STRUCTURE AND PROPERTY COMPARISON OF ALLVAC® 718PLUSTM ALLOY AND WASPALOY FORGINGS

Ian Dempster¹, Wei-Di Cao², Richard Kennedy², Betsy Bond², Jose Aurrecoechea³, and Mark Lipschutz³

Wyman-Gordon Houston Forgings, 10825 Telge Road, Houston, TX 77095, USA
ATI Allvac, 2020 Ashcraft Avenue, Monroe, NC 28110, USA
Solar Turbines Incorporated, 2200 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92186, USA

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Abstract

Alloy 718 has seen extensive use for many years due to its excellent mechanical properties, good processing characteristics, and relatively low cost. Numerous attempts have been made to develop a 718-type alloy with temperature capabilities higher than alloy 718. One of the most promising alloys to emerge from these efforts is Allvac[®] 718PlusTM Alloy. Interest in alloy 718Plus has grown after initial testing showed a 55°C temperature capability improvement over alloy 718, mechanical properties comparable to waspaloy, and processing behavior similar to alloy 718.

A comparison between the structure and properties of alloy 718Plus and waspaloy was performed on pancake forgings produced using an open-die process. The forgings were subjected to grain flow evaluations and subsequently heat-treated. The tensile, creep, and stress rupture properties of the pancake forgings were determined and related to their respective structures.

Introduction

Industrial gas turbines users demand high efficiency, superb performance, low emissions, and excellent durability from their equipment, along with an attractive life cycle cost. Materials of construction, particularly those of turbine hot section components, play a key role in meeting these demands. The increasingly stringent operating requirements of turbine blades, disks, and stationary components such as nozzle vanes and seal rings have stimulated alloy development activities for decades.

Industrial gas turbine disk material evolution reflects the pursuit of improved thermo-mechanical processing behavior and properties. Early industrial gas turbines relied on alloys such as A-286 and alloy 901, but increasing operating temperatures and stresses led to the utilization of more capable alloys such as alloy 718, waspaloy and alloy 706.

The extensive use of alloy 718 in industrial gas turbines is due to its attractive properties and excellent processing behavior. However, the upper use temperature of alloy 718 is limited to 650°C. The coherent γ " phase primarily responsible for alloy 718's strength is thermodynamically unstable at elevated temperatures, transforming to δ phase. This transformation is accompanied by a significant deterioration in mechanical properties.

Gamma prime strengthened alloys such as waspaloy, René 41, and U-720 have been used in industrial gas turbine disk applications where operating requirements dictate a more capable alloy than alloy 718. However, these stronger alloys are also more costly and difficult to process. Therefore, the development of an alloy combining the processing ease of alloy 718 with the enhanced properties of more advanced disk alloys has long been an objective.

Most of the numerous efforts to surpass the high temperature capability of alloy 718 have been aimed at increasing the strengthening effect and thermal stability of the γ " phase in an alloy, like alloy 718, strengthened primarily by γ " [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9]. A second approach consisted of developing a γ " strengthened alloy with better processing behavior, enhanced properties, and lower cost than γ ' strengthened alloys, as exemplified by René 220 [10] and GE Alloy 991 [11]. A third approach involved the addition of trace elements to alloy 718 to improve properties, without compromising its processing characteristics [12, 13, 14]. Unfortunately, none of the newly developed alloys have achieved the desired capability improvements over alloy 718 while maintaining the ease of processing characteristic of alloy 718.

Objective

Experience in processing of alloy 718Plus for disc applications is limited, therefore this program was initiated to evaluate the effects of thermomechanical processing and heat treatment on mechanical properties and microstructure that may be applied to manufacture of large alloy 718Plus forgings. The formability of alloy 718Plus will also be evaluated within the limited scope of the program.

Experimental Program

All the forgings in this study were manufactured on the Wyman Gordon 2500 Ton Advanced Product Development press using flat dies and a reduction ratio of 3:1. Allvac supplied the alloy 718Plus and waspaloy 200mm diameter billet used in the program. Both materials were produced from 500mm diameter VIM+VAR ingot, upset and drawn to an intermediate preform diameter and finish forged by a GFM. Typical chemical analysis alloy 718Plus and waspaloy are given in below.

