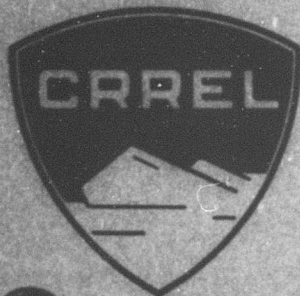


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Technical Report 212

DESIGN CRITERIA FOR SNOW RUNWAYS

Gunars Abele,
René O. Ramseier
and
Albert F. Wuori

November 1968

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U.S. ARMY MATERIEL COMMAND
TERRESTRIAL SCIENCES CENTER
COLD REGIONS RESEARCH & ENGINEERING LABORATORY
HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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DA TASK 1T061102B52A02

DA TASK 1T062112A13001

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PREFACE

This report was prepared by Mr. Gunars Abele, Research Civil Engineer, and Mr. Albert F. Wuori, Chief, Applied Research Branch, Experimental Engineering Division (Mr. K.A. Linell, Chief); and Mr. René O. Ramseier, Research Physicist, Snow and Ice Branch (Dr. C.C. Langway, Jr., Chief), Research Division (Dr. K.F. Sterrett, Chief), Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL), U.S. Army Terrestrial Sciences Center (USA TSC).

The report is published under DA Task 1T062112A13001, *Cold Regions Research - Applied Research and Engineering*.

The experimental work related to the wheeled traffic tests was performed at the Keweenaw Field Station, Houghton, Michigan, from 1960 to 1963 by Messrs. Wuori and Abele. The research work on the physical characteristics and behavior of snow was performed by Mr. Ramseier.

The authors express appreciation to Mr. W.H. Parrott (formerly Chief, Keweenaw Field Station; now Chief, Measurement Systems Research Branch, CRREL); and to F. Gagnon and C. Kristo of the Keweenaw Field Station for their support and assistance during the wheeled traffic tests.

Mr. Malcolm Mellor of the Experimental Engineering Division technically reviewed this report.

A shortened version of this report was presented by Mr. Wuori at the Annual General Meeting of the Engineering Institute of Canada, May 1966. Included in the present report, by kind permission of the authors, are discussions on this shortened version by Mr. L.W. Gold, National Research Council, Ottawa, Canada; Mr. E.H. Moser, Jr., U.S. Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory, Port Hueneme, California; and Mr. M. Mellor.

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ABSTRACT

The physical characteristics of snow and those processes of metamorphism which contribute to its strength are important considerations in planning the construction of compacted snow runways. Two distinct temperature-dependent processes affect the physical properties of snow: sintering and strength increase with decreasing temperature.

The rate of strength increase and the ultimate strength of snow may be greatly increased by mechanical agitation or depth processing followed immediately by surface compaction. Leveling to produce a smooth surface for aircraft is also necessary. Various combinations of processing and compaction are required depending on the size of aircraft to be operated on the runway. After construction is completed, the natural process of sintering or strengthening must be allowed to proceed for some time before aircraft operations can be initiated.

The mechanical properties of processed snow have been correlated with its wheel-load supporting capacity. The correlation shows the effect of such parameters as wheel load, tire contact pressure, and repetitive wheel coverages on the required hardness or strength of a compacted snow layer. Strength profiles which can be expected from certain snow processing and compaction procedures are shown and compared with required strength profiles for various types of wheeled vehicles and aircraft.

The purpose of this study was to combine the knowledge gained from fundamental research in the processes of sintering with methods and procedures developed by engineers for using snow as a construction material. The results are readily applicable to the construction of snow runways for a large variety of wheeled aircraft and the construction of snow roads for wheeled vehicle traffic, not only in polar and subpolar areas, but in temperate regions with a heavy seasonal snow cover.

The methods described apply not only to areas like Greenland or Antarctica but to areas with an annual snow cover. These methods, together with a fundamental understanding of the sintering process, have recently been applied in the construction of runway taxi strips at McMurdo, Antarctica.

DESIGN CRITERIA FOR SNOW RUNWAYS

by

Gunar Abele, René O. Ramseier and Albert F. Wuori

INTRODUCTION

A considerable amount of work has been accomplished by various organizations during the past 20 years on the study of construction methods and properties of snow pavements suitable for support of heavy wheel loads. The results of this work have been reported by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (U.S. Army Engineer Division, New England, Frost Effects Laboratory, 1947, 1949; Arctic Construction and Frost Effects Laboratory, 1954); by the U.S. Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory (Reese, 1955; Moser, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1966; Moser and Sherwood, 1968; Moser and Stehle, 1964; Paige, 1965a, 1965b; Coffin, 1966); and by USA CRREL (Bender, 1957; Wuori, 1959, 1960, 1962a, 1963a, 1963b; Ramseier, 1966; Abele, 1964a, 1968; and Abele and Frankenstein, 1967).

During the period 1960-1963 a great number of simulated aircraft wheel traffic tests were conducted on various snow pavements by using a special test rig. The results of the study of the relationship between the wheel-load supporting capacity and the mechanical properties of a snow pavement are described in this report.

In order to evaluate fully the properties and behavior of a snow pavement, it was necessary to investigate the effects of time and temperature on the physical characteristics of snow. The results of this investigation are also discussed in this report.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SNOW

The initial geometric structure of snow varies from dendritic flakes to pellets. The initial forms depend on meteorologic conditions at the time of formation. Undisturbed fallen snow generally has a loose structure and a very high initial porosity, which may vary from greater than 90% in temperate and subpolar regions to 56% in polar regions.

Metamorphism, the changes which occur naturally after the deposition of snow, can be divided into three distinct processes. Two of these start soon after deposition although they terminate at different stages of the total metamorphism. The third starts somewhere in the high-density stage.

The first process of metamorphism is the rapid decrease in porosity or increase in density* occurring because the shapes of the dendritic snow crystals are unstable. Eventually, they attain an irregular grain shape. The second process, sintering, is the most important when snow is considered for construction purposes. This process, during which bonds are being developed between adjacent snow grains, is responsible for the increase in strength of snow. Although this process commences at the time of snowfall, it becomes of major significance after the process of porosity decrease has nearly ended. The sintering process terminates when the snow-ice transition occurs, at a porosity of about 10% (permeability equals zero). Recrystallization, the third process, becomes the major process at the ice stage.

*In snow, porosity = $1 - 1.09 \times \text{density}$.

None of these processes is stress dependent. Natural densification occurs primarily as a result of the increase of stress with depth. It is a result of the applied stress, rather than a separate process and is, therefore, superimposed on the metamorphism.

Under natural conditions snow does not support most wheeled vehicles. Some method of modifying the natural snow properties (such as processing or disaggregation), therefore, is necessary. Disaggregation of snow breaks up the existing grains, producing a wider and more uniform distribution of grain size with a concomitant decrease in porosity. Sintering begins immediately after deposition of the disaggregated snow. No further decrease in porosity (i.e., increase in density) is observed as a result of sintering.

Several mechanisms may be responsible for the growth of bonds between snow grains which are in contact. Ramseier and Sander (1965) found that the major mechanism is one of evaporation, diffusion through the environment, and condensation. Evaporation occurs on the convex parts of the aggregate because of the higher vapor pressure which promotes mass transport. Water vapor then diffuses through the local environment, condensing where the grains are in contact because of the lower vapor pressure of those points. Volume and surface diffusion may also contribute to mass transport but the amount is negligible (Ramseier and Keeler, 1966).

The resulting increase in strength due to the growth of bonds can be represented by an exponential equation

$$\sigma_r = \sigma_f [1 - \exp(-kT)] \quad (1)$$

where σ_f is the final unconfined compressive strength, σ_r is the unconfined compressive strength after a time r and k is a rate constant defined as

$$k = A \exp\left(-\frac{E}{RT}\right) \quad (2)$$

where A and E are constants, E being the activation energy of the sintering process ($E = 10.2$ kcal mole⁻¹), R the gas constant, and T the absolute temperature.

Combining eq 1 and 2, the following is obtained for the unconfined compressive strength at time r (Ramseier, 1966):

$$\sigma_r = \sigma_f \left(1 - \exp\left[-A r \exp\left(-\frac{E}{RT}\right)\right]\right) \quad (3)$$

The appropriate limits are:

$$\text{at } r = 0, \sigma_r = 0, \text{ and as } r \rightarrow \infty, \sigma_r \rightarrow \sigma_f.$$

The only unknowns in this equation are A and σ_f . For fully sintered snow, σ_f can be represented satisfactorily by an equation of the form (Ballard and McGaw, 1965)

$$\sigma_f = \sigma_l \left[1 - \left(\frac{n}{n_l}\right)\right] \quad (4)$$

where σ_l (kg cm⁻²) is the unconfined compressive strength of fine-grained, randomly oriented, bubble-free ice; n is the porosity; and n_l is the limiting porosity which is assumed to be an indicator of snow structure or snow type. The variation of n_l is mostly between 0.5 and 0.6 porosity where the

latter value represents the upper limit (Ballard and Feldt, 1966). It can be obtained experimentally by performing a series of unconfined compressive strength tests on fully sintered snow as a function of porosity at a constant temperature. σ_l is defined as follows:

$$\sigma_l = 41.83 - 0.788 \theta \quad (5)$$

where θ is the temperature in °C (Butkovich, 1954). The constant A , on the other hand, is more difficult to determine. Because it is a function of porosity and snow structure, it must be found experimentally.

