

**Ricardo Fernando Paes Tiecher**

**Modeling of New Commercial  
Refrigeration Systems Operating  
with Low-GWP Fluids**

**DISSERTAÇÃO DE MESTRADO**

**DEPARTAMENTO DE ENGENHARIA MECÂNICA**

**Programa de Pós-Graduação em Petróleo e  
Energia**

Rio de Janeiro  
March 2014

**Ricardo Fernando Paes Tiecher**

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**Dissertação de Mestrado**

Dissertation presented to the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Petróleo e Energia of the Departamento de Engenharia Mecânica do Centro Técnico Científico da PUC–Rio, as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Mestre em Engenharia Mecânica.

Advisor : Prof. José Alberto dos Reis Parise  
Co–Advisor: Prof. Samuel Fortunato Yana Motta

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Rio de Janeiro — March 18, 2014

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#### Bibliographic data

Tiecher, Ricardo Fernando Paes

Modeling of New Commercial Refrigeration Systems Operating with Low-GWP Fluids / Ricardo Fernando Paes Tiecher; advisor: José Alberto dos Reis Parise; co–advisor: Samuel Fortunato Yana Motta . — 2014.

219 f. : il. ; 30 cm

1. Dissertação (Mestrado em Engenharia Mecânica) - Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2014.

Inclui bibliografia

1. Engenharia Mecânica – Teses. 2. refrigeração comercial. 3. simulação. 4. sistema secundário. 5. CO<sub>2</sub> transcrito. 6. consumo de energia. 7. fluidos com baixo GWP. 8. impacto ambiental. 9. LCCP. I. Parise, José Alberto dos Reis. II. Motta, Samuel Yana. III. Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro. Departamento de Engenharia Mecânica. IV. Título.

CDD: 621

To uncle Sérgio, for being more than a father to me.

## Acknowledgments

I find myself deeply grateful on the professional and personal levels to many people, who have contributed to this work, and to whom I wish to express recognition.

First of all, I would like to thank my advisor, teacher and friend, Prof. Parise. I am forever grateful to him, not only for all the support, advice and assistance thorough the development of this study, but also for his guidance and encouragement on a daily basis, regardless of the problem or situation I would bring to his attention. He is the one responsible for providing me with the opportunity of pursuing a Master's Degree in the first place. Since then, I have had the unique pleasure of working with Prof. Parise on a variety of projects and have greatly benefited, in many ways, from this opportunity. He taught me day-to-day lessons on how to perform high level research, and his approval helped a great deal in building confidence in my work. I admire profoundly his devotion and commitment to teaching and researching, and I hope to be a professional as enthusiastic and dedicated as him someday.

I am also very grateful to my co-advisor, Samuel Yana Motta, for the valuable discussions and the generosity in sharing his experiences. Most of all, I thank him for his inspiration and understanding, as well as his trust in my competence and commitment. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to work with Samuel.

I am very appreciative of Paul Sotomayor, for many useful comments and stimulating discussions about all kinds of subjects, from commercial refrigeration systems to Fortran programming strategies. Paul has always lent open ears when I needed advice, and for that I am incredibly grateful. I wish him the best of luck in all future endeavors.

I would also like to thank Ankit Sethi and Gustavo Pottker. They have shown infinite patience in always taking the time to answer my questions and helping me learn software development skills. They have played, without a doubt, an integral part in the successful development of this work. Thanks are also due to Elizabet Becerra, for her continued support.

I would specifically like to thank Prof. Thomas Lewiner, for taking the time to help me deal with L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X programming. I extend my gratitude to all the staff at the Departamento de Engenharia Mecânica at PUC-Rio, for being part of a stimulating atmosphere and an excellent environment to work in.

Thanks are also given to the financial support by CNPq and Honeywell. Regarding international cooperation projects, I thoroughly enjoyed working with Honeywell, who always showed support, understanding and concern regarding my work.