Alloy	C	Cr	Mo	W	Co	Fe	Ni	Nb	Ti	A1	P	В
Alloy 718Plus	0.025	18	2.7	1.0	9.0	10.0	Bal	5.4	0.7	1.45	0.014	0.004
Waspaloy	0.035	19.4	4.3	0	13.5	0	Bal	0	3.0	1.3	0.006	0.006

The program was conducted in two phases. The first phase evaluated the effects of forging temperature, solution temperature and ageing time on structure and properties. In the second phase, the study was restricted to the solution treatment conditions for alloy 718Plus and included a trial with a waspaloy forging.

Three alloy 718Plus forgings were produced for the initial phase of the program using temperatures in the range 996-1024°C. The 200mm diameter billet multiples were upset with a 3:1 reduction to yield a 60mm thick forging. Each forging was halved, solution treated at temperatures of 955°C or 982°C, and oil quenched. A 857°C for 8 hrs presolution thermal cycle was applied before raising the material to the solution temperature.

Aging of alloy 718Plus is similar to alloy 718 but at higher temperatures (dual age cycles at 788°C and 650°C, with an intermediate cool at about 55°C/hour, followed by an air cool). To

complete the test matrix, quarter forgings were aged for 2 or 8 hours at the 788°C temperature of the age cycle.

In the second phase of the program a forging temperature of 1038°C was selected for the alloy 718Plus forgings. The forgings were produced from 200mm diameter billet with a 3:1 reduction to a final thickness of 100mm. The forgings were halved and heat treated. Further evaluation of the solution temperature was also performed in this phase of the program. A presolution heating cycle was used on three of the forging sections before raising to the solution treatment temperatures of 955, 968 and 982°C and oil quenching. One section was heated directly to 955°C and oil quenched. All forging were aged using the 788°C / 650°C dual age cycle.

A waspaloy forging, supersolvus forged at 1071°C, was produced from 206mm diameter billet with a 3:1 reduction ratio to a final thickness of 100mm. After sectioning into two pieces, one section was heat treated by solution treating at 1020°C oil quenched, stabilized at 843°C and aged at 760°C. The waspaloy test results are compared with the alloy 718Plus phase 2 forgings.

Mechanical property testing for both phases of the program involved room temperature tensile, elevated temperature tensile, stress rupture and creep testing. All elevated temperature tests were performed at 704°C. Stress rupture and creep specimens were run at 551Mpa and 483Mpa stress levels respectively

For the first phase of the program, two test specimens of each type were removed in both the radial and tangential orientations from each of the fully processed quarter forgings. All specimens were taken from the middle third of the forging thickness and the midradius.

For the second phase, three room temperature and elevated temperature tensile test specimens were taken in the radial direction and three creep and three stress rupture tests were taken in the tangential direction. All specimens were taken from the middle of the forging thickness and in the mid radius location from both alloy 718Plus and waspaloy forging sections.

Results and Discussion

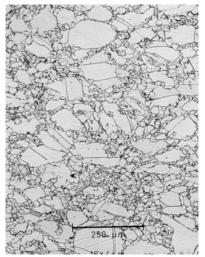
In initiating this program, there was very little data on the forgeability of alloy 718Plus, although it had been formed by ring rolling successfully as part of the alloy development program. Forging trials conducted by Allvac, not reported here, showed no evidence of forging cracks and suggesting alloy 718Plus has good formability.

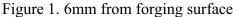
Over the temperature range 982 to 1038°C, and reduction ratio of 3:1 used in both phases of the program, no evidence of surface cracking or tearing was observed in the alloy 718Plus forgings. The good surface condition of the forgings suggests that alloy 718Plus is not crack sensitive within the range of conditions used in this study.

While it is recognized in the industry that waspaloy has formability issues and is crack sensitive during forging, the waspaloy forging produced as part of this trial did not show any evidence of fracture. This indicates that the upset forging is not a severe test of the forgeability of alloy 718Plus and more evaluations will be necessary to explore the limits of hot workability.

Both the alloy 718Plus and waspaloy forgings show deformed and partially recrystallized grains in the area of the die contact faces. This extends from the forging surface to a depth of approximately of 5-10mm. Figures 1 and 2 show the microstructure at mid-radius location 6mm from the forge surface and at mid thickness for a fully heat treated alloy 718Plus forging formed at

1038°C. The depth of the unrecrystallized/partially recrystallized material will have an impact on the forging envelope and hence manufacturing cost for a component.





