

MARITIME

Keel Fatigue

Technical Background

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SAFER, SMARTER, GREENER

In structural analysis we often use to assess structures for two different characteristics: for Strength and for Stability. Stability is a phenomenon where thin structures or lattice-like structures are critical to buckling. And Strength assessment are carried out typically using two different approaches:

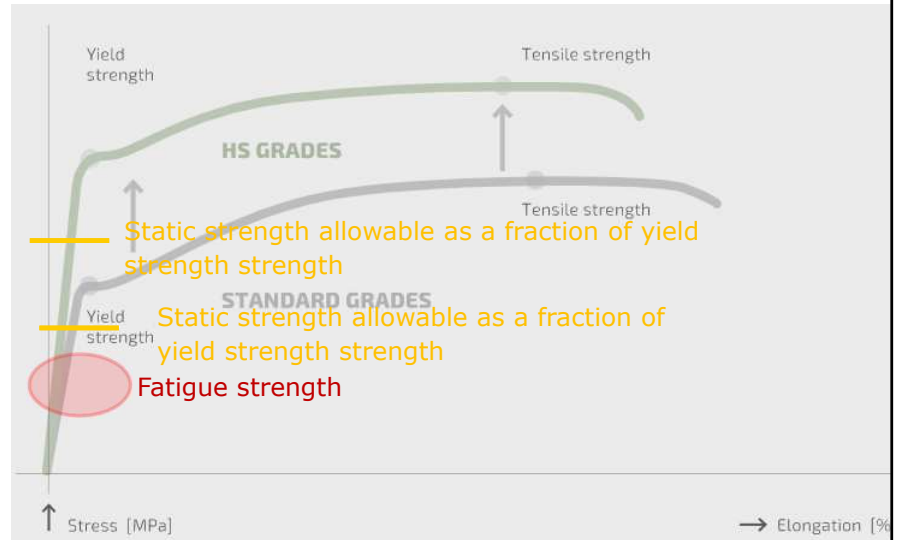
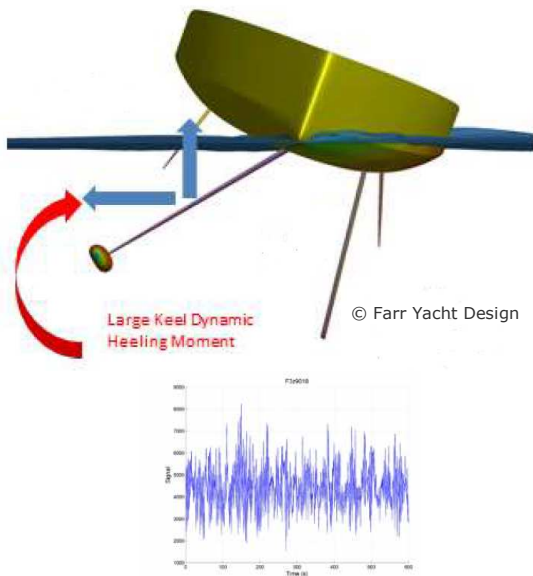
Point 1) The static strength assessment. This is the strength assessment when a structure is subject to only

- Static load only or few load cycles only; for a keel fin this would be the case for a grounding event

Point 2) What is called “fatigue strength” is a somewhat separate topic and is relevant when:

- High number of cycles occur
- And : High and low stresses occur under these cycles
- And often particularly when structures are welded metal structures
- For a keel fin this is the case when in dynamic motion, i.e. sailing in waves

Yield/Ultimate strength in Quasi static applications



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In this presentation I am NOT addressing the STATIC Design loads and their pertinent safety philosophy, such as extreme heeling cases or grounding. Those latter loads are always coped with a simplistic static material strength assessment, with the common reserve factors on yield or ultimate strength of materials.

We are looking at the diagram to the right hand side which is showing a typical stress/strain behaviour of ductile steels. Most often, the structural safety refers to the strength properties using a certain ratio on strength (yellow lines). So, the safe limit always depends on the strength of the material.

I already point out here, that THIS IS GENERALLY NOT THE CASE IN FATIGUE.

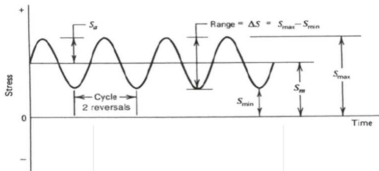
SO, more or less independent of the material strength, the fatigue strength (red circle) underlies other physical principles and is very often presenting the dominant design criteria. But it is not prone to the already mentioned extreme loads, but the every day loads; this makes it so difficult to assess.

Higher strength alloys will obviously be chosen for slim and slender fins, and this as a consequence from the above diagram you will probably agree that assessing fatigue strength is even more important, because the fatigue strength places a stronger limitation on the design.

I hope that I will be able to explain, why this is so, in the following slides:

Metal Fatigue

- **Fatigue** is the weakening of a material caused by cyclic loading that results in progressive and **localized structural damage** and the **growth of cracks**.



- It occurs at **much lower stress levels** than the ultimate material strength.



