

Better Quantifying and Locating Building Leakages



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Webinar management



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Better Quantifying and Locating Building Leakages

AGENDA

- 10:30 | **Building component performances as an answer for airtightness issues –existing quantification methods**, Martin Prignon, UCLouvain, Belgium
- 10:40 | **Uncertainty of effective leakage areas determination through reductive sealing technique**, Vitor Cardoso, FEUP, Portugal
- 10:55 | Questions and answers
- 11:00 | **Bias and precision errors in the measurement of building component airtightness with direct component test**, Martin Prignon, UCLouvain, Belgium
- 11:15 | Questions and answers
- 11:20 | **Comparison of airflow and acoustic measurements for evaluation of building air leakage paths in a laboratory test apparatus**, Benedikt Kölsch, DLR, Germany
- 11:35 | Questions and answers
- 11:45 | End of webinar

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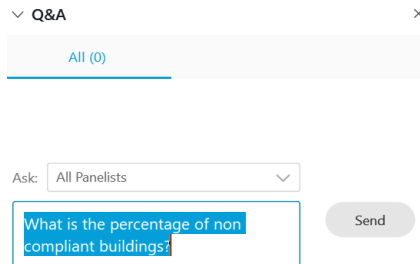
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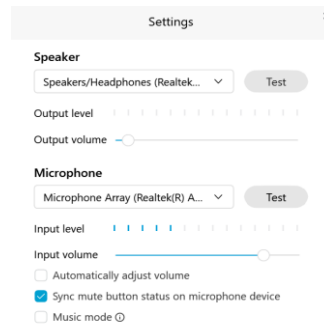
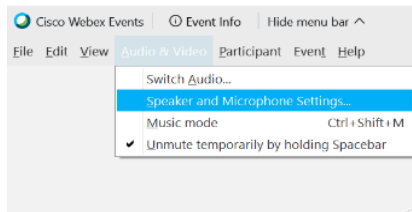


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Airtightness of building components

Building Component Performances as an Answer for
Airtightness Issues – Existing Methods

Speaker
Martin Prignon

Project **AirPath50** (2016 – 2020), funded by INNOVIRIS

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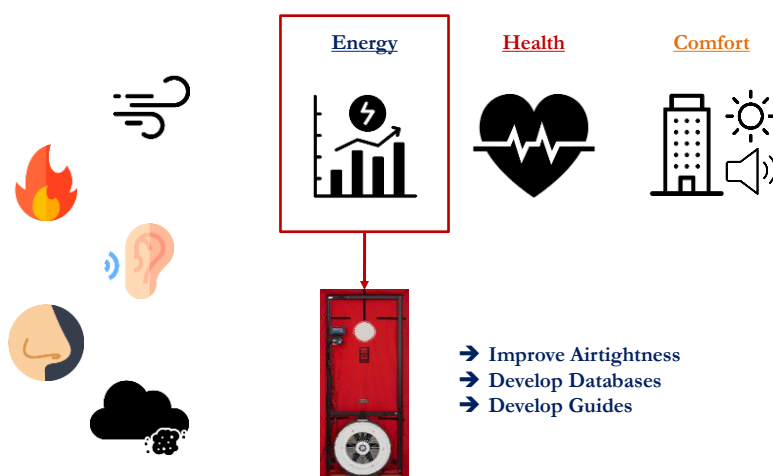
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Infiltration, Consequences and Current Practice



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Airtightness paradox in current practice

We promote fan
pressurisation test

- It reports airtightness at 50 Pa.
- Assumes leakage uniformly distributed along the envelope.

**The consequences and the amount
of air infiltration depend on leakage
location and distribution.**

e.g., Internal vs. External leakage

See [Rogers, 2019]
(40th AIVC Conference)

Looking at component scale in parallel
with whole building performances.

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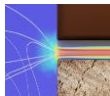
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Quantification of Building Component Airtightness



Numerical models

Airflow estimation through the development of
fundamental equations of fluid mechanics.



Laboratory testing

Measurement of $\Delta p - q$ relation of the component
in a highly controlled environment.



In-situ testing

Measurement of $\Delta p - q$ relation of the component
directly on site.

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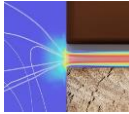
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Advantages and Drawbacks



- No planning constraints
- Easy interpolation of models
- Transferrable to larger models

- Representation of reality
- Validation work needed
- Lack of crack data



- No planning constraints
- Control of variables
- Visualisation of the component

- Not “real configuration”:
 - o Component alone
 - o No dust, enough space, etc.



- Real configuration (i.e., includes workmanship quality)

- Planning constraints
- Uncontrolled environment

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Presentations in this Webinar



Old topic

TN 34: Air Flow Patterns within Buildings: Measurement Techniques

New perspectives

Regain interest in health and comfort
New directives for retrofit (Europe, 2018)

Uncertainty Of Effective Leakage Areas Determination Through Reductive Sealing Technique
Vitor Cardoso

Bias and Precision errors in the Measurement of Building Component Airtightness with Direct Component Test
Martin Prignon

Comparison of Airflow and Acoustic measurements for Evaluation of Building Air Leakage Paths in a Laboratory Test Apparatus
Benedikt Kölsch

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Uncertainty of effective leakage areas determination through reductive sealing technique

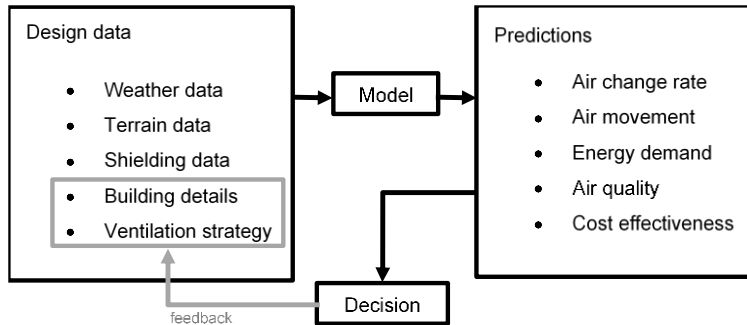
Vitor Emanuel Martins Cardoso
Doctoral Program in Civil Engineering

