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3	
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Analysis of the condition of track superstructure elements using the finite element method in the ABAQUS software package

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Abstract:

The aim of this work was a comprehensive study of the process of modeling the elements of the track superstructure using modern three-dimensional finite element methods. Given the high degree of complexity and versatility of the problem, a detailed model of the railway track was developed and implemented during the study, which allowed for a deeper understanding of the behavior of its elements under the influence of various operational loads. The modeling included both static and dynamic analyses, which made it possible to assess the influence of various factors on the strength and durability of the structure.

Keywords:

Model, stress, von Mises, wheel, rail, modeling, finite element track superstructure, ABAQUS

1. Introduction

The use of finite element modeling (FE) allows to significantly reduce both financial and time costs, while

effectively achieving the set goals. This method allows to quickly identify the maximum values of strength, stresses and displacements in the railway track structure, which, in turn, helps to focus attention on the most vulnerable sections of the infrastructure.

Table 1

Technical characteristics of the track superstructure

Elements of the railway superstructure	Density (kg/m ²)	Young's modulus (E)	Poisson's ratio (ν)
Rail (steel)	7850	210 GPa	0.3
Sleeper (reinforced concrete)	1200	80 GPa	0.3

2. Research methodology

Statement of the problem

The calculations modeled the contact interaction between the wheel and the rail. The parameters of the contact interaction depend on the adopted configuration of the wheel and rail profile, as well as their nominal dimensions. During movement, the wheel and the rail can occupy various mutual positions, which are shown in Fig. 1.

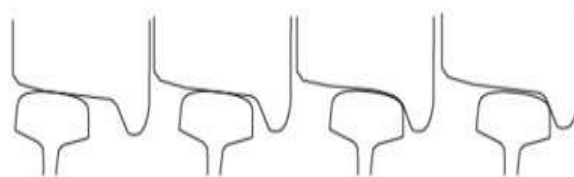


Fig. 1. Location of wheel and rail contact zones

The model of interaction between the wheel and the rail in the wheel-track system, adopted for modeling the process of the impact of dynamic load [1-2] on this system, is presented in Fig. 2.

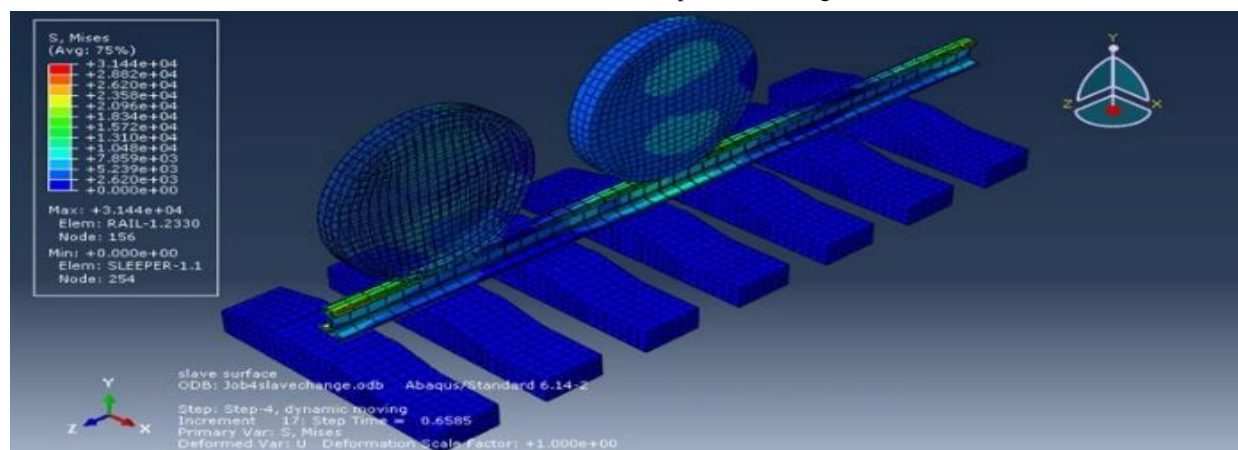



Fig. 2. Stresses at wheel-rail interaction points

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The loading process includes two steps:

- general static analysis
- dynamic implicit analysis

Stress elements in the wheel-rail contact zones, as well as the stress distribution according to the von Mises criterion, are shown in Figures 3 and 4. The von Mises stress

is widely used to assess the deformation of isotropic and plastic metals under complex loads. Using ABAQUS software allows you to calculate the von Mises stress values at specified points at each stage of the calculation.