On a personal level, I want to express special gratitude to my family and friends, for all the encouragement and support. They were exceptionally helpful, specially in providing good laughs when I needed them the most. I found in our endless conversations and discussions the foundation to build my identity and the confidence to express my beliefs.

Most importantly, I would like to thank my mother for her love, patience and support. Without her continuous encouragement and sacrifice, this achievement would never have been possible. She is the one to whom I own all my success, and I hope that one day I am fortunate enough to be able to take care of our family at least half as well as she does. Mom, I only have one idol, one person whose steps I intend to follow: you.

## Abstract

Tiecher, Ricardo Fernando Paes; Parise, José Alberto dos Reis; Motta, Samuel Yana. **Modeling of New Commercial Refrigeration Systems Operating with Low-GWP Fluids**. Rio de Janeiro, 2014. 219p. Dissertação de Mestrado — Departamento de Engenharia Mecânica, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

Comparison of new and conventional commercial refrigeration systems, operating with typical and alternative refrigerants, was performed. First, thermodynamic models for the pumped CO<sub>2</sub> and the CO<sub>2</sub> booster cycles were developed. The COP and the annual energy consumption of these novel designs were compared to those of the traditional direct expansion system in different geographic locations, to take into account year-round climate data. Refrigerant R404A, CO<sub>2</sub> and new low-GWP non-azeotropic blends were considered as working fluids in this analysis. Second, a component-based lumped parameter model to simulate the steady-state operation of a multi-compressor multi-evaporator direct expansion system was developed. The modeling effort considered a multizone approach for the tube-and-fin heat exchangers, as well as addressing enhanced internal surfaces and different fin patterns. Predicted results were compared with experimental data, and a life cycle climate performance (LCCP) analysis was performed to compare the environmental impact of new low-GWP refrigerants.

## Keywords

commercial refrigeration. simulation. pumped CO<sub>2</sub>. CO<sub>2</sub> booster. energy consumption. low-GWP fluids. environmental impact. LCCP.



## Resumo

Tiecher, Ricardo Fernando Paes; Parise, José Alberto dos Reis; Motta, Samuel Yana. **Modelagem de Novos Sistemas de Refrigeração Comerciais Operando com Fluidos de Baixo GWP**. Rio de Janeiro, 2014. 219p. Dissertação de Mestrado — Departamento de Engenharia Mecânica, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

Configurações novas e tradicionais de sistemas de refrigeração comerciais foram comparadas considerando sua operação com fluidos refrigerantes alternativos. Primeiramente, desenvolveram-se modelos termodinâmicos para o ciclo transcrito de dois estágios com refrigerante CO<sub>2</sub> (CO<sub>2</sub> booster) e para o sistema indireto com CO<sub>2</sub> bifásico operando como fluido secundário (pumped CO<sub>2</sub>). Tais tecnologias foram, em seguida, comparadas com o ciclo de expansão direta (DX) por meio do COP e do consumo anual de energia. Nessa análise, R404A, CO<sub>2</sub>, e misturas não-azeotrópicas de baixo GWP foram utilizados como fluidos refrigerantes. Em segundo lugar, desenvolveu-se modelo de parâmetros concentrados para simular a operação em regime permanente do sistema de expansão direta com múltiplos compressores e evaporadores. O método multizona foi utilizado na modelagem dos trocadores de calor tubo-e-aleta, com a consideração de diferentes tipos de aletas e superfícies internas para os tubos. Resultados da simulação foram comparados com dados experimentais e, em seguida, calculou-se o impacto ambiental do sistema operando com diferentes refrigerantes de baixo GWP, por meio da metodologia LCCP.

## Palavras-chave

refrigeração comercial. simulação. sistema secundário. CO<sub>2</sub> transcrito. consumo de energia. fluidos com baixo GWP. impacto ambiental. LCCP.