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- 1 Air infiltration
- 2 Effective leakage areas
- 3 Reductive sealing
- 4 Regression models
- 5 Uncertainty propagation
- 6 Application and best practices

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Air infiltration



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Effective Leakage Areas

The area of a single orifice that would produce the same leakage as the group of leakages it represents at a reference pressure difference

- Typical form of expressing air leakage characteristics
 - building components
 - whole envelopes

$$ELA = \frac{10q}{3.6} \sqrt{\frac{\rho_0}{2\Delta p}} \frac{1}{C_D}$$

$$ELA = \frac{10}{3.6} C_{env} \left(\frac{T_0}{T}\right)^{1-n} \left(\frac{\rho_0}{2}\right)^{0.5} \Delta p^{n-0.5}$$

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Effective Leakage Areas

- Available extensively in ASHRAE and AIVC documentation
 - repeated measurements
 - compilation of laboratory and in situ experiments

Results using ordinary least squares regression in the airflow

No propagation of uncertainty in incremental sealing

Table 1 Effective Air Leakage Areas (Low-Rise Residential Applications Only)

	Units (see note)	Best Estimate	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum		Units (see note)	Best Estimate	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum
Ceiling	cm ² /m ²	1.8	0.79	2.8	Piping/Punching/Wiring penetrations	cm ² /ea	6	2	24
General	cm ² /m ²	0.19	0.046	0.19	Uncaulked	cm ² /ea	2	1	2
Drop	cm ² /m ²	0.19	0.046	0.19	Caulked	cm ² /ea	2	1	2
Ceiling penetrations	cm ² /ea	20	1.6	21	Vents	cm ² /ea	10	2.5	20
Whole-house fans	cm ² /ea	10	1.5	21	Bathroom with damper closed	cm ² /ea	20	6.1	22
Recessed lights	cm ² /ea	31	28	31	Bathroom with damper open	cm ² /ea	3	2.9	7
Ceiling/flu vent	cm ² /ea	0.82			Dryer with damper	cm ² /ea	15	12	34
Surface-mounted lights	cm ² /ea	29	21	36	Dryer without damper	cm ² /ea	40	14	72
Chimney	cm ² /m ²	10	8	17	Kitchen with damper open	cm ² /ea	5	1	7
Crawl space	cm ² /m ²	129			Kitchen with damper closed	cm ² /ea	1		
General (area for exposed walls)	cm ² /ea	12	2.4	25	Kitchen with tight gasket	cm ² /ea	0.5	0.049	1.8
200 mm by 400 mm veins	cm ² /m ²	5	1.7	5	Walls (exterior)	cm ² /m ²	0.68	0.05	2.3
General	cm ² /m ²	1	0.3	1	Cast-in-place concrete	cm ² /m ²	1.2	0.28	1.65
Masonry, not caulked	cm ² /m ²	1.7	0.6	1.7	Clay brick cavity wall, finished	cm ² /m ²	3.5	1.3	4
Masonry, caulked	cm ² /m ²	0.3	0.1	0.3	Precast concrete panel	cm ² /m ²	1.1	0.52	1.1
Wood, not caulked	cm ² /m ²	1			Low-density concrete block, unfinished	cm ² /m ²	0.25		
Wood, caulked	cm ² /m ²	8	7	10	Low-density concrete block, painted or stucco	cm ² /m ²	0.15	0.055	0.21
Trim	cm ² /m ²	2	1.2	24	Rigid sheathing	cm ² /m ²	0.35	0.29	0.41
Jamb	cm ² /m ²	30	10	37	Window framing	cm ² /m ²	6.5	5.7	10.3
Threshold	cm ² /m ²	18	8	18.5	Masonry, caulked	cm ² /m ²	1.3	1.1	2.1
Doors	cm ² /ea	44	23	86	Masonry, uncaulked	cm ² /m ²	1.7	1.5	2.7
Attic/crawl space, not weatherstripped	cm ² /ea	22	14	43	Wood, uncaulked	cm ² /m ²	0.3	0.3	0.5
Attic/crawl space, weatherstripped	cm ² /ea	0	0	0	Wood, caulked	cm ² /m ²	0.8	0.4	1.2
Attic fold down, not weatherstripped	cm ² /ea	11	7	22	Windows	cm ² /m ²	1.6	0.8	2.4
Attic fold down, weatherstripped	cm ² /ea	8	3	23	Awning, not weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.8	0.4	1.2
Attic fold down, with insulated box	cm ² /m ²	0.26	0.14	0.35	Awning, weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.24	0.1	3
Double, not weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.31	0.23	0.45	Casement, not weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.38		
Double, weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.9	0.25	1.5	Casement, weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	1.1	0.019	3.4
Elevator (passenger)	cm ² /ea	4			Casement, not weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.55	0.15	1.72
General, average	cm ² /m ²	22	3	60	Casement, weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.78	0.58	0.8
Interior (pocket, on top floor)	cm ² /ea	22	3	60	Double horizontal slider, not weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	2.5	0.86	6.1
Interior (stair)	cm ² /m ²	5.5	0.6	15	Double horizontal slider, wood, weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.65	0.2	1.9
Mail slot	cm ² /ea	6	3	6.2	Double horizontal slider, aluminum, weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²	0.97	0.48	1.7
Sliding exterior glass patio	cm ² /m ²				Double-hung, not weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²			
Sliding exterior glass patio	cm ² /m ²				Double-hung, weatherstripped	cm ² /m ²			
Sliding exterior glass patio	cm ² /m ²				Double-hung with storm door	cm ² /m ²			
Storm (difference between with and without)	cm ² /ea	71	17	93					
Single, not weatherstripped	cm ² /ea								



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Reductive sealing

Offsetting results from blower door tests to attain the performance of individualized elements or groups

French database has 46 subcategories of leaks

Leak categories and occurrences.

