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19 minimises the number of variables, providing more comparable and repeatable sets of
20 data. Implications of the results on the engine performance were also discussed.

21 Keywords: Cryogenic engine injection, Liquid nitrogen, Hydraulic valve actuator,
22 Thermal energy, Zero emission engine

23

24 **1. Introduction**

25 The cryogenic engine is a zero-emission combustion free engine designed to deliver
26 power from cold. The engine uses a typical Rankine cycle with a near-isothermal
27 expansion of liquid air or nitrogen from low grade/ ambient heat to convert heat energy
28 into work¹. With a limited engine power of ~0.2 kWh/kg of fuel (one ref here), the
29 engine is aimed at providing auxiliary power and air conditioning for refrigeration
30 hybrid heavy-duty vehicles. The performance and efficiency of the engine are solely
31 based on the expansion, which is driven by the speed of the heat transfer process.
32 Previous designs involved the indirect expansion of the cryogen using a heat exchanger,
33 but were limited by its efficiency, and added to the overall bulk and mass of the design.
34 More recently, the Dearman engine² was designed in order to achieve higher
35 efficiencies using in-cylinder heat transfer, which is achieved by the direct injection of
36 the cryogen into a heat transfer fluid (HEF). The heat transfer is enhanced by direct
37 contact and increased interfacial area between the two fluids³. The process is entirely
38 controlled by the injection and mixing of the cryogen in the cylinder.

39 High pressure cryogenic injection has been of great interest for power and propulsion
40 systems in the aerospace industry. Although extensive experimental and numerical
41 studies⁴⁻⁷ have been conducted to characterize and understand the cryogenic flow
42 dynamics involved in the injection and mixing process, only a few authors have
43 attempted to investigate injections specific to reciprocating cryogenic engines^{3, 8-12}. For
44 example, Clarke et al.³ demonstrated the benefits of the mass transfer, latent heat and
45 sensible heat transfer of liquid nitrogen, as well as the use of water as the heat transfer
46 fluid, which were influenced significantly by the injection parameters. Despite the linear
47 correlation between the injection pressure and pressurisation rates, it was noted that the
48 intake pressure would be limited by the onset of cavitation and choking at a certain
49 point. At this point, the flow velocity becomes non-responsive to the increase of the
50 upstream or decrease of the downstream pressure. This critical point, based on the ratio
51 of the downstream and upstream pressure, would determine the peak engine pressure
52 under specific conditions. The onset of choking occurs approximately 50 % lower
53 than the critical pressure ratio¹³. The effects of choking are not considered because the
54 pressure at which this maximum is reached is above the injection pressures tested here.
55 This work is an extension of the work done by Mohr et al.¹⁴ investigating high pressure
56 flow through a poppet valve for the Dearman engine but with the use of liquid nitrogen
57 rather than gas.

58 Earlier work was limited to low injection pressure due to the experimental constraints.
59 Additionally, closed cylinder injections meant that the mass flow during the injection
60 cycle could not be measured, but only determine once the valve was closed. Therefore,
61 the injected mass at any time during the injection cycle was unknown. Repeatability and
62 comparison of the results was also an issue especially with the lack of information on
63 valve timings and injection duration and therefore further testing is needed in this area.

64 The mass transfer into the engine is key expansion and pressurisation in the engine
65 and therefore key to its overall performance. Precise control of the valve lift and speed
66 is necessary to analyse and understand the mass transfer during the injection cycle.
67 However, experiments in this area present several challenges due to the complexity of
68 the injection process. For example, the adequate supply of the cryogen at sub-cooled
69 temperatures (77-126 K) is difficult to maintain. Secondly, high pressure injections
70 coupled with short valve timings are necessary to maximise the injected mass. The rapid
71 valve movement is required to prevent backflow, as the cylinder-pressure approaches to
72 that in the injection line. Consequently, a robust high speed valve actuation system
73 capable of the task within a few milliseconds is also necessary for the experiments.

74 This paper describes the design and operation of a purposely built rig to conduct off
75 engine tests for the high pressure injection of liquid nitrogen. With increased pressure,
76 we expect higher flow velocities of the injected jet, which would enhance the mixing
77 and ultimately, the heat transfer. The system is used for a quasi-steady flow

78 characterisation of the LN₂ injector, as a vital stage of investigations into direct injection
79 for cryogenic engines. An electro-hydraulic valve actuation (EHVA) system is used to
80 control the movement of the poppet valve in the LN₂ injector. This valve actuation
81 system is needed to allow for a rapid and timely valve movement. LN₂ is shot into an
82 open vessel, in order measure the injected mass during the injection cycle. Pressure and
83 temperature readings at the injector are used to determine the thermodynamic state of
84 the nitrogen. The effect of injection parameters on the mass flow is discussed, as well as
85 the implications for the engine performance.

86 **2. Structure of injection system**

87 2.1 Injector

88 The spray quality is highly dependent on the design of the injector and the injection
89 pressure. The injector used is provided by Dearman Engine Company Ltd and is
90 designed specifically for cryogenic injection. It is made of stainless steel because of
91 high cryogenic toughness and consistent thermal expansion at the operating sub-zero
92 temperatures. The injector consists of a poppet valve, which is attached to the head of
93 the injector. The inlet and outlet lines are both angled, to reduce the pumping force at
94 the inlet, whilst increasing it at the outlet. This prevents the cryogen from flowing out of
95 injector too quickly. The inlet feedline is slightly extended to allow for a steady laminar
96 flow before the valve is opened.

