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## Gas-Phase Rate Coefficient of OH + 1,2-Epoxybutane Determined between 220 and 950 K

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1 **Title:**

2 Gas-phase rate coefficient of OH + 1,2-epoxybutane determined between 220 and 950 K

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14 **Keywords:**

15 Epoxide, hydroxyl, kinetics, atmospheric chemistry, non-Arrhenius

16

17 **Abstract:**

18 Epoxides have many primary and secondary atmospheric sources. As with other oxygenates,  
19 they exhibit a complex temperature-dependent reaction with OH, whose full description is  
20 necessary in order to understand their interactions in atmospheric and combustion  
21 environments. We measured the kinetics of the title reaction using two complementary  
22 absolute methods: pulsed-laser photolysis–laser-induced fluorescence (PLP–LIF) and a  
23 discharge-flow mass spectrometric system (DF-MS), both monitoring temporal decays in OH.  
24 In addition, two relative methods employing the DF-MS as a function of temperature, as well  
25 as several simulation chamber experiments at room temperature were performed. A very weak  
26 negative temperature dependence was observed at  $T \leq 285$  K, and only through the  
27 combination of precise data and a large temperature range were we able to discern the  
28 transition towards positive temperature dependence found at  $T \geq 295$  K. The non-Arrhenius  
29 temperature dependence of OH + 1,2-epoxybutane implies the agency of pre-reactive  
30 complexes in this reaction mechanism, albeit with a smaller effect than with its acyclic ether  
31 analogues. This will have implications for understanding the chemical fate of epoxides within  
32 oxidizing environments.

33 **1. Introduction:**

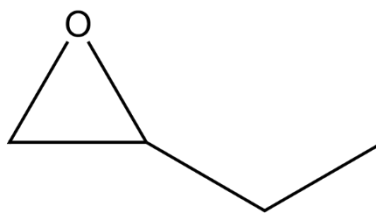
34 Many epoxide-forming reaction channels have so far been identified. Within the atmosphere,  
35 these may include simple association reactions with oxidants such as  $O(^3P) +$  alkenes,<sup>1</sup>  $NO_3 +$   
36 alkenes,<sup>2</sup>  $O_3 +$  conjugated dialkenes,<sup>3–5</sup> and  $O_3 +$  halogenated/ sterically hindered alkenes.<sup>6</sup>  
37 Potentially more important are the unimolecular processes such as ring-closure reactions that  
38 occur for hydroperoxyalkyl radicals,<sup>7,8</sup> and unsaturated hydroperoxides.<sup>9</sup> These have been  
39 implicated in the formation of highly functionalized oxidation products of biogenic volatile  
40 organic compounds such as isoprene epoxydiols (IEPOX), key gas-phase oxidation products  
41 of isoprene.

42 There are several primary emissions of epoxides relating to industrial production, e.g.  
43 alkoxylation reactions for polymer synthesis,<sup>10</sup> as well as natural emissions such as floral  
44 perfumes and other semiochemicals.<sup>11</sup>

45 Once epoxides enter the atmosphere, they will engage in subsequent reactions. Notable among  
46 these are acid-catalyzed ring-opening processes, which lead to highly functionalized polyol  
47 species. These products have a greatly reduced volatility compared with the epoxide starting

48 material, and are thought to contribute significantly to secondary organic aerosol production.<sup>12–</sup>  
49 <sup>14</sup> However, these multiphase processes occur in competition with gas-phase oxidation  
50 reactions in the atmosphere, the most important of which is expected to be hydrogen abstraction  
51 reactions with the OH radical. By querying a recently compiled near-comprehensive database  
52 of gas-phase atmospheric reactions of organic compounds,<sup>15</sup> it can be concluded that as few as  
53 two epoxides have been studied as a function of temperature: ethylene oxide and 1,2-propylene  
54 oxide.<sup>16,17</sup>

55 With such limited knowledge of the OH kinetics, the overall atmospheric fate of epoxides  
56 therefore remains highly uncertain. We address this by taking a relatively simple epoxide, 1,2-  
57 epoxybutane (EPB), and subjecting it to a set of precise and accurate kinetic measurements,  
58 such that we can better understand the effects of the epoxide functionality on chemical  
59 reactivity throughout the tropospheric temperature range and higher, which may be of  
60 importance to combustion chemistry.



61

62 Structure of 1,2-epoxybutane (EPB)

## 63 **2. Experimental methods:**

### 64 **2.1. Absolute measurements:**

65 Two absolute techniques were employed in this study to measure the temperature-dependent  
66 rate coefficient of Reaction 1:



68 Notably, the pulsed-laser photolysis–laser-induced fluorescence (PLP–LIF) technique, and the  
69 discharge-flow mass spectrometry method (DF-MS), which are described in the following  
70 subsections.

#### 71 **2.1.1. Pulsed-Laser Photolysis–Laser-induced by fluorescence measurements:**

72 The PLP–LIF system has been described in detail elsewhere,<sup>17</sup> and will be described only  
73 briefly here. This system consists of a 5-way cross Pyrex reaction cell (volume = 200 cm<sup>3</sup>), the

74 gaseous contents of which were temperature-regulated by circulating heated or cooled fluid  
75 through an outer jacket. Measurements were conducted over the temperature range 220–373 K  
76 and ~100 Torr of bath gas (He), and were performed under pseudo-first-order conditions, where  
77 [EPB]  $\gg$  [OH]. OH radicals were produced in Reactions 2 or 3 from OH precursors (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> or  
78 HNO<sub>3</sub>) that were photolyzed at 10 Hz at a wavelength of 248 nm by a KrF excimer laser pulse.



