

Wind Measurements on a Maneuvering Twin-Engine Turboprop Aircraft Accounting for Flow Distortion

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ABSTRACT

Traditional techniques for the calibration of the aircraft-relative wind vector from flight maneuvers are discussed with special regard to the effects of perturbations in the flow patterns around the aircraft body during periods of significant accelerations and angular rates (rapidly varying motion). A procedure is developed that allows both unbiased determination of steady-flight calibration parameters and explicit determination and characterization of errors in measured flow quantities that result from flow perturbations induced during the rapidly varying motion. This technique is applied to the case of air vector measurements from a five-hole pressure probe mounted under the wing of a Convair 580 research aircraft operated by the Canadian National Research Council. Results indicate that during pitching, yawing, and rolling maneuvers air data measurements at the pressure probe contain substantial errors that are associated with adjustments of the oncoming airflow to the sudden wing translations and rotations, as well as associated with variations in the strength and pattern of the along-wing sidewash circulation. In addition, the fuselage-measured static pressure position error is strongly affected by pressure pattern changes during strong longitudinal accelerations and, to a lesser extent, by lateral and normal accelerations during pitching and yawing motions. Empirical corrections to the pressure probe and static pressure measurements are derived to account for these effects, using multiple regression techniques. Under steady flight conditions, these corrections are small, but during rapid maneuvers they reduce the peak-to-trough errors in the derived earth-relative winds from $\pm 1.5 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ (uncorrected) to around $\pm 0.6 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ in the case of the horizontal wind components, and $\pm 0.4 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ in the case of vertical wind components.

1. Introduction

Basic principles for determination of the three-dimensional wind vector from airborne platforms are well established (e.g., Lenschow 1986), and research groups worldwide are developing and operating wind measurement systems on aircraft (e.g., MacPherson 1990; Bögel and Baumann 1991; Lenschow et al. 1991; Tjernström and Friehe 1991; Crawford and Dobosy 1992; Whitmore et al. 1992). The enormous range in accuracy, complexity, and sophistication of individual installations is necessarily linked to performance and budgetary requirements, with systems designed for accurate high-resolution meteorological turbulence and flux measurements being among the most demanding. In recent years, this field has benefited from dramatic progress in aircraft position and motion sensing technology (e.g., Dobosy and Crawford 1996), sophisticated correction procedures for aircraft position and motion measurements (e.g., Shaw 1988; Leach and MacPherson 1991, 1994;

Masters and Leise 1993), and new air motion sensing systems (e.g., Brown et al. 1983; Whitmore et al. 1992; Crawford and Dobosy 1992).

Although the calibration of airborne wind measurement systems is practically a "science in itself," detailed critical discussions of such procedures appear only rarely in the literature (e.g., Bögel and Baumann 1991; Tjernström and Friehe 1991; Haering 1992). Central to this issue is the treatment of flow distortion effects (e.g., MacPherson and Baumgardner 1987; Cooper and Rogers 1991; MacPherson 1993; Crawford et al. 1996). Failure to compensate for the effects of flow distortion can lead to very significant errors in Reynolds stress and scalar flux measurements from aircraft (Wyngaard et al. 1985; Wyngaard 1991).

Many of the difficulties experienced in obtaining satisfactory and reliable results from wind calibrations may be attributable to the following interrelated characteristics of the measurement and calibration process.

- The wind vector cannot be measured directly but must be inferred via a complex nonlinear combination of more directly measurable components, all of which are subject to uncertainty in varying degrees.
- Many of the parameters required to “connect” these components are dependent upon properties of the dis-

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TABLE 1. Measured air data quantities onboard the NRC Convair 580 aircraft. Superscripts/subscripts fus, pp, meas, and mir refer to “fuselage,” “pressure probe,” “measured,” and “mirror,” respectively.