97 An ultra-high-molecular-weight-polyethylene (UHMWPE) seat is pressed onto the base
98 of the poppet valve to reduce the wear resulting from impact during movement. The
99 thermoplastic material is used for its low density; high impact strength; ductility;
100 abrasion resistance; chemical resistance and self-lubricating properties^{15, 16}. UHMWPE
101 also has excellent sealing properties¹⁷, which are vital to prevent any leakage when the
102 valve is closed. UHMWPE and stainless steel were selected for their compatibility and
103 low shrinkage percentage (less than 1%). At low temperatures, the hardness and friction
104 coefficient of the plastic increases and it begins to display characteristics of fatigue and
105 abrasive wear¹⁸. The increased hardness is attributed to the closely packed micro-
106 structure at low temperatures, hindering the movement/slip of the molecular chains. The
107 ductility of the material is lost, therefore reducing its ability to absorb energy during
108 compressions. Although its fatigue life cycle at low temperatures is unclear, the seal did
109 not demonstrate any sign of leakage and did not require replacement during the project
110 period. Before testing, the valve was checked for leakage using both high pressure gas
111 and liquid nitrogen.

112 The injector assembly also consists of a spring underneath the injector head. The
113 movement of the poppet valve is controlled by the EHVA unit that is coupled (Figure 1)
114 to the injector, where it applies a 4.2kN force transmitted through the springs. (Insert
115 Figure1)

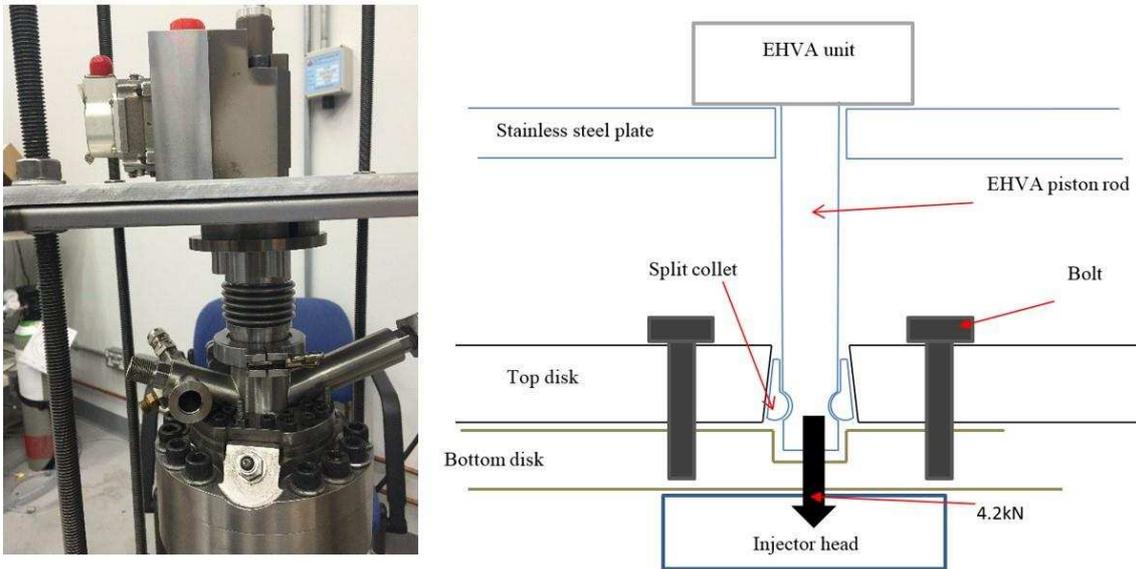


Figure 1: Injector and actuator assembly

116 2.2 EHVA set up

117 The EHVA is controlled by a servo valve mechanism. A servo mechanism is a
 118 control system that uses its own measured output to accurately match the demand
 119 signal. The mechanism minimises the effect of errors or anomalies within the control
 120 system itself, as well as the load ¹⁹. It also offers greater precision control of the valve
 121 position with a rapid response to changes in speed, direction or frequency.

122 The hydraulic valve responds to the input signal, with the conversion of fluid
 123 pressure into the movement of its own piston rod. This then applies a large axial force
 124 onto the head of the injector, which is transmitted to the poppet valve. As a result, the
 125 poppet is pushed down to allow the cryogen to flow into the vessel. This is known as
 126 the forward stroke. The large force is needed to allow the valve to move independent of

127 any pressure or forces upstream or downstream of it, during both the forward and return
128 strokes. For the forward stroke, the 4.2kN force has to overcome the spring forces and
129 the pressurised LN₂ in the feedline. During the return stroke, the pressure rises in the
130 vessel and the spring forces are most likely to force the valve to close a lot quicker than
131 desired. Therefore the force provided by the EHVA provides better control over the
132 closing of the valve despite the opposing forces.

133 The hydraulic pressure in the valve actuator is controlled by a unit (Figure 2)
134 consisting of an electrical motor, 5 l/min speed pump, 30 litre oil tank, 2 litre



Figure 2: Hydraulic unit controlling the hydraulic pressure of the EHVA: 1. 50 Hz motor 2. Accumulator 3. Pressure gauge 4. 30 L Oil tank 5. Solenoid by-pass valve 6.

135 accumulator and a bypass damper for safety. A temperature gauge is incorporated to
136 monitor the oil temperature. This is due to the high fluid temperature caused by constant
137 pumping that could result in failure. The unit has a maximum operating oil pressure of
138 275 bar which can be used to vary the hydraulic force applied. (Insert Figure 2)

139 The position of the piston rod of the actuator is measured by a differential variable
140 reluctance transducer (DVRT), with an accuracy of $\pm 2.7\%$. The readings are fed to the
141 Data Acquisition system and recorded by the computer running LabVIEW software.
142 The 14-bit Data Acquisition device provides a voltage resolution of 10^{-2} mV per bit and
143 based on the DVRT calibration, the valve lift could be adjusted to the nearest
144 micrometer (10^{-3} mm).

