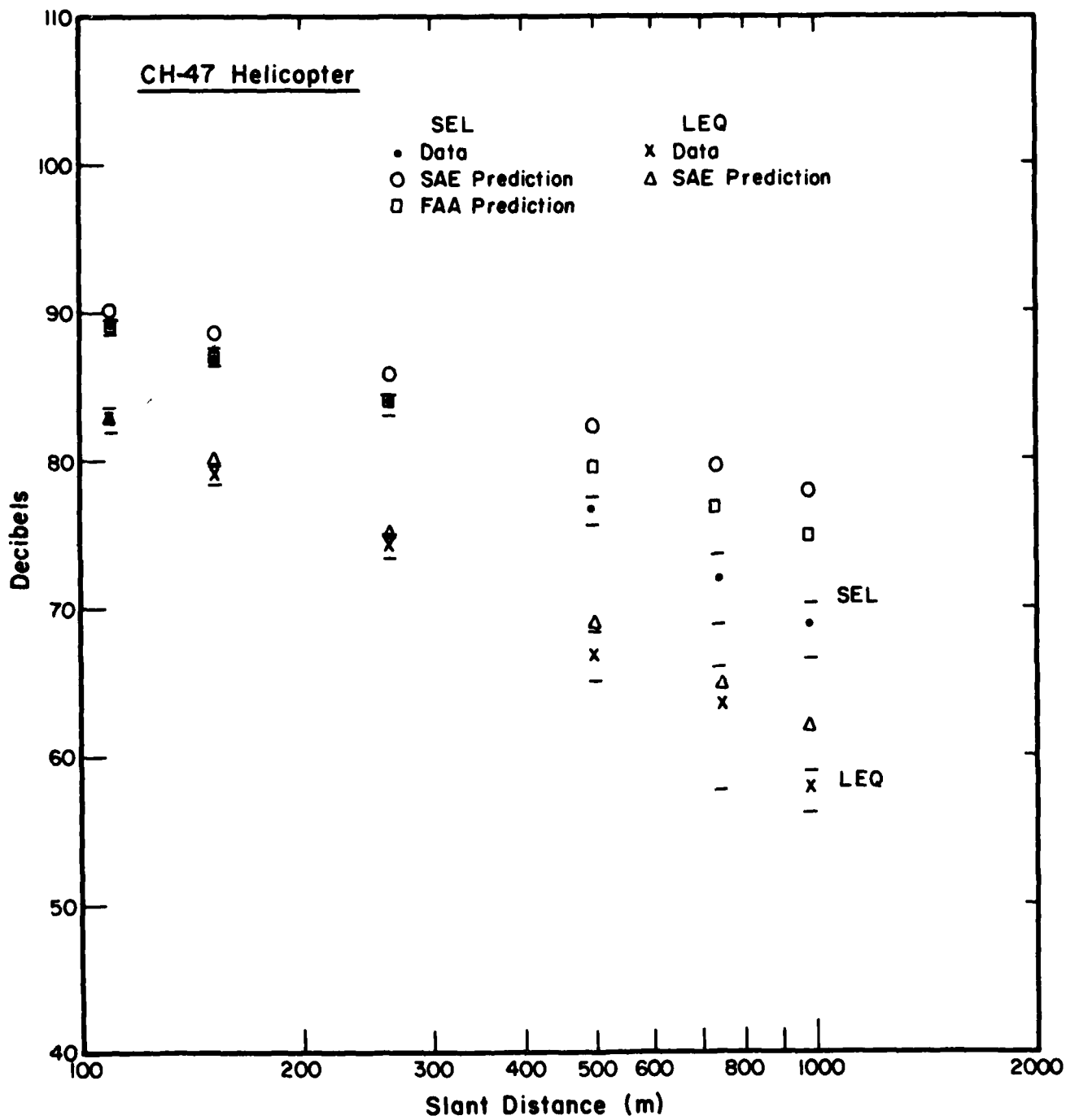


Figure 6. FAA method versus measured levels for CH-47C.

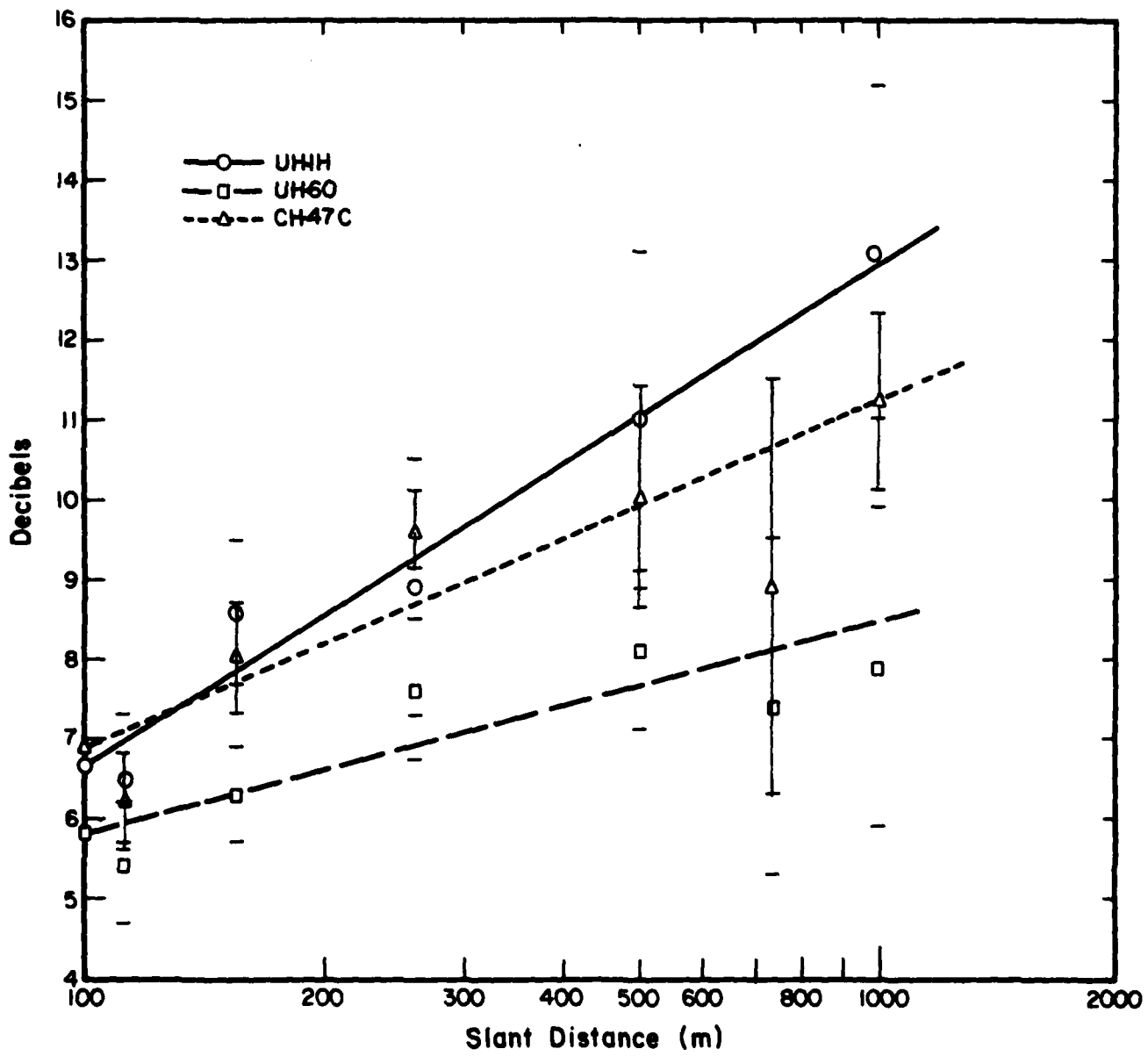


Figure 7. (SEL-LEQ) versus distance.

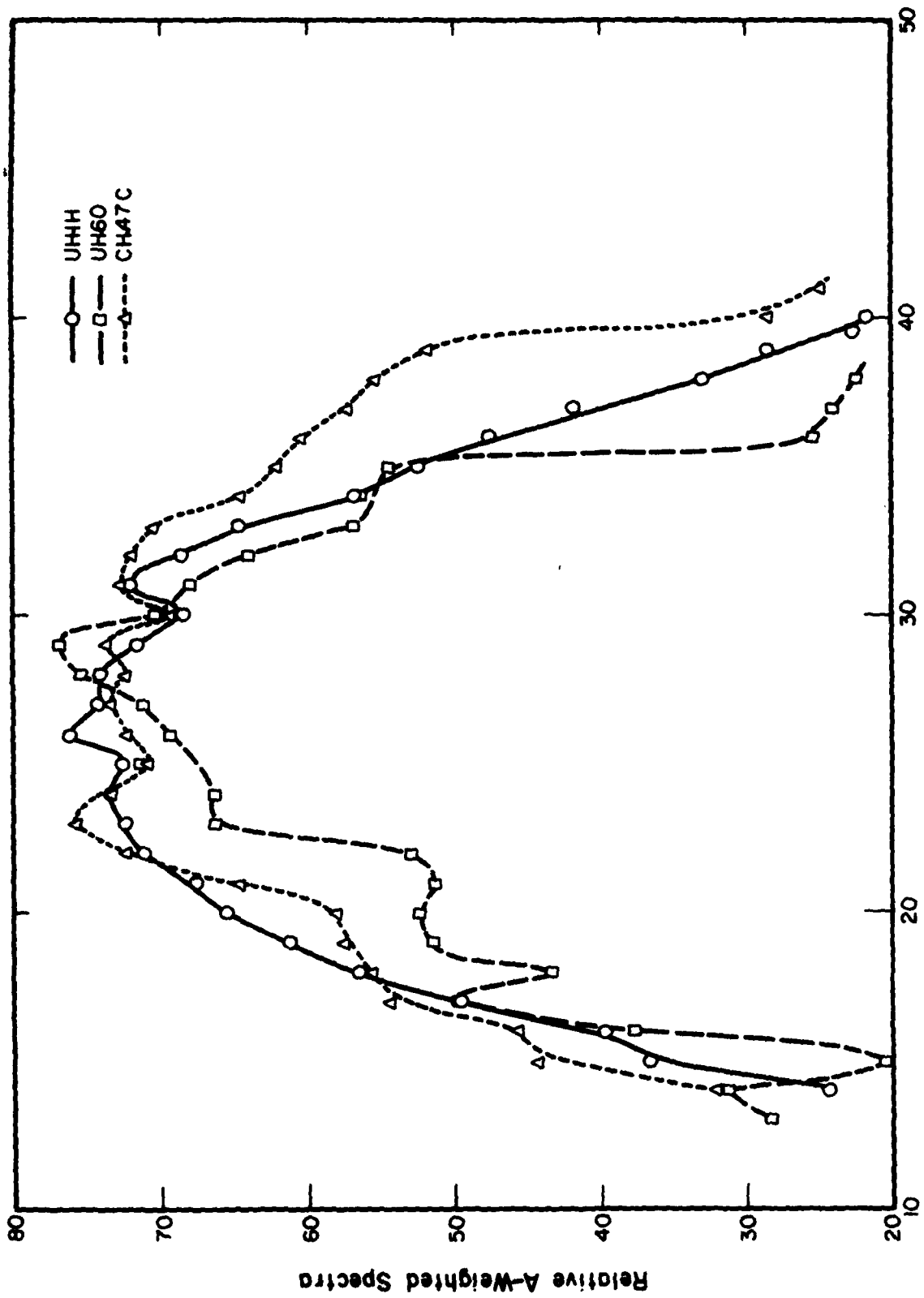


Figure 8. Comparison of normalized A-weighted helicopter spectra.

between SEL and LEQ. The effect of spectral content on decay will be discussed more in Chapter 5.

It was concluded from this analysis that the FAA procedure is acceptable for slant distances up to 300 m. For the CH-47C, the procedure overestimates SEL by 5 dB at 500 m. It is notable that the duration factor's actual behavior varies among helicopters. There is a tendency for the difference between the SEL and LEQ to become almost constant as the distance increases. SEL predictions for the UH-1H, which has an experimental duration factor closest to 7 dB per decade, are no better than predictions for the other helicopters. The measured LEQ in this case is much below the predicted LEQ, so that the measured SEL is also below the predicted SEL.

4 COMPUTER MODEL FOR FLYBY INTEGRATION

Chapter 3 has shown that neither the FAA procedure nor a calculation performing the actual integral and using only SAE attenuation and incoherent addition could adequately describe the sound decay with distance for large slant distances. Therefore, a detailed computer model called "NHELI" was constructed to perform the integration for a flyby. Options included in this model are:

1. Hard or finite impedance¹⁰ ground surface
2. SAE 866A or ANSI S1.26¹¹ atmospheric attenuation
3. Coherent or incoherent interference between the direct and reflected wave. The two extreme cases of completely coherent or completely incoherent were modeled for lack of information on atmospheric stability or instability.

Input for this program is the one-third-octave source spectrum of the helicopter type during the maximum 0.5 sec at a reference distance of 91.5 m. The LEQ for any distance is calculated in this program by three steps:

1. Atmospheric attenuation and spherical spreading are calculated for each one-third-octave band. The A-weighted factor is also introduced at this stage.
2. The ground attenuation relative to 0 dB at 1 m is calculated either with a reflection coefficient of 1 or from Donato's notation for reflection from a finite impedance ground. If coherent addition is specified, the complex amplitudes are added and then multiplied by the complex conjugate of this total to give energy; if incoherent addition is specified, the amplitudes of the direct and reflected waves are each multiplied by their complex conjugates and then added.
3. The factors above are combined to give the one-third-octave level, which is then summed to give the total LEQ.

The LEQ is calculated for the slant distance to begin the integration. Under the assumption of spherical symmetry, the LEQ occurs at the distance of closest approach. This value is stored for later comparison.