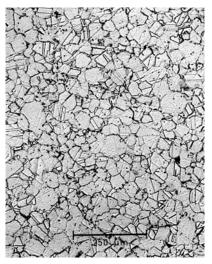


Figure 2. Forging mid thickness

The uniform, recrystallized grain size in the forgings was a function of the forge temperature and ranged from an average of ASTM 9 ALA 8 for the 996°C, ASTM 8 ALA 7 for 1010°C, ASTM 7 ALA 6 1024°C and ASTM 6 ALA 5 for the supersolvus 1038°C forging, shown in Figure 3.

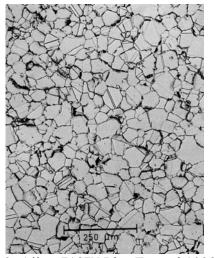


Figure 3. Alloy 718TM Plus Forged 1038°C

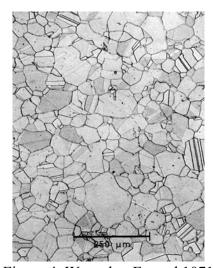


Figure 4. Waspaloy Forged 1071°C

Waspaloy upset at 1071°C had an average ASTM 5 ALA 4 microstructure, figure 4, and the similarity in grain size between the alloy 718Plus and waspaloy forgings eliminated that grain size was not an issue in making a comparison of the mechanical properties.

Balancing the mechanical properties was the principal consideration for selecting the heat treatment conditions. The previous development program indicated that, like alloy 718 and alloy 706, alloy 718Plus may be susceptible to low notch ductility. Therefore the heat treatment had to balance achieving good tensile properties and minimizing the risk of stress rupture notch ductility failure.

The heat treatment was designed to precipitate delta phase on the grain boundaries in order to reduce susceptibility for notch failures. This was accomplished by using the presolution heating

cycle at an intermediate temperature and limiting the time at solution temperature. The solution temperature range was selected to retain sufficient Nb, Al and Ti in solution for precipitation of gamma prime and gamma double prime during the age cycle.

Tables I and II show the ambient and elevated temperature tensile properties respectively for alloy 718Plus for different forging and solution temperatures. The data shown are the average of two tests for each forge and solution treatment condition. In general, room temperature strength appears to be negatively impacted at the highest forge temperature with an attendant pick up in ductility whereas the higher solution temperature promotes improved strength levels. The elevated temperature properties do not appear to be sensitive to the forge temperature, though the same effect of solution temperature is observed.

Table I. Effect of Forge and Solution Temperature on Average RT Tensile Properties

	Average Room Temperature Tensile Properties								
Forge	Solution	Tensile	Yield Stress	%Elong	%RofA	Test			
Temp. °C	Temp. °C	Stress MPa	MPa	70Eiong	/0K01A	Direction			
996	857+955	1439	979	19.6	24.2				
1010	857+955	1453	1012	18.8	24				
1024	857+955	1438	981	20.7	26.4	Tangential			
996	857+982	1482	1071	19.1	27.4	Tangentiai			
1010	857+982	1483	1081	18.9	26.1				
1024	857+982	1458	1057	21.6	30.0				
996	857+955	1413	962	21.2	27.4				
1010	857+955	1425	970	20.0	24.7				
1024	857+955	1408	947	22.0	29.0	Radial			
996	857+982	1445	1028	20.6	27.3	Rauiai			
1010	857+982	1441	1017	20.6	28.2				
1024	857+982	1450	1037	22.4	34.6				

Table II. Effect of Forge and Solution Temperature on Average 704°C Tensile Properties

Average Elevated Temperature Tensile Properties								
Forge	Solution	Tensile	Yield Stress	%Elong	%RofA	Test		
Temp. °C	Temp. °C	Stress MPa	MPa	70210118	70110111	Direction		
996	857+955	1112	826	18.8	20.1			
1010	857+955	1124	869	19.4	23.3			
1024	857+955	1107	795	16.0	19.2	Tangential		
996	857+982	1128	850	14.4	17.0	Tangentiai		
1010	857+982	1166	914	21.0	32.2			
1024	857+982	1133	865	13.8	16.9			
996	857+955	1104	809	18.2	21.0			
1010	857+955	1132	859	20.2	22.6			
1024	857+955	1139	840	16.6	19.3	Radial		
996	857+982	1116	826	14.0	17.8	Radiai		
1010	857+982	1158	874	14.2	17.4			
1024	857+982	1121	828	11.8	14.2			

No significant influence in the tensile, stress rupture or creep results of the 2 or 8 hour hold at 788°C of the age cycle was observed.