Measured quantity	Description	Location	Type
$p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{fus}}$	Static pressure	Fuselage	DigiQuartz
$q_{\text{meas}}^{\text{fus}}$	Dynamic pressure	Fuselage	DigiQuartz
$\Delta P_{\text{q}}^{\text{pp}}$	Differential pressure, dynamic (q)	Pressure probe	Rosemount-858AJ
$\Delta P_{\alpha}^{\text{pp}}$	Differential pressure, attack angle (α)	Pressure probe	Rosemount-858AJ
$\Delta P_{\beta}^{\text{pp}}$	Differential pressure, sideslip angle (β)	Pressure probe	Rosemount-858AJ
$T_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}$	Total temperature	Near pressure probe	Rosemount 102DJ1CG
T_{mir}	Dewpoint (for humidity corrections)	Fuselage	EG&G cooled-mirror hygrometer

2. Wind measurements using the NRC Convair 580

The wind vector \mathbf{U} in geodetic coordinates (x is east, y is north, z is up) may be calculated from aircraft measurements via the wind equation

$$\mathbf{U} = \tilde{\mathbf{M}}(\boldsymbol{\tau} + \boldsymbol{\Omega} \times \mathbf{r}) + \mathbf{G}, \quad (1)$$

where \mathbf{G} is the aircraft ground-speed vector in geodetic coordinates, $\boldsymbol{\tau}$ is the relative wind ahead of the pressure probe, $\boldsymbol{\Omega}$ is the vector of angular “body” rates about the aircraft axes, and \mathbf{r} is the (constant) position of the pressure probe. In (1), $\boldsymbol{\tau}$, $\boldsymbol{\Omega}$, and \mathbf{r} are defined in aircraft-based coordinates (lon is longitudinal, lat is lateral, nrm is normal) and are converted to geodetic coordinates via the transformation matrix $\tilde{\mathbf{M}}$ (e.g., Lenschow 1972). The “lever arm” correction $[\tilde{\mathbf{M}}(\boldsymbol{\Omega} \times \mathbf{r})]$ is formulated alternatively (e.g., Lenschow 1986) in terms of the time derivatives of the attitude angles, for which the relationship to the body rates is well known (e.g., Etkin 1963). (See appendix B for definition of variables.)

The aircraft-based coordinate system coincides with that of the LTN-91 Inertial Navigation System (INS), mounted at the Convair center of mass. The variable \mathbf{G} is provided in real time directly by the INS, or it may be obtained in postflight reanalysis to an improved accuracy by combining high-frequency velocity components from the INS with low-frequency components from the NovAtel Global Positioning System (GPS), thereby eliminating low-frequency INS velocity errors (order of $1\text{--}2\text{ m s}^{-1}$) associated with the Schuler Oscillation (Shaw 1988). The variable $\mathbf{\Omega}$ and the attitude angles (used in calculating $\mathbf{\bar{M}}$) are also provided by the INS.

The relative wind vector $\boldsymbol{\tau}$ in aircraft coordinates is

$$\boldsymbol{\tau} = \begin{pmatrix} \tau_{\text{lon}} \\ \tau_{\text{lat}} \\ \tau_{\text{orm}} \end{pmatrix} = -\tau \begin{pmatrix} D^{-1} \\ D^{-1} \tan \beta \\ D^{-1} \tan \alpha \end{pmatrix}, \quad (2)$$

where α is the aircraft's angle of attack (positive if wind from below), β is the angle of sideslip (positive if wind from right), τ is true airspeed (magnitude of τ), and $D = (1 + \tan^2 \alpha + \tan^2 \beta)^{1/2}$. An approximate form of Eq. (2) is sometimes used by others (e.g., MacPherson 1990). The model used for the calculation of τ , α , and

β onboard the Convair is based on the measured basic quantities in Table 1, for which accurate static calibrations are essential and known. The extended PMS canister-mounted 858 probe described in the introduction has been wind-tunnel tested at the NRC (MacPherson 1985) and has been flown on a variety of research aircraft, including the Convair (MacPherson 1993). For accurate wind computations, τ , α , and β must correspond to the *effective* (sometimes called “free stream”) true airspeed and angles of attack and sideslip *in the undisturbed airstream ahead of the pressure probe*. The quantities measured at the probe will therefore need to be corrected for the effects of distortion in the flow near the wing of the aircraft.