¹⁰R. J. Donato, "Propagation of a Spherical Wave Near a Plane Boundary with a Complex Impedance," J. Acoust. Soc. Am., Vol 60, No. 1 (July 1976), pp 34-39. Although Donato's results are used, an improved derivation of the finite ground impedance results can be found in: Keith Attenborough, Sabih I. Hayeh, and James M. Lawther, "Propagation of Sound Above a Porous Half Space," J. Acoust. Soc. Am., Vol 68, No. 5 (November 1980), pp 1493-1501. The results of both theories are very close, however, for geometries and frequencies in this study.

¹¹American National Standard Method for the Calculation of the Absorption of Sound by the Atmosphere, ANSI S1.26 (American National Standards Institute, 1978).

The horizontal ordinant y is incremented by a small step and the SEL for this step is calculated as above. The choice of increment is important: it should be small enough so the phase difference between direct and reflected waves changes slowly for all significant frequencies (A-weighted one-third-octave contribution down 10 dB from the peak). Five hundred steps were found to accommodate all coherent cases. The requirement is not as stringent for incoherent addition and 100 steps were enough. The integration range was chosen to be $3.1 D$ where D is the slant range. The incrementing and calculation were continued until the LEQ for the segment was 10 dB down from the LEQ (D). Figure 9 is a flow chart for this routine and Figure 10 is a typical output.

Since the one-third-octave spectra were relative values, the LEQ at the distance of closest approach 110 m is forced to agree with the data and all other distances are corrected by this same amount when the prediction is compared with actual data.

Attenuation Model

This computer model was used to study the sensitivity of SEL and LEQ to certain known variables. The first step was to compare the SAE 866A standard with the ANSI S1.26 standard for the same atmospheric conditions. Table 1 shows the results for incoherent propagation temperature 15°C , relative humidity 70 percent, helicopter flights at 100 knots, and altitudes of 91.5 m AGL. The differences between the two methods are very minor for the helicopter tested. However, these differences would be significant if individual one-third-octave bands at higher frequencies were examined.

Coherent Versus Incoherent: Hard Surface

Coherent or incoherent addition of the direct and reflected waves from a hard surface was next examined. The strength of this test is limited by the spectral representation in one-third-octave bands rather than in narrow bands; however, for the altitude and slant ranges in this study, the interference bands are quite broad compared to single one-third-octave bands. The helicopter spectra are relatively broadband, so this sensitivity test can still provide useful information. Figures 11 through 13 show results for the three helicopters at a 91.5-m AGL altitude, 1.2-m microphone height, 100-knot aircraft speed, 15°C temperature, 70 percent relative humidity, and 1.01 kPa pressure.

Figures 4 through 6 show incoherent hard surface results for comparison with the FAA method. For all helicopters, the coherent SEL and LEQ are lower for intermediate ranges and slightly higher at long ranges at which the phase difference between direct and reflected rays becomes small. The maximum difference occurs for the UH-60A's LEQ.

The LEQ is expected to be more sensitive than the SEL to whether the direct and reflected waves are coherent or incoherent, since SEL is an integral over many positions whereas the maximum LEQ (LEQMAX) depends on interference at one location. These effects are expected to be greatest for the UH-60A

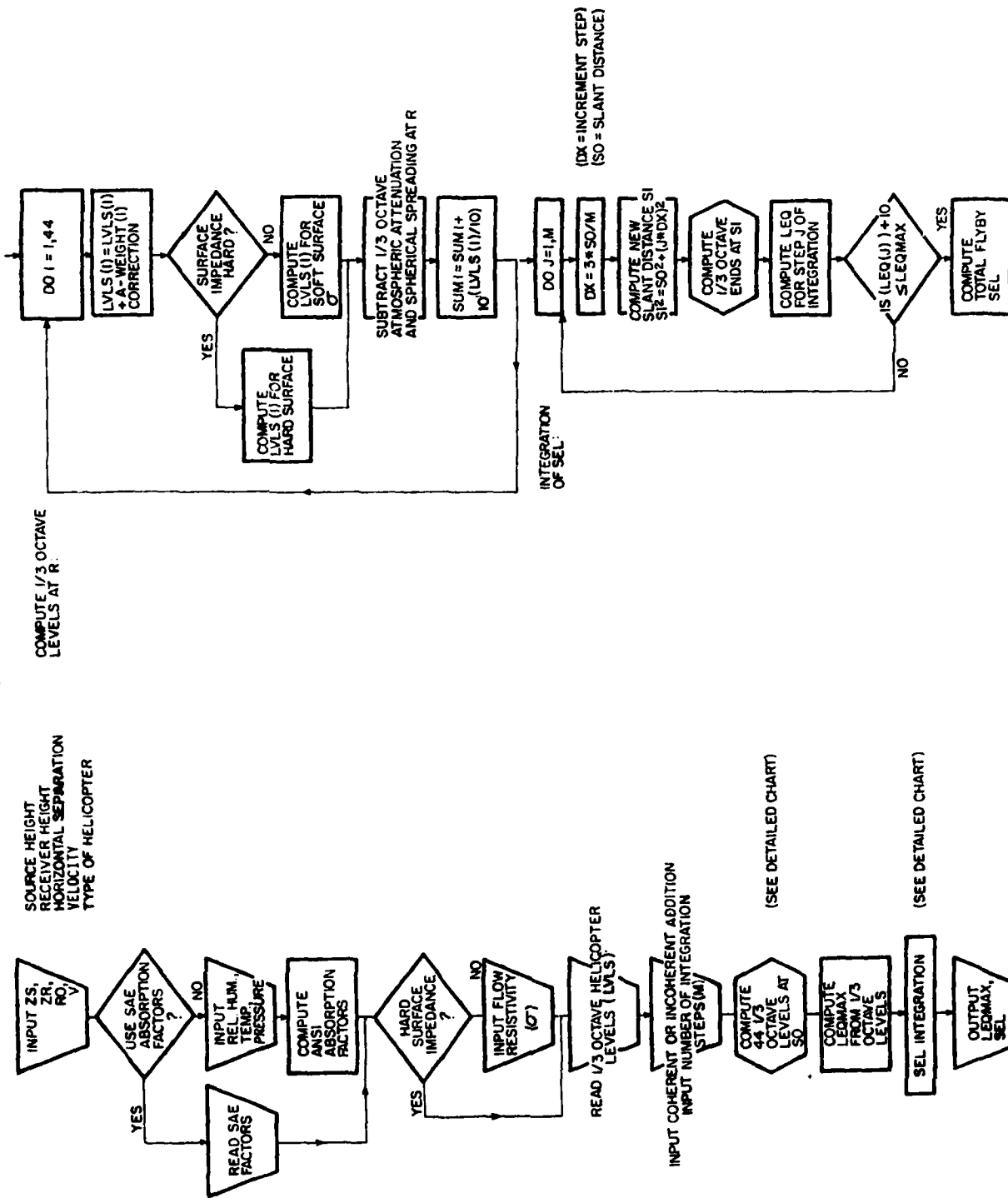


Figure 9. NHELI program flow chart.

ALTITUDE = 91.50 M
 MIC HEIGHT = 1.20 M
 DISTANCE MIC OFF FLIGHT TRACK = 120.00 M
 VELOCITY = 51.400 M/SEC
 USING ANSI ABSORPTION FACTORS (VIA AIRAB)
 REL HUMIDITY = 64.0 %
 TEMPERATURE = 300.0 K
 PRESSURE = 1.0 ATM
 SURFACE IS SOFT
 SIGMA = 100.00
 NUMBER OF STEPS TO BE USED FOR INTEGRATION = 100

FOR COHERENT INTERFERENCE ASSUMED...

SO = 150.90
 V = 51.400
 LEQMAX = 76.85
 SEL = 84.67
 TMAX = 14.327

FOR INCOHERENT INTERFERENCE ASSUMED...

SO = 150.90
 V = 51.400
 LEQMAX = 76.61
 SEL = 84.70
 TMAX = 14.797

Figure 10. Sample output of NHELI program.

Table 1
Computer-Calculated Comparison of SAE and ANSI Standards

	Dist. (m)	SAE LEQ	SEL	ANSI Using SAE Std. Cond.	
				LEQ	SEL
UH-1H	110.25	83.82	90.36	83.82	90.36
(NHELI 1)	260.59	75.18	85.88	75.17	85.94
	737.7	66.06	82.05	66.17	82.12
UH-60A	110.25	80.26	87.94	80.26	87.94
(NHELI2)	260.59	71.92	83.19	71.91	83.20
	737.7	59.99	76.89	60.08	76.82
CH-47C	110.25	78.04	84.40	78.05	84.42
(NHELI 4)	260.59	68.87	79.98	68.90	80.09
	737.7	60.13	75.76	60.36	76.03

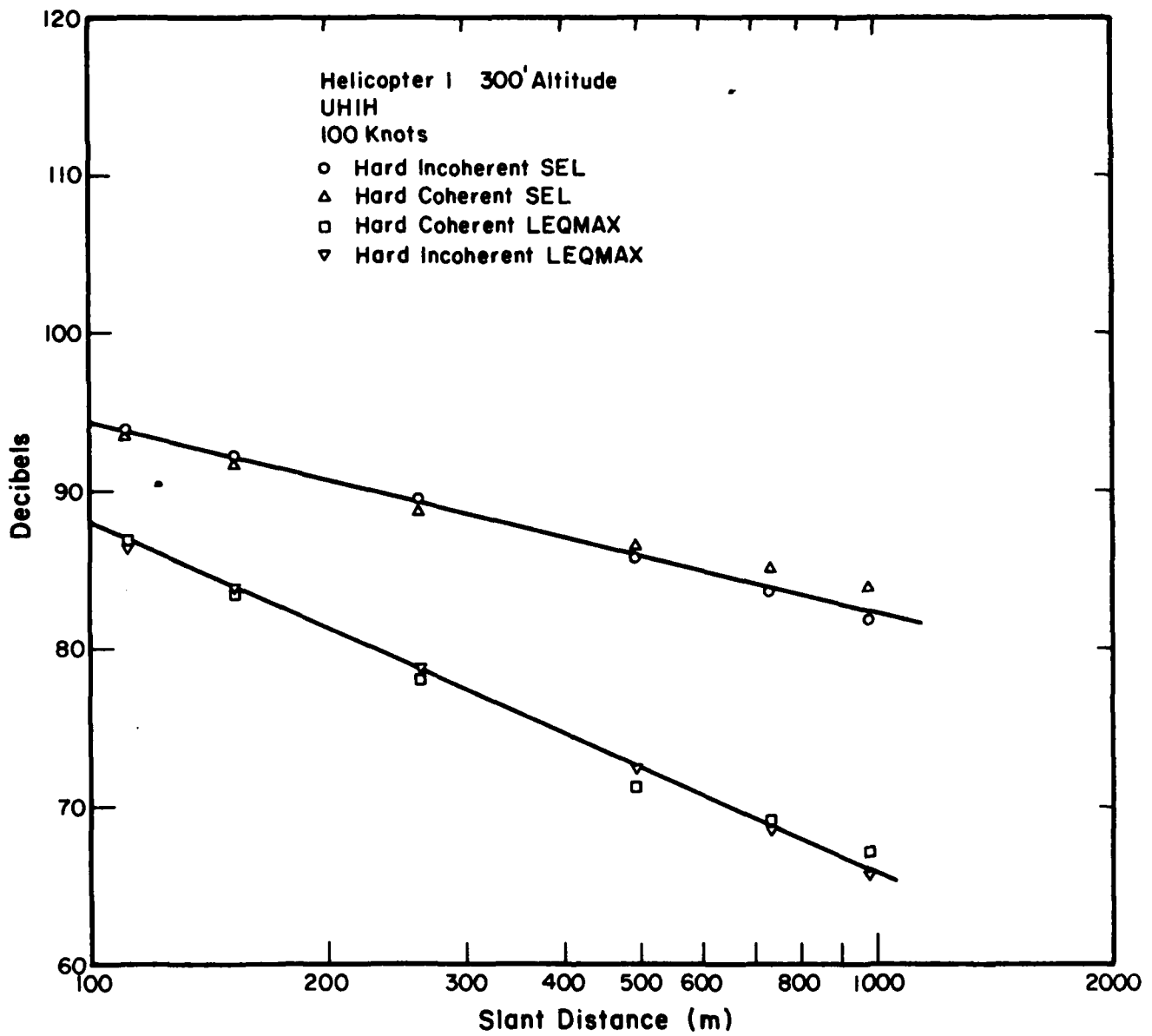


Figure 11. NHELI predictions for US-1H over hard surface.