Besides the sintering process, temperature also affects the strength properties of the snow considerably. The strength variations of snow caused by temperature changes can be determined by using eq 4. For a snow with constant n and n_f but different σ_l , a new σ'_l can be calculated:

$$\sigma'_l = \sigma_l \left(\frac{\sigma'_l}{\sigma_l} \right) \quad (6)$$

In general the effects of eq 3 and 6 are superimposed in nature. Until now this has greatly complicated the analysis of field data, especially since both the process of sintering and the effect of temperature were not fully understood.

Figure 1 shows a set of sintering curves for snow varying in porosity between 0.346 and 0.455 at a constant temperature of -20C ending at 95% of σ_l . The unconfined compressive strength has been plotted against the time τ . Here is shown (using eq 3 and 4) the effect of porosity on the strength of the snow. A 10% change in porosity results in an approximate 100% strength increase. It is, therefore, very desirable to obtain the lowest possible porosity of the processed snow by compacting it mechanically.

Figure 2 shows a group of sintering curves ending at 95% of σ_l at a constant porosity but different temperatures. The temperature effect on the rate constant k is very strong. Much more time is required to attain a given strength at -50C than at -10C. Thus, it is very important in construction to perform all processing at the highest temperature possible to take full advantage of the rapid strength increase due to the rapid development of bonds. The effect of temperature changes on the unconfined compressive strength of snow as a function of porosity for a constant limiting porosity n_f is shown in Figure 3. A decrease in temperature at a constant porosity n will result in an immediate increase in the strength of the snow.

To ensure the best possible strength properties for construction, the processed snow should be compacted to obtain the lowest possible porosity and allowed to sinter at the highest possible temperature. Any natural decrease in temperature will result in an instant increase in the snow strength above that already acquired from the sintering process.

When the snow aggregate is compacted during deposition from a mechanical device or compacted by a machine, it instantaneously acquires an initial increase in strength equivalent to that produced by the first 6 days of sintering of an ideal snow aggregate of equivalent density.* Figure 4 shows one example of a theoretical curve as given by eq 3. The points represent a set of representative data as it would be obtained under field or laboratory conditions, starting at $t = 0$. Ramseier and Sander (1965) found that the sintering curves as a function of temperature will converge at a time $t = -6$ days. This effect also seems to be true as a function of density (Ramseier

*There is no snow which exists in reality for $0 < \tau < 6$ days ($t < 0$) except in the theoretical analysis.

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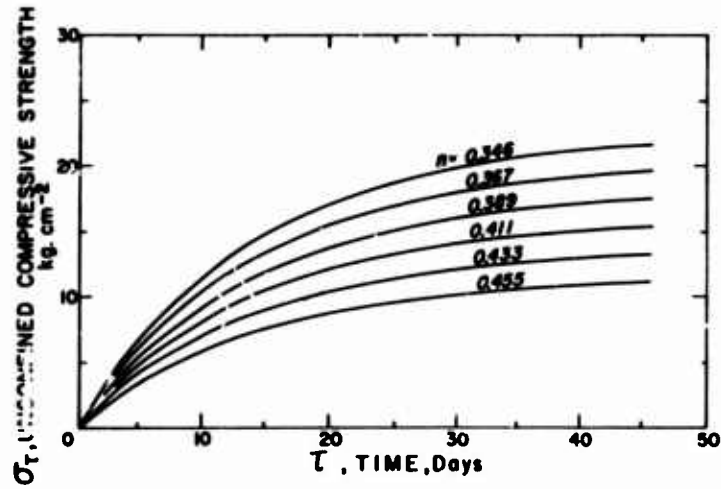


Figure 1. Sintering as a function of porosity (n) at $-20C$.

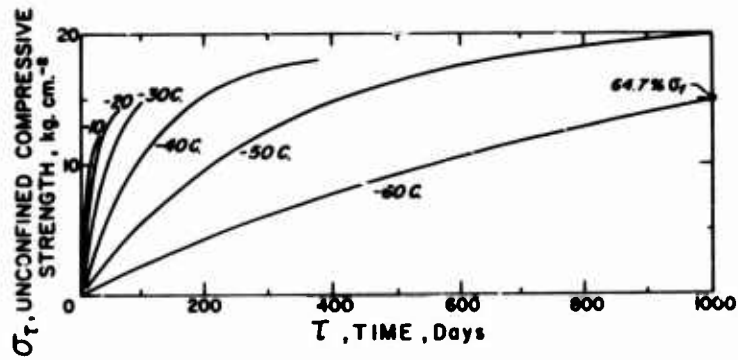


Figure 2. Sintering as a function of temperature at a constant porosity.

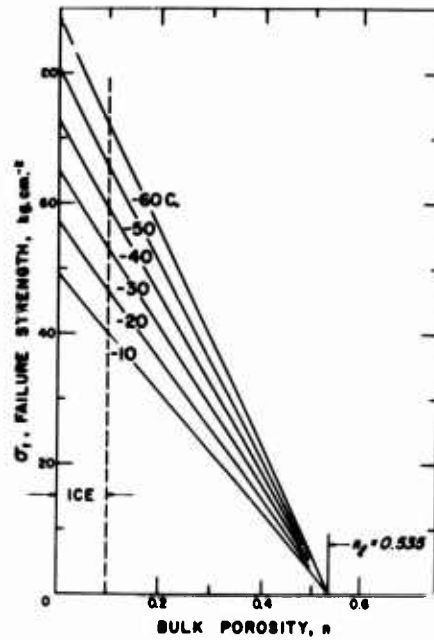


Figure 3. Temperature dependence of snow.

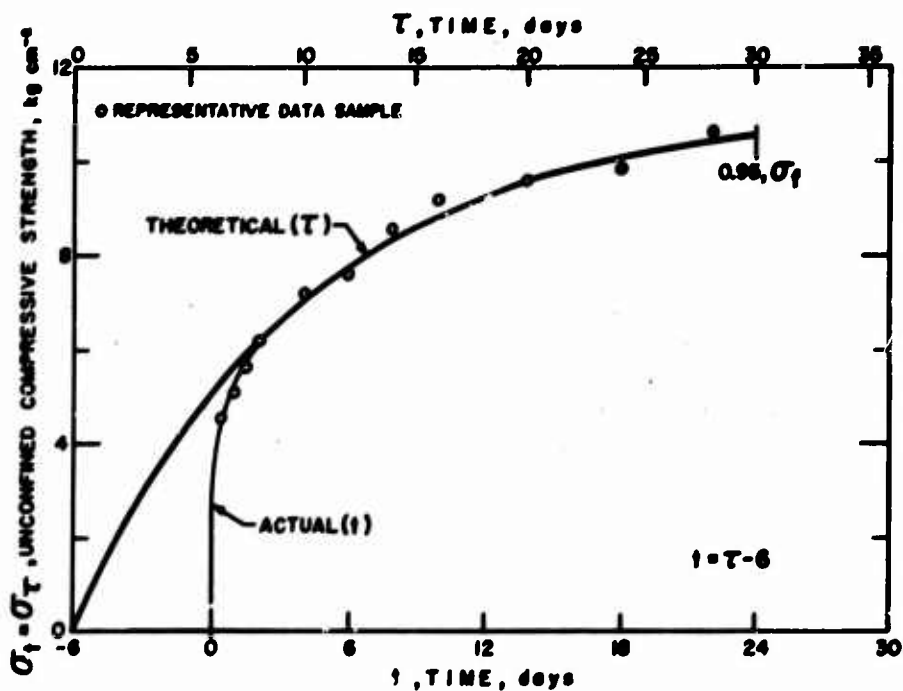


Figure 4. Representative experimental data compared with a theoretical sintering curve.

and Reeve, unpublished data). In general it is found that the first few points (up to $t = 2$ days) are somewhat lower than the predicted values. This discrepancy seems to be caused by a physical process operating during the initial stage. The rapid increase in strength is obtained from new bonds created during this initial period (Ramseier and Keeler, 1966). This again emphasizes the need for compacting as much as possible in the beginning stages as new bonds are created at places where grains are nearly in contact.

METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION

Processing

Compacted snow is adequate for support of ski-equipped aircraft and light wheeled traffic. Depth processing or milling, however, is required for support of heavy wheeled aircraft.

Studies have been made by USA CRREL on various methods of processing or disaggregating snow to break up its original structure, to produce a wider and more nearly optimum distribution of its grain sizes, and to increase its density, resulting in higher strength properties. These studies have included the use of various rotary snowplows and modified pulvimixers (Wuori, 1959, 1962a, 1963a). Other organizations, including the U.S. Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory (Moser, 1963) and the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Laboratories, have also explored the use of modified soil pulvimixers.

The USA CRREL studies have shown that best results are obtained with the use of certain rotary plows on tracked carriers. In particular, the Swiss-manufactured Peter snow miller has been very effective for processing snow. The Peter miller has a horizontally mounted closed drum with cutting blades spiralling around it. The drum is over 1.2 m in diameter and 2.7 m wide and rotates at 225 to 305 rpm. A 1.5-m-deep cut can be made with the miller. The snow can be directed from the cutting drum through specially fabricated ejection chutes to the rear of the machine to backfill the trench.

