8TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON
SUPERALLOY 718
and Derivatives

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PREFACE

The patent for Superalloy 718 was initially applied for in 1958 and awarded to Herb Eiselstein on July 24, 1962. Over the past 52 years, Superalloy 718 has established a firm position on production products ranging from deep wells in oil patch applications to critical rotating parts in advanced turbofan engines.

This collection of proceedings includes the manuscripts of presentations and posters given at the 8th International Symposium on Superalloy 718 and Derivatives. During the past half century, a menagerie of alloys has been tailored to address unique process or product needs in the industry. These versatile alloys require advanced melt and conversion practices to ensure reproducibility from lot to lot and subsequently from part to part. It is therefore fitting that advances in their use continues to lead the way to advanced processing technologies including additive manufacturing, metal injection molding, and cold sprayed coatings and associated new applications.

The 8th International Symposium on Superalloy 718 and Derivatives was designed to provide a very concentrated and intense venture into the fundamental and practical aspects of this alloy group. The conference followed the format used in prior symposia on the subject consisting of an evening opening talk followed by three days of detailed presentations. The conference was centrally located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to facilitate access from Europe and the Far East as well as Central and South America.

This 8th symposium continued the successful expanded technical scope established at its last meeting in 2010. Through the joining of multiple metallurgical disciplines, the future of Superalloy 718 and derivatives were addressed through an understanding of the fundamental science and processing of the alloys. The symposium was made up of focused sessions which progressively provide an understanding of the microstructural development from alloy composition through final property response. Individual sections were provided and included raw materials, melting, casting, deformation processing, joining, thermal treatments, microstructural evolution, properties, environmental effects and modeling.

Over 100 abstracts were received for the conference, and a significant number of these advanced to be part of this proceedings. The focus of the conference was to provide an opportunity for leading technologists in the field to present their work for peer review as well as develop relationships within the technical community to exchange concepts and develop new ideas. In order to facilitate this exchange, the conference committee structured the conference to balance formal presentations with multiple poster sessions to maximize opportunities for researchers to interact.

The technical committee worked to maintain discipline in selecting the manuscripts for presentations at the symposium of the highest quality and encapsulating the innovative spirit of the original symposium organizer, Edward Loria (1916–2010). The intention of the committee was to provide a meaningful collection of the latest developments for Superalloy 718 and derivatives in a concise and accessible electronic media. On behalf of the committee, we hope you enjoyed the conference and find value in the proceedings.

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8TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON
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and Derivatives
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Keynote Session
LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE DEVELOPMENT, APPLICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF ALLOY 718

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Pratt & Whitney, 400 Main Street, East Hartford, CT 06108, USA

Keywords: Alloy 718, Superalloys, Development, Environment, Aerospace, Turbine Engines

Abstract

Materials play a significant role in the development and advancement of engineered components and systems. This is particularly evident in the aerospace industry where critical component and system attributes of weight, mechanical performance, temperature capability, manufacturability and overall cost drive the development and implementation of materials. Alloy 718 is a unique superalloy that was developed many decades ago, but has continued to fill critical requirements for current and emerging products. This material has a balance of attributes that have made it one of the world’s most utilized superalloys. Alloy 718 continues to evolve in engineering and design definition for specific applications through optimization of chemistry, microstructure, manufacturing processes and advances in application designs. The lessons learned from the development, application and continual improvement of Alloy 718 need to be utilized as we seek next generation materials to provide similar versatility and longevity.

Introduction

Materials selection and capabilities are critical for advancement of engineered systems. In the aerospace industry weight and cost are significant drivers in the selection of materials. For turbine engine applications, environmental resistance, including temperature capabilities and corrosion resistance are also paramount. Metallic materials for structural applications are continuously evolving to meet the changing requirements of new system designs and architectures.

A material that has continued to fit the needs for turbine engines throughout the evolution of designs and architecture is Alloy 718. This material continues to provide a unique combination of mechanical property capabilities, cost and manufacturability. How this material has positioned itself as a workhorse for many challenging applications is very interesting and provides insight relative to how future materials should be designed. There are many lessons learned from this material system that can be applied to other materials.

