Estimation of Uncertainty for Fatigue Growth Rate at Cryogenic Temperatures

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\textbf{ABSTRACT} - Fatigue crack growth rate (FCGR) measurement data for high strength austenitic alloys at cryogenic environment suffer in general from a high degree of data scatter in particular at $\Delta K$ regime below 25 \text{ MPa\textcdot m^{\frac{1}{2}}}$. Using standard mathematical smoothing techniques forces ultimately a linear relationship at stage II regime (crack propagation rate versus $\Delta K$) in a double log field called Paris law. However, the bandwidth of uncertainty relies somewhat arbitrary upon the researcher’s interpretation. The present paper deals with the use of the uncertainty concept on FCGR data as given by GUM (Guidance of Uncertainty in Measurements), which since 1993 is a recommended procedure to avoid subjective estimation of error bands. Within this context, the lack of a true value addresses to evaluate the best estimate by a statistical method using the crack propagation law as a mathematical measurement model equation and identifying all input parameters. Each parameter necessary for the measurement technique was processed using the Gaussian distribution law by partial differentiation of the terms to estimate the sensitivity coefficients. The combined standard uncertainty determined for each term with its computed sensitivity coefficients finally resulted in measurement uncertainty of the FCGR test result. The described procedure of uncertainty has been applied within the framework of ITER on a recent FCGR measurement for high strength and high toughness Type 316LN material tested at 7 K using a standard ASTM proportional compact tension specimen. The determined values of Paris law constants such as $C_0$ and the exponent $m$ as best estimate along with their uncertainty value may serve a realistic basis for the life expectancy of cyclic loaded members.

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