



SPECTRA

Sophisticated Plant Evaluation Code
for Thermal-hydraulic Response Assessment

Table of Contents

Overview of SPECTRA	4
Validation Based on Experiments - LWR	6
Validation based on Experiments - HTR	9
Validation Based on Experiments - LMFR	11
Validation Based on Experiments - MSR	13
International Code-to-Code Benchmarks Benchmarks	15
Examples of Other Applications	17
Interactive Simulators	20
SUE platforms, SA, UQ, BEPU	21
Documentation	23
Application Domain	24
References	25
SPECTRA Package	27
Contact	26

SPECTRA

Thermal-Hydraulic System Code

System Code

SPECTRA is a thermal-hydraulic system code. SPECTRA is designed for thermal-hydraulic analyses of nuclear power plants. The code main applicability is the area of Light Water Reactors, High Temperature Reactors, Liquid Metal Fast Reactors, Molten Salt Reactors, as well as conventional plants and chemical reactors. The code can be used for analyzing accident scenarios, including loss-of-coolant accidents (LOCAs), operational transients, and other accident scenarios in nuclear power plants. The code structure (Fig. 1) is based on Packages, which contain models on a given topic. The available models include multidimensional two-phase flow, non-equilibrium thermo-dynamics, transient heat conduction in solid structures, general heat and mass transfer package, with natural and forced convection, condensation, boiling. Detailed description of the code is available [Spectra, 2025].

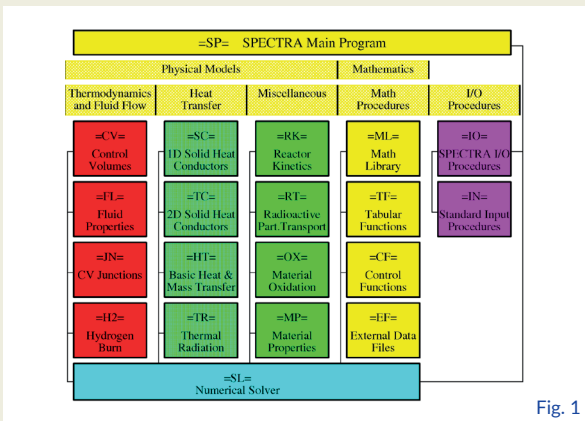


Fig. 1

Fluid Properties

- Built-in fluids**
Built-in fluid property tables consist of the properties of water, steam, and several non-condensable gases, all of them treated as real gases. The steam properties were obtained using the NRC/NBC steam tables program, covering the range from 270 K to 3070 K, and from virtually 0.0 Pa to 2.1×10^7 Pa.
- User-defined gases**
Non-condensable gases can be added as user-defined gases, these are treated as perfect gases.
- User-defined liquids**
User-defined liquid properties can be applied as an alternative fluid. This can be used to liquid metal reactors, molten salt reactors, etc...

Basic Heat Transfer

Heat conduction is calculated by the 1-D (Fig. 2) and 2-D Solid Heat Conductor (Fig. 3) Packages, using a general transient heat conduction equation. The heat transfer at the boundaries of the Solid Heat Conductors is obtained from the Heat and Mass

Transfer Package, which provides models for natural and forced convection, condensation with and without non-condensable gases, boiling curve (Fig. 4), including nucleate boiling, critical heat flux (CHF), transition boiling, film boiling, heat transfer in two-phase flow, as well as non-equilibrium boiling and condensation ("flashing" and "fogging"). The heat and mass transfer models include correlations valid for wall-fluid, pool-atmosphere, atmosphere-droplets, and pool-bubbles interfaces.

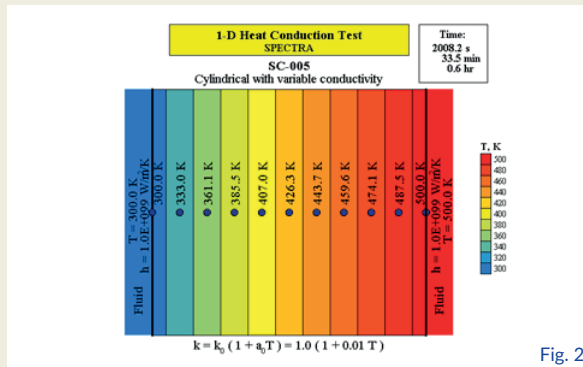


Fig. 2

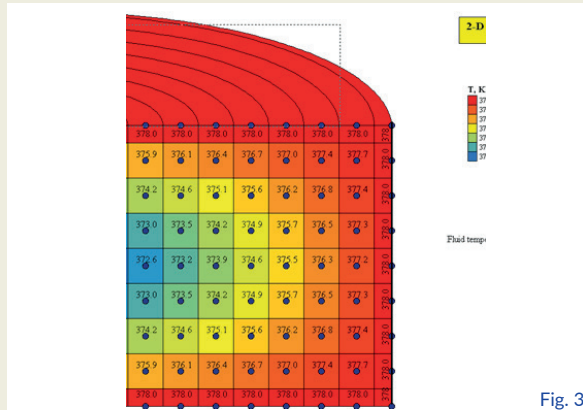


Fig. 3

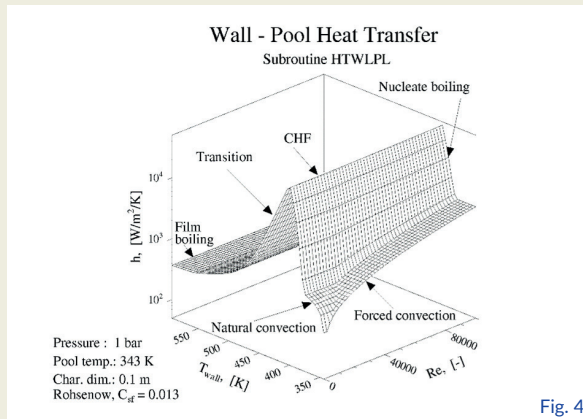


Fig. 4

Thermal Radiation

A detailed thermal radiation model is provided, including grey enclosure models, with and without participating gas. The gas radiation model is based on the Hottel gas approach.

Reactor Kinetics

Point kinetics and nodal kinetics models are available, with reactivity feedbacks from control rods, fuel and moderator temperature, void fraction, as well as changes in isotope concentrations. The Isotope Transformation model allows computing core composition changes (due to fuel burn-up, production of poisons, such as Xe-135, fuel reload, etc.), and their effect on reactivity as well as decay heat production. For molten salt reactor applications, the reactor kinetics model has been extended to account for delayed neutron precursor drift, characteristic for molten salt reactors with circulating fuel. The model was validated based on MSRE data (Fig. 5) [Stem et al., 2017a].

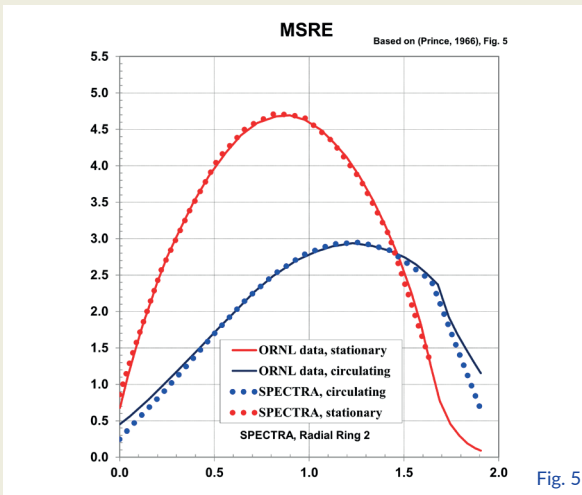


Fig. 5

Radioactive Particle Transport

The Radioactive Particle Transport Package deals with release of fission products, aerosol transport, deposition, and resuspension. Radioactive chains of fission products (Fig. 6) are tracked. The models for the transport and deposition of aerosols include Brownian diffusion, thermophoresis, and gravitational settling. For turbulent flow conditions, turbulent deposition models for the diffusional deposition, turbulent eddy impaction, and inertia impaction regime are included. Moreover, gravitational, Brownian, and turbulent coagulation are modeled. Two state-of-the-art dynamic resuspension models are available. Alternatively, resuspension can be modeled using a parametric model with user-defined coefficients directly obtained from resuspension experiments. The following fission product models are included:

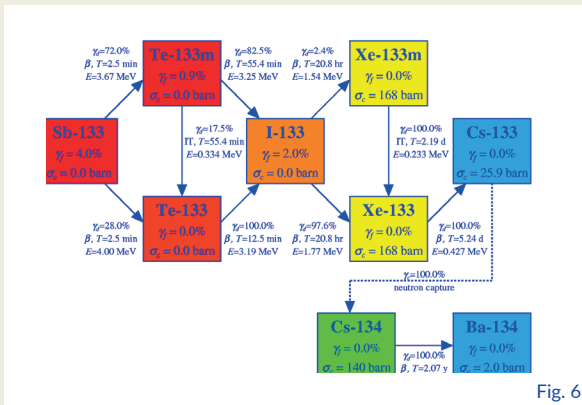


Fig. 6

- FP release models (CORSOR, CORSOR-M, user-defined functions)
- Condensation of FP vapors
- Sorption of FP on surfaces
- Sorption of FP vapors on aerosol particles

Hydrogen Burn

A hydrogen burn model is available, which includes temperature-dependent flammability limits for slow deflagrations, fast turbulent deflagrations and detonations (Fig. 7) as well as ignition criteria.

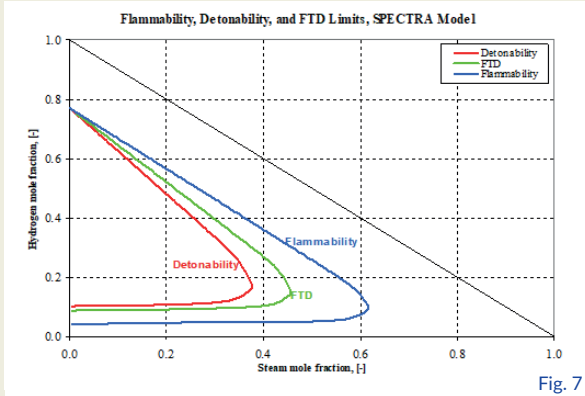


Fig. 7

Oxidation Models

An oxidation model is available, which consists of Built-in oxidation models

- Zr oxidation by steam, (Cathcart or Urbanic-Heidrich)
- Steel oxidation by steam, (White)
- Zr oxidation by O₂, (Benjamin et al.)
- Graphite oxidation by O₂, (Roes)

User-defined oxidation

A general oxidation equation with user-defined coefficients is available. Practically any oxidation reaction can be modeled. Multiple reactions (e.g. simultaneous oxidation of Zr by steam and air) are possible. Recent additions:

- Reactions occurring during water ingress into HTR were implemented and tested [Stem, 2014].
- A new correlation for air oxidation (Fig. 8) in spent fuel pools (SFP), including the effect of nitrogen, has been proposed, implemented and tested. The new model results were compared with the results of correlations available in MELCOR and ASTEC [Stem, 2016].