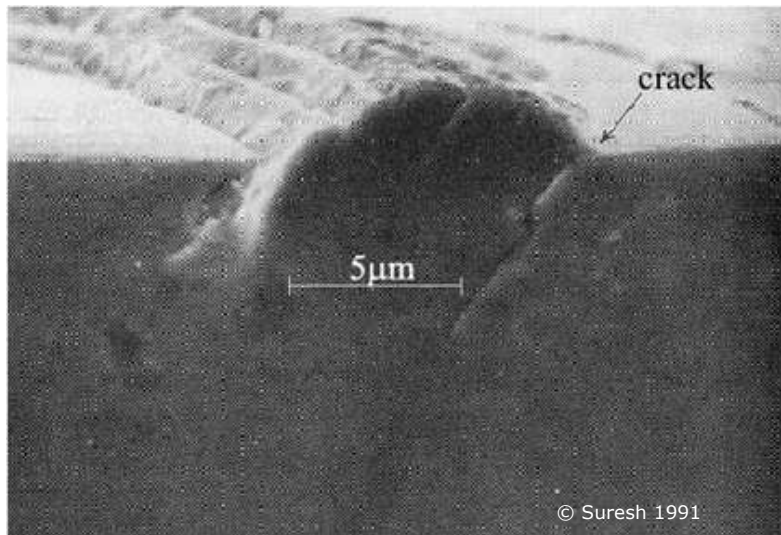
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In [materials science](#), **fatigue** is the weakening of a material caused by cyclic loading that results in progressive and localized structural damage and the growth of cracks. Fatigue is usually associated with tensile stresses (also bending, which involves tension on one side).

Once more: It is important to note that the nominal stress values that cause such damage can be much lower than the static strength of the material, typically quoted as the ultimate strength, or the yield strength.

Initiation

- In metal alloys, the fatigue process starts with dislocation movements at the microscopic level, which eventually form persistent slip bands that become the basic origin of short cracks.



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In metal alloys, the fatigue process starts with dislocation movements at the microscopic level, which eventually forms so-called “persistent slip bands” that become the nucleus of short cracks.

Here are some associated facts on fatigue:

Point 1) Damage is obviously irreversible. Materials do not recover when rested.

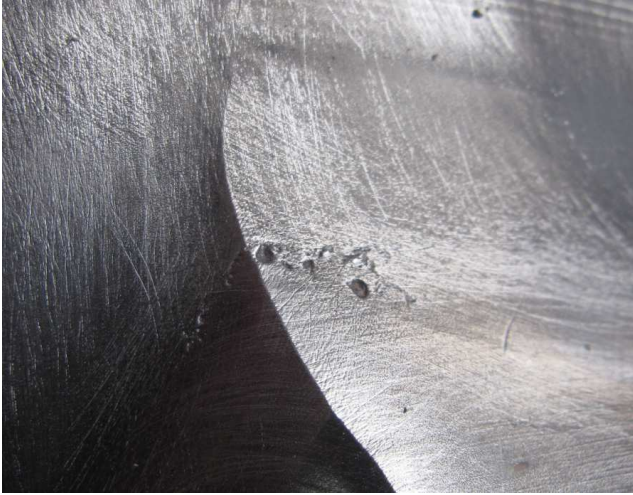
Point 2) Fatigue life is influenced by a variety of factors, such as surface finish, metallurgical microstructure, presence of oxidizing chemicals, residual stresses, temperature, scuffing contact , etc.

Point 3) Most metals exhibit a theoretical fatigue stress limit **below** which continued loading does **not** lead to fatigue failure.

Detrimental effects

Microscopic (at the crystalline grain scale like on the previous slide) but also macroscopic discontinuities as well as production defects and component design features which cause stress concentrations, are common locations at which the fatigue process, the crack, begins.

You may anticipate even from these macroscopic photos, that not only air inclusions in a weld seam, or kinks from grinding can be critical, but also surface roughness.



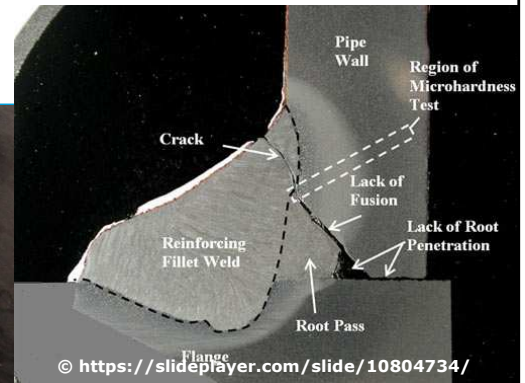
Some of these photos are from a failed racing yacht keel. The keel was lost in 2013.
So where does fatigue process actually start?

Microscopic (at the crystalline grain scale like on the previous slide) but also macroscopic discontinuities as well as production defects and component design features which cause stress concentrations, are common locations at which the fatigue process, the crack, begins.

You may anticipate even from these macroscopic photos, that not only air inclusions in a weld seam, or kinks from grinding can be critical, but also surface roughness.

Detrimental effects II

- This is also valid for other design and metallurgical discontinuities (holes, keyways, sharp changes of load direction etc.) and particularly welds, which further include metallurgical discontinuities.