Average stress rupture life and ductility for the initial phase forgings are given in Table III. There is considerable scatter and the results do not give a clear indication of the effect of either forging or solution temperature on rupture life or ductility.

There were a number of failures in the notch of the stress rupture test bars. Four of the five notch failure specimens were solution treated at 982°C suggesting that under certain conditions, this solution treatment of alloy 718Plus may be unacceptable.

Average creep life to 0.2% and 0.5% strain is shown in Table III. The results suggest that highest forging temperature gave improved creep life. As was the case for tensile strength, higher solution temperatures appear to promote better creep strength. The effect is more clearly seen for the life at 0.5% strain. It is well documented that larger grain size from high temperature forging will be a significant factor in creep life.

Table III. Effect of Forge & Solution Temperature on Average Stress Rupture & Creep Properties

Froperties								
Average Stress Rupture(704 °C 552MPa) & Creep (704 °C 483Mpa) Properties								
Forge	Forge Solution		Lupture	Creep	Specimen			
Temp °C	Temp °C	Life hrs	%Elong	0.2% Strain	0.5% Strain	Direction		
996	857+955	205.3	33.0	41.9	150.0			
1010	857+955	178.5	34.8	41.6	140.6			
1024	857+955	206.7	37.9	43.7	156.9	Tangential		
996	857+982	216.5	39.5	46.8	166.3			
1010	857+982	84.6*	41.6*	46.0	164.1			
1024	857+982	154.9*	32.0*	82.7	224.5			
996	857+955	217.3	32.9	60.1	191.6			
1010	857+955	232.7	41.1	49.7	174.7			
1024	857+955	117.6*	34.6*	72.3	225.0	Radial		
996	857+982	120.2*	24.5*	63.7	201.5	Naulai		
1010	857+982	137.1*	33.6*	67.0	212.8			
1024	857+982	314.4	38.8	122.3	285.2			

^{*} Notch failure of one specimen in the notch with life of ~1 hour.

The second phase of the study focused on a forge temperature of 1038°C for alloy 718Plus and comparison of properties with waspaloy. Tables IV and V show the tensile properties for both alloy along with the heat treatment parameters. At room temperature alloy 718Plus shows superior tensile and 0.2% proof stress with slightly reduced ductility in comparison to waspaloy. At elevated temperature [704°C] tensile and 0.2% proof stress, the alloys are comparable with waspaloy again showing greater ductility. Consistent with earlier observations alloy 718Plus solution treatment at 982 °C gives the highest room and elevated temperature yield strength.

These results indicate that alloy 718Plus has retained the good room temperature capability of alloy 718 while the improved the 704°C tensile properties suggest alloy 718Plus may be a potential alternative to waspaloy in high temperature applications.

Table IV. Average Room Temperature Tensile Results

Solution Temp °C	UTS MPa	0.2% Proof Stress Mpa	%Elongation	% Reduction of Area	Test Direction				
	Allvac® 718Plus TM								
857+982	1419	1072	22.2	32.4					
857+968	1424	1018	22.5	28.8	Radial				
857+955	1436	1046	21.5	27.0	Kadiai				
955	1424	983	22.2	25.3					
Waspaloy									
Subsolvus	1348	940	27.2	35.7	Radial				

Table V. Average 704°C Tensile Test Results

Solution Temp °C	UTS MPa	0.2% Proof Stress MPa	%Elongation	% Reduction of Area	Test Direction				
	Allvac [®] 718Plus TM								
857+982	1169	879	18.9	21.3					
857+968	1151	820	21.8	25.6	Dadial				
857+955	1151	812	25.5	26.3	Radial				
955	1151	812	26.4	28.6					
Waspaloy									
Subsolvus	1128	837	33.8	52.6	Radial				