Meeting the Challenges of Numerous Industries and Applications

Materials provide specific combinations of capabilities to enable a wide-range of engineered consumer and industrial products. Engineered materials are present everywhere and are the cornerstone of successful component designs and complex systems. There are a number of
common and unique material challenges within disparate industry sectors, including general industrial, chemical processing, energy and power generation, and aerospace and propulsion.

A common challenge for all industrial sectors is economics. Materials that fulfill the mechanical requirements for component applications must also be cost effective. Customers of engineered products are continually seeking best value; therefore successful engineering designs must incorporate materials that enable lowest overall system installation and operating costs.

This is seen dramatically in the aerospace and energy industries where system costs are accompanied by significant operating costs and associated system fuel efficiency is of significant concern. Figure 1 provides the industry average costs of airline cash operating costs. The cost of fuel has grown from 14% a little over a decade ago to approximately 45% today, and is projected to grow even further in the future.

![Airline Cash Operating Costs](image)

Figure 1. The major elements of airline cash operating costs as a function of time shows a dramatic increase in the percentage attributed to fuel. (Fuel cost data from U. S. Energy Information Administration.)

For the aviation industry, propulsion systems that deliver improved fuel efficiency are highly desired. To achieve increases in fuel efficiency there are two main interdependent paths that must be taken, which are increased system efficiency through system architecture, and increased thermodynamic efficiency through increased system pressures and temperatures.

Emerging turbine engine concepts are being driven by the need for ultra-fuel-efficient capabilities. Traditional turbine engine designs relied on significant change in airflow velocity to produce thrust (e.g. turbojet). Advances in turbine engine design resulted in greater efficiency engines through the smaller increase of velocity of much larger volumes of air by increasing bypass ratios (e.g. turbofan). Figure 2 shows the improvement in fuel efficiency as a function of turbine engine design. Continued advancement in these architectures has been through increases in efficiency of sealing, higher pressure ratios, and increased core temperatures.

The next generation of turbine engine architecture has been recently developed and implemented by Pratt & Whitney and results in even greater increases in fuel efficiency. This revolutionary architecture is called the Geared Turbofan™ engine. Its architecture incorporates larger fan diameter that create large bypass ratios which enables significant increases in fuel efficiency. Previous, conventional turbofan architectures reach a limit in fuel efficiency improvement due to
Figure 2. Schematic of relative fuel efficiency in terms of thrust specific fuel consumption (TSFC) as a function of aircraft engine architecture. Increases in bypass ratio (BPR) have provided a steady increase in fuel efficiency.

Increases in weight and reduction in efficiency of low pressure turbines that are required to run at low speed to match that of the larger fans. The geared turbofan enables the fan to operate at an optimum speed and also allows the low pressure turbine to run at much increased speeds to maximize efficiency. Figure 3 shows schematically the increase in aviation turbine engine efficiency as a function of fan diameter for conventional turbofan and geared turbofan configurations.

Figure 3. Relationship between fan diameter and engine architecture on overall system efficiency.
This new architecture required advances in material development for unique properties and capabilities. Efficient turbine engine designs require an increase in temperature to achieve better thermodynamic efficiency. Creative design systems that employ cooling schemes enable gas path temperatures to increase while maintaining structural materials within safe operating limits. The use of cooling air or even cooled cooling air has a negative impact on efficiency, however. Reducing system pressure by bleeding off air for component cooling reduces thermodynamic efficiency and is hence discouraged for maximum fuel efficiency. Increasing component temperatures provides direct increase in potential system efficiency. Figure 4 provides an overview of the classes of materials and their specific strength and temperature capabilities and potential location within a turbine engine.

![Figure 4. Ashby-type diagram of materials that are utilized within turbine engines.](image)

Development of materials that will sustain the property balance at higher temperatures is paramount, along with advances implemented to the existing ones that will tailor them for a specific use. Alloy 718 is a natural candidate material and this new engine utilizes several versions of it as depicted in Figure 5.

![Figure 5. Typical material utilization within modern commercial aircraft engines along with examples of Alloy 718 applications within the P&W Geared Turbofan™ engine.](image)
Alloy 718 has uniquely filled the requirements for a large range of industries and applications. It has the ability to be processed to a range of mechanical property capabilities that are unique to specific applications. Alloy 718 fills a niche in engineering design space relative to tensile strength, fatigue strength, creep resistance, corrosion resistance and especially cost. The use of Alloy 718 is roughly approximately double that of the next most widely used nickel superalloy in this class of cast and wrought alloys.