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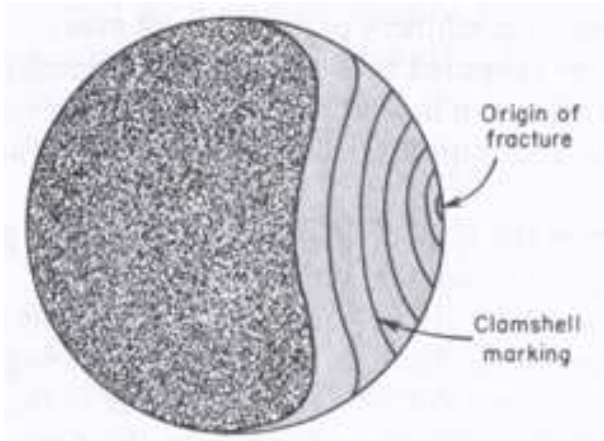
Further macroscopic inhibitors of fatigue are geometrical changes causing stress concentrations, such as key-ways, holes or WELDS.

The small photo in the top right hand corner illustrates the difficulties when two parts are joined using welding, when not done properly. It shows a cut through a weld joint and in an exemplary way addresses the different potential difficulties. (The top right image is an illustration, and not from a keel).

Growth of fatigue cracks

Upon repeated cyclic loading, the crack will continue to grow until it reaches a critical size, which occurs when the [stress intensity factor](#) of the crack exceeds the ultimate strength of the material, producing rapid propagation and typically complete fracture of the structure.

This is indeed what typically occurs on keels before they fail; cracks should be there before.



Confidential © <http://www.ux.uis.no/~hirpa/6KdB/ME/Fatigue.pdf>

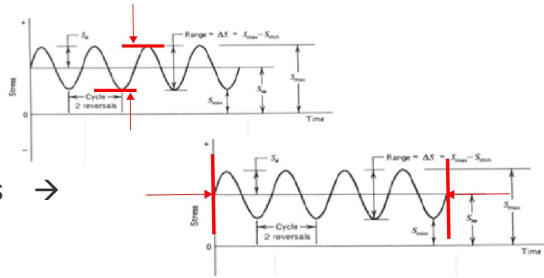
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Upon repeated cyclic loading, the crack will continue to grow until it reaches a critical size, which occurs when the [stress intensity factor](#) of the crack exceeds the ultimate strength of the material, producing rapid propagation and typically complete fracture of the structure.

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Summary of driving factors

- Magnitude of stress range (amplitude) →
- Number of (cumulated, irregular) load cycles →
- Stress discontinuities (stress concentration) →
 - Macroscopic imperfections (holes, edges, welds, surface finish)
 - Microscopic imperfections (metallurgical, voids)
- Residual stresses (from welding or production process)
- Presence of oxidizing chemicals
- Scuffing



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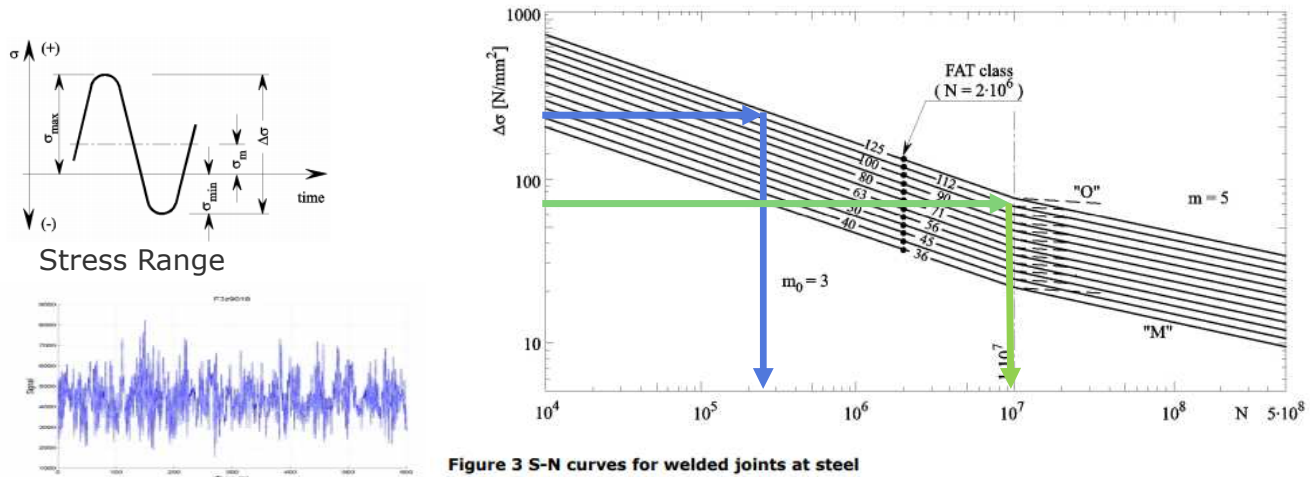
Let me summarize the main driving factors that promote fatigue:

The stress range actually represents the variable dynamic loading of a keel fin. These cycles can be caused by a boat excited by waves, but can also be generated by change of course, flapping sails and all other sorts of dynamic events.

The main drivers are the first three bullet points, on which I would like to focus now. So, how is the **response** of the metal and its typical joining technologies on the cyclic stressing?

The greater the applied stress range, the shorter the life.

- A SN or Wöhler curve describes the resistance of metal (in this case a welded joint) to fatigue
- It describes the relationship of maximum stress range and tolerable number of cycles



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In high-cycle fatigue situations, the **materials fatigue performance** is commonly characterized by a so-called *S-N curve*, also known as a *Wöhler curve*.

This curve, directly provides the relation between the stress range (definition on the left hand side) and the number of **bearable** cycles, on a double logarithmic scale. The term **“bearable”** includes a statistical assurance on probability of structural survival of exactly 97,7%. We call this fatigue life.

