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Y Cressault, Ph Teulet, X Baumann, G Vanhulle, N Kabbaj, et al.. STATE OF ART AND CHAL-LENGES FOR THE CALCULATION OF RADIATIVE AND TRANSPORT PROPERTIES OF THERMAL PLASMAS IN HVCB. Symposium on physics of switching arc (FSO 2019), Sep 2019, Brno (Rép. Tchèque), Czech Republic. 10.14311/ppt.2019.X.1. hal-04880273

## HAL Id: hal-04880273 https://hal.science/hal-04880273v1

Submitted on 10 Jan2025

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### STATE OF ART AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CALCULATION OF RADIATIVE AND TRANSPORT PROPERTIES OF THERMAL PLASMAS IN HVCB

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**Abstract.** This paper is focused on the state-of-the-art and challenges concerning the thermophysical properties of thermal plasmas used in numerical modelling devoted to high voltage circuit breakers. For Local Thermodynamic Equilibrium (LTE) and Non-Local Thermodynamic (NLTE) and/or Chemical Equilibrium (NLCE) plasmas, the methods used to calculate the composition, thermodynamic, transport and radiative properties are presented. A review of these last data is proposed and some comparisons are given for illustrations.

Keywords: HVCB, chemical composition, transport coefficients, radiative properties, NLTE.

#### 1. Introduction

Due to the cost of the experimental tests for HVCB, 2 more and more numerical modelling is developed in 3 order to compare the interruption capability of gases 4 or mixtures with lower ODP than  $SF_6$  (CF<sub>3</sub>I, CO<sub>2</sub>, 5  $C_4F_7N$  with Air,  $N_2$  or  $O_2$ ), to optimize the efficiency 6 of the process by using new designs, new electrodes or new walls, or simply to better understand the physical 8 and chemical processes in the plasma. q To develop the simulation of a high voltage circuit 10 breaker using magneto-hydro-dynamic models (MHD), 11 it is necessary to elaborate databanks of fundamental 12 properties: the thermodynamic properties, the trans-13 port coefficients, and the radiative properties, these 14 data being used in the different equations of conserva-15 tion: mass conservation, momentum conservation and 16 energy conservation. Depending on the region of the 17 plasma (near the electrodes, near the walls, in the sur-18 rounding gases, in the core of the plasma), depending 19 on the pressure and the temperature, depending on 20 the intensity or power (ignition of the arc or its cooling 21 and extinction), presence of turbulence or not, the 22 Local Thermodynamic Equilibrium (LTE) hypothesis 23 can be assumed or not when non-equilibrium effects 24 appears. Consequently, the numerical simulations 25 have to be performed considering nonequilibrium phe-26 nomena, which are done using the two-temperature 27 assumption. In this we usually distinguish the elec-28 tron kinetic temperature  ${\cal T}_e$  which characterizes the 29 high temperatures area of the plasma, while the heavy 30 particles kinetic temperature  $T_h$  describes low tem-31 perature regions. 32

This paper tries to make a state of the art and to present the challenges on the calculation of the properties of plasmas used in HVCB, in the case of LTE and non-LTE assumptions. The first part is devoted 36 to properties of plasmas in LTE conditions with a 37 summarize of the gases studied as alternative gases or 38 mixtures to  $SF_6$  and of the methods used to estimate 39 the composition, the thermodynamic, transport and 40 radiative properties. As the expressions available in 41 the literature are accepted by the community in the 42 case of LTE assumption, we will remember the recent 43 works done on new mixtures and radiative proper-44 ties. The second part is focused on the 2T-properties 45 of plasmas in non-local thermodynamic equilibrium 46 (nLTE) and/or non-local chemical equilibrium (nLCE). 47 Few works have been done on this topic and lot of 48 questions remain. We make a brief overview of the 49 recent papers dealing with the 2T-properties applied 50 to HVCB and finish the paper by indicating some 51 challenges to solve. 52