145 2.3 Control configuration of the EHVA

146 The servo valve requires a well-designed control system, in order to promptly and
147 accurately open and close the valve in response to the demand signal. Figure 3 shows
148 the components of the closed-loop control system used here. The feedback from the
149 transducer is compared to the demand. The resulting error is amplified and fed back as
150 the new input. The gain of the amplifier is set as high as possible, in order to improve
151 the response and accuracy of the servo valve. This strategy makes the precision of the
152 valve solely dependant on the accuracy of the transducer itself. The output from the
153 DVRT is also amplified by a signal conditioner before the deviation from the demand is
154 calculated. This configuration is used to determine the exact closing time, unlike the

155 previous work³, where the valve closure was reliant on the valve springs and the
156 pressure gradient.

157 The injection duration and valve lift were controlled by the width of the demand
158 pulse, which is set manually within the LabVIEW programme. When triggered, the oil
159 in the actuator moves in proportion to the drive signal, resulting in the movement of the
160 piston rod to the desired position. The best valve response was attained using a square
161 wave demand signal of 0 - 1 V, from fully closed to fully opened. The maximum valve
162 lift was recorded at 1.222 mm. (Insert Figure 3)

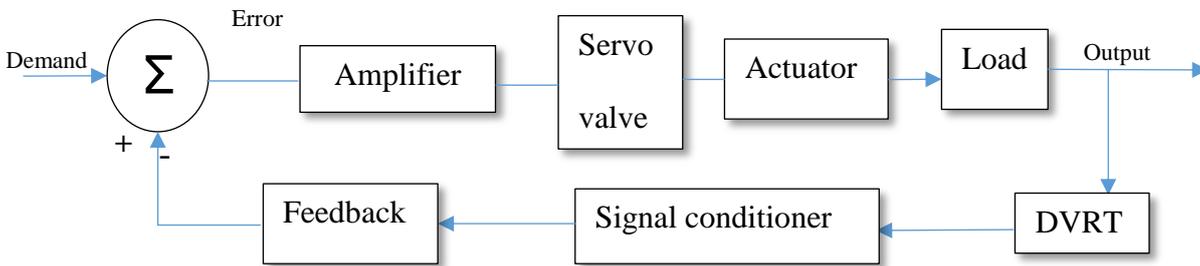


Figure 3: Components in the EHVA servo control mechanism

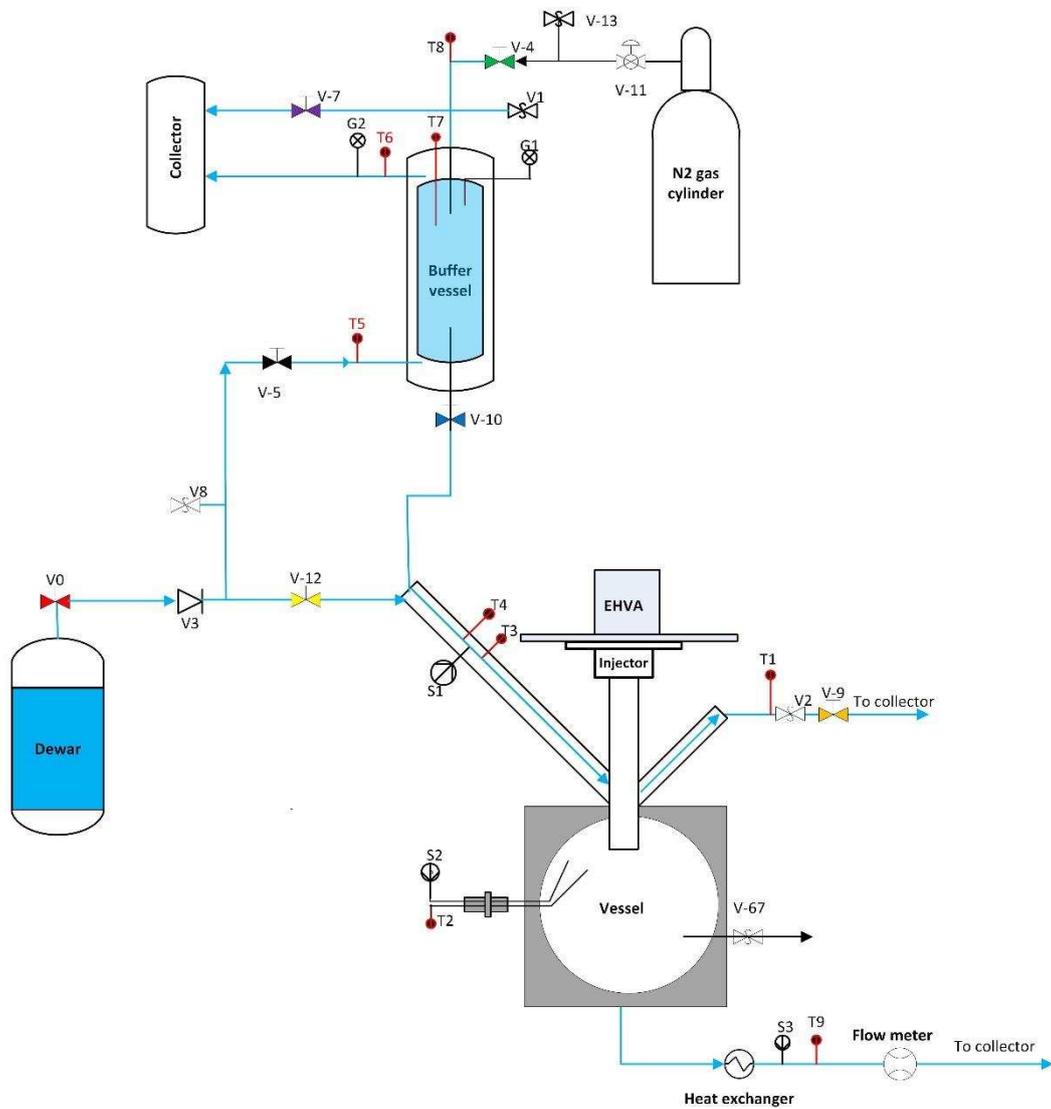


Figure 4: Schematic of the experimental rig in an open configuration

164 The experimental rig (Figure 4 & 5) consists the injector, pressure vessel (pressure
165 bomb), buffer vessel, an EHVA and a data acquisition unit. The primary supply of LN₂
166 is provided by a 200 L Dewar, which is used to purge the entire system before testing. A
167 manual valve (V5) allows for LN₂ to be delivered to the cooling jacket of the buffer
168 vessel to commence sub-cooling. Sub-cooling occurs continuously throughout testing.
169 The buffer vessel is filled with nitrogen from the Dewar via a vacuum insulated hose
170 and valve V10. Thermocouples T8 and T7 are used to determine when the vessel is
171 filled. Using V4, the LN₂ in the buffer is pressurised using the gas bottle. The
172 pressurised LN₂ has a higher saturation temperature, therefore minimising the
173 occurrence of a multiphase injection, whose thermodynamic properties would be
174 problematic to determine without knowledge of the liquid to vapour ratio in the mixture.
175 The injected LN₂ is vaporised and measured by the flow meter located at the end of the
176 heat exchanger. The measurement uncertainty of the injected mass is mainly due to that
177 of the flow meter of $\pm 5\%$.

178 To achieve consistent and repeatable data, the pressure and temperature of the LN₂ were
179 constantly monitored using several thermocouples and pressure sensors at various
180 locations. The valve was triggered once steady state temperature and pressure readings