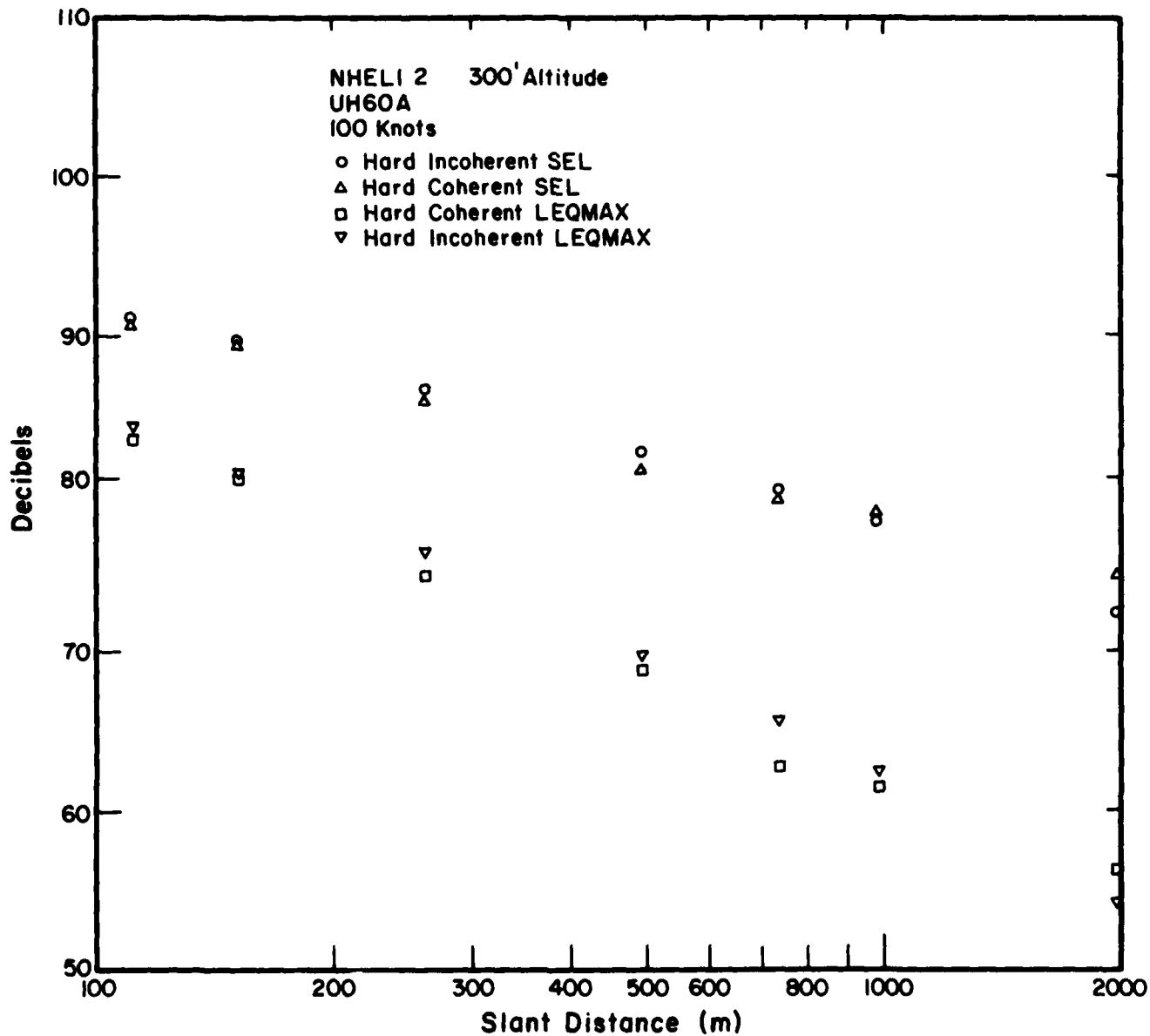


Figure 12. NHELI predictions for UH-60A over hard surface.

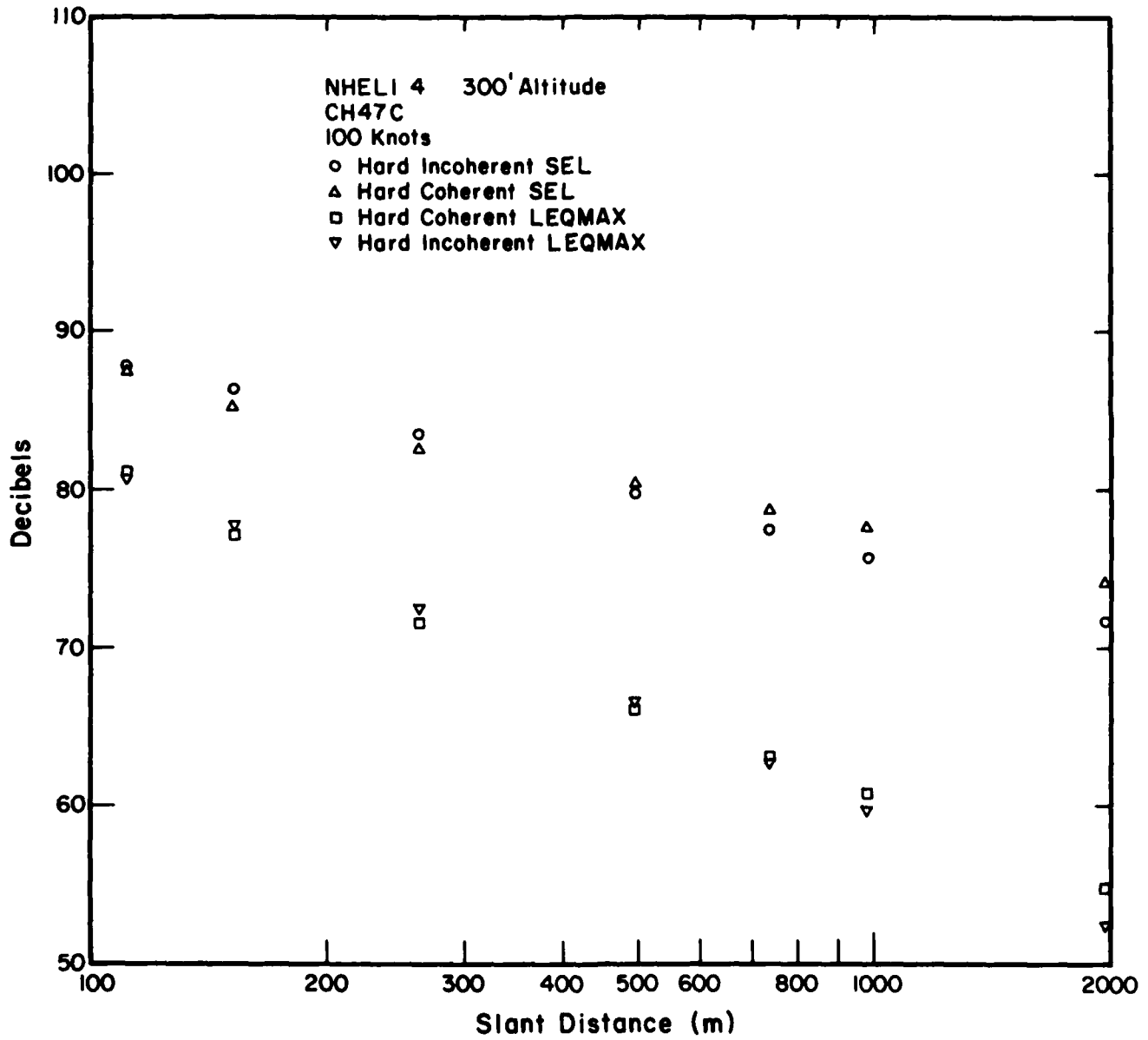


Figure 13. NHELI predictions for CH-47C over hard surface.

because its spectrum peaks sharply at 630 Hz rather than showing wideband behavior like the CH-47C and UH-1H.

Coherent Versus Incoherent: Finite Impedance Surface

Coherent and incoherent propagation above a finite impedance surface were next examined. The porosity was chosen to be 100 (cgs rays), which is representative of a loose, grassy surface. The other variables are as described in the preceding section.

The finite impedance calculation is the most interesting because it best represents the sideline conditions at Fort Campbell. Comparing Figures 14 through 16 with Figures 11 through 13, the reduction due to the finite impedance ground is quite large; the incoherent SELs are reduced by 3 to 4 dB at 1000 m slant distance, and the coherent ones are reduced even more. The difference between the coherent and incoherent cases above finite impedance ground is 2 to 3 dB. This is expected since, at large slant ranges, much of the spectrum undergoes a phase change near π due to ground reflection near π . At long slant ranges, the direct and reflected path difference is small and cancellation occurs for coherent addition; under the assumption of complete incoherence, intensity addition occurs.

Turbulence was not measured at Fort Campbell, so it is not possible to calculate the mutual coherence as derived by Daigle.¹² However, coherence for ground level propagation can be estimated for a typical day.

From Daigle, the lateral coherence estimated at 3000 m for a 340-Hz signal on a summer day ($\langle \mu^2 \rangle = 10 \times 10^{-6}$) is on the order of 0.5 and, at 1000 m, about 0.8. Since turbulence decreases¹³ rapidly with altitude, the complete coherent calculation should be the more accurate expression for sideline decay. This is an important conclusion even for source measurement, since the microphone height does affect the measured content of the source spectra for coherent conditions.¹⁴

Figures 17 through 19 compare this "best" model with the Fort Campbell measurements. In this comparison, the predicted LEQ has been adjusted to match the measured LEQ. This adjustment is necessary since the source spectra used are relative, not absolute.

The agreement between the finite ground impedance, coherent interference model, and the data is quite good out to 500 m except for the UH-60. For that helicopter, the procedure of aligning measured and predicted LEQs resulted in an overprediction of SEL even at close distances. The SEL's general behavior

¹²G. A. Daigle, J. E. Piercy, and T. F. W. Embleton, "Effects of Atmospheric Turbulence on the Interference of Sound Waves Near the Boundary," J. Acoust. Soc. Am., Vol 64, No. 2 (1978).

¹³E. H. Brown and S. F. Clifford, "On the Attenuation of Sound by Turbulence," J. Acoust. Soc. Am., Vol 60, No. 4 (1976).

¹⁴D. F. Pernet, The Effect of Small Variations in the Height of a Microphone Above Ground Surface on the Measurement of Aircraft Noise, Acoustics Report AC77 (National Physical Laboratory, October 1976).

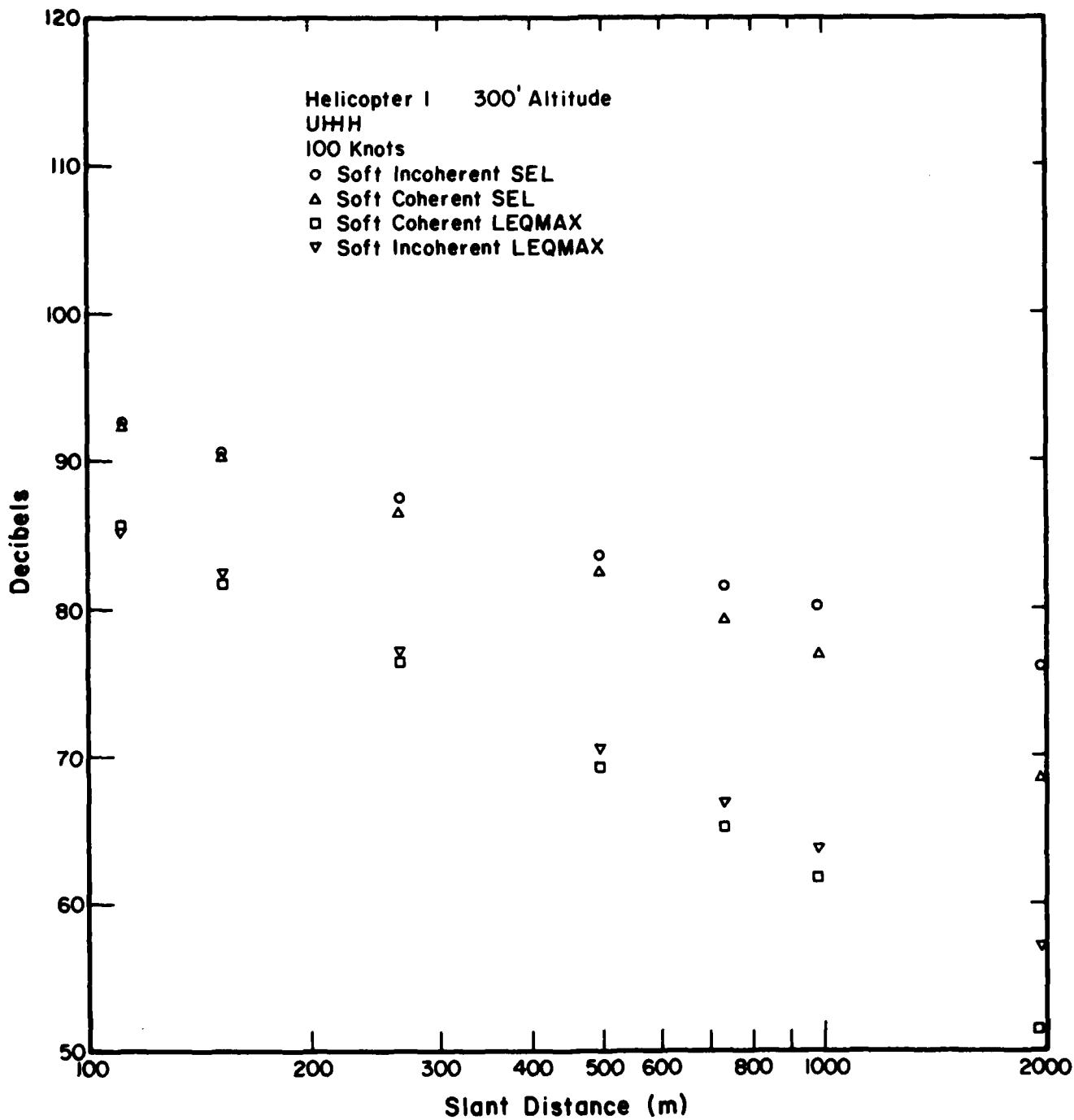


Figure 14. NHELI predictions for UH-1H over soft surface.