Incorporated into the calibrations of the four basic pressure-related quantities (static and dynamic pressure, and the angles of attack and sideslip) are flow-distortion corrections for both steady and rapidly varying flight, the latter being denoted ε_x . For the purposes of this study, the term “rapidly varying” refers to periods in which aircraft accelerations and/or angular rates are significantly nonzero. The exact form of the corrections will be left undefined for the present. The major task of the subsequent sections is to assign empirical forms to these terms. We continue with the derivation of τ using the corrected quantities.

Atmospheric static pressure at the altitude of the pressure probe p^{pp} is best estimated by correcting measurements made on the fuselage $p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{fus}}$ since probe-measured static pressure is overestimated significantly because of the proximity of the wing. Once the fuselage pressure has been corrected for flow effects, it is adjusted to the current height of the pressure probe to obtain p^{pp} . Free-stream dynamic pressure ahead of the pressure probe q^{pp} is estimated by correcting dynamic pressure measured at the probe $q_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}$, which is the measured differential dynamic pressure ΔP_q^{pp} , adjusted for off-axis flow angles (see appendix A). In its extended configuration, the pressure probe reports local dynamic pressure to an accuracy of 0.4% or better for flow angles up to $\pm 15^\circ$ (MacPherson 1985). If q^{pp} were to be estimated from $q_{\text{meas}}^{\text{fus}}$ (the fuselage-measured dynamic pressure), complex corrections would be required to account for attitude-related speed variations of the pressure pod relative to the fuselage. Such a method is possible but undesir-

