



Standard Test Method for Automated Heithaus Titrimetry¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method describes a procedure for quantifying three Heithaus compatibility parameters (1,2)² that estimate the colloidal stability of asphalts and asphalt cross blends (1,2), aged asphalts (3), and pyrolyzed heavy oil residua and asphalt (4) using automated Heithaus titrimetry as a stability diagnostic tool.

1.2 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*³

D 3279 Test Method for *n*-Heptane Insolubles

D 4124 Test Methods for Separation of Asphalt into Four Fractions

D 5546 Test Method for Solubility of Asphalt Binders in Toluene by Centrifuge

E 169 Practices for General Techniques of Ultraviolet-Visible Quantitative Analysis

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 *asphalt* (5), *n*—a dark brown to black cementitious material, solid or semisolid in consistency, in which the predominating constituents are bitumen, which occur in nature as such or are obtained as residue by the refining of petroleum.

3.1.2 *asphalt cross-blend*, *n*—any mixture of two or more asphalts blended together to form a consistent material.

3.1.3 *asphaltene peptizability*, *n*—the tendency of asphaltenes to exist as a stable dispersion in a maltene solvent, measured by the Heithaus parameter p_a .

3.1.4 *asphaltenes*, *n*—the high molecular weight hydrocarbon fraction precipitated from asphalt by a designated paraffinic naphtha solvent at a specified solvent-asphalt ratio.

3.1.4.1 *Discussion*—The asphaltene fraction should be identified by the solvent and solvent-asphalt ratio used.

3.1.5 *asphalt state of peptization*, *n*—a measure of the ability of the combination of a maltene solvent and dispersed asphaltenes to form a stable dispersed system. Equivalent to compatibility of the system.

3.1.6 *bitumen*, *n*—a class of black or dark-colored (solid, semisolid, or viscous) cementitious substances, natural or manufactured, composed principally of high-molecular weight hydrocarbons, of which asphalts, tars, pitches, and asphaltites are typical.

3.1.7 *coke*, *n*—the solid product resulting from the destructive distillation of coal, petroleum residuum, or bitumen in an oven or closed chamber, or from imperfect combustion of these materials, consisting principally of carbon.

3.1.8 *colloidal suspension*, *n*—an intimate mixture of two substances, one of which, called the dispersed phase (or colloid), is uniformly distributed in a finely divided state through the second substance, called the dispersion medium (or dispersing medium).

3.1.9 *compatibility*, *n*—the state of peptization of an asphalt, which is measured quantitatively by the Heithaus parameter P .

3.1.10 *core asphalts*, *n*—the eight asphalts selected for intensive study in the Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP).

3.1.11 *dispersed phase*, *n*—one phase of a dispersion consisting of particles or droplets of one substance distributed through a second phase.

3.1.12 *dispersing medium*, *n*—one phase of a dispersion that distributes particles or droplets of another substance, the disperse phase.

3.1.13 *flocculation*, *n*—the process of aggregation and coalescence into a flocculent mass.

3.1.14 *Heithaus compatibility parameters*, *n*—three parameters: asphaltene peptizability (p_a), maltene peptizing power (p_o), and asphalt state of peptization (P), measured using Heithaus titration methods.

3.1.15 *maltene peptizing power*, *n*—the ability of a maltene solvent to disperse asphaltenes, measured by the Heithaus parameter p_o .

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D04 on Road and Paving Materials and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D04.47 on Miscellaneous Asphalt Tests.

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² The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references at the end of this standard.

³ For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

3.1.16 *maltenes, n*—a red-brown to black heavy oil material derived from asphalt after precipitation with normal or branched alkanes (for example, *n*-pentane, *n*-hexane, *n*-heptane, isooctane, and so forth), filtration of asphaltenes, and distillation of alkane precipitating agent from the filtrate. Equivalent to deasphalted materials. Maltene is the solvent moiety of an asphalt.

3.1.17 *oxidatively age-hardened asphalt, n*—an asphalt that has reacted with oxygen at elevated temperatures in an oven, usually under greater than atmospheric oxygen pressure. The reaction is run for a time sufficient to simulate asphalt aging in pavement.

3.1.18 *pyrolysis, n*—the breaking apart of complex molecules into simpler units by the use of heat, as in the pyrolysis of heavy oil to make gasoline.

