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\* Indicates paper was accepted but not presented.

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# TOWARDS A PARAMETRIC MODEL OF A PLANAR BLAST WAVE CREATED WITH DETONATING CORD

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## ABSTRACT

A shock wave originating from a point source will expand spherically. At large distances the area of impact from this sphere is considered to be plane. For a test scenario this implicates a major problem: either the donor explosion has to be very large to generate a significant pressure at large distances or the blast wave is still spherical.

To overcome this problem researchers use multiple point sources, or a curtain of detonating cord instead of the single point source. Both these options introduce a different problem: the generated pressures and other blast parameters are hard to predict. These are measured and with iterative trial and error the desired parameters are realized.

This paper describes the first steps towards the generation of a model for predicting the blast wave parameters of a planar wave. The blast wave parameters are determined using AUTODYN, for the full range of the scaled distance  $Z$ .

First, the results of the spherical (1D) calculations are compared to several models described in literature. The generally accepted Kingery-Bulmash relations, implemented in CONWEP, are used as reference. An overall good similarity is found, as well as some specific deviations. Next, AUTODYN is used to determine the blast wave parameters generated with a line explosion (2D) using detonating cord. These calculations are compared to the results of experiments, with special attention to the point of initiation. Based on these results, a parametric model of a line explosion is formulated.

The ultimate aim of the modeling will be the expansion of both the point and line models to a model of a plane detonation, being a set of in-plane cords, generating a plane blast wave.

## INTRODUCTION

A variety of methods can be used to create a planar blast wave. The first is to simply assume a small area of a (hemi-) spherical shock front to be plane. The second is to create a Mach stem using several point sources at specific distances. The third is to use a curtain of detonating cord, with the advantage of the low total detonating weight. The third method in particular can be applied in both open air and in a shock tube. In both point and line source methods the interaction of several shock waves makes the resulting shock wave and its parameters hard to predict. In this paper the first steps towards a model for predicting the blast parameters of a planar blast wave are described.

An extensive comparison of blast wave parameters is performed to validate both the AUTODYN calculations and the measurement technique. After validations these two methods were also used to obtain the blast wave parameters of a line detonation.

## **AUTODYN CALCULATIONS**

AUTODYN [1] is a computer modeling program for non-linear transient dynamic analysis of effects including shock, contact, impact, explosions and dynamic structural response. For the spherical detonation a 1D model is used, so a high number of cells can be used. Still, the far field values take a long time to calculate due to the small time steps when fine meshes are used. Some tricks are used to save calculation time. One trick is to delete the part of the model with the smallest cells: the detonation itself after the shockwave has properly developed. This way the timestep increases after resuming the calculations, due to the fact that the smallest cell size in the model has increased. Another method is to map an accurately calculated detonation solution on a new mesh using the remap option. An important aspect of AUTODYN calculations is to insert the correct internal energy of air, being the reference of atmospheric conditions (altitude and temperature). In these calculations the internal energy  $2.068e5 \mu\text{J}/\text{mg}$  is used. Furthermore, AUTODYN calculates absolute pressures, so the peak overpressure has to be calculated. A series of gauge points was used to export pressure-time results to a file. This file is imported into MATLAB to derive the actual shock wave parameters like positive phase duration, time of arrival and positive phase impulse.

The detonating material in the simulations is always TNT, in order to have no mistake in TNT equivalency.

## **SPHERICAL DETONATION**

### Models from literature

In literature many persons have proposed models for calculating the blast wave parameters, mainly for the peak incident pressure. These models are either based on theoretical analysis, numerical calculations or on a large number of experimental results. Some of these historical models are used in this paper to show their respective accuracy. In the last 20 years the Kingery-Bulmash [8] model (implemented in CONWEP [5] ) has been accepted as being accurate, therefore CONWEP is used in this paper as reference. With the computer program CONWEP several effects of a wide range of weapons can be calculated, for example the blast wave parameters of a bare charge, for which the Kingery-Bulmash model is used. In detail (far-field pressure), some adjustments to this model were proposed to better fit the increasing number of experimental results. The best known is the modification from Kingery [12] , implemented in BEC [3] . The models, as listed in table 1, are compared mutually for the full range of the scaled distance  $Z (=R/W^{1/3}$ , where R is the range [m] and W is the TNT equivalent explosive weight [kg]).

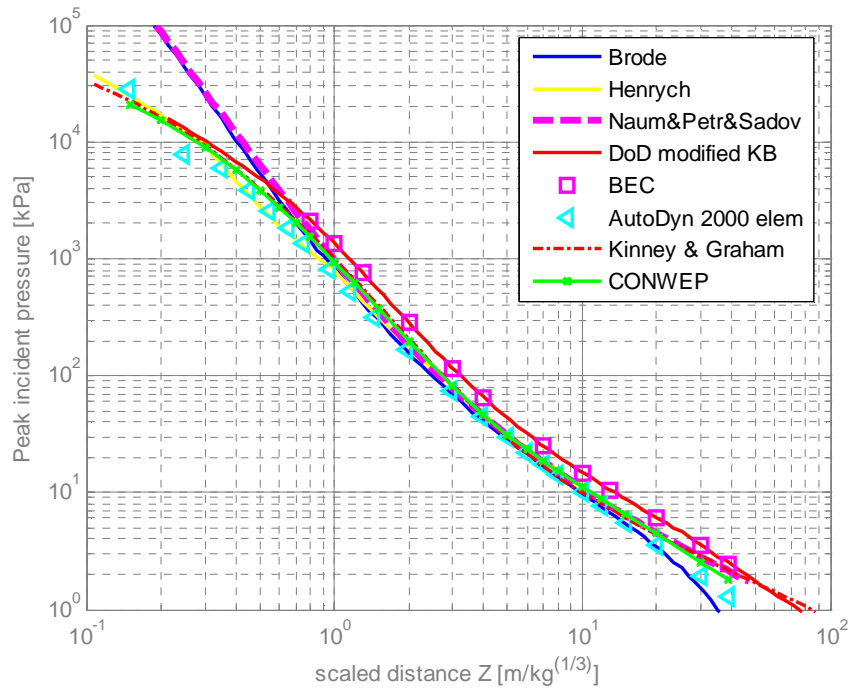
**Table 1** Several models from literature for the peak incident pressure  $P_s$

