

Section 3.5

Recovery Systems: Parachutes 101

Material taken from: Parachutes for
Planetary Entry Systems

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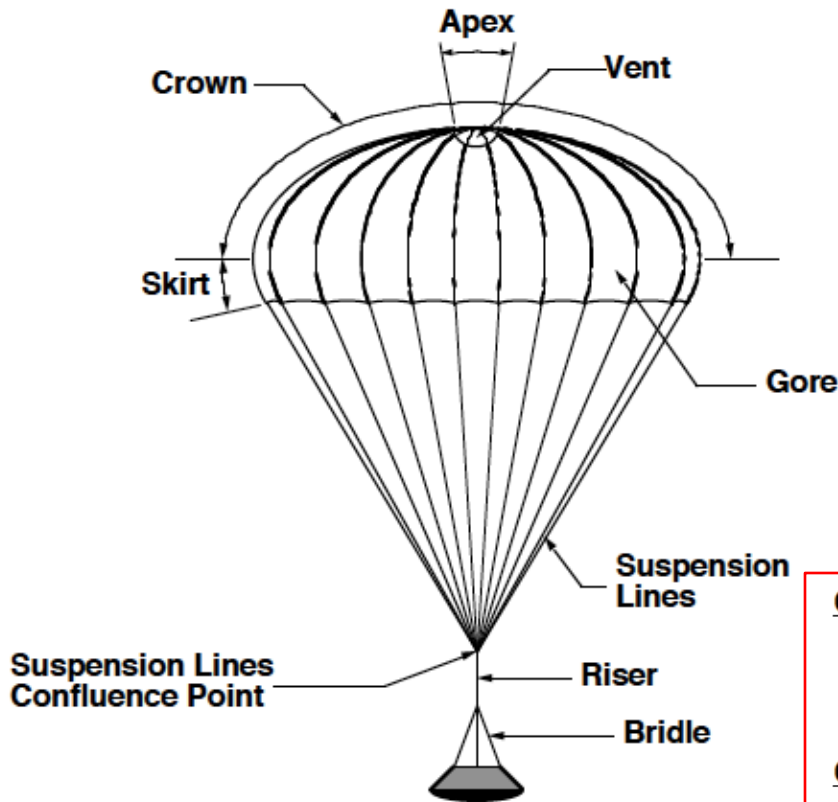


Also, Images from:

*Knacke, T. W.: Parachute Recovery Systems Design
Manual, Para Publishing, Santa Barbara, CA, 1992.
and*

*Ewing, E. G., Bixby, H.W., and Knacke, T.W.: Recovery
System Design Guide, AFFDL-TR-78-151, 1978.*

Basic Terminology



Nominal Area, S_0

- Area based on canopy constructed surface area
- Includes vent area and other open areas (e.g., gap area in a DGB parachute)
- Often (but not always!) used as reference area for aerodynamic coefficients

Nominal Diameter, D_0

- Fictitious diameter based on S_0 :

$$D_0 = \sqrt{\frac{4S_0}{\pi}}$$

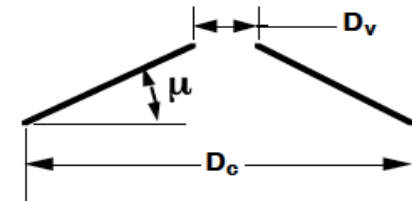
- Often (but not always!) used as reference length for aerodynamic coefficients and other calculations

Constructed Diameter, D_c

- Maximum diameter of the parachute (measured along the gore radial seam) of the parachute

Conical Parachute Base Angle, μ

Vent Diameter, D_v

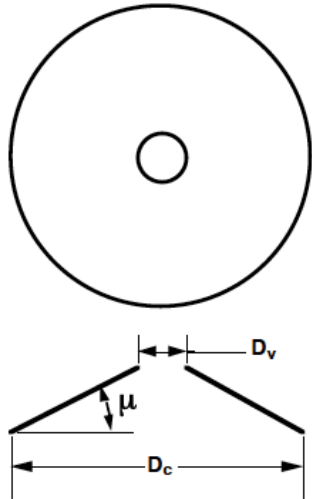


Vent Area, S_v

- Constructed area of the vent
- Although related, the vent area and vent diameter (D_v) are not always related by the simple relationship between the area and diameter of a circle (see following example for a conical parachute)
- S_v is typically $\sim 1\%$ of S_0

Basic Terminology (2)

Example: Conical Parachute



$$S_0 = \lambda \frac{D_c^2}{4} \sqrt{1 + \tan^2 \mu}$$

$$D_0 = \sqrt{\frac{4S_0}{\lambda}}$$

$$S_v = \lambda \frac{D_v^2}{4} \sqrt{1 + \tan^2 \mu}$$

$$\lambda_g = \frac{S_v}{S_0}$$

For our purposed conical and elliptical parachutes are same thing"

Projected Area, S_p

- Projected area of the inflated parachute
- Sometimes used as reference area for aerodynamic coefficients in parachutes for which it is difficult to define S_0 (e.g., Guide Surface parachutes)

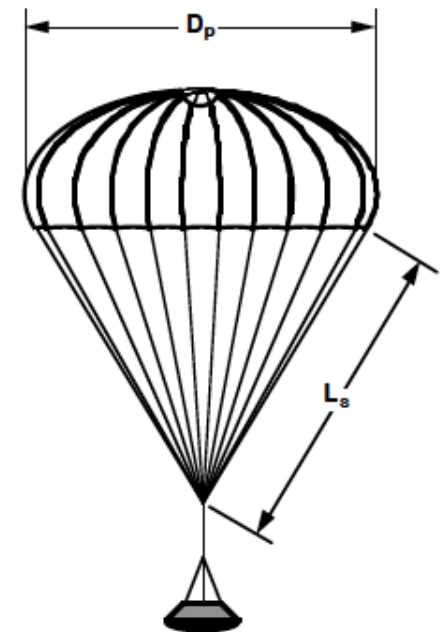
Projected Diameter, D_p

- Maximum projected diameter of the parachute based on S_p :

$$D_p = \sqrt{\frac{4S_p}{\pi}}$$

Suspension Line Length, L_s

- Typically $L_s/D_0 = 1$ to 2

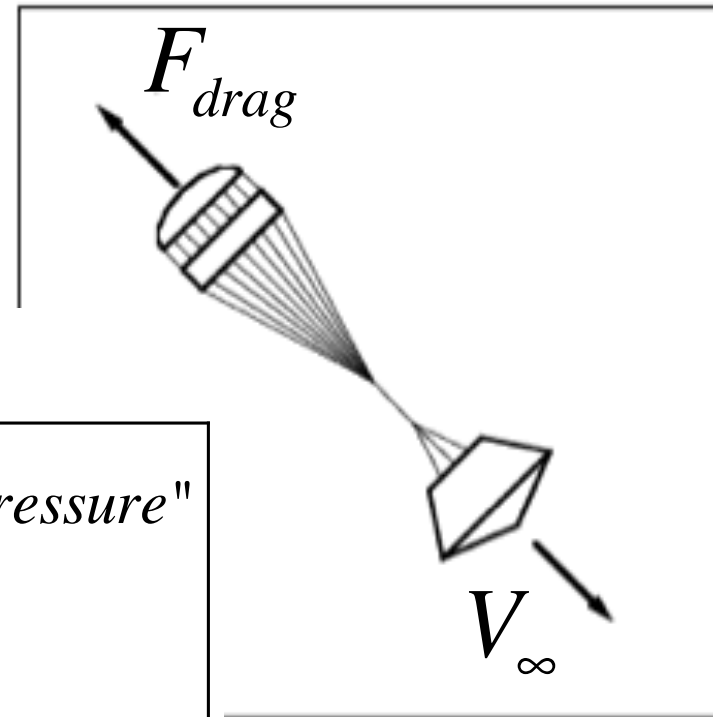


Basic Terminology ⁽³⁾

Drag

Drag - Force parallel to the free-stream velocity,

Assuming quasi steady-state conditions (e.g., parachute is fully inflated) the parachute drag force F_p can be calculated from:



$$F_{drag} = \bar{q} \cdot C_D \cdot S_0$$

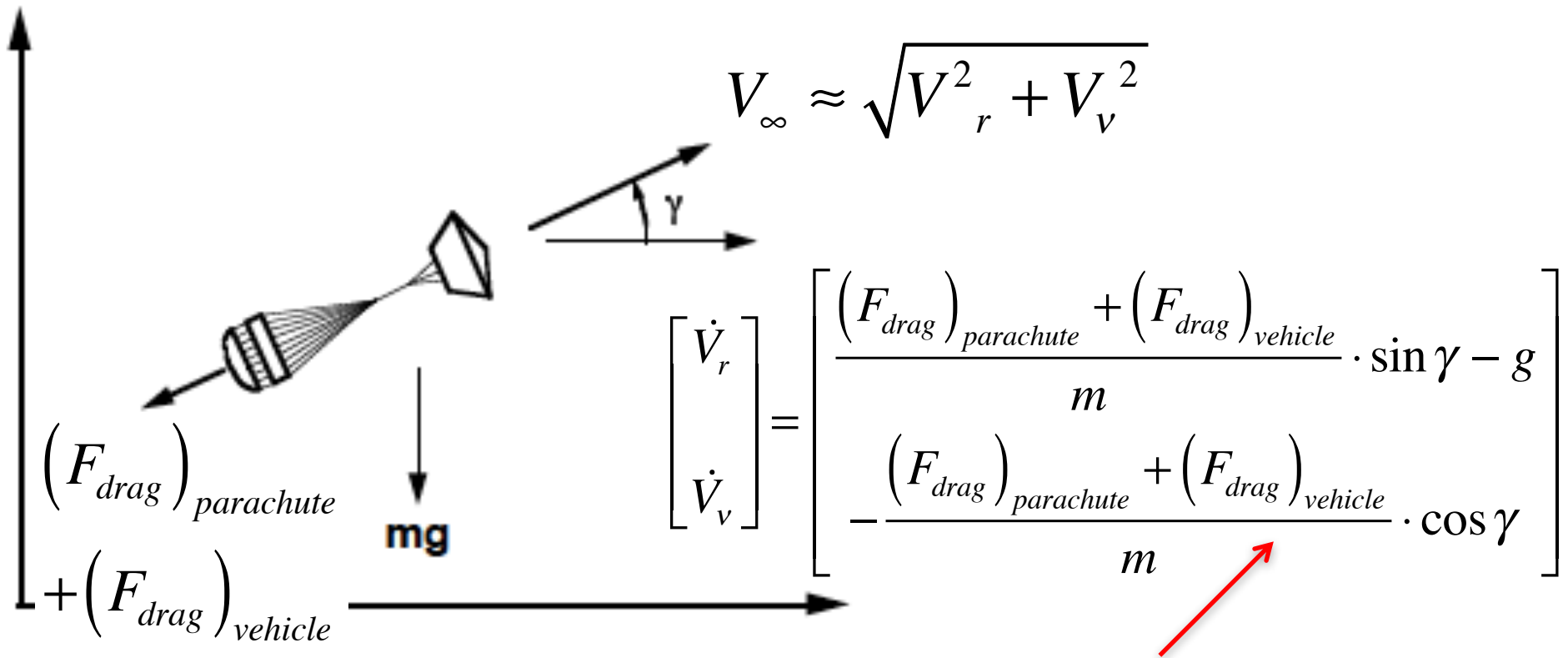
$$\bar{q} = \frac{1}{2} \rho \cdot V_\infty^2 \text{ "incompressible dynamic pressure"}$$

→ $C_D = \text{"drag coefficient"}$

$C_D \cdot S_0 = \text{"drag area"}$

Basic Terminology (4)

In general, under parachute, 2-DOF equations of motion are
(ignore centrifugal & Coriolis forces)



*Vehicle decelerates very rapidly
in horizontal direction*

Basic Terminology (4)