3.1.19 *residuum, n*—a quantity or body of matter remaining after evaporation, combustion, or distillation.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 Three 30-mL reaction vials are tared. Three samples of an asphalt (or a heavy oil residuum), one weighing 0.400 g, a second weighing 0.600 g, and the third weighing 0.800 g, are transferred to the reaction vials, one sample into each vial. Toluene (3.000 mL) is added to each of the reaction vials to dissolve the asphalt (or heavy oil residuum). Each reaction vial contains a solution which differs by concentration of asphalt (or heavy oil residuum) prepared in toluene. All solutions that are prepared for a given asphalt material are titrated with isooctane (2,2,4-trimethyl pentane) or some other titrant that promotes a flocculation of material within the solution (6) conducted at a constant titrant delivery rate. The titration is performed by placing the reaction vials separately in the apparatus illustrated in Fig. 1. The apparatus depicted in Fig. 1 consists of intersecting sample circulation and titration loops.

4.2 Each reaction vial is separately placed into a 250-mL, water-jacketed reaction vessel (Fig. 1). Water-jacketing is required for temperature control of the system. Furthermore, the water-jacketed reaction vessel is filled with enough water such that the reaction vial and temperature probe are 75 % immersed. Water flowing through the water jacket maintains the temperature of the water in the reaction vessel, which further maintains the temperature of the solution in the reaction vial. The connection with the sample circulation loop is made by covering the reaction vial with a screw top TFE-fluorocarbon cover penetrated by three small bore TFE-fluorocarbon tubes (Fig. 2). A fourth hole in the cover accommodates a temperature probe. One of these tubes (1.6-mm (1/16-in. diameter)) leads to a short path length (0.2-mm) quartz flow cell housed in an ultraviolet- (UV) visible spectrophotometer. A second tube (1.6-mm diameter) leads to a high flow rate metering pump and then to the quartz cell. This system is the sample circulation loop. The third tube (1.6-mm diameter) connects the reaction vial to the titration loop and leads to a low flow rate metering pump and then to another water-jacketed reaction vessel filled with titrant (usually iso-octane). This reaction vessel is covered with another TFE-fluorocarbon cover penetrated by one TFE-fluorocarbon tube. This TFE-fluorocarbon cover has the same dimensions as the one illustrated in Fig. 2, but does not require threading

because the cover fits directly over the reaction vessel and no vial is screwed into it. Also it has only one hole. The second reaction vessel is filled with titrant. While the sample solution circulates through the sample circulation loop, the titrant is pumped into the sample reaction vial at a constant rate using the low flow rate metering pump. During this process, the output signal from the spectrophotometer is recorded using an integrator or some other data gathering device. The change in percent transmittance (%*T*) of detected radiation at 740 nm (7) passing through the quartz cell is plotted versus the time, *t*, during which the titrant is added to the sample reaction vial.

4.3 The spectrophotometer output signal detects the onset of turbidity of the sample solution. This is the flocculation onset point, corresponding to the beginning of the precipitation of asphaltenes from the sample solution. Fig. 3 illustrates a typical series of plots of %*T* versus *t* for the three test solutions. Values of %*T* increase with time until maximum values of %*T* are observed, after which values of %*T* decrease. The reason that the curves in Fig. 3 exhibit maxima is that, at the beginning of each titration, %*T* increases due to dilution with titrant. At the flocculation onset point, the formation of asphaltene particles causes an immediate decrease in %*T* due to light scattering effects. The time required to reach the maximum in %*T* from the onset of titration of a sample is defined as the flocculation time, *t_f*. When the value of *t_f* for each sample is multiplied by the titrant flow rate, the titrant volume, *V_T*, required to cause the onset of flocculation for each sample is obtained.

4.4 The weight of each asphalt (or heavy oil residuum) sample, *W_a*, the volume of toluene used to dissolve each sample, *V_S* (2.00 mL in each case), and the volume of titrant required to cause the onset of flocculation, *V_T* are recorded for each sample solution. Values of these three quantities for each set of three test sample solutions are used to calculate the quantities *C* (referred to as the dilution concentration) and *FR* (referred to as the flocculation ratio). *C* is defined as $W_a / (V_S + V_T)$. *FR* is defined as $V_S / (V_S + V_T)$. Values of *C* are plotted versus *FR* for each of the three recorded sets of values of *W_a*, *V_S*, and *V_T* (Fig. 4). Customarily, the *C* values are along the *x*-axis, and the *FR* values are the *y*-axis. The three data points are connected by a line, and the line is extrapolated to both axes. The point at which the line intercepts the *x*-axis is defined as *C_{min}*. The point at which the line intercepts the *y*-axis is defined as *FR_{max}*. These two values are used to calculate the three Heithaus compatibility parameters, designated *p_a*, *p_o*, and *P*. The parameter *p_a*, the peptizability of asphaltenes, is defined as the quantity $(1 - FR_{max})$. The parameter *p_o*, the peptizing power of maltene, is defined as the quantity $FR_{max} [(1/C_{min}) + 1]$. The parameter *P*, the overall compatibility of the system, is defined as $[p_o / (1 - p_a)]$, or $(1/C_{min} + 1)$.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This test method is intended primarily as a laboratory diagnostic tool for estimating the colloidal stability of asphalt, asphalt cross blends, aged asphalt, pyrolyzed asphalt, and heavy oil residuum. Historically, asphalt and heavy oil residua have been modeled as colloidal suspensions (8,9) in which a polar, associated asphaltene moiety (the dispersed phase) is suspended in a maltene solvent moiety (the dispersing medium) (refer to test methods D 3279, D 4124, and D 5546 for