The advantage in using a rotary plow such as the track-mounted Peter miller is that with the 1.5-m-deep cut the trench is backfilled to a depth of 1 m with dense processed snow. A mat of this thickness is required to support heavy wheel loads, especially if the underlying snow is rather weak. The processing depth of the modified pulvimixers is limited to approximately 60 cm. Another advantage is that the plow is a valuable machine for other uses such as snow removal and excavation in snow.

As a result of processing with the snow miller, the snow density is increased from about 0.25 g cm^{-3} to about 0.50 g cm^{-3} . Grain size analyses indicate that the processed snow has a desirable range and distribution of particles not only for optimum packing but for the subsequent sintering process described earlier. Immediately after the snow is processed, it resembles a fine sand in consistency and is incapable of supporting any significant load. The sintering, which begins immediately at a rapid rate, is responsible for increasing the strength and bearing capacity of the processed snow. Other methods of processing include the addition of heat or the addition of another material such as sawdust during or after disaggregation.

The use of heat is justified only when dry processing and other compaction techniques are inadequate for obtaining the high snow strengths required to support heavy wheel loads having high tire contact pressure ($>9 \text{ kg cm}^{-2}$). Heat should then be applied only to a relatively shallow surface layer. The high unit shearing forces induced by a wheel load decrease rapidly with depth; therefore, the strength of the snow at a greater depth need not be as high.

Several years ago USA ERDL developed a machine for milling and heating snow. This was essentially a modified soil pulvimixer equipped with rotary drums and fuel oil burners for heating the snow during processing. The machine produced a wet snow layer that had to be compacted with rollers immediately and allowed to freeze to produce a hard snow-ice layer. The total depth of processing was limited to about 45 cm. Also, the surface produced was rather inhomogeneous with respect to strength. The machine required $600 \text{ liters hr}^{-1}$ of fuel oil to provide $5 \times 10^6 \text{ kcal hr}^{-1}$ output of the burners.

The machine was used by USA CRREL to process a shallow (30-cm) layer on a previously cold-processed 0.9-m-thick layer with fair results, although inhomogeneity of the surface was still experienced (Wuori, 1963b). Also, flame-out of the burners was a continuous problem. It was concluded that the method was not mechanically reliable and that the direct application of heat in this manner was very inefficient.

Spraying a processed snow surface with water is another method of introducing heat. Approximately 1 to 3 cm of water on a surface was necessary for effectively treating a processed snow base course to produce a snow-ice pavement 12 to 25 cm thick. Although this method is considerably more efficient than the direct heat method, its disadvantage is that elaborate methods of producing and heating water are necessary to prevent freezing in spreading tanks, nozzles, etc.

Wherever sawdust or wood shavings are readily available, they may be used as an admixture to processed snow to increase its strength, reduce slipperiness, and retard softening of the snow pavement during periods of thaw. The best method of application, as determined by tests conducted by USA CRREL (Wuori, 1963a) is to spread the sawdust on a previously processed snow surface to a depth of 3 cm and, with the use of a pulvimixer or rotary tiller to mix the sawdust into the snow to a depth of about 15 cm. This method is quite effective but, of course, possible only in areas where the material is readily available.

Planing

Planing of processed snow to produce a level runway surface presents a difficult problem. The snow must be leveled immediately after processing while still in a cohesionless condition. After several hours the snow has hardened enough to make planing difficult. Also, the snow should be leveled before the surface is compacted and compaction must be performed on freshly processed snow.

A grader or planer, therefore, must follow immediately behind the snow processor, and it should be capable of producing a level surface in preferably only one or two passes. This requires a planer with accurate leveling controls, preferably automatic, and with a leveling bowl of considerable storage capacity for accumulating snow from high spots, to fill in depressions.

In recent years great improvements have been made in grading and leveling devices for road and runway construction (Moser, 1962; Wuori, 1963). USA CRREL procured and modified an automatic finegrader for use in snow (Abele, 1964). This grader had a leveling bowl with a storage capacity of 7.5 m³, the bowl had an auger to distribute the snow laterally in it and to sidecast excess material. The grader was equipped with automatic hydraulic controls to produce a level surface in the direction of travel as well as laterally. It was also equipped with large skis and a winterized cab. This finegrader performed very satisfactorily when rough leveling was first performed with a bulldozer.

Compacting

Snow must be compacted as soon as possible after processing and leveling because after only a few hours of sintering much of the energy of compaction is used in breaking newly formed grain bonds.

Several methods of compaction have been used with varying degrees of success. At low temperatures, the newly processed snow resembles a cohesionless, granular material, such as dry beach sand. Vibratory compaction is very effective under these conditions (Wuori, 1960, 1965). High-frequency (2000- to 4000-rpm) compactors are very effective in compacting the surface, but the depth of compaction is quite limited. Low-frequency (up to 2000-rpm) compactors or tampers are more effective for compacting to a greater depth.

At temperatures near the melting point, the snow can be compacted more effectively with corrugated, sheepfoot, or rubber-tired rollers.

The depth of compaction with the smooth and corrugated steel rollers is very limited. Better results are obtained by using a rubber-tired roller in combination with a steel roller. The standard sheepfoot roller is effective in compacting to a greater depth but is too heavy for use in snow; its performance may be improved by increasing the contact area of each foot.

The most effective compaction at both low and high temperatures has been obtained by using the low-ground-pressure (LGP) tracks of a D-8 crawler tractor (Wuori, 1960). The effectiveness of compaction is due to: 1) the large volume of snow under confinement by the wide tracks (137 cm), 2) the large gross load of the tractor (over 32,000 kg), and 3) the vibration set up by the tractor engine and moving track pads.

MECHANICAL PROPERTIES OF SNOW RELATED TO SUPPORTING CAPACITY

In order to develop design criteria for a snow pavement, it is necessary to establish a correlation between some mechanical property of the snow and its actual traffic-supporting capacity. A theoretical approach alone is not sufficient at present.

In the study of snow properties, several methods of evaluating snow strength have been used with varied success. Density is not a reliable indicator of snow strength, although it can be used to indicate the relative effectiveness of various compaction techniques (Wuori, 1963a). The unconfined compressive strength gives a realistic strength value relative to the load-supporting capacity of snow. However, the test is time-consuming. California Bearing Ratio (CBR) and plate-bearing-strength tests, besides being very time-consuming, are inconvenient to perform because of the equipment required.

More data can be obtained with the Rammsonde cone penetrometer. Although the instrument is not reliable on very hard snow (Wuori, 1963a; Niedringhaus, 1965), and considerable scatter of hardness values occurs even under favorable conditions, the ram hardness values have been correlated empirically with the unconfined compressive strength of processed snow (Abele, 1963). Because of the relative ease of performing the hardness test and obtaining a hardness profile to any depth, ram hardness has been used extensively as an index of snow strength.

To determine the actual traffic-supporting capacity of a snow pavement, a self-powered traffic test rig, capable of applying loads up to 27,000 kg on a hydraulically controlled center test wheel, was developed. Using various aircraft wheels (F-86, B-47, B-50, C-130), it was possible to simulate realistic aircraft wheel loads and traffic up to speeds of 32 km hr⁻¹ on snow pavements of various strength properties (Wuori, 1962a).

Ram hardness, unconfined compressive strength and density profiles and a nominal amount of CBR data for the snow pavement were obtained before and during the traffic tests. Particular attention was given to snow pavement areas whose supporting capacity for a particular wheel load was marginal.

Failure of the snow pavement was arbitrarily defined as any penetration of the wheel exceeding a depth of 5 cm. The critical penetration of a wheel (depth of penetration of a wheel into the supporting medium at which the vehicle becomes immobilized, or, in the case of aircraft, at which the safety of the aircraft becomes marginal) is considerably more than 5 cm and varies as the diameter of the wheel. However, it was observed that a wheel penetration in excess of 5 cm definitely indicated a general weakness of the snow pavement, except where this penetration was the result of surface wearing after a number of wheel coverages. Quite frequently a wheel penetrated a few centimeters after one or more wheel coverages without a further increase in the depth of penetration under additional traffic. This condition was apparently caused by weakness in the snow pavement surface only. If, however, a penetration of several centimeters resulted shortly after the traffic tests began, the depth of penetration continued to increase with additional traffic.

The average contact pressure (wheel load divided by tire contact area) of a tire was the most significant factor for determining the supporting capacity of a snow pavement. Under design load and tire-inflation-pressure conditions, the average contact pressure of an aircraft tire is of the same magnitude as the inflation pressure. This does not necessarily represent the maximum contact pressure produced by the tire on the pavement surface (Wuori, 1962a, 1962b).

It was also determined that the gross wheel load is a factor of some importance, although not as significant as the contact pressure.

The effect of repeated traffic (expressed as repetitive wheel coverages or passes) over the same pavement area within a few hours appeared to be a factor of considerable importance.

The required strength, in terms of ram hardness R , of a snow pavement for supporting wheel traffic can then be expressed as a function of these three parameters:

$$R = f(p, W, n) \quad (7)$$

where:

R = ram hardness (or some other strength index)

p = average contact pressure

W = gross wheel load

n = number of repetitive wheel coverages.

The contact areas of various aircraft tires vary significantly. The stress distribution below a load is related to the loaded area; the extent of the "stress bulb" increases with an increase in the contact area.