As you can see, the fatigue life is not so much depending on the absolute level of stress, but the stress cycle **amplitude** as shown on the vertical axis of the above diagram; combined with the number of cycles, on the horizontal axis.

This whole relation is an empirically derived methodology and includes a statistical confidence level.

Let us pick two examples in order to understand what the diagram is showing:

Blue: At a high stress range (on the left axis), the fatigue life is short (shown on the horizontal axis).

Green: At a low stress range, the fatigue life is longer.

On this curve we can extract the behaviour of a weld design at different **individual** stress range ratios (e.g. the green and the blue). This is how we later predict fatigue life, as a spectrum of different stress ranges , each tied to an individual life time. The stress range spectrum with all these associated fractional life times cumulates to one final result: This is called the **total damage ratio** and needs to stay below the number of 1. I can show you in a separate file how we derive to this spectrum for a typical racing yacht;

here again, there are assumptions. But back to the figure:

This relation between stress range and bearable cycles is the most important in fatigue science, but there are a great number of further contributors, some of which I already mentioned. In the following I would like to concentrate on talking about fatigue mainly with considering welded connections, as those seem to cause the most head-ache in our world.

For example, as you can see, there are more than only one curve describing the relation of stress range vs. fatigue life. These different curves are giving rise to different detail design. Higher number = better design= longer fatigue life. I will come back to this later. Now, follow me to the next step which addresses the qualities in detail:

"FAT" Classes

A. Butt welds, transverse loaded					B. Longitudinal load-carrying weld					E. Unwelded base material				
Type No.	Joint configuration showing mode of fatigue cracking and stress σ considered	Description of joint	FAT class $\Delta\sigma_R$		Type No.	Joint configuration showing mode of fatigue cracking and stress σ considered	Description of joint	FAT class $\Delta\sigma_R$		Type No.	Joint configuration showing mode of fatigue cracking and stress σ considered	Description of joint	FAT class $\Delta\sigma_R$	
			Steel	Al				Steel	Al				Steel	Al
A1		Transverse butt weld ground flush to plate, 100 % NDT (Non-Destructive Testing)	112	45	B1		Longitudinal butt welds both sides ground flush parallel to load direction without start/stop positions, NDT with start/stop positions	125 125 90	50 50 36	E1		Rolled or extruded plates and sections as well as seamless pipes, no surface or rolling defects	160 ($m_0 = 5$)	71 ($m_0 = 5$)
A2		Transverse butt weld made in shop in flat position, max. weld reinforcement 1 mm + 0,1 x weld width, smooth transitions, NDT	90	36	B2		Continuous automatic longitudinal fully penetrated K-butt weld without stop/start positions (based on stress range in flange adjacent to weld)	125	50	E2a		Plate edge sheared or machine-cut by any thermal process with surface free of cracks and notches, cutting edges chamfered or rounded by means of smooth grinding, groove direction parallel to the loading direction. Stress increase due to geometry of cut-outs to be considered by means of direct numerical calculation of the appertaining maximum notch stress range.	150 ($m_0 = 4$)	—
A3		Transverse butt weld not satisfying conditions for joint type No. A2, NDT	80	32	B3		Continuous automatic longitudinal fillet weld without stop/start positions (based on stress range in flange adjacent to weld)	100	40	E2		Plate edge sheared or machine-cut by any thermal process with surface free of cracks and notches, cutting edges broken or rounded. Stress increase due to geometry of cut-outs to be considered. ¹	140 ($m_0 = 4$)	40 ($m_0 = 4$)
A4		Transverse butt weld on backing strip or three-plate connection with unloaded branch	71	25	B4		Continuous manual longitudinal fillet or butt weld (based on stress range in flange adjacent to weld)	90	36	E3		Machine cut or sheared edge: Manually thermally cut: Stress increase due to geometry of cut-outs to be considered. ¹	125 ($m_0 = 3,5$) 100 ($m_0 = 3,5$)	36 ($m_0 = 3,5$) 32 ($m_0 = 3,5$)
A5		Transverse butt welds between plates of different widths or thickness, NDT as for joint type No. A2, slope 1 : 5 as for joint type No. A2, slope 1 : 3 as for joint type No. A3, slope 1 : 2 as for joint type No. A3, slope 1 : 5 as for joint type No. A3, slope 1 : 3 as for joint type No. A3, slope 1 : 2 For the third sketched case the slope results from the ratio of the difference in plate thicknesses to the breadth of the welded seam. Additional bending stress due to thickness change to be considered, see also B.1.3.	90 80 71 80 71 63	32 28 25 22 20	B5		Intermittent longitudinal fillet weld (based on stress range in flange at weld ends) In presence of shear τ in the web, the FAT class has to be reduced by the factor $(1 - \Delta\tau / \Delta\sigma)$, but not below 36 (steel) or 14 (Al).	80	32					
A6		Transverse butt welds welded from one side without backing bar, full penetration not controlled by NDT For tubular profiles $\Delta\sigma_R$ may be lifted to the next higher FAT class.	71 36	28 12	B6		Longitudinal butt weld, fillet weld or intermittent fillet weld with cut outs (based on stress range in flange at weld ends) If cut out is higher than 40 % of web height In presence of shear τ in the web, the FAT class has to be reduced by the factor $(1 - \Delta\tau / \Delta\sigma)$, but not below 36 (steel) or 14 (Al). <i>Note</i> For D-shaped scallops, an assessment based on local stresses is recommended.	71 63	28 25					
A7		Partial penetration butt weld, the stress is to be related to the weld throat sectional area, weld overlap not to be taken into account	36	12										

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Here we have a catalogue in which the different weld connections are presented and each one is dedicated to one of the beforementioned categories, quantified with **blue shade**.