“Terminal Velocity” .. Equilibrium velocity where parachute + vehicle are no longer accelerating



$$\begin{bmatrix} \dot{V}_r \\ \dot{V}_v \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \left(F_{drag} \right)_{parachute} \\ \rightarrow D_0^{parachute} = 58.0589_{cm} \end{array} + \left(F_{drag} \right)_{vehicle} = m \cdot g \right] \quad \gamma \approx 90^\circ$$

$$\left(\frac{1}{2} \rho \cdot V_{terminal}^2 \right) \cdot \left[\left(C_D \cdot S \right)_0^{parachute} + \left(C_D \cdot S \right)_{ref}^{vehicle} \right] = M_{vehicle} \cdot g$$

$$V_{terminal}^2 = \frac{2 M_{vehicle} \cdot g / \rho}{\left(C_D \cdot S \right)_0^{parachute} + \left(C_D \cdot S \right)_{ref}^{vehicle}}$$

Parachute Types

Parachute Types

Solid Textile Parachutes

- Parachutes with canopies fabricated mainly from cloth materials
- Typically these types of parachutes have no openings other than the vent
- Relatively easy to manufacture



Guide Surface Parachute

We'll be using solid parachutes

Slotted Textile Parachutes

- Parachutes with canopies fabricated from either cloth materials or ribbons
- These types of parachutes have extensive openings through the canopy in addition to the vent
- Can be expensive to manufacture
- Most common parachute type used in planetary exploration missions



Galileo Ribbon Parachute

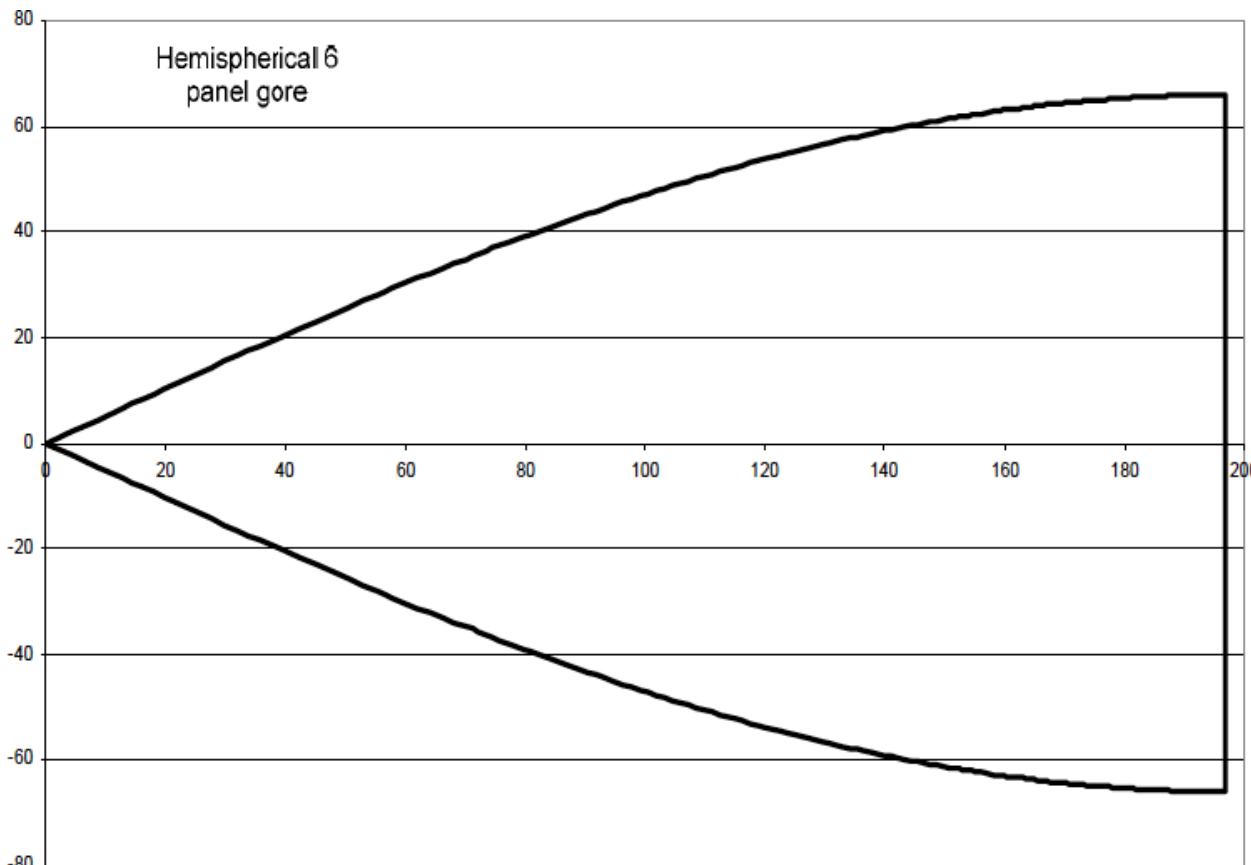


MER DGB Parachute

Parachute Shapes

- **Hemispherical parachute:**

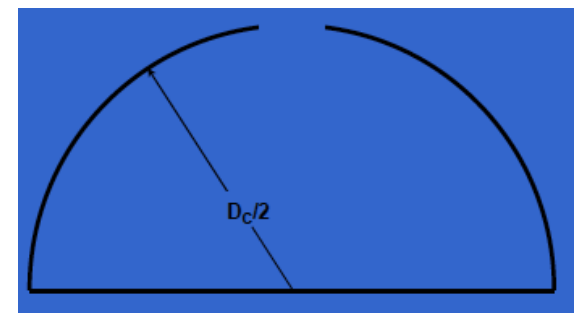
- Deployed canopy takes on the shape of a hemisphere.
- Three dimensional hemispherical shape divided into a number of 2-D panels, called gores



Gore pattern for 6 gore 252mm dia hemispherical parachute

- Angle subtended on the left hand side of the pattern is 60 degrees

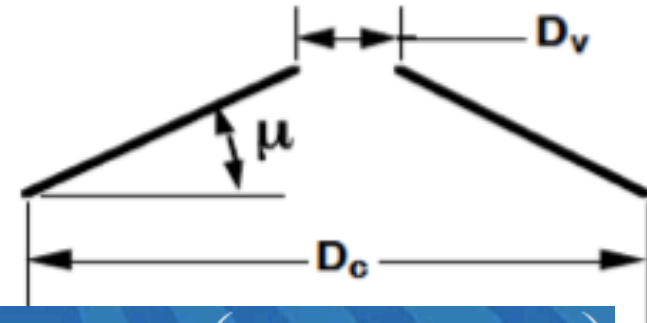
- When all six gores are joined they complete the 360 degree circle.



Parachute Shapes (2)

- **Conical Parachute**

- 2-D Canopy shape in form of a triangle



- ◆ For conical parachutes $D_c = D_o \sqrt{\cos \mu} \quad \left(\mu = \text{cone } \frac{1}{2} \angle \right)$

- ◆ For 10° conical parachute:

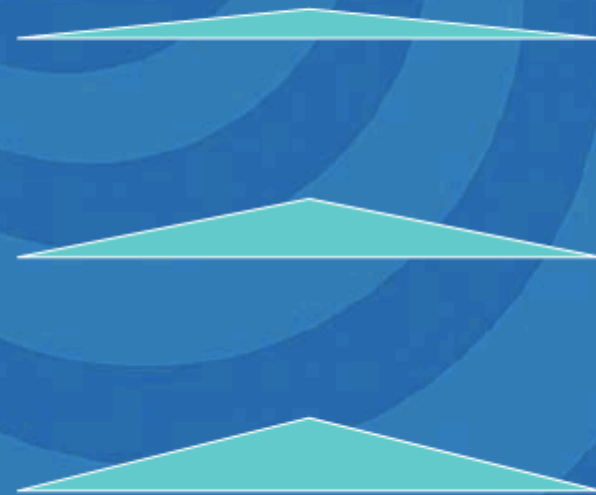
- ◆ $D_o = 1.008 D_c$

- ◆ For 20° conical parachute:

- ◆ $D_o = 1.03 D_c$

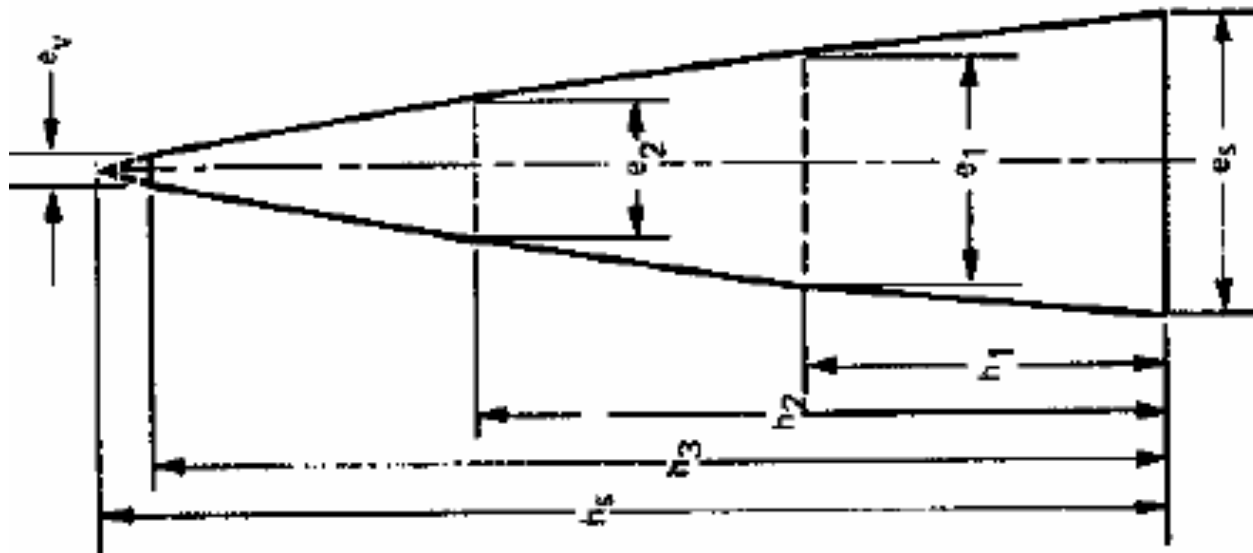
- ◆ For 30° conical parachute:

- ◆ $D_o = 1.07 D_c$



Parachute Shapes (3)

- **Conical Parachute Gore Shape**
 - 2-D Canopy shape in form of a triangle

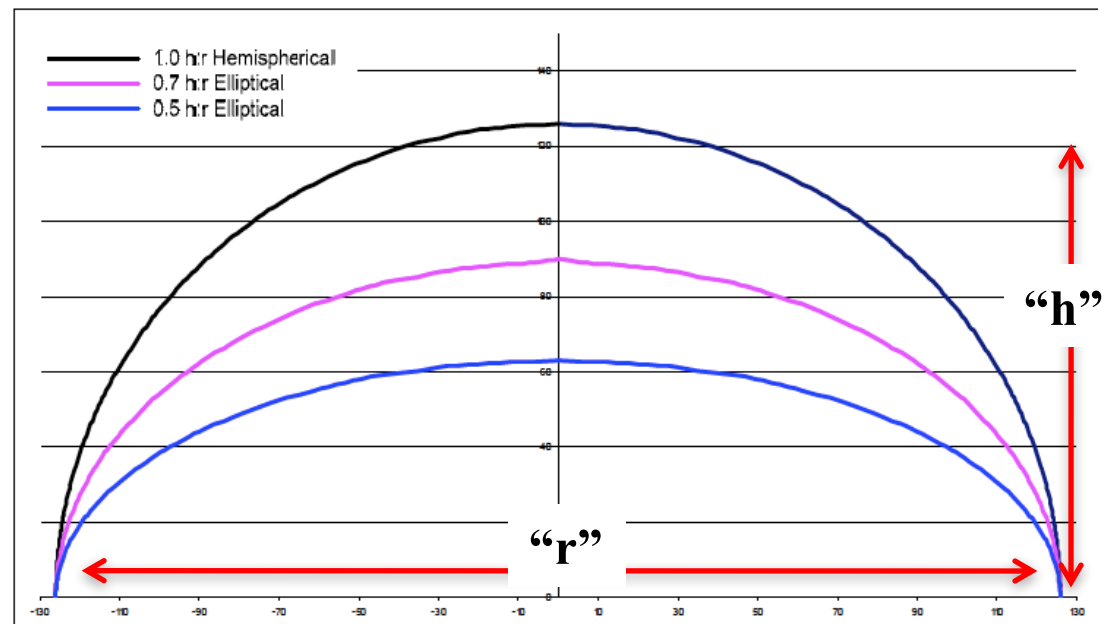
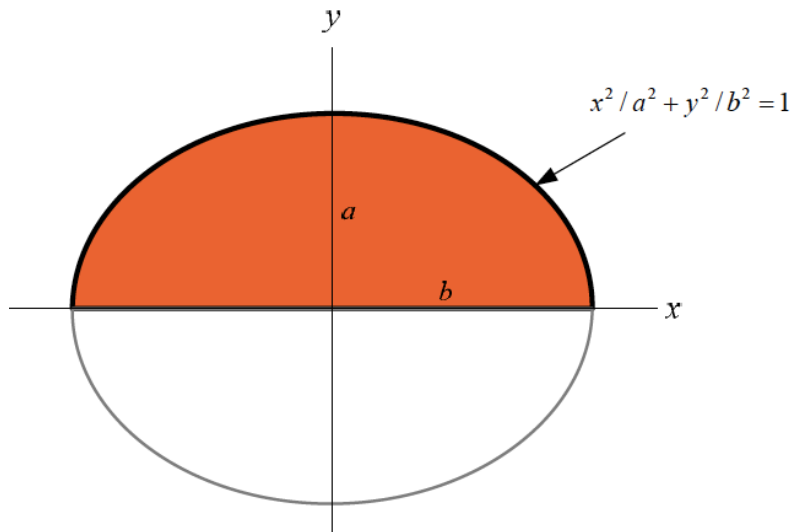