181 at the injector were achieved. The pressure was measured by a piezo-resistive
182 transducer (Kulite CT-375) with an uncertainty of $\pm 5\%$, whilst temperature readings
183 were recorded by T-type thermocouples, calibrated with a $\pm 1\%$ of uncertainty.
184 Thermocouples T1, T3, and T4 were used to monitor the liquid temperature in the
185 injector in order to establish steady flow, and provide information on the heat leak in the



Figure 5: Picture of the assembled experimental rig.

186 feed line, pre-injection. (Insert Figure 4 & 5)

187

188 3. Results

189 To demonstrate the feasibility of the setup, injections were conducted at various
190 frequencies, pressure, valve lifts, injection durations and sub-cooling ratios (T_{inj}/T_{sat}) of
191 nitrogen; where T_{inj} is the injection temperature and T_{sat} is the saturation temperature at
192 the injection pressure. The parameters of a sample of the tests conducted are shown in
193 Table 1. Control of injection parameters reduces the variables in the injections, thus
194 making the results comparable and repeatable. The flow rate was used to calculate the
195 mass of liquid nitrogen injected. The liquid density was calculated using the reference
196 equation established by Span et al.²⁰, with an uncertainty of 0.02% for pressures below
197 300 bar.

198 Table 1: Sample of some of the injections conducted below saturation temperature and at high pressure, showing
199 the total injected mass and flow rate per injection (per pulse).

Test	Valve lift (h) (mm)	Test duration (s)	Demand Pulse width (ms)	Frequency (Hz)	Injection Pressure (bar)	Temperature T3 (K)	Sub-cooling ratio T_{inj}/T_{sat}	Total LN ₂ mass (kg)	Flow rate (\dot{m}) (kg/s)
1	0.51	5.80	5	5	14.58	104.52	0.95	6.02	0.064
2	0.57	4.43	7	5	26.55	102.42	0.84	3.77	0.079
3	1.13	4.63	10	5	28.85	96.82	0.79	3.81	0.084
4	0.55	4.43	7.5	5	29.37	106.78	0.86	3.34	0.081
5	0.59	5.23	7.5	5	44.46	100.41	0.80	3.06	0.097
6	1.18	6.64	10	5	43.54	95.49	0.76	4.18	0.104
7	1.17	4.63	10	5	45.25	96.44	0.77	3.14	0.095

8	0.50	6.03	5	5	46.29	96.89	0.77	3.18	0.095
9	0.61	4.83	7.5	5	47.35	100.46	0.80	2.79	0.098
10	0.51	4.43	5	5	66.34	102.51	0.81	1.74	0.091
11	1.20	5.00	10	5	62.84	108.64	0.78	2.52	0.118
12	1.220	5.00	10	5	71.70	99.40	0.79	2.28	0.115
13	1.16	5.00	10	5	82.22	106.11	0.84	2.13	0.091
14	1.16	5.00	10	2	94.03	110.95	0.88	0.97	0.045

200

201

202 3.1 Valve frequency and lift profiles

203 Pulsed injections of up to 20 Hz were achieved using the EHVA unit as shown in
 204 Figure 6. Frequencies above this were found to cause misalignment of the EHVA
 205 piston, due to the increased mechanical vibration in the components. Regardless of the
 206 20 Hz maximum operating frequency, the system can never the less be used to conduct
 207 injections corresponding to various engine speeds of up to 1200 rpm, and determine the
 208 total injected mass at various injection parameters. With sufficient experimental data,
 209 correlations can be established to predict the engine peak pressure and ultimately power
 210 output. (Insert Figure 6)