#### 2. Plasma in LTE conditions

For the HVCB applications, the first studies were 54 devoted to the description of the heat zone, corre-55 sponding to the ignition of the arc in the first instants 56 after the opening of the contacts. The plasma is as-57 sumed to be in Local Thermodynamic Equilibrium, 58 the thermal properties are calculated with or without 59 metallic vapors coming from the erosion of the elec-60 trodes (Cu, W, CuW), with or without thermoplastic 61 vapors coming from the erosion of the nozzle  $(C_2F_4)$ . 62 The LTE properties have been calculated for lots of 63 pure gases or mixtures  $(SF_6, N_2, Air, CO_2, CF_3I)$ 64  $[1, 2], CF_4, C_3F_8, C_4F_8, c-C_4F_8, C_4F_7N, C_4F_8N_2,$ 65 C<sub>5</sub>F<sub>10</sub>, C<sub>6</sub>F<sub>12</sub>O, CF<sub>3</sub>NSF<sub>2</sub>, SF<sub>6</sub>-N<sub>2</sub>, SF<sub>6</sub>-CO<sub>2</sub>, SF<sub>6</sub>-66  $CF_4$ ,  $C_2F_4$ - $CO_2$ ,  $C_4F_8$ - $CO_2$  [3–5],  $CO_2$ - $N_2$ -Cu [6], 67  $SF_6-Cu$  [7–9],  $C_5F_{10}O-CO_2-O_2$  [10]. The plasma com-68 position is the first and unavoidable step allowing 69

the computation of these properties, and is obtained 70 from the law of mass action and the chemical base 71 concept defined by Godin and Trépanier [11]. This 72 technique is derived from the laws of thermodynamics 73 and condensed phases are sometimes considered in the 74 calculation of the population densities. Virial [12] and 75 Debye [13] pressure corrections are often considered 76 at high pressure (P > 10 bars) where the perfect gas 77 law has to be replaced by a real gas law. 78

The thermodynamic properties (mass density, en-79 thalpy, and specific heat at constant pressure) are 80 directly deduced from the plasma compositions. Some 81 results are given in [2-9] and behaviors are explained 82 versus temperature, mixtures and pressure. The trans-83 port coefficients (viscosity, thermal and electrical con-84 ductivities) are obtained according to the Chapman-85 Enskog method and a previous calculation of collision 86 integrals depending on the interaction potentials cho-87 sen to characterize the different collisions between par-88 ticles (neutral-neutral, ion-neutral, electron-neutral 89 and charged-charged collisions). The study of the 90 collision integrals constitutes the most important part 91 of the calculation of the transport coefficients and are 92 often responsible for the differences observed between 93 the authors [2-13]. 94

The radiative losses play an important role in the 95 HVCB arc plasmas: this is the main term of energy 96 losses in the central region of the arc, the absorption 97 in the surrounding plasma and cold gas leads to an 98 increase of the pressure, it is responsible of the PTFE 99 ablation influencing the behavior and the extinction of 100 the plasma. The divergence of the flux is obtained by 101 solving the radiative transfer equation which depends 102 on the wavelengths, directions, and the geometry of 103 the plasma. Due to the complexity of this equation, 104 several simplifying approaches have been developed 105 during the last decades such as the method of the 106 net emission coefficient (NEC) initially proposed by 107 Lowke and first calculated for  $SF_6$  by Liebermann 108 and Lowke [14, 15], then by Aubrecht and Barlova 109 or Gleizes et al. [16, 17]. In order to treat efficiently 110 the radiative transfer in the middle or cold regions, 111 the P1-Model or discrete ordinates methods are often 112 preferred using grey body approximation or Mean 113 Absorption Coefficients (MACs) [18–22]. Then, due to 114 rise of the computer's capacity, some works have been 115 developed on pure  $SF_6$  in order to perform an exact 116 calculation of the radiative transfer equation with a 117 very fine description of the spectrum, evaluating the 118 accuracy and the validity of the simplified methods 119 by comparisons. A quick review has been presented 120 during the FSO conference in 2011 by A. Gleizes et 121 al. [23]. Since, more studies on the radiative transfer 122 equation have been done for pure gases ( $SF_6$ , N2, Air, 123 CO2), binary mixtures (SF<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>2</sub>F<sub>4</sub>, C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>8</sub>-CO<sub>2</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>-124 Cu [3, 24]) and ternary mixtures (SF<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>2</sub>F<sub>4</sub>-Cu/W) 125 in 1D-2D-3D geometry with imposed temperatures 126 profiles [25-28]. An example is given in Figure 1 for 127 the divergence of the flux for a  $SF_6$  pure plasma at 128



Figure 1. Divergence of the flux for a  $SF_6$  pure plasma at 0.1 MPa, obtained with different approached methods [1].