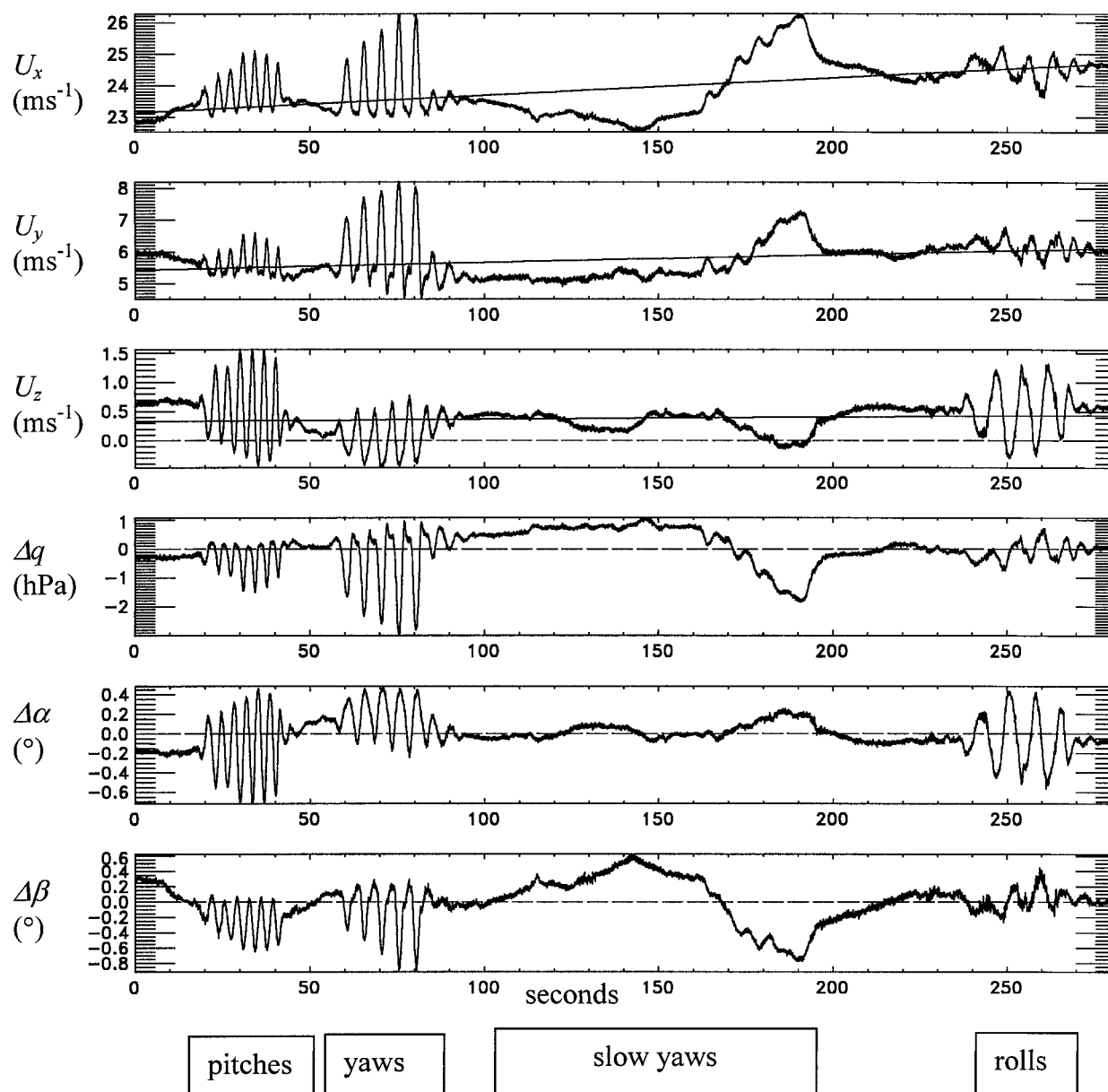


FIG. 8. Time series of computed quantities during pitch/yaw/roll maneuvers. Top three panels: wind components (m s^{-1}) uncorrected for rapidly varying motion, superimposed with linear regression lines used for the reference winds. Bottom three panels: Δq (hPa), $\Delta\alpha$, and $\Delta\beta$ ($^\circ$) (“reverse”-reference minus steady-motion estimates).

steady-motion effects, as described above. These differences are denoted Δq , $\Delta\alpha$, and $\Delta\beta$ (Δ = “reverse” reference minus the steady-motion estimate). Clearly, errors associated with rapidly varying maneuvers can be as large as ± 1.5 hPa for q and $\pm 0.5^\circ$ for α and β , producing wind errors from the Convair up to ± 1.5 m s⁻¹.

In addition to the three aircraft accelerations (a_{lon} , a_{lat} , a_{nrm}) used in the analysis of the fuselage static pressure measurements, it was considered that an investigation of flow distortion effects in the vicinity of the pressure

probe during rapidly varying motions should also include the three body rates (Ω_{lon} , Ω_{lat} , Ω_{nm}) and the flow angles themselves (α , β). Nonzero angular rates can produce significant additional accelerations at the position of the probe (because of its location far from the aircraft's center of gravity) and, along with variations in the flow angles, can alter the form of flow over and along the wing. The differences Δq , $\Delta\alpha$, and $\Delta\beta$ were thus investigated relative to all of these quantities, once again using multiple regression analysis techniques.

A general regression was first performed upon each

During yawing motions, both slow and fast, all three air data quantities again exhibited errors. In the case of $\Delta\beta$ (Fig. 10), these were corrected partially using lateral acceleration (a_{lat}). Although a dependence on a_{lat} seems understandable in terms of delayed adjustment of the oncoming flow to sideways wing movement while the aircraft is yawing, this correction is not entirely satisfactory as it overcorrects during fast yaws and undercorrects during slow yaws, leading to substantial residual errors (Fig. 10). A possible explanation is that distortion of the sidewash circulation pattern becomes more severe as the yawing frequency increases. Similar errors found in wind data from the NOAA P3 aircraft during high-frequency yawing maneuvers have also been attributed to variable time lags in air data quantities caused by such effects (J. Masters 1998, personal communication). In any case, the corrected sideslip angle (β) subsequently was used fairly successfully to correct errors in both Δq and $\Delta\alpha$ during yawing motions (Figs. 9 and 11).

During rolls, errors appear in Δq and $\Delta\beta$ (Figs. 9 and 10) that are corrected partially by the a_{lat} and β dependencies discussed above. In addition, however, $\Delta\alpha$ is correctable as a function of roll rate Ω_{ion} (Fig. 11), which is likely due to the additional vertical accelerations of the wing in the vicinity of the probe, induced by the roll rotation.