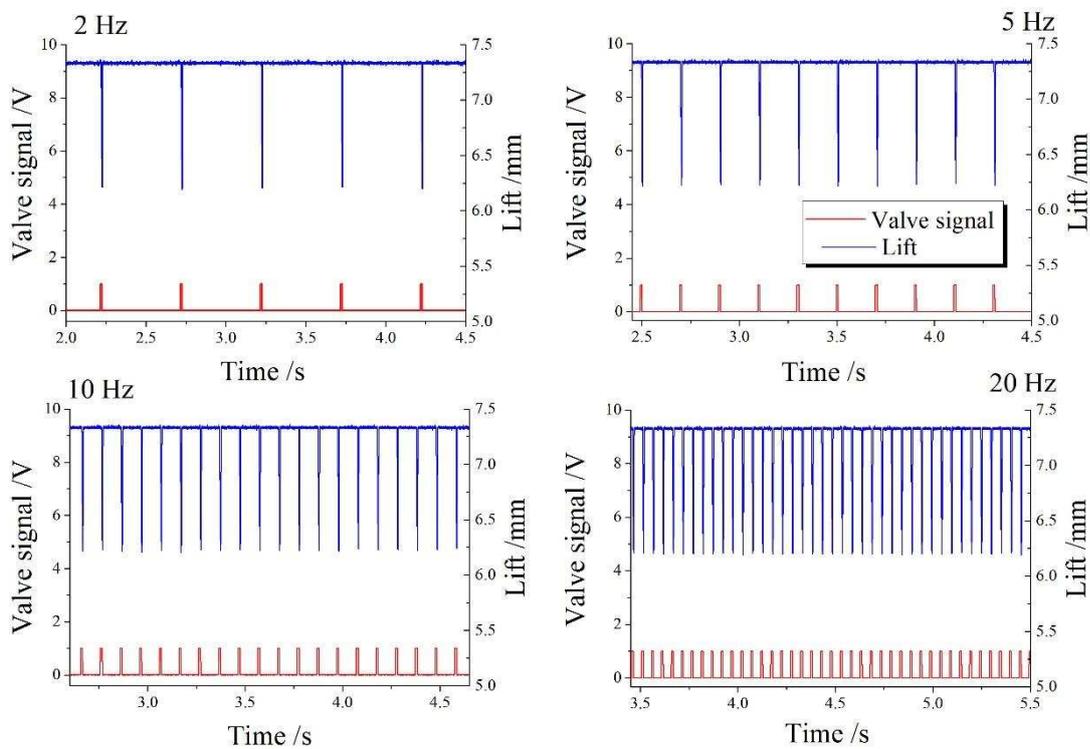
211 Details of the valve profile are demonstrated in Figure 7. The amplifier provides the
 212 signal required for the valve to move to the correct position in respect to the demand. A
 213 4.8 ms delay between the demand and actual valve movement was observed. This delay
 214 could be caused by limitations of the hydraulics or the mechanical components of the
 215 actuator. That is, it may take slightly longer to redistribute the oil in the valve once it is
 216 triggered. It should be noted that the delay was found to vary with the frequency and

217 demand width, however, this was ignored because the valve is still opened and closed
218 within the time specified in the demand. (Insert Figure 7&8)

219 The valve may only be opened briefly to avoid the onset of backflow in the injector
220 inlet, which would occur as the cylinder pressure rises above that in the feed line. The
221 speed of the valve is controlled by the width of the demand pulse as demonstrated in
222 Figure 8.

223 The width also determines the height of the valve lift because the valve is given more
224 time to reach its maximum position with a longer pulse. Demonstrated by the 3ms
225 demand, the valve does not have enough time to move to its commanded position before
226 returning to close. To attain the maximum lift, the demand has to be ≥ 10 ms. For a
227 longer pulse, the valve stays open at its maximum lift for longer before commencing the
228 return stroke.

229 With this in mind, the valve lift and injection timing can be perfected in accordance



230 with the engine requirements such as; engine speed, performance or fuel (cryogen)
231 consumption.
232

Figure 6: Valve profiles of 2,5,10 and 20 Hz frequencies

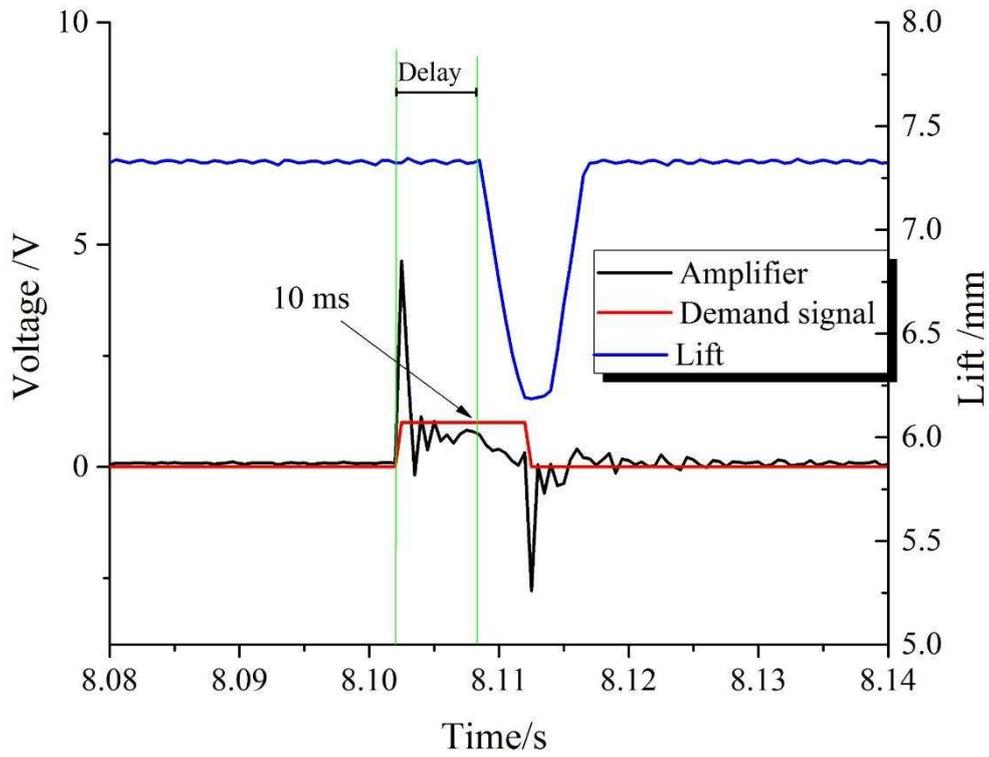


Figure 7: Detail of valve lift profile of a 10 ms demand pulse.

