DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF BRAZE ALLOYS FOR VACUUM FURNACE BRAZING

by K. L. Gustafson

Prepared by
AEROJET-GENERAL CORPORATION
Sacramento, Calif.

for Lewis Research Center

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DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF BRAZE ALLOYS
FOR VACUUM FURNACE BRAZING

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for

Lewis Research Center

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

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ABSTRACT

A report of the results of an investigation of 11 braze alloy systems, 8 of which were developed by the Aerojet-General Corporation, as alternatives for the copper-gold commercial alloy (Nicoro) widely used to vacuum braze large rocket engine tubular thrust chambers.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. SUMMARY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. TECHNICAL DISCUSSION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. BRAZE FILLER METAL REQUIREMENTS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. COPPER-BASE BRAZE ALLOYS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. SPECIMEN DESIGN AND PREPARATION</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. EVALUATION AND QUALIFICATION TESTS</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Test 1 - Determination of Chemical Compositions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Test 2 - Determination of Liquidus and Solidus Temperatures</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Test 3 - Braze Temperature Determination</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Test 4 - Determination of Diffusion and Erosion Characteristics</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Test 5 - Brazement Hardness</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Test 6 - Wet and Flow Characteristics</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Test 7 - Peel Test</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Test 8 - Mechanical Properties</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Test 9 - Burst Test</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. BRAZE JOINT PROPERTIES</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. METALLOGRAPHIC EXAMINATION OF BRAZE JOINTS</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. AGC-200 - A Solid-Solution Alloy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. AGC-201 - A Solid-Solution Alloy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. AGC-202A - A Peritectic and Solid-Solution Alloy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vii
# TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>AGC-202B - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>AGC-204A - A Peritectic and Solid-Solution Alloy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>AGC-204B - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>AGC-206A - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid Solution and Peritectic Alloy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>AGC-206B - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid Solution and Peritectic Alloy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Anaconda 651 (1015) - A Solid-Solution Alloy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Anaconda 656 (1010) - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Wesgo Nicoro - A Solid-Solution Alloy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. CONCLUSIONS

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX A DEFINITIONS
I. SUMMARY

A program was conducted to develop an alternative braze alloy for the copper-gold commercial alloy (Nicoro) widely used to vacuum braze large rocket engine tubular thrust chambers. The use of this alloy on extremely large thrust chambers, such as the M-1 engine, would result in inordinate costs. Copper and 10 copper-base alloys were investigated; eight of these copper-base alloys were non-commercial alloys developed under this contract. Two of these alloys, AGC-200 and AGC-201, proved to be equal in all respects to the commercial alloy Nicoro. The remaining six of these new alloys contained small additions of silicon and were somewhat weaker than Nicoro because of the formation of brittle silicide phases. Two commercial copper-base alloys, Anaconda 656 and Anaconda 651, compared favorably with Nicoro; however, additional research is required to reduce their impurity content for satisfactory high temperature vacuum brazing operations. Use of AGC-200 or AGC-201 braze alloy in preference to Nicoro will reduce the gold content by 57% and offer a 50% reduction in braze material costs.

II. INTRODUCTION

In 1956, the Aerojet-General Corporation Sacramento Plant developed the processing techniques for fabricating large size liquid rocket tubular thrust chambers by the high temperature furnace brazing process. This method of processing was successfully used in fabricating several thousand first-stage and second-stage thrust chambers for the Titan I, Titan II, and Gemini engine systems. It has since been adopted by the Aerospace industry as the most reliable and economical way for fabricating large tubular components requiring a very high linear footage of quality braze joints.

The selection of dry hydrogen as the furnace atmosphere for joining the above components permitted the Aerojet-General Corporation Materials Engineering organization to develop techniques utilizing relatively low cost braze alloys (i.e., approximately $8.00 per lb). The decision to use a vacuum environment for furnace brazing of the M-1 Combustion Chamber at an optimum brazing temperature required the consideration of braze alloys with high purity containing elements with low vapor pressure. Because commercially available alloys of this category contain a high percentage of noble metals and cost approximately $200.00 per lb, a program was initiated to develop and evaluate alternative lower cost braze alloys for use in joining of the M-1 components.

