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COMMUNICATION

An elegant access to formation and vaporization enthalpies of ionic liquids by indirect DSC experiment and "in silico" calculations†

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We used DSC for determination of the reaction enthalpy of the synthesis of the ionic liquid [C₄mim][Cl]. A combination of DSC and quantum chemical calculations presents a new, indirect way to study thermodynamics of ionic liquids. The new procedure was validated with two direct experimental measurements and MD simulations.

Ionic liquids (ILs) are neoteric materials which have garnered attention from both academia and industry during the last decade. Alkyl halides are widely used for ILs synthesis as alkylating agents in quaternization reactions, since they are cheap and easily available. The formation reactions are irreversible. As a consequence, systematic studies of the IL synthesis reactions, and the measurement and computation of reaction enthalpies, are of importance in process design. Reaction enthalpies, $\Delta_r H^o_m$, can be reliably measured using traditional reaction calorimetry.1 However, calorimetric study in practice turns out to be a complex and challenging procedure where measurements of dissolution and fusion enthalpies of the reaction participants are required.² Alternatively, differential scanning calorimetry (DSC) seems to be a suitable experimental tool for measuring $\Delta_r H^o_{\ \mathrm{m}}$. DSC is nowadays broadly used for determination of enthalpies of phase transitions and for heat capacity measurements.⁴ DSC offers definite advantages in comparison to traditional reaction calorimetry, such as the requirement of smaller quantities of experimental samples (a few milligrams), swiftness of sample scan, precise temperature control, and commercial availability of the device. Over the last decade, we have recognised an additional advantage of using DSC to analyze ILs, namely a possibility to measure a broader range of thermochemical properties indirectly. Our longstanding interest in ionic liquids is focused on providing systematic thermodynamic data. 5,6,7 The traditional way to obtain enthalpies of formation is to use oxygen bomb calorimetry. However, reliable data can be obtained only if

1-Me-imidazole (liq) +
$$C_4H_9Cl(liq) = [C_4mim][Cl](liq)$$
 (1)

According to Hess' Law, reaction enthalpy is defined as the difference between enthalpies of formation $(\Delta_f H^o_m)$ of the products and reactants:

$$\Delta_{\rm r} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}(\text{liq}) = \Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}(\text{[C_4mim][Cl], liq})$$
$$-\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}(\text{1-Me-im, liq}) - \Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}(\text{C_4H_9Cl, liq}) \quad (2)$$

Once the $\Delta_r H^o_m(1)$ is measured by DSC, the $\Delta_f H^o_m([C_4mim][Cl],$ liq), is known provided that the $\Delta_f H^o_m$ of the precursors are known. This was realized by studying reaction (1) using a computer-controlled Mettler-Toledo 822 heat flux DSC. The reaction enthalpy of (2) was determined to be (-78.6 ± 0.8) kJ mol⁻¹ in a series of four DSC runs under optimized conditions³ (Table S1 of ESI).†

Enthalpies of formation, $\Delta_f H^o_m$, from DSC measurements: using the experimental $\Delta_f H^o_m$ value of the precursors of reaction (1) at 298 K: $\Delta_f H^o_m$ (1-Me-imidazole, liq) = (70.7 ± 1.1) kJ mol⁻¹, and $\Delta_f H^o_m$ (C₄H₉Cl, liq) = -(188.2 ± 1.2) kJ mol⁻¹, the enthalpy of formation of the IL $\Delta_f H^o_m$ ([C₄mim][Cl], liq) in the hypothetical liquid state calculated from eqn (2) is:

$$\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}([C_4 {\rm mim}][Cl], {\rm liq}) = (-78.6) + (70.7) + (-188.2)$$

= $(-196.1 \pm 1.8) {\rm kJ mol}^{-1}$ (3

As a matter of fact, the ionic liquid [C₄mim][Cl] is not liquid at room temperature. It is a solid with a melting point of 341.8 ± 0.2 K and the molar fusion enthalpy $\Delta_{\rm fus}H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}=21.7 \pm 0.5$ kJ mol⁻¹ at $T_{\rm fus}$. When adjusted to 298 K

the final products of the reaction (ideally CO_2 and H_2O) are well defined, and completeness of combustion is achieved. These requirements are not satisfied by the most popular ILs due to the presence of F, Cl, B, and S among common anions like [BF₄] or [NTF₂]. This is compounded by the challenge in determining the degree of oxidation of hetero-elements. Moreover, combustion of simpler Cl, Br, or S containing ILs, (for instance, the [C_n mim] cation and the anions Cl, Br or SCN) necessitates a special rotating bomb combustion calorimetry which includes a complex analysis of the oxidation products. In all such situations, DSC offers a feasible alternative. For example, instead of sophisticated combustion experiments with [C_4 mim][Cl], DSC can be used to measure the enthalpy of the following reaction:

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 $\Delta_{\text{fus}} H^{\text{o}}_{\text{m}} = 18.6 \pm 0.5 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ (see details in ESI†) and hence, the enthalpy of formation in the solid state is given by:

$$\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}([{\rm C_4 mim}][{\rm Cl}], \text{ s}, 298 \text{ K})$$

= $(-196.1) - (18.6) = (-214.7 \pm 1.9) \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ (4)

It should be emphasized that this enthalpy of formation of the solid ($[C_4mim][Cl]$, s) has been obtained indirectly in several steps but by using only experimental data. But, what is the value of this solid phase enthalpy of formation?

Enthalpies of formation, $\Delta_f H^o_m - Quo \ vadis$? A few important aspects could be mentioned in this context. First, with the help of $\Delta_f H^o_m(s)$ it is possible to assess a lattice potential energy (U_{POT}) and lattice enthalpy (ΔH_L) of an ionic solid. This is a measure of the strength of bonds in that ionic compound. It is usually defined as the enthalpy of formation of the ionic compound from gaseous ions: 11,12

$$U_{POT}([C_4 \text{mim}][Cl]) = \Delta_f H^o_{\text{m}}([C_4 \text{mim}]^+, g) + \Delta_f H^o_{\text{m}}([Cl]^-, g) - 2RT - \Delta_f H^o_{\text{m}}([C_4 \text{mim}][Cl], s)$$
 (5)

Lattice potential energy is a dominant term in the thermodynamic analysis of the existence and stability of ionic solids. Direct experimental determination is generally not possible since, in practice, the crystalline solid dissociates into atoms and *not* into gaseous ions, as is required in the lattice energy evaluation. 13 By combining experimental data, empirical correlations, and quantum chemical calculations, Born-Fajans-Haber cycles can be constructed to gain a deeper insight into reaction or phase transition thermodynamics. 14,15 A simple "volume-based thermodynamics" (VBT) procedure was developed recently for the evaluation of U_{POT} , which relies only on the chemical formula, ionic charges and molecular volume (or density) of the ionic compounds. 12,16 However, for a proper validation of the VBTequation the extended data set of the experimental $\Delta_f H^o_m(s)$ derived by using calorimetry is essential, and DSC can be an appropriate tool for rapid accumulation of the experimental data.

The second valuable application of the $\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}$ (liq) and $\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}$ (s) data for ILs can be for the design and synthesis of new energetic materials. $\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}$ is a key property which is used to assess potential performance in technology applications of high-energy-density materials. Taking into account restricted possibilities for safe experimental studies of high-energy materials, a reasonable combination of experimental and "in silico" studies offers a critical advantage. Thus development of any procedure suitable for reliable assessment of $\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}$ of energetic ILs could save much time and effort in the synthesis and development of new energetic materials. A test set of reliable experimental $\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}$ for ILs containing a broad range of common cations and anions can be collected by using the DSC technique according to eqn (1)–(4).

Vaporization enthalpy from $\Delta_f H^o_m$: the third valuable application of the enthalpic data derived from DSC is the ability to obtain an indirect estimate of the $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ of ILs. A lot of methods, including Knudsen effusion, transpiration, TGA, UV, LOSMS, and so on, have been reported to determine the vaporization enthalpy of ILs. 6,21 However, reliable direct measurement of $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ remains a challenging task due to elevated experimental temperatures. $^{5-7}$ A valuable procedure whereby $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ of ILs can be obtained indirectly using a combination of traditional combustion calorimetry and modern high-level quantum chemical computations has been suggested recently. 5 $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ is obtained as

the difference between $\Delta_f H^o_m(g)$ of the IL as calculated using first-principles methods and $\Delta_f H^o_m(liq)$ as obtained from high precision combustion calorimetry, where:

$$\Delta_{\rm l}^{\rm g} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m} = \Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}({\rm g}) - \Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}({\rm liq}) \tag{6}$$