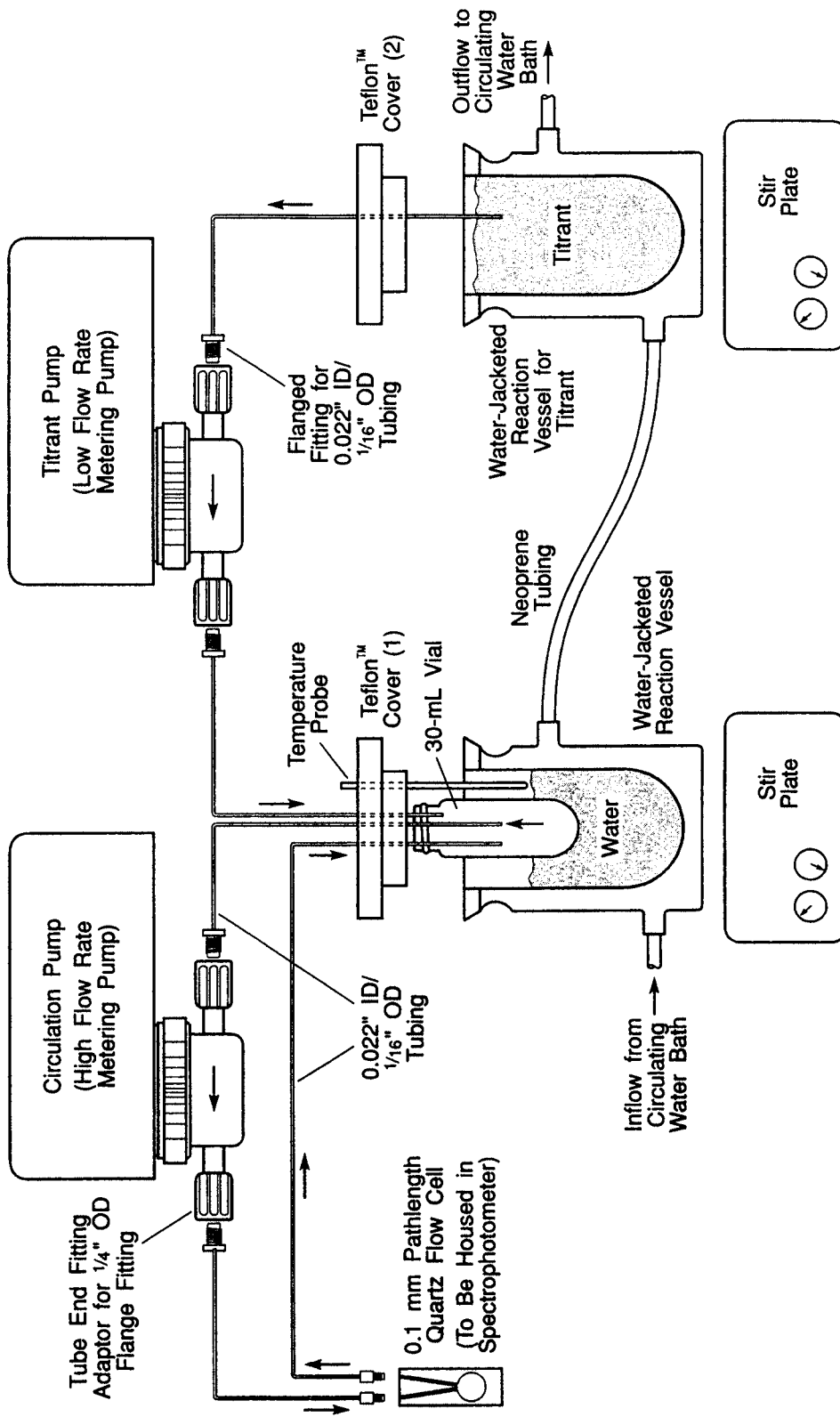


FIG. 1 Automated Titration Apparatus