- *Higher drag coefficient than hemispherical parachutes, but also less stability*

Parachute Shapes (4)

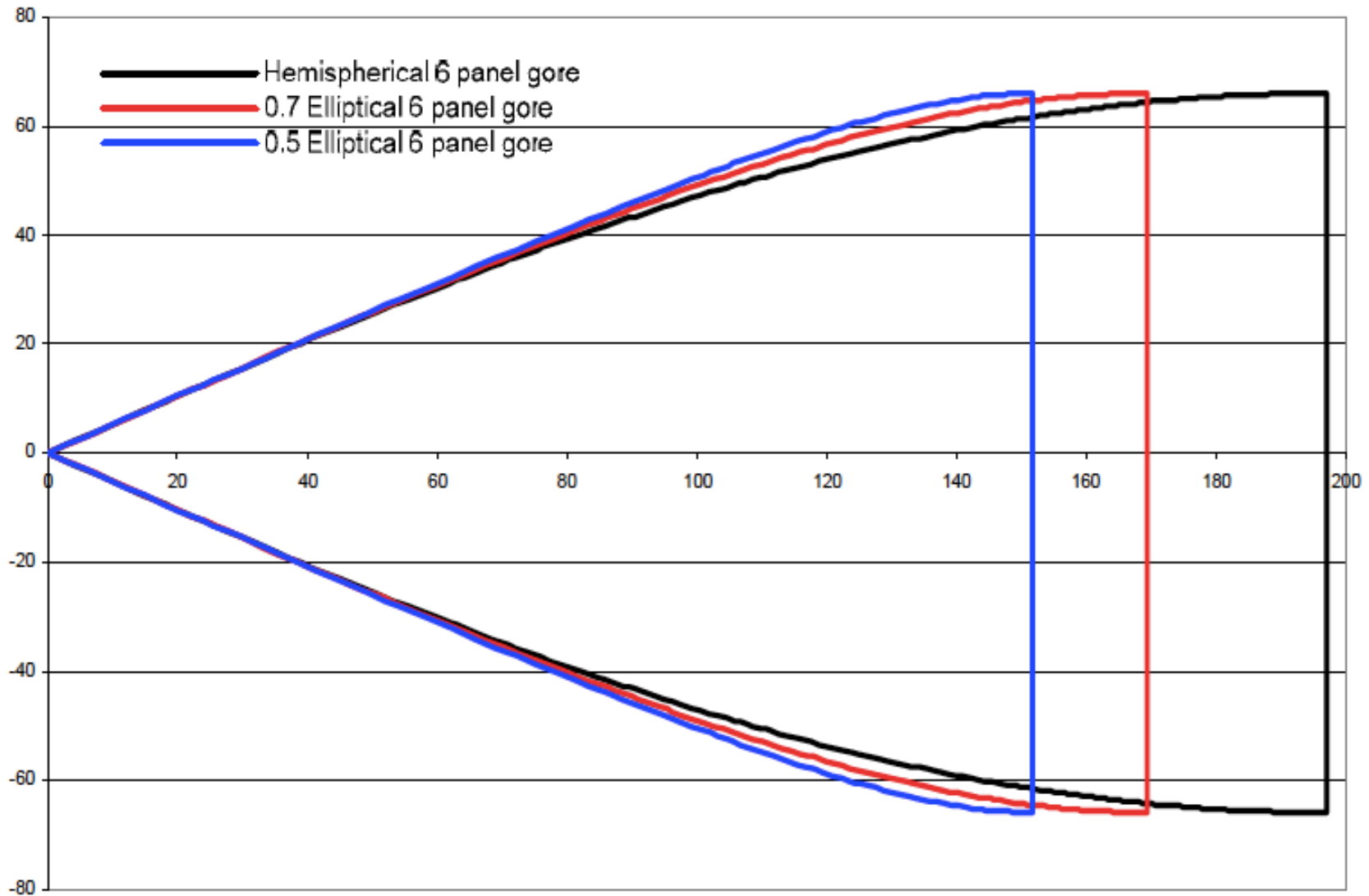
- **Elliptical parachute:**

- Parachute where vertical axis is smaller than horizontal axis
- A parachute with an elliptical canopy has essentially the same CD as a hemispherical parachute, but with less surface material



Canopy profile for different height / radius ratios



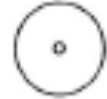







Parachute Shapes (5)



Comparison of gore shapes for different height : radius ratios















Parachute Types (2)

Solid Textile Parachutes

Type	Constructed Shape		$\frac{D_c}{D_o}$	Inflated Shape $\frac{D_p}{D_o}$	Drag Coef. C_{D_o} Range	Opening Load Factor C_X (Inf. Mass)	Average Angle of Oscillation	General Application
	Plan	Profile						
Flat Circular			1.00	.67 to .70	.75 to .80	~1.8	$\pm 10^\circ$ to $\pm 40^\circ$	Descent
Conical			.93 to .95	.70	.75 to .90	~1.8	$\pm 10^\circ$ to $\pm 30^\circ$	Descent
Bi-Conical			.90 to .95	.70	.75 to .92	~1.8	$\pm 10^\circ$ to $\pm 30^\circ$	Descent
Tri-Conical			.90 to .95	.70	.80 to .96	~1.8	$\pm 10^\circ$ to $\pm 20^\circ$	Descent
Hemispherical			.71	.66	.62 to .77	~1.6	$\pm 10^\circ$ to $\pm 15^\circ$	Descent

Parachute Types (3)

Slotted Textile Parachutes

Type	Constructed Shape		Inflated Shape	Drag Coef. C_{D0} Range	Opening Load Factor C_X (Inf. Mass)	Average Angle of Oscillation	General Application	
	Plan	Profile						$\frac{D_c}{D_o}$
Flat Ribbon			1.00	.67	.45 to .50	~1.05	0° to ±3°	Drogue, Descent, Deceleration
Conical Ribbon			.95 to .97	.70	.50 to .55	~1.05	0° to ±3°	Descent, Deceleration
Conical Ribbon (Varied Porosity)			.97	.70	.55 to .65	1.05 to 1.30	0° to ±3°	Drogue, Descent, Deceleration
Ribbon (Hemisflo)			.62	.62	.30* to .46	1.00 to 1.30	±2°	Supersonic Drogue
Ringslot			1.00	.67 to .70	.56 to .65	~1.05	0° to ±5°	Extraction, Deceleration
Ringsail			1.16	.69	.75 to .90	~1.10	±5° to ±10°	Descent
Disc-Gap-Band			.73	.65	.52 to .58	~1.30	±10° to ±15°	Descent

*Supersonic

Example Calculation: Drogue Chute Terminal Velocity



First deployment
at apogee

$$h_{apogee} = h_{agl} + h_{launch\ site} =$$

$$(1609.23 + 240)_{meters} \approx 1850_{meters}$$

$$\rho_{apogee} = 1.0218 \frac{kg}{m^3}$$

$$g = \frac{\mu}{r^2} = \frac{3.9860044 \times 10^5 \frac{km^3}{sec^2}}{(6371 + 1.85)_{km}^2} = 9.815 \frac{m}{sec^2}$$

$$\text{Maximum mass at apogee: } m_{apogee} = m_{launch} - m_{fuel} = (14.188 - 1.76) = 12.428_{kg}$$

$$m_{apogee} \cdot g = 12.428 \cdot 9.815 = 121.975_{Nt}$$

Example Calculation: Drogue Chute Terminal Velocity (2)



First deployment
at apogee

- Descent rate under drogue, 50-100 ft/sec
- Go with minimum value ~ 15.24 m/sec (50 ft/sec)

“Vehicle Drag Area” ..

Rocket is broken into two pieces

$$(C_D \cdot S_0)_{vehicle} \approx 2 \cdot \left[(C_D)_{rocket} \cdot (A_{ref})_{rocket} \right] = (2 \cdot 0.35 \cdot 0.01589) \approx 0.0111 \text{ m}^2$$

“Double up” nominal rocket drag area

Example Calculation: Drogue Chute

Terminal Velocity (3)



First deployment
at apogee

- Parachute Drag Coefficient
- Elliptical Parachute .. Take median value

Solid Textile Parachutes

Type	Constructed Shape		$\frac{D_c}{D_o}$	Inflated Shape $\frac{D_p}{D_o}$	Drag Coef. C_{D_o} Range	Opening Load Factor C_X (Inf. Mass)	Average Angle of Oscillation	General Application
	Plan	Profile						
Conical			.95 to .95	.70	.75 to .90	~1.8	$\pm 10^\circ$ to $\pm 30^\circ$ λ_y	Descent
Hemispherical			.71	.66	.62 to .77	~1.6	$\pm 10^\circ$ to $\pm 15^\circ$	Descent

$$(C_D)_{chute} \approx 0.76 \pm 0.115$$

Example Calculation: Drogue Chute

Terminal Velocity (4)

- Calculate required chute area:

$$V_{\text{terminal}}^2 = \frac{2M_{\text{vehicle}} \cdot g / \rho}{(C_D \cdot S)_0^{\text{parachute}} + (C_D \cdot S)_{\text{ref}}^{\text{vehicle}}}$$