Model	year	Equation $p_s$ [bar] ( $Z$ in $[m/kg^{1/3}]$ )	range
Brode [4]	1955	$\frac{6.7}{Z^3} + 1$ $\frac{0.975}{Z} + \frac{1.455}{Z^2} + \frac{5.85}{Z^3} - 0.019$	$10 < p_s$ $0.1 \leq p_s \leq 10$
Henrych [6]	1979	$\frac{14.072}{Z} + \frac{5.540}{Z^2} - \frac{0.357}{Z^3} + \frac{0.00625}{Z^4}$ $\frac{6.1938}{Z} - \frac{0.3262}{Z^2} + \frac{2.1324}{Z^3}$ $\frac{0.662}{Z} + \frac{4.05}{Z^2} + \frac{3.288}{Z^3}$	$0.05 \leq Z \leq 0.3$ $0.3 \leq Z \leq 1$ $1 \leq Z \leq 10$
Naumenko & Petrovskyi [9]	1956	$\frac{10.7}{Z^3} - 1$	$Z \leq 1$
Sadovskyi [10]	1952	$\frac{0.76}{Z} + \frac{2.55}{Z^2} + \frac{6.5}{Z^3}$	$1 \leq Z \leq 15$
Kinney & Graham [7]	1985	$\frac{p_s}{p_0} = \frac{808(1 + (Z/4.5)^2)}{\sqrt{1 + (Z/0.048)^2} \sqrt{1 + (Z/0.32)^2} \sqrt{1 + (Z/1.35)^2}}$	
Kingery Bulmash [8] / CONWEP [5]	1984	(defined and used in CONWEP)	
modified KB / DoD [12]	1998	$A$ $B$ $C$ $D$ $E$ 7.2106    -2.1069   -0.3229   0.1117   0.0685 7.5938    -3.0523   0.40977   0.0261   -0.01267 6.0636    -1.4066   0          0          0 $\exp(A + B \ln(Z) + C \ln(Z)^2 + D \ln(Z)^3 + E \ln(Z)^4)$ ( $p_s$ in [kPa])	$0.2 < Z < 2.9$ $2.9 < Z < 23.8$ $23.8 < Z < 198.5$

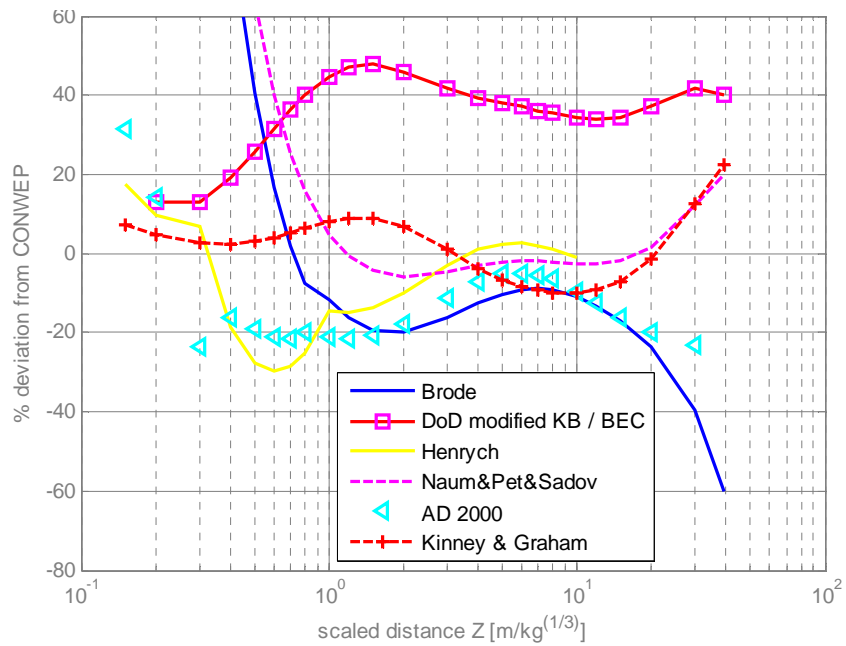
Figure 1 shows the standard double logarithmic plot of the peak incident overpressure ( $p_s$ ) versus the scaled distance  $Z$ . In this plot all models seem to give similar results, but this is partially because of the logarithmic scale used. Therefore the second plot in figure 2 gives the relative deviation from the CONWEP pressure versus the same scaled distance  $Z$ . The following conclusions can be drawn from these plots:

- In the range  $1 < Z < 10$  all models give similar results, except for BEC (and the “modified DoD”, which is identical). BEC results in a better fit to experimental values of  $p_s$ , as will be shown in this paper, but these values are almost always 40% higher than CONWEP.
- In near field ( $Z < 1$ ), all models diverge strongly. Mind that several models have been extended to  $Z = 0.1$ , which is close to the outer radius of the explosive.
- Henrych [6] proposed 3 equations, based on experiments. The deviation, especially from the middle equation (also discussed by Smith and Hetherington [11]) is awkward, since simply adjusting the ranges from the 1st and 3rd equation to fill in the gap would lead to a more accurate solution.
- The far-field solution from Brode [4], starting at  $p_s < 10$  kPa is deviating rapidly due to the limited range of the equation ( $10 \text{ kPa} = 0.1 \text{ bar} \leq p_s$ ).