233

234

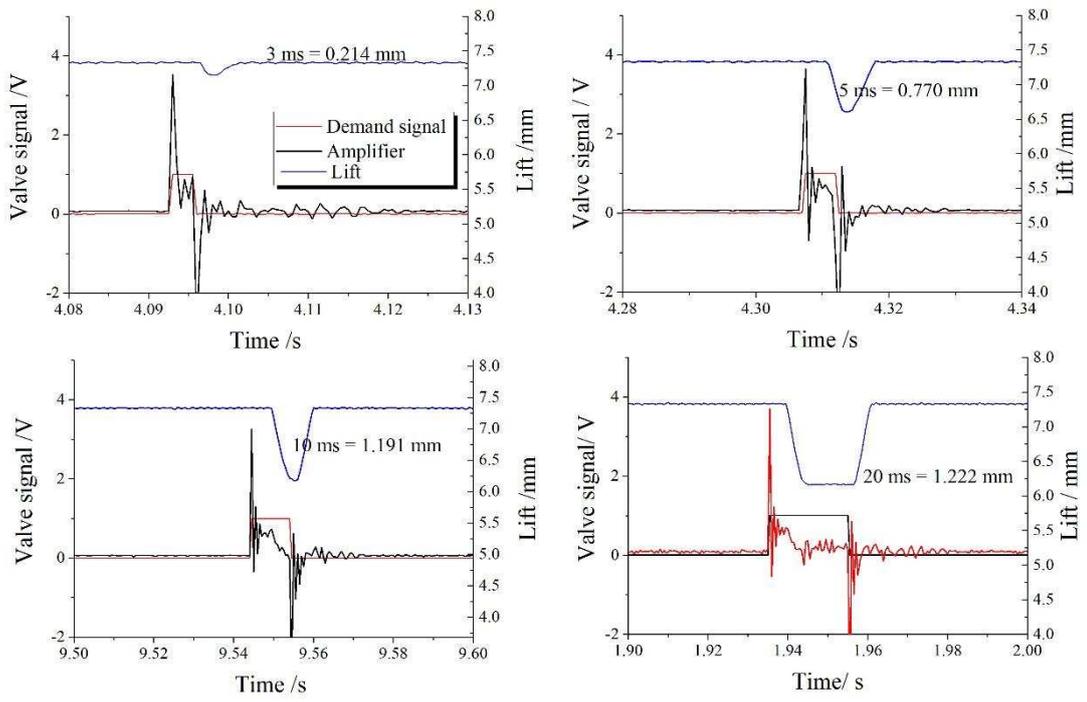


Figure 8: Increase in valve lift with an extended demand period, with maximum lift attained at 10 ms

236 Pressure drop

237 When the valve is opened, there is an immediate pressure drop in the upstream
238 pressure in the cryo feed line due to the pressure gradient across the injector as shown

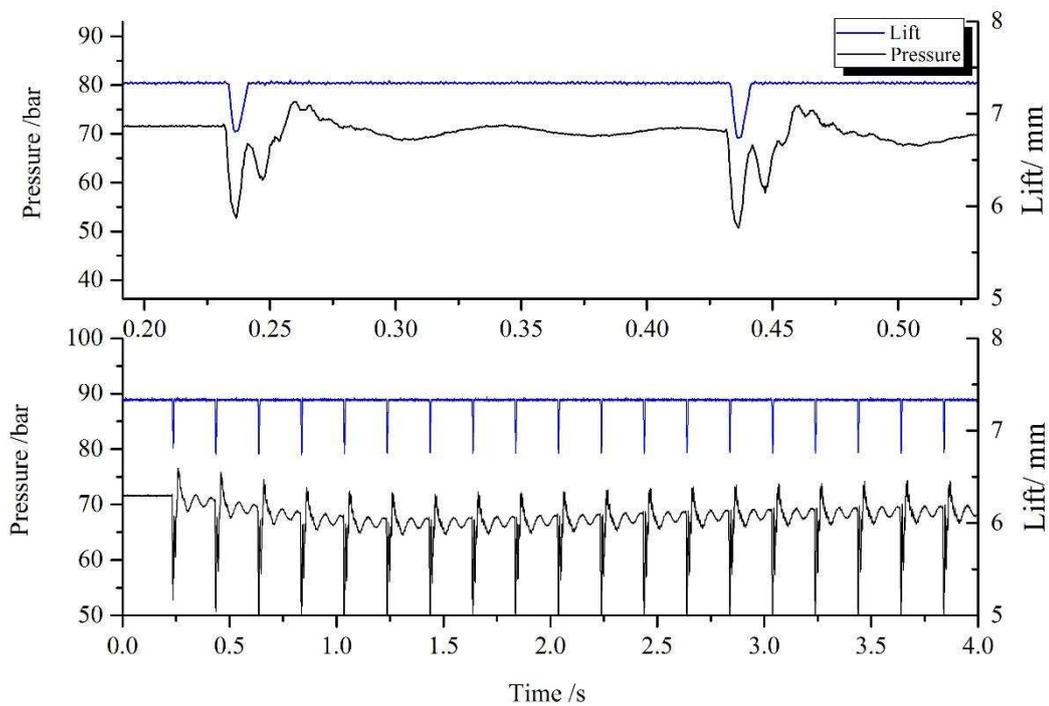


Figure 9: Pressure drop of 18 ± 0.05 bar at each pulse and (b) Pressure variation of ± 2 bar throughout the entire injection cycle.