Various criteria in addition to those inherent with vacuum brazing guided the analysis and selection of alternative alloy compositions. The service environment required an alloy with high strength and toughness at cryogenic temperatures. Fit-up problems, inherent in the assembly of such a large tubular bundle, dictated the use of an alloy which is relatively insensitive to joint clearance variations.

The use of Alloy 718 in the assembly imposed a maximum braze temperature limitation of 1975°F; the maximum solution heat treat temperature.
A literature search was made to review and analyze commercially-available alloys (see Table 1) that could satisfy the aforementioned requirements. Nickel, gold, copper, and silver braze alloys were considered. Nickel-base alloys were discounted because of their inherent brittleness resulting from intermetallic compounds. Silver-base alloys were inadequate because of their relatively low strength. Hence, the gold-base and copper-base systems received critical study. This study resulted in the development of eight copper-base brazing alloys.

III. TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

A. BRAZE FILLER METAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Good strength and ductility in the room temperature to cryogenic (-423°F) temperature range. Crystal structure of the elemental constituents should be face-centered-cubic.

2. Elemental constituents should have relatively high vaporization temperature because vacuum brazing in the range of 0.5 to 5.0 microns is anticipated.

3. Minimum erosion and diffusion characteristics when used on AISI 347 stainless steel and brazed at approximately 75-degrees above the rated liquidus.

4. Melting point and brazing temperature in the range of 1700°F to 1975°F to minimize fixturing problems and to be compatible with heat treating requirements.

5. Insensitive to joint clearance variations as compared with copper.

6. Step-brazing capability (i.e., a sufficiently high brazing temperature to permit a second braze cycle, if required, at a slightly lower temperature).

7. Available in the three basic forms of wire, foil, and powder.

B. COPPER-BASE BRAZE ALLOYS

Copper was selected as the base material because of its desirable mechanical and physical properties as well as its low cost. The face-centered-cubic crystal structure of copper provides good cryogenic mechanical properties. Copper has approximately a 50% increase in tensile strength from room temperature to -423°F. It has a low critical vapor pressure which is essential for vacuum brazing (1.0 micron at 2085°F), alloy readily with the selected elements and forms a solid-solution alloy with nickel, cobalt, palladium, gold, and silicon. Copper has a relatively low melting point (1981°F) and requires minimum percentages of depressant elements to lower the melting point of the alloy to a point where brazing can be accomplished at
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Braze Alloy</th>
<th>Composition, %</th>
<th>Brazing Temperature, °F</th>
<th>Pressure, Microns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicoro</td>
<td>Cu 62</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Au 35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nioro</td>
<td>Au 82</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemco</td>
<td>Cu 87.75</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ge 12.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicoro 80</td>
<td>Au 81.5</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu 16.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 2.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600N</td>
<td>Cu 52.5</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>13-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 9.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mn 38.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700N</td>
<td>Cu 67.5</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>15-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 9.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mn 23.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700CN</td>
<td>Cu 63</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>20-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cr 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mn 22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusil</td>
<td>Ag 72</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu 28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicusil 3</td>
<td>Ag 71.15</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu 28.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1975°F or below. The alloying elements selected and the percentage of the alloy constituents formulated were made upon the basis of each element forming a solid-solution alloy which would enhance the properties of the copper-base metal while meeting all of the specified basic requirements.

Generally, all constituents should have the same crystal form and have near-identical atomic diameters to produce a solid-solution alloy system. Variations in atomic diameters should not exceed approximately 14% from the base metal; however, limited solid-solubility can be achieved with some elements in small percentages. Some of the significant properties are shown in Table 2.

In this development program, two elements (cobalt and silicon) were added as alloying constituents. Although neither has the same crystal form as copper, they will go into solution with a copper-base alloy in a limited quantity.