This procedure has been successfully tested with different imidazolium-based ILs. 5,19 Excellent agreement of the value derived from eqn (6) with the experimental $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ has proved the thermodynamic consistency of both the experimental and theoretical methods. Such a new procedure has opened a new indirect way to obtain $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ of ILs which have not been available so far. Unfortunately, this new procedure cannot serve for a rapid accumulation of $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ for ILs. The restriction is mainly due to the sophisticated and time-consuming combustion experiments, which have to be performed on highly pure (99.9%) samples of ILs. But in contrast to the combustion calorimetry, the DSC experiments have less demanding requirements for purities of the precursors involved in eqn (1). That is why the $\Delta_f H^o_m$ obtained via eqn (3) from the DSC measurements could be now used instead of the combustion results and to bring a new life into eqn (6). Thus, in this work we have extended the procedure combining high-level quantum chemical calculations with the results from DSC as a valuable thermochemical option to compute $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$. The $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ for the [C₄mim][Cl] was calculated as eqn (6):

$$\Delta_{\rm l}^{\rm g} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m} = (-43.5) - (-196.1) = (152.6 \pm 4.4)$$
 (7)

where $\Delta_f H^o_m(\text{liq})$ was derived from DSC calorimetry and $\Delta_f H^o_m(g) = (-43.5 \pm 4.0) \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ was calculated by first-principles calculations (CBS-QB3 method).

Vaporization enthalpy from DSC enthalpies of reaction, $\Delta_r H^o_m$: the indirect option to determine $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ using eqn (6) suffers from one input requirement: it is based on $\Delta_f H^o_m(g)$, which is calculated using quantum chemical methods. There are some ambiguities with respect to procedures for converting results of first-principles calculations (total energies E_0 at T=0 K and enthalpies H_{298} at T = 298 K) into the desired value of $\Delta_f H^o_m(g)$. It is well established that in standard Gaussian-n theories theoretical $\Delta_f H^o_m(g)$ are calculated through atomization reactions, isodesmic and bond separation reactions. However, it has been observed²⁰ that $\Delta_f H^o_m(g)$ calculated from the standard atomization procedure systematically deviate very often from the available experimental results.²⁰ Hence we are somewhat reticent to use atomization reactions, isodesmic and bond separation reactions to obtain $\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}({\rm g})$ of ILs. All the same, using DSC we have measured the experimental $\Delta_r H^o_m(l)$ e.g. for [C₄mim][Cl] according to eqn (2). The $\Delta_r H^o_m$ for (1) in the gas phase could be obtained from the first-principles calculations as shown in eqn (8):

1-Me-imidazole (g) +
$$C_4H_9Cl(g) = [C_4mim][Cl](g)$$
. (8)

We have calculated the H_{298} at T=298 K for all reaction participants of reaction (1) using the CBS-Q3B approach. According to Hess' Law, the enthalpy of this reaction is calculated as follows:

$$\Delta_{\rm r} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}({\rm g}) = H_{298}([{\rm C_4 mim}][{\rm Cl}], {\rm g}) - H_{298}(1{\text{-Me-imidazole, g}})$$

- $H_{298}({\rm C_4 H_9 Cl, liq}) = (-14.9 \pm 4.0) {\rm kJ mol}^{-1}$ (9)

It is important to emphasise that the $\Delta_r H^o_m(g)$ was obtained using quantum chemical methods *directly* from the calculated H_{298} bypassing the conventional calculation of the $\Delta_f H^o_m$ with the help of atomization or isodesmic procedures. As a consequence

of this manoeuvre, the resulting $\Delta_r H^o_m(g)$ is not affected at all by the choice and the quality of the auxiliary quantities commonly required for atomization or bond separation reactions. Having established $\Delta_r H^o_m(liq)_{exp}$ from the experiment and $\Delta_r H^o_m(g)$ from quantum chemistry, we have derived the $\Delta_1^g H^o_m$ (e.g. for $IL = [C_4 mim][Cl]$) provided that the following balance holds:

$$\Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}({\rm liq}) = \Delta_{\rm f} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}({\rm g}) - \Delta_{\rm l}^{\rm g} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m} \tag{10}$$

The experimental $\Delta_r H^o_m$ was calculated using Hess' Law:

$$\begin{split} & \Delta_{r} H^{o}_{m}(liq)_{exp} = \left[\Delta_{f} H^{o}_{m}(g, IL) - \Delta_{l}{}^{g} H^{o}_{m}(IL) \right] \\ & - \left[\Delta_{f} H^{o}_{m}(g, 1\text{-Me-im}) - \Delta_{l}{}^{g} H^{o}_{m}(1\text{-Me-im}) \right] \\ & - \left[\Delta_{f} H^{o}_{m}(g, C_{4}H_{9}Cl) - \Delta_{l}{}^{g} H^{o}_{m}(C_{4}H_{9}Cl) \right] \end{split} \tag{11}$$