Categories	Subcategories
A: Main envelope area	A1: Other leak on main envelope area A2: Vapour barrier membrane (or similar complex): adhesive junction between strips, puncture or tear A3: Liaisons mortier/glas between masonry blocks, panels between doublings A4: Opening (e.g.: wall plug) or not sealed junctions between panels A5: False ceiling slabs
B: Wall, roof and floor junctions	B1: Other leak on wall, roof and floor junctions B2: Junction between two vertical walls B3: Junction between wall base and floor B4: Junction between wall and high floor or pitched roof B5: Vapour barrier membrane (or similar complex): Attachment defective smooth with sill, intermediate floor, and top floor
C: Doors and windows	C1: Other leaks on doors and windows C2: Window and French window: frames (no seals or compression default of seals) C3: Window and French window: junction between glass and frame (defective seal) C4: Landing door or fire door: poor compression of seals (excluding threshold bar) C5: Landing door or fire door: absent or ineffective threshold bar C6: Sliding door: Excessive space between window portions of sliding frame, and/or top and bottom of frame C7: Sliding door: Evacuation of condensates C8: Rolling shutter casing
D: Building component penetrating the envelope	D1: Another element through a wall D2: Vapour barrier membrane (or similar complex) through which duct, pipe, beams, hatches D3: Crossing Floor and walls and/or partitions (any type of plumbing pipes and electrical conduits ...) D4: Ventilation air terminals: leaks at periphery of exhaust or supply air vents D5: Beams: Linking beams or joist with walls D6: Beams: Liaison with ceiling beams or joists or floor D7: Stairs: Junction flooring/stairs or vertical walls/stairs
E: Trapdoor	E1: Another trapdoor E2: Trapdoor to attic (absent or ineffective seal) E3: Trapdoor to vertical technical duct (absent or ineffective seal)
F: Electrical component	F1: Another equipment F2: Electrical board F3: Grids built on the exterior walls F4: Grids built on the internal partition walls F5: Lighting components
G: Door/wall and windows/wall junctions	G1: Another leak on walls/doors and windows junction G2: Junction between walls and windows or French windows G3: Junction between walls and landing door or fire door G4: Junction between internal panels and window and French window G5: Junction between internal panels and landing door or fire door G6: Junction between vapour barrier membrane and door or window



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Reductive sealing

Most frequent

- windows
- doors
- shutters

Most impactful

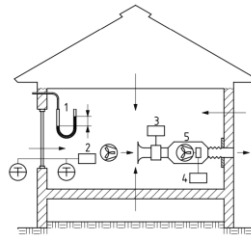
- lighting components
- junction between floor and wall
- electrical board
- junction between window and wall
- trapdoors to attics

Leakage type assessment often qualitative – smoke tracer/thermography

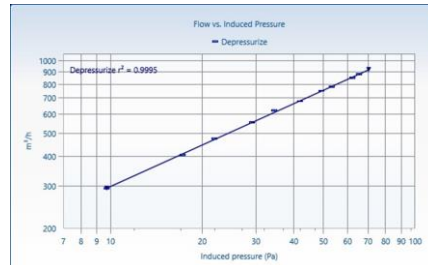
Background leakage after initial assessment usually ranges from 45% to 75%

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Regression models



- 1 pressure-measuring device
- 2 temperature-measuring device
- 3 air-flow measuring system
- 4 air-moving equipment
- 5 fan



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Regression models

OLS – Ordinary least squares

WLOC – Weighted Line of Organic Correlation

OLS	OLS uncertainty	WLOC uncertainty
q readings: distance to regression values	q readings: fan accuracy t readings: sensors accuracy and resolution	q readings: fan accuracy t readings: sensors accuracy and resolution Δp and Δp0 readings: manometer accuracy and resolution zero-flow approximation

Uncertainty propagation

- Uncertainty propagation to the ELA

$$u(ELA) = \sqrt{\left(2.155 C_{env} \Delta p^{n-0.5} \left(\frac{T_0}{T}\right)^{1-n} \ln\left(\frac{\Delta p}{T_0}\right) u(n) \right)^2 + \left(2.155 C_{env} \Delta p^{n-0.5} \left(\frac{T_0}{T}\right)^{1-n} u(\ln(C_{env})) \right)^2 + \left(\frac{2.155 C_{env} \Delta p^{n-0.5} (n-1) \left(\frac{T_0}{T}\right)^{1-n} u(T)}{T} \right)^2 + 2 \left(2.155 C_{env} \Delta p^{n-0.5} \left(\frac{T_0}{T}\right)^{1-n} \ln\left(\frac{\Delta p}{T_0}\right) u(n) u(\ln(C_{env})) r(n, \ln(C_{env})) \right)}$$

- Offset of uncertainties between sealing steps

$$ELA_{step,i} = ELA_{i-1} - ELA_i$$

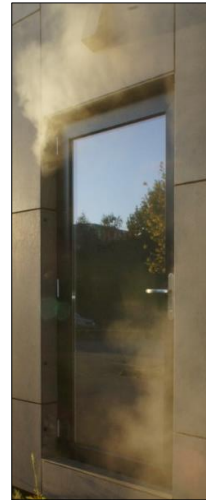
$$u(ELA_{step,i}) = \sqrt{u(ELA_{i-1})^2 + u(ELA_i)^2}$$

Application and best practices



Smoke tracer provides info for:

- Identification of predominant leaks
- Sealing step sequence



Application and best practices



Exterior finishings can be a challenge



Application and best practices

12 sealing steps
11 leakage path types

default mode (DEF)
mechanical ventilation (MEV)
heating and air conditioning elements (HAC)
electrical appliances (ELE)
lighting (LIG)
plumbing (PLU)
wall/wall joints (WWJ)
wall/floor joints (WFJ)
wall/roof joints (WRJ)
wall/openings joints (WOJ)
openings (OPE)
entrance door (ENT)

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Application and best practices

- Significant dispersion of air flow rates between leakage paths
- WLOC provides higher calculated uncertainties in the airflow rates
- No leakage path type exceeded 18% of the total air change rate
- On average, 2.6 and 1.7 times greater than OLS and OLSu