81 OH radicals were detected following excitation from a probe laser pulse, tuned to excite the  
82  $\text{A}^2\Sigma^+(\nu = 1) \leftarrow \text{X}^2\Pi(\nu = 0)$  transition near 282 nm using a frequency-doubled Nd:YAG  
83 pumped dye laser. The resulting fluorescence was detected using a photomultiplier tube fitted  
84 with a 308 nm bandpass filter. The photomultiplier signal was collected using a boxcar  
85 integrator and recorded on a data acquisition card (see Figure S1, Supporting Information SI).  
86 Temporal profiles of integrated OH signal were collected by changing the delay time between  
87 the photolysis and probe lasers, which, under pseudo-first-order conditions obey the following  
88 relationship:

89  $\ln\left(\frac{[\text{OH}]_t}{[\text{OH}]_0}\right) = \ln\left(\frac{S_t}{S_0}\right) = -(k[1,2\text{-epoxybutane}] + k_d)t = -k't$  Equation 1

90 where  $t$  is the delay time between laser pulses,  $S$  is the OH fluorescence signal, integrated over  
91 the box-car sampling window, and  $k'$  and  $k_d$  represent the pseudo-first-order decay rate of OH  
92 in the presence or absence of EPB respectively. Values of  $k_d$  were typically 30–150 s<sup>-1</sup> and were  
93 a consequence of the reaction of OH with the OH precursor (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> or HNO<sub>3</sub>) and diffusion of  
94 OH out of the reaction volume. We expect that this diffusion term is not truly first-order in  
95 nature, and besides, given that signal:noise is reduced at long delay times, in order to ensure  
96 high-quality first-order fits in each case, we limited our temporal profiles to include only the  
97 first three decades of integrated OH fluorescence signal. Values for  $k'$  were obtained through  
98 an error-weighted least-squares fit of  $S_t$  vs  $t$ . Following this, an error-weighted least-squares fit  
99 of  $k'$  against [EPB] yielded a slope equal to the bimolecular rate coefficient,  $k$ . This procedure  
100 was conducted at each temperature of the dataset.

101 As with similar studies,<sup>20,21</sup> in order to reduce systematic uncertainties in this relationship, EPB  
102 concentrations were quantified on-line using a multipass Fourier transform infrared  
103 spectrometer (pathlength = 1000 cm). For this purpose, the infrared band intensity of EPB was  
104 determined. This was achieved by introducing known concentrations of EPB from a  
105 manometrically prepared sample bulb (He bath gas) into the multipass cell, and the absorbance  
106 was quantified over a range of concentrations. Absorbance was found to obey the Beer-Lambert

107 law over the concentration range of our measurement. During experiments, [EPB] was  
108 monitored on-line, whereby the FTIR absorption cell was situated directly downstream from  
109 the LIF reactor. Figure S2 shows a plot of the integrated band intensity determination.

110

### 111 **2.1.2. Discharge-flow mass spectrometry measurements:**

112 Complementary measurements were performed using a fast-flow reactor coupled with a  
113 molecular beam sampling electron impact ionization quadrupole mass spectrometer.<sup>22,23</sup> These  
114 measurements were performed over a pressure range of 2–9 Torr (He), and were conducted in  
115 one of two reactors, either for low- or high-temperature measurements. The low-temperature  
116 flow reactor covered the temperature range 240–340 K, and consisted of a Pyrex tube (45 cm  
117 in length, 2.4 cm i.d.) with an outer jacket through which a temperature-regulated fluid was  
118 circulated (see Figure S3). To minimize wall-loss of OH, the inner surface of the reactor, as  
119 well as the movable injector, were coated with halocarbon wax. The high-temperature flow  
120 reactor was employed over the temperature range 360–950 K, a quartz tube (45 cm in length,  
121 2.5 cm i.d.), where the temperature was controlled with electrical heating elements (see Figure  
122 S4).

123 OH was produced by passing H<sub>2</sub> in a bath gas (He) through a microwave discharge, yielding H  
124 atoms, which subsequently react with NO<sub>2</sub> in Reaction 4, to produce OH:



126 OH radicals were detected indirectly by scavenging with Br<sub>2</sub>, yielding HOBr (see Reaction 5),  
127 and detected at *m/z* 96/98 (HOBr<sup>+</sup>):



129 The excess concentrations of Br<sub>2</sub> employed ( $3\text{--}5 \times 10^{13}$  molecule cm<sup>-3</sup>) combined with the  
130 rapidity of Reaction 4, leads to efficient scavenging under our experimental conditions. This  
131 reaction was also used to determine absolute concentrations of OH through their chemical  
132 conversion to HOBr in an excess of Br<sub>2</sub>, whereby [OH] = [HOBr] = Δ[Br<sub>2</sub>], i.e. the  
133 concentration of OH (HOBr) was determined from the consumed fraction of [Br<sub>2</sub>]. A detailed  
134 discussion on the possible influence of secondary chemistry on this method of OH detection  
135 and determination of the absolute concentrations of the radicals is presented elsewhere.<sup>24</sup>

136 EPB was delivered to the reactor by passing carrier gas (He) over a liquid sample of pure EPB,  
137 and was detected by mass spectrometry at its parent ion of *m/z* = 72 (C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>8</sub>O<sup>+</sup>). The absolute

138 calibration of the mass spectrometer for EPB was performed by two methods. Firstly, absolute  
139 concentrations of EPB (as well as of other stable species, NO<sub>2</sub>, Br<sub>2</sub> and *n*-butane) were  
140 calculated from the flow rates obtained from the measurements of the pressure drop of the  
141 manometrically prepared mixtures in He stored in calibrated volume flasks. Secondly, a known  
142 volume (generally, 0.6 μl) of sample was injected into a helium flow in the reactor under the  
143 experimental conditions of the kinetic measurements (pressure, temperature, total flow of bath  
144 gas) and the mass peak at  $m/z = 72$  was recorded. The integrated area of the mass spectrometric  
145 signal, corresponding to the total number of EPB molecules injected into the reactor, allowed  
146 the determination of the calibration factor. These two methods were found to agree within 10%.

## 147 **2.2. Relative rate measurements:**

148 In addition to the absolute measurements of Section 2.1., two relative rate techniques were used  
149 to determine the rate coefficient of Reaction 1, notably, the same DF-MS described earlier to  
150 make temperature-dependent measurements, but operated in a different mode; and a 7.3 m<sup>3</sup>  
151 Teflon atmospheric simulation chamber, used to make room-temperature measurements. These  
152 are described in the following subsections.