- The old Russian model from Sadovskiy [10] gives results very close to CONWEP, but is only valid for the medium to far-field range:  $1 < Z < 15$ . The other part of this curve (from [9]) is based on nuclear explosions, resulting in evident different blast parameters than chemical explosions.
- The first AUTODYN results from a mediate fine mesh already give satisfactory results.



**Figure 1** Incident peak overpressure  $p_s$  versus scaled distance



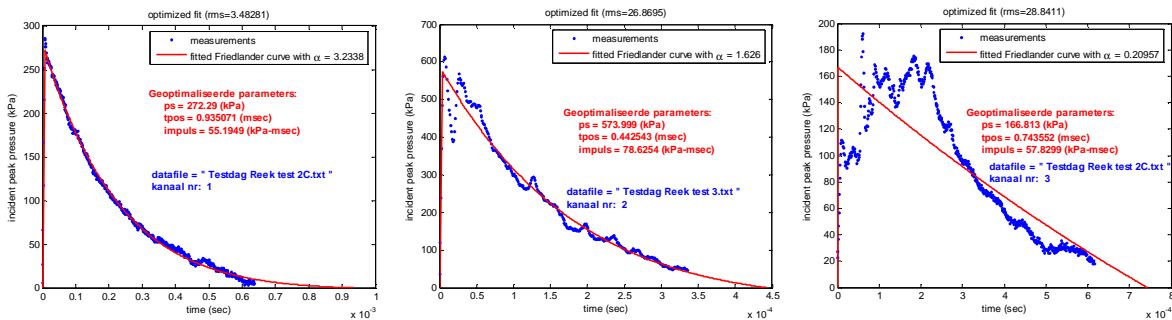
**Figure 2** Relative deviation from CONWEP of incident peak overpressure  $p_s$  versus scaled distance.



## Measurements

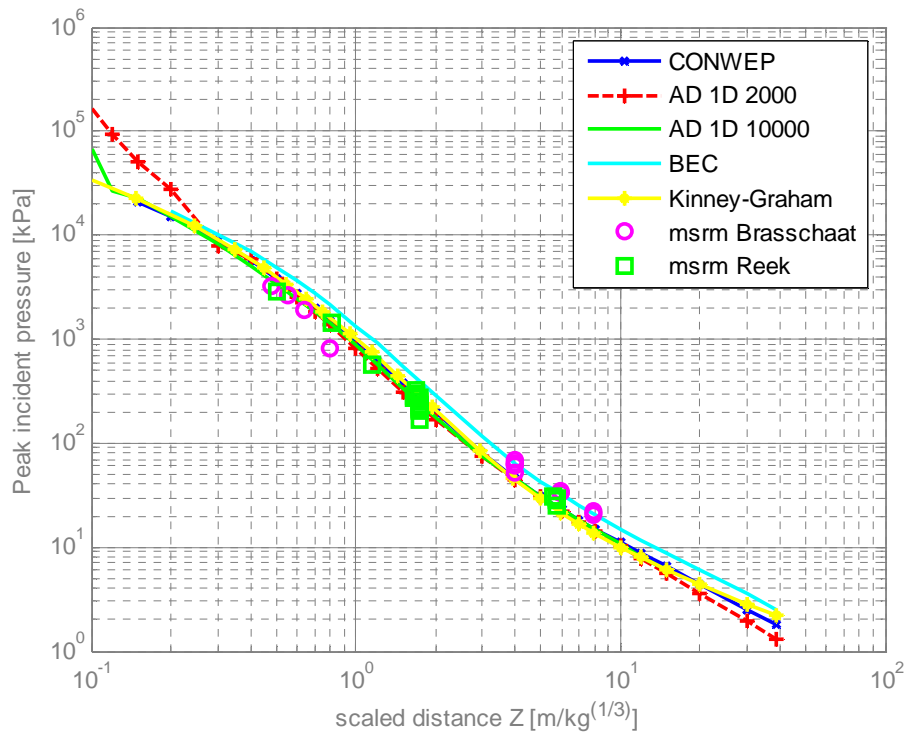
The Netherlands Defense Academy has acquired a set of 4 pressure sensors to measure the incident blast wave. This equipment was used in two small series of tests for validation purposes. Because of a lacking trigger signal at detonation the time of arrival could not be measured. Due to inaccuracies in the signal (noise, peak signal inaccuracies, and additional disturbing signals later on in time, possibly due to reflections) the blast wave parameters  $p_s$  and especially  $t_{pos}$  are sometimes hard to determine. Therefore each pressure-time signal was automatically curve-fitted using MATLAB, assuming each signal to be exponentially decaying. This shape, also called the Friedlander-curve ( $p = p_s(1 - t/t_p)e^{-\alpha t/t_p}$ ), is determined by three parameters: peak pressure ( $p_s$ ), positive phase duration ( $t_p$ ) and a wave form parameter ( $\alpha$ ).

The first series was obtained in Reek (NL), using spherical charges of 150 g pentriet (plastic explosives) for the spherical blast wave. For pentriet a TNT equivalence of 1.28 is used. The second series of measurements was obtained in Brasschaat (Be), using spherical charges of 1.493 kg M112 (plastic explosives, TNT-equivalence 1.34), resulting in a TNT equivalent spherical charge of 2.0 kg.