Average effective leakage area uncertainty

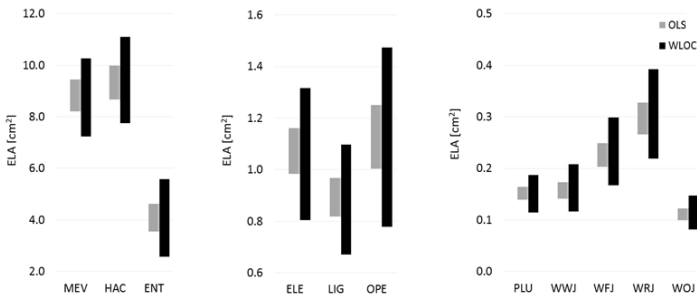
Pressure difference	OLS [%]	OLSu [%]	WLOC [%]
4	9.9	18.8	27.5

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Application and best practices

Normalized ranges of ELAs

Ranges only provide $(y - u(y); y + u(y))$



Group	Qty.	Metric
MEV	4	item
HAC	4	item
ELE/	19	
LIG/	17	item
PLU	7	
WWJ/	40.8	
WFJ/	38.3	Im
WRJ/	38.3	
WOJ	35.1	
OPE	25.6	Im
ENT	5.9	Im

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Application and best practices

- Less impacting air leakage types should be assessed first
 - Minimize uncertainty accumulation effect in earlier steps
- Measure similar types of air leakage paths in a consecutive order
 - If adjoining is needed for subsequent data treatment
- WLOC should be preferred since it considers the greatest number of error sources
 - Even though a greater variability will result from its application

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Application and best practices

Effective Leakage Areas are used primarily for input in airflow models

Risk assessment on health-related issues:

- minimum air renovations
- comfort concerns

Energy relevant aspects :

- ranges of heating and cooling loads

Support decision on intervention scenarios by:

- Cost
- Invasiveness
- Labour
- Time

With **truer** uncertainties



Most adequate leakage paths for intervention

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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Airtightness of building components

Bias and Precision errors in the Measurement of Building Component Airtightness with Direct Component Test

Speaker
Martin Prignon

Project **AirPath50** (2016 – 2020), funded by INNOVIRIS

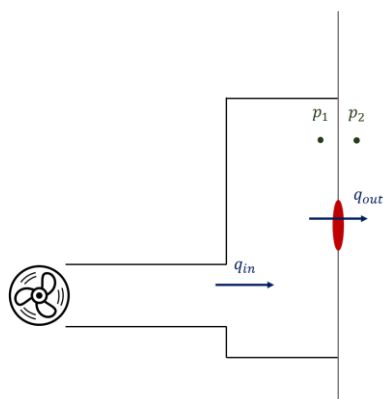
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Direct testing of building components



At equilibrium:
 $q_{in} \rightarrow \Delta p$ constant
 $\Delta p \rightarrow q_{out}$

Hypothesis :
 $q_{in} = q_{out}$

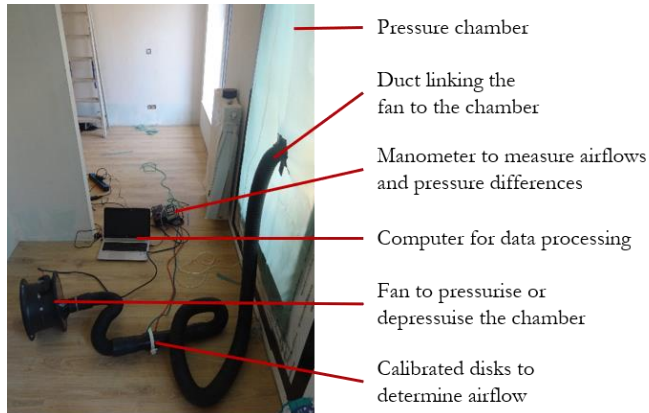
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Experimental setup



Range of measurement:

$$q_m = [0,17 ; 78,5] \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$$

$$\Delta p_m = [0 ; 2500] \text{ Pa}$$

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Different experimental designs



- Woodbox system
- Plastic-sheet system



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Data processing (linear regression)

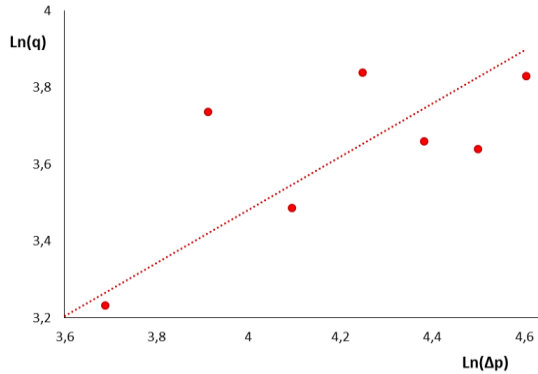
$$q = C(\Delta p)^n$$

$$\ln(q) = n \ln(\Delta p) + \ln(C)$$

Slope

Intercept

$$\rightarrow C_L = e^{\ln(C)} \left(\frac{T_0}{T_i} \right)^{1-n}$$



$$q_{50} = C_L(50)^n$$

$$q_{50+}; q_{50-} \text{ et } q_{50m}$$

$$n_+ \text{ et } n_-$$

OLS and WLOC

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Experiments and methodology

① Validation

Large circular openings:

$$q = C_d A \sqrt{(2\Delta p)/\rho}$$

VS

"In-situ" measurement:

$$q = C_L(\Delta p)^n$$

② Bias errors

Background leakage: airflow through the pressure chamber.