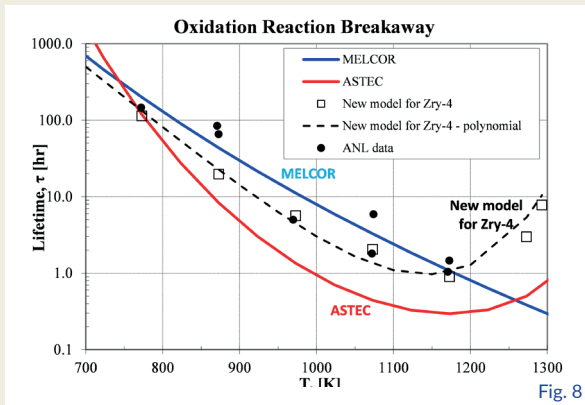


Fig. 8

Validation Based on Experiments - LWR

ORNL THTF Tests

ORNL THTF tests [Mullins et al., 1982] have been selected as one of the Separate Effect Tests (SET) to verify code capability to predict two-phase mixture flow and level swell in a tube bundle. The two-phase mixture level swell is important for a small break loss-of-coolant-accident (SBLOCA) in a PWR. The extent of core uncover following SBLOCA strongly depends not only on the core liquid inventory but also on the core void fraction distribution.

Models were built with SPECTRA and RELAP5 codes and both codes results were compared to measured data (Fig. 9).

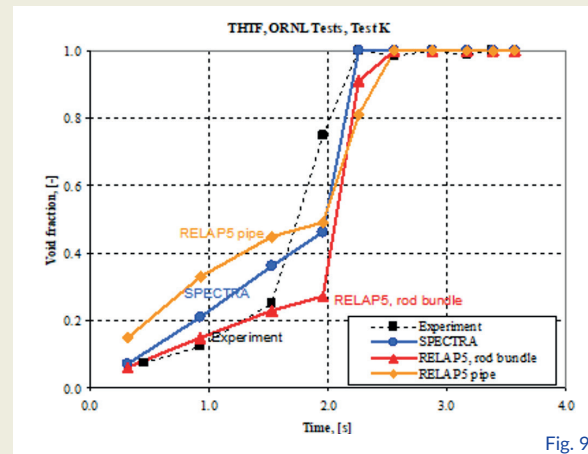


Fig. 9

Boiling in Narrow Channels - Monde Experiments

Code validation for geometries encountered in the research reactors requires data for narrow channels (Dhyd~1 mm). Natural convection boiling data obtained by Monde et al. was used to validate codes RELAP5 and SPECTRA for boiling in narrow channels. Models were built with SPECTRA and RELAP5 codes and both codes results were compared to measured data (Fig. 10, 11) [Stem et al., 2016].

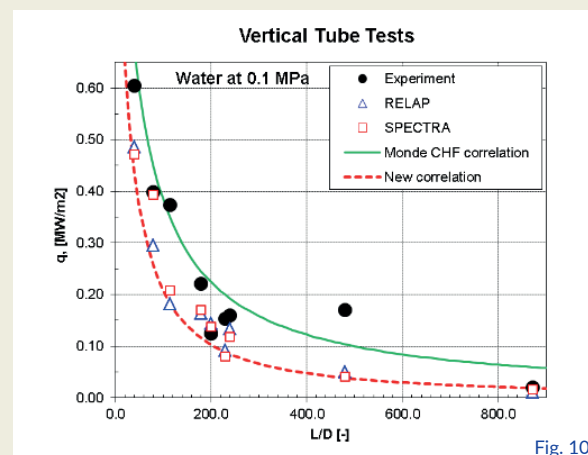


Fig. 10

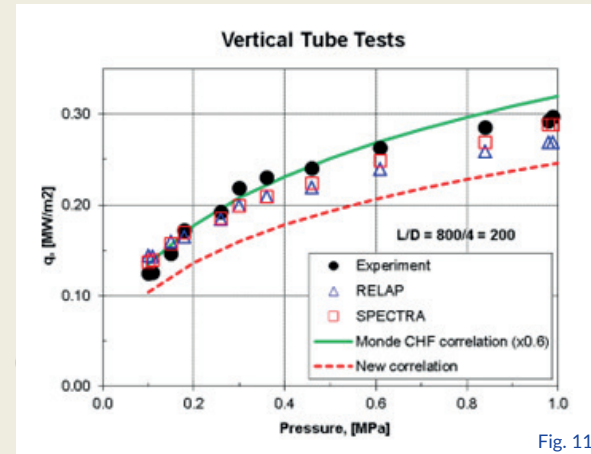


Fig. 11

International Standard Problem No. 35. The purpose of this ISP was to verify the predictive capabilities of computer codes with respect to simulation of light gas (helium) mixing and distribution in a containment. NRG PALLAS (at that time KEMA Nuclear) participated in ISP-35 with MAAP-4, including blind and open calculations. Later a SPECTRA model was created and open analysis was performed. The conclusions from MAAP4 and SPECTRA calculations:

Generally good results were obtained with both codes. Multidimensional effects of spray were important. Modeling of spray in the MAAP / SPECTRA codes was adjusted to mimic the multi-dimensional effects in the open phase. This adjustments improved containment pressure prediction; helium concentrations were practically unaffected.

ISP-42, PANDA Tests (Advanced BWR Containment)

PANDA is a large-scale facility, which has been constructed at the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) for the investigation of both overall dynamic response and the key phenomena of passive containment systems during the long-term heat removal phase for Advanced Light Water Reactors (ALWRs). In the PANDA test facility a number of tests were performed for use as the basis of International Standard Problem number 42 (ISP-42). NRG PALLAS participated in ISP-42 both blind and open phase using SPECTRA.

ISP-42 consisted of six "Phases": A through F (different experiments). The most difficult for simulation with system codes was Phase F, where significant stratification developed in the wetwell volume.

Consequently, the containment pressure was clearly overpredicted in the blind phase (Fig. 12). Stratification models applied in the open phase (Fig. 13), allowed to obtain excellent agreement with experiment. The comparison of blind calculations, performed by the organizers, lead them to conclude that in the blind phase "The overall best results were obtained by the lumped parameter code SPECTRA" [Aksan, 2010].

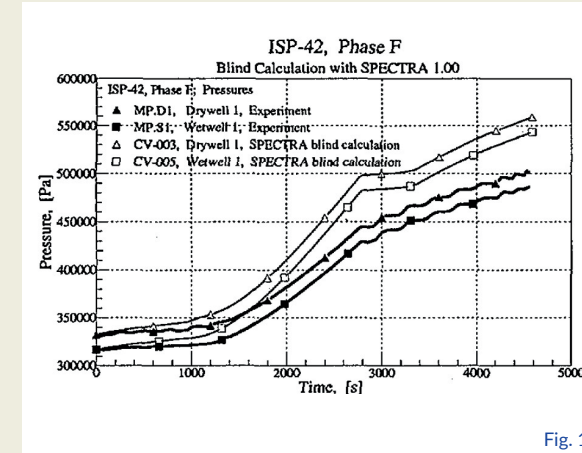


Fig. 12

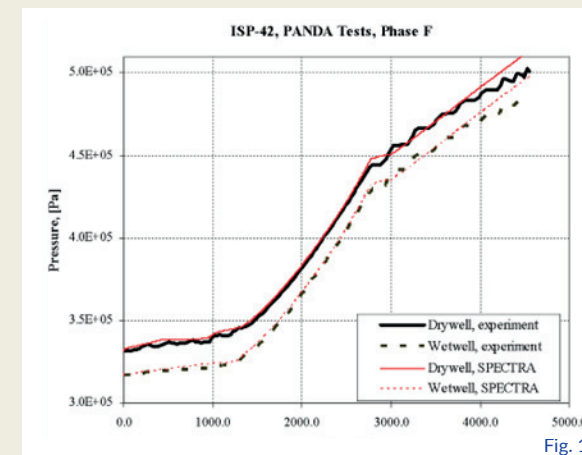


Fig. 13

PANDA PCC Tests (Passive Containment Cooling)

PANDA ("Passive Decay Heat Removal and Depressurization Test Facility") has been constructed at Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) in Switzerland to study long term performance of the Simplified Boiling Water Reactor (SBWR) passive containment cooling system. The first experiments, conducted at the beginning of 1995, were the so-called S-series tests, performed to investigate the steady state operation of the Passive Containment Cooling (PCC) (Fig. 14) condenser unit at different fractions of non- condensables. The PCC consists of an upper drum, called "steam box", a vertical tube bundle, and a lower drum, called "water box".

NRG PALLAS performed analyses of the S-series tests using four codes:

TRACG (GE version), TRAC-BF1 (PennState), MELCOR 1.8.2, SPECTRA.

Comparison of code calculations and measured Fig. 14 data showed that all codes under-predicted the PCC efficiency (fraction of steam condensed) [Stem, 2000]

(Fig. 15). To explain this fact, it was later postulated that:

- condensate coming from the steam box, forms a stream of liquid in one or two tubes, connected in the lower part of the, steam box, leaving most of the tubes unaffected.
- condensate entering the water box is assumed to fall down in the form of droplets.

With these assumptions, the PCC efficiency increases because of smaller film thicknesses in the tubes and the water box. Results were closer to the experimental data, although small underprediction still remained [Spectra, 2025].

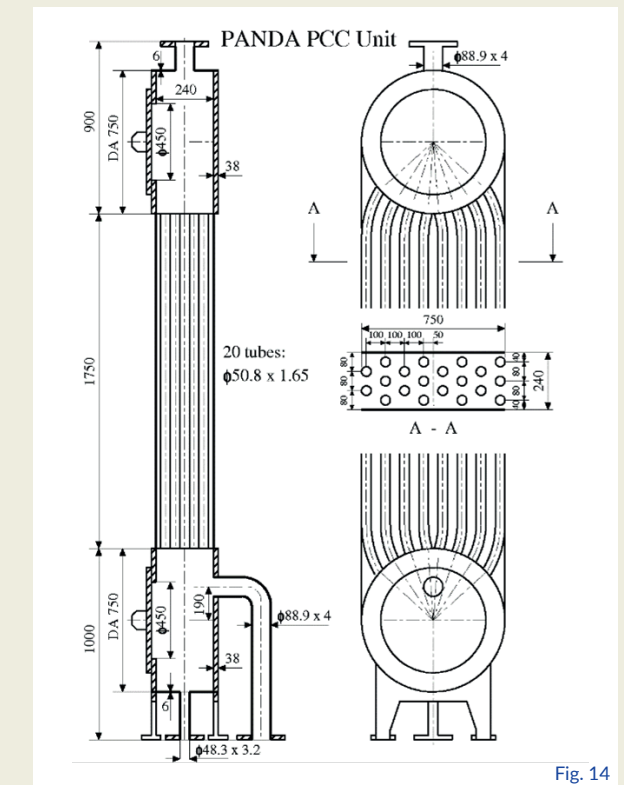


Fig. 14

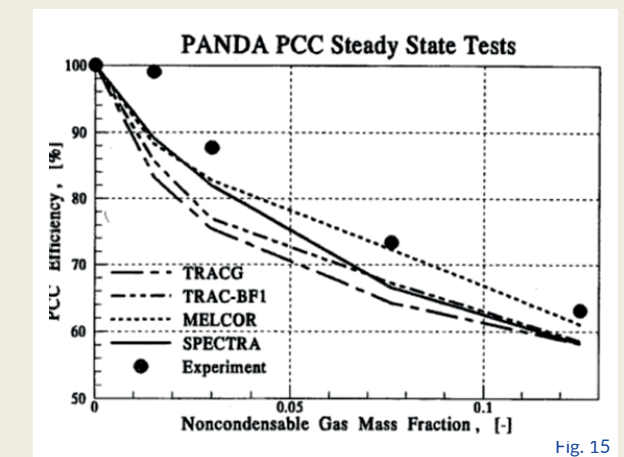


Fig. 15

PANDA BC Tests (Building Condenser)

The TEMPEST project was devoted to studying passive decay heat removal systems for advanced BWR: the SWR 1000 reactor designed by Siemens. The passive decay heat removal system for SWR 1000 consists of the Building Condenser (BC), a finned tube heat exchanger placed at the top of the drywell. Experimental investigation of the BC performance has been performed at the PANDA test facility. One of the experiments, BC4 Test, was designed to study the BC performance under severe accident conditions, with hydrogen being generated in the core, and released to the containment (in the experiment helium was used instead of hydrogen). This test was selected for analytical investigation within the TEMPEST project. NRG PALLAS performed a combined System Thermal-Hydraulic (STH) code / CFD code of the PANDA BC4 test within the TEMPEST project:

- STH code: SPECTRA,
- CFD code: CFX.