Eight alloy compositions were developed and were assigned the designations: AGC-200, AGC-201, AGC-202A, AGC-202B, AGC-204A, AGC-204B, AGC-206A, and AGC-206B. All eight alloys are copper-base quaternary systems. The actual compositions (see Table 3) were arrived at by mathematical calculations (weight ratios) of published binary alloy systems. To prevent exceeding the maximum brazing temperature of 1975°F, a liquidus temperature maximum was established at approximately 1950°F. Sufficient gold is alloyed in AGC-200 and AGC-201 to depress the liquidus temperature of these alloys to 1925°F and 1950°F, respectively. Variations in the gold content were found to affect the melting point by the factor of approximately 4°F per each one percent of gold added. It was determined that the addition of 15% gold provided the capability for achieving some economic benefit (a reduction of gold by a factor of 57% from the prime commercial candidate Nicoro).

In addition, two commercial copper-base alloys, Anaconda 651 and Anaconda 656, were evaluated as potential braze alloys. The purity of these alloys was not to the level generally required for alloys intended as braze filler materials. The composition and properties of these alloys are shown in Table 4 together with the reference Nicoro alloy and OFHC copper.

C. SPECIMEN DESIGN AND PREPARATION

Two basic types of specimens were prepared to obtain both ultimate tensile strength and ultimate shear strength values for the alloy systems under study. The tensile specimens were prepared by machining AISI 347 stainless steel blocks as shown on Figure 1. The lap shear specimens were prepared in accordance with A.W.S. C3.1-63, "Standard Test for Brazed Joints" (see Figure 1). Three specimens of each type were vacuum furnace brazed with each of the test alloys. The use of both lap shear and tensile specimens was necessary to evaluate the newly-developed alloys as well as the commercial alloys.
## Physical Properties of Alloying Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Atomic Diameter (Angstrom Units)</th>
<th>Crystal Structure</th>
<th>Melting Point °F</th>
<th>Vapor Pressure (Critical)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>Face-Centered Cubic</td>
<td>1945.4</td>
<td>1 micron @ 2400°F 0.1 micron @ 2175°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palladium</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>Face-Centered Cubic</td>
<td>2826</td>
<td>1 micron @ 2560°F 0.1 micron @ 2320°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>Face-Centered Cubic</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1 micron @ 2085°F 0.1 micron @ 1895°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobalt</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>*Close-Packed Hexagonal</td>
<td>2723</td>
<td>1 micron @ 2720°F 0.1 micron @ 2485°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nickel</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>Face-Centered Cubic</td>
<td>2647</td>
<td>1 micron @ 2500°F 0.1 micron @ 2295°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silicon</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>*Diamond Cubic</td>
<td>2570</td>
<td>1 micron @ 2235°F 0.1 micron @ 2040°F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ordinary form, other forms known or probable.

Source: Handbook of Chemistry and Physics, Chemical Rubber Publishing Company
Metals Handbook, American Society for Metals
Vapor Pressure Data, Radio Corporation of America, Sarnoff Research Center
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGC</th>
<th>Composition, %</th>
<th>Liquidus, °F</th>
<th>Brazing Temp., °F</th>
<th>Diffusion, in.</th>
<th>Erosion (At braze temp.)</th>
<th>Hardness (Braze ment RB)</th>
<th>Peel Test Failure</th>
<th>Metal Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Ni 3.0</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Co 5.0</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>202A</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Si 3.5-4.0</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>202B</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Si 1.5-2.0</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>204A</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Si 3.5-4.0</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>204B</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Si 1.5-2.0</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>206A</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Si 3.5-4.0</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>206B</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Cu bal</td>
<td>Si 1.5-2.0</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hardness (Braze ment RB)</th>
<th>58</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>94</th>
<th>84</th>
<th>80</th>
<th>89</th>
<th>88</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wet and Flow Characteristics</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peel Test Failure</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Braze</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Braze</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Characteristics</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## COMMERCIAL ALLOYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition*</th>
<th>O.F.H.C. Copper</th>
<th>Nicoro (Wesgo)</th>
<th>Anaconda 656 (1010)</th>
<th>Anaconda 651 (1015)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composition, %</strong></td>
<td>Cu 99.9</td>
<td>Au 35.0</td>
<td>Cu 95.8</td>
<td>Cu 98.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cu 62.0</td>
<td>Si 3.10</td>
<td>Si 1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ni 3.0</td>
<td>Mn 1.10</td>
<td>Mn 0.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liquidus, °F</strong></td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brazing Temp., °F</strong></td>
<td>2030</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diffusion, in.</strong></td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Erosion</strong></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hardness</strong></td>
<td>40 RF</td>
<td>75 RB</td>
<td>65 RB</td>
<td>52 RB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wet and Flow</strong></td>
<td>Fair to Good (joint clearance sensitive)</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peel Test Failure</strong></td>
<td>Base Metal</td>
<td>Base Metal</td>
<td>Base Metal</td>
<td>Base Metal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See Appendix A for definitions.