During welding, a large amount of stress concentration is introduced:

- By the assembly configuration (in-line, T-shaped, etc.) **shaded orange**
- By the type of weld

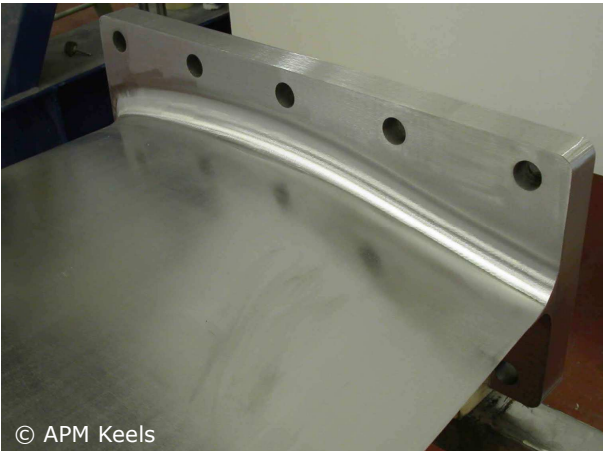
You can also see that those categories are subdivided by loading direction, shaded in orange.

Shaded red, let us look at some exemplary extremes:

- A7 representing a transverse loaded partial penetration weld, incorporating a big stress concentration
- A1 the same but fully penetrated weld where the material is continuous, but with some metallurgical obstacles
- B1 is the same but loaded along the weld
- E1 is representing base material

The FAT Classes designations or numbering is actually quantifying the fatigue life stress range for 1Mio load cycles

"FAT" Classes



Structural detail	FAT class
	100
	90-125
	80-90
	80
	71
	63
	50-80
	40-50

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Here again, some simplified cases so that you can remember the FAT class numbers ranging from 36 to 160

As you can perhaps imagine now, the post surface treatment is also important for the quality of a weld;as long as it is not the root (the back of the weld) that creates the critical issue, as seen before

Why am I trying to focus so much on these FAT Classes? Well, it is because I would like to lead you back to the S-N fatigue life curve to study what these classes actually mean: So, let us look at some little examples:

The higher the weld category, the higher the bearable stress range (for a given life time).

- A SN or Wöhler describes the resistance of metal (in this case a welded joint) to fatigue
- It describes the relationship of maximum stress range and tolerable number of cycles

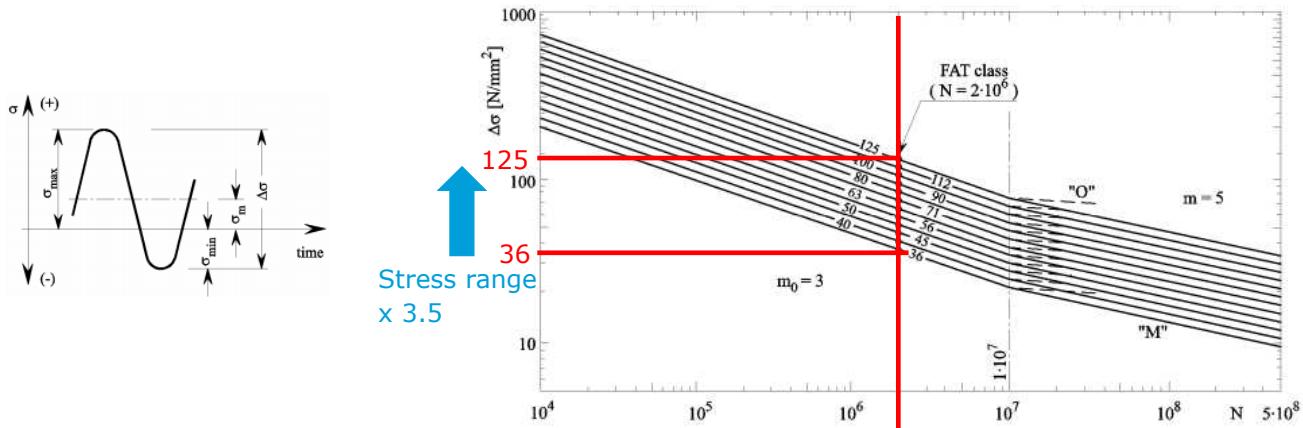


Figure 3 S-N curves for welded joints at steel

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I repeat:

The S-N curve directly provides the relation between the stress range and the number of bearable cycles, within a defined statistical confidence level.

Study #1:

Let us look at one particular same fatigue life (vertical line). For different quality designs (FAT 36 and FAT 125), the allowable stress is 125MPa for the higher quality weld and only 36MPa for the lower quality weld.

This has drastic implications for the design.

The higher the weld category, the higher the life time (for a given stress range).