Large stratification in drywell-1 (Fig. 16) lead to overestimation of containment pressure in STH. When the stratification data from CFX was included in SPECTRA, containment pressure was very close to the experimentally measured value. The combined SPECTRA/CFX codes showed that stratification was responsible for overestimation of containment pressure obtained by several codes [Wichers, 2003].

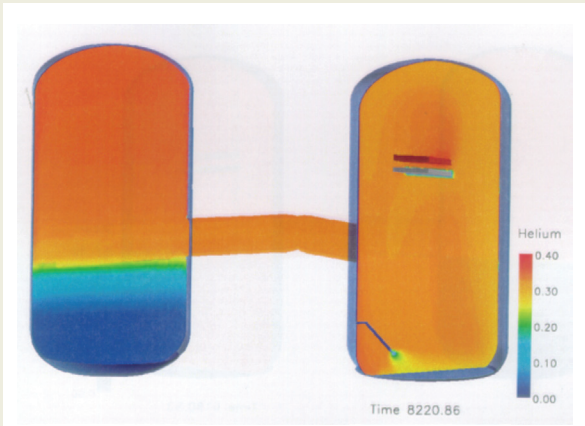


Fig. 16

HYMIT Tests (Hydrogen Burn)

A hydrogen deflagration experiment, performed in the HYMIT experimental facility at Shanghai Jiao Tong University (PR China) between October 17 and October 21, 2016, has been simulated with the lumped parameter system codes MELCOR and SPECTRA.

The results were obtained without knowledge of the measured data, so that they are blind predictions. The purpose of the work was to enhance code validation and verification (V&V) of the codes. Some differences between MELCOR and SPECTRA results were observed, which were explained by differences in default burn models in different codes (Fig. 17).

In MELCOR instantaneous propagation to all CV-s was observed. To prevent this, the value of TFRAC was set to 0.7. Furthermore, the hydrogen limit for ignition without igniters was enlarged from 0.10 to a large value (0.50). This leads to a gradual flame propagation through CV-s and is qualitatively consistent with SPECTRA and also with CFD and ASTEC calculations from [Holler, 2016].

In SPECTRA flame acceleration to FTD occurs, that finally leads to a detonation. This could be avoided by increasing the constant in the σ -criterion from the conservative value of 3.5 to 4.0. This leads to slow deflagration and is qualitatively consistent with MELCOR and also with CFD and ASTEC calculations from [Holler, 2016].

The results will be further analyzed when the experimental data become available.

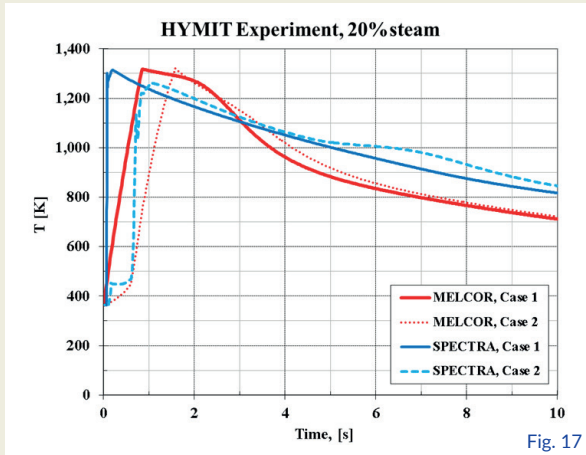


Fig. 17

Validation Based on Experiments - HTR

NACOK (HTR)

Air ingress into to the core after the primary circuit depressurization due to large breaks of the pressure boundary is considered as one of the severe hypothetical accidents for the High Temperature gas-cooled Reactor (HTR). The NACOK (Naturzug im Core mit Korrosion) facility was built at Jülich Research Center in Germany to study the effects of air flow driven by natural convection as well as to investigate the corrosion of graphite.

The NACOK air ingress experiment carried out on October 23, 2008 to simulate the chimney effect, was analyzed at NRG PALLAS with the SPECTRA code, as well as at INET, Tsinghua University of China with the TINTE and THERMIX/REACT codes [Zheng-Stem, 2012]. The calculated results of air flow rate by natural convection, time- dependent graphite corrosion, and temperature distribution are compared with the NACOK test results. The preliminary code-to-experiment and code-to-code validation successfully proves the codes capability to simulate graphite corrosion (Fig. 18) during air-ingress accident.

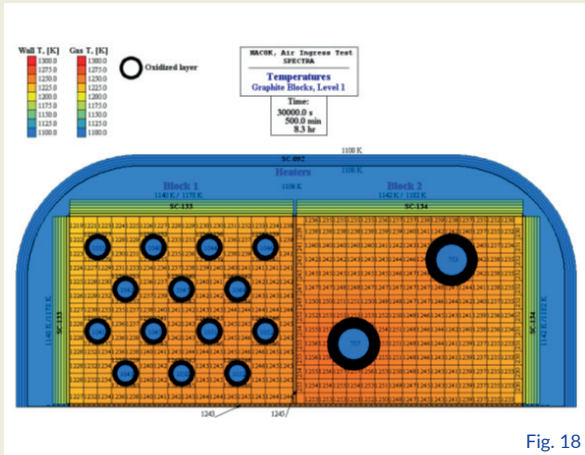


Fig. 18

HTTU

Separate effects tests were conducted to determine the effective thermal conductivity through the pebble bed for temperatures up to 1200°C in the HTTU facility [Rousseau et al., 2014]. The HTTU test section consisted of approximately 25,000 graphite spheres containing no nuclear fuel, with an outer diameter of 60 mm. The spheres were randomly packed within an annular core configuration bounded by inner (electrically heated) and outer (water-cooled) graphite reflectors (Fig. 19).

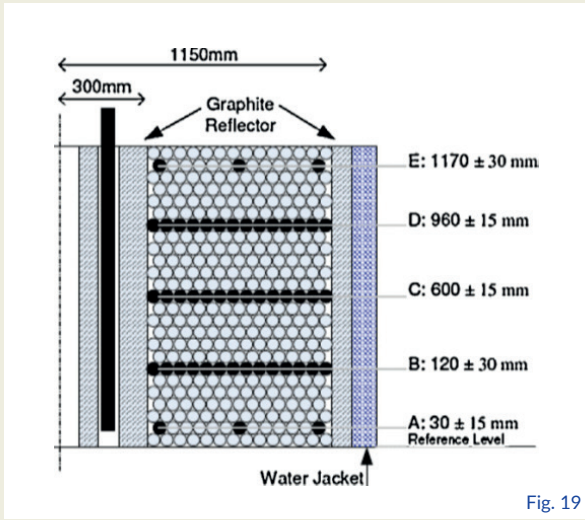


Fig. 19

SPECTRA model of HTTU was prepared. Calculations were performed using two effective conductivity correlations: developed based on the HTTU, 82 kW test data Zehner-Schlunder and Robold, which were applied in SPECTRA analyses of the HTR-PM reactor [Zheng et al., 2018]

The calculated results were in very good agreement with the measured data (Fig. 20).

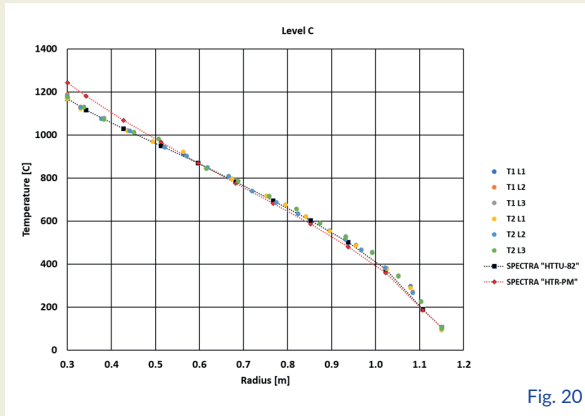


Fig. 20

Resuspension Experiments, Reeks and Hall

Graphite dust that will be generated in an HTR/PBMR during normal reactor operation will be deposited inside the primary system and will become radioactive due to sorption of fission products. A significant amount of radioactive dust may be resuspended and released from the reactor cooling system in case of a depressurization accident. Therefore accurate particle resuspension models are required for HTR/PBMR safety analyses.

A number of well-known resuspension models (Veinstein, Rock'n Roll) are available in SPECTRA. A new resuspension model was proposed by Komen and Stempniewicz [Komen-Stem, 2010]. This model, referred to as NRG4 or the K-S resuspension model, is available in SPECTRA. The resuspension models were investigated using the experimental data of Reeks and Hall experiments (monolayer deposit) [Komen-Stem, 2010].

Resuspension Experiments, STORM, ISP-40

The Committee on the Safety of Nuclear Installations of the OECD/NEA, in its meeting of November 1996, endorsed the adoption of STORM test SR11 as International Standard Problem number 40 (ISP-40). The test took place in April 1997 and included two distinct phases, the first concentrating on aerosol deposition mostly by thermophoresis and eddy impaction and the second on aerosol resuspension under a stepwise increasing gas flow.

NRG PALLAS performed simulation of the STORM test SR11 using resuspension models in SPECTRA: Veinstein, Rock'n Roll, NRG3, and NRG4 (the K-S model). The resuspension models were compared to the measured data of the STORM experiment (multi-layer deposit) [Komen-Stem, 2010].

Validation Based on Experiments - LMFR

EBR-II (IAEA CRP)

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Coordinated Research Project (CRP) "Benchmark Analyses of EBR-II Shutdown Heat Removal Tests" [Briggs et al., 2017] was initiated in 2012 with the objective of improving state-of-the-art SFR codes by extending code validation to include comparisons against whole-plant data recorded during landmark shutdown heat removal tests (SHRT) that were conducted at Argonne's Experimental Breeder Reactor II (EBR-II) in the 1980's.

At NRG PALLAS the multi-scale thermal hydraulic simulation platform, consisting of the system thermal-hydraulic (STH) code SPECTRA and the CFD code ANSYS CFX, was used for transient simulations. Based on comparisons of core inlet/outlet coolant temperatures (**Fig. 21**), the intermediate heat exchanger (IHX) primary inlet temperatures, IHX secondary outlet temperatures and primary coolant flow rates with the measured data provided by Argonne National Laboratory (ANL), the SPECTRA stand-alone model and the multi-scale thermal hydraulic coupled SPECTRA/CFX model (**Fig. 22, 23**) proved to be able to provide satisfactory results for this benchmark [Stem, et al., 2017b].