The $\Delta_{\rm l}^{\rm g} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}$ of the IL has been obtained from eqn (11):

$$\Delta_{l}^{g}H^{o}_{m}(IL, 298 \text{ K}) = -\Delta_{r}H^{o}_{m}(liq)_{exp} + \Delta_{r}H^{o}_{m}(g) + \Delta_{l}^{g}H^{o}_{m}(1-\text{Me-im}) + \Delta_{l}^{g}H^{o}_{m}(C_{4}H_{9}Cl)] = -(-78.6) + (-14.9) + (55.0) + (33.5) = 152.2 \pm 4.1 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$$
(12)

So, using the theoretical value $\Delta_r H^o_m(g)$ calculated with CBS-QB3 in the gas phase and $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ at 298 K of precursors $\Delta_{\rm l}^{\rm g} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}(1\text{-Me-im}) = 55.0 \pm 0.3 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}, ^{9} \text{ and } \Delta_{\rm l}^{\rm g} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m}({\rm C}_{4}{\rm H}_{9}{\rm Cl}) =$ 33.5 ± 0.1 kJ mol⁻¹, 10 and $\Delta_{\rm r} H^{\rm o}_{\rm m} ({\rm liq})_{\rm exp}$ measured using the DSC in the liquid phase, the $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ of [C₄mim][Cl] has been calculated. Comparison of the $\Delta_l^g H_m^o$ derived using two different procedures (i.e. eqn (2) and (7)) shows that both methods provide values in very close agreement with one another. We recommend eqn (12), however, because the $\Delta_r H^o_m(g)$ for this procedure has been calculated directly from H_{298} avoiding any procedure for converting quantum-chemical results into enthalpy of formation.

 $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ from direct QCM and TGA measurements: using indirect means to assess thermodynamic properties requires careful validation of the procedure with reliable experimental values. We have recently developed two experimental methods for the determination of $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ of extremely low volatility ILs: quartzcrystal microbalance (QCM)⁶ and thermogravimetric analysis (TGA).²¹ We used both these methods to measure $\Delta_1^g H_m^o$ of [C₄mim][Cl] (for details see Tables S2 and S3 in ESI†). The values (adjusted to the reference temperature 298 K using the commonly acknowledged $\Delta_{\rm l}^{\rm g} C_{\rm P\ m}^{\rm o} = -100\ {\rm J\ mol}^{-1}\ {\rm K}^{-1}$) are as follows: $153.5 \pm 1.5 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1} \text{ from QCM and } 151.3 \pm 1.7 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1} \text{ from}$ TGA. It is quite obvious that the experimental $\Delta_1^g H^o_m$ are indistinguishable within the boundaries of the experimental uncertainties. At the same time the direct experimental values are also in excellent agreement with those indirectly derived from the DSC measurements by using eqn (2) and (12). This test convincingly demonstrates the ability of the DSC method to provide reliable indirect vaporization enthalpies of ILs.

 $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ from molecular dynamics simulations: as an additional test to establish consistency of the direct and indirect $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$, we have also used molecular dynamics simulations to compute pure, "in silico", $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$. These were computed for [C₄mim][Cl] over a temperature range of 343-383 K (see Table S4 in ESI†) using the method outlined.²² The $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ at the lowest temperature 343 K was calculated to be 147.4 kJ mol⁻¹. Akin to the experimental QCM and TGA results, this value was adjusted to 298 K as $\Delta_1^g H^o_m([C_4 \text{mim}][Cl]) = 151.6 \pm 0.3 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$. Comparison of the experimental and "in silico" Δ_I^gH^o_m shows very good agreement. Please refer to the ESI† for force field and computational details.

Summary of benefits of using DSC for indirect evaluation of $\Delta_1^g H^o_m$: there are several very important advantages of using the DSC technique for the indirect evaluation of the $\Delta_1^g H^o_m$ of ILs:

- Δ_rH^o_m(liq)_{exp} measurements using DSC are quick and less demanding as compared to combustion calorimetry;
 - purity requirements for the chemicals are less rigorous
- $\Delta_r H^o_m(g)$ is obtained using first principles directly from calculated H_{298} (avoiding the usual calculation of $\Delta_f H^o_{m}(g)$ with the help of atomization or isodesmic procedures);
- $\Delta_l^g H^o_m$ of the starting chemicals are well known or easy to measure.
- DSC calorimeter is available as basic equipment in the labs working with ILs.

In conclusion, we have successfully coupled DSC measurements with "in silico" quantum chemical methods. This alliance suggests a new thermochemical option for rapid accumulation of data on $\Delta_l^g H_m^o$ and $\Delta_f H_m^o$ for a series of imidazolium, pyridinium, and pyrrolidinium based ILs. MD simulations can also be used for reliable calculation of $\Delta_1^g H^o_m$ of ILs.

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