- A SN or Wöhler describes the resistance of metal (in this case a welded joint) to fatigue
- It describes the relationship of maximum stress range and tolerable number of cycles

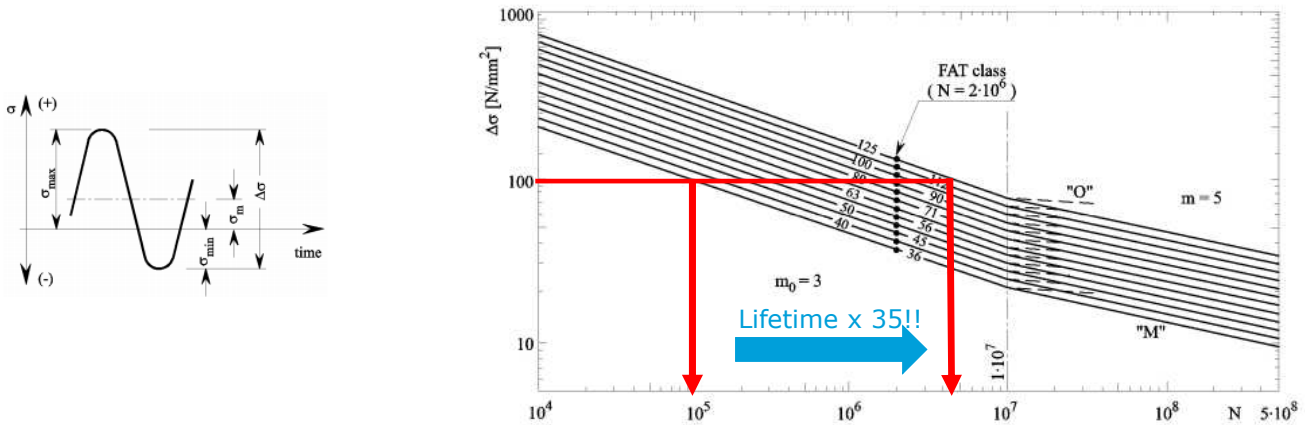


Figure 3 S-N curves for welded joints at steel

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Study #2:

If one chooses a fixed stress range, e.g. 100MPa, the life time increases by the ratio of 35!! between these same (extreme) qualities.

The higher the weld category, the higher the life time (for a given stress range)

- A SN or Wöhler describes the resistance of metal (in this case a welded joint) to fatigue
- It describes the relationship of maximum stress range and tolerable number of cycles

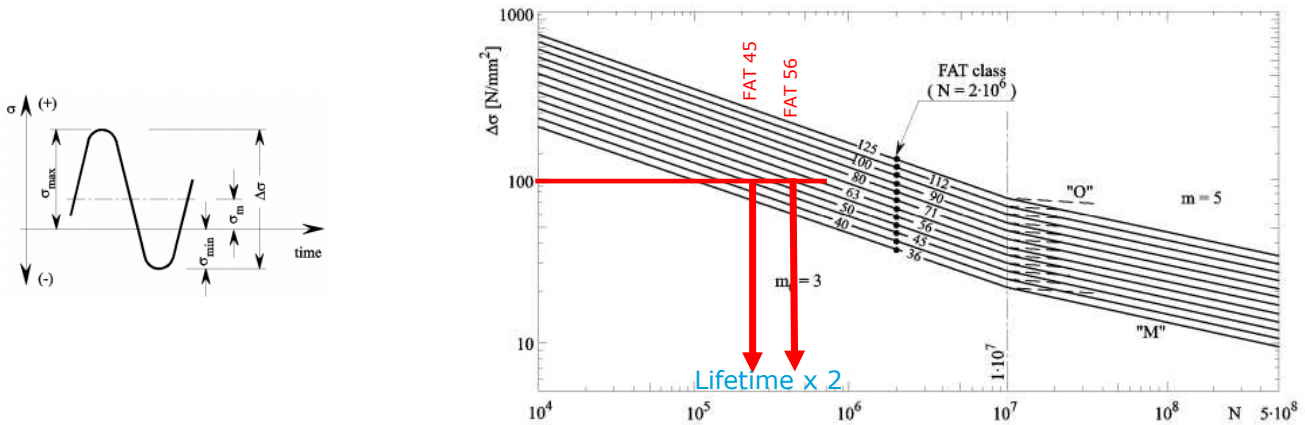


Figure 3 S-N curves for welded joints at steel

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Study #3:

Choosing again a bearable stress range of 100, but comparing FAT 45 with FAT 56, there is already a fatigue life difference ratio of 2.

Life time doubles with 25% lower stress range

- A SN or Wöhler describes the resistance of metal (in this case a welded joint) to fatigue
- It describes the relationship of maximum stress range and tolerable number of cycles