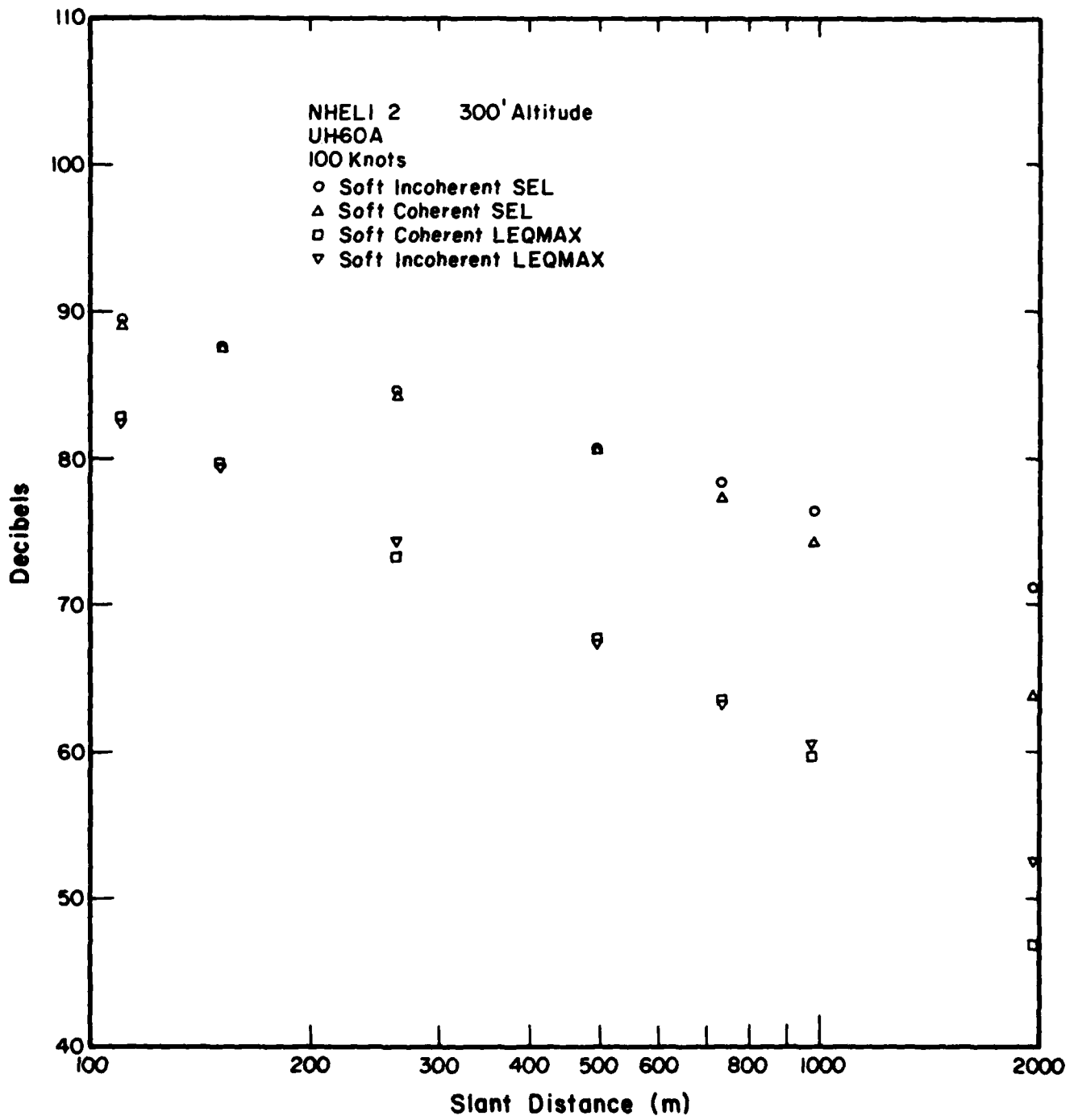


Figure 15. NHELI predictions for UH-60A over soft surface.

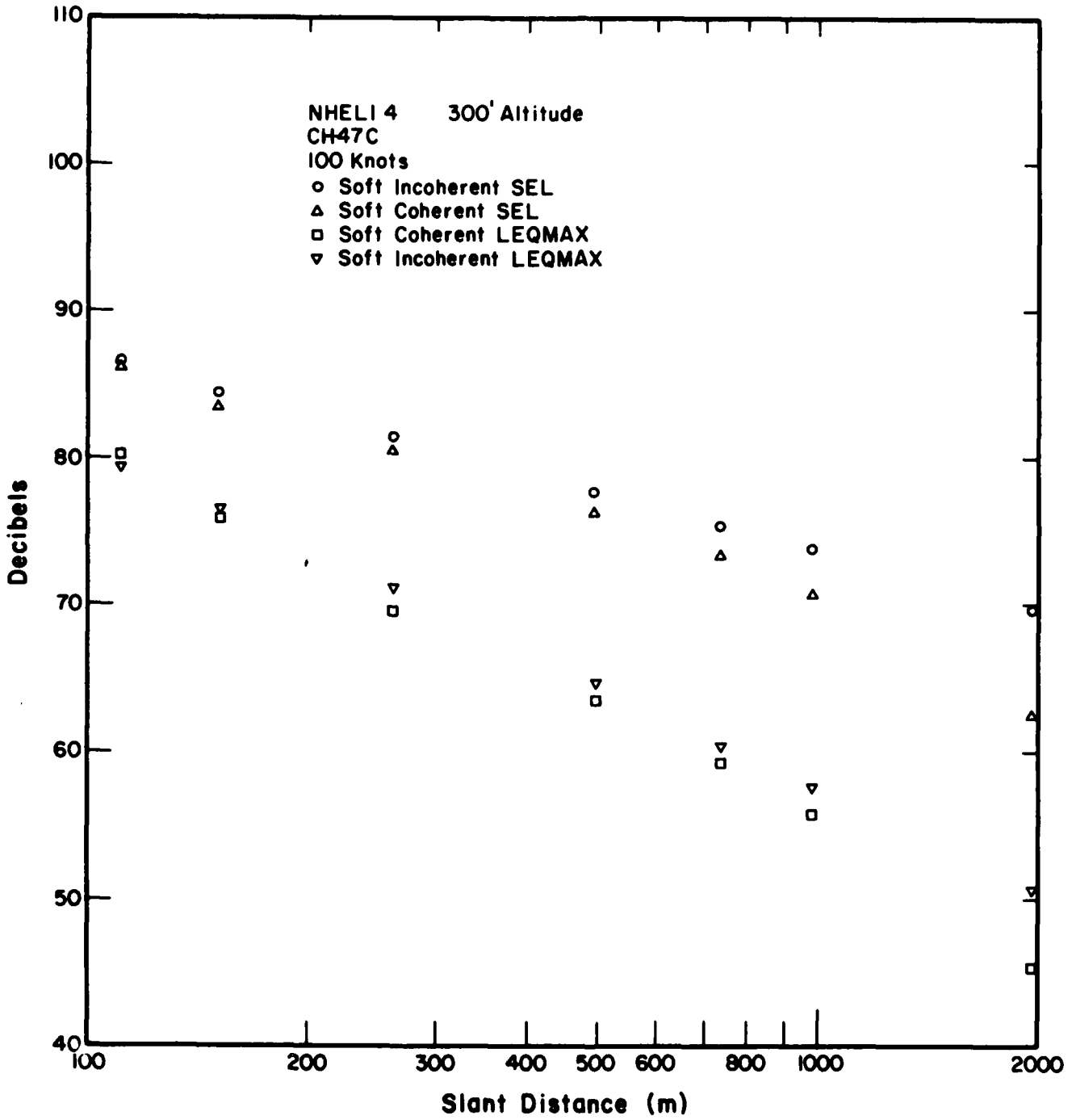


Figure 16. NHELI predictions for CH-47C over soft surface.

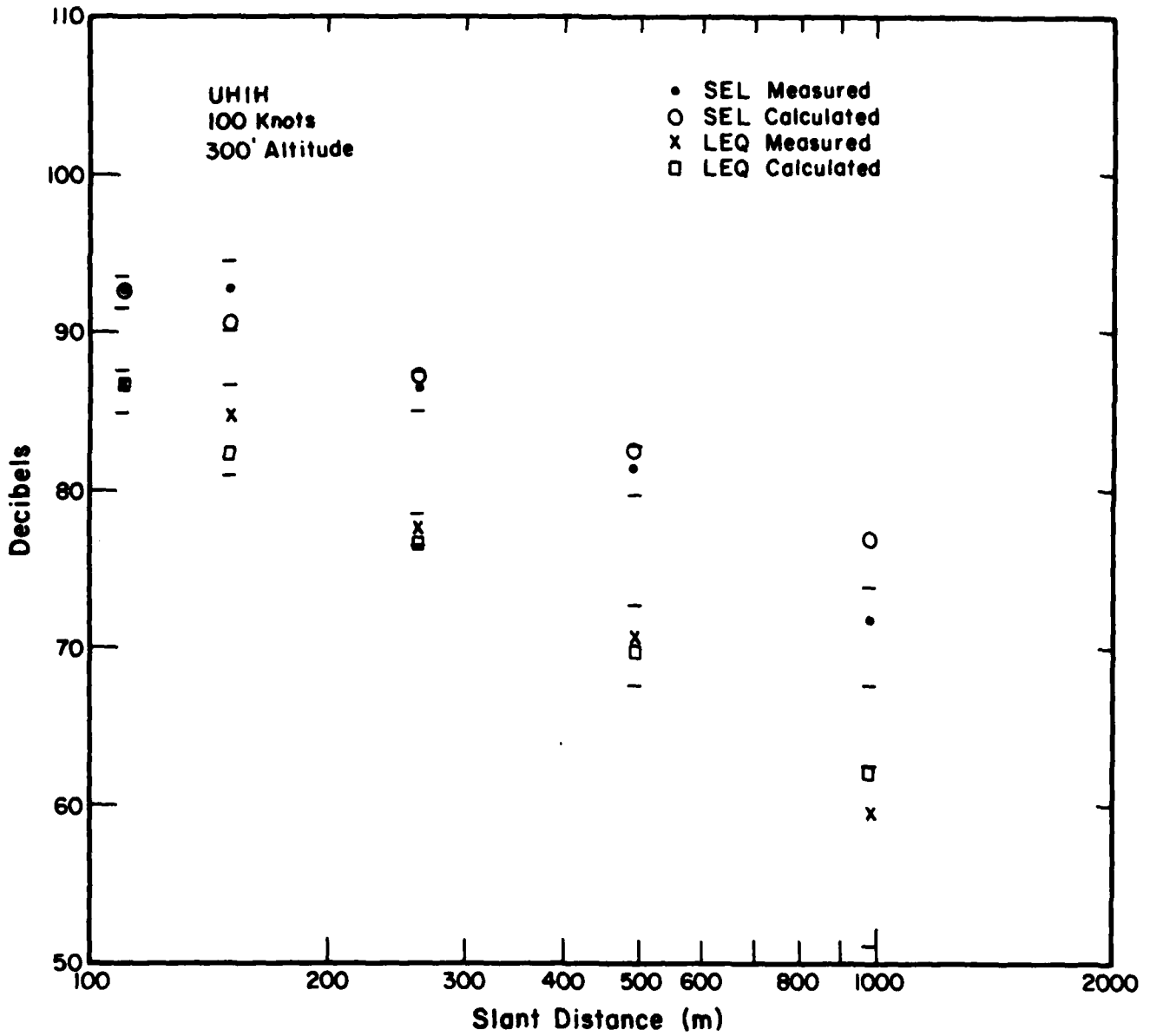


Figure 17. Soft coherent prediction versus measured levels for UH-1H.

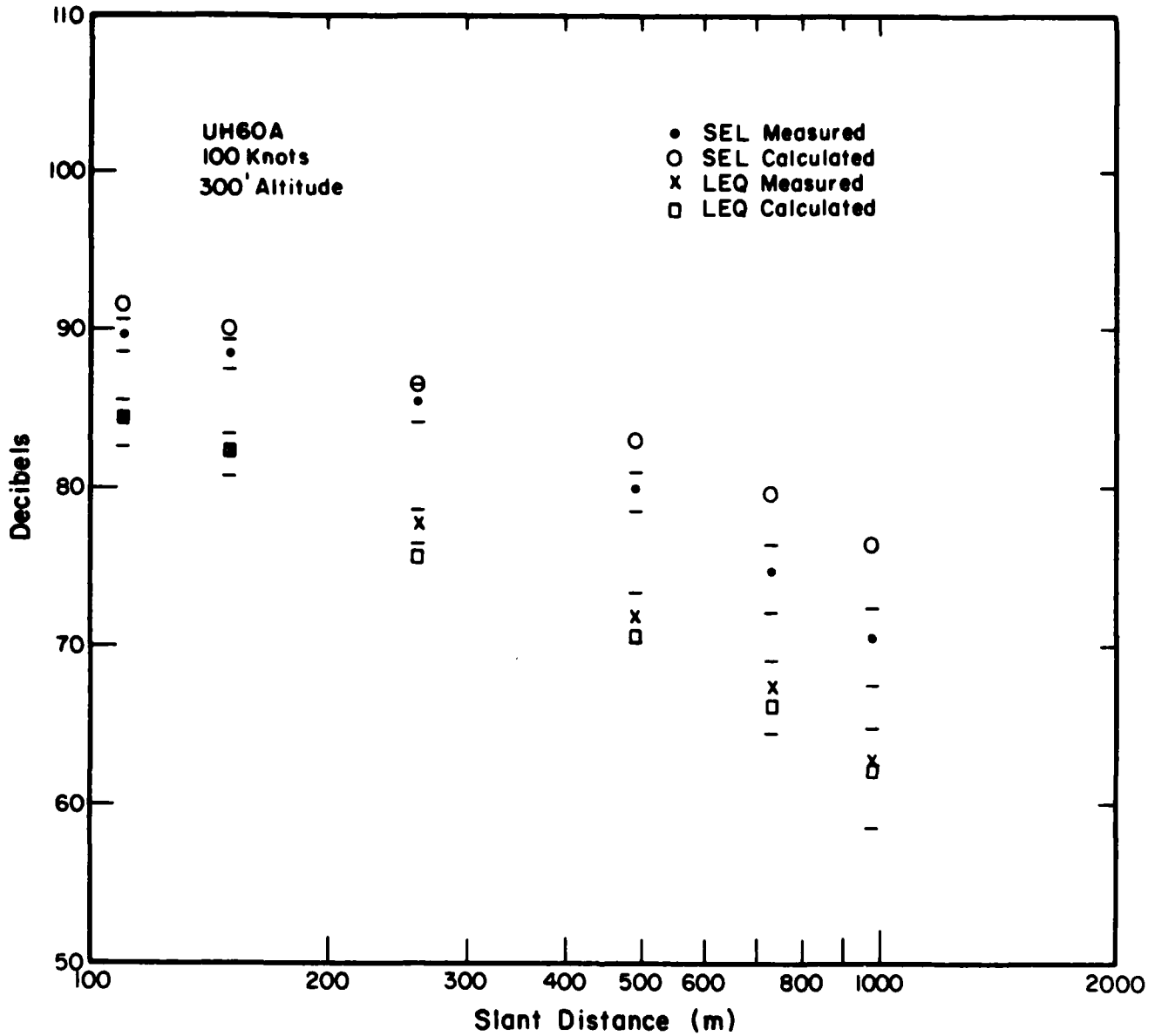


Figure 18. Soft coherent prediction versus measured levels for UH-60A.