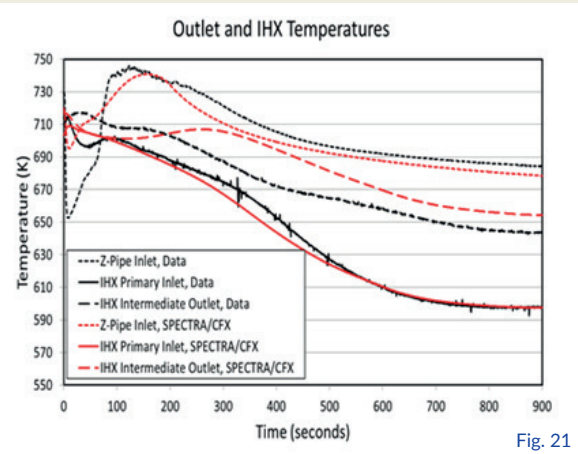


Fig. 21

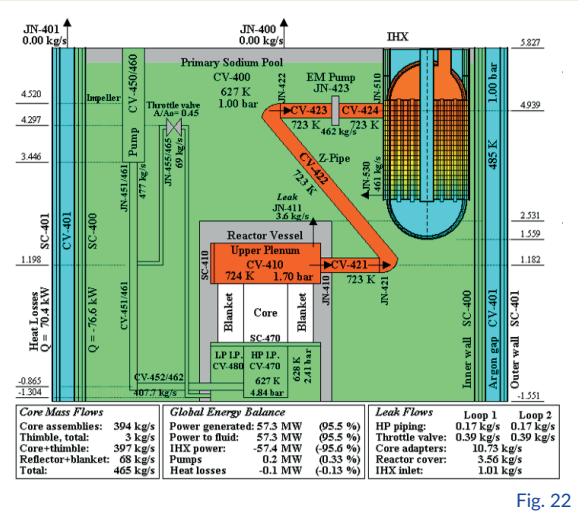


Fig. 22

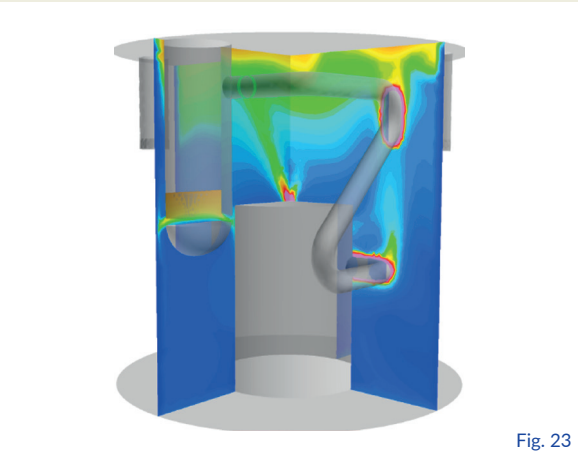


Fig. 23

NACIE-UP (IAEA CRP)

The NACIE
NACIE-UP loop facility, located at ENEA Brasimone Research Centre in Italy, is designed to investigate the transition from forced to natural circulation using lead lead-bismuth eutectic (LBE). The transient experimental data generated from this facility provide valuable reference measurements for validating STH and CFD models. Within the framework of an IAEA Coordinated Research Project (CRP) benchmark starting in 2022, NRG PALLAS carried out multiscale STH-TH-CFD simulations using the in-house coupling platform myMUSCLE [Pangukir, 2025].

Coupled STH
STH-CFD simulations were performed for an asymmetric heating case using an overlapping domain approach (Fig. 24), where STH provides inlet conditions to the CFD model of the fuel pin simulator. The coupled model predicts mass flow rates (Fig. 25) consistent with both STH and experimental results within uncertainty margins, while temperature predictions (Fig. 26) show slight overestimation.

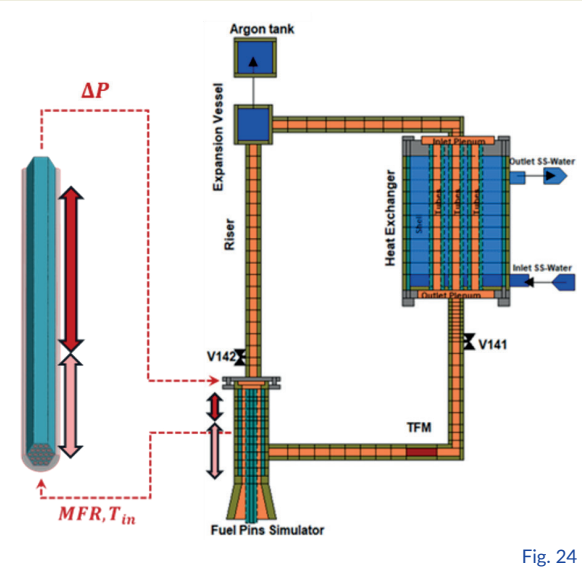


Fig. 24

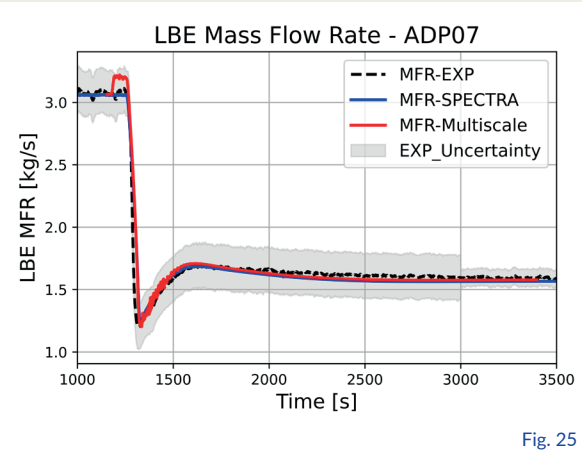


Fig. 25

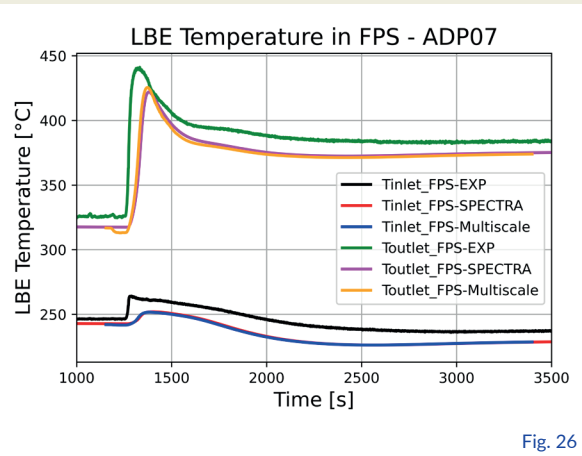


Fig. 26

Validation Based on Experiments - MSR

MSRE

The Molten Salt Reactor Experiment (MSRE) was in nuclear operation at ORNL from June 1, 1965 to December 12, 1969. During that time the reactor generated 13,172 equivalent full-power hours of energy at power levels up to 7.4 MW. Because the fuel is a circulating fluid, the mobility of all the fuel constituents, including the fission products, is an important consideration in the overall performance of molten-salt systems. This mobility is especially important for the noble-gas fission products because they, typically, have very low solubilities in molten salts and because some, notably Xe, are significant neutron absorbers.

The MSRE model for SPECTRA was created using data found in open literature. Steady state calculations were performed at design power of 10 MW (Fig. 27). The steady state model parameters compared to available data showed good agreement [Stem et al., 2017a].

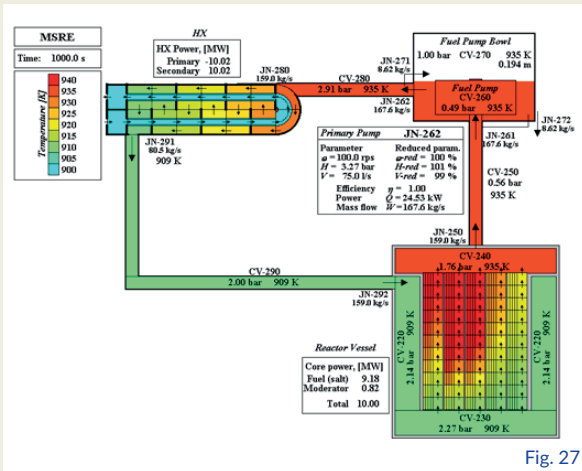


Fig. 27

Fission product behavior was analyzed. As a first step, delayed neutron precursors were modeled because of their importance for reactor kinetics. The calculated DNP behavior showed good agreement with data. As a next step other fission products will be analyzed, including Xenon and noble gases.

DNP

Delayed neutron precursor (DNP) drift model developed and implemented

- First verification by comparison to CFD data for simple loop
- Validation against MSRE data from a theoretical model of

ORNLORNL (Fig. 28). Note that: 'Stationary' red dots (●) represent DNP generation rate 'Circulating' blue dots (●) represent circulating state

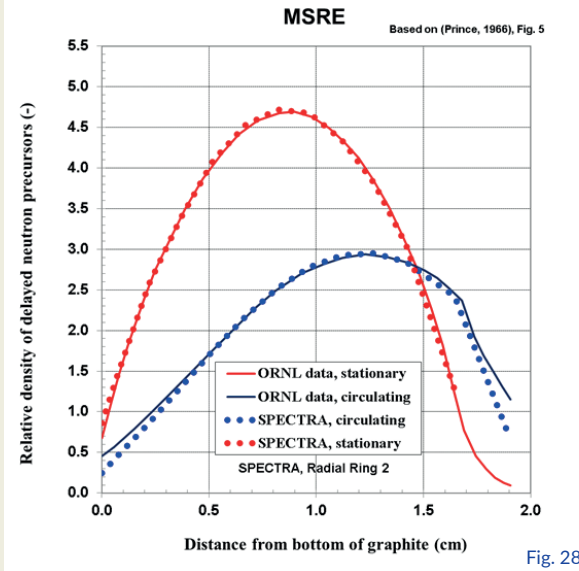
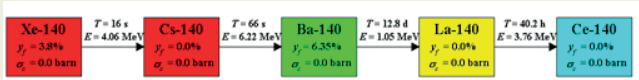


Fig. 28

Validation against short lived isotope behavior Xe Xe-140 / Ba Ba-140



Based on measured data from (Kedl, 1967):

- Fission product concentrations calculated as a function of graphite depth.
- Calculations requires an estimate of operational history.
- Simulation time 1100 h.
- Good agreement with measured data data (Fig. 29).
- Leaching of chromium from alloys at high temperatures and in the presence of salt.
- Chromium removed from Hastelloy N and deposited in low low-temperature regions.
- Measured data was used to develop a correlation by Zheng et al. (2015).
- Similar correlation implemented in SPECTRA SPECTRA (Fig. 30).