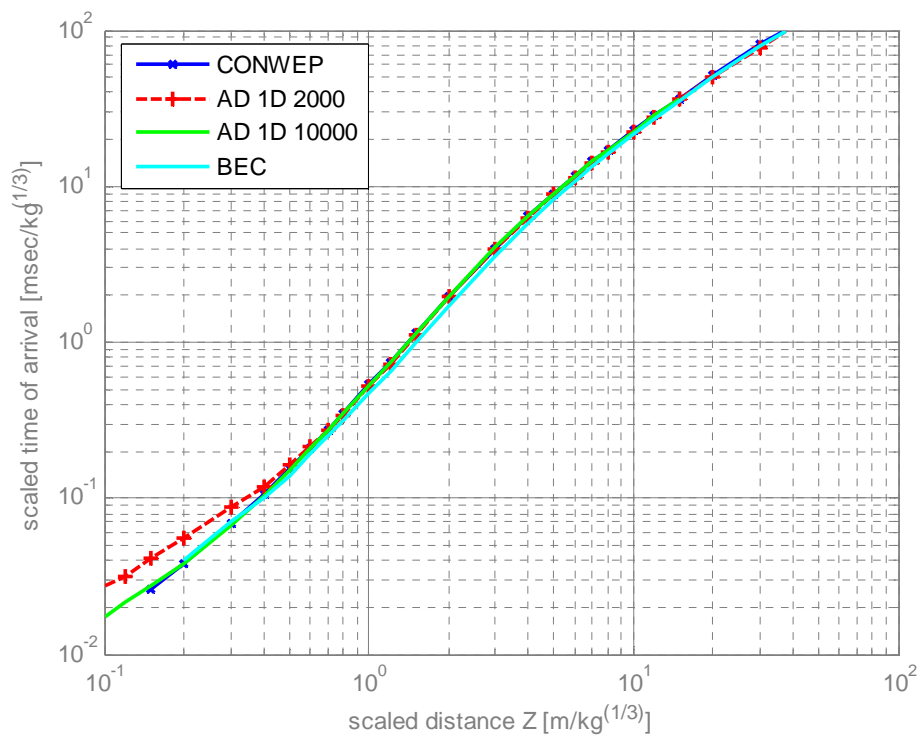


**Figure 3** Three examples of testdata fits with Friedlander curve (good, medium and bad signal)

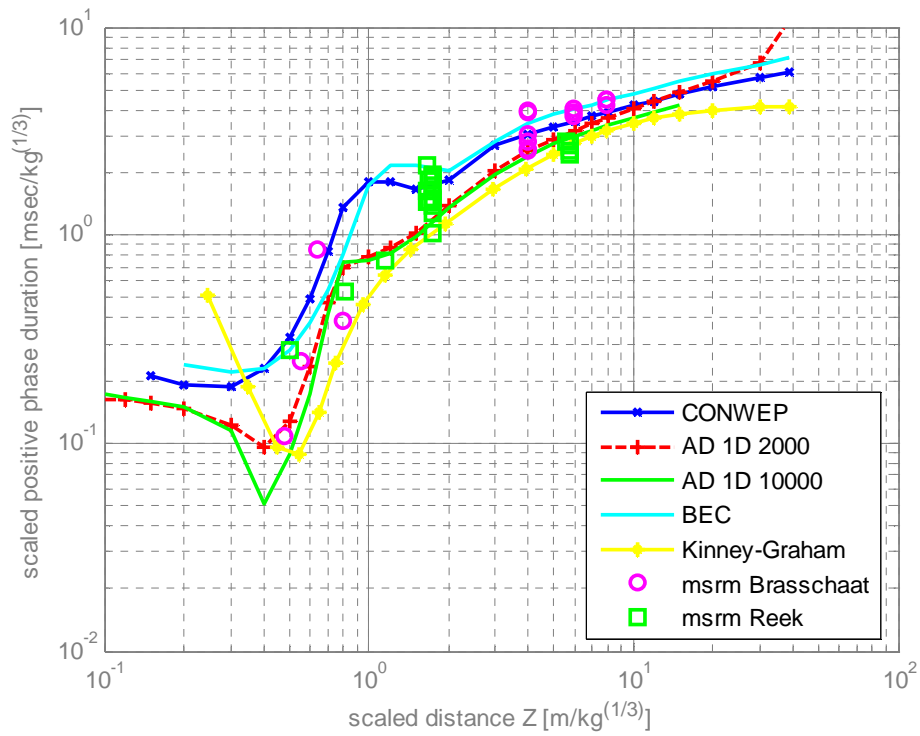
For consistency reasons no signals were skipped, although some signals gave a deviant shape (see figure 3), especially when measuring the near field values ( $Z < 1$ ). All four blast wave parameters obtained from AUTODYN simulations, measurements and three different models from literature are plotted in figure 4 to figure 7, which are similar to the graphs from side-on blast wave parameters as presented by Baker et al. [2].