### 153 **2.2.1. Discharge-flow mass spectrometry:**

154 The DF-MS was used to determine the decay rate of EPB in the presence of a reference  
155 compound (Reaction 6), whose rate coefficient is already known:



157 Comparing these decay rates, the rate coefficient is determined from the following equation:

158 
$$\ln \left( \frac{[1,2\text{-epoxybutane}]_0}{[1,2\text{-epoxybutane}]_t} \right) = \frac{k_{1,2\text{-epoxybutane}}}{k_{\text{reference}}} \ln \left( \frac{[\text{reference}]_0}{[\text{reference}]_t} \right)$$
 Equation 2

159 where subscripts 0 and  $t$  refer to initial species concentrations at time 0 and time  $t$  respectively.  
160 In this case, the reference compound was *n*-butane, which has a well characterized temperature  
161 dependence over a large temperature range (231–1236 K).<sup>15</sup>

162 
$$k(T) = 2.09 \times 10^{-12} \exp\left(\frac{42}{T}\right) \left(\frac{T}{300}\right)^{1.82}$$
 Equation 3

163 Initial concentrations of EPB and *n*-butane were in the range 1.8–3.6 and  $0.9\text{--}2.0 \times 10^{12}$   
164 molecule cm<sup>-3</sup>, respectively. OH radicals were produced by Reaction (3) with [NO<sub>2</sub>] ≈  $5 \times 10^{13}$   
165 molecule cm<sup>-3</sup>. EPB and *n*-butane were monitored by mass spectrometry at their parent peaks

166 at  $m/z = 72$  and 58, respectively. A small contribution (3–4%) of EPB at  $m/z = 58$  was observed  
167 and was subtracted from the *n*-butane signal. In addition, an appearance of a small signal at  $m/z$   
168 = 72 (probably, as a result of *n*-butane secondary chemistry) was observed upon consumption  
169 of *n*-butane in its reaction with OH. The corresponding corrections applied to the EPB signal at  
170  $m/z = 72$  depended on the consumed fraction of *n*-butane and were  $\leq 20\%$ . Although the possible  
171 impact of secondary reactions of EPB and *n*-butane with organic radicals produced in Reactions  
172 (1) and OH + *n*-butane was not verified, it is expected to be insignificant, considering the  
173 relatively low initial concentrations of EPB and *n*-butane used in the experiments. The observed  
174 independence of the experimental results of the reaction time, which was varied from 0.02 to  
175 0.04 s, and their good agreement (within the region of overlap) with the data obtained for the  
176 other methods of this study supports this assumption. Another possible secondary loss of EPB/  
177 *n*-butane may be initiated by oxygen atoms formed in the self-reaction of OH radicals (see  
178 Reaction 7):



180 whose rate coefficient is as follows:

181  $k_7 = 2.68 \times 10^{-14} \times (T/300)^{2.75} \exp(1165/T) \text{ cm}^3 \text{ molecule}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$  ( $T=220\text{--}2384 \text{ K}$ ),<sup>25</sup> Equation 4

182 but this has a negligible effect on the concentrations of EPB and *n*-butane, because O-atoms are  
183 mainly consumed in the rapid reactions with OH radicals and NO<sub>2</sub> present in high  
184 concentrations in the reactor:



186  $k_8 = 6.1 \times 10^{-12} \exp(155/T) \text{ cm}^3 \text{ molecule}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$  ( $T = 220\text{--}950 \text{ K}$ ),<sup>26</sup> Equation 5



188  $k_9 = 1.8 \times 10^{-11} \exp(180/T) \text{ cm}^3 \text{ molecule}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$  ( $T = 136\text{--}515 \text{ K}$ ),<sup>27</sup> Equation 6

189 Examples of the observed plots of  $\ln([\text{EPB}]_0/[\text{EPB}]_t)$  against  $\ln([n\text{-butane}]_0/[n\text{-butane}]_t)$  are  
190 presented in Figure 3.

191 Relative rate measurements were also performed using Br<sub>2</sub> (Reaction 5) as a reference,  
192 conducted at a total pressure of 2–9 Torr and relied on determining the HOBr yield as a function  
193 of the [EPB]/[Br<sub>2</sub>] ratio upon OH consumption in reaction with a mixture of Br<sub>2</sub> and EPB.



194 The fraction of the initial concentration of OH radicals,  $[\text{OH}]_0$ , transformed to HOBr in  
195 Reaction 5, is:

$$196 \quad [\text{HOBr}] = \frac{k_5[\text{Br}_2]}{k_5[\text{Br}_2] + k_1[\text{EPB}] + k_w} \times [\text{OH}]_0 \quad \text{Equation 7}$$

197 After rearrangement of this expression we obtain:

$$198 \quad \frac{[\text{OH}]_0}{[\text{HOBr}]} - 1 = \frac{k_1[\text{EPB}]}{k_5[\text{Br}_2]} + \frac{k_w}{k_5[\text{Br}_2]} \quad \text{Equation 8}$$

199 At a constant concentration of  $\text{Br}_2$ , the second term in Equation 8 is constant and  $k_1/k_5$  can be  
200 determined as the slope of the linear dependence of  $([\text{OH}]_0/[\text{HOBr}] - 1)$  with  $[\text{EPB}]/[\text{Br}_2]$ . In  
201 these experiments, HOBr was monitored in both EPB-free system, corresponding to  $[\text{OH}]_0$ , and  
202 in the  $\text{Br}_2$ - and EPB-containing systems, corresponding to the fraction of  $[\text{OH}]_0$  reacted with  
203  $\text{Br}_2$ . Reaction time was 0.03–0.07 s,  $[\text{OH}]_0 = 2.5\text{--}6.0 \times 10^{11}$  molecule  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ , concentrations of  
204 EPB and  $\text{Br}_2$  are shown in (Table S3, SI).