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*Yes – I've learned from my mistakes, and I'm  
sure I could repeat them perfectly.*

**Jonathan Coe**, *The Closed Circle*.



## Nomenclature

- $a$  — parameter in Eqs. (B.16) to (B.18) , (B.46) to (B.48), and (B.70) to (B.72), Appendix A [kPa/°C]
- $a_0$  — refrigerant-side heat transfer area per unit of air mass flow rate [m<sup>2</sup>s/kg]
- $a_{min}^*$  — ratio between total air-side heat transfer area and total free-flow frontal area [-]
- $A$  — heat transfer area [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $A_c$  — cross-sectional area [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $A_f^*$  — total cross-sectional area of the fins obstructing air-flow [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $A_{ff}$  — minimum free-flow frontal area [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $A_{fin}$  — one microfin sectional area [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $A_{rh}$  — refrigerant-side heat transfer area per unit of number of parallel circuits [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $A_{sec}$  — total sectional area (considered when microfins are present) [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $A_{tub}^*$  — "projected" area of tubes obstructing air flow [m<sup>2</sup>]
- $b$  — parameter Eqs. (B.17) to (B.18), (B.47) to (B.48), and (B.71) to (B.72), Appendix A [kPa]
- $B$  — Bond number [-]
- $C$  — capacity rate [kW/°C]
- $c_1$ – $c_{10}$  — parameters for the compressor polynomial equation [-]
- $c_p$  — specific heat at constant pressure [kJ/kg°C]
- $COP$  — coefficient of performance [-]
- $d$  — depth of the heat exchanger [m]
- $D$  — diameter of tubes [m]
- $D_c$  — fin collar outside diameter [m]
- $D_h$  — hydraulic diameter [m]
- $D_{rf}^*$  — adjusted inside (refrigerant-side) diameter of tubes for microfins [m]

- $E_{annual}$  — energy consumption per year [kWh/year]
- $E_h$  — enhancement factor for enhanced tube internal surfaces [-]
- $EER$  — energy efficiency ratio [BTU/Wh]
- $EOL$  — refrigerant loss at end-of-life [kg]
- $f$  — fraction of the heat exchanger [-]
- $F_P$  — fin pitch [fins/m]
- $Fr$  — Froude number [-]
- $G$  — mass flux [kg/m<sup>2</sup>s]
- $G_a^*$  — adjusted air mass flux for wavy plate fins [kg/m<sup>2</sup>s]
- $G_{rf}^*$  — adjusted refrigerant mass flux for microfins [kg/m<sup>2</sup>s]
- $GW P_{fug}$  — warming potential of direct fugitive emissions during manufacture of equipment and fluids [kg CO<sub>2</sub>/kg rf]
- $GW P_{emb}$  — warming potential of greenhouse gas emissions associated with equipment and fluids embodied energy [kg CO<sub>2</sub>/kg rf]
- $GW P_{rf}$  — global warming potential of refrigerant relative to CO<sub>2</sub> [kg CO<sub>2</sub>/kg rf]
- $GW P_{tot}$  — total global warming potential [kg CO<sub>2</sub>/kg rf]
- $h$  — specific enthalpy [kJ/kg]
- $h_{fg}$  — latent heat difference [kJ/kg]
- $h'_{fg}$  — driving enthalpy difference, Section 5.2.1.2 [kJ/kg]
- $H$  — height of the heat exchanger [m]
- $j$  — Colburn factor [-]
- $k$  — thermal conductivity [kW/m°C]
- $l$  — length of the heat exchanger [m]
- $l_{exp}$  — length of each tube not covered by fins [m]
- $L_{annual}$  — refrigerant leakage rate per year [kg/year]
- $LCCP$  — life cycle climate performance [kg CO<sub>2</sub>]