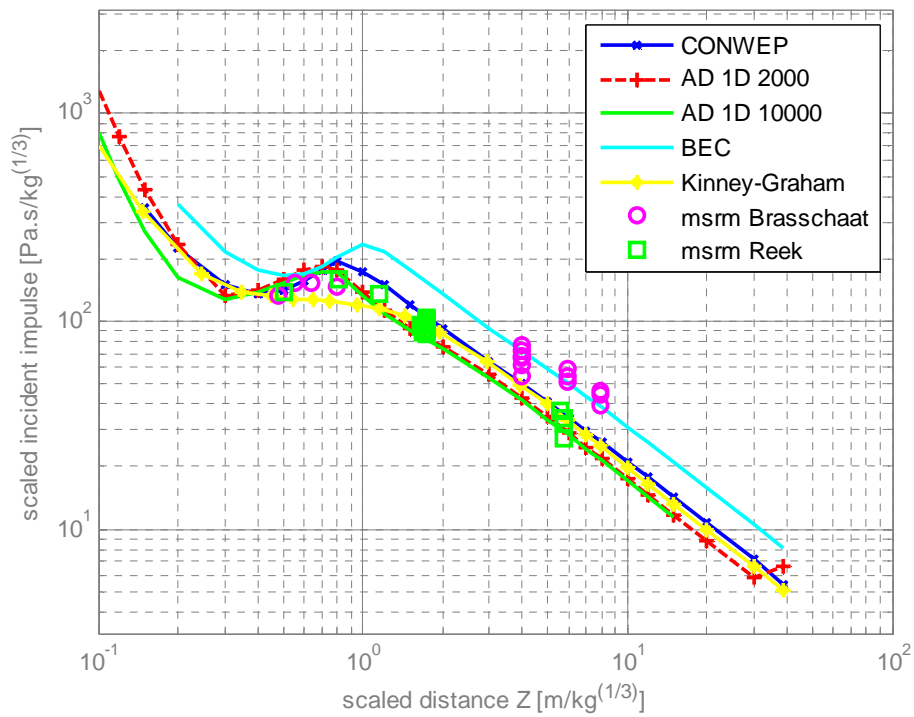
**Figure 4** Peak incident overpressure of spherical detonation (point source)



**Figure 5** Time of arrival of spherical detonation (point source)



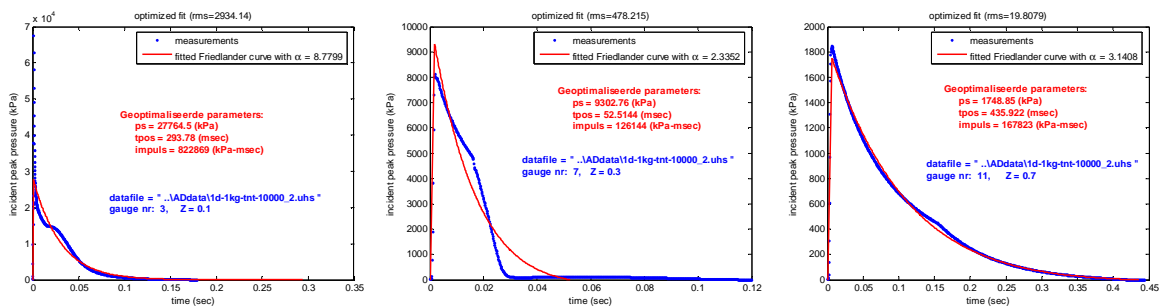
**Figure 6** Positive phase duration of spherical detonation (point source)



**Figure 7** Incident positive phase impulse of spherical detonation (point source)

From figures 4-7 the following can be concluded, based on comparison with CONWEP.

- The peak incident pressures are accurately measured as well as simulated.
- The time of arrival is accurately simulated, because the curves concur with both CONWEP and BEC.
- The positive phase duration shows a 50% lower value for the simulations compared to CONWEP, especially for the lower range of Z, however the Kinney & Graham model [7] results in even lower values. These large differences can be explained by the difficulties determining the actual end of the positive phase. The pressure decays exponentially, so the gradient is the smallest at the zero crossing. Furthermore measurement noise and possible disturbing signals from reflections mask the exact zero transitions. This results in the strong variation in the measurement results for positive-phase-duration, plotted in the figure 6. These problems are universal and because the reference models are based on fits through experimental results, some deviation can be expected. The main explanation however can be found looking at the actual shape of the blast wave, obtained from the AUTODYN simulations. The non-linearity in figures 6 and 7 ( $Z < 1$ ) indicates a transition. Analyzing the blast wave from the simulation it is clear that it does not decay exponentially. Figure 8 shows the discrepancy for  $Z = 0.1$  and  $Z = 0.3$ .



**Figure 8** Discrepancy in application of Friedlander curve for near field pressure-time response.

The strong non-linear part of figure 6 must be considered as a transition phase and only for higher values of Z the Friedlander curve can be used to describe the blast wave shape. CONWEP however assumes the exponential shape for the full range of Z. Furthermore the measurements in the near-field region also give lower values than CONWEP.

- The impulse of the positive phase shows fairly good results, although the AUTODYN results are consistently smaller than both the models and measurements.

The AUTODYN simulations using 2000 cells are reasonably accurate, but the 10.000 cells model matches even better with CONWEP. The deviations between both AUTODYN models increase mainly in near-field, which indicates that extreme fine meshing is needed near and in the detonation.

The measurement results are within the variation of the several models and therefore acceptable. An important point of attention here is the TNT equivalency used in plotting the results, because no distinction is made between pressure- or impulse equivalency. This could explain the fit differences in figure 7: the pentriet (Reek) detonation fits better to CONWEP, where the M112 (Brasschaat) detonation fits better to BEC.

Looking at all four parameters we conclude that the simulations give a fairly good, but slightly low estimate of the actual values.

## CYLINDRICAL DETONATION

The results from the spherical detonation show that AUTODYN can be used to model a detonation accurately, so we can now use AUTODYN to generate blast wave parameters for a two dimensional blast wave originating from a detonating cord. The results are verified by comparing several AUTODYN simulations, with mesh refinement and with different explosive charge weights. Additionally some measurements have been performed to validate these simulations.