③ Precision errors

Repeatability tests:

- Direct with plastic sheet system
- Direct with wood-box system
- Direct with wood box system vs. indirect

Repeatability tests:

Multiple measurements on the same component conducted with the same equipment and by the same operator.

$$u(y) \approx \sigma$$

$$e(\sigma) = (2[N - 1])^{-0.5}$$

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Validation and background leakage

① and ②

	Calibrated Openings		Direct Component Test							
	A	q ₅₀	C _{L,+}	n ₊	q _{50,+}	C _{L,-}	n ₋	q _{50,-}	q ₅₀	
Opening 1	1.76	3.54	0.55	0.48	3.73	0.55	0.49	3.78	3.76	●
Opening 2	3.46	6.93	1.05	0.49	7.24	1.02	0.50	7.10	7.17	
Opening 3	7.07	14.15	2.21	0.48	14.48	2.10	0.49	14.23	14.36	
Opening 4	13.85	27.73	3.99	0.49	27.62	4.14	0.49	28.39	28.01	●

Δ_{\max} in m³/h : 0,28 m³/h

- Measurement error (random)

Δ_{\max} in % : 6,0 %

- Background leakage (systematic)

Background leakage:

measurement of a perfectly airtight component ($q_{50} \approx 0$).

$\delta q_b = 0,17$ m³/h at 50 Pa



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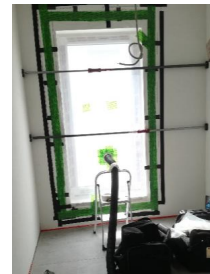
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Repeatability of direct component testing

③

10 tests using the plastic-sheet system wood window + interface with wall

→ $u = 10\%$ (q_{50m}); 4% (n_+) and 10% (n_-)
 $q_{50} = 0,56$ m³/(h.m); $n_+ = 0,85$ and $n_- = 0,81$



20 tests using the wood-box system electrical outlet

→ $u = 5\%$ (q_{50m}); 3% (n_+) and 2% (n_-)
 $q_{50} = 0,84$ m³/h; $n_+ = 0,69$ and $n_- = 0,69$



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Comparison between direct et indirect methods

③



$$q_{50,1} ; u(q_{50,1})$$

$$q_{50,2} ; u(q_{50,2})$$

$$q_{50,c} = q_{50,2} - q_{50,1}$$

$$u(q_{50,c}) = \sqrt{u^2(q_{50,1}) + u^2(q_{50,2}) + 2 r_{q_{50,1},q_{50,2}} u(q_{50,1})u(q_{50,2})}$$

Component measured: Electrical outlet in a laundry room.

Direct testing: 20 tests using the woodbox system

Indirect testing: 20 tests of a limited zone (the laundry room) with an air leakage rate at 50 Pa \approx 80 m³/h

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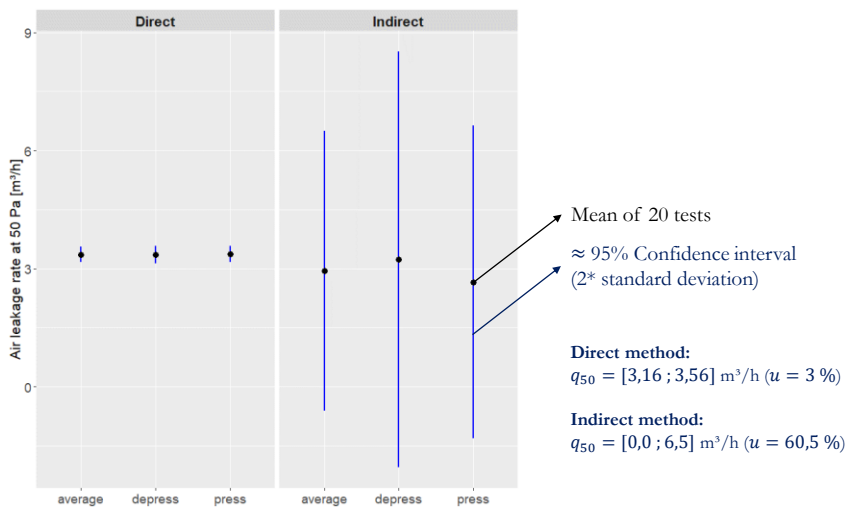
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November 2020



9

Results of the comparison

③



10

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10

Conclusions

The direct component test measures *in-situ* n and C values of building components with high reliability (between 3% and 10%, depending on the chamber design).

But:

- Must be replicated when measuring multiple components.
- Requires different pressure chambers depending on the component measured.
- Uses another equipment than the fan pressurisation test.

Most promising applications:

- Guarantee of good installation.
- Intermediate testing earlier in the construction process.
- Improving databases with reliable *in-situ* values including n .

Further work:

- Validation on components with $n > 0,5$.
- Study variables influencing uncertainty.
- Increase the upper limit of range of measurement (doors).



Comparison of airflow and acoustic measurements for evaluation of building air leakage paths in a laboratory test apparatus

AIVC Webinar – Better Quantifying and Locating Building Leakages

Benedikt Kölsch

German Aerospace Center (DLR) – Institute of Solar Research
Jülich, Germany



Supported by:

 Federal Ministry
for Economic Affairs
and Energy
on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag



Knowledge for Tomorrow

1

DLR.de • Chart 2 > Evaluation of leakage paths > Benedikt Kölsch > 30-11-2020

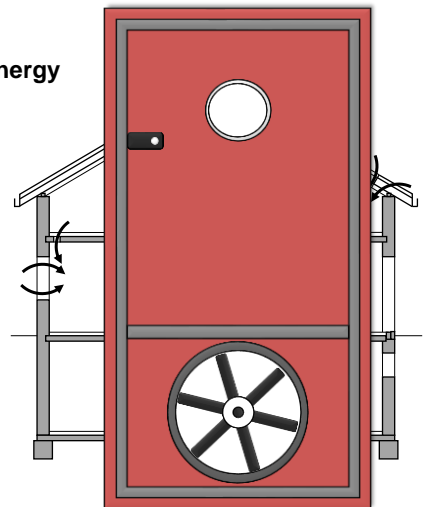
Air Leakage in Building Envelopes

Uncontrolled airflow → **increase** consumption of **heating** and **cooling** energy

Measuring airtightness: **Blower door test**

1. **Measuring air leakage** in buildings
2. **Comparing relative airtightness** of different buildings
3. **Determining reduction** of air permeability

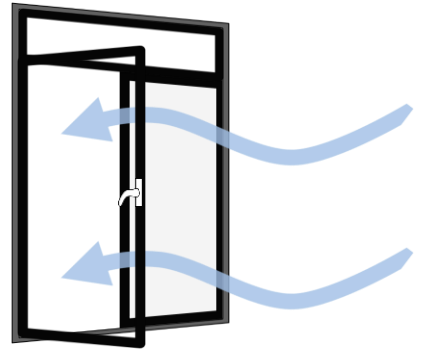
→ Leakage detection **time-consuming** and **expensive**



2

Why Acoustics?