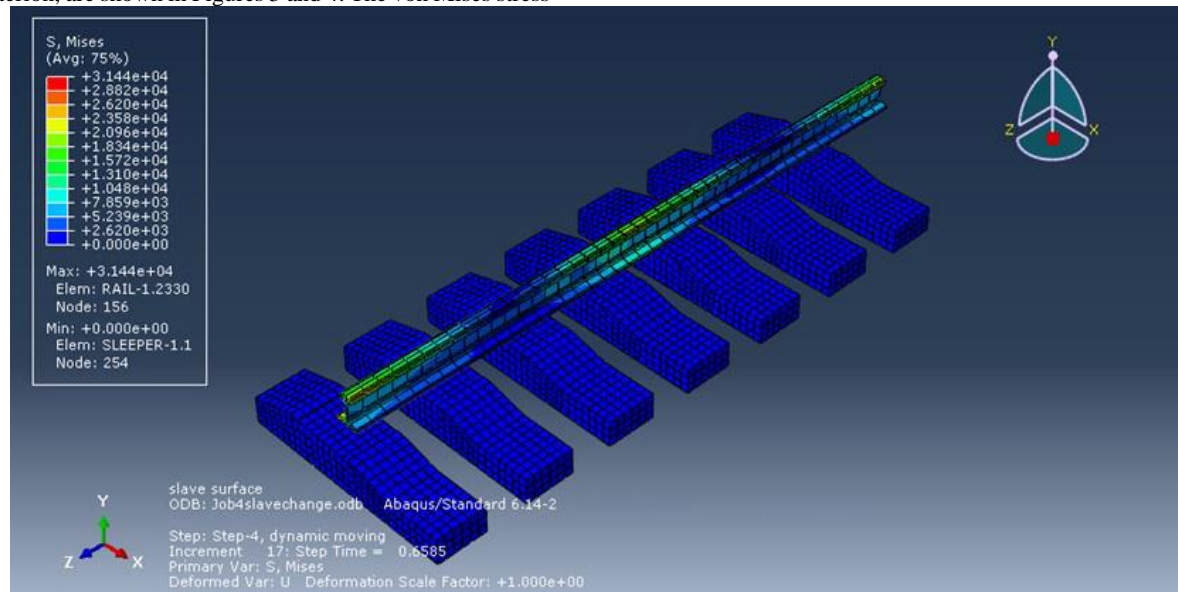


Fig. 3. Distribution of von Mises stresses (without wheel)

Distribution of maximum principal stress

The von Mises stress is a theoretical measure of stress used to evaluate limit state criteria in ductile materials and is also popular in fatigue calculations (where it can be positive

or negative depending on the dominant principal stress). While the principal stress is a more "real" and directly measurable stress.