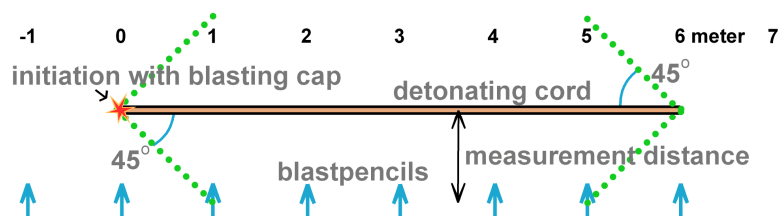
### AUTODYN calculations

The calculations for a line detonation were performed using the same wedge model as for the spherical detonation, but this time a 2D model instead of 1D model is used. Again, the detonating material in the simulations is TNT, in order to have no mistake in TNT equivalency. The radius of the detonator is much smaller (1.534 mm for 12 g/m), resulting in smaller cells, because in order to represent the detonation phase of an explosion with an acceptable degree of accuracy it is desirable to have at least 10 cells within the explosive charge [1], in this paper 15 to 100 cells in the detonating material are used. In the simulations only the bare explosive charge is modelled, the actual confinement of detonating cord is not modelled, since this will hardly influence the results, or will cause the results to depend on the modelling of the confinement.

### Measurements

In both measurement series (in Reek and Brasschaat) pentriet detonating cord was used. According to the specifications the (Dutch) detonating cord contains a minimum of 11 g/m, but the total roll with 30m contains 500g. Therefore an average of 16 g/m pentriet (TNT-equivalency 1.28) is used. The Belgian detonating cord contained 10 g/m pentriet, with no further details known, but for consistency reasons the same 16 g/m is assumed.

The blast pencils were positioned on different locations over the length of 6 m detonating cord, in order to determine whether the shock wave is still cylindrical. At a distance of 1 m this showed to be the case, so all measurements between 1 and 5 meter can be used. Two tests were performed twice to demonstrate reproducibility; three parameters from one sensor in 4 identical tests all varied within 3%.



**Figure 9** Location of blast pencils in tests with detonating cord.

The measured pressure-time plots again were curve-fitted to obtain the most reliable results. Due to the fitting routine, slight differences with the actually measured maximum pressure occurred, the impulse remained constant (since the fitting-routine was actually based on the complete positive phase of the blast wave), but especially the positive phase duration obtained from the fitting procedure can be up to 100% different, because the exact location of the zero

transition of the pressure is hard to recognize from the measurement signal, as was discussed in the spherical detonation section.

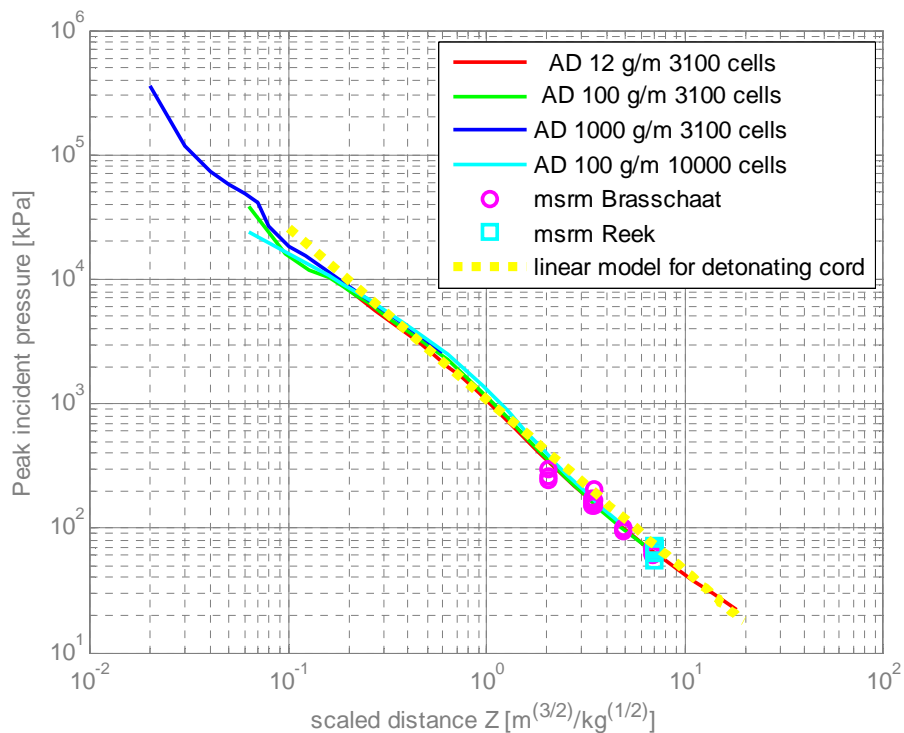
During the tests in Brasschaat a high speed camera recorded the detonations. The detonating proces is clearly visible and a constant detonating velocity of 6,3 km/s was derived from all the tests. One frame from a test, initiated on both sides is shown in figure 10. In a region with contrasting background (trees, not visible in figure 10) the shock wave can be recognized. From these images the time of arrival can be determined, which was not possible from the pressure signal due to the lack of a trigger signal at detonation. These results are plotted in figure 12.