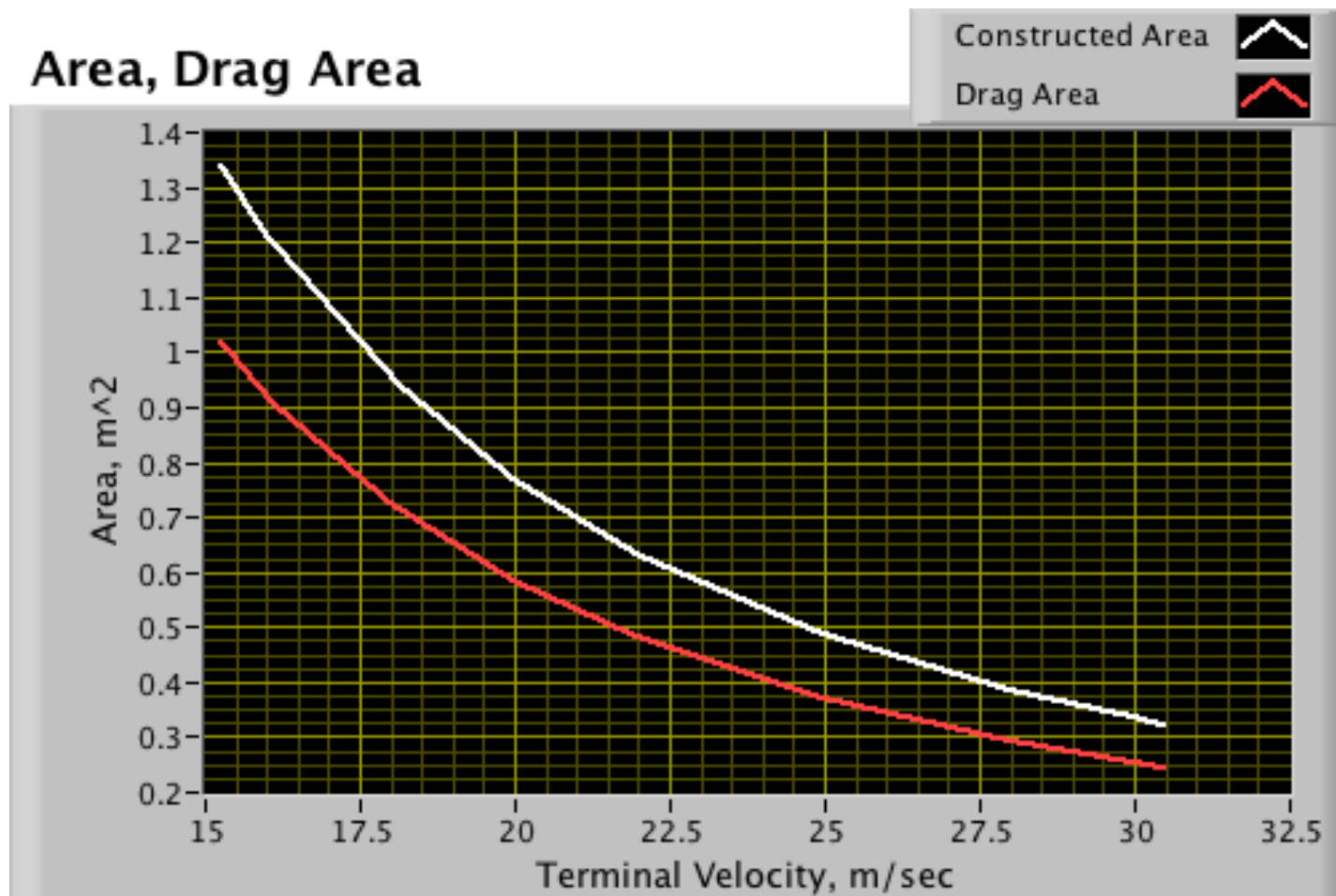
$$\rightarrow (S_0)_{\text{parachute}} = \frac{\frac{m \cdot g}{\frac{1}{2} \rho \cdot V_{\text{terminal}}^2} - (C_D \cdot S_0)_{\text{vehicle}}}{(C_D)_{\text{parachute}}} =$$

$$\frac{121.965}{\left(\frac{1}{2} 1.0218 \cdot 22.86^2\right) - 0.0111} = \frac{1.3378 \text{ m}^2}{0.76}$$

$$D_0 = \sqrt{\frac{4 \cdot (S_0)_{\text{parachute}}}{\pi}} = \left(\frac{4 \cdot 1.33783}{\pi}\right)^{0.5} \frac{39.37}{12} = 4.28 \text{ ft}$$

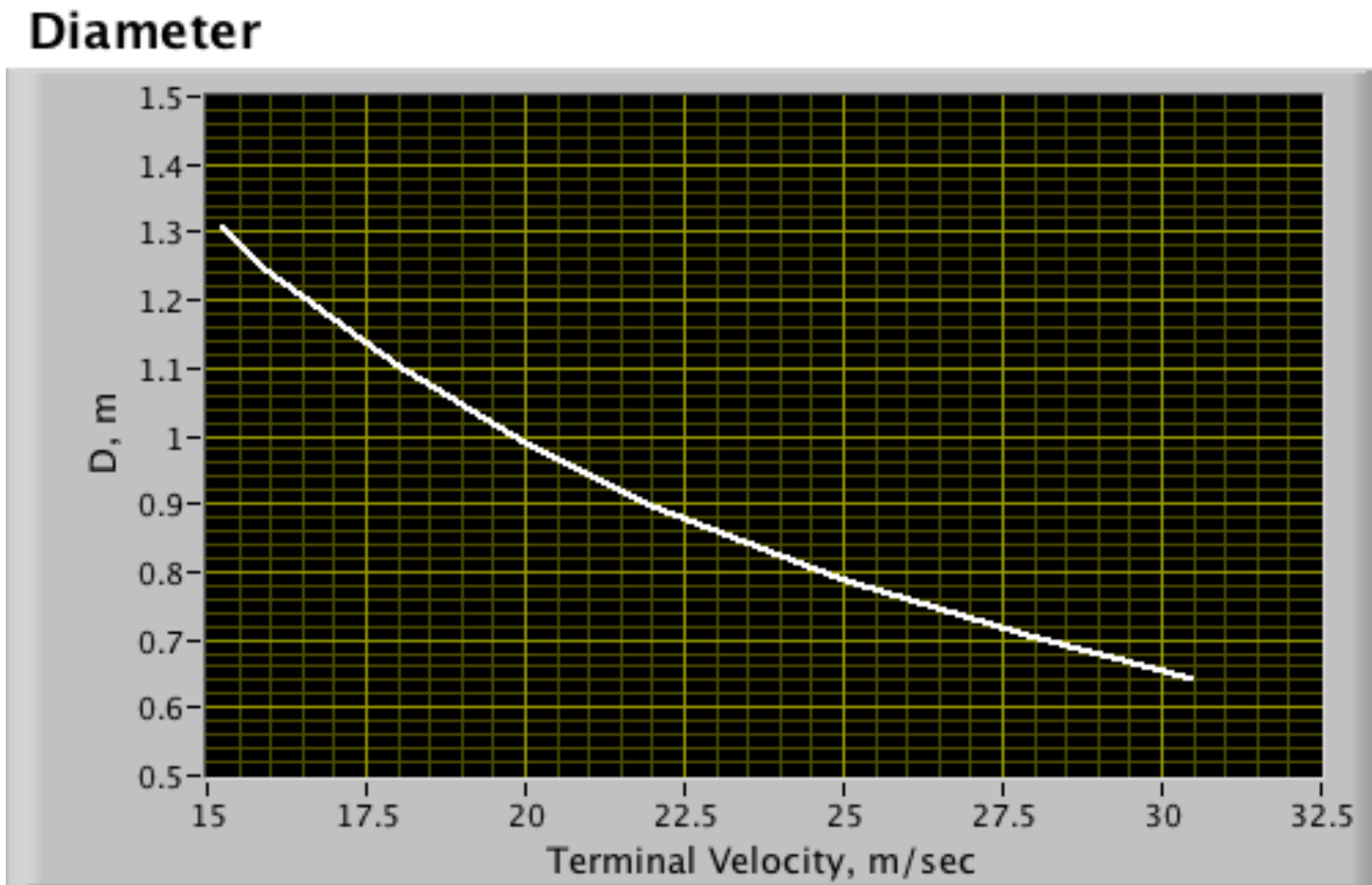
Example Calculation: Drogue Chute Terminal Velocity (5)

Drag Chute Areas Versus Terminal Velocity



Example Calculation: Drogue Chute Terminal Velocity (5)

Drag Chute Diameter Versus Terminal Velocity



Parachute Opening Loads

Largest Tensile Load on Vehicle ... often the Ultimate Design Load Driver

Accurate calculation of opening loads are critical for:

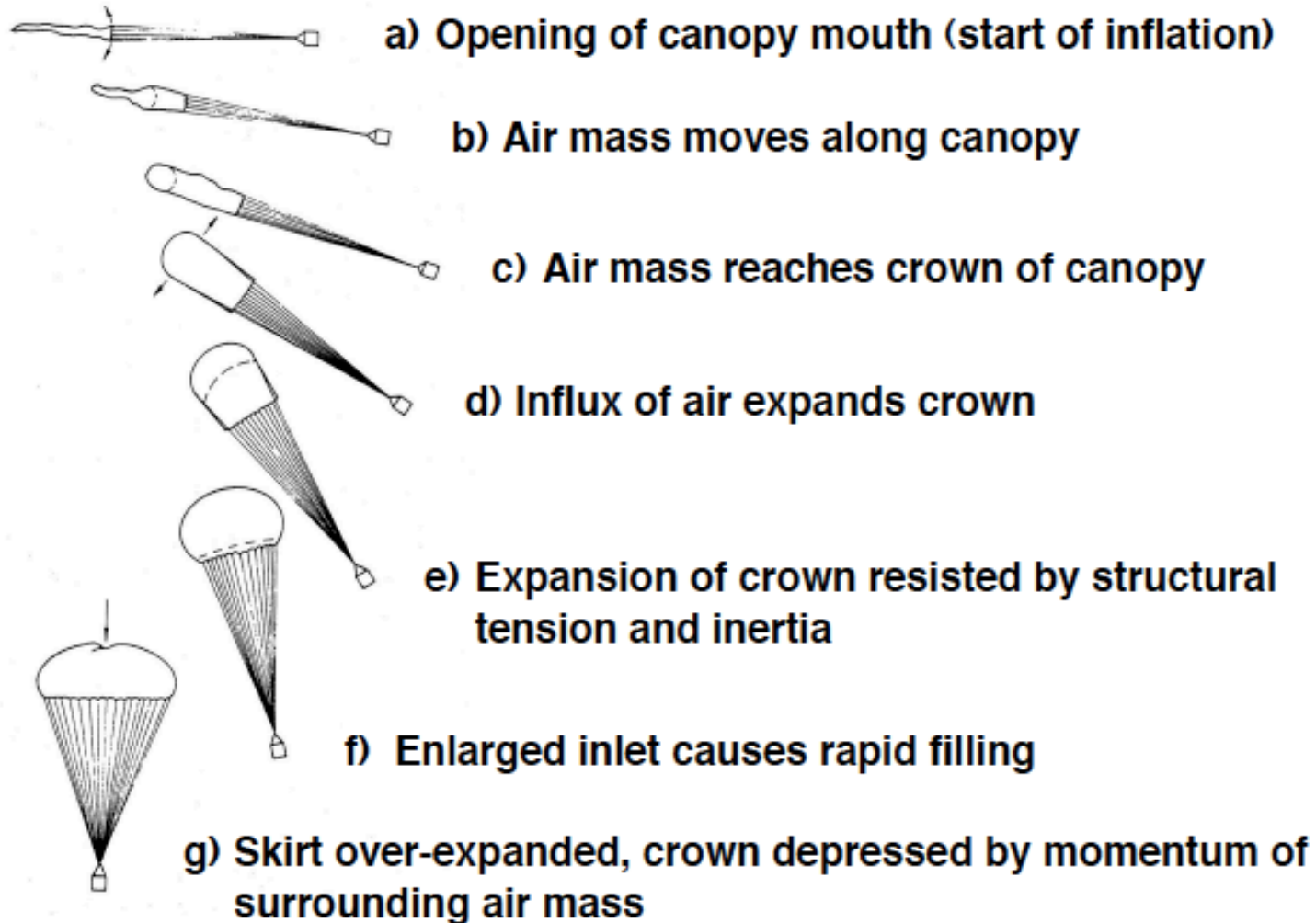
- **Stress analysis of parachute**
- **Stress analysis of entry vehicle**
- **Calculating acceleration of payload**
- **Specification of on-board accelerometers**

Three opening loads analysis methods are discussed here:

- **Pflanz's Method** ← *Design Tool*
- **Inflation Curve Method** ← *Verification Tool*
- **Apparent Mass Method** ← *(Direct Simulation)*

Parachute Opening Loads (2)

Inflation Process



Parachute Opening Loads (3)