If the contact pressure is kept constant, an increase in the contact area can be achieved only by an increase in wheel load. Since the effect of wheel load is already considered as a parameter, it is not necessary to treat the contact area as a parameter of the loading condition. However, the effect of increased stress with depth resulting from an increase in the contact area cannot be ignored in the pavement strength criterion. That is, when specifying the required strength of a snow pavement for a particular loading condition, the depth to which the required strength is needed (the thickness of the pavement having this strength) also has to be indicated. This can be achieved by expressing the required strength as some function of the contact area. In this case the required strength of the snow pavement, in terms of ram hardness R , is related to an arbitrary dimension of the tire contact area; specifically, the required hardness is expressed in increments of the radius r of an equivalent circular contact area. For example, the tire contact area of a C-47 aircraft is 1535 cm^2 ; therefore, $r = 22 \text{ cm}$. The required ram hardness R , therefore, denotes the required hardness for an arbitrary depth 0 to r .

Previous studies (Wuori, 1962a) have indicated that the stress distribution in a processed, high-density snow can probably be approximated by using Boussinesq equations for stress distribution in soils. Consequently, the required strength for the depth 0 to r can be considered applicable only if the strength profile below depth r (or the strength for depth increments r to $2r$, $2r$ to $3r$, etc.) is at least equal to that required by the Boussinesq stress distribution equations.

The applicability of the Boussinesq equations for stress distribution in snow, however, has not been fully investigated either theoretically or experimentally (Abele, 1967). Also, ram hardness is a logarithmic function of the unconfined strength of snow (Abele, 1963) and should be plotted on a logarithmic scale when showing snow strength properties in terms of ram hardness.

The average contact pressure and the gross wheel load (parameters p and W in eq 7) are related to the forces produced by a wheel on the snow pavement and can be combined into a factor arbitrarily called the *effective load condition* L :

$$L = f(p, W). \quad (8)$$

First, the effect of the gross wheel load W was investigated from experimental data. The ram hardness R_1 , denoting marginal or "just safe" support for 1 coverage (or pass) of a particular wheel load, was plotted versus wheel loads at various contact pressures as shown in Figure 5. (The data were originally obtained and are listed in Appendix F using the British system. Since it would have been rather inconvenient to show the contact pressures in Figure 5 both in the British and the metric systems, for clarity of the graph the contact pressures are shown only in the original British system.)

An increase in wheel load without an increase in contact pressure required an increase in ram hardness. This could be observed best on a log-log plot. This type of plot also satisfies the conditions:

$$R_1 = 0 \text{ at } W = 0 \text{ for any } p$$

and

$$R_1 = 0 \text{ at } p = 0 \text{ for any } W.$$

The slope that best satisfied all the data was 0.146. That is, the increase in the required ram hardness R_1 for any contact pressure p varies as $W^{0.146}$; the latter represents the effect of wheel load,

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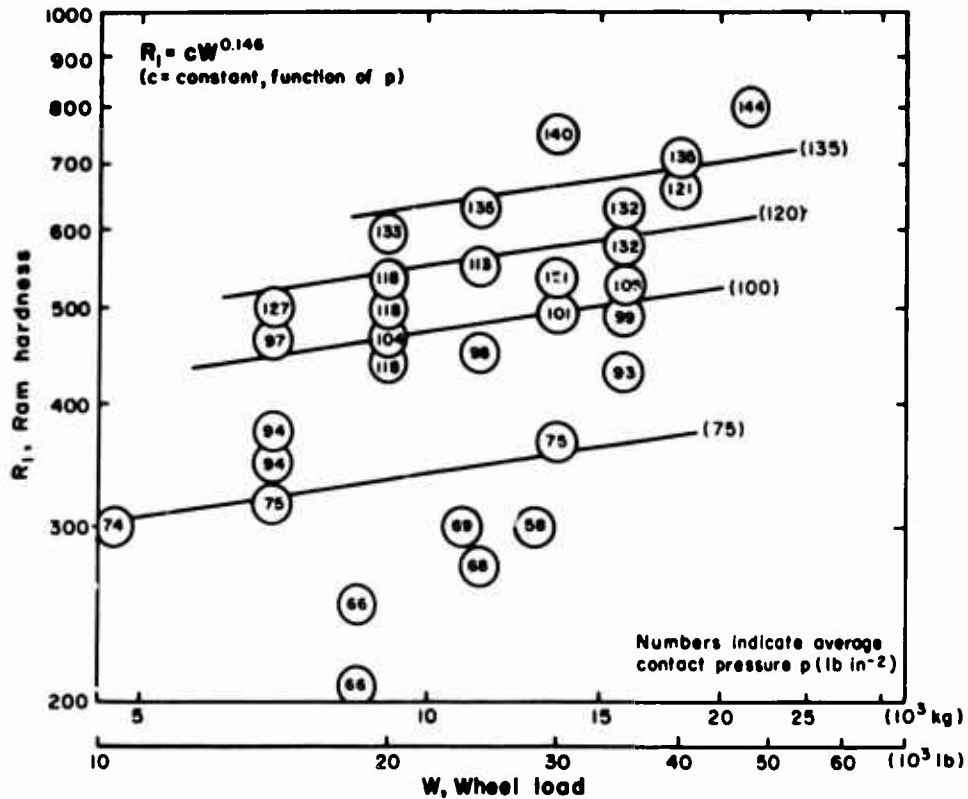


Figure 5. Effect of wheel load on the required ram hardness.

independent of the resulting contact pressure. The *effective load condition*, therefore, can now be expressed as

$$L = pW^{0.146}. \quad (9)$$

The ram hardness R_1 was then plotted versus L (Fig. 6). From the data the following points were selected and used in this plot:

- 1) The lowest ram hardness values (mean value for depth 0 to r) which provided safe support (*hold*) for a particular wheel load (tire penetration less than 1 cm);
- 2) The ram hardness values which provided marginal support (tire penetration between 1 and 5 cm);
- 3) The highest ram hardness values which failed to support the wheel load (tire penetration more than 5 cm).

An envelope was then constructed so that the *marginal* and *fail* points were located below the envelope as shown in Figure 6. The area above the envelope indicates a safe condition for 1 coverage of a wheel load.

The expression for the R_1 vs L envelope is

$$R_1 = \exp(4.94 + aL)$$

or

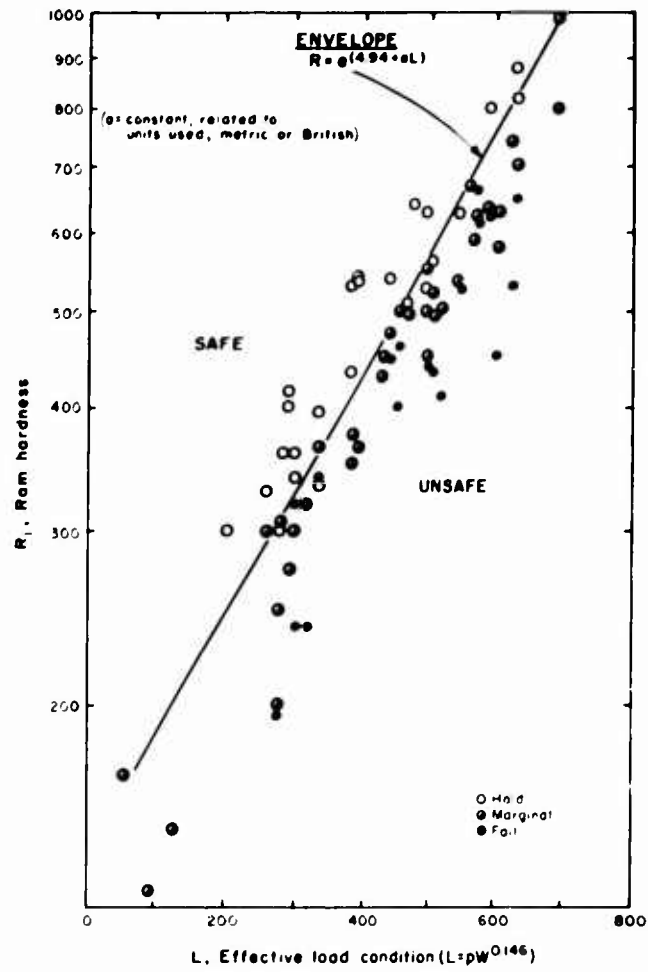


Figure 6. Required ram hardness vs effective load condition.

$$R_1 = \exp(4.94 + apW^{0.146}) \quad (10)$$

where:

R_1 = required ram hardness, for depth 0 to r , to support a wheel load for 1 coverage or pass

p = tire contact pressure

W = wheel load

a = constant, 0.0444 when p is expressed in kg cm^{-2} and W in kg
0.00281 when p is expressed in lb in^{-2} and W in lb.

Equation 10 for the envelope does not satisfy the condition

$$R_1 = 0 \text{ at } L = 0.$$

However, it satisfactorily represents the R_1 vs L relationship in the range $200 < L < 700$ or $50 < R_1 < 1000$. Below this range, the envelope more likely curves downward, approaching the Y -axis (R_1 scale) asymptotically.