Table 4
AWS LAP SHEAR SPECIMEN

1. Braze Alloy

1. Machine blanks, vapor degrease, grit-blast mating surfaces, hydrogen bright anneal, shim edge of specimen, tack weld edge of specimen, apply braze alloy, and furnace braze.


TENSILE SPECIMEN

(1) Machine blocks, vapor degrease, grit-blast mating surfaces, hydrogen bright anneal.
(2) Shim edge of block, tack weld at corners, apply braze alloy into feed hole, and furnace braze.
(3) Machine specimens and test.

Figure 1

Lap Shear and Tensile Test Specimens
The tests were conducted at room temperature and at 
-423°F. Each specimen was pulled on a Tinius-Olsen tensile machine with a 
cross-head travel rate of 0.1-in.-per-minute until failure occurred. Ultimate strengths 
were calculated and are shown in Tables 5 and 6.

D. EVALUATION AND QUALIFICATION TESTS

The following nine basic tests were performed to qualify the 
systems.

1. Test 1 - Determination of Chemical Compositions

The tests were conducted on as-received alloys using the 
spectrographic and wet chemistry techniques to cross-reference the results. 
All alloys met the established chemical compositions.

2. Test 2 - Determination of Liquidus and Solidus Temperatures

The alloys were checked using the cooling curve technique and 
visual reference test, whereby the alloy is placed in a vacuum furnace with 
thermocouples located in close proximity to the alloys. The thermocouples 
are observed during the heating and cooling cycle. Near-identical results 
were obtained (± 10°F).

3. Test 3 - Braze Temperature Determination

Several tests were conducted for each alloy system to obtain 
proper flow characteristics. Generally, a temperature of approximately 50°F 
to 70°F above the rated liquidus produced good flow characteristics.

4. Test 4 - Determination of Diffusion and Erosion Characteristics

Microstructural examination was made to determine the rate of 
diffusion and erosion. No erosion could be detected when using the braze tem-
peratures considered optimum; however, AGC-202A, AGC-204A, and AGC-206A dif-
fused between 0.001-in. to 0.002-in. A direct relationship exists between 
silicon content and diffusion (see Tables 3 and 4).

5. Test 5 - Brazement Hardness

Micro hardness surveys were made on the resulting brazements. 
A range in hardness from R_B 58 to R_B 89 was obtained. Further investigation 
revealed that the alloy systems which exhibited 0.003-in. diffusion had a 
hardness range in excess of R_C 40.