The features that make Alloy 718 so versatile and adaptable include the ability for this material to meet the design requirements for so many industries and applications. The mechanical properties of this alloy can be tailored to unique sets of capabilities through control of microstructure, including grain size and precipitate type, morphology, location and quantity. There are a number of industry and company proprietary specifications for Alloy 718 to meet specific, application challenges.

Many industries and applications require subtle and deliberate changes to the balance of base properties of Alloy 718. Aerospace applications often seek ultra-clean material with optimum combinations of strength and temperature capabilities. Energy applications, such as in nuclear power industries, require microstructure and property stability, and overall component durability. Similarly, petro-chemical industries require enhanced corrosion and environmental resistance. There has been considerable research relative to manipulating Alloy 718 properties by controlling microstructure.

In addition to the flexibility of Alloy 718 to deliver specific sets of properties, this material is also one of the most processable high nickel containing industrial alloys. This alloy can be readily forged by all methods to produce nearly any configuration. Alloy 718 can be forged at very high strain rates (hammer forging) or very low strain rates for superplastic forming. Alloy 718 has and continues to be processed by casting processes of all types and sizes to obtain mechanical properties. This material is readily welded to support fabrication and repair processes. Heat treatment processes have been designed to optimize specific properties for this alloy. All conventional heat treating processes have been used successfully to manipulate the final microstructure and properties for this material. Alloy 718 is very machineable, so it can produce myriad final product forms. This alloy has been extremely adaptable to a range of these processes through optimizing chemistry, cleanliness and microstructure.

One of the major attributes that make Alloy 718 unique and ubiquitous in industrial applications is its economics. This alloy contains less nickel and other expensive alloying constituents than other nickel-base superalloys. The inherent costs of this material based on alloy content make the economics of this material more stable as compared to more heavily alloyed materials. There are alloy variants that aim to further reduce the inherent alloy costs, but introduce alloy stability challenges. The industry standard chemistry of Alloy 718 has shown exceptional capabilities and stability for many applications.

The ability for Alloy 718 to fulfill the requirements of so many industries and applications has also supported the overall favorable economics of this material. Increased volume usage of
materials has a tendency to support overall lower material costs. Larger volumes enable mills to scale-up manufacturing and to produce wide ranges of standard forms. Recycling and reverting of scrap for this high volume material also supports a lower cost material infrastructure and capability. System costs are critical to all industries, so the lowest cost material solutions are always sought making Alloy 718 an attractive material selection option for challenging applications.

Alloy 718 has been modified to generate unique variants for specific requirements and applications through chemistry optimization. Table 1 lists the chemistry of Alloy 718 and related variants along with Waspaloy, the next most common superalloy, but which deviates from γ’ strengthening to enable increased temperature capabilities, and IN100, one of the original γ' strengthened P/M superalloys developed for high temperature applications. Higher strength versions of Alloy 718, such as PWA1472, have a balance of alloying elements that enable changes in the phase fractions of γ", γ', and δ precipitates. A further departure from the original Alloy 718 chemistry is the 718Plus alloy family, where iron is traded for additions of cobalt, further stabilizing γ' in these alloys, though γ" and δ are still present, which is a large difference in comparison to Waspaloy, which is solely γ' strengthened. These alloy chemistry modifications are for special purpose and can depart from the original low cost characteristic of Alloy 718 by incorporation of various quantities of high cost alloying additions. Additionally, boutique alloys also suffer from limited volume usage and recycle capabilities, which also adversely impact affordability. These challenges for variant alloys make the focus on optimizing the capabilities and balance in properties for Alloy 718 solely from processing and microstructure control even more important.

Table 1. Chemistry of Alloy 718 related variants and early generation gamma-prime strengthened nickel-base superalloys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALLOY</th>
<th>Cr</th>
<th>Ni</th>
<th>Co</th>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>Nb</th>
<th>Ti</th>
<th>Al</th>
<th>Fe</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alloy 718</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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Alloy 718 properties can be readily manipulated through control of microstructure. Grain size is one of the controlling mechanisms. Hall-Petch strengthening is effective in the optimization of Alloy 718 and its variants. Figure 6 shows the properties of DA718 as a function of grain size. Finer grain size will provide increase in material strength.