- $m_{rf}$  — refrigerant mass or charge [kg]
- $\dot{m}$  — mass flow rate [kg/s]
- $M$  — molecular weight [amu]
- $n$  — number of years of lifetime in LCCP calculation [years]
- $N_{circ}$  — number of equivalent, parallel refrigerant circuits [circuits]
- $N_f$  — number of fins [fins]
- $N_T$  — number of tubes in the direction of air-flow (horizontally) [tubes]
- $N_{tot}$  — total number of refrigerant tubes [tubes]
- $N_V$  — number of tubes in a row (vertically) [tubes]
- $NTU$  — number of transfer units [-]
- $Nu$  — Nusselt number [-]
- $P$  — pressure [kPa]
- $P_{init}$  — average pressure initialization value, Appendix A [kPa]
- $P_{red}$  — reduced pressure [-]
- $Pr$  — Prandtl number [-]
- $q$  — heat flux [kW/m<sup>2</sup>]
- $\dot{Q}$  — heat exchange rate [kW]
- $r$  — ratio of cooling loads [-]
- $R$  — thermal resistance [°C/kW]
- $R_p$  — pressure ratio [-]
- $Re$  — Reynolds number [-]
- $Re^*$  — superficial Reynolds number [-]
- $Rx$  — parameter considered in the determination of the heat transfer coefficient for two-phase refrigerant [-]
- $s$  — specific entropy [kJ/kg°C]
- $s_{ca}$  — Cavallini constant applied in the determination of the refrigerant two-phase heat transfer coefficient in the evaporator [-]

$s_{cb}$  — convective boiling two-phase multiplier applied in the determination of the refrigerant two-phase heat transfer coefficient in the evaporator [-]

$s_{nb}$  — nucleate boiling suppression factor applied in the determination of the refrigerant two-phase heat transfer coefficient in the evaporator [-]

$S_T$  — transversal pitch [m]

$T$  — temperature [°C]

$T_{gl}$  — temperature glide [°C]

$T_{v,ds}^*$  — bulk refrigerant temperature at the end of the single-phase vapor region [°C]

$U$  — overall heat transfer coefficient [kW/m<sup>2</sup>°C]

$v$  — specific volume [m<sup>3</sup>/kg]

$V$  — velocity [m/s]

$\dot{V}$  — volumetric flow rate, displacement rate [m<sup>3</sup>/s]

$W$  — air humidity ratio [-]

$\dot{W}$  — power [kW]

$W_T$  — horizontal distance between tubes (center-to-center) [m]

$We$  — Webber number [-]

$x$  — vapor quality [-]

$x_{qw}$  — average vapor quality in mass basis [-]

### Greek letters

$\alpha$  — film heat transfer coefficient [kW/m<sup>2</sup>°C]

$\alpha_{rec}$  — recovery/recycling factor in the LCCP calculation [% rf]

$\alpha_{tp}^*$  — condensing refrigerant heat transfer coefficient before interpolation [kW/m<sup>2</sup>°C]

$\beta$  — indirect emission factor in LCCP calculation [kg CO<sub>2</sub>/kWh]

$\beta_1$  — microfin angle [°]

$\beta_2$  — helix angle of microfins [ $^\circ$ ]

$\beta_3$  — microfin height [m]

$\beta_4$  — number of microfins [fins]

$\gamma$  — percentage of refrigerant leak per year in the LCCP calculation [% rf/year]

$\gamma_1, \gamma_2$  — parameters for the calculation of the in-tube condensation heat transfer coefficient [-]

$\delta$  — fin thickness [m]

$\Delta P$  — pressure drop [kPa]

$\Delta P_{acc}$  — acceleration contribution to pressure drop [kPa]

$\Delta P_{frc}$  — friction contribution to pressure drop [kPa]

$\Delta T$  — temperature difference [ $^\circ\text{C}$ ]

$\epsilon$  — roughness [m]

$\varepsilon$  — effectiveness [-]

$\zeta$  — friction factor [-]

$\zeta_{sm}$  — smooth tubes friction factor [-]

$\eta$  — efficiency [-]

$\eta_d$  — fin efficiency [-]

$\theta$  — corrugation angle for wavy fin, louver angle for louvered fin [ $^\circ$ ]