6. Test 6 - Wet and Flow Characteristics

The wet and flow characteristics were determined by the 
ability or inability of the braze filler metal to wet and flow up vertical 
test specimens (two 6-in. long 0.020-in. tubes, Type 347, tack welded at the
**LAP SHEAR TEST RESULTS**

**Ultimate Shear Strength, K.S.I.**

(Base Metal Type 347 SS-0.002 in. Joint Clearance)

"2T"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Braze Alloy</th>
<th>Room Temperature</th>
<th>-423°F</th>
<th>Position-Relative Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Room Temperature</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 200</td>
<td>44.4*</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 201</td>
<td>47.6*</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 202A</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 202B</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 204A</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 204B</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 206A</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 206B</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaconda 651</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaconda 656</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFHC Copper</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesgo-Nicoro</td>
<td>45.1*</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Specimens failed in base metal.
AGC 200 -- All three specimens failed in base metal.
AGC 201 -- All three specimens failed in base metal.
Nicoro --- One specimen failed in base metal.

| Table 5 | 10 |
TENSILE TEST RESULTS

Ultimate Tensile Strength K.S.I.
(Base Metal Type 347 SS-0.003 in. Joint Clearance)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Braze Alloy</th>
<th>Room Temperature</th>
<th>$-423^\circ$F</th>
<th>Position-Relative Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGC 200</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>128.9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 201</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>117.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 202A</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 202B</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 204A</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>30.8*</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 204B</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 206A</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>24.0*</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGC 206B</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaconda 651</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaconda 656</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFHC Copper</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesgo Nicoro</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>166.2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Incomplete braze coverage.

Table 6
ends) with a pre-set joint clearance of 0.003-in. using standard brazing
temperature and pressure ranging from 0.5 microns to 5.0 microns. The speci-
mens were then visually rated to determine the extent of wetting and flow.

7. **Test 7 - Peel Test**

The degree of bond strength was determined using the specimens
described above by peeling the tube specimen in opposing directions and
examining the mode of failure. Failure would occur in either the brazement or
the parent metal.

8. **Test 8 - Mechanical Properties**

Standard A.W.S. lap shear specimens were prepared along with
tensile specimens to determine lap shear and tensile strength for each alloy
system at room temperature and -423°F.

9. **Test 9 - Burst Test**

Burst testing of AISI stainless steel brazed tubular specimens
was also performed. Three-inch lengths of AISI stainless steel tubing with
a 0.020-in. wall were furnace-brazed to a platform of the same material
(0.125-in. thick) to perform pressure burst tests. This test was made to
determine if thin-walled stainless steel tubing would be embrittled by the
braze filler alloys. These specimens are shown in Figures 2 and 3.

The tube ends were fitted with A-N fittings and hydrostatic-
ally pressurized until failure occurred. All specimens failed at approximately
5000 psig at the mid-point of the tube.

E. **BRAZE JOINT PROPERTIES**

The lap shear and tensile properties of the alloys investigated
are shown in Tables 5 and 6, respectively. Also included are Nicoro and OFHC
copper as reference data.

The alloys containing small percentages of silicon were generally
weaker; this is attributed to the formation of a hard iron-silicide phase in
the diffusion zone. Test results indicate that the AGC-200, AGC-201, and the
Anaconda 651 (low silicon) have closely related ultimate shear strengths and
are comparable with Nicoro, the prime commercial candidate alloy. The same
relationship of strength is apparent for the ultimate tensile strength, with
the exception of Anaconda 651 which had a lower ultimate tensile strength than
OFHC copper at -423°F.

F. **METALLOGRAPHIC EXAMINATION OF BRAZE JOINTS**

The photomicrographs illustrated in Figures 4 through 14 are
typical tube joints brazed with the different braze filler materials investi-
gated. The base metal in all tests is Type AISI 347 hydrogen-annealed stain-
less steel tubing.
Figure 2
Brazed Specimens for Pressure Testing
Figure 3
Brazed Specimens for Pressure Testing
The following observations were made during the course of evaluating the alloy systems.

1. **AGC-200 - A Solid-Solution Alloy**

   No phase change or secondary phases could be detected. Minimal diffusion into the base metal was observed. Braze deposit microhardness average (based upon several surveys) was $R_B$ 58 (see Figure 4).

2. **AGC-201 - A Solid-Solution Alloy**

   No phase change or secondary phases could be detected and there was minimal diffusion into the base metal. Braze deposit microhardness average was $R_B$ 60 (see Figure 5).