### 205 **2.2.2. Atmospheric simulation chamber**

206 Relative rate measurements were also performed in the ICARE-CNRS chamber in 760 Torr of  
207 zero air bath gas at a temperature of  $291 \pm 2$  K. This chamber is  $7.3 \text{ m}^3$  in volume and has been  
208 described in detail in an earlier work,<sup>28</sup> and has been employed in several recent studies from  
209 our group.<sup>29,30</sup> The walls of the chamber are constructed of FEP Teflon foil and contains two  
210 Teflon fans to ensure that the chamber contents are well mixed. In these experiments, the  
211 chamber was illuminated at 365 nm using an array of  $24 \times \text{UV-A T-40 L}$ , Viber-Lourmat lamps,  
212 to generate OH through the following sequence of reactions:



216 In order to prevent the ingress of atmospheric contamination into the chamber through the  
217 permeability of the Teflon foil and any small leaks, experiments were performed at a slight  
218 overpressure using a continuous flow of zero air. As a consequence, chamber contents were  
219 gradually diluted over time. This was accounted for by monitoring an inert tracer ( $\text{SF}_6$ ), whose  
220 concentration was determined at regular intervals, using a multipass in-situ Fourier transform  
221 infrared spectrometer. Samples of reactants were introduced into the chamber through the

222 injection of known volumes of liquid samples introduced into a stream of zero air flowing  
223 through a Pyrex impinger.

224 In these experiments, the relative rate was determined using the following equation:

$$225 \ln \left( \frac{[1,2\text{-epoxybutane}]_0}{[1,2\text{-epoxybutane}]_t} \right) - k_d t = \frac{k_{1,2\text{-epoxybutane}}}{k_{\text{reference}}} \ln \left( \frac{[\text{reference}]_0}{[\text{reference}]_t} \right) - k_d t \quad \text{Equation 9}$$

226 which is similar to Equation 2, except that additional loss processes besides the reaction with  
227 OH (e.g. dilution, wall-loss and decomposition) are taken into account using the first-order term  
228  $k_d$ . Two reference compounds were selected for these experiments: 2-propanol and ethanol, and  
229 these, together with the EPB were monitored continuously using a PTR-ToF-MS 8000 (Ionicon  
230 Analytik) operated in  $\text{NH}_4^+$ ,<sup>31</sup> and  $\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$  modes. Both 2-propanol and ethanol have well-defined  
231 OH rate coefficients at 291 K, 5.32 and  $3.31 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ molecule}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ , respectively.<sup>15</sup>

## 232 **2.3 Materials:**

233 For DF-MS experiments: the purities of the gases used were as follows: He (>99.9995%,  
234 Alphagaz), passed through a liquid nitrogen trap;  $\text{H}_2$  (>99.998%, Alphagaz);  $\text{Br}_2$  (>99.99%,  
235 Aldrich);  $\text{NO}_2$  (>99%, Alphagaz), EPB (>98%, Aldrich), *n*-butane (>99.5%, Air Liquide). For  
236 PLP-LIF experiments: He carrier gas (Alphagaz, 99.999%) was taken directly from the cylinder  
237 without further purification. Hydrogen peroxide,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ , (50 wt%, Aldrich) was purified over  
238 the course of several days by bubbling with zero air. Gas-phase nitric acid was taken from the  
239 headspace of a sample of 70% redistilled nitric acid, which had been dehydrated through the  
240 dropwise addition of pure  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  added in a 1:2 ratio. Methyl nitrite was synthesized through  
241 the dropwise addition of 50%  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  into a continuously stirred saturated solution of  $\text{NaNO}_2$  in  
242 methanol maintained at 0°C, the effluent of which was swept through a water bubbler and a u-  
243 tube containing  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  using a slow flow of pure nitrogen, and trapped in a liquid nitrogen cold  
244 trap. For the atmospheric simulation chamber, ethanol (>99%, Aldrich) and 2-propanol (>99%,  
245 Aldrich) were used as references.

## 246 **3. Results:**

### 247 **3.1. Absolute measurements:**

#### 248 **3.1.1. PLP-LIF measurements:**

249 Absolute overall rate coefficients were determined at temperatures between 243 and 371 K and  
250 at pressures of ~100 Torr (He). Concentrations of EPB ranged from 0.33 to  $16.6 \times 10^{15} \text{ molecule}$   
251  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ . Initial OH concentrations,  $[\text{OH}]_0$ , varied from 2 to  $50 \times 10^{10} \text{ molecule cm}^{-3}$ . A summary

252 of results together with experimental conditions are given in Table S1. Typical examples of  
253 second-order plots of  $k'$  vs [EPB] are shown in Figure 1. Under the pseudo-first-order conditions  
254 of our study, single exponential decays of OH were observed in all cases, with low scatter  
255 indicating no apparent complications of secondary chemistry or OH recycling. Second-order  
256 plots displayed good linearity in all cases, indicating that [EPB] was determined precisely and  
257 that no apparent heterogeneous or dimerization processes were perturbing the mixing ratio or  
258 reactivity of the reaction mixture.

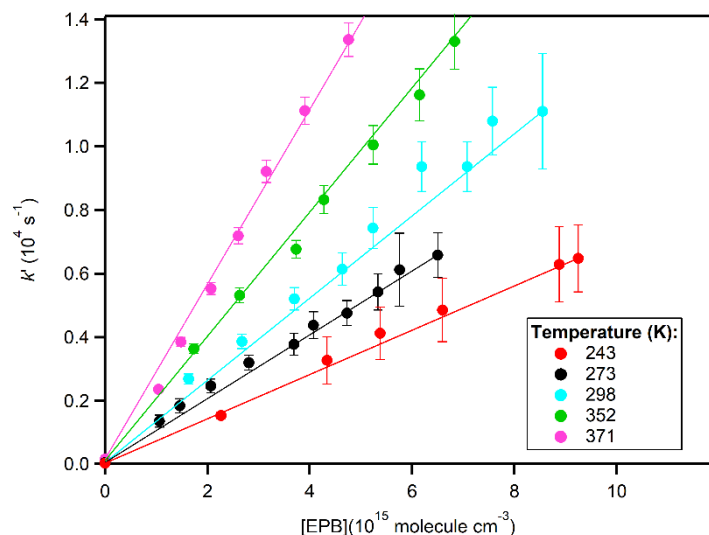
259 Combined uncertainties of rate coefficients were estimated to be <10%, accounting for  
260 statistical error in  $k'$  (~3%), EPB infrared cross section (5%), pressure (2%), temperature (2%).