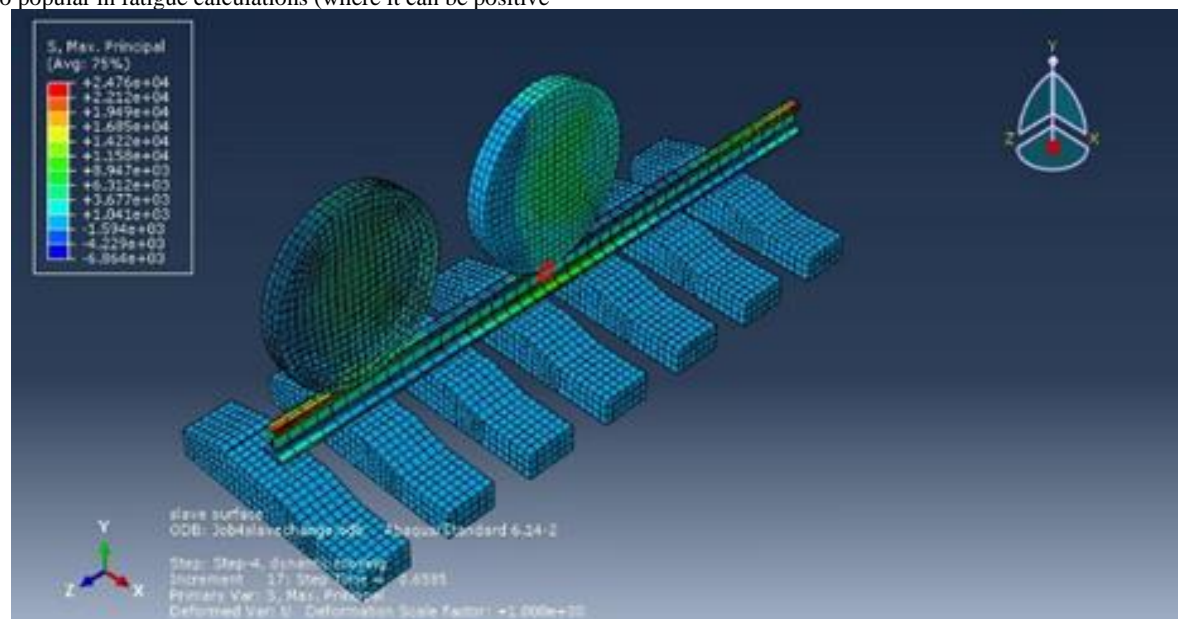


Fig. 4. Distribution of maximum principal stress



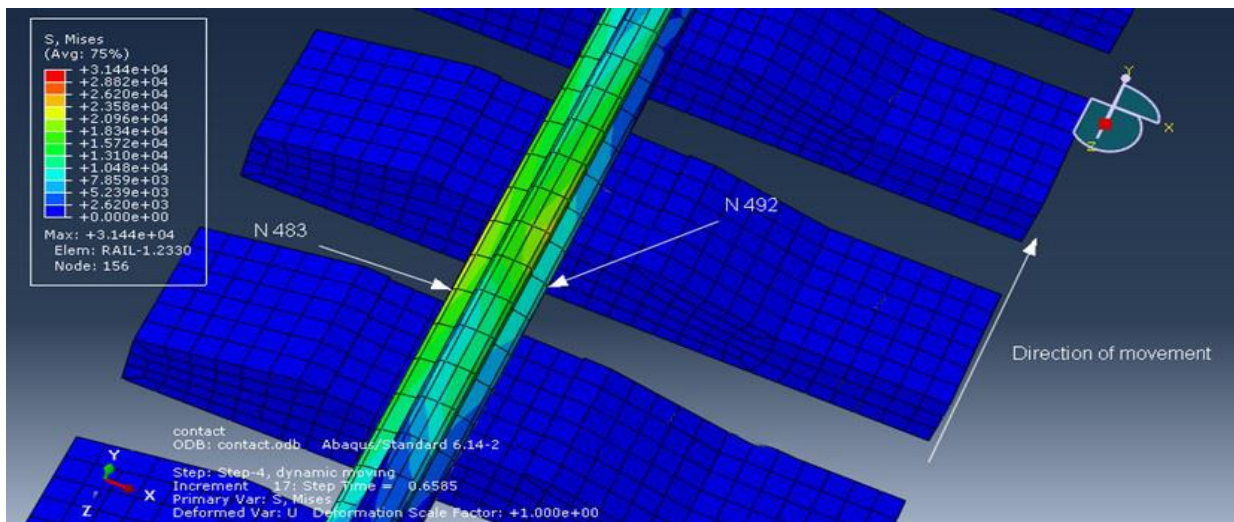


Fig. 5. Location of nodes with maximum and minimum von Mises stress

Analysis of the obtained results

Calculations show that the maximum von Mises stress for step #17 corresponds to node N483, while the minimum von Mises stress for the same increment corresponds to node N492. The change in the von Mises stress distribution can be

seen in Figure 6. The stresses are $\sigma = 21.3 \times 10^3 \text{ N/cm}^2$ for node N483 and $\sigma = 4.40 \times 10^3 \text{ N/cm}^2$ for node N492. However, node N483 reaches the maximum stress value at time $t = 0.7585 \text{ s}$, equal to $\sigma = 22.9 \times 10^3 \text{ N/cm}^2$ [3-4].