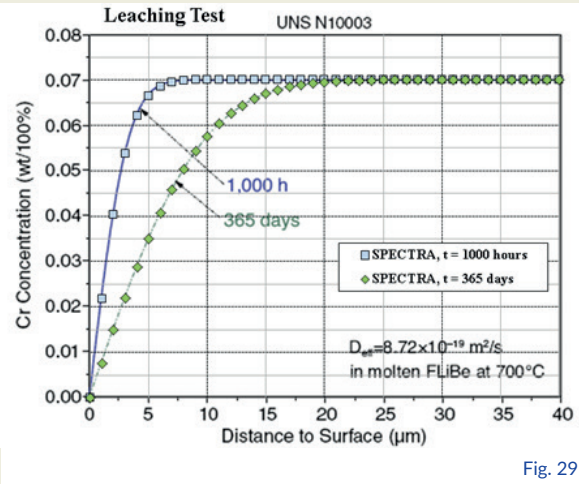


Fig. 29

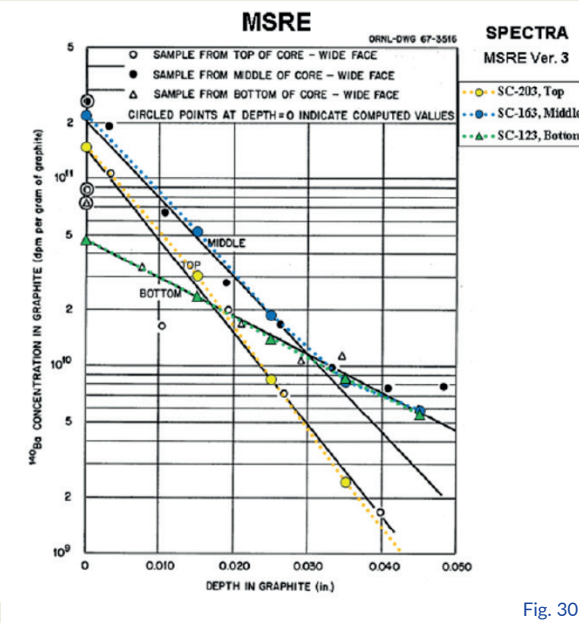


Fig. 30

International Code-to-Code Benchmarks

GENERIC CONTAINMENT (LWR)

One outcome of the OECD/NEA ISP-47 activity was the recommendation to elaborate a 'Generic Containment' in order to allow comparing and rating the results obtained by different lumped-parameter models on plant scale. Within the European SARNET2 project such a Generic Containment nodalization (Fig 31), was defined based on PWR (1300 MWe).

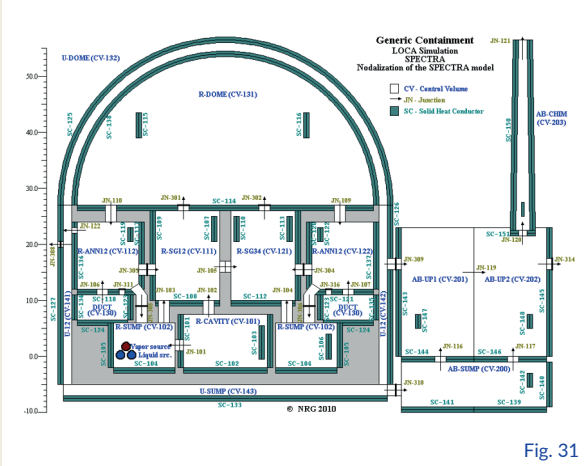


Fig. 31

The methodology applied in order to compare the different code predictions consisted of a series of three benchmark steps with increasing complexity as well as a systematic comparison of characteristic variables and observations:

- Run 0 – initial step
- Run 1 – detailed comparisons
- Run 2 – application to PAR (hydrogen recombiners) modeling

The participant used codes APROS, ASTEC, COCOSYS, CONTAIN, ECART, GOTHIC, MELCOR, SPECTRA. NRG PALLAS participated in Generic Containment using MELCOR and SPECTRA codes. Both codes provided very similar results in all three steps. A significant user effect was observed, as results obtained with the same code (e.g. MELCOR) by different participants could differ significantly. It was concluded that, even though the problem was well defined, the uncertainty of calculated results due to different modelling approaches and users may be much higher than expected [Kelm et al., 2014].

AIR-SFP (LWR Spent Fuel Pool)

The Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear accident has renewed international interest in the safety of SFPs. In the frame of the SARNET2 FP7 project, several partners performed simulations of accident scenarios in SFP using different Severe Accident (SA) codes (ASTEC, MELCOR, ATHLET-CD, RELAP/SCDAPSIM, ICARE/

CATHARE, SPECTRA) [Coindreau et al., 2017]. The studies have raised questions about the reliability of the results obtained since these codes were developed for reactor applications. The code to code comparison of the Air-SFP benchmark project showed not only differences from the different severe accident codes but also user differences by using the same code. NRG PALLAS participated in AIR- SFP using MELCOR and SPECTRA codes.

ASTRID (LMFR)

In the frame of the ESNII+ FP7 EU Project, participants of the benchmark, using the ASTRID-like core neutronic and thermal- hydraulic specification (including reactivity feedback coefficients), developed the core models with their system codes and OD neutron kinetics models. Calculations were performed on the most representative design basis accident: the unprotected loss of flow accident (ULOF) up to the initiation of sodium boiling [Bubelis et al. 2017].

Steady-state and dynamic simulation of the ULOF transient was simulated by participants using system codes in combination with neutron point kinetics: TRACE, CATHARE, SIM-SFR, SAS-SFR, ATHLET, SPECTRA, SAS4A. NRG PALLAS participated with the SPECTRA code [Stem et al., 2018]. The NRG PALLAS results were roughly in the middle (Fig. 32, 33) of the results of all codes.

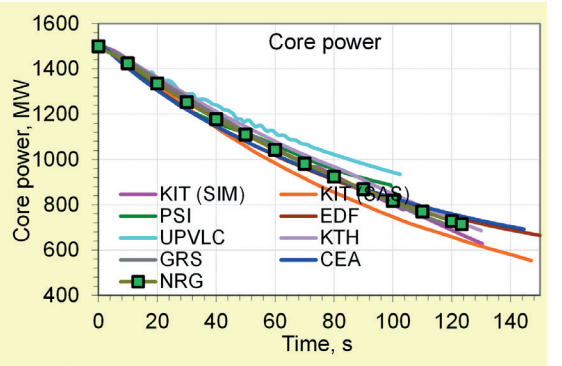


Fig. 32

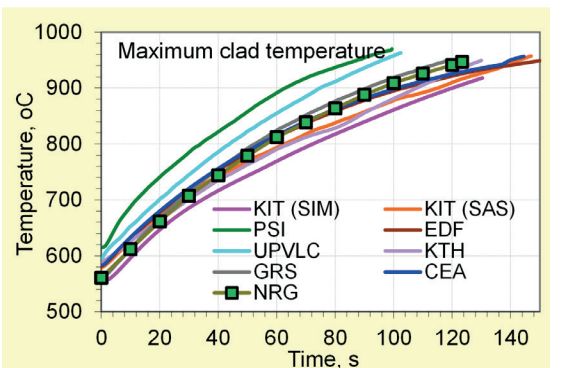


Fig. 33

ESFR (LMFR)

The new reactor concepts proposed in the Generation IV International Forum (GIF) are conceived to improve the use of natural resources, reduce the amount of high-level radioactive waste and excel in their reliability and safe operation. Among these novel designs Sodium Fast Reactors (SFRs) stand out due to their technological feasibility as demonstrated in several countries during the last decades. As part of the contribution of EURATOM to GIF the CP-ESFR is a collaborative project with the objective, among others, to perform extensive analysis on safety issues involving renewed SFR demonstrator designs. The verification of computational tools able to simulate the plant behavior under postulated accidental conditions by code-to-code comparison was identified as a key point to ensure the reactor safety level. In this line, several organizations developed models able to simulate the complex and specific phenomena involving multi-physics studies that this fast reactor technology requires. The participant used codes CATHARE, RELAP5, TRACE, SIM-SFR, SAS-SFR, MAT4-DYN, SPECTRA [Lazaro et al., 2014]. NRG PALLAS participated in the ESFR benchmark using the SPECTRA code.

LEADER (LMFR)

Lead-cooled European Advanced DEmonstration Reactor (LEADER) is an EU design of liquid lead-cooled fast reactor. Within WP5, several computer codes (SAS-LFR, RELAP, TRACE, CFX, SIMMER, SPECTRA) were applied to evaluate consequences of selected unprotected accident scenarios such as Loss of Flow, Loss of Heat Sink, and reactivity-initiated accidents [Bandini, 2013]. NRG PALLAS participated with the SPECTRA code (Fig. 34) Eight accident scenarios were analyzed [Stem, 2013]:

- TR-4 - Unprotected Transient Overpower: reactivity insertion
- T-DEC1 - Unprotected Loss of Flow: loss of all primary pumps.
- T-DEC3 - Unprotected Loss of Heat Sink: loss of SCS
- T-DEC4 - loss of off-site power.
- TO-3 - loss of FW pre-heater
- TO-6 - 20% increase of FW flow
- T-DEC6 - SCS failure
- T-DEC5 - Partial blockage of hottest assembly

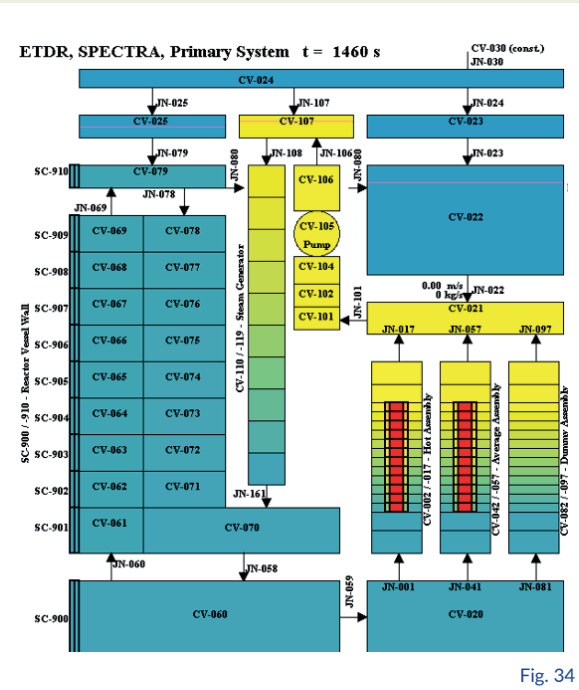


Fig. 34

Dodewaard (BWR Stability)

GKN Dodewaard was a unique reactor, operated in the Netherlands until 1997. This was the only operating BWR with natural circulation. An unstable behavior of the reactor cooling system was observed during one cycle. In the past, NRG PALLAS performed an analysis of the Dodewaard stability using TRAC- NEM codes. Currently NRG PALLAS is proposing to perform a code benchmark using the old data. At first this will be an internal benchmark involving computer codes TRACE and SPECTRA. As a next step an international benchmark may be proposed, similar to the Oskarshamn benchmark.

Examples of Past Applications

SWR-1000 (Advanced BWR)

SWR-1000 is a 1000 MWe advanced Boiling Water Reactor designed by Siemens. Safety analyses of SWR-1000 were performed using the thermal-hydraulic code WAVCO. NRG PALLAS performed an independent verification of the safety analysis using the SPECTRA code. The work was performed within the TEMPEST project. A SPECTRA model of the SWR-1000 reactor, the containment and safety features (Fig. 35) was prepared and tested. Results of steady state calculations were in agreement with available design data for the nominal operating conditions. Severe accident initiated by a stuck open safety valve, with simultaneous failure to open all valves on the core flooding lines was analyzed. Several runs were performed, investigating the influence of hydrogen stratification on containment pressure, 1-D versus 2-D modelling of reactor vessel.