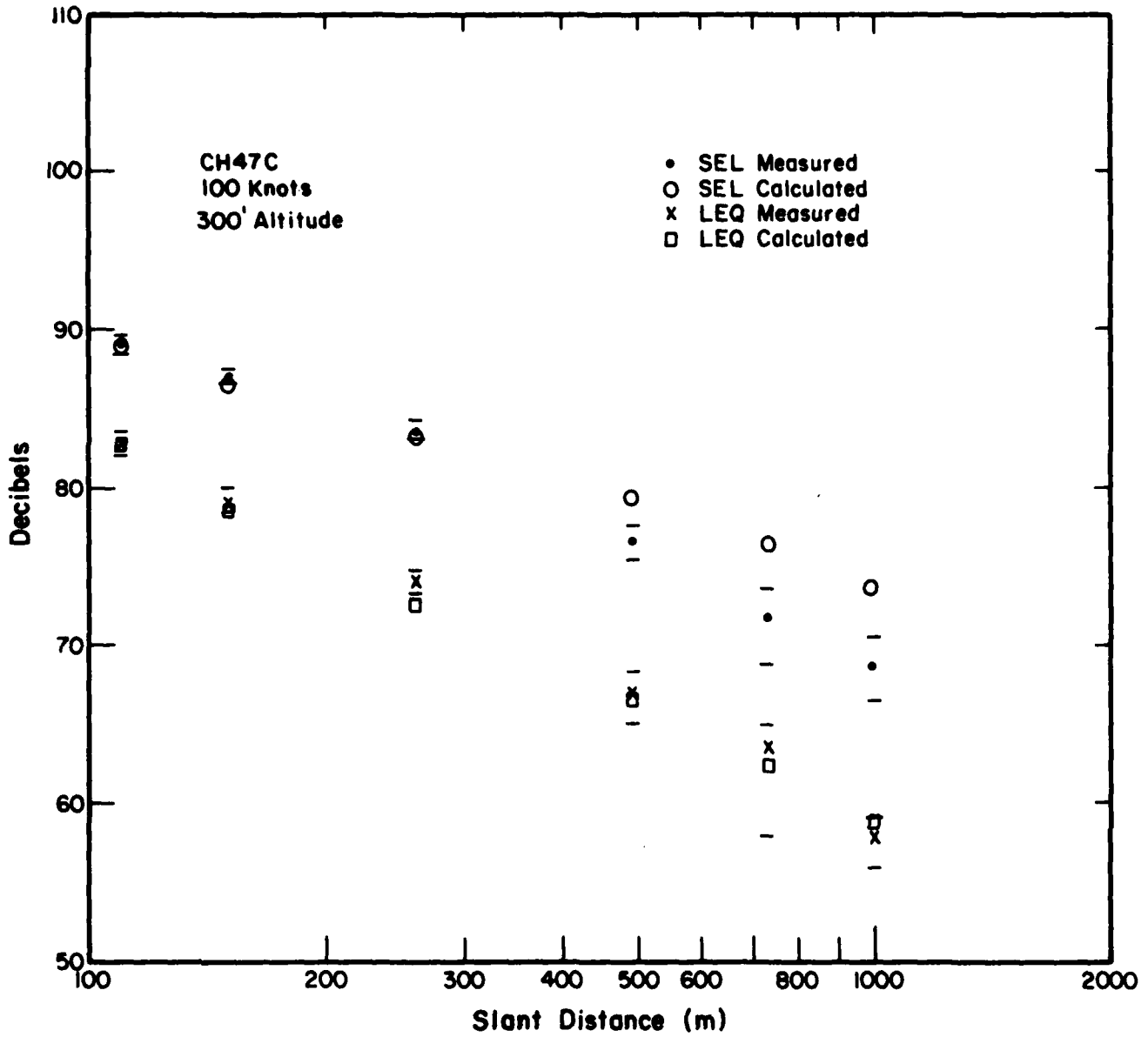


Figure 19. Soft coherent prediction versus measured levels for CH-47C.

is correct, but is about 2 dB high. If the SEL measured at 110 m slant distance is used as the reference point as in the FAA procedure, the prediction is within error bars to 500 m slant distance and above the error bars by less than 2 dB at 730 and 980 m slant distances.

The overestimation of the difference in LEQ and SEL may have resulted from representing the spectra as one-third-octaves rather than as narrow band spectra. For the UH-60A, there is a significant energy peak in the 630-Hz band and constructive or destructive interference for this one frequency greatly affects the calculation. The LEQ was predicted for sideline distances of 70, 80, 90, and 100 m and was found to vary rapidly with a variation of a few dB magnitude. This variation shows the need to consider coherent interference of the direct and reflected paths when the source has pure tones or a sharply peaked spectrum.

Calculation for 305-m Altitude

Sideline decay was calculated using the FAA procedure and the soft coherent integration was performed for UH-1H overflights at a 305-m altitude. Figure 20 shows the results of this calculation. In this case, the measurements were normalized to the 328-m slant range since the vertical directivity pattern has such a large effect on the reading at 310 m slant distance.

The vertical pattern of the rotor noise is discussed in USA-CERL Technical Report N-131. The FAA data are adjusted to give the measured SEL value at 328 m and the integration procedure is adjusted to give the correct LEQ at that slant distance. In this case, the FAA procedure agrees closely with the integration at all points, but both differ from the measured average by 4 dB or more beyond 600 m slant range.

The agreement between the methods at 305 m AGL contrasted with the differences for lower altitude flights demonstrates the importance of finite ground impedance in low-level flight sound prediction. Both procedures overestimated the SEL beyond 600 m.

Variation in Decay Rate With Aircraft Speed

Since the spectra used in the calculations are averaged over many speeds, UH-1H data from the high and low aircraft speeds (40 and 120 knots) were averaged and compared to the 100-knot data. To compare the sound decay, the data were corrected so that the LEQs at 110 m were identical and a speed correction of $10 \log (V/100)$ was added to the SEL data. Figure 21 shows the results along with the calculated levels. The differences in data from the different speeds are random and minor: there is no systematic variation with speed. This does not imply that the noise level stays unchanged with velocity, only that the decay with distance is the same once the data are corrected for velocity and source level.

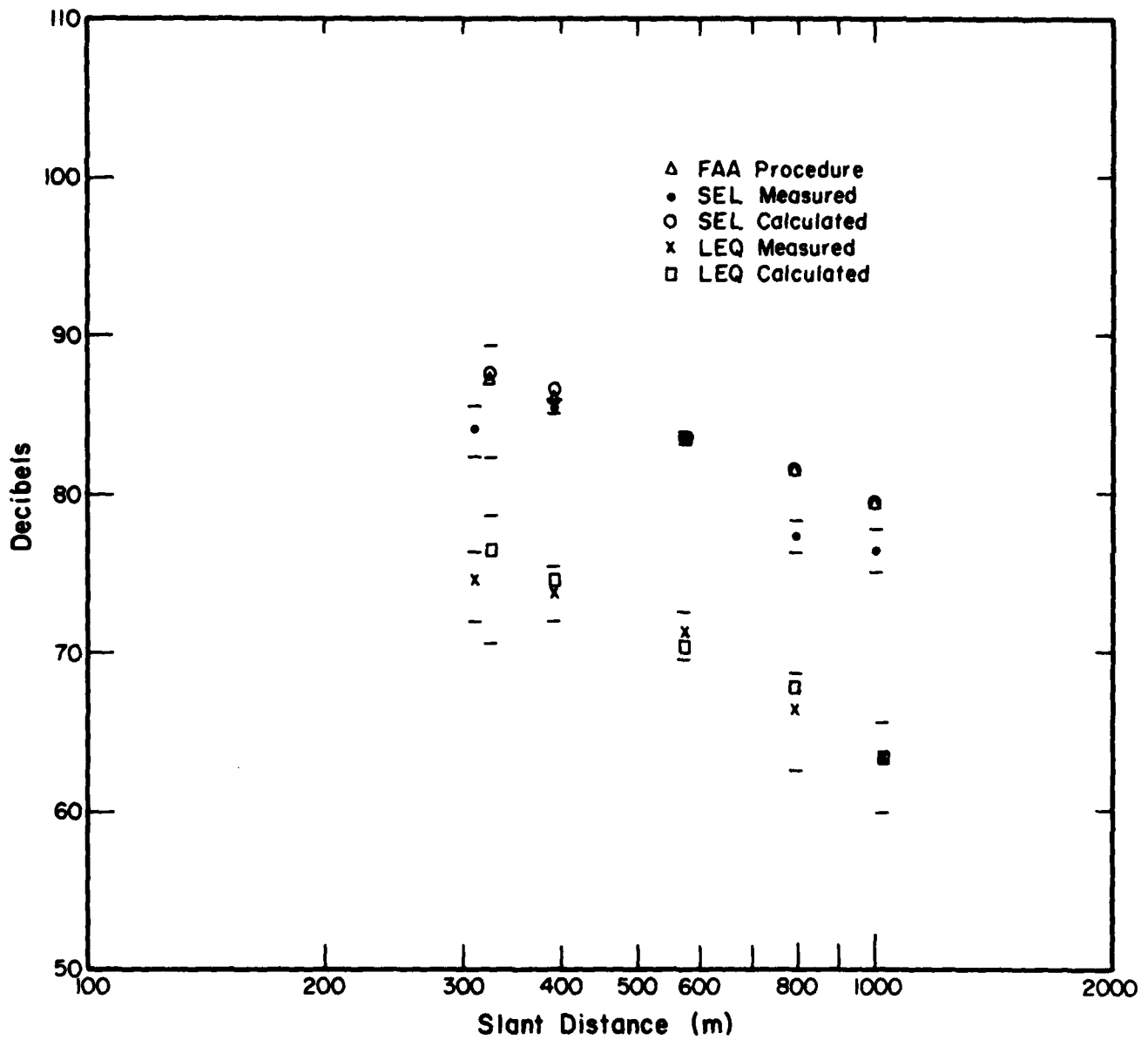


Figure 20. Soft coherent prediction versus measured levels for UH-1H and normalized to 1075.4-ft (328-m) data.

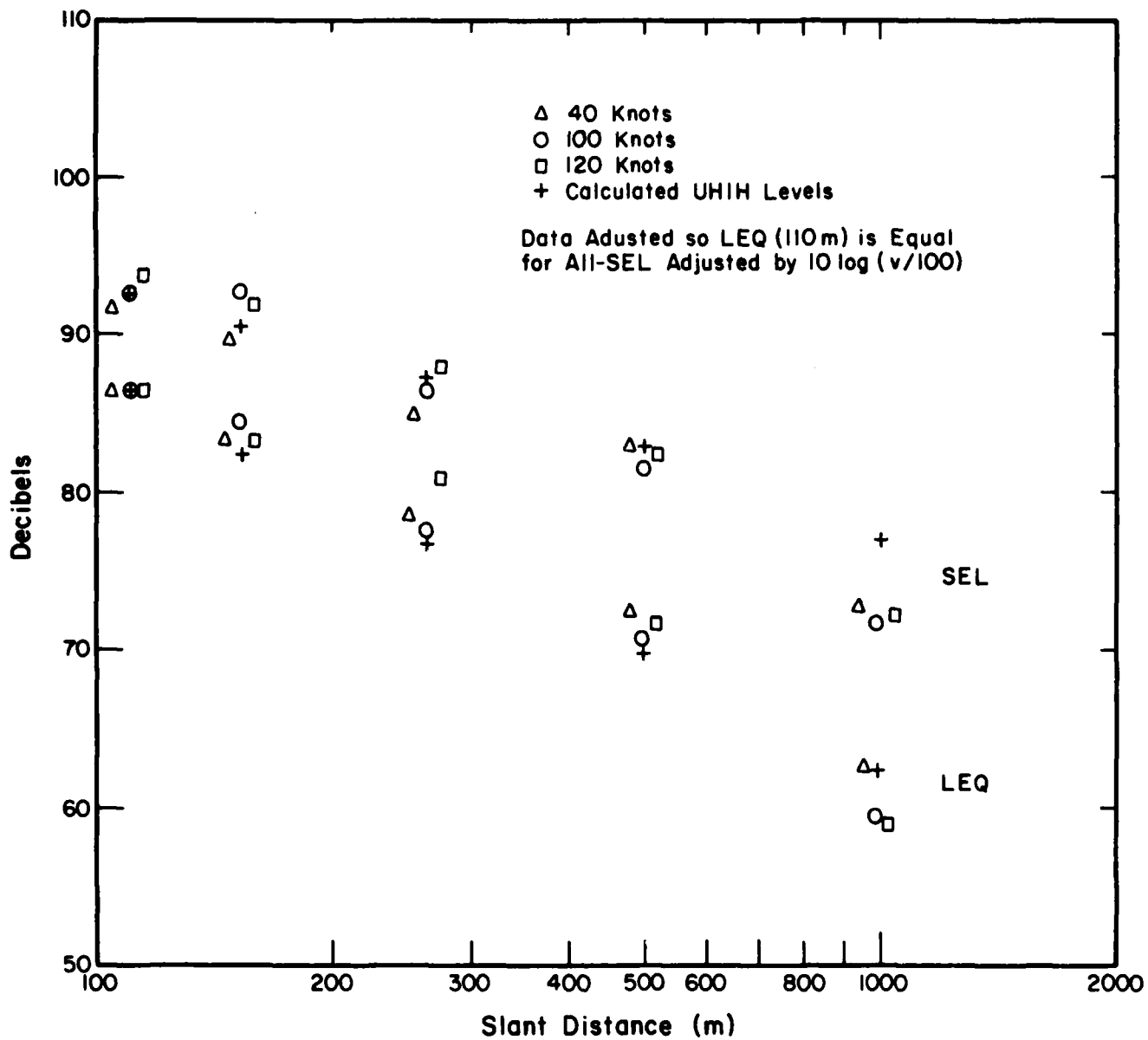


Figure 21. Check for variation in decay with speed.