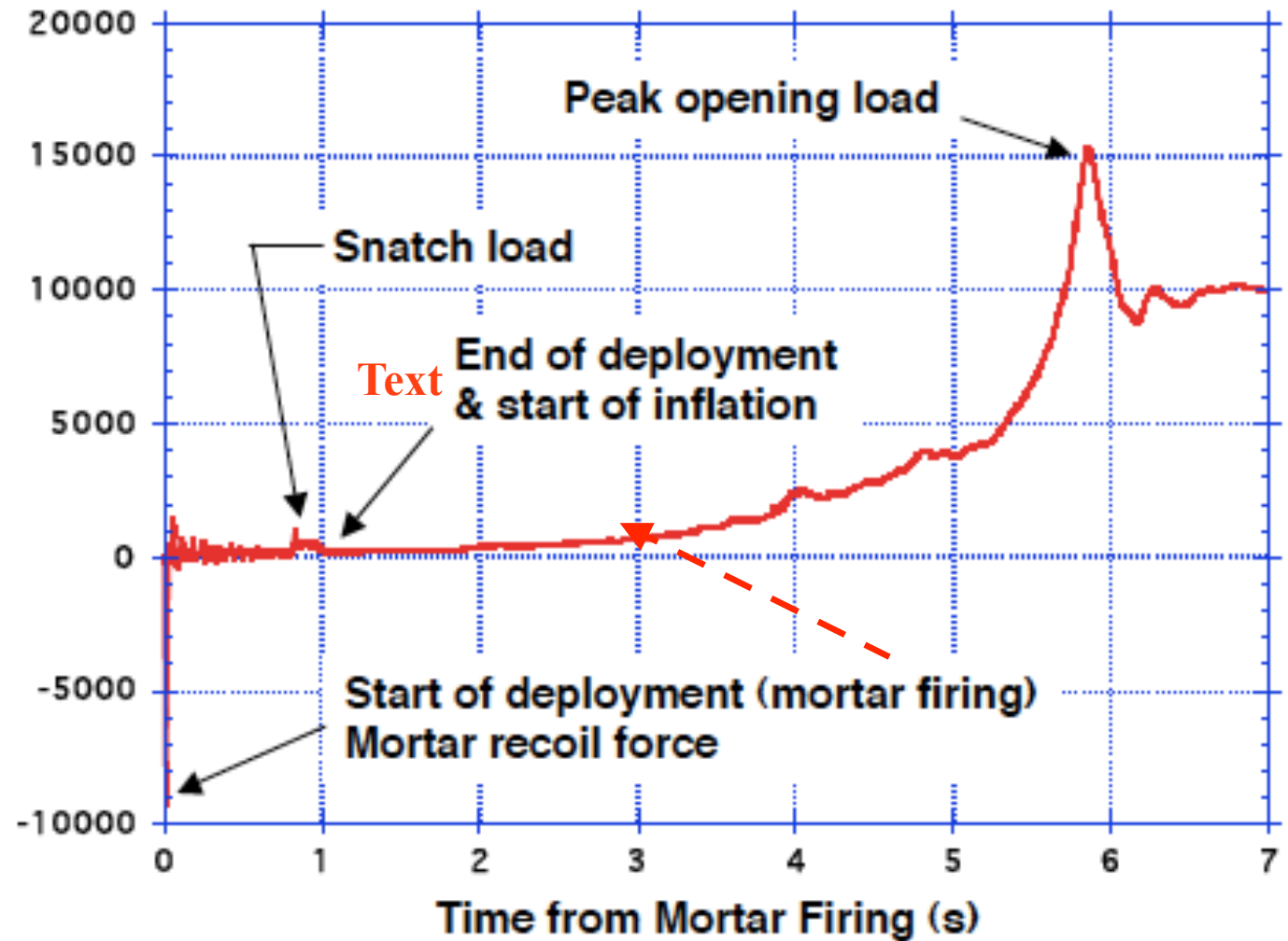
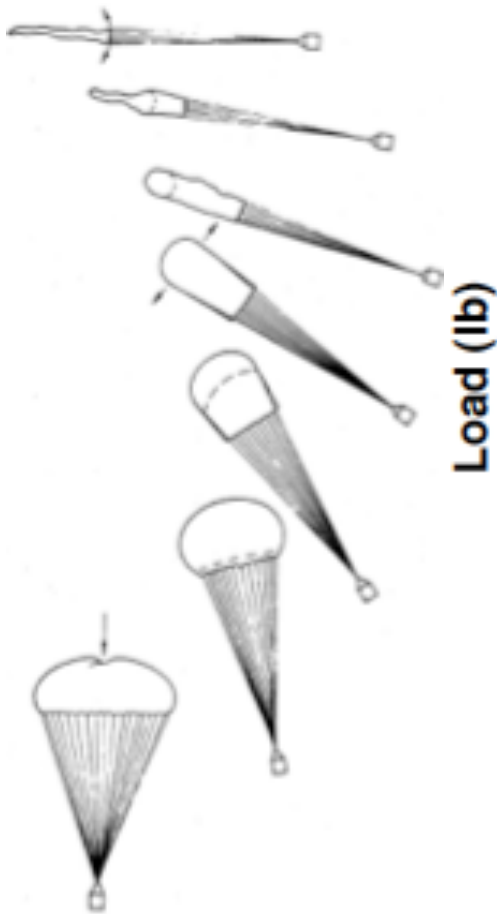
- At subsonic speeds, inflation is often modeled as occurring over a constant number of parachute diameters (i.e., multiples of D_0) for a given parachute type
- Parachute is “scooping” a given volume of air to inflate
- For the most part, experimental data supports this assumption
- Thus if inflation occurs at a constant velocity, V , the inflation time, t_{inf} , can be estimated from:

$$t_{\text{inf}} = n \cdot \frac{D_0}{V_1^k} \rightarrow \begin{array}{l} n = \text{canopy fill constant} \\ k = \text{decceleration exponent} \end{array}$$

where n depends on the parachute type and geometry (typically $n_{\text{inf}} \sim 6$ to 15)

- If V varies significantly during inflation, the equations of motion must be integrated to obtain the inflation time for a given inflation distance

Parachute Opening Loads (4)



Parachute Opening Loads (5)

Infinite-Mass Inflation

- If inflation is of the infinite mass type there will be little deceleration and reduction in the dynamic pressure during inflation
 - Peak opening load will occur at full inflation
- Infinite-mass inflation can happen when inflation occurs so rapidly that there is no time for significant deceleration of the entry vehicle during inflation
- Parachute inflation in thin atmospheres at supersonic speeds is often of the infinite mass type -> Mars!
- Infinite-mass inflation is difficult to obtain at subsonic speeds at low Earth altitudes - this presents a challenge to the qualification of supersonic parachutes at low Earth altitudes
- To obtain infinite-mass inflation at low Earth altitudes:
 - Payload mass must be large or,
 - Test must be conducted in a wind tunnel

Parachute Opening Loads (6)

Finite-Mass Inflation

- If the payload has “finite-mass,” there will be substantial deceleration and reduction in the dynamic pressure during the inflation
 - Peak opening load will not occur at full inflation
- This is the typical situation when parachutes are inflated at low Earth altitudes
- It is more difficult to accurately predict the opening loads in a finite-mass inflation

Pflanz's Method

- **Pflanz' (1942):**

- introduced analytical functions for the drag area

- (finite mass inflation approximation)*

- **Simple, first-order, design book type method**

- Requires least knowledge of the system compared to other methods

fight

- Assumes no gravity acceleration – limits application to shallow path angles at parachute deployment

- Neglects entry vehicle drag

- Yields only peak opening load

- Allows for finite mass approximation

- **Doherr (2003) extended method to account for gravity and arbitrary fight path angles**

Pflanz's Method (2)

$$F_{peak} = \bar{q}_1 \cdot (C_D \cdot S)_0 \cdot C_x \cdot X_1 \rightarrow$$

(finite mass inflation approximation)

$\bar{q}_1 \rightarrow$ Dynamic Pressure @ Deployment
 $C_x \rightarrow$ Shock Load Factor
 $X_1 \rightarrow$ Opening Force Reduction Factor
 $(C_D \cdot S)_0 \rightarrow$ Nominal Drag Area @ Full Inflation

$$X_1 = f(A, \eta) \rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \eta \rightarrow \text{Inflation Curve Exponent} \\ A \rightarrow \text{Ballistic Parameter} \end{array} \right] A = \frac{2 \cdot M_V}{(C_D \cdot S)_0 \cdot \rho_1 \cdot V_1 \cdot \tau_{infl}}$$

- F_{peak} - peak opening load
- q_1 - dynamic pressure at start of inflation
- C_{D0} - parachute full-open drag coefficient
- S_0 - parachute nominal area
- C_x - opening load factor (from test data or tables in pages 24 through 26)
- X_1 - force reduction factor accounting for deceleration during inflation
- A** - ballistic parameter
- η - inflation curve exponent (dependent on canopy type, see Knacke: Parachute Recovery Systems Design Manual, p. 5-58)
- M_V - mass of entry vehicle
- ρ_1 - atmospheric density
- V_1 - velocity at start of inflation
- τ_{infl} - inflation time (See Later Description)

Pflanz's Method (3)

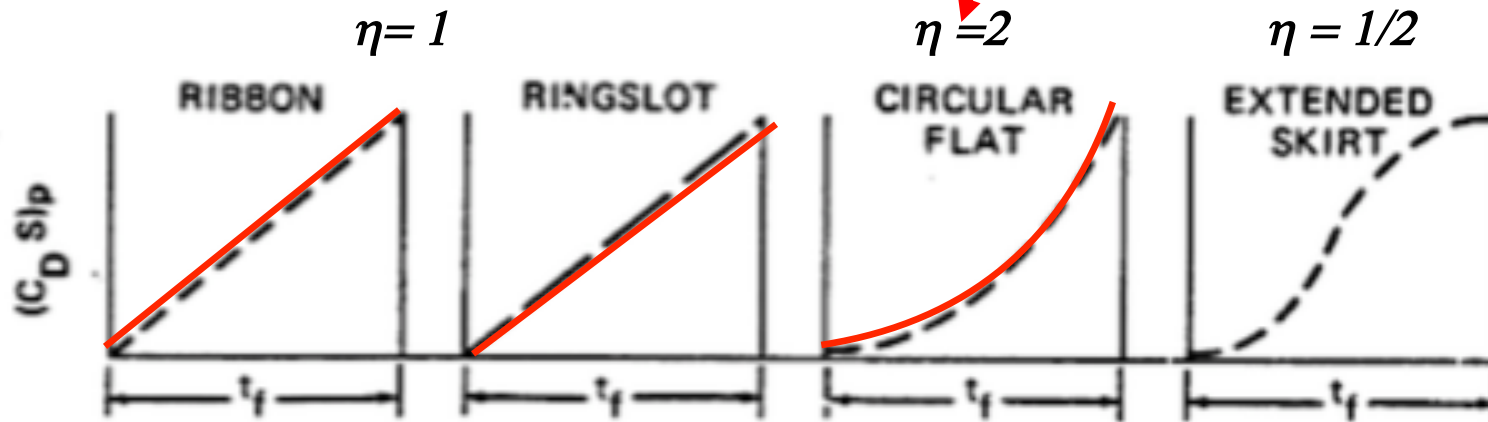
$$A = \frac{2 \cdot M_V}{(C_D \cdot S)_0 \cdot \rho_1 \cdot V_1 \cdot \tau_{infl}} \quad \beta$$