The average results of second phase stress rupture testing at 704°C and 552Mpa for alloy 718Plus and waspaloy are given in Table VI. At the time of writing, testing is not complete but the results indicate that alloy 718Plus solution treated at 982°C shows comparable stress rupture life when solution treated at 982°C with waspaloy. One of the six alloy 718Plus stress rupture tests for 982°C solution treated specimens failed prematurely at the notch. Metallographic evaluation of the alloy 781Plus test specimens indicates delta phase grain boundary precipitation has an influence on stress rupture notch sensitivity. Notch ductility issues and the influence of precipitation on mechanical properties and fracture in alloy 718 and alloy 706 are well documented [15, 16, 17, and 19].

Table VI. Average Stress Rupture (704 °C 552MPa) & Creep (704 °C 483MPa) Test Results

Solution Temp.	Stress Rupture		Creep						
°C	Life hrs	% Elong.	0.25% Strain hrs	0.5% Strain hrs	Test Direction				
	Allvac® 718Plus TM								
857-982	407	27.6	-	-	Radial				
857-982	502*	28.1	247	392					
857-968	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	Tangential				
857-955	252	28.7	333	445	Tangennai				
955	288	28.3	TBD	TBD					
Waspaloy									
Subsolvus	434	21.1	66	162	Tangential				

^{*} Average life for two specimens, third specimen failed prematurely with a Notch failure.

The microstructure of alloy 718Plus stress rupture specimens in notch ductile (500 hr life) and notch brittle conditions are shown in figures 5 and 6 respectively. Both samples were forged at 1038°C and solution treated at 982°C. The microstructure from the two specimens is similar, but the delta phase precipitation appears to be greater on the grain boundaries of the notch ductile specimen than the notch brittle specimen. This observation is based on a visual comparison as it has not been possible to quantify the delta phase concentration at the grain boundaries.

The microstructure from alloy 718Plus solution treated at 955°C and 968°C are shown in Figures 7 and 8, respectively. Comparison of the Figures 7 and 8 with Figures 5 and 6 show a higher concentration of grain boundary delta phase precipitation on the lower temperature solution treated material.

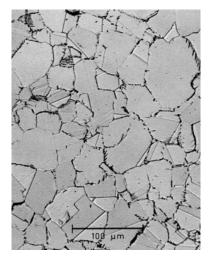


Figure 5. 500 hr Stress Rupture Life

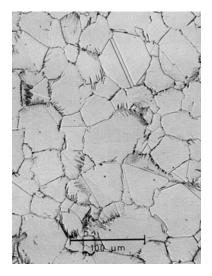


Figure 7. Alloy 718PlusTM 955 °C Solution

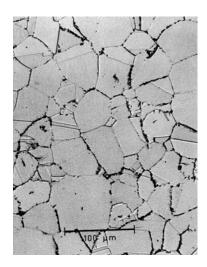


Figure 6. Stress Rupture Notch Failure



Figure 8. Alloy 718PlusTM 968 °C Solution

Table VI also shows the average available creep life to 0.25% and 0.5% strain for the second phase alloy 718Plus forgings solution treated at 982°C and 955°C and for waspaloy. Alloy 718Plus in both solution treated conditions shows improved creep life over waspaloy. It is not possible to draw a conclusion in comparing the phase one and two alloy 718Plus forging creep lives. Further investigation of the effects of forging and heat treatment on creep life is required to clarify these results.

Summary and Conclusions

The structure and mechanical properties of alloy 718Plus and waspaloy forgings were evaluated. The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

- Pancake forgings made of alloy 718Plus displayed tensile, stress rupture, and creep properties comparable to supersolvus processed waspaloy.
- The best tensile properties were obtained for the lower forge temperatures and higher solution temperatures whereas the best creep resistance is obtained at higher forge and solution temperatures used in this study.
- Grain size and delta phase precipitation exerts a strong influence over stress rupture properties, strength and ductility.
- Alloy 718Plus exhibited stress rupture notch brittle behavior that appears to be related to grain boundary delta precipitation.
- The results obtained to date suggest that, through further optimization of thermomechanical processing parameters and heat treatment, alloy 718Plus can consistently achieve mechanical properties approaching those of waspaloy.

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