Sound takes predominantly the **same paths** as **air** in fan pressurization method



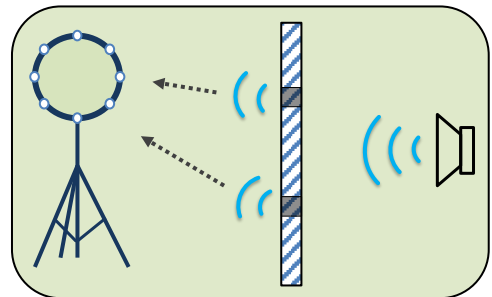
Why Acoustics?

Sound takes predominantly the **same paths** as **air** in fan pressurization method

Advantages:

- Can be applied while building is in use
- Independent from pressure or temperature differences
- Microphone arrays may localize leakage spots

→ Size quantification difficult

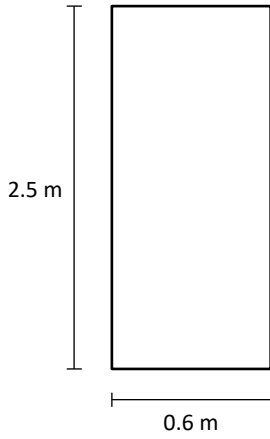


Is leakage size quantification possible?



Laboratory Test Apparatus

Goal: Simulation of realistic leakage scenarios on model scale



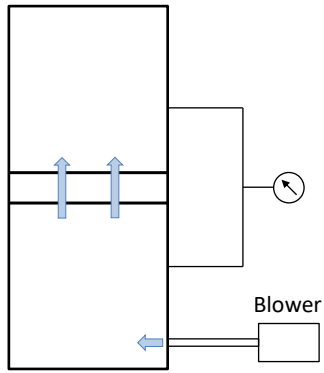
Laboratory Test Apparatus

Different wall configurations



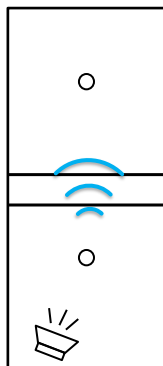
Laboratory Test Apparatus

Airflow Measurements



Laboratory Test Apparatus

Acoustic Measurements



Tested Leak Configurations

43 different wall configurations

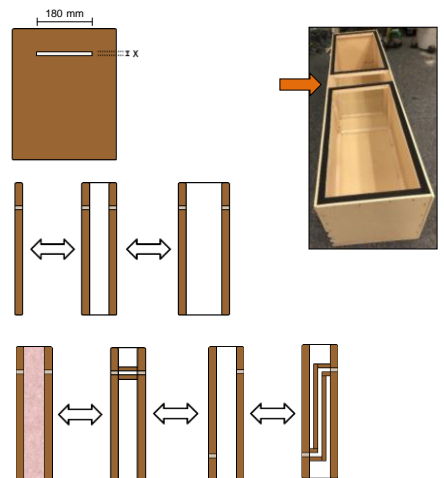


Tested Leak Configurations

43 different wall configurations

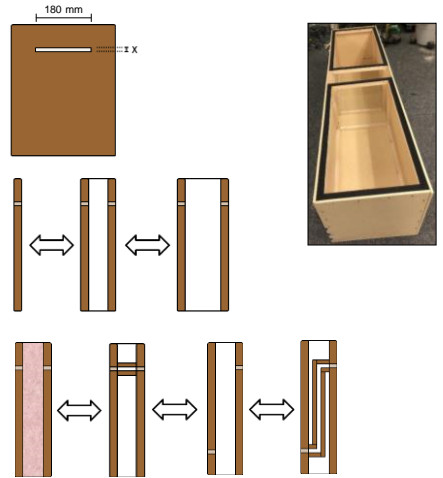
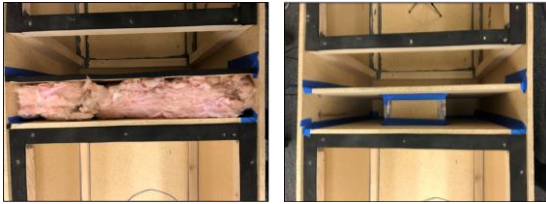
Modified parameters:

- Variation of **slit heights**: 5, 1, 0.4, 0.25 mm
- **Number of walls**: Single wall or two walls with air gap
- **Distance** between **double-wall** constructions: 100 and 150 mm
- Measurements with/without **insulating material**
- **Connection of slits** at double wall with a channel
- **Non-parallel** leakage paths
- **Blank walls** without openings

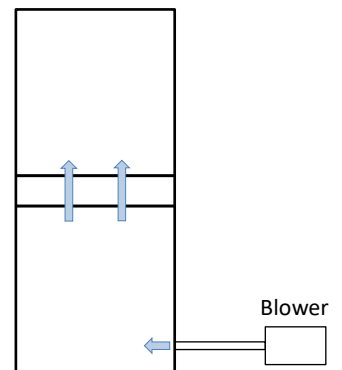
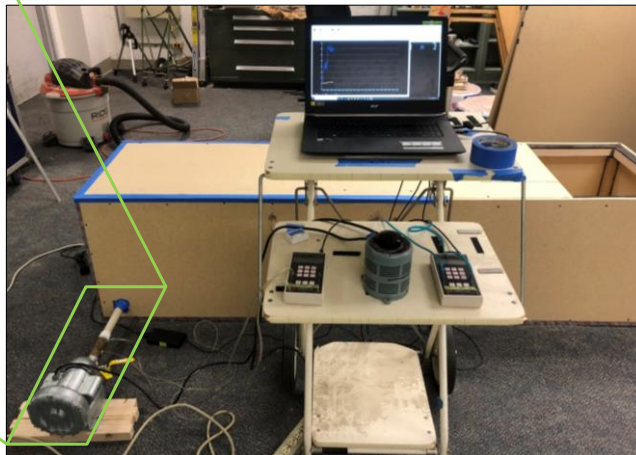