4. Discussion

In the absence of a sound physical description of flow around and along the Convair wing and fuselage during steady and rapidly varying motion, this study has been necessarily empirical in nature. Although attempts are occasionally made in the literature to derive relationships between aircraft motion parameters and airframe flow distortion fields on a more physical basis (Wyngaard et al. 1985; Crawford et al. 1996), the complexity and variability of such fields (both from aircraft to aircraft and as a function of location on any given aircraft) makes generalization of such relationships difficult. Although another approach is sophisticated numerical modeling of the flow about the wing, such studies still require empirical fitting of real flight data to model results.

In any case, it appears that our approach is effective. Figure 12 demonstrates the effects of the corrections derived above for rapidly varying motion upon the final computed wind vector. Errors associated with the violent pitch/yaw/roll maneuvers have been reduced substantially, with peak-to-trough values now being around $\pm 0.6 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ for the horizontal components over a wide range of flying conditions (substantially less during steady flight). The vertical component of wind velocity U_z (critically important for meteorological turbulence and flux measurements) is in particularly good health, with errors during pitch maneuvers almost completely removed and errors during yaws and rolls reduced to

around $\pm 0.4 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ (peak to trough). In the horizontal wind components (U_x and U_y), the largest remaining errors appear during yawing maneuvers, probably attributable to complex adjustments in sidewash circulation patterns as β is varied, which remain uncompensated for. In addition to further flow distortion effects and possible influences of variations in flap settings, residual errors may be attributable at least partially to latencies and inaccuracies in the attitude and ground speed components obtained from the inertial navigation system (Bögel and Baumann 1991; Tjernstrom and Friehe 1991), which potentially could be removed in the future by Kalman filtering techniques (Leach and MacPherson 1991, 1994) or by the implementation of modern attitude differential GPS technology (Dobosy and Crawford 1996).

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APPENDIX A

Flow Angles and q at the Pressure Probe

The Rosemount-858 probe mounted in the FRL PMS canister (MacPherson 1985) consists of a conventional array of five pressure holes drilled into a hemispheric nose, with an additional static pressure measurement made via a ring of smaller holes drilled in a circle around the cylindrical housing, 3 in. back from the nose. The probe is plumbed/configured to supply the following outputs:

$p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}$	Local static pressure,
$\Delta P_{\alpha}^{\text{pp}}$	pressure difference between the lower and upper (attack) holes,
$\Delta P_{\beta}^{\text{pp}}$	pressure difference between the right and left (sideslip) holes, and
ΔP_q^{pp}	pressure difference between the central hole and
$p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}$	

Elsewhere in this paper, static pressure at the probe altitude (p^{pp}) is derived using the fuselage static sensor $p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{fus}}$ since $p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}$ is elevated because of the proximity of the wing. However, $p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}$ remains the correct reference quantity for ΔP_q^{pp} since the central hole of the probe is also in the influence of the wing. It should also be noted

$$\begin{aligned}\sin^2\zeta &= 1 - \cos^2\zeta \\ &= 1 - \frac{(s_{\text{lon}} + s_{\text{lat}} \tan\beta_l + s_{\text{nrn}} \tan\alpha_l)^2}{D_l^2}.\end{aligned}$$

For the central hole, $\hat{\mathbf{s}} = (1, 0, 0)$, and we obtain

$$\Delta P_q^{\text{pp}} = p_{\text{central}} - p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}} = q_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}} \left(\frac{9 - 5D_l^2}{4D_l^2} \right),$$

from which $q_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}$ can be deduced for use in the wind analysis. Next, for an angle λ between the central and any other port on the pressure probe, the unit vectors pointing to the lower and upper attack angle ports are $\hat{\mathbf{s}} = (\cos\lambda, 0, \sin\lambda)$ and $\hat{\mathbf{s}} = (\cos\lambda, 0, -\sin\lambda)$, respectively, giving a differential pressure of

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta P_{\alpha}^{\text{pp}} &= (p_{\text{lower}} - p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}) - (p_{\text{upper}} - p_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}) \\ &= -\frac{9}{4} q_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}} (\sin^2 \zeta_{\text{lower}} - \sin^2 \zeta_{\text{upper}}) \\ &= \frac{9}{2} \frac{q_{\text{meas}}^{\text{pp}}}{D^2} \tan \alpha_l \sin 2\lambda.\end{aligned}$$

