

VSTOL Ground Effects Characterization and Control

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HPC Computer Resource: SGI Origin 2000 [ASC MSRC, ARL MSRC]

Research Objective: Develop and validate a numerical method using computational fluid dynamics (CFD) for the prediction of VSTOL ground effects flow fields. Use the validated computational prediction method to explore flow control devices designed to limit lift loss due to suckdown and hot gas ingestion and to limit landing area heating and acoustic levels.

Methodology: Two CFD approaches were explored with two different CFD codes, USM3D and Overflow, which use unstructured and chimera-structured grids, respectively. The CFD codes were validated against existing experimental data including simple flat plate studies and more complex multiple jet delta wing studies. The approach that shows the best agreement with experimental data will then be used to explore various control device concepts designed to reduce or eliminate the adverse characteristics associated with VSTOL aircraft flight in ground effect.

Results: Initial comparisons with experimental data for simple flat plate cases showed promising results, fig. 1. Comparison with experimental data for the more complex delta wing case has not yet been completed. Surface pressure results, fig. 2, and Mach contours along the symmetry plane, fig. 3, from the Overflow code indicate all the expected features such as the fountain effect between the two jets.

Significance: A validated CFD tool is essential for the expedient and accurate prediction of forces and moments experienced by a VSTOL aircraft flying in ground effect. A validated computational method would also greatly reduce design cycle time and cost by providing a fast and reliable test bed for parametric design changes. Ground effect flow control devices have the potential to greatly affect all of the following areas: thrust and fuel requirements for take off and landing, aircraft stability, landing area erosion, ground crew safety, etc.. This, in turn, has the potential to significantly reduce overall life cycle cost.

JWCO: Precision Force

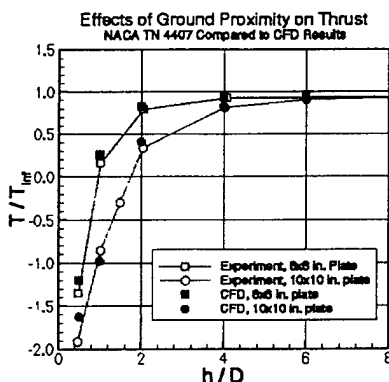


Fig. 1. Comparison of CFD with experimental suckdown data. Courtesy LMTAS

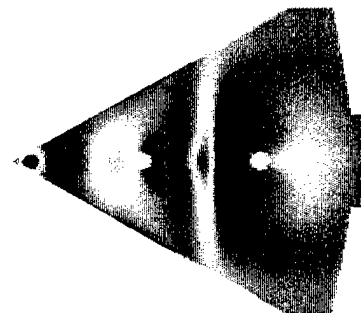


Fig. 2. Pressure contours on the lower surface

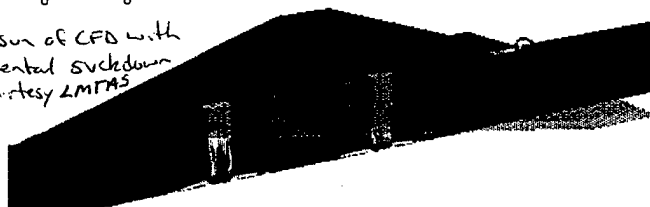


Fig. 3 Mach contours along the symmetry plane

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE		2. REPORT TYPE Professional Paper		3. DATES COVERED	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE VSTOL Ground Effects Characterization and Control				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Susan A. Polsky				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division 22347 Cedar Point Road, Unit #6 Patuxent River, Maryland 20670-1161				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Air Systems Command 47123 Buse Road Unit IPT Patuxent River, Maryland 20670-1547				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT Develop and validate a numerical method using computational fluid dynamics (CFD) for the prediction of VSTOL ground effects flow fields. Use the validated computational prediction method to explore flow control devices designed to limit lift loss due to suckdown and hot gas ingestion and to limit landing area heating and acoustic level.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			Susan Polsky
Unclassified	Unclassified	Unclassified	Unclassified	1	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) (301) 342-8575