Tested Leak Configurations

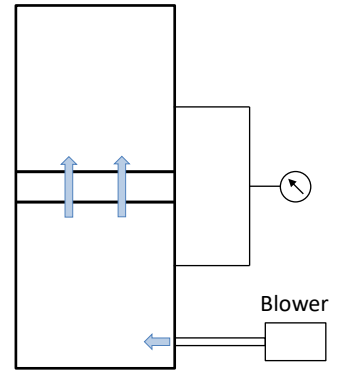
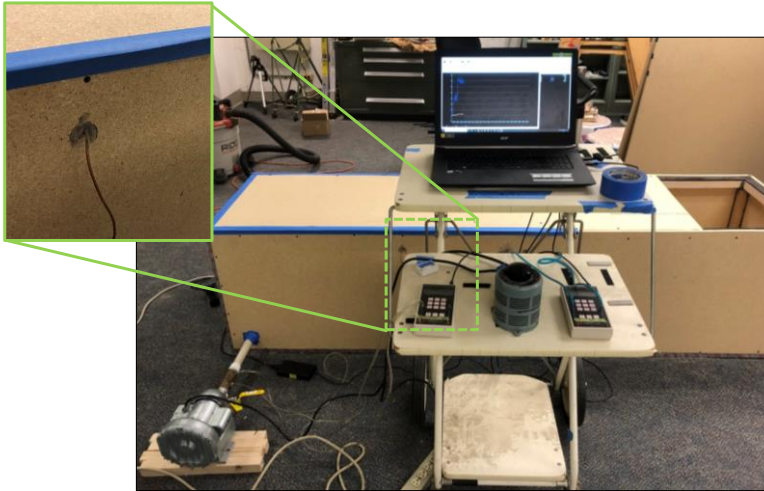
43 different wall configurations



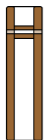
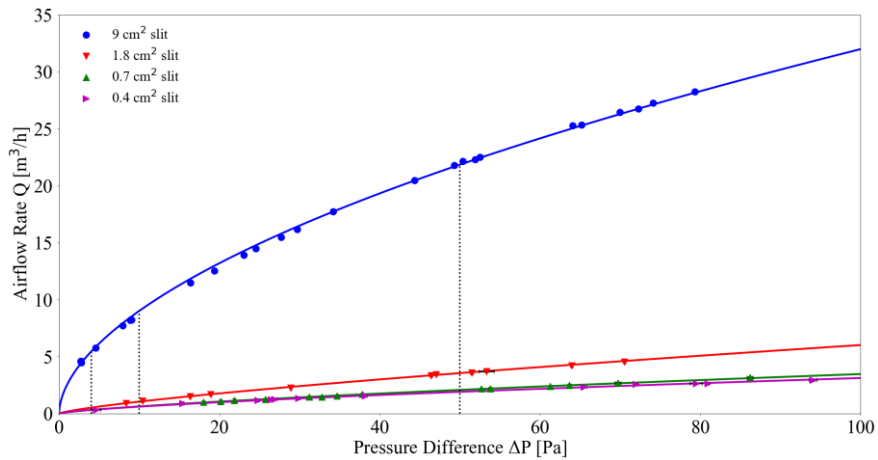
Airflow Measurements – Setup



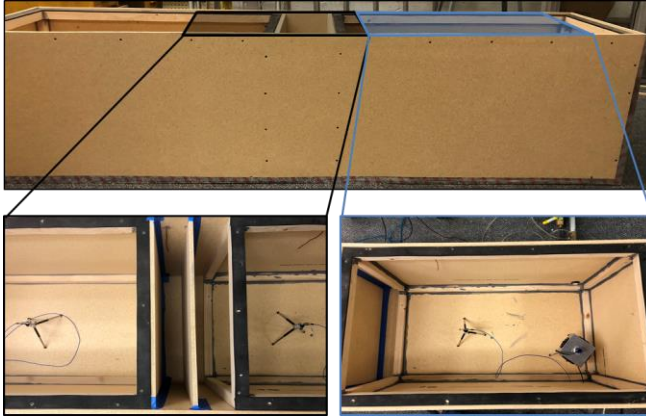
Airflow Measurements – Setup



Airflow Measurements – Results



Acoustic Measurements – Setup



Microphones in both chambers

Speaker in one chamber

Excitation signal: White noise

Frequency range: 0 – 40 kHz



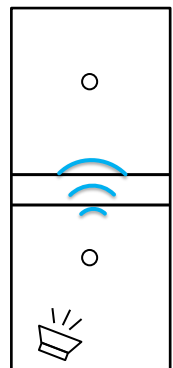
Acoustic Measurements

Coherence

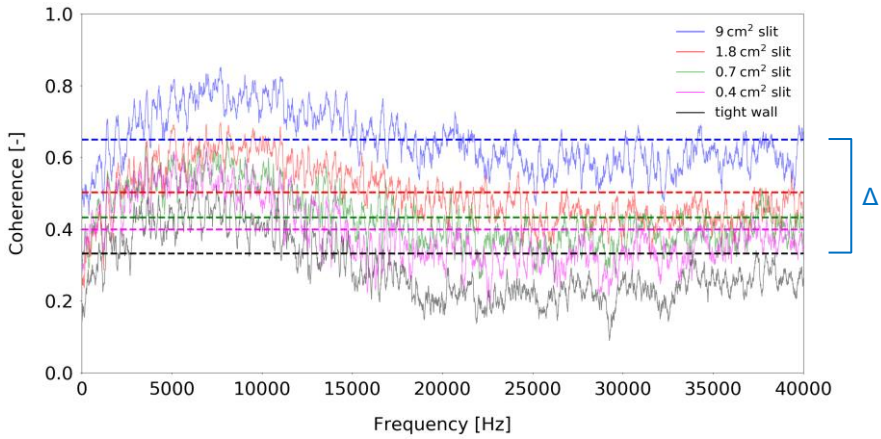
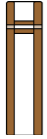
Describes the fraction of an output signal from an input signal at a specific frequency