### 261 3.1.2. DF-MS measurements:

262 Absolute rate coefficients were measured over a temperature range of 298–720 K at pressures  
263 between 2.0 and 2.2 Torr (He). [EPB] was varied between 0.5 and  $20 \times 10^{13}$  molecule  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ .  
264  $[\text{OH}]_0$  ranged from  $2\text{--}4 \times 10^{11}$  molecule  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ . As with the PLP–LIF measurements, high quality  
265 single exponential decays were observed in all cases, examples of which are shown in Figure  
266 S5. All the pseudo-first order rate constants were corrected for axial and radial diffusion of OH  
267 radicals<sup>32</sup> with the diffusion coefficient of OH in He calculated as  $D_0 = 660 \times (T/298)^{1.85}$  Torr  
268  $\text{cm}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$ ,<sup>33</sup> which accounted for <11% of the observed  $k'$  values. These data are tabulated in  
269 Table S2.

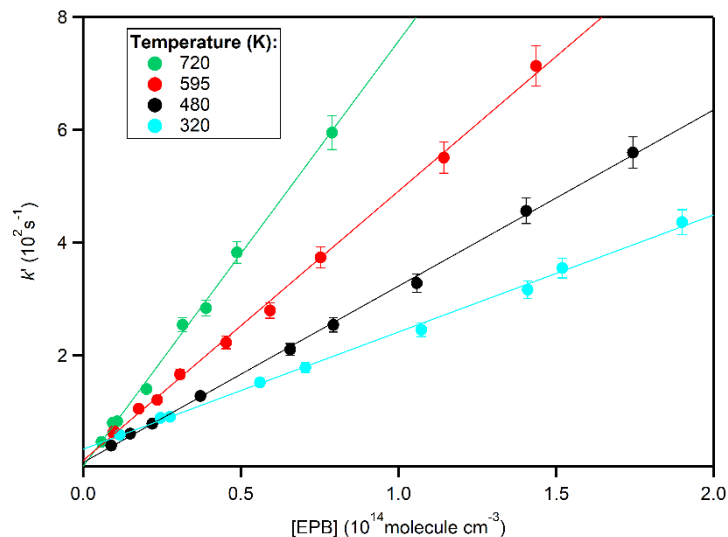
270 Second-order plots obtained using the DF-MS method are shown in Figure 2. The y-intercepts  
271 in Figure 2 arise from wall-loss processes,  $k_w$ , are  $10 \pm 5 \text{ s}^{-1}$  over the temperature range 480 to  
272 720 K. At 320 K, this value rises to  $34 \pm 4 \text{ s}^{-1}$ , which we attribute to surface contamination with  
273 EPB or its oxidation products. Enhanced wall-losses were observed for both halocarbon wax-  
274 coated ( $T < 298 \text{ K}$ ) and uncoated quartz reactors ( $T < 430 \text{ K}$ ), and for this reason, these  
275 temperatures were used as lower temperature limits for these respective reactors in the absolute  
276 measurements of  $k_1$ . Conversely, at temperatures  $>720 \text{ K}$ , some evidence of thermal  
277 decomposition of EPB is observed in the appearance of signals at  $m/z = 94/96$  and  $108/110$   
278 which can be assigned to  $\text{CH}_3\text{Br}$ ,  $\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{Br}$ , or fragments of potentially higher-mass products,  
279 and which could affect the absolute kinetic determinations, and was therefore considered to be  
280 an upper temperature limit for the absolute measurements of this study.

281 Combined uncertainties of rate coefficient determinations were estimated to be <15%,  
282 accounting for statistical error ( $\leq 5\%$ ), determination of [EPB] ( $\sim 10\%$ ), mass flow (3%),  
283 pressure (2%) and temperature (1%).



284

285 **Figure 1.** Dependence of the pseudo-first-order rate constant ( $k'$ ) on [1,2-epoxybutane] at  
286 different temperatures obtained in PLP-LIF system. Error bars represent  $2\sigma$  statistical  
287 uncertainties.



288

289 **Figure 2.** Pseudo-first-order rate constant ( $k_1'$ ) as a function of [1,2-epoxybutane] at different  
290 temperatures obtained in the DF-MS system. Partially shown error bars represent typical  
291 uncertainties ( $\leq 5\%$ ) on the determination of  $k_1'$ .

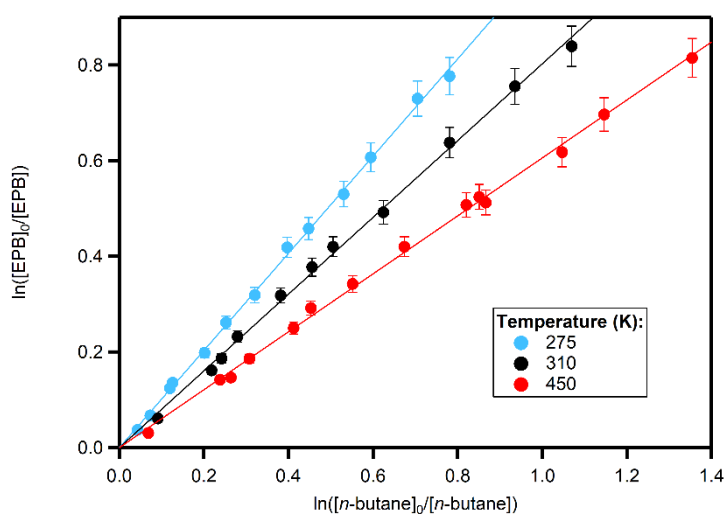
## 292 3.2. Relative rate measurements:

### 293 3.2.1. DF-MS measurements:

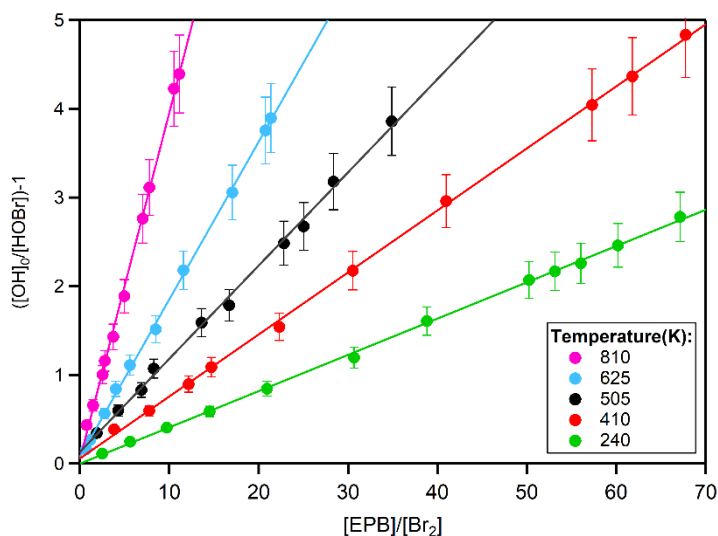
294 In order to extend the temperature range of the measurements of  $k_1$ , we used the DF-MS  
295 apparatus to make relative rate measurements, using both *n*-butane and Br<sub>2</sub> as reference  
296 compounds. Total pressures in the flow-tube ranged from 2–9 Torr (He). In the case of *n*-butane,  
297 rate coefficients were determined at temperatures between 275 and 950 K, and for Br<sub>2</sub>, between  
298 240 and 810 K. Linear relative rate plots were observed in each case, some examples of which  
299 are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

300 Final values of  $k_1$ , calculated using experimentally determined  $k_1/k_{\text{ref}}$  ratios. See Table S3 for  
301 tabulated data of measurements with the Br<sub>2</sub> reference and Table S4 for the *n*-butane reference.

302 The temperature dependence of OH + *n*-butane and OH + Br<sub>2</sub> are both well-established over  
303 the temperature range of these measurements.<sup>15,22</sup> Therefore, we estimate ~15% combined  
304 uncertainty in the DF-MS relative rate measurements, accounting for ~10% uncertainty in the  
305 reference rate coefficients, combined with uncertainties in temperature (1%) and statistical  
306 uncertainty in the relative rate, EPB/reference decomposition and heterogeneous loss (<5%).



307  
308 **Figure 3.** Relative rate plot showing the linear dependence of  $\ln([EPB]_0/[EPB])$  with  $\ln(n$ -  
309 butane)<sub>0</sub>/ $[n$ -butane]) observed at T = 275, 310 and 450 K. Error bars represent the statistical  
310 errors (<5%) in the relative rate.



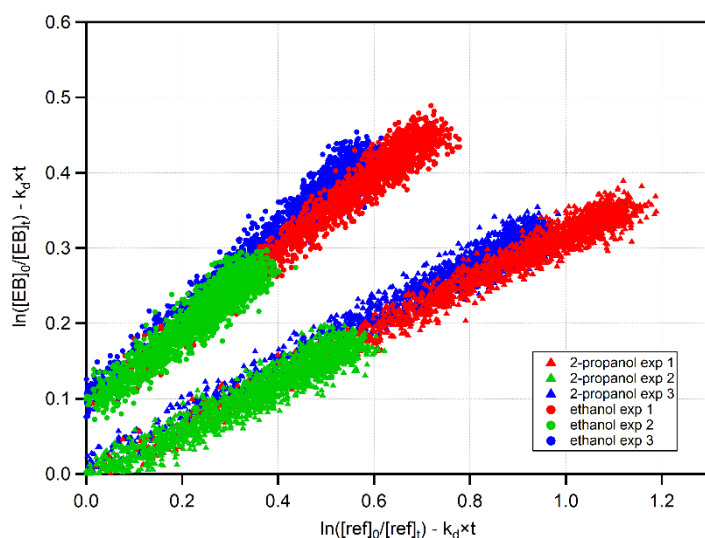
311

312 **Figure 4.** An alternative relative rate approach, monitoring the yield of HOBr from OH-radical  
 313 titration with Br<sub>2</sub> + 1,2-epoxybutane mixtures at different temperatures. Error bars represent  
 314 typical uncertainties of the measurements (<10%).

### 315 3.2.2. Atmospheric simulation chamber measurements:

316 As a further test, and to reduce the potential effects of wall interactions, a series of experiments  
 317 was conducted in a 7.3 m<sup>3</sup> simulation chamber at 760 Torr of zero air and a temperature of  
 318 291±2K. Relative rate plots were found to be linear, with intercepts close to the origin in all  
 319 cases (see Figure 5). Relative rates measured with both 2-propanol and ethanol as reference  
 320 compounds were found to be in excellent agreement (1.70±0.14) and (1.71±0.11) ×10<sup>-12</sup> cm<sup>3</sup>  
 321 molecule<sup>-1</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>, respectively, leading to a weighted-average value of (1.70±0.12) ×10<sup>-12</sup> cm<sup>3</sup>  
 322 molecule<sup>-1</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>. These data are tabulated in Table S5.

323



324

325 **Figure 5.** Plots of relative kinetic data obtained from the reaction of 1,2-epoxybutane + OH  
 326 using ethanol and 2-propanol as the reference compounds. For clarity, ethanol experiments  
 327 have been offset by 0.1.

328 **4. Discussion:**

329 All the kinetic measurements of this study are shown in Figure 6, together with the sole  
 330 literature room-temperature measurement of which we are aware.<sup>34</sup> All measurements of this  
 331 study – within their respective overlap regions – were found to be in close agreement, and were  
 332 also found to agree with the literature relative rate determination. The curvature observed in the  
 333 data was fitted using the following modified Arrhenius expression, and is valid over the  
 334 temperature range 220–950 K:

335

336  $k_1 = 1.72 \times 10^{-14} \times \exp(1407/T)(T/300)^{4.8} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ molecule}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$  Equation 10