DESIGN CRITERIA FOR SNOW RUNWAYS

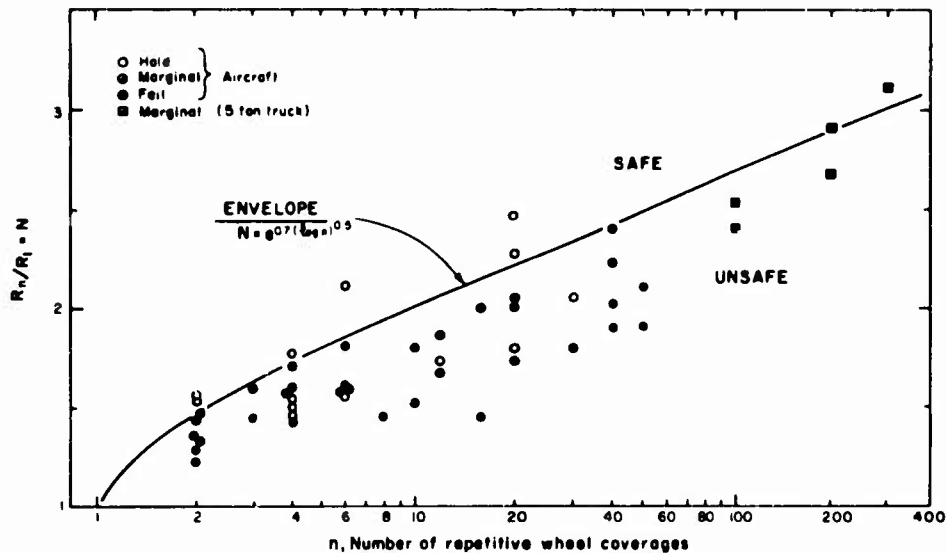


Figure 7. Effect of repetitive loading on the required ram hardness.

The effect of the number of repetitive wheel coverages n was investigated by plotting the required ram hardness for any number of coverages R_n versus n . It would be reasonable to expect the required ram hardness R_n to approach asymptotically some limiting maximum value R_∞ as n approaches ∞ . However, from available data, it is not possible to estimate R_∞ . Also, R_∞ would be a function of the wheel load and contact pressure and would, therefore, vary with various wheel load conditions.

For practical purposes any equation containing R_∞ would be very inconvenient. It would be considerably more practical to express the required increase in ram hardness for n coverages as a ratio R_n/R_1 , which could be denoted by N and which would indicate the value by which R_1 would have to be multiplied to obtain R_n for any value of n ,

$$R_n = R_1 N. \quad (11)$$

By plotting the *hold*, *marginal*, and *fail* points of R_n/R_1 vs n , an envelope was constructed so that the *marginal* and *fail* points were below it (Fig. 7). Data from trafficability tests with a 5-ton truck (Abele, 1965) for large n values are also shown. The area above the envelope indicates a safe supporting condition for any n . The envelope can be expressed by

$$N = \exp[0.7 (\log n)^{0.5}]. \quad (12)$$

This expression satisfies the condition $N = 1$ at $n = 1$ but is probably unrealistic for very large values of n (> 500), since $N \rightarrow \infty$ as $n \rightarrow \infty$. For $n \geq 2$, the envelope (eq 12) can be approximated by the expression

$$N = 0.7 \log n + 1.3. \quad (13)$$

Both equation (eq 12 and 13) give virtually the same values for the range $2 < n < 200$.

Reviewing the apparent effect of repetitive wheel coverages, for 2 coverages an almost 50% increase in ram hardness is required; for 10 coverages a 100% increase is required; and for 50 coverages a 150% increase is required.

Table I. Aircraft specifications (from Portland Cement Association, 1955, 1960).

Aircraft and type of gear	Tire pressure		Wheel load		Contact area		Avg contact pressure		"r"***	
	lb in. ⁻²	kg cm ⁻²	lb	kg	in. ²	cm ²	lb in. ⁻²	kg cm ⁻²	in.	cm
C-47 (single)	45	3.16	11,800	5,351	238	1,535	50	3.51	8.7	22
C-130B (single tandem)	85	5.98	28,500	12,295	405*	2,612	70	4.92	12.5	32
C-121C (dual)	120	8.44	31,000	14,050	245	1,580	127	8.93	8.8	22
KC-135 (dual tandem)	134	9.42	33,500	15,193	250	1,613	134	9.42	8.9	23

*obtained during field tests (Wuori, 1962b)

***"r" = equivalent circular contact area radius

These percentages pertain only to ram hardness, and not to the required increase in pavement strength, since snow strength varies as the logarithm of ram hardness (Abele, 1963). A 100% increase in ram hardness corresponds to an increase of approximately 2.9 kg cm⁻² (41 lb in.⁻²) in terms of unconfined compressive strength.

Equations 10 and 12 can now be substituted into eq 11 (for simplicity, let $R_n = R$); this results in

$$R = [\exp(4.94 + apW^{0.146})] \exp[0.7(\log n)^{0.5}] \quad (14)$$

where:

R = required minimum mean ram hardness for depth 0 to r (r = radius of the equivalent circular contact area of the tire)

p = mean contact pressure produced by the tire

W = gross wheel load

a = constant: 0.0444 when p is in kg cm⁻² and W in kg
0.00281 when p is in lb in.⁻² and W in lb

n = number of repetitive wheel coverages.

Equation 14 can be presented more conveniently in a nomogram form as shown in Figure 8. The method of determining R from the nomogram is shown for four examples: C-47, C-130B, C-121C, and KC-135 aircraft at design loads (see Table I), which are commonly used in the polar areas.

In the nomogram the lines for the C-130B and KC-135 aircraft are drawn through 2 on the n scale because of the tandem wheel configuration. The effect of dual wheels has not yet been determined. However, from field data and observations it seems that the effect of dual wheels on the required strength properties of a snow pavement is not as significant as that of tandem wheels.

The dynamic effect of a rapidly moving load on a snow pavement has not been considered here.

The unconfined compressive strength values, shown beside the ram hardness scale, were obtained from the empirical relationship (Abele, 1963)

$$\sigma(\text{kg cm}^{-2}) = 4.078 \ln R - 14.72. \quad (15)$$

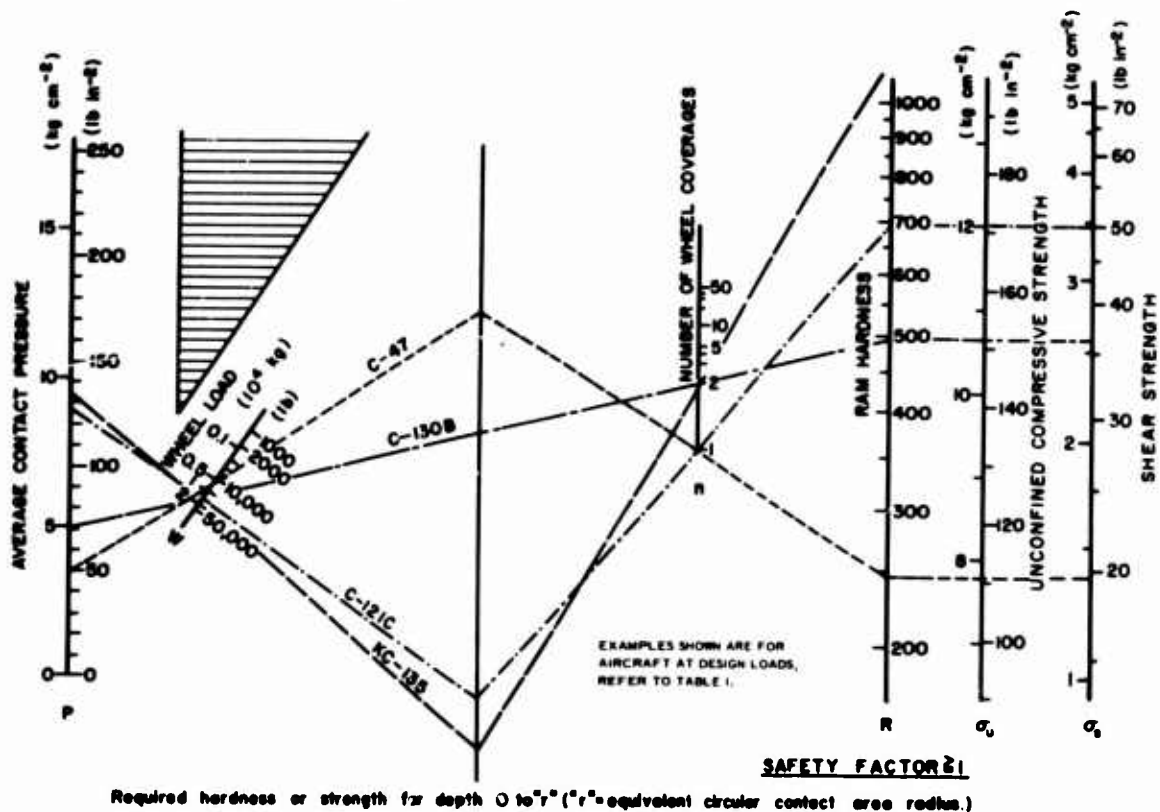


Figure 8. Required hardness (or strength) of a snow pavement for various wheel load conditions.

The NCEL confined shear strength values (Moser and Stehle, 1964), which have been related empirically to ram hardness (Abele, 1968), are also shown in the nomogram.

The required strength values obtained from the nomogram are valid only if $\sigma \geq p$; this is so as long as any pW combination does not require crossing of the shaded area between the p and W scales.