1bar, obtained with different approached methods [1].

129

130

From these studies, some conclusions can be done: 131 (1) for the equilibrium composition and thermody-132 namic functions, the methods are well-known and 133 valid, maybe questionable for plasmas at very high 134 pressure and low temperature; (2) for transport coef-135 ficients, the interaction potentials have a significant 136 influence on the values obtained and validation is 137 done through other parameters such as the pressure 138 for the thermal conductivity. A very small concen-139 tration of metallic vapors (>1%) strongly influences 140 the electrical conductivity whereas viscosity and ther-141 mal conductivity are modified with concentration of 142 metals or PTFE higher than 20-25%. Consequently, 143 it is important to consider those coefficients in the 144 conservation equations if we want to study the plasma 145 regions where the ablation/erosion of walls and elec-146 trodes is important; (3) for the radiative transfer, 147 some differences can be observed on the NEC when 148 estimated using the escape factor approximation in-149 stead of the line by line method (more than 40% of 150 difference can be observed at very high pressure > 100151 bar [25]). 152

In LTE conditions, the challenges on thermal prop-153 erties are mainly "driven" by the use of new alternative 154 gases to  $SF_6$  (CO<sub>2</sub>,  $CF_3I$ , c-C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>8</sub>, C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>7</sub>N, C<sub>5</sub>F<sub>10</sub>O, 155  $C_6F_{12}O$ ,  $CF_3NSF_2$ , pure gases or mixed with  $CO_2$ , 156  $CF_4$ ,  $C_2F_4$ ,  $O_2$ ,  $N_2$ , air) or by the use of new mate-157 rials for the manufacturing of electrodes or nozzles 158 (Cu, W, CuW which have an important impact on the 159 electrical conductivity and the radiation even if in few 160 concentration). Some numerical modelling have been 161 developed to study the influence of the erosion of elec-162 trodes or ablation of nozzle on the arc behavior from 163 its ignition to its extinction [29–34]. The radiative 164 transfer calculation with simplified methods can be 165 improved following four ways: a better treatment of 166 the absorption coefficients for molecules [26]; a careful 167 definition of the spectral intervals for the calculation 168

of the Mean Absorption Coefficients as in their works 169 of Jan et al., Norborg and Iordanidis or Klock et al. 170 [26, 27, 35]; the elaboration of MACs tables from a 171 mix of the different mean functions (Planck averag-172 ing at high temperature considering the absorption of 173 the lines, and mean natural value at low temperature 174 with only continuum contribution) [26]; the use of 175 an optimized function based on the minimization of 176 the difference between the exact calculation of the 177 radiative flux or the divergence of the flux and the 178 results obtained with simplified methods [36–38]. 179

# 3. Plasma in nLTE and/or nLCE conditions

In many plasma processes, departures from thermal or 182 chemical equilibrium exist on the edges of the plasma 183 and close to the walls and the electrodes. For exam-184 ple, in the case of breaking devices and during the 185 current zero phase, the electron number density is not 186 very significant, the energy transfer between the elec-187 trons and the heavy particles is not enough efficient 188 to preserve thermal equilibrium. As a consequence, 189 the electron kinetic temperature  $T_e$  is higher than the 190 heavy particles temperature  $T_h$ , and two-temperature 191 models must be developed. The recent papers propose 192 two equations of energy conservation: one for the elec-193 trons and the other for the heavy species [39]. These 194 models require the computation of thermodynamic, 195 transport and radiative properties as a function of  $T_e$ 196 and  $\theta = T_e/T_h$  and the first step to obtain these data 197 is, as in the case of LTE, the calculation of the 2T 198 plasma composition. 199