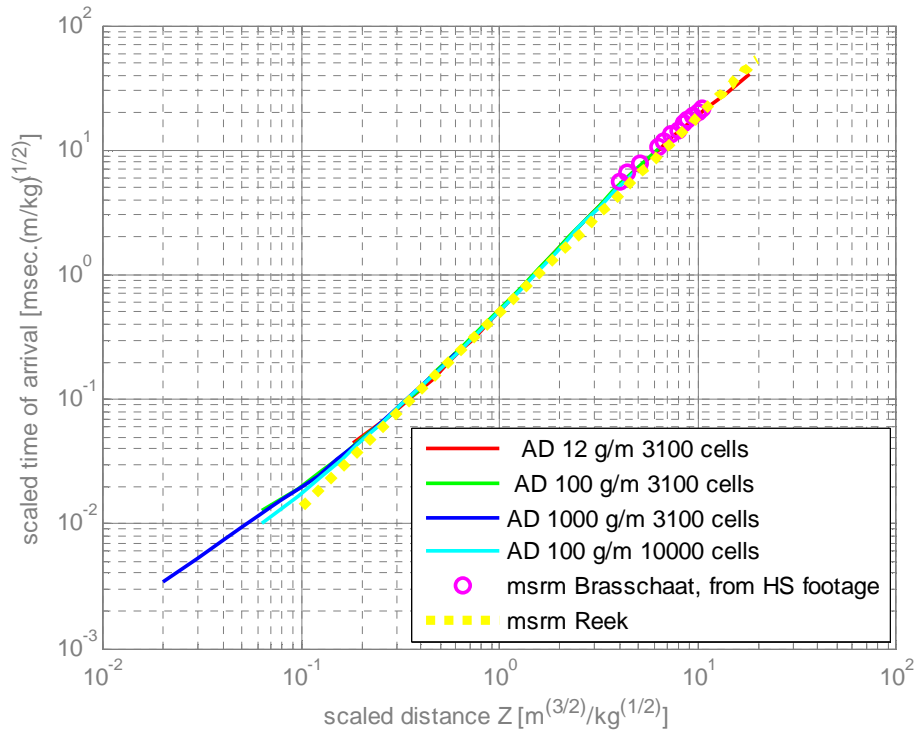
**Figure 10** High speed image of detonating cord, initiated on both sides.

### New model for line detonations

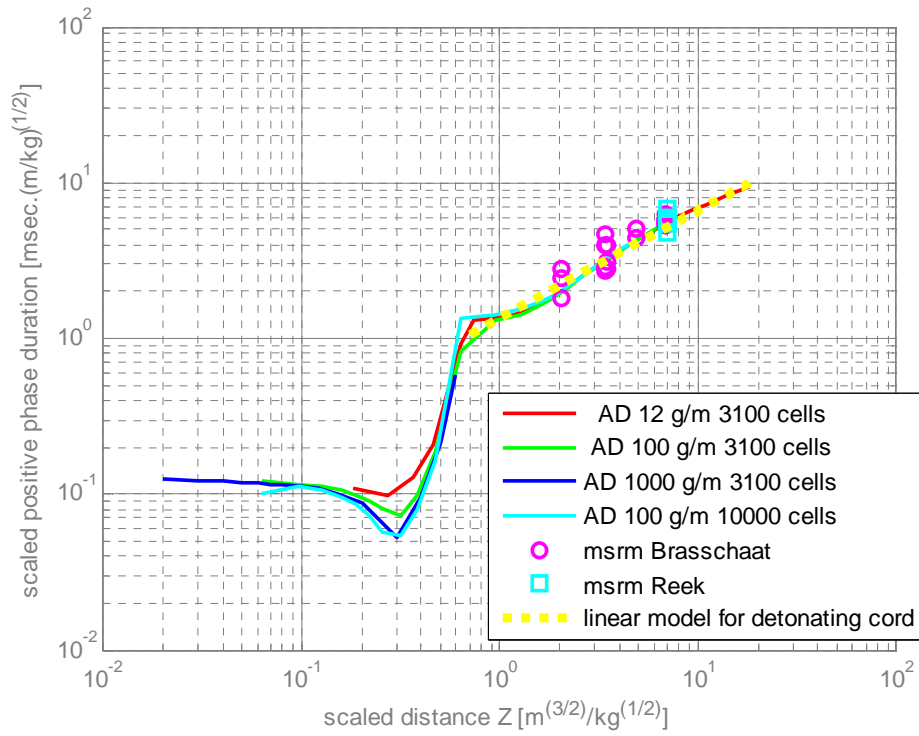
The results from both the simulations and the measurements are plotted in figures 11 to 14, where the horizontal axis indicates the square-root scaled distance  $Z = R/W^{1/2}$ , where the unit of  $W$  is [kg/m], so the unit of  $Z$  becomes [ $m^{3/2}/kg^{1/2}$ ]. Except for the peak pressure all parameters are scaled as well, by dividing the parameter by the square-root of weight per meter ( $kg/m$ )<sup>1/2</sup>. The AUTODYN simulations with three entirely different weights per meter coincide because of this scaling.



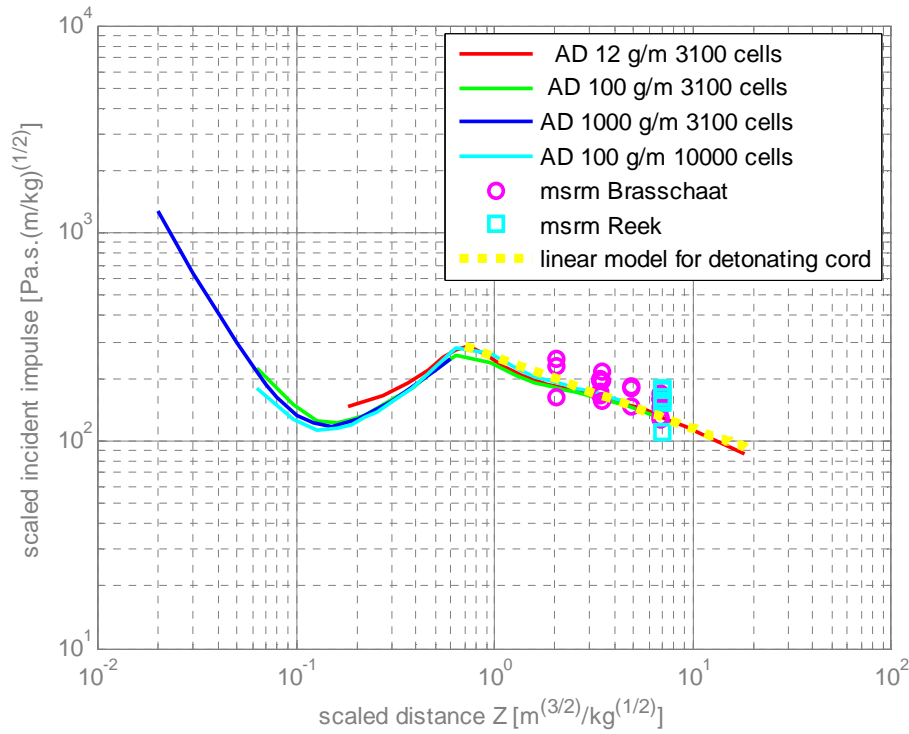
**Figure 11** Peak incident overpressure of cylindrical detonation (line source)