5 DIRECTIVITY EFFECTS

The model for helicopter sideline noise decay does not allow adjustments for the helicopter directivity pattern or for the change in spectral content as the helicopter is approaching or receding. These two effects were investigated to see if one or both could lead to the excess decay measured at large slant distances.

Effect of Spectral Change on SEL Calculation

The spectral plots in Figure 22 show the change in frequency from mostly low frequencies as the helicopter approaches to mostly higher frequencies as it recedes. These plots are for 0.5-sec spectra of a single UH-1H flyover at

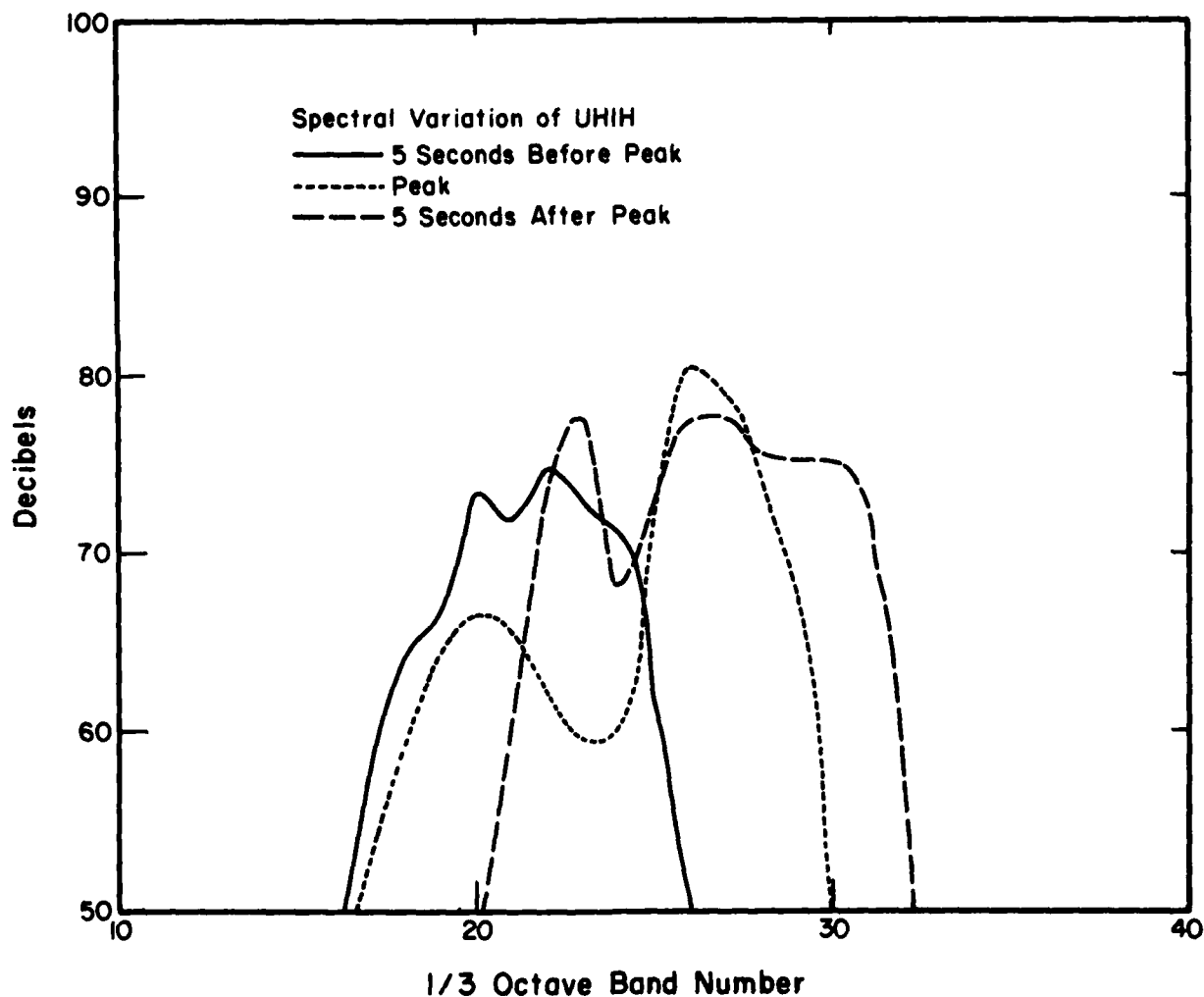


Figure 22. Spectral variation of UH-1H over flyby.

100 knots, 91.5 m altitude, and 122 m sideline distance. The spectra are more irregular than those in Figure 7 since they are not averages. The spectra were taken 5 sec before the maximum 0.5-sec LEQ, at the maximum LEQ point, and 5 sec after the 0.5-sec LEQ. These spectra were corrected for distance. SEL was calculated using the early spectra for the first half of the SEL integration and the late spectra for the second half. The peak spectrum was used to calculate the LEQ at each distance. Figure 23 compares the measured SEL and LEQ to the results of the SEL calculation using the average UH-1H data and the SEL calculated using the early and late spectra. There is no significant difference between the two calculations. Therefore, the difference between calculation and measurement is still significant--5 dB or more at large slant ranges. It is notable that the large asymmetry denoted by the spectra does not affect the SEL calculation for these measurements.

Analysis of Directivity Effects on a Level Flyby

The neutral result from the early-late simulation suggested that directionality effects for ideal cases should be examined. As discussed in USA-CERL TR N-131, vertical directivity can greatly affect microphone levels for near overhead flybys (this has been discussed in Chapter 4 when the 300-m altitude sideline decay was examined). For larger sideline distances and lower altitudes, this effect is smaller since the vertical emission angle varies only slightly with sideline distance, but it is at these larger ranges that the prediction fails. The effects of the changing spectral content due to direction changes were modeled in the preceding section. It can also be demonstrated that any horizontal directivity will not affect the ideal decay rate (the no-attenuation case).

If the pressure is modeled as depending on horizontal direction:

$$p = \frac{P_{\text{ref}} R_{\text{ref}} f(\theta)}{R}, \quad [\text{Eq 9}]$$

where $f(\theta) = 1$ at the direction of maximum emission and R is the distance to the receiver. First, the ideal LEQ is shown to vary as $20 \log d$, where d is the slant distance (Figure 2):

$$P(Y, \theta) = P_{\text{ref}} R_{\text{ref}} \frac{f(\theta)}{\sqrt{d^2 + y^2}}. \quad [\text{Eq 10}]$$

To maximize P for any d , it is expressed in terms of θ only:

$$P(D, \theta) = P_{\text{ref}} R_{\text{ref}} \frac{f(\theta) \sin \theta}{d}. \quad [\text{Eq 11}]$$

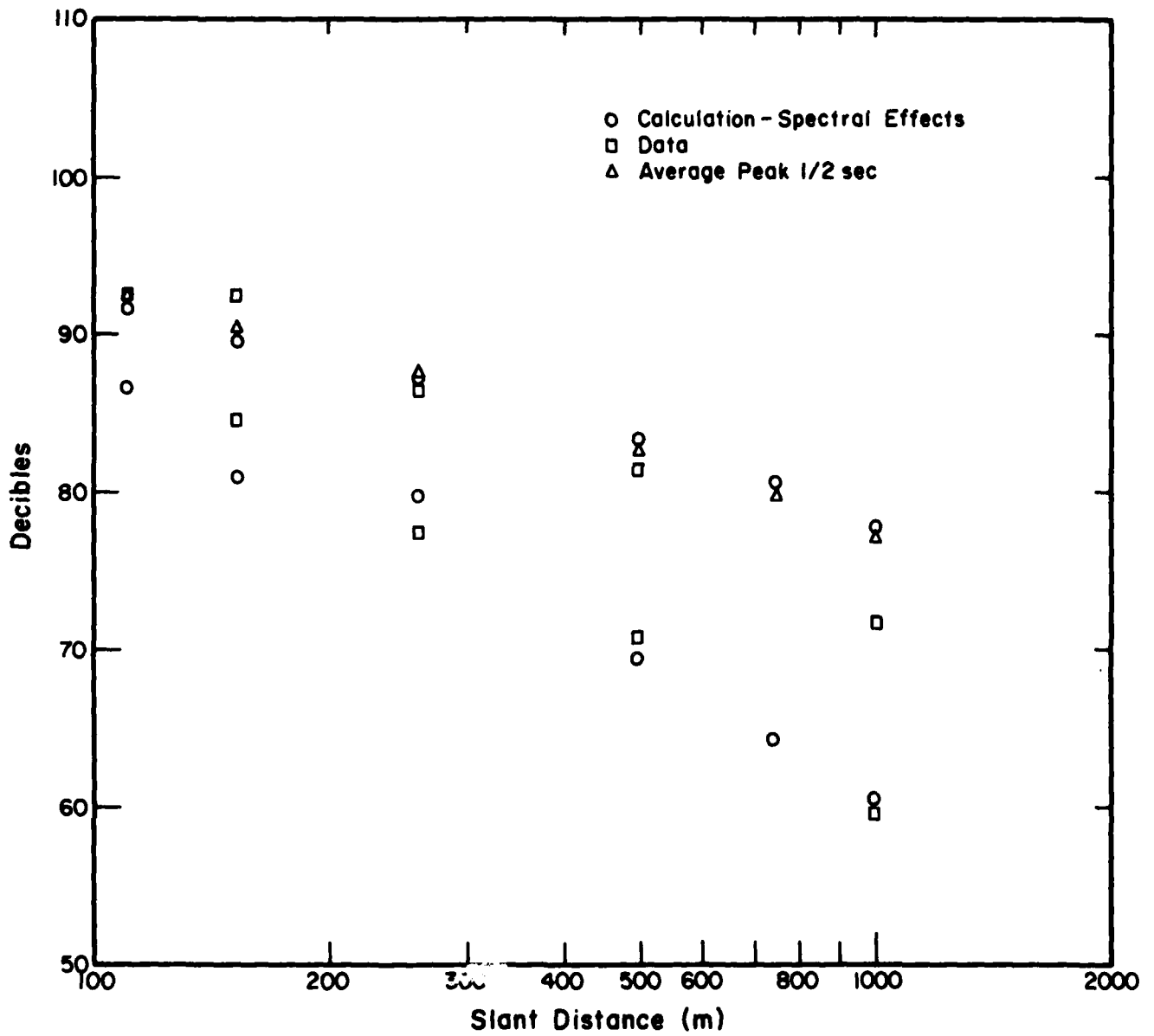


Figure 23. Spectral effects calculation.

The maximum sound pressure level for any slant distance D will occur at the same angle θ such that $f(\theta) \sin\theta$ is a maximum. This implies that:

$$P_{\max} \propto 1/D \text{ and}$$

$$\text{LEQ} \propto -20 \log D.$$

Since the pressure level has the angular dependence described in Equation 11, the endpoints (10 dB down points) are also defined uniquely and occur at the same θ_E and θ_L (although the two angles are not necessarily equal). The SEL integral is:

$$I = \int_{\theta_E}^{\theta_L} \frac{P_{\text{ref}}^2 R_{\text{ref}}^2 f^2(\theta)}{D^2 + Y^2} \frac{dy}{v}.$$

$$Y = \frac{d}{\tan\theta} ; dy = \frac{d d\theta}{\sin^2\theta} ;$$

$$D^2 + Y^2 = D^2/\sin^2\theta.$$

Substituting, the integral becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} I &= P_{\text{ref}}^2 R_{\text{ref}}^2 \int_{\theta_E}^{\theta_L} f^2(\theta) \frac{\sin^2\theta}{d^2} \frac{d}{\sin^2\theta} d\theta \\ &= \frac{P_{\text{ref}}^2 R_{\text{ref}}^2}{D} \int_{\theta_E}^{\theta_L} f^2(\theta) d\theta. \end{aligned}$$

So the pressure squared integral is proportional to $1/D$ and decays as $-10 \log(D)$. This implies that the difference between LEQ and SEL decays as $10 \log(D)$. Note that the directivity can affect the initial values of SEL and LEQ and the relationship between them, but it does not affect the decay rate or the duration factor.

6 FLYBY PROFILES

The excess reduction in SEL with distance indicates there may be an unidentified mechanism for attenuation. To investigate this possibility, the flybys' sound level profiles were examined. This was done by playing the recording into a Bruel and Kjaer Type 2209 sound level meter as the input to a NORLAND 2001 programmable oscilloscope. The output was plotted on an X-Y recorder for the cases shown in Figure 24. Data were also taken using a tunable filter to record the change in level for frequency bands.

The most striking feature of these profiles is the tremendous variation in sound level with time. Much of the variation is due to changes in source level as the helicopter flies through turbulence.¹⁵ However, investigations of this variation as distance increased showed it to be much larger for the far distances (Figure 24). The time between peaks is random but appears to vary on a scale of 5 to 10 sec. Figure 25 presents a flyby profile resolved into frequency bands. The peaks are observable across these bands, which indicates the variations may be due to refraction rather than scattering.

During daytime measurements, it is common to observe high rates of temperature lapse near the ground. The temperature gradient usually varies logarithmically with height; Figure 26 shows data taken between 1115 and 1130 on 30 April 1983 at Bondville Field Station south of Champaign, IL. Although no weather data were taken at Fort Campbell, those taken at Fort Carson, CO, in conjunction with another type of measurement showed significant lapse rates. Figure 27 shows a typical logarithmically varying temperature lapse rate for 4 August 1982 at 1400. Figure 28 gives the associated sound speed lapse. Using a simple three-layer refractive model and a source height of 91.5 m, the intensity was calculated using a simplification of the technique described by Hayes, Haefeli, and Karlsrud.¹⁶ The refractive effects of the temperature gradient produces sound level attenuation and a shadow zone at 1500 m (Figure 29). Unlike a single gradient layer, the three-layer model produces a reduction in intensity with distance compared to a homogeneous, isovelocity atmosphere before the shadow zone forms. More importantly, the upward refraction reduces the apparent source height (Figure 30) and therefore decreases the grazing angle (Figure 31). On a finite-impedance surface, the reduced angle of incidence causes greater surface attenuation.