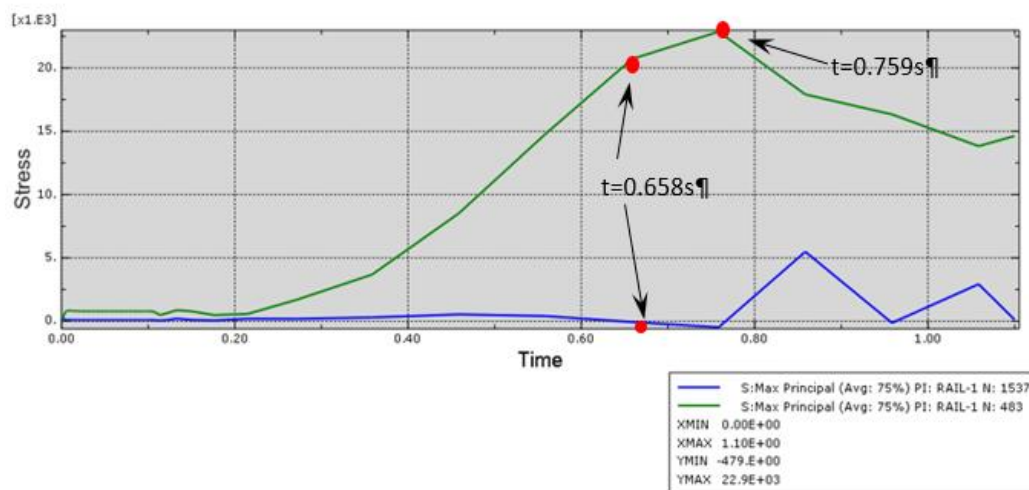


Fig. 6. Maximum and minimum voltage of the Von Mises for increment No. 17 at $t=0.658\text{s}$

The values of the principal stress for node N483 are $\sigma = 21.27 \times 10^3 \text{ N/cm}^2$, and for node N1537 $\sigma = -0.175 \times 10^3 \text{ N/cm}^2$. Comparing the von Mises stresses and the maximum principal stress in node N483, it can be seen that these values differ [3].

3. Conclusion

During the study, an analysis of stresses was carried out according to the von Mises criterion, maximum principal stresses, spatial displacements of rail and sleeper assemblies, as well as contact interactions between the wheel and the rail, including normal contact forces and reaction forces in the sleepers [5-10].

Modeling in ABAQUS allowed us to obtain the following results:

- deformations, contact forces, stresses and reaction forces were calculated;

- a difference was established between the von Mises stresses and the maximum principal stresses for one node (21.30×10^3 for von von Mises and 21.27×10^3 for maximum principal stress);

The developed finite element model of the railway track reproduces the geometry of the real structure. The analysis of the stress distribution according to von Mises showed that in the wheel-rail contact zone the maximum values reach 22.9 MPa. The ultimate stresses were recorded in node N483 ($\sigma = 22.9 \text{ MPa}$), and the minimum ones were recorded in node N492 ($\sigma = 4.4 \text{ MPa}$). The analysis of the main stresses also revealed significant fluctuations that affect the wear of the rails and wheels. The maximum values of the main stress are 21.27 MPa.



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K. Turdibekov, D. Rustamov, M. Mamadalieva <i>Increasing the selective operation of microprocessor terminals.....</i>	56
M. Shukurova, E. Abdurakhmanova, F. Usarkulova, M. Botirov <i>Mathematical modeling of transient groundwater filtration in multilayered media with a low-permeability barrier.....</i>	59
T. Amirov, K. Muminov, M. Dauletov, S. Rakhmatov <i>Evaluating the impact of elevations between concrete pavement slabs on road surface smoothness.....</i>	64
I. Bedritsky, M. Mirasadov, L. Bazarov <i>Single-phase to six-phase voltage converter.....</i>	70
B. Kodirov, S. Shaumarov, S. Kandakhorov <i>Production of aerated concrete blocks using energy-efficient technology.....</i>	73
B. Kodirov, S. Shaumarov, S. Kandakhorov <i>Development of building structures with individual characteristics taking into account the conditions of Uzbekistan.....</i>	78
E. Salayev <i>Assessing the risk of public transport in southern cities of Azerbaijan using the "bow tie" method.....</i>	83
T. Verdiev <i>Evaluation effectiveness of solutions to improve mobility in cities....</i>	90
S. Djabbarov, N. Kodirov <i>Analysis of the condition of track superstructure elements using the finite element method in the ABAQUS software package.....</i>	94
S. Djabbarov, N. Kodirov <i>Assessment of the condition of a railway track based on finite element modeling.....</i>	98