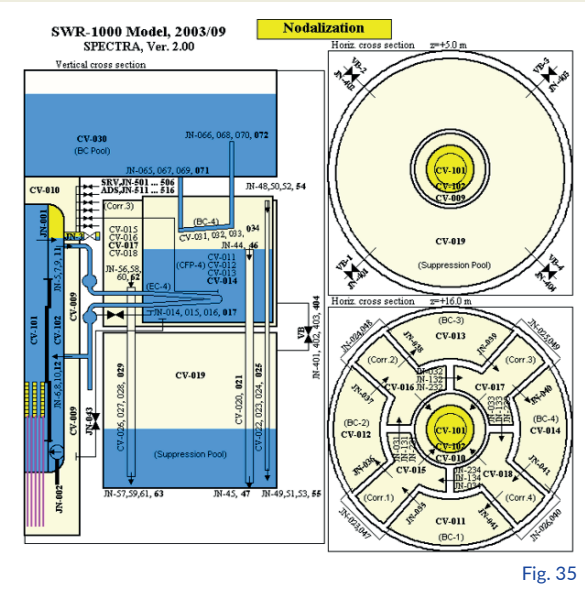


Fig. 35

Chemical Reactors (Shell)

Shell was designing chemical plants involving a number of large multimulti-tubular reactors in which the so-called Heavy Paraffin Synthesis (HPS) is performed. HPS was an up up-scaled version of an earlier design, called PEARL. The cooling system of these reactors involves natural circulation using water. Shell contracted NRG to perform an independent verification of the design for both PEARL and HPS reactors at various operating conditions (load levels). NRG PALLAS performed the analyses using two different codes: RELAP5 and SPECTRA (Fig. 36). Very similar results were obtained with both codes.

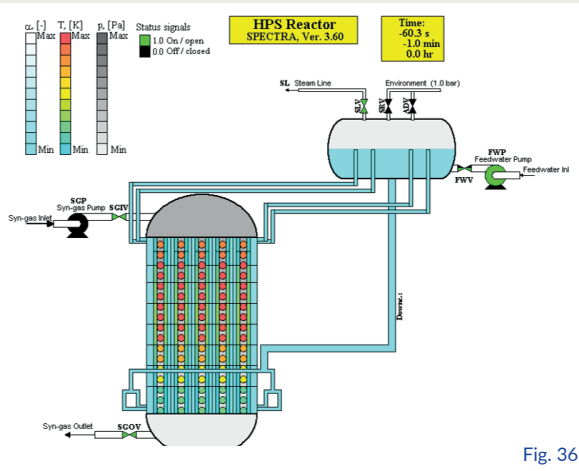


Fig. 36

PLOFC in Space Environment

Analyzed:

- PLOFC at normal gravity acceleration
- PLOFC at "zero" gravity acceleration
- switch from normal to "zero" gravity at 40,000 s

Observations (Fig 37).

- In the case with "zero" gravity the maximum fuel temperature is 1540 °C, higher than in it is in the gravitational field (1240 °C) because natural circulation is not possible.
- The results of PLOFC in lack of gravity field are very similar to the results of DLOFC (maximum temperature of 1524 °C).
- If the gravity acceleration is reduced after 40,000 s, then the fuel temperature starts rising after that time and reaches 1362 °C at the end of calculations.

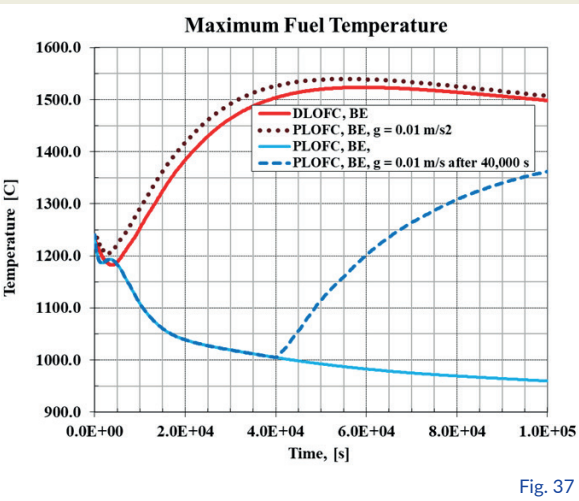


Fig. 37

PLOFC in Marine Environment

Analyzed:

- PLOFC at periodically changing gravity acceleration (Fig. 38, 39).

Observations :

- Circulation flows are affected - Fig. 40, however there is almost no effect on the maximum fuel T (Fig. 41).

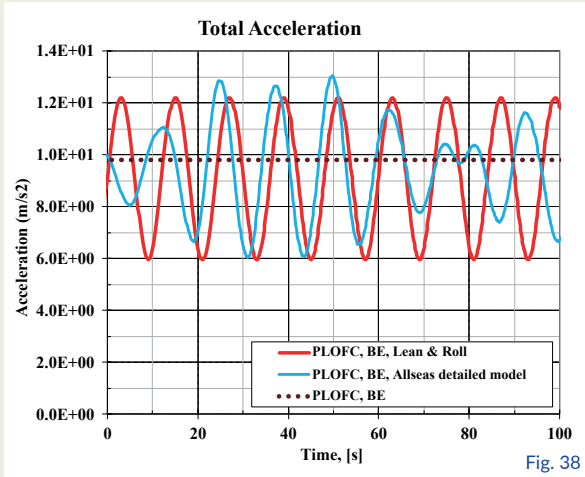


Fig. 38

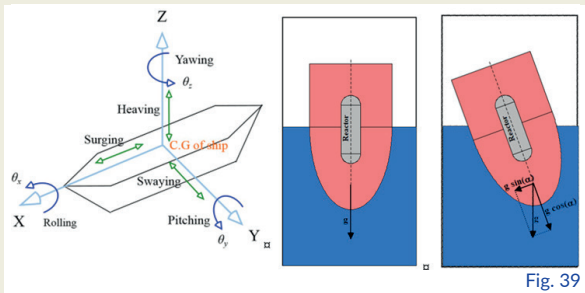


Fig. 39

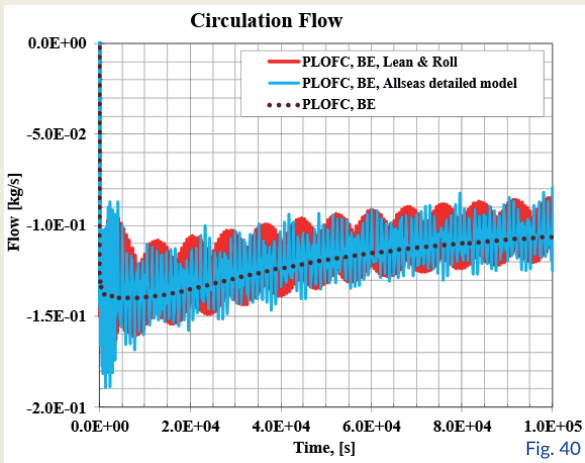


Fig. 40

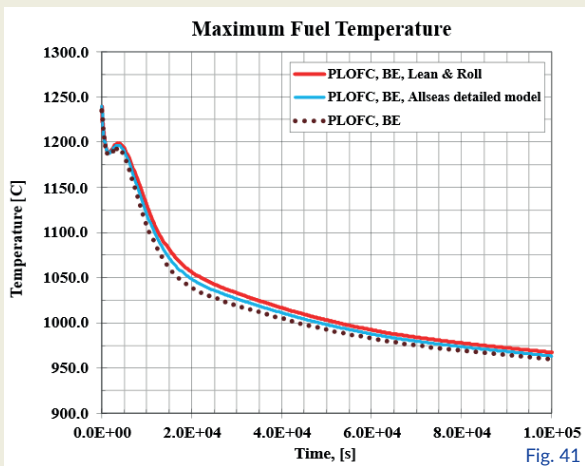


Fig. 41

HTR-PM

INET has a major program on High Temperature Gas Reactors. It has been operating the HTR-10 test reactor successfully for several years now and has finished construction of the HTR-PM demonstration reactor. In addition, large research projects are underway on several HTR subjects, amongst others fuel, thermal-hydraulics and graphite dust. INET contracted NRG PALLAS to build SPECTRA model (Fig. 42) and perform analysis of dust and fission product behavior during postulated accident scenarios. The contract deliverables consisted of six parts:

- Model description and steady state results
- Analysis of PLOFC, DLOFC
 - Dust deposition during plant life-time
 - Dust behavior during operational transients
 - Dust behavior during accidents
 - Fission product behavior during accidents

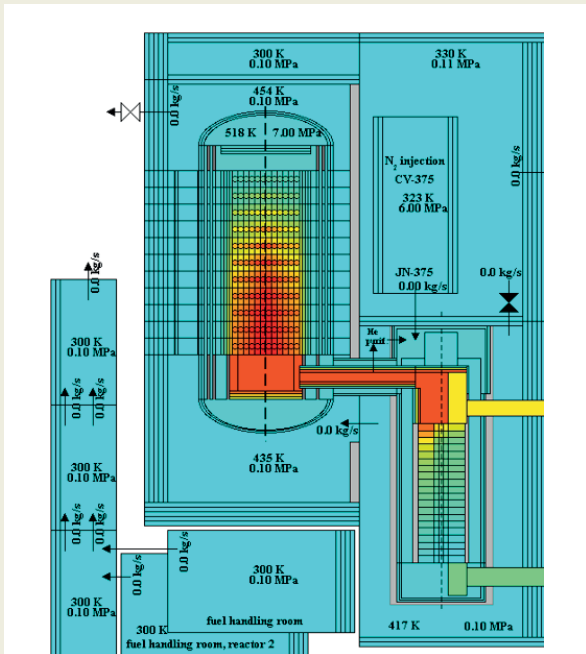


Fig. 42

PBMR (HTR)

PBMR is a South African design helium-cooled, direct cycle (Brayton) High Temperature Reactor. The design-support calculations were performed by PBMR Pty Ltd. using FLOWNEX code. PBMR contracted NRG PALLAS for independent assessment of the thermal hydraulic calculations performed by FLOWNEX. SPECTRA has been selected as the primary tool for the verification and validation of the PBMR thermal hydraulic analyses. Calculations were performed for the PBMR design versions 5.02, 7.04 (Fig. 43), S201. Good agreement with FLOWNEX results were obtained in most cases. Differences were investigated in detail.

Design-support calculations of the PBMR Reactor Cavity Cooling System (RCCS) (Fig. 44) were performed by PBMR Pty Ltd. using the RELAP5 code. PBMR contracted NRG PALLAS for independent assessment of the thermal hydraulic calculations performed by RELAP5. SPECTRA has been selected as the primary tool for the verification and validation of the RCCS thermal hydraulic analyses, including normal operation and selected accident scenarios. Good agreement with FLOWNEX results were obtained.

PBMR Pty Ltd contracted NRG PALLAS to perform dust analyses, including long-term (plant life time) deposition of dust. Calculations were performed for the PBMR main components: reactor, turbine [Stem-Wessels, 2014], recuperator plates (Fig. 45), coolers, as well as several sub-systems: Core Conditioning System (CCS), Core Barrel Conditioning System (CBCS), Fuel Handling System (FHS).