**Figure 12** Time of arrival of cylindrical detonation (line source)



**Figure 13** Positive phase duration of cylindrical detonation (line source)



**Figure 14** Incident positive phase impulse of cylindrical detonation (line source)

A remarkable feature in figures 13 and 14 is the non-linear behaviour in the near-field region, which is similar to the parameter plots for spherical detonation (figures 6 and 7). All four plots show a good correspondance, between the mutual AUTODYN simulations as well as between the simulations and measurements. Therefore based on these results the following models for obtaining the blast parameters are proposed for a line detonation. These models are plotted as well.

$$\text{Incident peak pressure} \quad p_s^{wire} = 10^{-1.38 \log(Z) + 3.033} \text{ kPa} \quad [0.1 < Z < 20] \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Time of arrival} \quad t_{arrival}^{wire} = 10^{1.57 \log(Z) - 0.295} \text{ msec.}(\text{m/kg})^{1/2} \quad [0.1 < Z < 20] \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Positive phase duration} \quad t_{pos}^{wire} = 10^{0.69 \log(Z) + 0.136} \text{ msec.}(\text{m/kg})^{1/2} \quad [0.7 < Z < 20] \quad (3)$$

$$\text{Positive phase impulse} \quad I_{pos}^{wire} = 10^{-0.35 \log(Z) + 2.41} \text{ Pa.s.}(\text{m/kg})^{1/2} \quad [0.7 < Z < 20] \quad (4)$$

In these equations is  $Z = R/W^{1/2}$ , with R in [m] and W in [kg/m]. Mind that apart from the incident peak pressure all blast wave parameters are scaled with  $W^{1/2}$ . These models are relatively simple (linear in double log plot), but in the given ranges accurately fitting both the simulations as well as the measurements.

The lower limit for the positive-phase-duration and impulse models ( $Z = 0.7$ ), is no disadvantage, since the application of this model is in the generation of a blast wave at a distance, since the expansion to a planar wave implies a combination of blast waves from several detonating cords in a curtain construction. The near field parameters however can be obtained from the figures 13 and 14 as we used to do for spherical detonations using the blast parameter plot (for example from Baker [2]). As in the spherical models one can apply the weight correction factor 2 for surface detonations.



The upper limit ( $Z = 20$ ) could perhaps be extended since all plots show linear behaviour in this region, but this is not necessary because at large distances, the original cylindrical (or the future planar) blast wave transforms to a spherical shape, so the application of these models is limited. The tests showed that within a  $45^\circ$  angle the blast wave can be considered cylindrical (plane), see the dotted lines in figure 9. Using a single wire (16 g/m pentriet), the upper limit of  $Z$  corresponds with a distance of almost 3 m, so in our test set-up with 6 m detonating cord only the centre blast pencil would be measuring a cylindrical wave. Assuming detonation and measuring height were sufficient to prevent ground reflection interference. This example indicates the redundancy of expanding the model to larger distances.

The simulations were performed in 2D, meaning that the detonation was initiated over the full length of the detonating cord instantaneously. In the measurements however, two types of initiation were used: single (one-sided) or double (both-sided). All parameters showed to be independent of the initiation type, however the time of arrival would vary if measured from initiation time, because of the detonation velocity in the cord and the measurement position along the cord. For this reason the actual cylindrical wave was not plane, but slightly cone-shaped. Towards a model for a planar blast wave the initiation method is a major point of concern, as will be the curtain shape (braiding), due to the interaction of individual blast waves.

#### Application example of the new model

Suppose detonation cord is used to force an entry in a house. A line of 4 strings, 2 meters long is used to open a door at its hinges. What would be the safety distance for the special forces, considering ear drum rupture at 35 kPa.

This must be considered as a surface explosion. Assuming the 16g/m cord as was used in our test, the detonating weight would be  $W = 2.4 \cdot 16 \cdot 10^{-3}$  kg/m. From equation (1) one can work out the corresponding  $Z = 12$ , which results in a minimum distance of 4,3 m. The other equations can now be used to obtain the other shock wave parameters.

However, at this distance the blast wave will no longer be cylindrical (due to the  $45^\circ$  angle, the maximum validity range of the cylindrical equations for 2 m. detonating cord is 1 m.) and the detonation must probably be considered spherical, concentrating all detonating mass into a sphere. The comparison of both models will be studied in future work.

## CONCLUSION

In the validation proces of the AUTODYN simulations generally good similarity was found with both measurements and models from literature for the spherical blast parameters. On the other hand some specific differences with CONWEP were shown and discussed, especially in the positive phase duration.

The first step toward a parametric model of a planar blast wave has been set by defining equations of four blast wave parameters of a cylindrical blast wave: the peak incident pressure, the time of arrival, the positive phase duration and the positive phase impuls. This model, listed in equations (1) to (4), is based on a curve fit of both numerical simulations and experimental results, which were shown to concur. The model can be applied for any kind of line detonation, restricted for the validity range of  $Z$ . A second restriction is the transformation from a cylindrical to a spherical blast wave shape for a line source with finite length, so the model can only be applied to a distance of half this line length. In the scaled distance  $Z$  the square-root of the explosive charge weight per length is used.

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