239 Figure 9. A momentary pressure drop of ~ 18 bar is recorded during each pulse. During
240 the injection cycle, the average pressure remains relatively steady, with a slight
241 variation of ± 2.2 bar. An increased variation in pressure during the injection would

242 lead to cyclic variation in the peak cylinder pressure. This can be likened to the jerking
243 in the conventional engine during acceleration, due to the uneven engine power. With a
244 less than 4% variation demonstrated in these tests, jerking was not a concern. The
245 injected mass of a single injection can be scaled up to determine that of pulsed/transient
246 injections, for the same conditions, especially the upstream and downstream pressure
247 ratio. For future work, the pressure variation can be lessened with the use of an
248 accumulator volume of some kind, so as to conduct injections without the significant
249 pressure drop in the upstream. (Insert Figure 9)

250 3.2 Effects of pressure and cooling ratio on the flow profile

251 The mass flow profiles obtained for injections at 29, 67, 81 and 83 bar are shown in
252 Figure 10(b). The measured flow was limited by the minimum value recorded by the
253 flow meter at 25 l/s (0.032 kg/s) evident in the cut off points in the graphs below. Above
254 this, the flow increases gradually as it attempts to achieve quasi-steady flow. At this
255 point, the injected nitrogen begins to boil off at the same rate at which it goes through
256 the flow meter. A maximum flow is recorded at the point when the injection is stopped
257 and the flow decreases gradually due to some residual boil off of what is left
258 downstream of the vessel. A comparison of flow profiles for gas and liquid injections at
259 64 bar is shown in Figure 10(a). (Insert Figure 10)

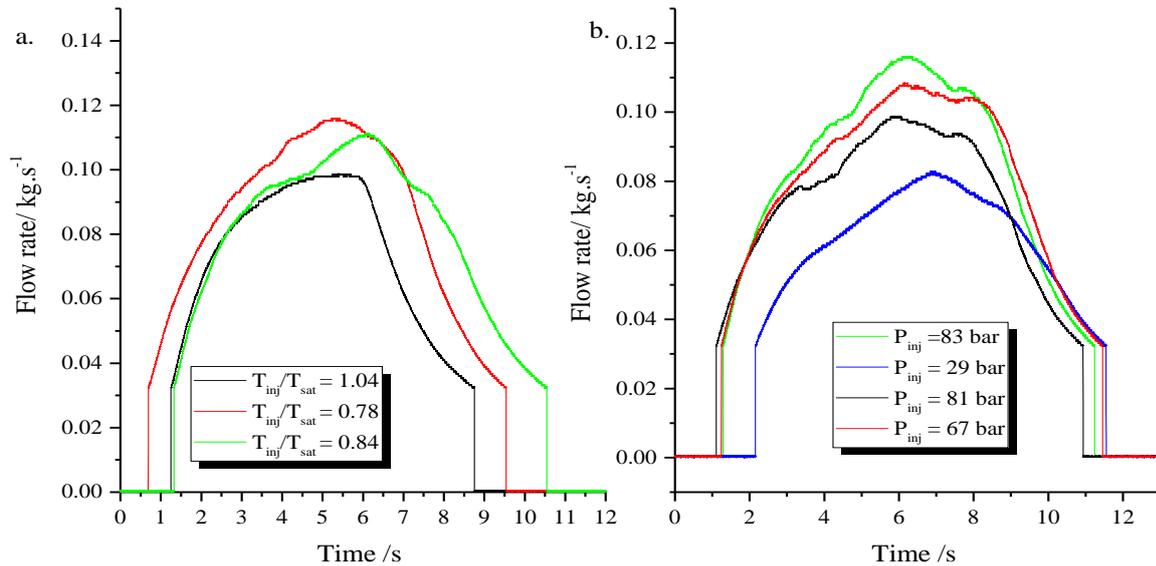


Figure 10: Increase in flow rate with (a) decreased injection temperature and (b) increased injection pressure

260 The gaseous injection (at a cooling ratio of 1.04) is different because the injected
 261 mass is reduced due to a lower fluid density. This is reflected by the lower maximum
 262 flow reading of 0.095 kg/s, 1.2 times less than that of the liquid injection at a cooling
 263 ratio of 0.78. The initial flow gradient is significantly reduced and the flow plateau's out,
 264 indicative of attaining a steady state a lot quicker. With the lack of phase change, the
 265 equilibrium temperature is achieved a lot sooner. The higher flow rate in the liquid
 266 injections is sustained by the higher energy transfer (latent heat), which continues to
 267 increase steadily until the injection is terminated.

268 The data does not reveal any information on the mass flow profile during the first
 269 seconds of the injection, therefore the effects of flashing on the flow were not recorded

270 here. This is due to the minimum measurement of the flow meter at 25 l/s. Flashing is a
 271 phenomenon that driven by the temperature and pressure upstream and the pressure
 272 downstream of the valve. It is the formation of a gaseous phase in the jet flow due to
 273 the rapid pressure drop as the liquid emerges. In theory, this would decrease the mass
 274 flow across the valve initially until the liquid begins to flow out. At lower injection
 275 temperatures, we would expect a reduction in flashing, resulting in a larger ratio of
 276 liquid to gas. However, it is not possible to observe these effects in these experiments.
 277 A gradual opening of the valve over a longer time interval, or injection into a
 278 pressurised vessel, would reduce the occurrence of flashing due to the reduced pressure
 279 drop across the valve. This would facilitate higher pressurisation rates in the engine