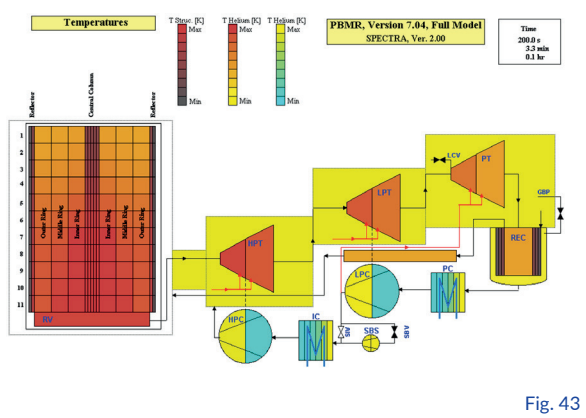


Fig. 43

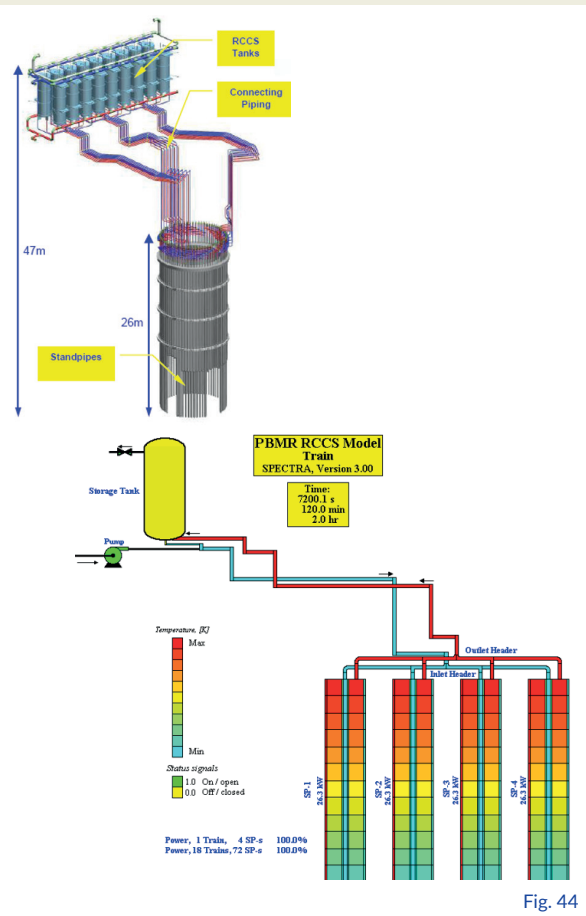


Fig. 44

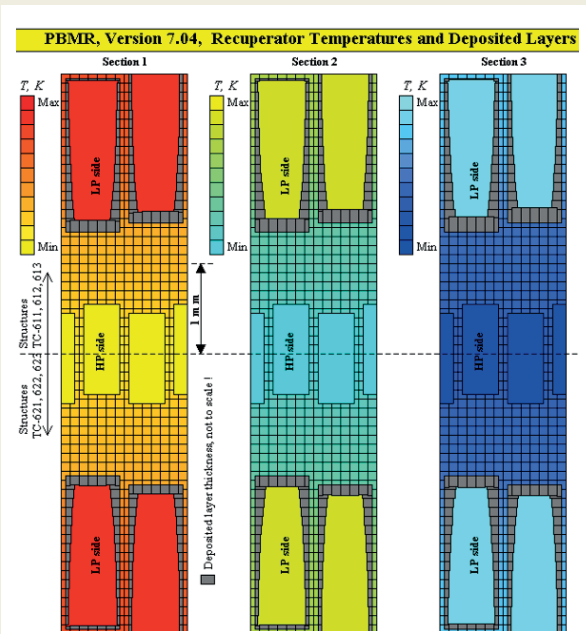


Fig. 45

Interactive Simulators

BWR

A simple BWR interactive simulator (**Fig. 46**) was created at NRG PALLAS as a part of a training course for new members of the thermal- hydraulic analysis team, users of computer codes RELAP, MELCOR, SPECTRA.

- Plant: a hypothetical BWR-type reactor.
- Scenario: break at an unknown location of the primary system + simultaneous loss of grid power for one hour.
- Objectives:
 - Prevent any core damage by keeping the core covered using available pumps and emergency (battery) power.
 - Prevent containment venting and failure by using spray if necessary.

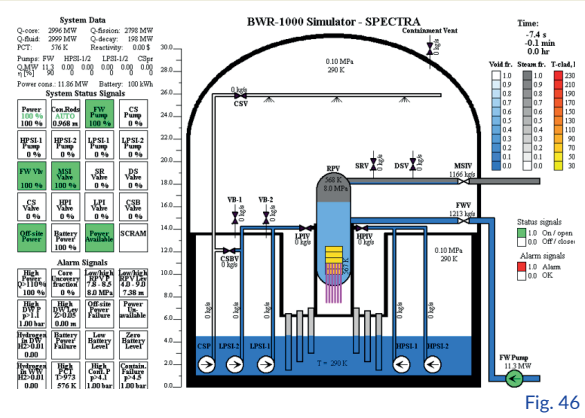


Fig. 46

PWR

PWR interactive simulator (**Fig. 47, 48**) was created for a course of reactor physics students "Cursus Kerntechnik".

- Plant: typical PWR, 3000 MWth, 2 cooling loops.
- Scenario: primary system leakage in an unknown location + loss of grid power + loss of diesel generators
- Objectives:
 - Prevent release of activity to atmosphere.
 - Guarantee core cooling for as long as possible.

Low Flux Research Reactor

- An interactive simulator of LFR (**Fig. 49, 50**) was created for training of HFR operators.
- Plant: Low Flux Reactor operated in Petten (Netherlands) in the period 1960 - 2010.
- Model: full replica of the LFR control room and all its functionalities.
- Objectives: simulation of training exercises performed in the past on the LFR, e.g.:
 - Approach to criticality
 - Reactivity excess measurement
 - Estimation of control rod reactivity worth, etc.

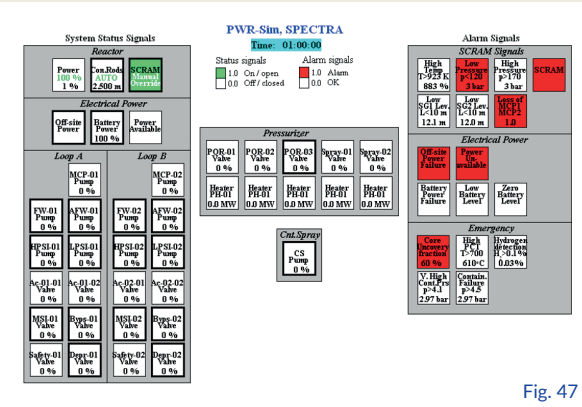


Fig. 47

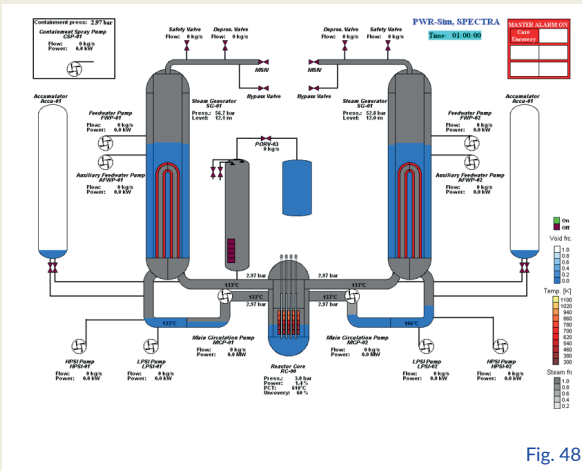


Fig. 48

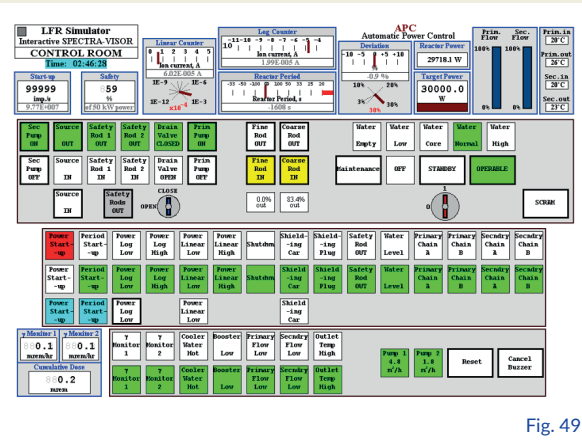


Fig. 49

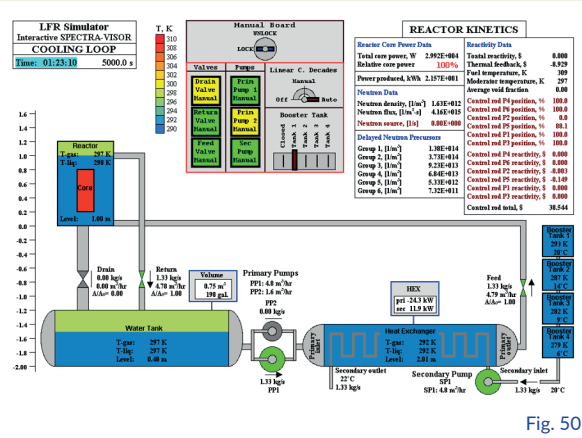


Fig. 50

SUE Platform, SA, UQ, BEPU

SUE: System-code Uncertainty Evaluation

SUE is a robust, user user-friendly platform designed to automate and streamline uncertainty analysis for nuclear safety. By wrapping around system thermal thermal-hydraulic (SPECTRA, RELAP5, MELCOR) and CFD (FLUENT) codes, SUE quantifies the impact of uncertain parameters on safety safety-critical results, moving beyond conservative estimates to a high high-fidelity Best Estimate Plus Uncertainty (BEPU) framework [SUE, 2025].

Key Methodologies :

- Random Sampling (RS): Traditional Monte Carlo approach for fullfull-scale probability distributions.
- Deterministic Sampling (DS): Utilizing Standard, Hadamard, and Simplex methodologies to achieve high high-accuracy results with significantly fewer code runs (e.g., 66–10 runs vs. hundreds).
- Engineering Hot Hot-Spot Factor (EHSF): Specialized methodology for localized thermal margin assessment.
- User-Defined Matrices: Full flexibility for custom uncertainty

Validation & Reliability :

- SUE has been rigorously verified through the PBF Test LOC-11C benchmark, ensuring its mathematical precision in predicting safetycritical transients.
- Experimental Validation: Rigorously verified against the PBF Test LOC-11C benchmark.
- CodeCode-toto-Code Benchmarking: Proven consistency across RELAP5, MELCOR, and SPECTRA.
- International Standards: Cross Cross-verified against RAVEN, ensuring compliance with global regulatory requirements for licensing and safety.

Examples - Sensitivity Analysis

SPECTRA SUE analysis of MSRE pump start-up.

Tests conducted at MSR "zero" power (10 W) were done to determine the reactivity effect due to changes in fuel flow rate. Pump start start-up → DNP drift out of core starts → reactivity decreases. Control rod needs to be withdrawn to add reactivity. The amount of added reactivity was measured. SPECTRA (NRG) and SAM (ORNL) results match well the data (**Fig. 51**).

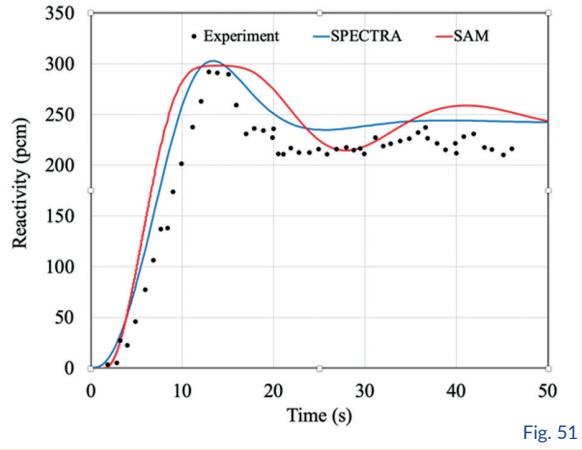


Fig. 51

Sensitivity analysis was performed using Deterministic Sampling (DS) and Random Sampling (RS) methodologies assuming tainties on the Delayed Neutron Precursor (DNP) data. Uncertainty of 10% was assumed on DNP yield fraction data, based on [Golinelli, 1981]

Sensitivity measures (Fig. 52).