$$\tau_{infl} = n \cdot \frac{D_0}{V_1^k}$$

n – Canopy Fill Constant
 k = Deceleration Exponent

Solid, Elliptical Chute \rightarrow $n \approx 4$
 $k \approx 0.85$

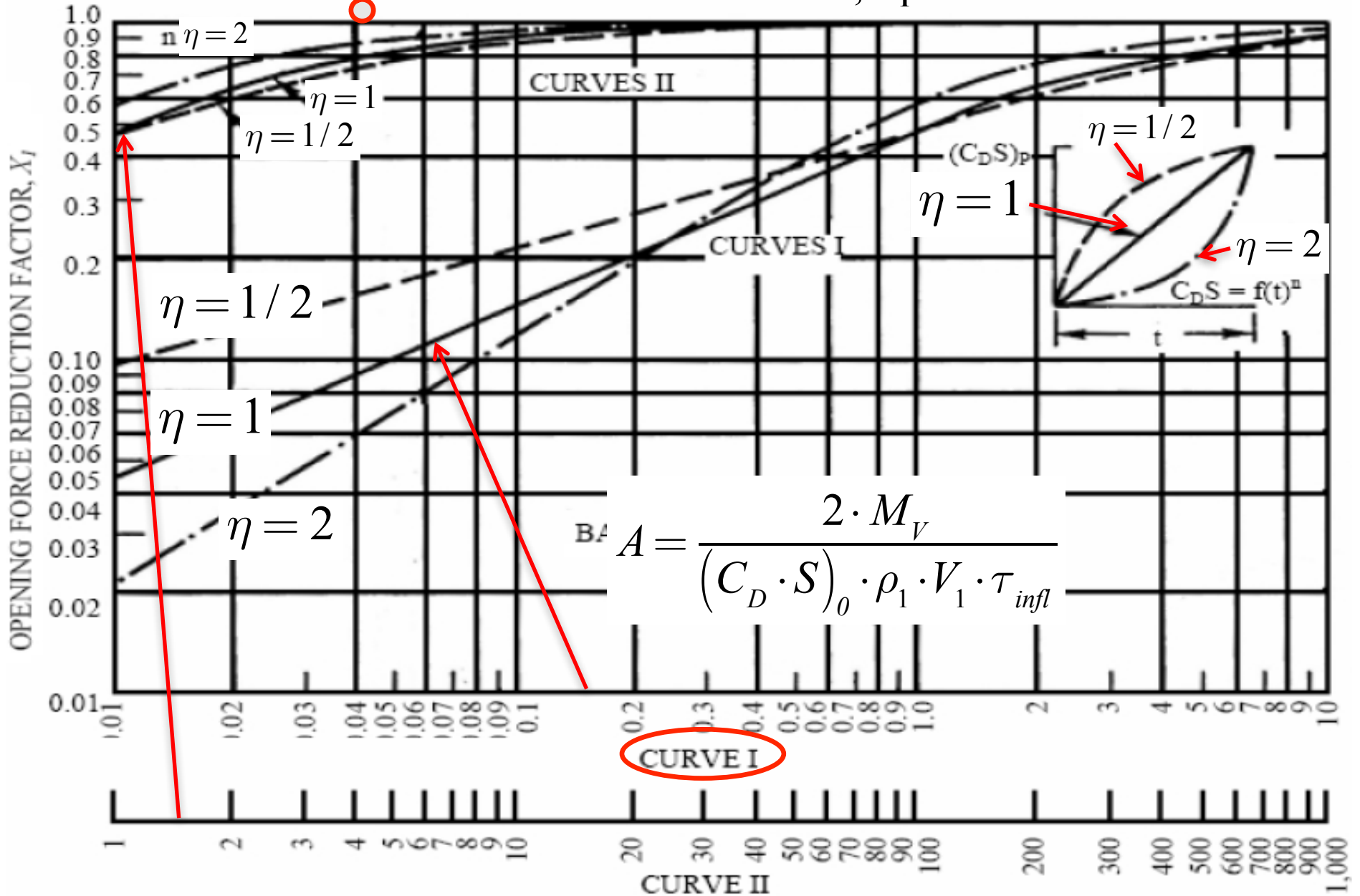
- Ribbon/Ringslot $\rightarrow \eta=1$
- Solid, Elliptical, Flat $\rightarrow \eta=2$
- Extended Skirt, Reefed $\rightarrow \eta=1/2$



Typical Drag-Area-Versus-Time Increase for Various Parachute Types.

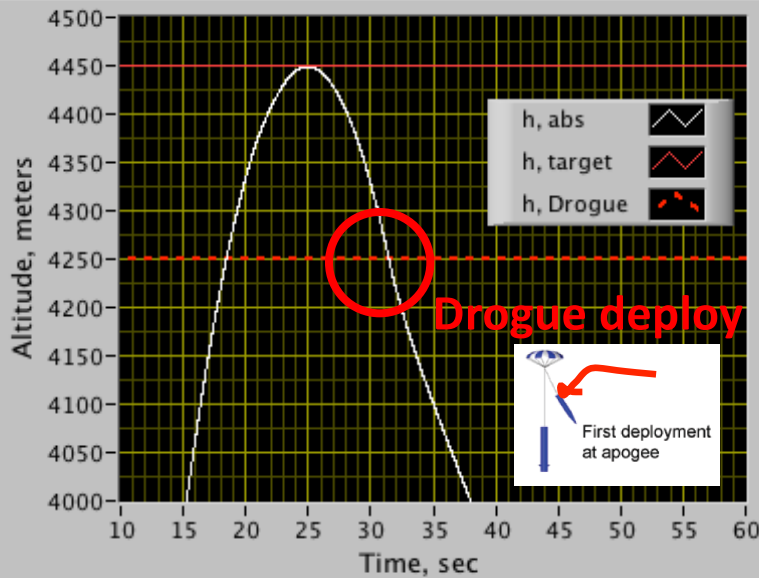
Pflanz's Method (4)

Load Reduction Factor, X_1

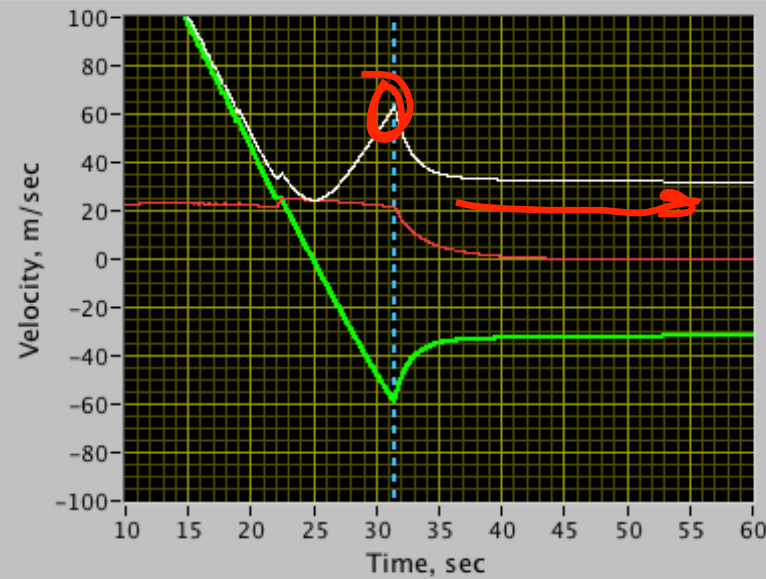


Pflanz's Method Example

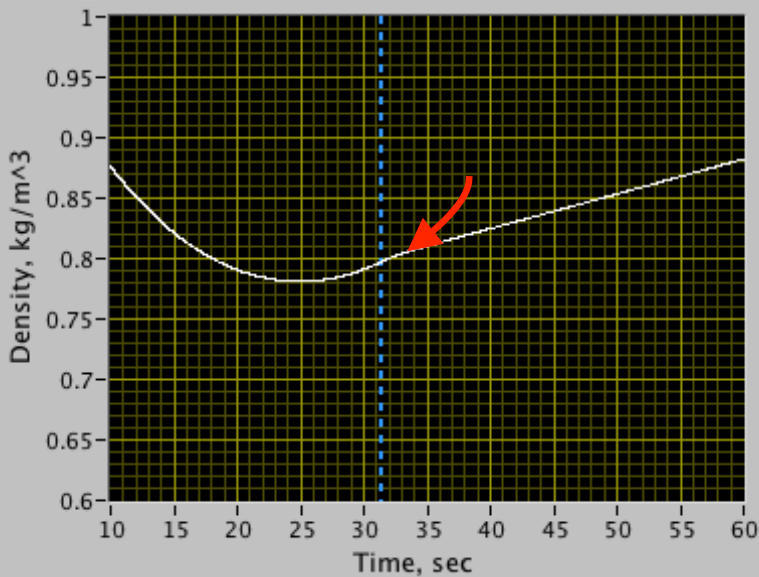
Altitude MSL



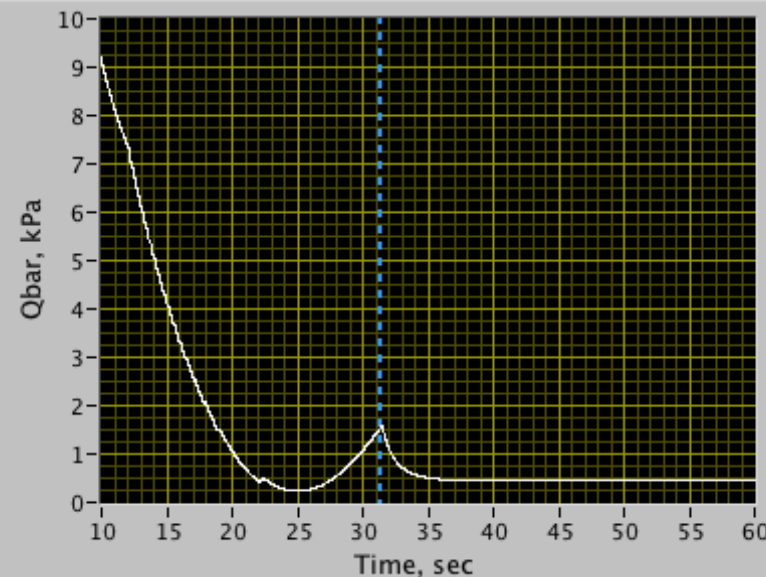
Airspeed



Atmospheric Density



Dynamic Pressure



Deployment
Altitude, MSL
Meters

4251

Deployment
Time, sec

31.45

V₁, m/sec

62.864

ρ_1 , kg/m³

0.797675

q₁, kPa

1.57616

V_{terminal}, m/sec

31.5532

Pflanz's Method Example (2)

Desired Terminal Velocity = 31.55 m/sec ... Get Nominal Parachute Size

Deployment Altitude, MSL Meters
4251

Deployment Time, sec
31.45

V1, m/sec
62.864

ρ_1 , kg/m³
0.797675

q_1 , kPa
1.57616

V_{terminal}, m/sec
31.5532

$$V_{terminal} = \sqrt{\frac{2 M_{vehicle} \cdot g / \rho}{(C_D \cdot S)_0^{parachute} + (C_D \cdot S)_{ref}^{vehicle}}}$$

$$S_0^{parachute} = \frac{M_{vehicle} \cdot g}{\left(\frac{1}{2} \rho \cdot V_{terminal}^2\right) - (C_D \cdot S)_{ref}^{vehicle} \times 2}$$

$$\frac{10.1151 \cdot 9.80716}{0.5 \cdot 0.797675 \cdot 31.5532^2} - \frac{0.3415 \cdot 0.036305 \cdot 2}{0.85} = 0.264745 \text{ M}^2$$

$$\rightarrow D_0^{parachute} = 58.0589 \text{ cm}$$

Final Vehicle Mass, kg
10.1151

Parachute CD
0.85

Vehicle CD0
0.3415

Vehicle Aref (M²)
0.036305

Pflanz's Method Example (3)

Subsonic Inflation time ...

$$\tau_{infl} = n \cdot \frac{D_0}{V_1^k} \rightarrow \begin{array}{l} n - \text{Canopy Fill Constant} \\ k = \text{Deceleration Exponent} \end{array}$$

Solid, Elliptical Chute $\rightarrow \begin{array}{l} n \approx 4 \\ k \approx 0.85 \end{array}$