3. **AGC-202A - A Peritectic and Solid-Solution Alloy**

   Formation of a secondary phase was noted together with a hard diffusion boundary. The diffusion boundary is attributed to the formation of iron-silicides. Average hardness of brazement was $R_B$ 60; average hardness of diffusion zone was $R_c$ 38 (see Figure 6).

4. **AGC-202B - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy**

   There is minimal diffusion into the base metal. The lower silicon content in this alloy limited the formation of the iron-silicide noted for AGC-202A. Average microhardness of the brazement was $R_B$ 94 (see Figure 7).

5. **AGC-204A - A Peritectic and Solid-Solution Alloy**

   Formation of a secondary phase and a hard diffusion boundary was noted. The diffusion boundary is attributed to the formation of iron-silicide. Average microhardness of the brazement was $R_B$ 84; average hardness of diffusion zone was $R_c$ 52 (see Figure 8).

6. **AGC-204B - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy**

   There is minimal diffusion into the base metal. The lower silicon content in this alloy limited the formation of iron-silicide experienced with alloys AGC-202A and AGC-204A (see Figure 9).

7. **AGC-206A - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy**

   The presence of an intermetallic compound was not observed. The silicon preferentially combined with the palladium and nickel resulting in a network of void areas. Consequently, AGC-206A resulted in the poorest joint strength (see Figure 10).
AGC 200 alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1970°F/15 min.

AGC 200
Cu Bal.  
Au 15.0  
Pd 4.5  
Ni 3.0

Etchant: Picral - HCl

Figure 4

PHOTOMICROGRAPH, AGC-200
AGC 201 alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1970°F/15 min.

AGC 201

Cu Bal
Au 15.0
Pd 5.0
Co 5.0

Etchant: Picral - HCl

Figure 5

PHOTOMICROGRAPH, AGC-201
AGC 202A alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1900°F/15 min.

Etchant: Picral - HCl

Cu bal
Si 3.5-4.0
Ni 0.5-1.5
Pd 0.5-1.0

Figure 6
PHOTOMICROGRAPH, AGC-202A
AGC 202B alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1950°F/15 min.

**AGC 202B**

- Cu bal
- Si 1.5-2.0
- Pd 0.5-1.5
- Ni 0.5-1.0

**Etchant**: Picral - HCl

**Figure 7**

**PHOTOMICROGRAPH, AGC-202B**
AGC 204A alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1900°F/15 min.

**AGC 204A**

- Cu bal
- Si 3.5-4.0
- Pd 5.0-6.0
- Ni 3.3-4.0

**Etchant:** Picral - HCl

**Hardness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H</th>
<th>HB 92</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC 53</td>
<td>RC 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8

PHOTOMICROGRAPH, AGC-204A
AGC 204B alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1970°F/15 min.

AGC 204B
Cu bal
Si 1.5-2.0
Pd 5.0-6.0
Ni 3.3-4.0

Etchant: Picral - HCl

Figure 9
PHOTOMICROGRAPH, AGC-204B
AGC 206A alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1900°F/15 min.

Cu bal
Si 3.5-4.0
Pd 9.0-10.0
Ni 6.0-6.75

Figure 10
PHOTOMICROGRAPH, AGC-206A
8. AGC-206B - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy

There was evidence of a minor amount of diffusion. The diffusion boundary did show the presence of a hard intermetallic compound which indicated an average microhardness equivalent to \( R_C \) 42 (see Figure 11).

9. Anaconda 651 (1015) - A Solid-Solution Alloy

No secondary phases could be detected. A hard diffusion boundary was present and is attributed to the formation of iron-silicide. Average hardness of the brazement was \( R_B \) 52; average hardness of the diffusion zone was \( R_C \) 30 (see Figure 12).

10. Anaconda 656 (1010) - A Multi-Phase Structure, Solid-Solution and Peritectic Alloy

A sharp line of diffusion is present and is clearly shown in the photomicrograph. The diffusion zone gave an average hardness of \( R_C \) 33 (see Figure 13).