$$C_{xy}(f) = \frac{|G_{xy}(f)|^2}{G_{xx}(f) \cdot G_{yy}(f)}$$

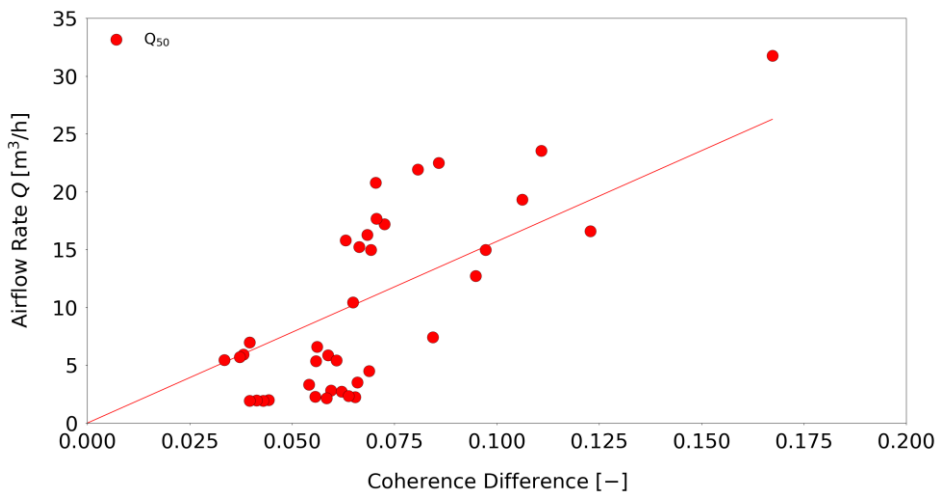
- Measure of the linear dependency between two discrete time signals $x[n]$ and $y[n]$
- $0 \leq C_{XY}(f) \leq 1$



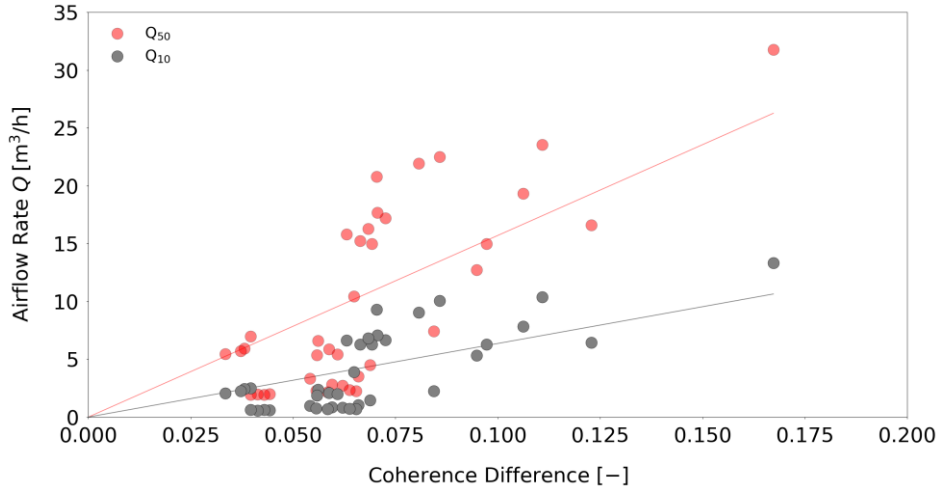
Acoustic Measurements – Results



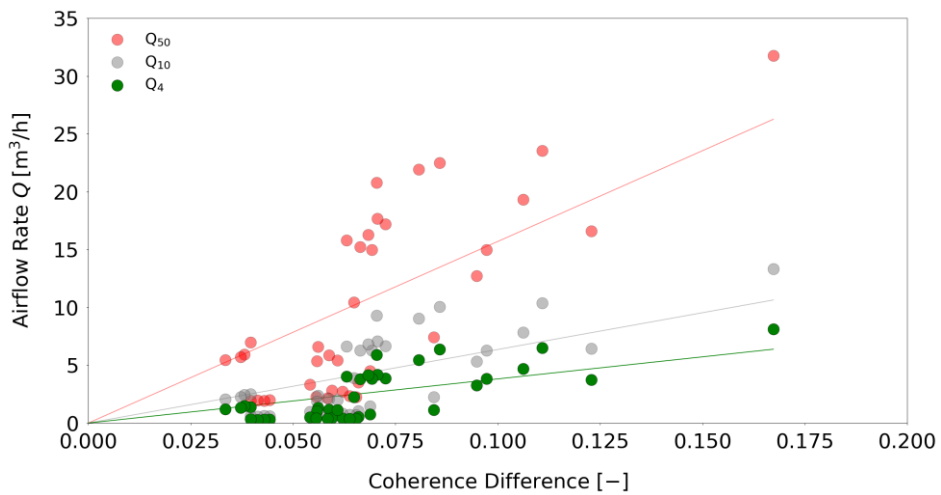
Airflow vs. Acoustic Measurements



Airflow vs. Acoustic Measurements



Airflow vs. Acoustic Measurements



Conclusion and Outlook

- **Airflow** and **acoustic measurements** in the same **laboratory** environment
- **43** different **leak configurations** were tested
- **Distinction** between different **leak sizes** possible

- **Weighting** of certain dominant **frequency bands**, instead of mean value may **increase** prediction **accuracy**
- More **complex** and **different leaks**
- Potential for **localization** of leaks using acoustics

Thank you

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