$\kappa_h$  — parameter for the calculation of the dry air-side heat transfer coefficient for a tube with lanced plate fins [-]

$\kappa_s$  — parameter for the calculation of the dry air-side heat transfer coefficient for a tube with lanced plate fins [-]

$\lambda_1$ – $\lambda_8$  — parameters for the calculation of the dry air-side heat transfer coefficient for a tube with flat, wavy, lanced or louvered plate fins [-]

$\mu$  — dynamic viscosity [kg/ms]

$\xi_{dh}, \xi_{sp}, \xi_{ba}$  — parameters for the calculation of the in-tube condensation pressure drop, the refrigerant two-phase heat transfer coefficient in the evaporator [-]

$\rho$  — density [kg/m<sup>3</sup>]

$\sigma$  — surface tension [N/m]

$\sigma_a$  — ratio between free-flow frontal area and frontal area [-]

$\tau_1, \tau_2$  — parameters for the calculation of the smooth tubes friction factor [-]

$\phi_S, \phi_{F1}, \phi_{F2}, \phi_y, \phi_{Be}$  — parameters for the calculation of void fraction using the Premoli et al. model

$\phi_i, \phi_{Cal}, \phi_{KH}$  — parameters for the calculation of void fraction using the Hughmark model

$\varphi$  — intensive property

$\Phi$  — void fraction [-]

$\Upsilon$  — parameter of the compressor polynomial equation

$\psi$  — parameter for the calculation of the bulk refrigerant temperature at the end of the single-phase vapor region [-]

$\Omega$  — parameter for the calculation of the dry air-side heat transfer coefficient for a tube with louvered plate fins [-]

## Symbols

$\mathfrak{S}$  — error, Appendix A [°C]

$\wp$  — tolerance, Appendix A [°C]

## Subscripts

$a$  — air, air-side, outside

$amb$  — ambient

$avg$  — average, mean

$bub$  — bubble point

$bv$  — bypass valve

*Booster* — CO<sub>2</sub> Booster refrigeration system

$cd$  — condenser

- cf* — counterflow
- cond* — condensing
- cp* — compressor
- crit* — critical
- cv* — control valve
- dew* — dew point
- dhx* — downstream heat exchanger
- dl* — discharge line
- dry* — dry portion of the evaporator
- ds* — desuperheating, desuperheated zone
- DX* — Direct Expansion refrigeration system
- eq* — equivalent
- ev* — evaporator
- evap* — evaporating
- fl* — flat fin pattern
- gc* — gas cooler
- hs* — high stage
- Hugh* — Hughmark model for void fraction calculation
- in* — inlet, entrance, entering
- ind* — individual (compressor or evaporator)
- l* — subcooled region, saturated liquid
- lc* — lanced fin pattern
- liq* — liquid phase
- ll* — liquid line
- ls* — low stage
- lt* — low temperature

*lv* — louvered fin pattern

*LT* — refrigeration system for low temperature application

*m* — moist air conditions

*max* — maximum

*med* — average, Appendix A

*min* — minimum

*mt* — medium temperature

*MT* — refrigeration system for medium temperature application

*na* — non-azeotropic refrigerant mixture (NARM)

*out* — outlet, exit, leaving

*pf* — pure fluid

*pp* — pump

*Prem* — Premoli et al. model for void fraction calculation

*Pumped* — Pumped CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration system

*rec* — receiver

*rf* — refrigerant, refrigerant-side, inside

*s* — isentropic

*sat* — saturation

*sc* — subcooling, subcooled zone

*sf* — secondary fluid

*sh* — superheating, superheated zone

*shx* — suction heat exchanger

*sl* — suction line

*tp* — two-phase region

*uhx* — upstream heat exchanger

*v* — superheated region, saturated vapor



*vap* — vapor phase

*vl* — vapor line

*vol* — volumetric

*wet* — wetted portion of the evaporator

*wv* — wavy fin pattern

*xd* — expansion device

### **Superscript**

<sup>+</sup> — new or updated value