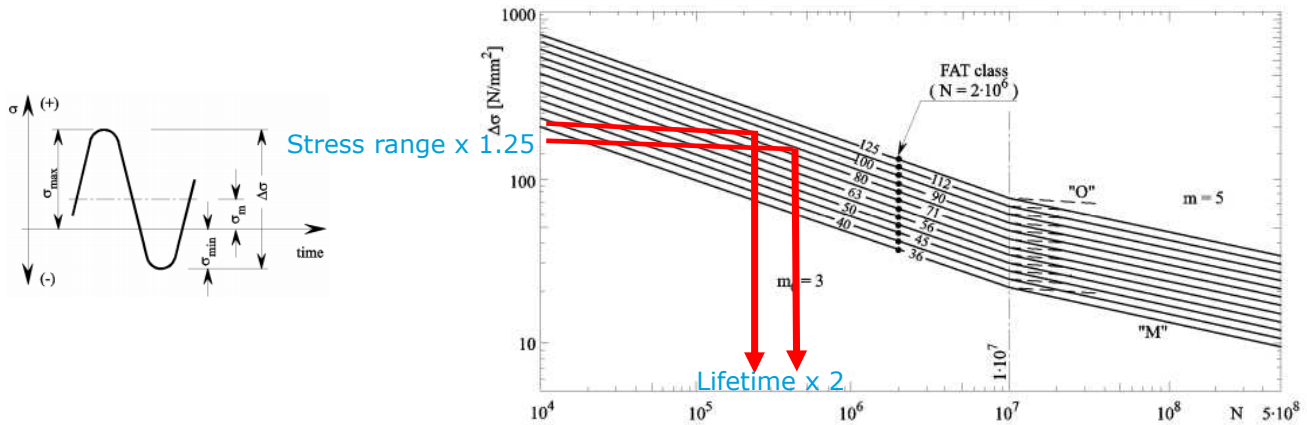


Figure 3 S-N curves for welded joints at steel

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Study #4

For the same quality weld (FAT 90), a predicted life time ratio of 2.0 is achieved already with a stress range ratio of 1.25.

After these studies I think we are hopefully understanding what the influences of weld design on fatigue life are and what the extension of fatigue life means when we are talking about an extension factor of 2.

Summary

- 25% lower stress range extends life by a factor of 2
- 25% better FAT class (quality) extends life by a factor of 2

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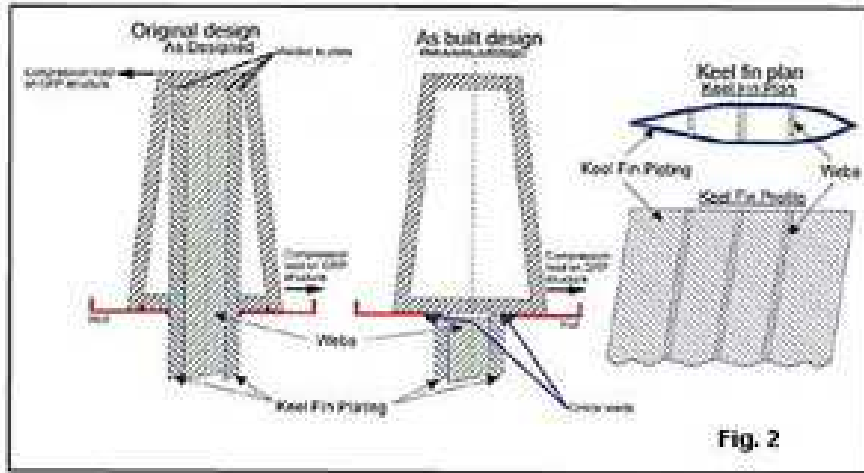
ISAF/WS OSR Plan Review; Observations since 2010

- Ca. 60% of keels certified are hollow welded structures
- Ca. 5% are canting keels
- New fatigue methodologies in ISO 12215-9 produced an awareness, but it is a slow growing process to “educate” designers.
- The awareness of importance of a proper weld design even today is often poor
- The awareness of high strength steel properties and behaviour today is poor.
- Designers often rely on “manufacturer´s” standards
- Manufacturers are often lacking awareness of structural importance
- Manufacturers make short cuts on design (e.g. “Hooligan”)
- Modifications on keels can be problematic
- Fitters are often lacking awareness
- High profiled Designs are often doing fine

Photo © Carlo Borlenghi /Rolex

Failures

- Hooligan V 2009



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Image ©: <https://www.gov.uk/maib-reports/keel-failure-and-capsize-of-sailing-yacht-hooligan-v-off-prawle-point-devon-england-with-loss-of-1-life>

As designed and as built...

Failures

- Canting Keel



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This is a photo of a structure still in action.