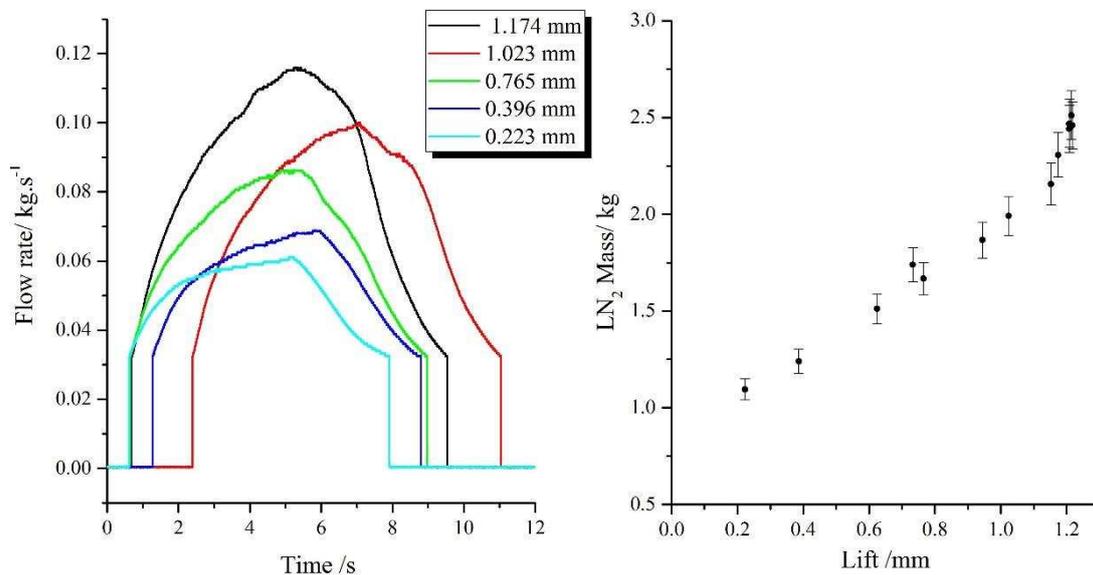


Figure 11: Increase in flow profile with increased valve lift and increased injected mass for injections of 68±1 bar at cooling ratio of 0.84 ± 0.1

280 cylinder. (Insert Figure 11)

281 Based on the Bernoulli equation²¹, at constant density, flow velocity increases with
282 pressure. However, the flow across the valve is most likely to be critical based on the
283 ratio of the upstream and downstream pressure. For a gas, the flow is choked when the
284 ratio of the downstream to the upstream pressure is less than 0.53. Choked flow is
285 useful because the velocity at the valve is maximised despite variations in the upstream
286 or downstream pressure. With injections into an open vessel, the possibility of choked
287 flow of some description (two-phase choked flow) is high. Under choked conditions,
288 the flow attains a maximum velocity despite the increase in upstream pressure. However,
289 the mass flow rate increases due to the increased flow density with increased injection
290 pressure.

291 3.3 Effect of valve lift

292 The valve lift is proportional to the flow area which is proportional to the mass flow
293 rate, \dot{m} . Proof of Equation 1 is evident in the results shown in Figure 11 where $A = h *$
294 circumference and $h =$ lift.

$$\dot{m} = \rho v A \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

295 where ρ is the flow density, v is the flow velocity and A is the flow area.

296 A 0.2 mm difference in the lift resulted in a 10 kg/s decrease in the flow. Results
297 showed a linear increase in the injected mass with the increased valve lift, due to the

298 increased lift. This correlation can be used to determine the injected mass for a specified
299 lift under these injection parameters, for this valve geometry.

300 The power and efficiency of the engine are most important. While the power is
301 dependent on the pressurisation, the efficiency is dependent on the speed of the heat
302 transfer process and ensuring the nitrogen is expelled at atmospheric temperature. The
303 mass profile during the injection provides an insight into the heat transfer and ultimately
304 the pressurisation in the cylinder.

305 **4. Conclusions**

306 Direct injection in a cryogenic engine requires a combination of a high mass transfer
307 with a swift injection duration. This paper presents a cryogen injecting system set up
308 and commissioned to allow for the investigations of controlled direct injection for
309 cryogenic engines. The set up consists of a liquid nitrogen supply and a powerful valve
310 actuation system. Designed to conduct several single and steady flow injections of
311 nitrogen in various thermodynamic states, controlled high pressure injections into an
312 open vessel were conducted and studied. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- 313 • With the addition of a sub-cooling system, the injection system is capable of
314 performing liquid nitrogen injections at high pressure of up to 94 bar. These tests
315 can be used as a stepping stone into investigations into a closed vessel.

- 316 • The use of the EHVA provides accurate control of the valve movement, thus
317 reducing the number of variables in the processes resulting in repeatable and
318 reliable injection data.
- 319 • The flow in the system is characterised by the extent of the boil off and
320 attainment of steady flow through the flow meter. This was used to distinguish
321 between liquid and gas injections, highlighting the benefits of latent heat transfer.
- 322 • The total injected mass of nitrogen increases with increased injection pressure
323 and valve lift. A definite linear correlation between the lift and injected mass is
324 observed, but there is still no clear trend for the increase in injection pressure.
- 325 • The mass flow profiles can be used to calculate the heat transfer to the nitrogen
326 during the injection and provide a better understanding of the pressurisation and
327 how it varies with the injection pressure.

328 The set up commissioned here can be utilised for further off engine testing such as,
329 the variation of the duration sweep of injections to better identify the transiency of mass
330 flow in an injection event, investigating the heat transfer that results in pressurisation
331 for closed vessel injections, as well as a comparison for future valve design iterations.

332 **Acknowledgements**

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336 Leeds) for all technical support.

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