- strong effect for the middle groups (2, 3, 4)
- weak for the long long-living group 1 and the short short-living groups 5, 6.

Group 1: long half-life ($T_{1/2} = 56$ s) → travels through the loop several times (one flow flow-through cycle takes about 26 s). Likelihood of decaying outside the core region is relatively large and depends mainly on the ratio of the time spent outside the core to the time spent inside the core.

Groups 5, 6: short half-life ($T_{1/2} = 0.6$ s and 0.2 s) - short compared to the flow time through the core (about 9 s) → decay mainly in the core, independently of the flow, and thus do not affect the pump transients.

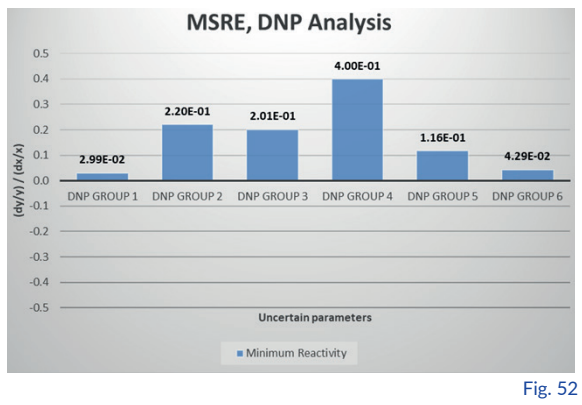


Fig. 52

SPECTRA SUE analysis of HTR plant GEMINI 4.0.

UQ Analysis of DLOFC.

parameters and uncertainty range

	Default	Variation
1. Relative core power	1.00	2%
2. Decay power multiplier	1.00	5%
3. Primary flow multiplier	1.00	1%
4. SG feedwater T multiplier	1.00	1%
5. RPV / RCCS wall emissivity multiplier	1.00	10%
6. RPV / RCCS wall HTC multiplier	1.00	20%
7. Graphite - specific heat multiplier	1.00	5% (reflector), 2,9% (core graphite)
8. Graphite - conductivity multiplier	1.00	5%

Qol: Maximum fuel temperature.

EHSF

The largest effect on the maximum fuel T comes from:

- core power, decay heat, graphite thermal conductivity,
- graphite specific heat heat (**Fig. 53**).
SUE calculated hot spot factor of $F_y = 1.0332$ and maximum fuel temperature of $1797 \times 1.0332 = 1857 \text{ K}$ (**1584°C**)

Wilks

- 1-side tolerance limits (since we are interested only in the upper value of the maximum fuel temperature),
- probability of $\alpha = 95\%$, and confidence level of $\beta = 95\%$,
- leading to the number of runs of 59.
Maximum fuel temperature (**Fig. 54**):
 $T_{\max} = 1843 \text{ K}$ (**1570°C**)

Maximum fuel temperatures, are:

- BE: $T_{\max} \leq 1524^\circ\text{C}$
- BEPU, EHSF: $T_{\max} \leq 1584^\circ\text{C}$
- BEPU, Wilks: $T_{\max} \leq 1570^\circ\text{C}$
- Conservative: $T_{\max} \leq 1601^\circ\text{C}$

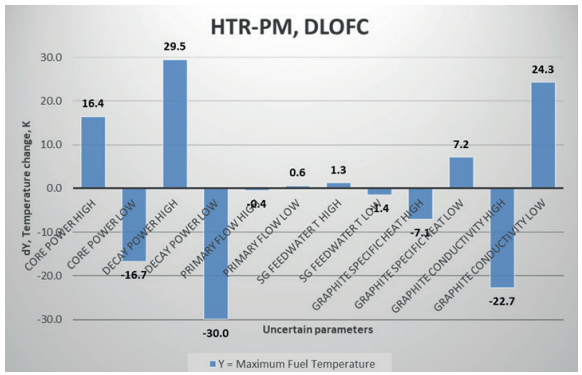


Fig. 53

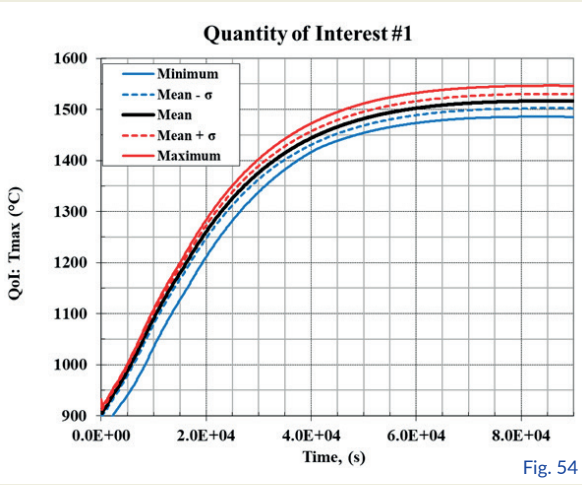


Fig. 54

Documentation

- General Overview Documents, related to individual applicability areas, LWR, HTR, LMFR, MSR, etc. (Fig. 55)

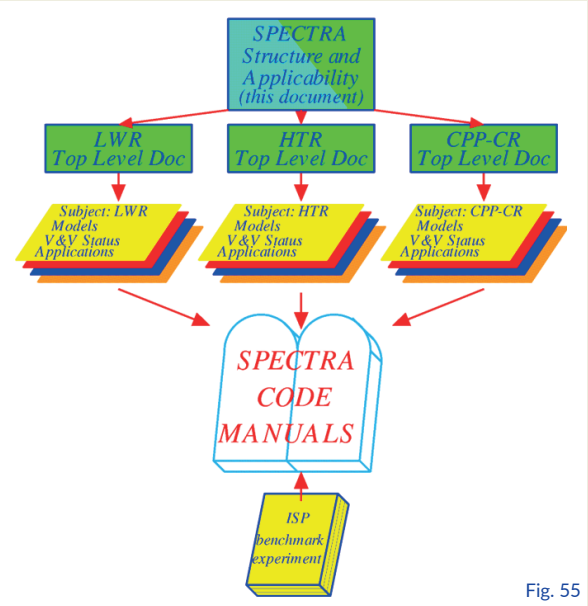


Fig. 55

- SPECTRA Code Manuals, containing the most detailed information on the modelling, the input requirements, and the V&V status.
 - Volume 1: Model Description
 - Volume 2: User's Guide
 - Volume 3: Verification and Validation
 - Volume 4: Code Structure
- Reports and publications from analyses performed with the code.

Applicability Domain

Application Domain	Key Physical Focus	Associated Publications/Projects
Gas-Cooled (HTR/PBMR)	Air Ingress, Pebble Bed HT, DLOFC/PLOFC, RCCS Analysis, Dust Transport	NACOK [Zheng, 2012], HTR-10 [Zheng, 2024], GEMINI+ [Stem, 2022], PBMR [de Geus, 2006; Stem, 2014], NGNP [Stem, 2012], HTTU [Rousseau, 2014]
Molten Salt (MSR / FHR)	Natural Circulation, Liquid Fuel, Delayed Neutron Precur-sors, FP Behavior	MSRE Benchmark [Hua, 2022; Roelofs, 2021], LUMOS HFR Loop [Stem, 2017/2018], Mk1 PB-FHR [Stem, 2018/2021]
Liquid Metal (SFR / LFR)	Sodium Void, Pool Hydraulics, ULOF, ASTRID/ESFR/ELSY/ LEADER Benchmarks	PHENIX [Narcisi, 2019; Uitslag-Doolaard, 2020], EBR-II SHRT [Stem, 2017; Briggs, 2017], CIRCE-HERO [Lorusso, 2021; Zwijsen, 2019], TALL-3D [De Kock, 2022], ESFR [Lazaro, 2014; Bubelis, 2017]
LWR / SMR / Water	Passive Safety, SBWR & SWR-1000 Accident Analysis, Narrow Channel Boiling	PANDA ISP-42 [Stem, 2000/2001; Aksan, 2010], Westinghouse SMR [Stem 2017], PERSEO [Mascari, 2020], Rod Bundle Heat Transfer [Mullins, 1982], TEMPEST [Wichers, 2003]
Source Term & Dust	Aerosol Resuspension, Graphite Dust, FP Sorption (I, Ag, Cs)	Dust Resuspension [Stem, 2008/2010/2018], Sorption Coefficients [Stem, 2010/2014/2016], AVR Dust [Stem, 2014]
Severe Accident	Spent Fuel Pools, Zry-4 Oxidation, Steam-Graphite Reac-tion, Gas Stratification	SFP Accidents [Coindreau, 2017], Zry-4 Oxidation [Stem, 2016], Steam-Graphite Reaction [Stem, 2014], HYMIT Deflagration [Holler, 2016]
Industrial / Chemical	Natural Convection in Chemical Reactors, Conventional Power Plants (CPP)	SHELL Design Chemical Reactors, Natural Convection Cooling Systems
Multi-Scale / BEPU	System/CFD Coupling, Uncertainty Quantification (SUE Tool)	E-SCAPE [Hussain, 2024], RELAP5 vs. SPECTRA [Stem, 2016], SAM vs. SPECTRA [De Kock, 2022], MELCOR/ TRACE Comparison [Stem, 2017]

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- Volume 1: Program Description
 - Physics models, correlations, and numerical methods.
- Volume 2: User's Guide
 - Input deck preparation and control logic.
- Volume 3: Verification and Validation
 - Comprehensive V&V report against experimental data.
- Volume 4: Code Structure
 - Development, Hardware and Software Requirements.

[SUE, 2025]: Stempniewicz, M.M., "SUE - System-code Uncertainty Evalua-tion", Version 3.00 – User Manual and

The SPECTRA code in short

SPECTRA is a high-performance system thermal-hydraulic code developed by NRG PALLAS.

It provides a unified simulation framework for LWR, HTR, MSR, and LMFR technologies, regardless of coolant or reactor type.

- One Code, All Reactors: Native support for water, gases, liquid metals, and molten salts.
- Multi-Purpose: Engineered for Licensing Safety Analysis, Interactive Simulators, and Advanced Design Optimization.

Validation and Quality Control

SPECTRA is developed under a rigorous ISO 9001 framework, subject to frequent external audits to ensure the highest nuclear quality standards.

- Standards-Based: V&V performed strictly to ANSI/ANS-10.4 guidelines.
- Rigorous V&V: Benchmarked against a global library of Separate Effects Tests and Integral System Tests (LOFT, ROSA, LSTF).
- Code Comparison: Cross-validated against industry standards like RELAP5 and TRACE to ensure physical consistency.
- Peer-Reviewed: Supported by numerous peer-reviewed international publications in high-impact nuclear journals.

SPECTRA Package

SPECTRA is delivered as a turnkey package for seamless integration into your workflow:

- Multi-Platform Engine: High-performance Windows/ Linux executables.
- VISOR: Intuitive graphical visualization and post-processing.
- SUE: Advanced Uncertainty Quantification (UQ) and Sensitivity Analysis.
- Full Library: Comprehensive Theory, User, and V&V Manuals.
- Validation Suite: Ready-to-run installation and benchmark test cases.
- Expert Services: Specialized training and technical support on demand.

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