337

338 From Figure 6, it is apparent that the reaction of OH with EPB demonstrates clear non-  
 339 Arrhenius behaviour. Indeed, this appears to be a general rule for oxygenates, wherever precise  
 340 kinetic information is available over an extensive temperature range.<sup>35</sup> The main explanation  
 341 for this phenomenon is the formation of cyclic hydrogen-bonded van der Waals (vdW)  
 342 complexes, otherwise referred to as pre-reactive complexes. These structures can be stabilized  
 343 into potential energy wells of ~5–33 kJ mol<sup>-1</sup> for alcohols, ethers, aldehydes, ketones, esters  
 344 and carboxylic acids.<sup>36,37</sup> The general mechanism by which vdW complexes increase the rate  
 345 coefficient can be rationalized by the prolonged contact time between OH and the oxygenated  
 346 co-reactant, which is afforded by stabilization into the pre-reactive complex energy well, and

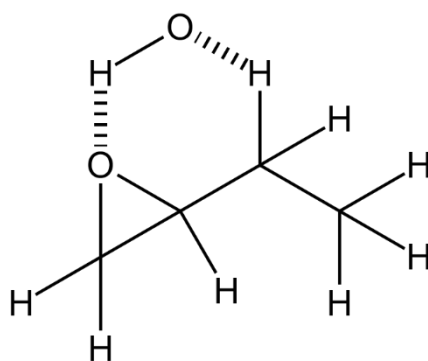
347 which therefore provides a greater probability for quantum tunnelling processes to occur. There  
348 are several factors that determine the magnitude of this effect as a function of temperature. This  
349 relates to the binding energy of the vdW complex, which limits the lifetime of a complex at a  
350 given temperature. For strongly bound vdW complexes such as those between OH and  
351 carboxylic acids,<sup>37</sup> a dominantly negative temperature dependence can be observed even at 575  
352 K for the reaction of OH with acetic acid.<sup>38</sup> In contrast, for weakly bound vdW complexes, such  
353 as those between OH and ketones, the onset at which a negative temperature dependence is  
354 observed in the Arrhenius diagram can be at much lower temperatures. Another aspect that can  
355 affect the tunnelling process is the entropic cost of forming the vdW. It has been observed, for  
356 example, that several vdW complexes can form for the reactions of larger species such as *n*-  
357 butanol + OH, and where it can be seen that even though the geometry may be favourable for  
358 larger cyclic vdW structures, the entropic cost of shutting down more free rotors within a  
359 molecule will reduce the overall favourability of forming the vdW complex. This results in the  
360 C–H bonds that are directly adjacent to the alcohol substitution being more reactive despite  
361 possessing a larger ring-strain associated with the 5-membered ring structure,<sup>39</sup> an observation  
362 that has been borne out by experimental kinetic<sup>20</sup> and product studies.<sup>40</sup> A further factor  
363 affecting the importance of vdW complexes is the width of the barrier going towards products,  
364 whereby quantum tunnelling becomes less probable in the case of broader barriers. This has  
365 been demonstrated experimentally by the pronounced preference of hydrogen abstraction from  
366 the O–H bond in methanol at very low temperatures, which involves traversing a high (yet  
367 narrow) barrier towards forming the methoxy radical + H<sub>2</sub>O.<sup>41</sup> On a related theme, the overall  
368 bond-strength of a given reactive site may also play a role in the reactivity of a given C–H bond.  
369 In the case of 2-butanol, for example, the alpha tertiary hydrogen atom is especially weak (92.9  
370 kcal/mol),<sup>42,43</sup> which is estimated to account for 63% of the overall reactivity of the molecule  
371 at room temperature.<sup>20</sup> In contrast, the reactivity of the two alpha secondary hydrogen atoms in  
372 *n*-butanol are slightly stronger (93.2 kcal/mol),<sup>42,43</sup> and only account for 28% of the total room  
373 temperature rate coefficient on a per hydrogen basis.<sup>20</sup>

374 However, it is acknowledged that negative temperature dependence has been observed  
375 experimentally in several other metathesis reactions, notably those of alkyl radicals with  
376 hydrogen halides.<sup>44</sup> Subsequently, this temperature-dependent behaviour was rationalized  
377 through a modified transition state theory (MTST), which, when applied to systems with  
378 negative apparent activation energies, can explain negative temperature dependence without  
379 invoking statistical intermediate complexes.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore MTST predicts the transition from



380 negative to positive temperature dependence in several reactions, similar to that observed in our  
381 case for OH + EPB.<sup>45,46</sup>

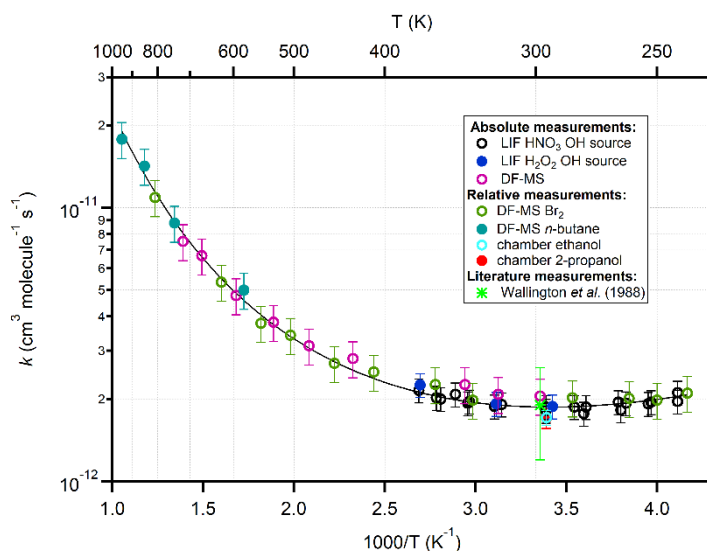
382 The EPB measurements of this study represent the first measurements of the reaction of an  
383 epoxide with OH over an extended temperature range. To provide a context for what we  
384 observe, we show in Figure 7 an Arrhenius diagram of several other molecules, each of which  
385 have been measured over an extended temperature range, and like EPB, possess 8 C–H bonds.<sup>15</sup>  
386 When the temperature dependence is compared with that of what we could take to be a base  
387 case alkane-like reactivity of OH + propane, it becomes apparent that the epoxide functionality  
388 does not impart a strong increase in the overall reactivity of this molecule. This contrasts  
389 markedly with acyclic ethers such as methyl ethyl ether, which is significantly more reactive  
390 than propane across the entire temperature range. An even more potent effect is observed for  
391 the reaction of *n*-butanal, which can at least in part be explained by the relative weakness of the  
392 aldehydic C–H bond. Conversely, the temperature dependence of EPB appears to be somewhere  
393 intermediate between the alcohols and alkanes. As explained above, there are several potential  
394 reasons for this. We note that the C–H bonds are relatively strong directly adjacent to the  
395 epoxide ring: 102 and 103 kcal/mol for the tertiary and secondary sites respectively, and the  
396 most favourable reaction site is probably the remaining secondary C–H bonds, which possess  
397 a BDE of 95.9 kcal/mol.<sup>42,43</sup> Assuming this to be the case and that the curvature that is observed  
398 is indeed associated with the formation of a vdW complex, we can hypothesize that such a  
399 configuration would lead to a bicyclic structure such as this:



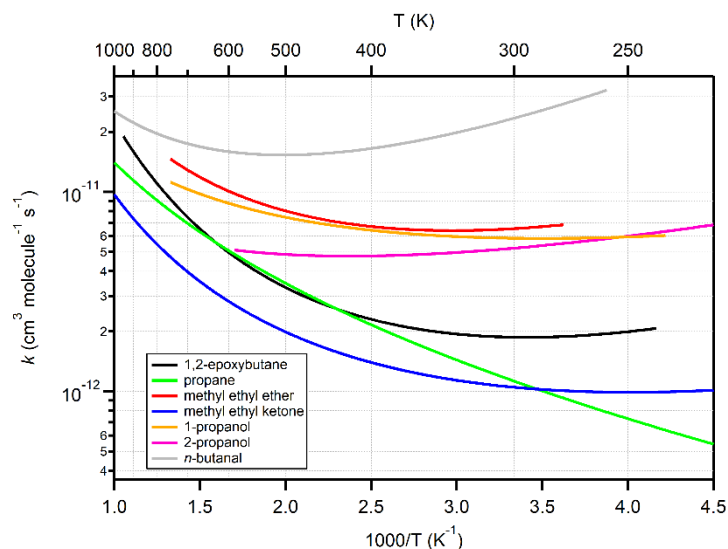
400  
401 which would restrict the rotation of the epoxide group, the formation of which is entropically  
402 costly and becomes favourable only at low temperatures. We expect that detailed theoretical  
403 calculations would be useful in constraining this mechanism further; however, this is outside  
404 the scope of the present study. In addition, it would be valuable to obtain quantitative product  
405 yield data, especially as a function of temperature, since it has been demonstrated in some  
406 oxygenated systems such as *i*-butanol, that a relatively temperature independent region of the

407 Arrhenius diagram can be underlain by several more temperature-dependent reaction channels  
408 offsetting each other.<sup>47</sup>

409 With regards to the atmospheric implications of epoxide chemistry, based on the EPB + OH  
410 kinetics, it would appear that the epoxide functionality does not enhance reactivity strongly in  
411 the tropospheric temperature range, and simple epoxides such as this may react at similar rates  
412 to alkanes. For more functionalized epoxides such as the IEPOX derivatives, larger rate  
413 coefficients are observed, which is likely to relate to the enhanced reactivity of the functional  
414 groups to which the epoxide moiety is attached.<sup>48,49</sup> It is therefore probable that for simple  
415 epoxides and those epoxides that possess deactivating functional groups such as ketones, that  
416 acid-catalyzed ring-opening becomes highly competitive with oxidative loss under tropospheric  
417 conditions. Conversely, for more functionalized epoxides, reaction with OH may represent an  
418 important sink.



419  
420 **Figure 6.** Summary of the OH + 1,2-epoxybutane rate coefficients obtained in this work,  
421 together with the sole room-temperature literature determination. The line represents an error-  
422 weighted fit to all data (see Equation 10). Error bars represent the total combined uncertainties  
423 for each determination (see Results section).



424  
 425 **Figure 7.** Arrhenius diagram comparing the temperature dependence of the OH + 1,2-  
 426 epoxybutane rate coefficient with analogous molecules possessing 8 C–H bonds taken from a  
 427 recently compile kinetic database.<sup>15</sup>

## 428 5. Conclusions:

429 Absolute and relative measurements of the rate coefficient of 1,2-epoxybutane + OH have been  
 430 determined over a temperature range between 220 and 950 K. Excellent agreement between  
 431 these measurements and techniques was observed in their respective regions of overlap. The  
 432 high precision of the measurements combined with the large temperature range allows us to  
 433 observe the non-Arrhenius behaviour of this rate coefficient. This represents the first epoxide  
 434 whose rate coefficient has been measured over an extended temperature range, which provides  
 435 new insights into the reactivity of the epoxide functional group. Curvature is observed at the  
 436 lower temperatures of this study, which suggests that van der Waals complexes are playing a  
 437 role in the reaction mechanism within the tropospheric temperature range. The data obtained  
 438 for this simple epoxide suggests that the epoxide moiety itself is not especially reactive, and  
 439 that the fate of more functionalized epoxides with respect to bimolecular processes in the  
 440 atmosphere is likely to be governed by the reactivity of functional groups to which the epoxide  
 441 is attached. Detailed theoretical calculations and quantitative product yield studies would be  
 442 useful in understanding the reaction mechanism further.

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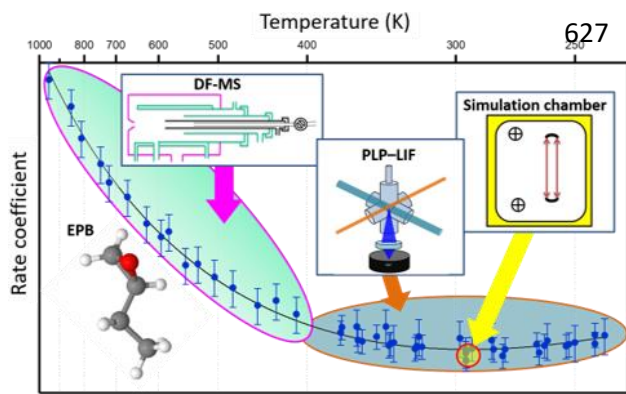
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