There are several available theories in the literature 200 to calculate the densities of species for non-equilibrium 201 plasmas: (i) the minimization of a thermodynamic 202 function (Gibbs' free enthalpy for plasma at constant 203 pressure or Helmholtz's free energy at constant vol-204 ume), (ii) the method based upon the 2T mass action 205 law (LMA) assuming the chemical equilibrium and 206 coupled with a set of equations for the conservation 207 of pressure, electrical charge and mixture proportions 208 and (iii) a collisional radiative models (CR) or a chem-209 ical kinetic model (CK) coupled with an equation for 210 the conservation of pressure. These methods give the 211 same results in LTE but present strong differences if 212 the plasma is not in equilibrium, depending on the 213 temperatures affected the processes: the translation 214 kinetic temperatures of electrons and heavy particles 215  $T_e$  and  $T_h$ , the temperatures characteristic of the pop-216 ulation of the various internal energy modes i.e. exci-217 tation temperature  $T_{ex}$  associated to the population of 218 excited electronic states (atomic and molecular), the 219 vibration temperature  $T_v$  linked to the distribution 220 of vibrational levels and the rotation temperature  $T_r$ 221 related to the population of rotational states. The 222 LMA method is relatively easy to implement in numer-223 ical codes, and requires few data (partition functions, 224 enthalpies of formation at 0K of each chemical species 225 and mass of species). The collisional-radiative (CR) 226



Figure 2. Electron number densities versus electronic temperature  $T_e$  (CK: chemical kinetic model, LMA : law of mass action). Pure SF<sub>6</sub>,  $\theta = 5$ , P = 1bar.

and chemical kinetic (CK) models have advantages 227 to reduce simplifying assumptions in the calculation. 228 Moreover, the CK model allows studying the temporal 229 chemical dynamic of the system. Nevertheless, a large 230 databank of reaction rates or cross sections for each 231 chemical process are needed. Relations between cross 232 sections and reaction rates are well known for plas-233 mas in thermal equilibrium conditions but are more 234 complex for non-LTE plasmas. Indeed, electrons and 235 heavy particles involved in chemical reactions have 236 not the same temperature  $(T_e \text{ and } T_h)$  and are not 237 described statistically by the same distribution func-238 tions. The temporal evolution of densities for each 239 chemical species is given by a set of master equations: 240

$$\frac{\partial n_i}{\partial t} = C_i - n_i D_i \tag{1}$$

where  $C_i$  and  $D_i$  are respectively the creation and 241 destruction factors for the specie i. They depend 242 on the densities of species participating at the cre-243 ation/destruction of specie i through the chemical 244 reaction and on the reaction rates of chemical reac-245 tions involved. Using relations between forward and 246 reverse reaction rates, we used the library DVODE to 247 solve the system formed (Eq. 1). The recent works 248 of the team compared these methods in the case of 249 pure  $SF_6$  [40–42] and mixture  $SF_6$ - $C_2F_4$ . We used 250 two different assumptions concerning the population 251 of internal energy modes: case (1) with  $T_{ex} = T_e$ , 252  $T_v = T_e$  and  $T_r = T_h$  more adapted to ionized gases 253 (high temperatures), and case (2)  $T_{ex} = T_h, T_v = T_h$ 254 and  $T_r = T_h$  more adapted to molecular gases (low 255 temperatures). The figure 2 compares the electron 256 number densities versus the electronic temperature  $T_e$ 257  $(\theta = T_e/T_h = 5)$ , for pure SF<sub>6</sub> at 1bar, and obtained 258 from the CK and LMA methods. 259

The thermodynamic properties of 2T plasma are deduced from relations given Colombo et al. [43, 44] which propose to calculate a unique 2T specific heat  $C_p$  as the derivative of the total enthalpy  $H_{tot} = 263$  $H_e + H_h$  compared to the electronic temperature  $T_e$ : 264



Figure 3. Mass density  $\rho$  versus electronic temperature  $T_e$  for pure SF<sub>6</sub> plasma, for  $\theta = 5$  and pressure of 1bar.