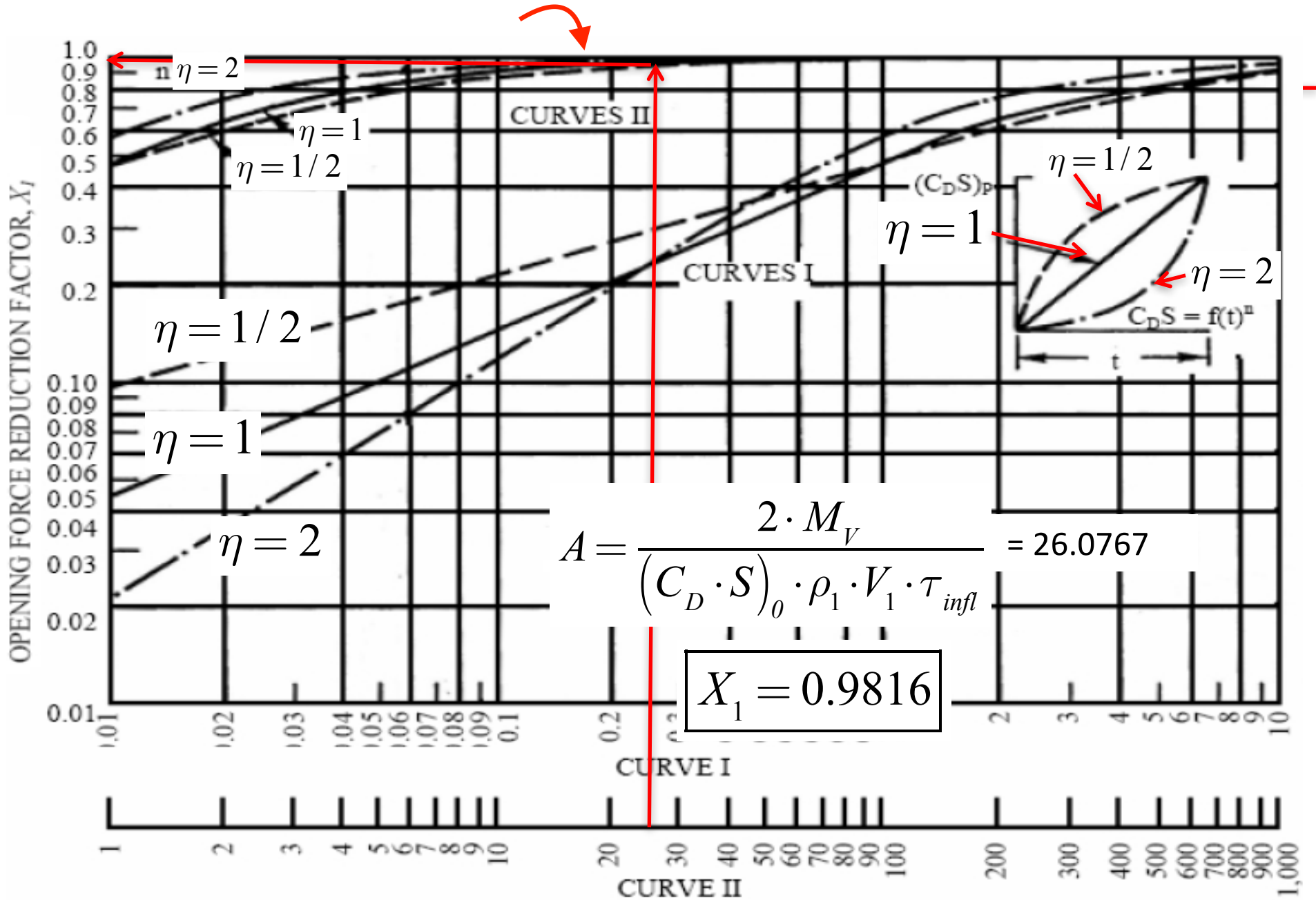
$$\rightarrow D_0^{parachute} = 58.0589_{cm}$$

$$V_1 = 62.864_{m/sec}$$

$$\tau_{infl} = 4 \frac{0.580589}{62.864^{0.85}} = 0.06875 \text{ sec}$$

$$A = \frac{2 \cdot M_V}{(C_D \cdot S)_0 \cdot \rho_1 \cdot V_1 \cdot \tau_{infl}} = \frac{2 \cdot 10.1151}{0.85 \cdot 0.264745 \cdot 0.79765 \cdot 62.864 \cdot 0.0687522} = 26.0767$$

Pflanz's Method Example (5)



Pflanz's Method Example (5)

$$F_{peak} = \bar{q}_1 \cdot (C_D \cdot S)_0 \cdot C_x \cdot X_1 \rightarrow$$

$\bar{q}_1 \rightarrow$	1576.2 Pa
$C_x \rightarrow$	1.8
$X_1 \rightarrow$	0.9816
$(C_D \cdot S)_0 \rightarrow$	0.22503 m ²

Deployment
Altitude, MSL
Meters
4251

Deployment
Time, sec
31.45

V₁, m/sec
62.864

ρ₁, kg/m³
0.797675

q₁, kPa
1.57616

V_{terminal}, m/sec
31.5532

$$= 1576.2 \cdot 0.22503 \cdot 1.8 \cdot 0.9816 = 626.614 \text{ N}$$

$$X_1 = 0.9816 \text{ Near infinite mass}$$

Pflanz's Method Example 2

Pflanz's Method Example (2)

MER A - Spirit

$$q_1 = 729 \text{ Pa}$$

$$C_{D0} = 0.400 \text{ (at } M = 1.75)$$

$$D_0 = 14.1 \text{ m}$$

$$S_0 = 156 \text{ m}^2$$

$$C_x = 1.45$$

$$m_{EV} = 827 \text{ kg}$$

$$\Delta = 0.00863 \text{ kg/m}^3$$

$$V_1 = 411 \text{ m/s}$$

$$t_{inf} = 0.282 \text{ s (from previous discussion on supersonic inflation)}$$

$$A = 26.5$$

$$n = 2 \text{ (for DGB parachutes)}$$

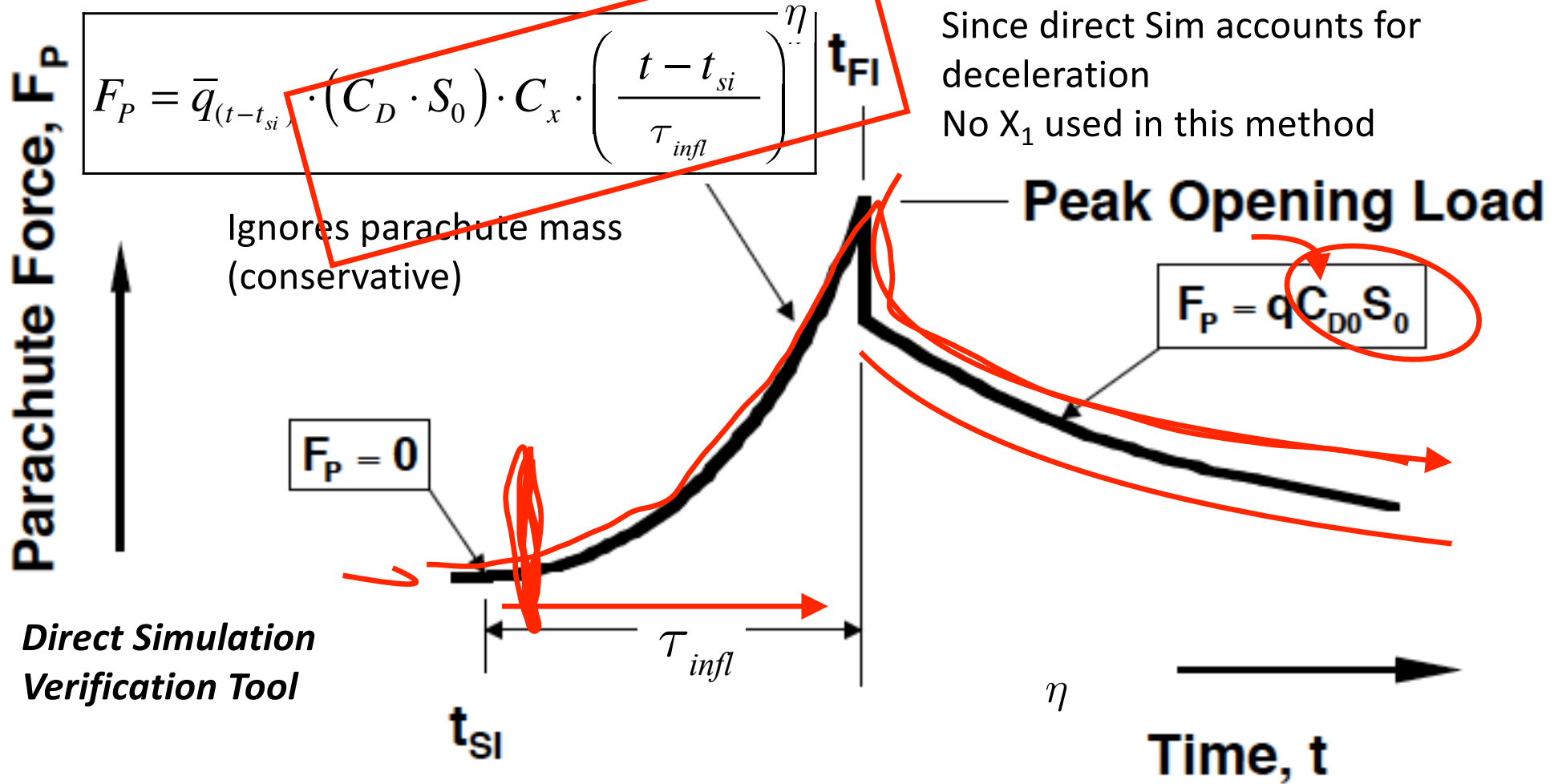
$$X_1 = 0.98 \text{ (i.e., very close to infinite mass inflation!)}$$

$$\Delta$$

$$F_{\text{peak}} = 64,641 \text{ N (within 10% of best estimate)}$$



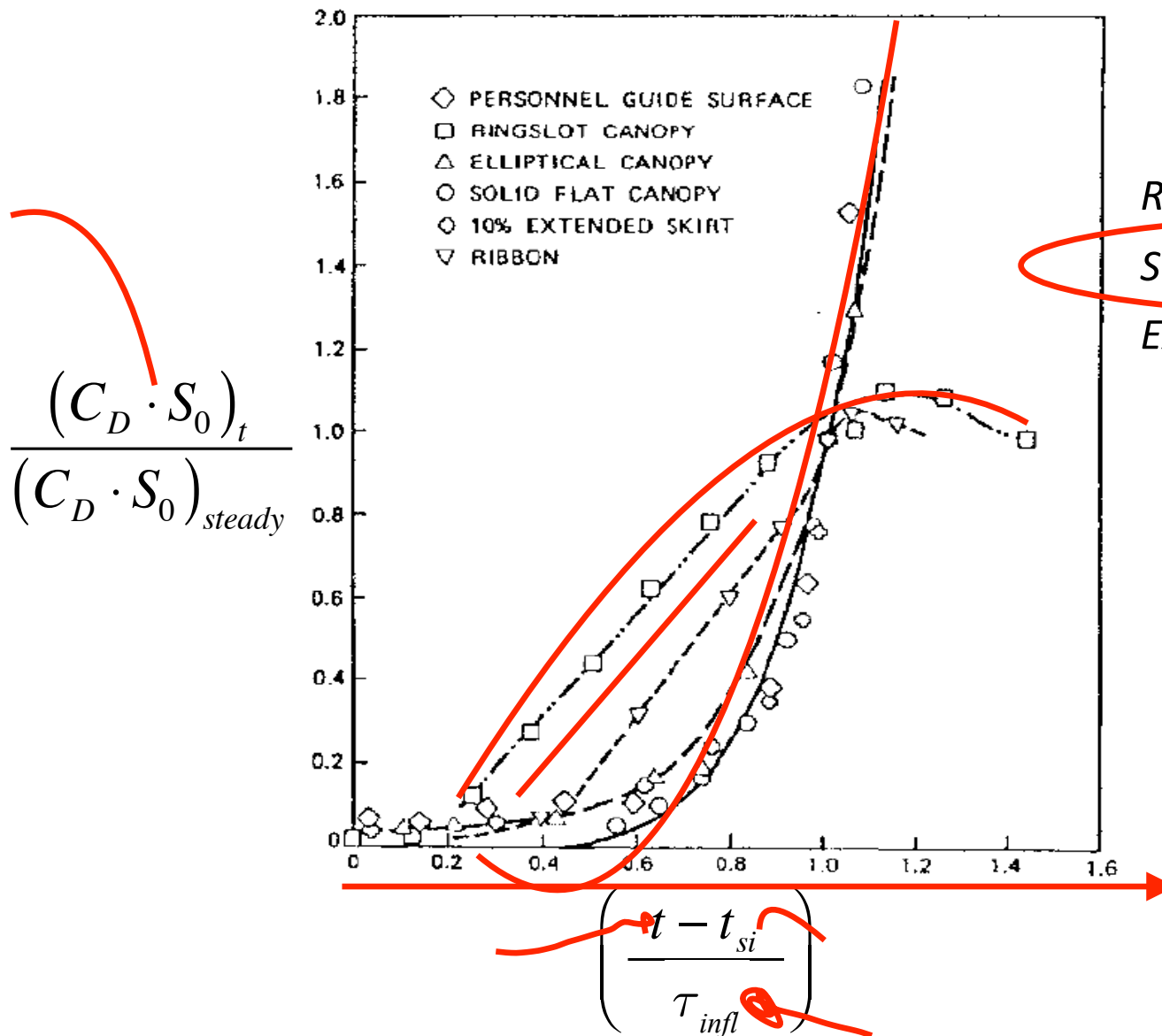
Inflation Curve Methods



$$F_p = \bar{q}_{(t-t_{SI})} \cdot (C_D \cdot S_0) \cdot C_x \cdot \left(\frac{t - t_{SI}}{\tau_{infl}} \right)^\eta$$