After the same analysis for the sideslip angle, we arrive eventually at the following ratios:

$$\frac{\Delta P_{\alpha}^{\text{pp}}}{\Delta P_q^{\text{pp}}} = 18 \frac{\tan \alpha_l \sin 2\lambda}{9 - 5D_l^2} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{\Delta P_{\beta}^{\text{pp}}}{\Delta P_a^{\text{pp}}} = 18 \frac{\tan \beta_l \sin 2\lambda}{9 - 5D_l^2}.$$

Defining the quantities

$$H_\alpha = \frac{2}{9 \sin 2\lambda} \frac{\Delta P_\alpha^{\text{pp}}}{\Delta P^{\text{pp}}} \quad \text{and} \quad H_\beta = \frac{2}{9 \sin 2\lambda} \frac{\Delta P_\beta^{\text{pp}}}{\Delta P_a^{\text{pp}}},$$

we see that

$$\begin{aligned} \left[1 - \frac{5}{4}(\tan^2 \alpha_l + \tan^2 \beta_l) \right] H_\alpha &= \tan \alpha_l \quad \text{and} \\ \left[1 - \frac{5}{4}(\tan^2 \alpha_l + \tan^2 \beta_l) \right] H_\beta &= \tan \beta_l. \end{aligned}$$

For small angles, $\tan^2 \alpha_i$ and $\tan^2 \beta_i$ can be neglected, and also $\tan \alpha_i \simeq \alpha_i$ and $\tan \beta_i \simeq \beta_i$. The above equations thus reveal that H_α and H_β are first-order approximations for α_i and β_i . However, taking quotients gives $H_\alpha \tan \beta_i = H_\beta \tan \alpha_i$, from which decoupled quadratic equations can be formed and solved to yield exact solutions:

$$\begin{aligned}\tan\alpha_l &= \frac{2H_\alpha}{1 + [1 + 5(H_\alpha^2 + H_\beta^2)]^{1/2}} \quad \text{and} \\ \tan\beta_l &= \frac{2H_\beta}{1 + [1 + 5(H_\alpha^2 + H_\beta^2)]^{1/2}}.\end{aligned}$$

APPENDIX B

Notation

a. Subscripts–superscripts

Geodetic coordinates: x is east, y is north, and z is up.
Aircraft coordinates: lon is longitudinal, lat is lateral,
and nrm is normal.

Others: meas is measured, l is local, fus is fuselage, pp is pressure probe, ref-rev is reference-“reverse”-reference quantities (for calibration), +/- is with-wind/into-wind, prt is pitch rate, and rrt is roll rate.

b. Parameters

Regression coefficients: C_{wn}^v , where v is the dependent variable, w is the independent variable, and n is the coefficient degree (0, 1, 2).

r	Effective recovery factor for temperature probe
C_L	Lift coefficient
f	α/β sensitivity factor
λ	Angle between central and any other port on pressure probe
\mathbf{r}	Vector position of pressure probe (aircraft co-ordinates)

c. Variables

a	Aircraft acceleration vector (aircraft coordinates)
α, β	Effective aircraft angles of attack and sideslip
c_p, c_v	Specific heats for moist air at constant pressure and volume
D	Derived term containing airflow angles
ΔP_x	Differential pressures measured at the pressure probe ($x = q, \alpha, \beta$)
ε_x	Correction terms for rapidly varying motion ($x = p, q, \alpha, \beta$)
G	Aircraft ground-speed vector (geodetic coordinates)
γ	Ratio of specific heats (c_p/c_v)
M	Mach number
M	Transformation matrix, aircraft to geodetic coordinates
Ω	Vector of angular “body” rates about the aircraft axes (aircraft coordinates)
p	Static pressure
P_γ	Pressure term defining static-to-total temperature ratio in adiabatic process
q	Dynamic pressure
T	Static temperature
TT	Total temperature
T_{mir}	Dewpoint mirror temperature
τ	Effective aircraft relative wind vector (aircraft coordinates)