Figure 4. Specific heat at constant pressure of electrons  $C_{Pe}$  versus electronic temperature  $T_e$  for pure SF<sub>6</sub>, for  $\theta = 5$  and pressure of 1bar.

$$C_P(\theta, T_e) = \left(\frac{\partial H_{tot}}{\partial T_e}\right)_P \tag{2}$$

As energetic contributions of electrons and heavies 265 are separated in numerical codes through two coupled 266 energy conservation equations, it is necessary to cal-267 culate independently the enthalpy of electron  $H_e$  and 268 heavy particles  $H_h$ , the specific heats of electrons  $C_{Pe}$ 269 and heavy species  $C_{Ph}$ : 270

$$C_{Pe}(\theta, T_e) = \left(\frac{\partial H_e}{\partial T_e}\right)_P \tag{3}$$

$$C_{Ph}(\theta, T_e) = \left(\frac{\partial H_h}{\partial T_h}\right)_P \tag{4}$$

This separation of the specific heat in two distinct 271 contributions for electrons and heavy species is also 272 the approach retained by Ghorui et al. [45, 46] or 273 Zhang et al. [47]. The figures 3 shows the mass 274 density of pure  $SF_6$  obtained from the LMA and CK 275 for the two cases,  $\theta = 5$  and 1bar. The figures 4 and 5 276 present the two specific heats in the same conditions. 277 The law of mass action is in dashed lines and the 278 chemical kinetic method in full lines. 279

With the CK model, there is a transition between 280 both cases of the LMA. We can conclude that the 281



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Figure 5. Specific heat at constant pressure of heavy particles  $C_{Ph}$  versus electronic temperature  $T_e$  for pure  $SF_6$ , for  $\theta = 5$  and pressure of 1bar.

25000

Te (K)

30000

35000

40000

45000

50000

10

5000

10000

15000

20000

LMA taken in the case 1 is accurate for the high 282 temperatures and in the case 2 for the low temperature range. In high temperatures, there is lot of electrons and the inelastic processes are dominated by electron collisions and have to be calculated at  $T_e$  (case 1). In low temperatures, the heavy particles chemical processes are dominant and have to be calculated at  $T_h$  (case 2). There is a range of temperature where the LMA is not exact and the CK is necessary to calculate the composition. 291

Whereas the community agrees the calculation of the thermodynamic properties, translation thermal conductivities of electrons and heavy particles, viscosity and electrical conductivity, there is no consensus for the calculation of the reactive thermal conductivity. The theory of Hirschfelder et al. [12] or Bonnefoi et al. [48, 49] consider separately the electrons and the heavy particles whereas the theory of Rat showed that these two theories did not consider correctly not only the diffusion in 2T plasmas but also the coupling between electrons and heavy particles. The Rat's theory leads to new definitions of collision integrals, transport coefficients and consequently new terms in energy fluxes. Ghorui et al. [45, 46] in 2008 and Colombo et al. in 2009 [43, 44] showed in their works that the method of Devoto is sufficient to determine the transport properties (electrical conductivity, thermal conductivity and viscosity) in 2T assumption only if diffusion coefficients defined by Ramshaw were used. From the last works published on 2T-properties for several gases applied in various applications (Bonnefoi et al. [48, 49] for Ar-H, Mexmain [50] for Ar-O, McCourt [51] for polyatomic mixtures, Aubreton et al. [52–54] for Ar-O2, Ar-He or pure N2, Capitelli et al. [55, 56] with a "State-to-State" model applied for pure N2 and H2 plasmas, Guo et al. [57], Zhang et al. [58] and Yang et al. [59] on helium, argon and  $SF_6-N2$  mixtures) we can consider as accepted that the translation and internal thermal conductivities of heavy particles and the viscosity can be calculated at  $T_h$ , the translation thermal conductivity of electrons and the electrical conductivity at  $T_e$ . The figure 6 compare these coefficients obtained for the cases 1 and 2, the LMA and CR/CK methods, in the case of pure SF<sub>6</sub> at 1bar and  $\theta = 5$ . The computation of the 2T reactive thermal conductivity at high pressure for complex gases such as  $SF_6$  using multi-temperature expressions from the literature (such as the one provided by Ghorui et al. [45, 46]) gave poor results. The use of the Ghorui's expressions seems to be accurate for pressure lower than 16 bar and pure gases (O2, N2) or mixtures with few chemical reactions (O2-N2). For pure  $SF_6$  and  $SF_6$ - $C_2F_4$  mixtures, we extended the Butler and Brokaw theory to 2T assumption. We divided the total reactive thermal conductivity into two contributions, one for the heavy particles (considering neutral atoms and molecules) and one for the electron part (considering electrons and ions):