The required strength obtained from the nomogram denotes only the strength value required in the top portion of the pavement (for depth 0 to r , which for aircraft is usually between 20 and 30 cm).

By using the Boussinesq equations as an approximation for the stress distribution in snow, the required strength (or hardness) profiles of the snow pavement for various aircraft can be predicted (Fig. 9). The procedure of computing the required strength profile (confined case) in terms of unconfined compressive strength may introduce a slight safety factor, since snow in the confined case will have a somewhat higher strength than in the unconfined case. Indications are that this safety factor is probably not more than 1.2 (Abele, 1967).

Data from actual aircraft operations on snow runways in Antarctica also indicate that the predicted values obtained from the nomogram (Fig. 8) may contain a small safety factor (≤ 1.2). This is discussed in more detail by Abele (1968).

For comparison, typical hardness (or strength) profiles obtained by processing and compaction, including surface treatment with heat, are also shown in Figure 9. It is apparent that a surface layer (0 to 20 cm) of adequate strength for supporting heavy wheeled aircraft (such as the KC-135) is difficult to obtain with standard compaction methods. A significant increase in surface strength is obtained by the addition of sawdust and heat processing (Wuori, 1963a, 1963b). The extent of increase in the surface hardness obtained with pneumatic-tired rollers has been discussed by Moser (1966).

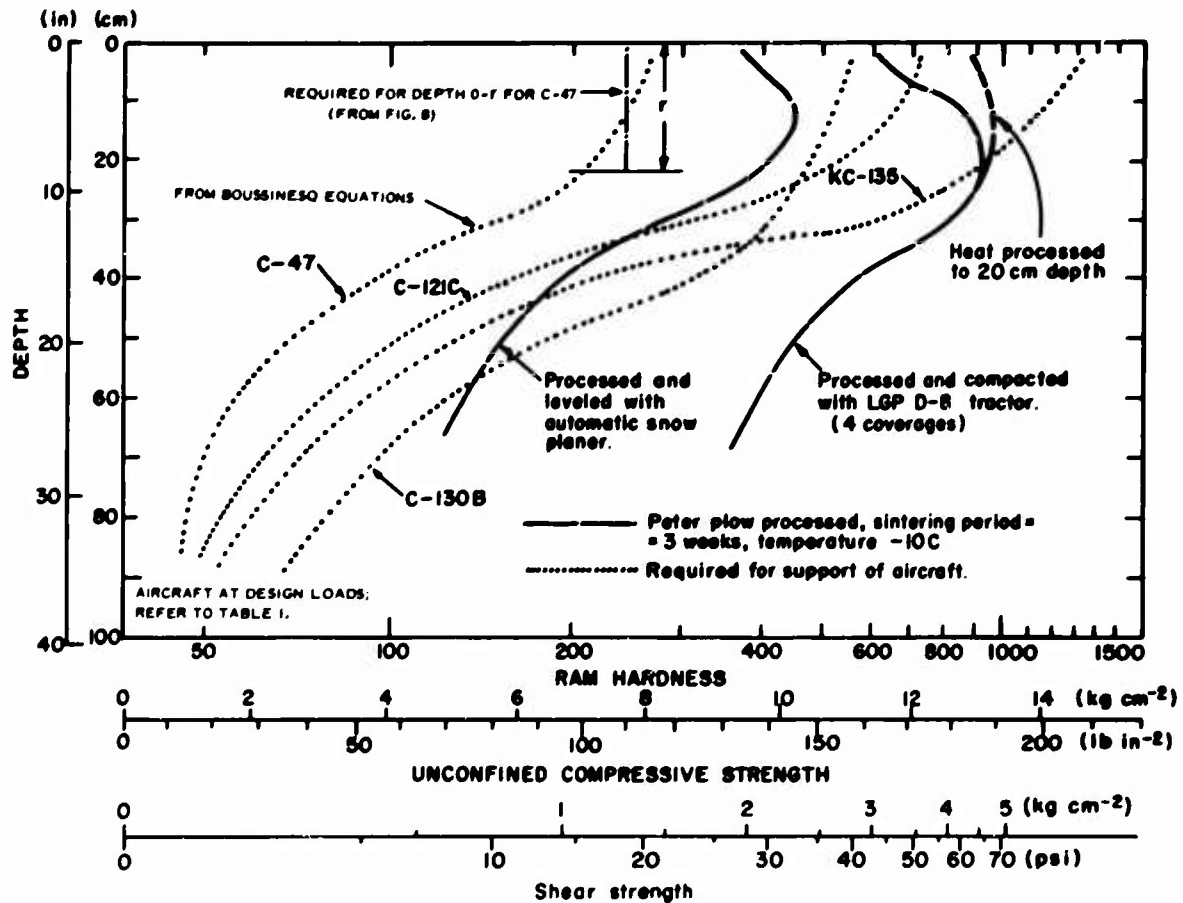


Figure 9. Required hardness (or strength) profiles of a snow pavement for various aircraft.

The apparent relationships between ram hardness and confined shear strength used by NCEL (Moser and Stehle, 1964) and between the NCEL hardness index (Moser, 1964) and the standard ram hardness have been discussed by Abele (1968) and are shown in Appendix E.

The influence of temperature on snow strength and the various mechanical properties of snow have also been discussed by Mellor (1966) and Kovacs (1967).

CONCLUSIONS

To enable snow to support heavy wheel loads, processing by disaggregation and subsequent compaction is required. The Peter miller seems to be one of the best snow-processing machines available because of the depth of processing and the resulting snow particle size distribution. A low ground pressure crawler tractor (D-8 or similar) is a more effective compactor of snow than any other standard compaction equipment. The increased snow density resulting from better packing because of the more desirable particle size distribution and from the additional tractor compaction causes an increase in the rate of sintering and results in higher final strength properties.

The rate of sintering increases with an increase in temperature towards the melting point, particularly at the early stages (first few days) of sintering. It is, therefore, important that compaction of the snow pavement be performed immediately after processing. Any delay in compaction decreases the effective depth of compaction. However, the final strength of snow after the sintering process is virtually completed decreases with an increase in temperature.

Snow runway construction can be performed more effectively during warm (close to 0C) temperature periods. In warm periods higher snow density during processing and compaction is achieved and the rate of sintering is high, resulting in almost fully developed bonds between adjacent snow grains. Snow runway use, however, is more reliable during colder temperatures. Several days or weeks (depending on temperature) after processing most of the strength properties due to sintering have been obtained, and the supporting strength of the snow pavement then depends primarily on temperature. Any decrease in temperature further increases the strength of the snow pavement.

Snow runways capable of supporting aircraft such as the C-130, C-121, C-124, and C-133 can be constructed during favorable temperature conditions. The supporting capacity of a snow runway can be estimated from an empirical relationship obtained from simulated tests using various tire contact pressures, wheel loads, and numbers of repetitive wheel coverages. Actual aircraft tests on snow runways in Antarctica generally confirm the validity of the criteria developed for the supporting capacity of snow pavements; the criteria are somewhat on the safe side.

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by L.W. Gold, National Research Council, Ottawa

Consideration is often given to snow as a material to provide a suitable temporary surface for transportation purposes. This has been particularly true for many areas in Canada. Considerable practical experience has accumulated, particularly within the pulp and paper industry, on the construction and use of snow roads for wheel, sled and ski traffic imposing medium to light loads. Such roads have provided and still do provide practical solutions for some problems. During recent years, however, there has been an increasing requirement for temporary road surfaces, able to support loads beyond the capability of snow roads constructed by the simple techniques of rolling and dragging, with perhaps some surface flooding. Since snow is often readily available, it was natural that attention should be given to finding ways of increasing its ability to carry loads.

Numerous investigations have been made on methods of processing snow so as to obtain the strongest surface that the material is capable of providing, and on the resulting strength properties, but it is characteristic of many of these investigations that they have not provided much information on the interrelationships between the several variables that affect the strength of snow. The Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory of the U.S. Army has carried out a series of field and laboratory investigations that have made a significant contribution to the understanding of the factors that control the strength of snow and determine the limits of its strength under field conditions. These studies, in association with the work of others, are gradually supplying the information that the engineer requires in order to decide if snow will provide a satisfactory, economical bearing surface for a given field requirement.

If an engineer is to decide if snow will be a suitable material from which to construct a road, he requires the following information.

1. What are the techniques and equipment required to provide a surface of given properties?
2. What will be the performance of the finished product and how will that performance be influenced by weather?

From this information, it would then be possible to estimate the cost of the equipment that would be required, the cost of construction, and the possible work of maintenance.

The results reported in the present paper by Abele, Ramseier and Wuori, and information contained in the papers to which they make reference, indicate that the maximum load that can be carried by roads prepared by the simple technique of rolling and dragging is about 2000 lb wheel load and less than 40 psi contact pressure. If the road is to carry loads in excess of this, it would be necessary to use depth processing methods. This would require a significant investment in equipment and increase in the amount of work required to produce the road. As the additional investment in equipment and time would probably rule out snow as a material for road construction for many situations, it would be useful if the authors would confirm this point, and qualify it if considered necessary.