Fluctuations in the observed flybys could be produced as thermal plumes break away from the ground and move into the region between the aircraft and the microphone.¹⁷ This would produce slow variations in level, with the level dropping as the smoothest profile is reestablished. However, lacking detailed

¹⁵Robert W. Paterson and Roy U. Amiet, Noise of A Model Helicopter Rotor Due to Ingestion of Turbulence, NASA Contractor Report 3213 (National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 1979).

¹⁶Wallace D. Hayes, Rudolf C. Haefeli, and H. E. Karlsrud, Sonic Boom Propagation in a Stratified Atmosphere, With Computer Program, NASA Contractor Report CR-1299 (National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 1969).

¹⁷S. David Roth, Acoustic Propagation in the Surface Layer Under Convectively Unstable Conditions, Ph.D. Thesis, The Pennsylvania State University (1983).

data on the weather profiles at Fort Campbell, no firm conclusion can be reached on whether this mechanism could produce the excess attenuation observed.

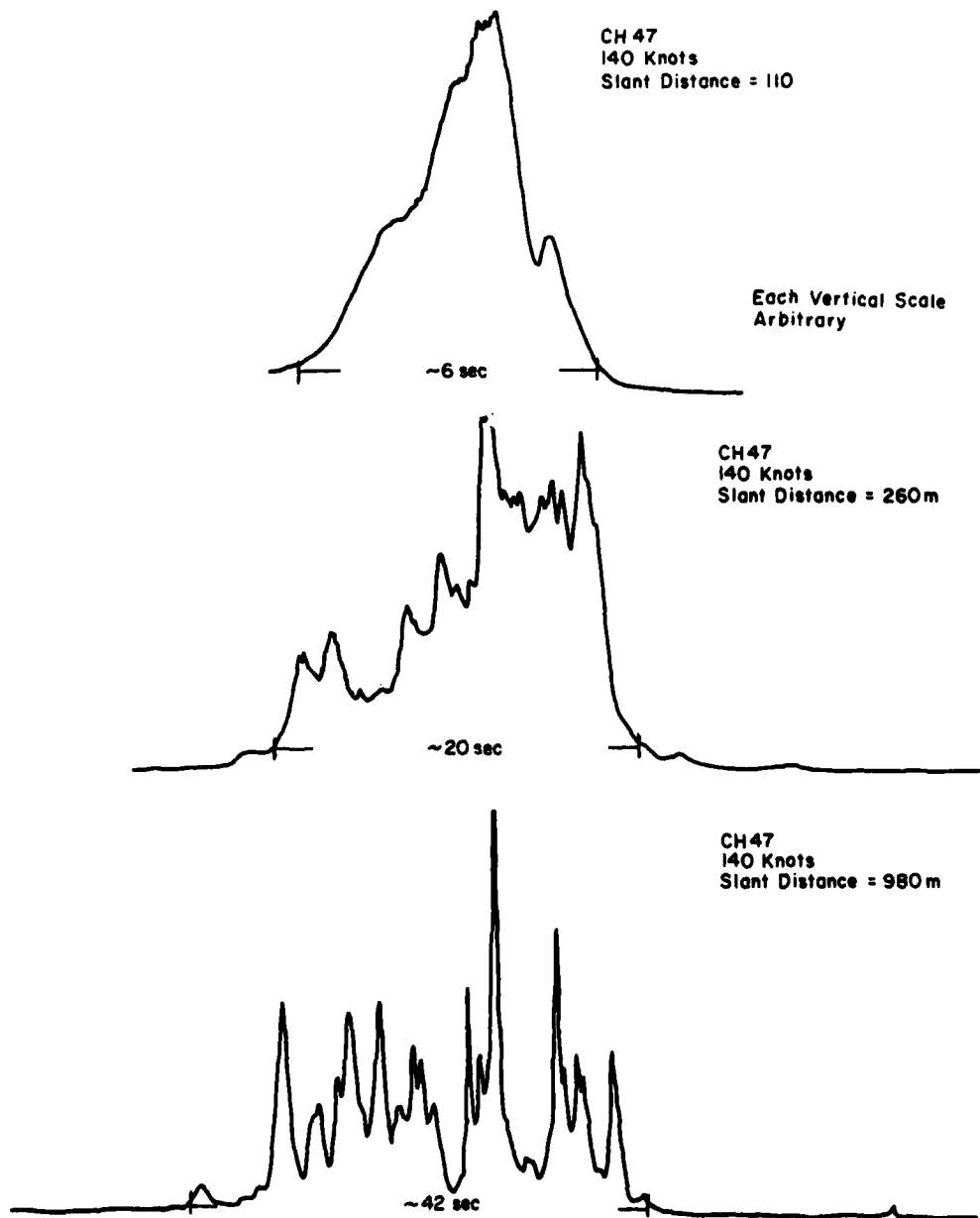


Figure 24. Flyby variation with slant distance.

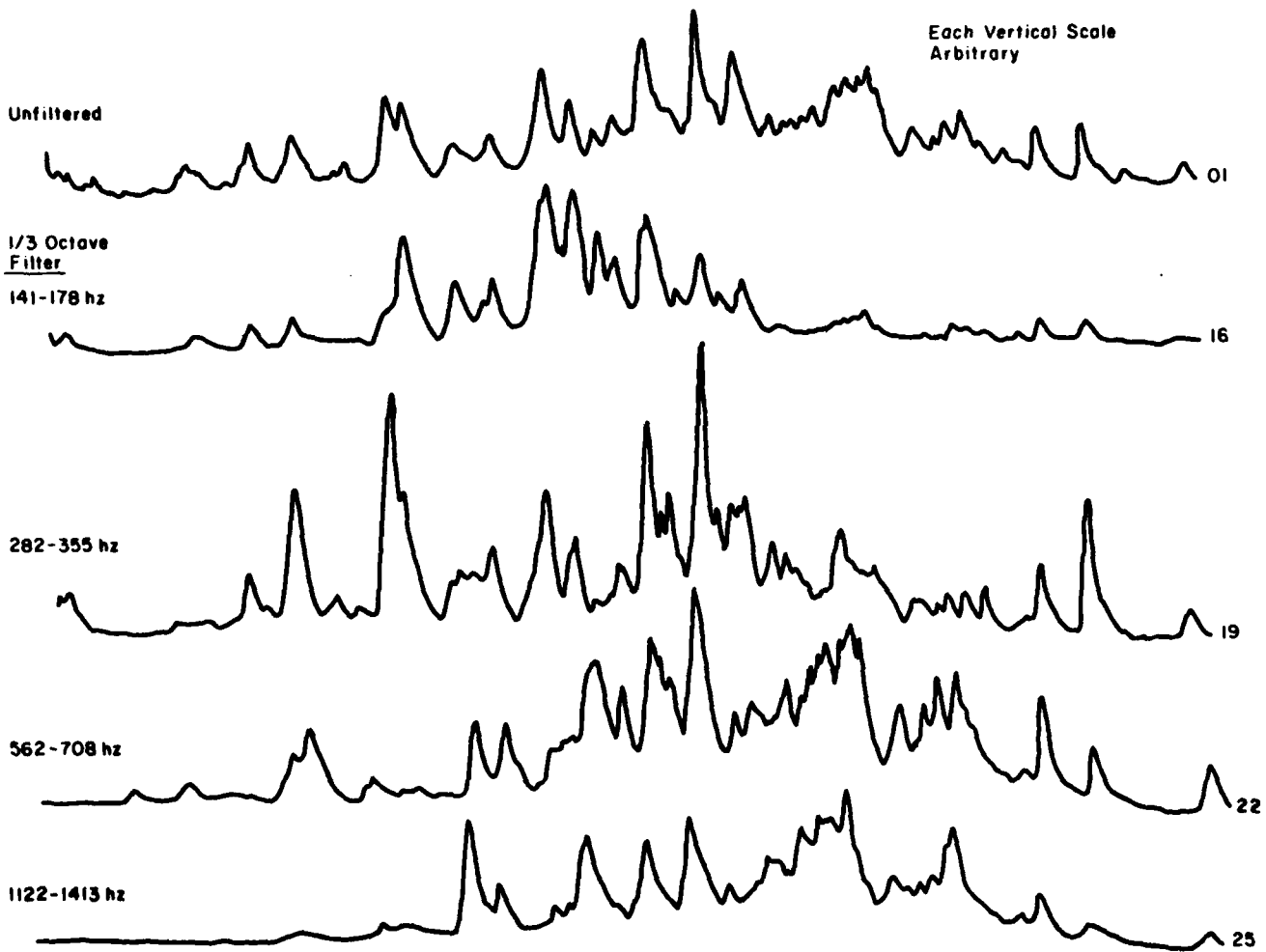


Figure 25. UH-1H flyby profile resolved into frequency bands.

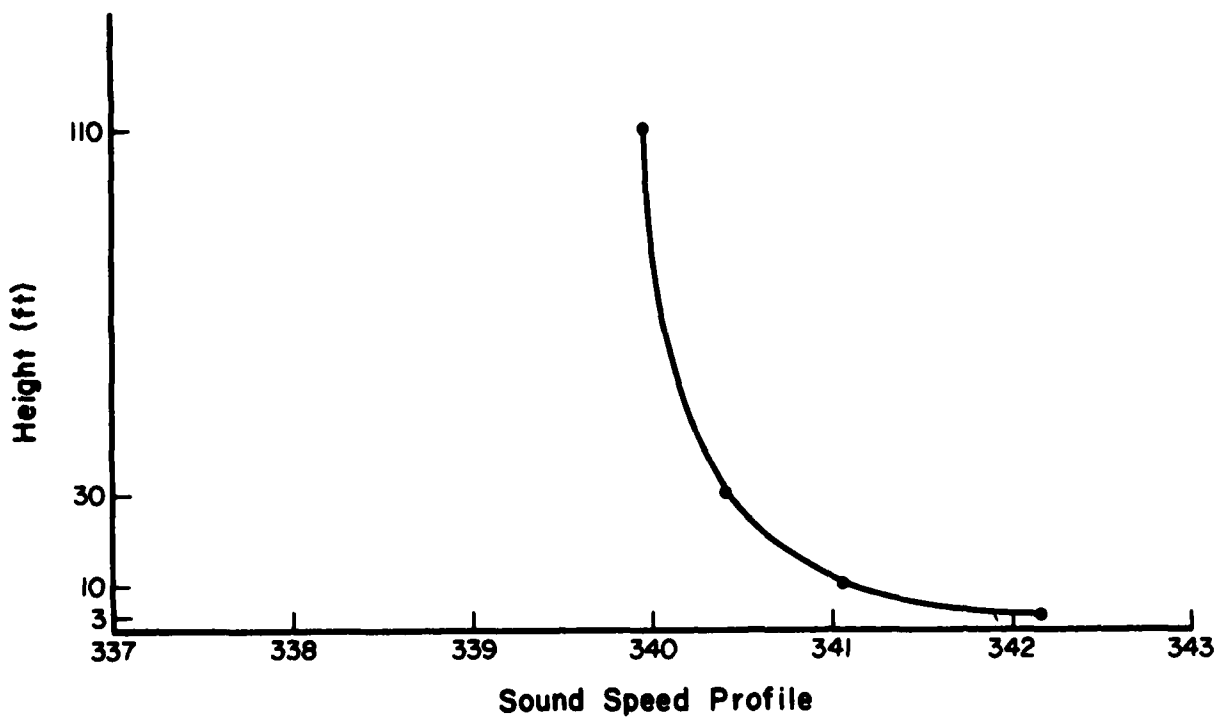
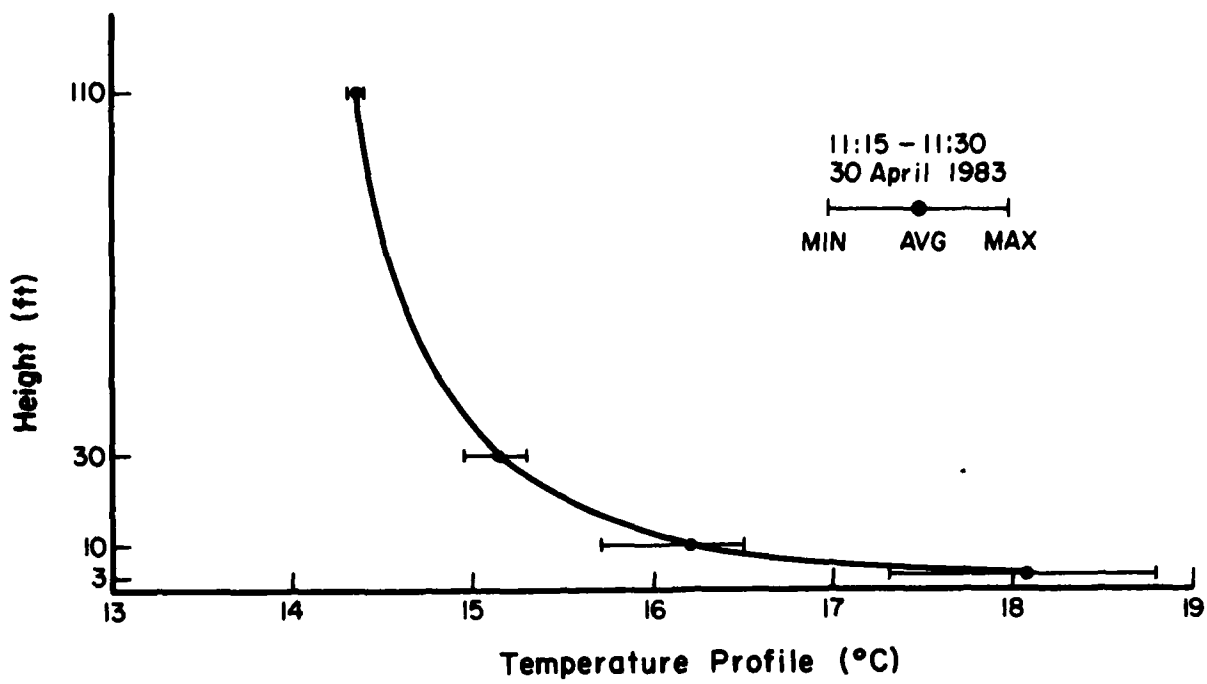


Figure 26. Temperature and sound speed profile at Bondville Field Station.