$$\kappa_{reac}^{h} = -\frac{1}{RT_{h}^{2}} \frac{\begin{vmatrix} 0 & \Delta h_{1} & \cdots & \Delta h_{N_{e}} \\ \Delta h_{1} & A_{11} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}1} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \Delta h_{N_{e}} & A_{1N_{e}} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}N_{e}} \end{vmatrix}}{\begin{vmatrix} A_{11} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}1} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ A_{1N_{e}} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}N_{e}} \end{vmatrix}}$$
(5)  
$$\kappa_{reac}^{e} = -\frac{1}{RT_{e}^{2}} \frac{\begin{vmatrix} 0 & \Delta h_{1} & \cdots & \Delta h_{N_{e}} \\ \Delta h_{1} & A_{11} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}1} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \Delta h_{N_{e}} & A_{1N_{e}} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}N_{e}} \end{vmatrix}}{\begin{vmatrix} A_{11} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}1} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ A_{1N_{e}} & \cdots & A_{N_{e}N_{e}} \end{vmatrix}}$$
(6)

with

$$A_{ij} = \frac{RT_{ij}}{P} \sum_{k=2}^{N_e-1} \sum_{l=k+1}^{N_e} \frac{x_k x_l}{D_{kl}^b} \left(\frac{\alpha(i,k)}{x_k} - \frac{\alpha(i,l)}{x_l}\right) \times \left(\frac{\alpha(j,k)}{x_k} - \frac{\alpha(j,l)}{x_l}\right)$$
(7)

 $T_{ij}$  is equivalent to  $T_e$  if one of the two particles in 292 collision is an electron,  $T_h$  in the other cases. From 293 the original expression of Butler and Brokaw, the tem-294 perature T was replaced by  $T_e$ ,  $T_h$  or  $T_{ij}$  in relations 295 (4). This choice has been validated by comparisons 296 of shape of the reaction thermal conductivities ver-297 sus temperature,  $\theta$  and pressure. As examples, the 298 results of the electrical conductivity, viscosity, trans-299 lational, reactive and total thermal conductivities of 300 electron and heavy particles are presented in figure 301 302 6 for 50%SF<sub>6</sub>-50%C<sub>2</sub>F<sub>4</sub> at 1bar and  $\theta = 5$ , obtained from CK and LMA methods. For the case 1, the 303 reaction term for heavy particles increases with  $\theta$ , the 304 contribution of electrons decreases. For the case 2, the 305 values of  $\kappa^h_{reac}$  are shifted toward high temperatures 306 and the peaks of  $\kappa^e_{reac}$  are diminished and shifted to 307 higher temperatures [60]. 308

Finally, the last part concerns the calculation of 309 the 2T radiative properties. For radiation in nLTE, 310 some works have been done on atmospheric reentry 311 by Soucasse et al. [61], or Scoggings [62] but few are 312 available in the literature for plasmas used in HVCB. 313 Contrarily to studies in LTE, the spectral emission 314 and absorption coefficients cannot be linked in the 315 Kirshhoff law through the Planck function. Recent 316 papers propose to write two equations of conservation 317 of energy: one for the electron with divergence of the 318 flux obtained with the net emission coefficient approx-319 imation considering only the continuum part, another 320 one for the heavy species with divergence of the flux 321 obtained with the same approximation considering 322 only the contribution of the lines. Consequently, the 323 radiation has to be separated into two parts: one com-324 ing from atomic (radiative recombination, radiative 325 attachment, Bremsstrahlung) and molecular continua 326 and calculated at the temperature  $T_e$ , and the other 327 one coming from the atomic lines and calculated at 328  $T_{ex}$  (consequently  $T_e$  or  $T_h$  depending on the case 1 329 or 2), the molecular lines being neglected at this step. 330 The broadenings have been calculated assuming  $T_h$  for 331 the FWHM due to the Doppler effect,  $T_h$  for the van 332 der Waals effect, and  $T_e$  for the Stark perturbation. 333 The correction proposed by Griem has been taken into 334 consideration by calculating the parameter R with  $T_h$ . 335 Then, two net emission coefficients can be estimated: 336

$$\varepsilon_N^{cont} = \int_0^{+\infty} \varepsilon_\lambda^{cont}(\lambda, T_e) e^{-R_p \kappa'_{tot}(\lambda, T_e)} d\lambda \qquad (8)$$

$$\varepsilon_N^{lines} = \int_0^{+\infty} \varepsilon_\lambda^{lines}(\lambda, T_{ex}) e^{-R_p \kappa'_{tot}(\lambda, T_{ex})} d\lambda \quad (9)$$