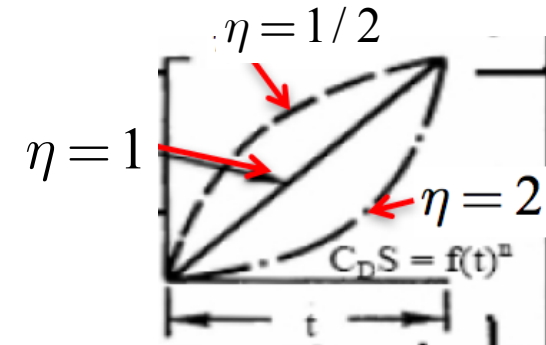
$$F_p = \begin{cases} q C_{D,0} S_0 C_x \left(\frac{t - t_{SI}}{t_{FI} - t_{SI}} \right)^\eta + M_V g \sin \gamma & t_{SI} \leq t \leq t_{FI} \\ q C_{D,0} S_0 + M_V g \sin \gamma & t > t_{FI} \end{cases}$$

Inflation Curve Method (2)

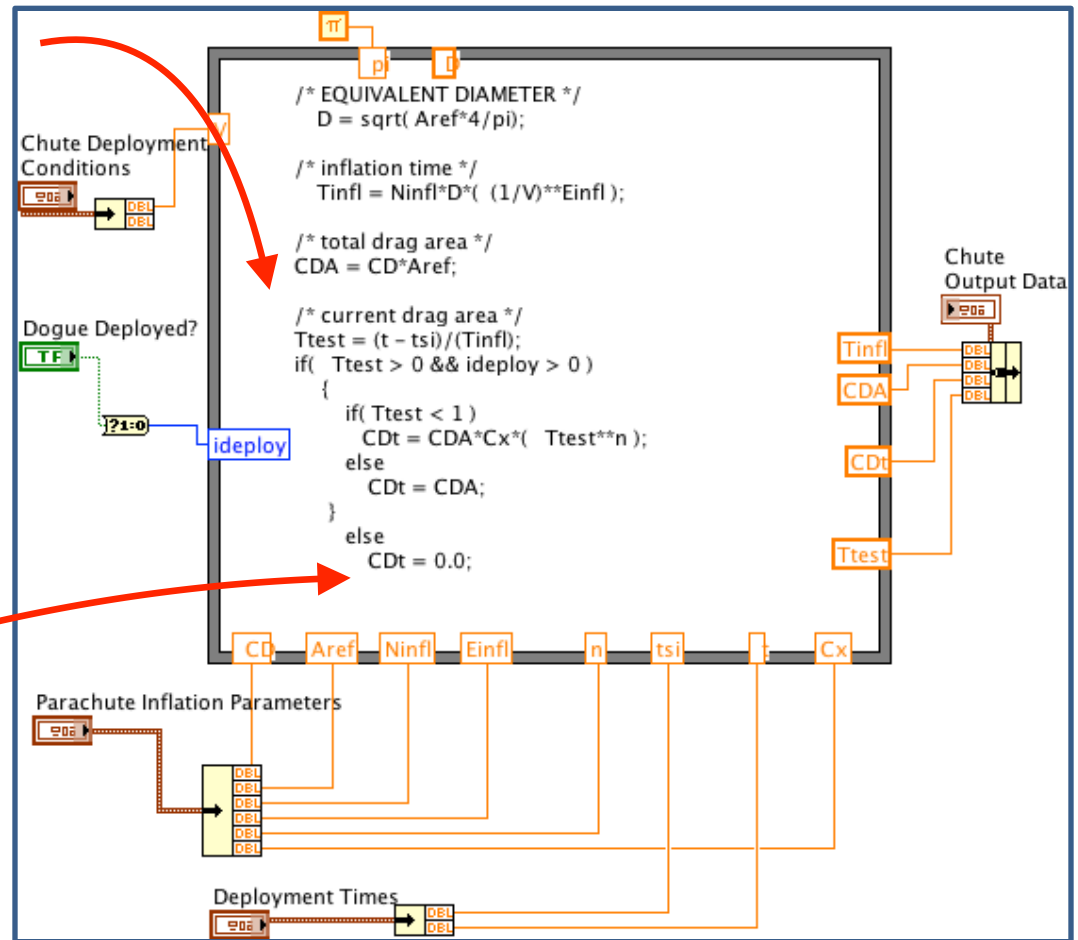
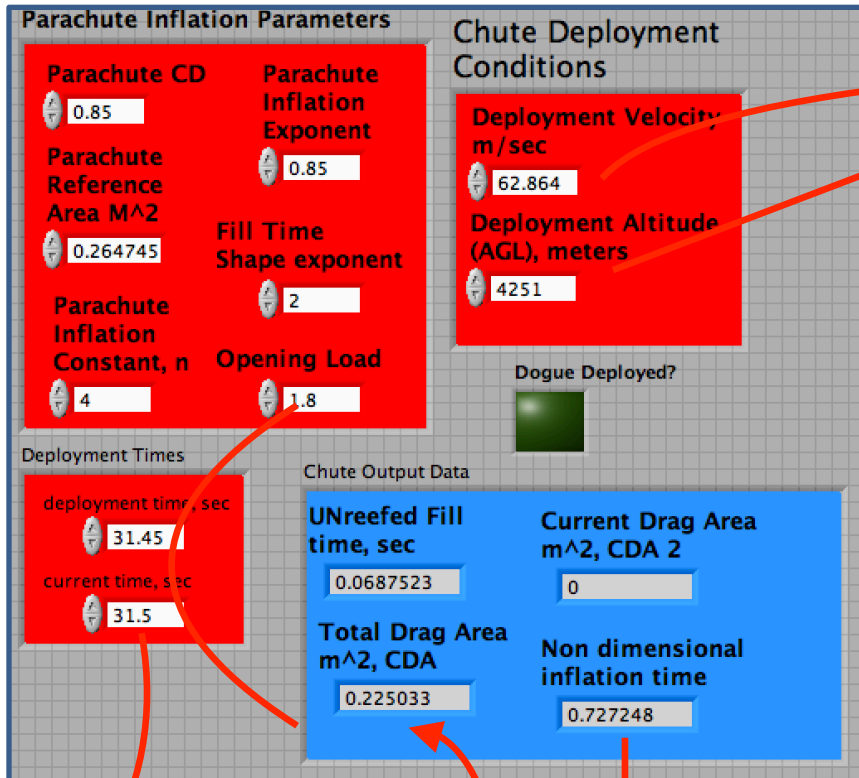


Inflation Data from Doherr

- Ribbon/Ringslot $\rightarrow \eta=1$
- Solid, Elliptical, Flat $\rightarrow \eta=2$
- Extended Skirt, Reefed $\rightarrow \eta=1/2$



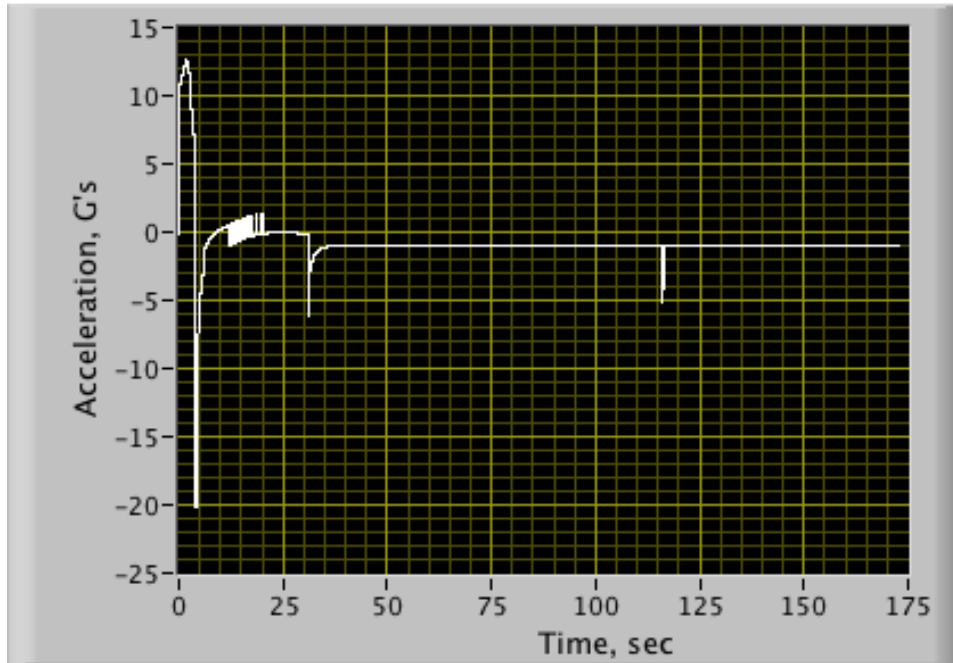
Inflation Curve Method (3)



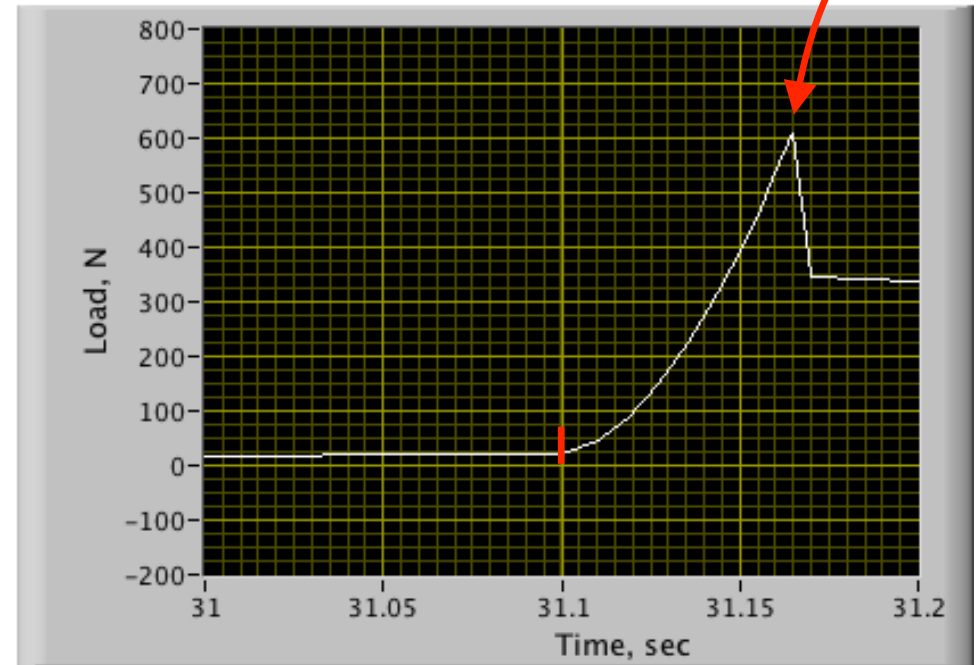
Inflation Curve Method (4)

Direct Simulation Response, compare peak load to Pflanz Method = 626.614 N

Acceleration



Load N



Questions??