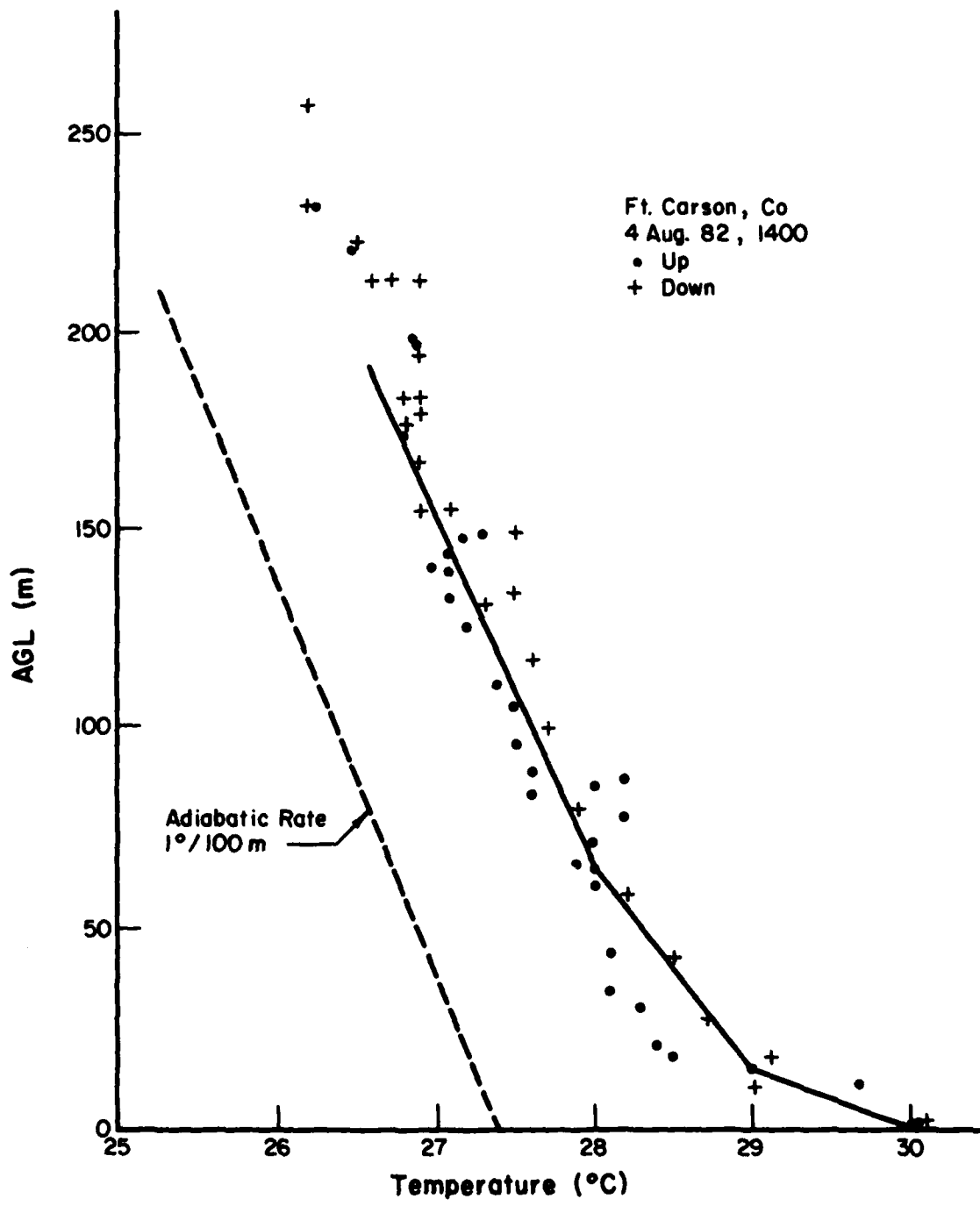


Figure 27. Temperature profile at Fort Carson on 4 August 1982.

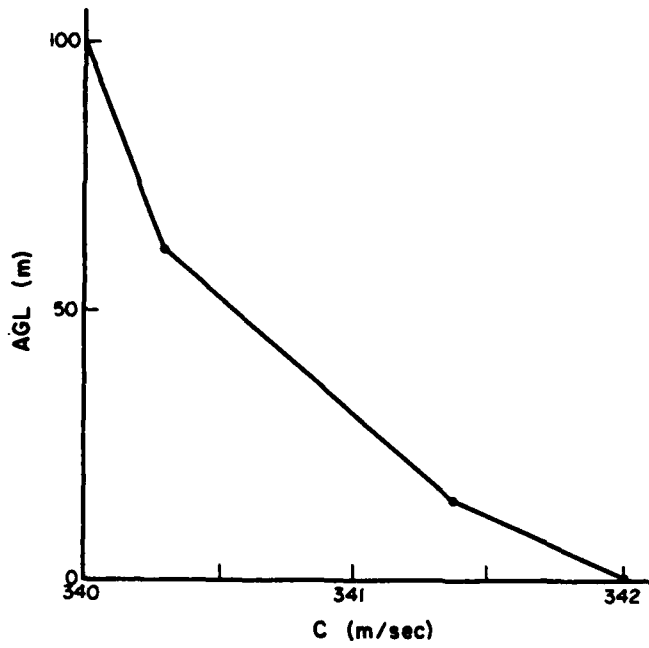


Figure 28. Sound speed profile at Fort Carson on 4 August 1982.

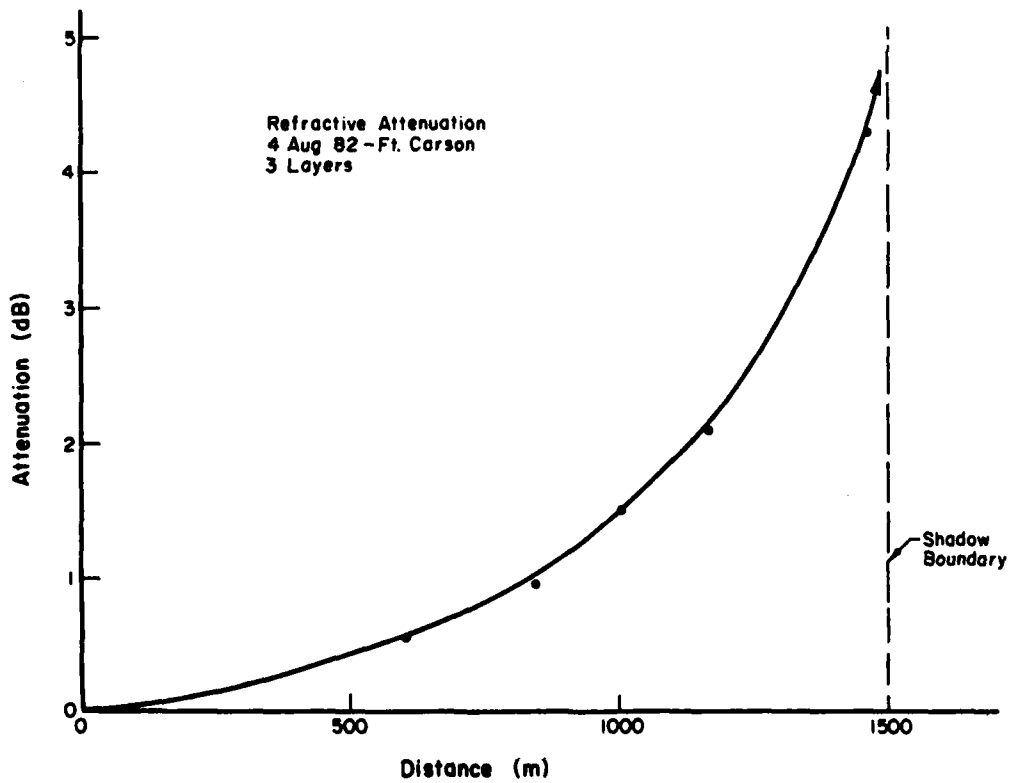


Figure 29. Refractive attenuation at Fort Carson on 4 August 1982.

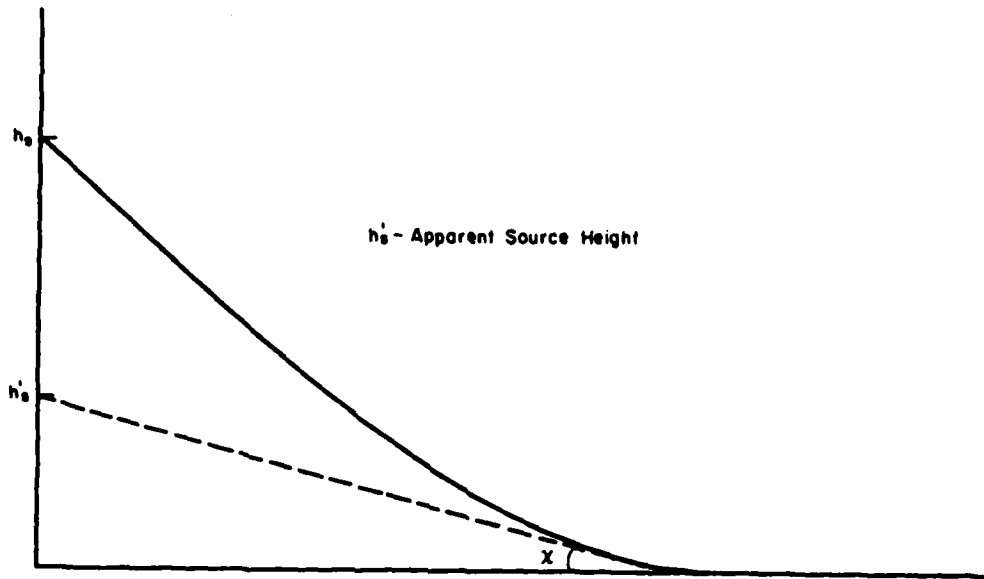


Figure 30. Apparent source height at Fort Carson on 4 August 1982.

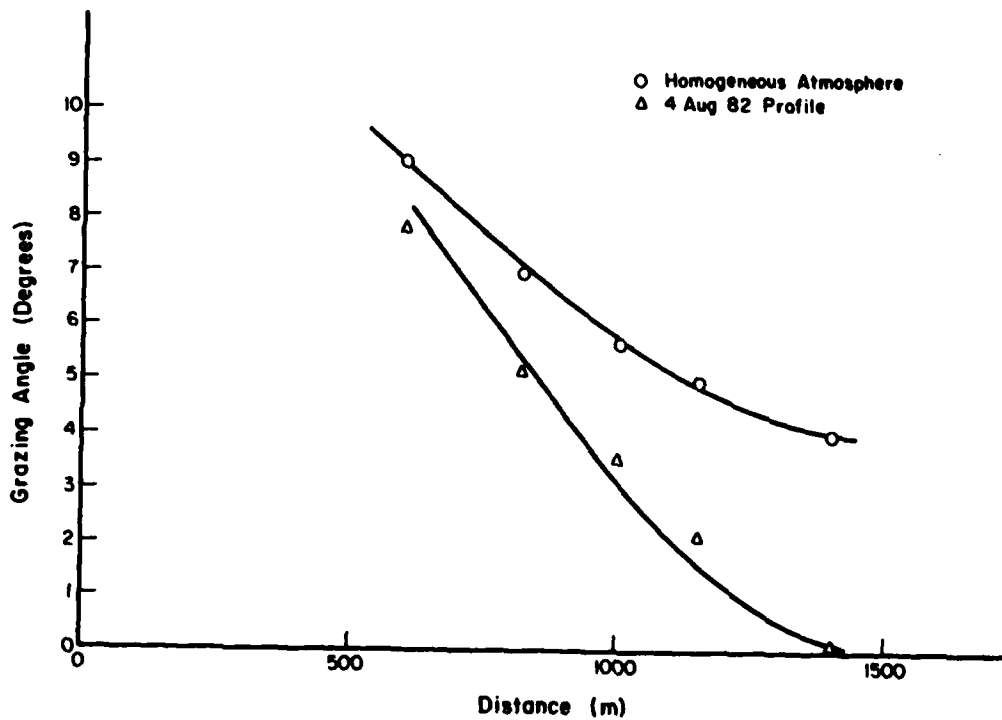


Figure 31. Comparison of grazing angle for a homogeneous atmosphere and the Fort Carson 4 August 1982 profile.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The FAA procedure has been studied to determine if it can make accurate predictions for rotary-wing aircraft noise decay with distance. It was concluded that the FAA procedure is accurate for aircraft altitudes above 100 m out to a slant distance of 500 m.

The physical mechanisms of sideline noise decay were examined by comparing measured sideline noise levels with those predicted using a detailed computer model that incorporates all known mechanisms. ANSI versus SAE atmospheric attenuation standards were also compared.

A sensitivity analysis was performed to study the effects of known variables on sideline decay. These included:

1. Hard surface versus finite impedance surface.
2. Coherent versus incoherent interference of direct and reflected sound
3. Aircraft type
4. Aircraft airspeed.

The soft coherent model proved most accurate. However, this model still underpredicted levels for slant distances greater than 500 m.

Some unexplained mechanism contributes to sound attenuation. Atmospheric refraction has been suggested as one possible explanation for this result. Work should continue to identify which additional mechanism is increasing sound attenuation.

Standard methods were found suitable for predicting propagation at moderate slant ranges and for high-altitude flights. At lower altitudes, the detailed model should be used to generate SEL versus distance curves.

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