Figure 7 shows the influence of  $\theta$  on the NECs for 337 the two cases. It means in our case that NEC for 338 continuum is always dependent on  $T_e$  but NEC for 339 atomic lines depend on  $T_e$  (case 1) or  $T_h$  (case 2). 340 As the NEC for the continuum only depends on  $T_e$ , 341 the factor  $\theta$  has no influence. This is not the same 342 conclusion for the NEC of the atomic lines since  $T_{ex}$ 343 is equal to  $T_e$  for the case 1 ( $T_{ex} = T_e$ ,  $T_v = T_e$  et  $T_r = T_h$ ) or  $T_h$  for the case 2 ( $T_{ex} = T_h$ ,  $T_v = T_h$  et  $T_r = T_h$ ). 344 345 346

#### 4. Conclusion

We have presented the methods commonly used to de-348 termine the thermophysical properties (composition, 349 thermodynamic, transport and radiative properties) 350 for LTE and NLTE/NLCE plasmas existing in HVCB. 351 For LTE plasmas, the methods are well-known, as the 352 influence of the metallic vapors on the properties: a 353 small proportion of metallic vapors (inferior to 1%) 354 strongly impacts the electrical conductivity and the 355 radiation, higher proportions is required (more than 356 20%) to modify significantly the thermal conductivity 357 and the viscosity. The challenges will be not only 358 the calculation of these properties for new materials 359



Figure 6. 2T transport coefficients of  $50\% SF_6-50\% C_2F_4$  (mass proportions) obtained with LMA, and CK methods, for  $\theta = 5$  and 1bar.



Figure 7. Influence of  $\theta$  on the two NECs versus electron temperature for a pure  $SF_6$  plasma at 1 bar and for  $R_p = 1 \text{ mm}$ : full lines for the atomic lines, dashed lines for the continuum.

(used for electrodes or nozzles) but also the treatment 360 of the RTE solving based on fine discretization and 361 better approached methods. For NLTE/NLCE plas-362 mas in HVCB, lots of challenges persist and must 363 be solved rapidly in order to contribute to the im-364 provement of the MHD modelling. For the plasmas 365 compositions, it will be necessary to develop more 366 precise models such as collisional radiative models or 367 chemical kinetic models which are (for the moment) 368 complex to achieve due to the lack of the reaction 369 rates or collisional cross-sections. For the transport 370 properties, the community must consider the thermal 371 reactional conductivity and answer to the questions: 372 should we consider only one coefficient (only for heavy 373 particles for example), two contributions, a total ther-374 mal conductivity and how to calculate them under 375 these conditions of non-thermal/chemical equilibrium? 376 For the radiative properties, some works have been 377 developed on  $CO_2$  or air for re-entry atmosphere phe-378 nomena, syngas or combustion researches but few 379 data are available for HVCB with or without metallic 380 vapors due to the numerous chemical reactions. As 381 the Planck and Kirchhoff laws are not accurate in 382 non-equilibrium conditions, it is essential to treat dif-383 ferently the emission and absorption phenomena. The 384 greatest difficulty lies in estimating correctly the popu-385 lation's energy levels, the emission and the absorption 386 being proportional to these populations. The treat-387 ment of the atomic lines will be one of the main locks 388 to raised (population of levels and broadenings being 389 governed by different temperatures). New models will 390 need to be developed to consider radiative phenomena 391 separately: Hybrid Statistical Narrow Band model 392 (HSNB) combining Statistical Narrow-Band model 393 394 (SNB) for the optically thick molecular systems and Narrow Band means for the emission and absorption 395 coefficients of the optically thin molecular systems 396 and continua, a line by line (LBL) calculation for the 397 bound-bound atomic lines [62]. Finally, these new 398 methods and databank have to be validated with the 399 comparison of MHD modeling results and experimen-400

401

tal works.

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