11. Wesgo Nicoro - A Solid-Solution Alloy

Average hardness was \( R_B \) 68. A minimal amount of diffusion was noted (see Figure 14).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Of the eight alloy systems developed in this program, two, AGC-200 and AGC-201, compare most favorably with the prime commercial candidate, Nicoro. A cost savings of approximately 50% could be realized if either of these alloys were used in place of Nicoro. The net savings for each M-1 Thrust Chamber is estimated to be $7,000.00. The commercial product Anaconda 651 also appears promising; however, additional research would have to be conducted to purify the analysis and to make further study of the union of silicon, iron, and nickel. All alloy systems, both commercial and Aerojet-General developed, with the exception of AGC-206A exhibited good braze characteristics and good strength levels. AGC-200 and AGC-201 has outstanding wet and flow characteristics and is insensitive to joint clearance variations. Both AGC-200 and AGC-201 are solid-solution type alloys free from any brittle intermetallic compounds such as is observed in the silicon-bearing alloys. The commercial product Nicoro is also a solid-solution alloy and as the results indicate in this report, the joint strength was the highest for these three alloys for both lap shear and tensile strength at room temperature and -423°F.
AGC 206B, vacuum furnace brazed at 1975°F/15 min.

**Etchant:** Picral - HCl

**Constituents:**
- Cu bal
- Si 1.5-2.0
- Pd 9.0-10.0
- Ni 6.0-6.75

**Photomicrograph, AGC-206B**

- Magnification: 120X
- Hardness:
  - RB 97
  - RB 96
  - RB 97
  - RC 44
  - RB 98
  - RB 92
Anaconda 651 alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1960°F/15 min.

**Anaconda 651**

Cu Bal
Si 1.5
Mn .25

**Etchant:** Picral - HCl

**Hardness**

$R_B$ 49
$R_C$ 28
$R_B$ 90
$R_B$ 91

Figure 12

PHOTOMICROGRAPH, ANACONDA 651
Magnification: 100X

Anaconda 656 alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1900°F/10 min.

Etchant: Picral - HCl

Figure 13

PHOTOMICROGRAPH, ANACONDA 656
Figure 34
PHOTOMICROGRAPH, NICORO

Magnification: 120X

Nicoro alloy, vacuum furnace brazed at 1925°F/15 min.

Etchant: Orthophosphoric Acid

Nicoro

Cu 62.0
Ni 3.0
Au 35.0

Hardness
RB 93
RB 68
V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The braze alloys AGC-200, AGC-201, Anaconda 651, and Nicoro should be evaluated further with respect to their behavior on specimens made from full-length thrust chamber tubes. Braze filler metal volume and distribution control, joint-making capacity, and possible erosion effects, when used for making long joints involving considerable gravitational flow, need to be established to verify suitability in this critical application.
APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS

1. **Liquidus**
   The temperature at which complete melting has occurred.

2. **Wet and Flow**
   The ability or the inability of the braze material to flow and wet on a vertical test specimen (6-in. long tubing) with a pre-set joint clearance of 0.003-in. at the standard brazing temperature and pressures ranging from 0.5 microns to 5.0 microns (visually rated).

3. **Diffusion**
   The depth of braze alloy penetration into the base metal. May be in the form of intergranular diffusion, mass diffusion, or solutioning effect.

4. **Erosion**
   The depth of, or the extent of surface dissolution of the base material being brazed.

5. **Microhardness**
   Hardness survey of micro-constituents.

6. **Peel Tests**
   The mode of failure experienced when brazed tube specimens are peeled in opposite directions. Failure will occur in the brazement or the parent metal.

7. **Lap Shear**
   Lap shear specimens tested for mode of failure and shear strength of brazement. (Standard A.W.S. Lap Shear Specimen.)

8. **Tensile**
   Tensile testing to determine the tensile strength of the brazement.