Experience within the pulp and paper industry probably bears upon this point. Loads of pulp wood have reached the size where their weight often exceeds the capability of roads prepared by simple techniques. Rather than increase the capability of snow roads by modifying the technique of construction, the tendency has been to develop off-road equipment capable of operating in deep snow (up to about 30 in. deep) and to construct access roads suitable for summer and winter operation. Wheel loadings for trucks carrying large loads of pulp wood would be about 6000 lb and contact pressure about 65 psi. According to the present paper and reference 9, it would require depth processing, leveling, and vibratory compaction to obtain a road adequate for such loads under favorable weather conditions.

The authors recommend a modified Peter rotary snow plow for processing snow. This is an expensive, specialized piece of equipment. It has given good performance in the deep snow conditions encountered in Greenland and the Antarctic. It would be useful if the authors could give their

opinion as to how it would perform on uneven terrain covered with light brush and snow 2 to 4 ft deep.

Reference has been made to modified soil pulvi-mixers for depth processing of snow. Perhaps the authors could offer some comments as to the relative merits of the pulvi-mixers and the Peter snow miller, and of the quality of the snow roads that these machines produce, assuming that the same leveling and compaction techniques are used after processing.

An important question is the rate at which roads can be constructed by various techniques, and the factors affecting this rate. If the authors have information concerning this question for the techniques with which they are familiar, it would be of value to potential users if this information could be made available.

In this discussion I have emphasized the economic aspect of snow roads because it is this factor, along with the natural limitation of the material and the weather, that will ultimately determine if they are to be used for a particular civilian need. Snow roads provide only temporary solutions to transportation problems, and it is probable that only occasionally will they be economical for loadings that require depth processing and leveling techniques. At times, however, they can provide quite practical solutions to some problems, such as the construction of a 125-acre parking lot for the Winter Olympic Games held at Squaw Valley, U.S.A. in 1960. The construction of this parking lot involved an investment of about \$350,000 in equipment and was accomplished over a period of about two months. During the 10 days of the Olympic Games, over 60,000 cars used the lot without serious difficulties. The preliminary investigations undertaken for this project, and the techniques and conditions of construction, are described in sufficient detail to be a useful starting point for similar undertakings.¹

As processed snow will probably be used as a bearing surface only in special circumstances, it is important that information concerning its capabilities and limitations be available in a form in which it can be readily digested and evaluated. The present paper, bringing together the results of a number of investigations, is a useful contribution to this need.

Reference

¹Moser, E.H., Jr. (1963) Navy cold-processing snow-compaction techniques. In *Ice and Snow* (W.D. Kingery, Editor), Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, p. 459-484.

by Earl H. Moser, Jr., U.S. Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory,
Port Hueneme, California

The authors develop a better understanding of the processes and physical properties of snow as a construction material and advance construction techniques and design criteria for snow runways on deep snow. Better quality control during processing and more reliable field test procedures are required before the criteria can be used with confidence.

Processed snow produced with a Peter snow miller traveling at a speed of about 0.3 km/hr and shaving snow at a drum peripheral speed of 1400 to 1900 cm/sec is about 15% finer by grain size distribution than processed snow produced with two Navy Civil Engineering Laboratory snow mixers (modified soil pulverizers) traveling in tandem at a speed of about 1 km/hr and disaggregating snow at rotor peripheral speeds of 800 and 3000 cm/sec respectively (Moser¹). With full width rear skis, which compress the snow immediately after disaggregation, the initial density of snow produced with two snow mixers approaches 0.55 gm/cm³ compared with 0.50 gm/cm³ processed snow produced with a Peter miller. Compaction, as described by the authors, will further increase the density of both types of processed snow if it is applied immediately after processing. The ultimate strength of Peter snow appears to be less than 10% stronger than that produced with two snow mixers. With snow mixers, however, a two-layer snow pavement is required to approach the potential thickness of a snow pavement possible with a single Peter miller.

Quality control during processing is essential with both types of equipment to produce snow pavements of uniform strength. A two-layer 80 cm thick experimental compacted-snow runway was developed with snow mixers by NCEL on the Ross Ice Shelf near McMurdo Station, Antarctica, during the austral summer of 1964-65. Low strength areas in this runway caused by misses between mixer processing lanes and by isolated zones of unprocessed snow up to 15 cm thick between the two layers failed under the moving wheels of a C-130 aircraft. After these areas were repaired by reprocessing, the runway supported a 61,200-kg C-130 aircraft with its four main wheels inflated to 6.7 kg/cm² in repeated takeoffs, landings and taxi tests on wheels.

During the austral summer of 1965-66 a runway test strip developed by USA CRREL on the Ross Ice Shelf near McMurdo Station showed the need for quality control when processing snow with a Peter miller. A lack of adequate depth control resulted in a snow pavement varying in thickness from 36 to 93 cm. Where this thickness was less than 50 cm the strip failed under the moving load of a C-121 test wheel inflated to 8.8 kg/cm² at a test load of 12,900 kg. A 72 cm thick, two-layer test strip was constructed in the same area by NCEL with snow mixers. Quality control during construction resulted in a uniform thickness of processed snow and eliminated the misses experienced in the 1964-65 experimental runway. This test strip supported an 8.8 kg/cm², 15,000 kg moving test-wheel load in 8 consecutive coverages before noticeable surface wear occurred.

Reference

¹Moser, E.H., Jr. (1963) Navy cold-processing snow-compaction techniques. In *Ice and Snow* (W.D. Kingery, Editor), Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, p. 459-484.

by M. Mellor, USA CRREL

Since the paper refers to pavement construction on seasonal as well as polar snow, one wonders whether the role of sintering might not have been overemphasized at the expense of other processes which influence strength. For example, fusion, produced by thaw-freeze or by introduction of free water, seems a more potent bond-forming process than dry sintering. Furthermore, it might be well to remember that vapor diffusion in snow does not necessarily produce a general increase of strength. If the snow is fine-grained, close-packed, and free from steep temperature gradients or vapor barriers there is likely to be net mass transfer, which may lead to formation of coarse-grained, cohesionless layers of low strength (the "depth hoar" which commonly forms at the base of a seasonal snow pack is an example).

Grain packing is a crucial factor in determining the number and the size of intergranular bonds, and hence strength. In dry snow the practical limit of bulk density attainable by rearrangement of the predominantly equant grains, say by vibration or brief compaction, is about 0.55 g/cm^3 (40% porosity). While this is somewhat lower than the theoretical maximum density for close packing, it does seem that further increase can only be achieved by straining the constituent ice grains. This is best done by increasing the duration of compactive loading and by conducting the compaction operation at the highest snow temperature possible. On a seasonal snow cover the efficiency of compaction should be significantly higher than is the case on deep polar snow, for progressive compaction of thin layers against a rigid base is possible.

Sawdust and wood shavings are mentioned as beneficial additives under some circumstances; it could be added that expanded metal mesh and Excelsior fibre also greatly improve rupture strength and deformation resistance. Reinforcement of snow might occasionally be justified by the exigencies of military operations, while there are possibilities for incorporating natural vegetation into compacted seasonal snow. Future research might be addressed to chemical modification of crystal growth, and to the addition of fine fibres or whiskers of synthetic filament.

Although coherent snow is visco-elastic, runway design is based on elastic analysis, since creep is a problem only in parking areas (settlement under body forces is insignificant in the surface layers of high density snow), and impact forces are apparently less critical than transient wheel loads imposed during roll and taxi. However, because creep and impact ought to enter the overall considerations for design, construction and operation, it is interesting to note that over the normal range of field temperatures, say 0 to -50C , creep resistance varies by some two orders of magnitude, brittle rupture stress varies only by a factor of about 4, while according to hydrodynamic theory for plastic collapse there is no explicit indication of temperature dependence for impact resistance.

The term "strength" should be treated with caution, for rupture stress varies significantly according to whether failure is ductile (creep rupture) or brittle. As strain rate or loading rate is increased, rupture stress increases in the ductile range, begins to decrease again after the transition to the brittle range, and finally tends asymptotically to a steady value for moderately fast loading. The critical loading rate for ductile-brittle transition varies with snow density and temperature, and if consistent brittle failure is to be guaranteed in unconfined compressive testing over a wide sample range, it seems desirable to use press speeds approaching 10 in./min instead of the 1 in./min or so which is most commonly used.

For the record, it might be noted that eq 4 is an approximation applicable only to high density snow, while eq 5 seems a poor expression for the temperature dependence of the strength of snow.

by G. Abele, R.O. Ramseier and A.F. Wuori, USA CRREL

The points raised by Mr. Mellor are well taken. In polar snow and thick snow masses the temperature gradient can be disregarded in most cases; this was the basis of the entire study. The authors acknowledge a problem in shallow snow covers in temperate zones where depth hoar can be formed. It has been noted, however, that depth hoar forms between the ground surface and the compacted snow layer toward the end of the winter season when use of the snow runway or road must be terminated anyway. The physical understanding of the various processes which take place in snow have only lately been studied vigorously. USA CRREL has recently commenced laboratory analysis of structural changes of the snow aggregate under various temperature gradients including mass transfer measurement and it is hoped it will be found possible to reproduce the conditions which lead to depth hoar. Presently the U.S. Forest Service is studying possibilities of eliminating depth hoar by chemical treatment (E. LaChapelle, *Scientific American*, Feb 1966). Equation 4 is very satisfactory for snow of density greater than $\sim 0.45 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$. Low density snow is of no use as a final construction product because the strength properties are unsatisfactory. Equation 5 is the strength of ice as defined in the text. For temperatures above $\sim -15\text{C}$ this expression is not entirely satisfactory, but for temperatures down to -50C it holds.

The comments of L.W. Gold are very pertinent to the practicality or economy of the described techniques for civilian or commercial use such as roads for logging, etc. The described techniques were developed primarily for military use where urgency justified high costs in terms of equipment. Also the techniques were developed primarily for ice-cap areas such as Greenland and the Antarctic where use of snow as a construction material is absolutely necessary. However, the techniques are applicable to other areas and may be economically feasible for operation such as logging in any area; for example, where a rotary plow may be necessary for snow removal operations. However, the use of a rotary plow such as the Peter snow miller on an uneven terrain covered with light brush may not be very satisfactory. The uneven terrain, however, would be more of a problem than the light brush.

The relative merits of the Peter snow miller and the snow mixer (modified soil pulvimixer) have been discussed in part by Mr. Moser in Appendix B. The operation of the Peter snow miller is more complicated than that of the snow mixer. Also the maintenance and especially repairs are more involved than those of the snow mixer. For snow road construction where a snow pavement thickness of 30 to 40 cm is sufficient, the use of a snow mixer will usually be more feasible. The slightly better strength properties of the snow processed with a Peter snow miller would be outweighed by the more economical operation of the snow mixer.

However, for a snow runway construction, where a processed snow pavement thickness of more than 50 cm is required, it may be more feasible to use the Peter snow miller, provided experienced operators are available. A 70 to 90 cm thick, 2.5 m wide strip of pavement can be produced at a rate of 0.3 kg/hr with one pass with the Peter snow miller. To produce the same pavement thickness with a snow mixer, a two-layer construction is necessary. That is, after a 30 to 40 cm thick processed snow layer is produced with the snow mixer, additional snow has to be blown from the adjacent area on top of the first layer to a thickness of approx 40 cm. This snow is then processed, producing a second 30 to 40 cm thick layer. Usually two passes with the snow mixer for each layer over the same area are used to achieve the desired snow particle distribution. This method is less efficient than the Peter snow miller method, comparing one snow mixer vs one Peter snow miller. As mentioned by Mr. Moser in Appendix B, usually two snow mixers in tandem are used. The forward speed of the snow mixer is three times that of the Peter snow miller. However, the problem of blowing snow on top of the first layer still remains. This requires additional equipment.

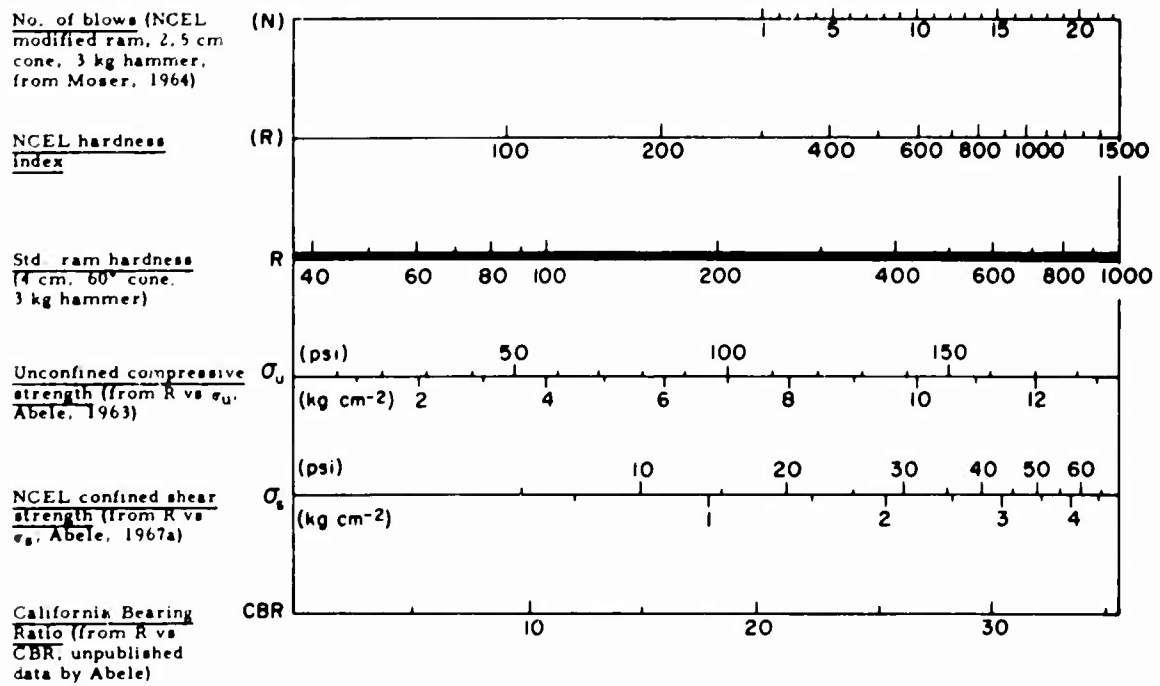
Quality control has not been a problem with the Peter snow miller, except when mechanical difficulties and breakdowns of the equipment occur. This was the case during the 1965-1966 test

season in the Antarctic. As a result of operational difficulties with the Peter snow miller, the thickness of the snow pavement in one area of the USA CRREL experimental runway was only 36 cm. (This area was approximately 1% of the total runway area.) In the rest of the runway the pavement thickness varied from 65 to 93 cm. During ordinary operation very good depth control can be maintained while processing with the Peter snow miller.

Quality control during compaction has been somewhat less successful. Frequently it is difficult to perform all the desired compaction immediately after processing. Compaction performed less than 1 hour after processing will yield significantly better results than compaction performed 3 or 4 hours after processing. As the time between processing and compaction increases, the effective depth of compaction decreases. Consequently, some variation in strength or hardness properties of the snow pavement (at the same depth) is the result.

The results from the experimental runway mentioned by Mr. Moser in Appendix B were obtained after the preparation of this paper and are discussed in another report (Abele, 1968).

**APPENDIX E: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STANDARD RAM HARDNESS AND
OTHER SNOW PROPERTIES**



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List of Symbols

- p_i = inflation pressure of the tire (lb/in.²)
- A = contact area of the tire at 0 sinkage (in.²)
- r = equivalent circular contact area radius (in.)
- W = wheel load (lb)
- p = mean contact pressure, W/A (lb/in.²)
- R = mean ram hardness of the snow pavement for the indicated depth increments in terms of r
- n = number of wheel load repetitions (coverages)
- z = surface deformation or tire sinkage (in.)

Unclassified
Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D		
<i>(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)</i>		
1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory U.S. Army Terrestrial Sciences Center Hanover, New Hampshire 03755		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified
		2b. GROUP
3. REPORT TITLE DESIGN CRITERIA FOR SNOW RUNWAYS		
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) Technical Report		
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) Gunars Abele, René O. Ramseier and Albert F. Wuori		
6. REPORT DATE November 1968	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 37	7b. NO. OF REFS 41
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	8b. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) Technical Report 212	
b. PROJECT NO.		
c. DA Task 1T062112A13001	9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d. DA Task 1T061102B52A02		
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT This document has been approved for public release and sale; its distribution is unlimited.		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES	12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory U.S. Army Terrestrial Sciences Center Hanover, New Hampshire	
13. ABSTRACT The physical characteristics of snow and those processes of metamorphism which contribute to its strength are important considerations in planning the construction of compacted snow runways. Two distinct temperature-dependent processes affect the physical properties of snow: sintering and strength increase with decreasing temperature. The rate of strength increase and the ultimate strength of snow may be greatly increased by mechanical agitation or depth processing followed immediately by surface compaction. Leveling to produce a smooth surface for aircraft is also necessary. Various combinations of processing and compaction are required depending on the size of aircraft to be operated on the runway. After construction is completed, the natural process of sintering or strengthening must be allowed to proceed for some time before aircraft operations can be initiated. The mechanical properties of processed snow have been correlated with its wheel-load supporting capacity. The correlation shows the effect of such parameters as wheel load, tire contact pressure, and repetitive wheel coverages on the required hardness or strength of a compacted snow layer. Strength profiles which can be expected from certain snow processing and compaction procedures are shown and compared with required strength profiles for various types of wheeled vehicles and aircraft. The purpose of this study was to combine the knowledge gained from fundamental research in the processes of sintering with methods and procedures developed by engineers for using snow as a construction material. The results are readily applicable to the construction of snow runways for a large variety of wheeled aircraft and the construction of snow roads for wheeled vehicle traffic, not only in polar and subpolar		

(Cont'd)

DD FORM 1473 REPLACES DD FORM 1473, 1 JAN 64, WHICH IS OBSOLETE FOR ARMY USE.

Unclassified
Security Classification

14. KEY WORDS	LINK A		LINK B		LINK C	
	ROLE	WT	ROLE	WT	ROLE	WT
<p>Snow runway Snow strength Snow construction Snow pavement Sintering Snow hardness</p> <p>Abstract (Cont'd)</p> <p>areas, but in temperate regions with a heavy seasonal snow cover. The methods described apply not only to areas like Greenland or Antarctica but to areas with an annual snow cover. These methods, together with a fundamental understanding of the sintering process, have recently been applied in the construction of runway test strips at McMurdo, Antarctica.</p>						