Failures

- Oyster 825 with deficient continuity in structural FRP bottom structures

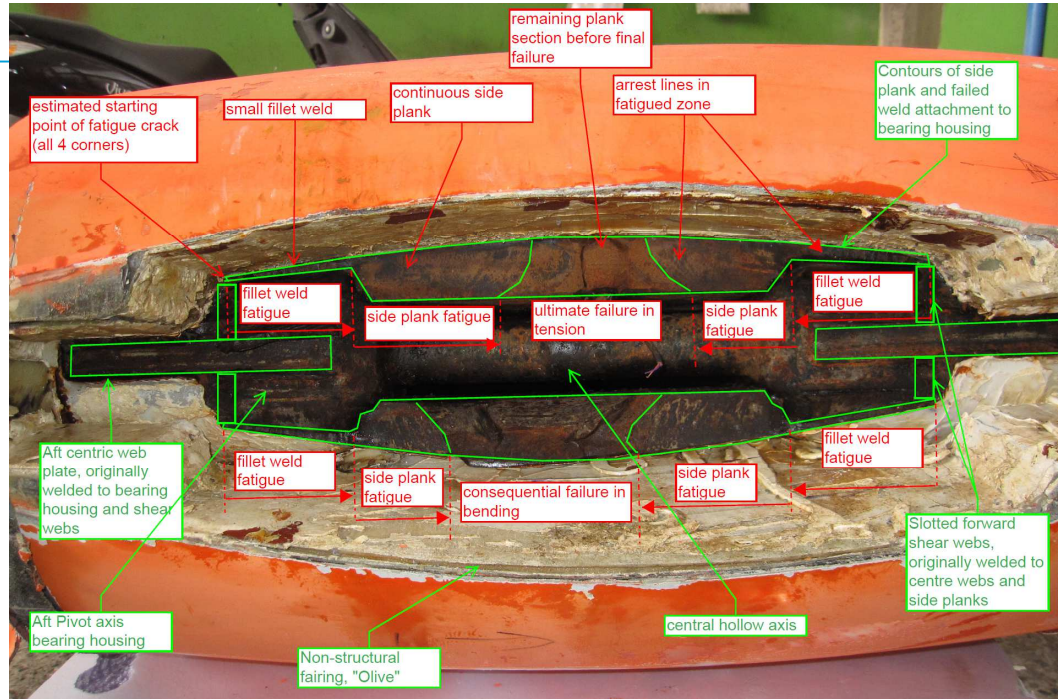


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© Artur Grokovsky/Yacht Russia

Failures

- The surface of the failed piece had shown signs of stirations typical only for fatigue progressing failure, accompanied with an ultimate break surface. You can even find the place where the crack started rather easily.
- In this case, the crack origin was from a non-structural, cosmetic weld , which progressed into the previously sound and structural planc.



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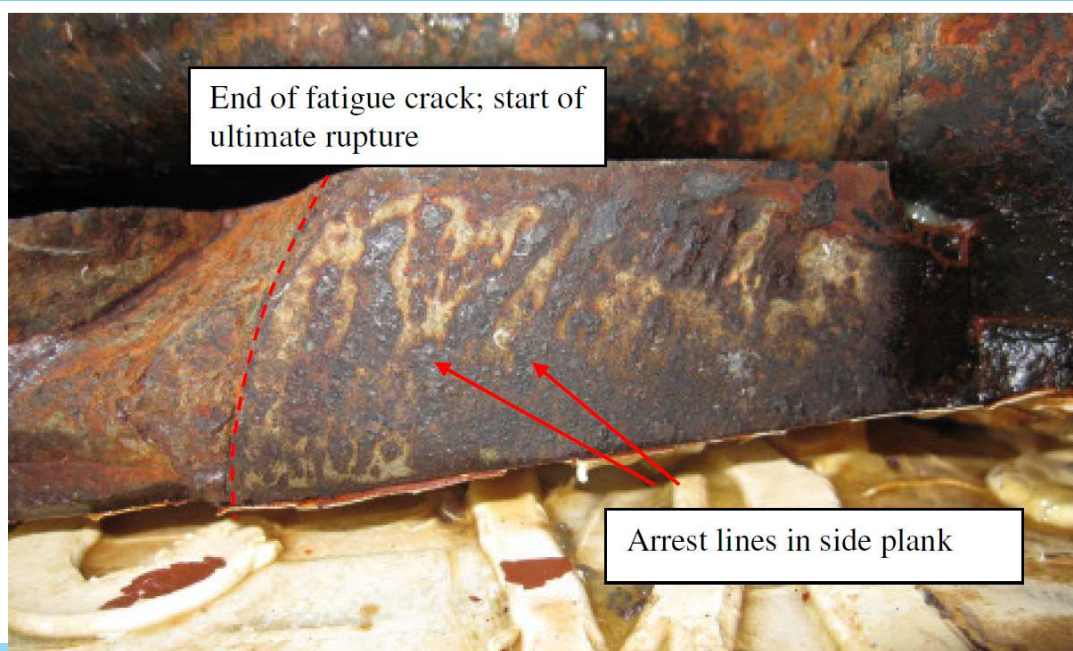
And this is the history that one can identify from simply analysing the fracture surface:

The surface of the failed piece had shown signs of stirations typical only for fatigue progressing failure, accompanied with an ultimate break surface. You can even find the place where the crack started rather easily.

In this case, the crack origin was from a non-structural, cosmetic weld , which progressed into the previously sound and structural planc.

Failures

- Detail of fatigue in keel plank



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Scantling Standard Discussion

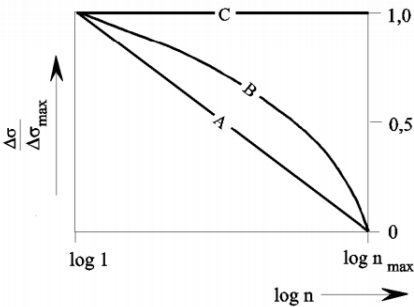
ISO 12215-9 for <24m

The operational life of the craft is assumed to be 8 million stress cycles. This is based on an assumed operational envelope — various times on different points of sail, average tacking times for beating, average rolling periods for downwind, typical wave encounter periods, estimated heel angles — and is only intended to be representative.

This corresponds to about 25–30 years of moderate-to-high usage recreational sailing or about five years of very extensive ocean racing (one, 30 000 NM, competition plus associated training and preparation annually). This is 15 % of the figure of the number of cycles normally used in ship fatigue assessment.

DNVGL Ship Rules:

In general the fatigue analysis has to be performed for a number of cycles $n_{max} = 5 \cdot 10^7$ for seaway induced stresses with the stress range spectrum A. This considers a lifetime of 25 years with 230 days per year at sea in the North Atlantic.



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Scantling Standard Discussion

■ ISO 12215-9 Fatigue Design Criteria

If $MSF < 0,5$:

The calculated fatigue life will exceed the design life with an effective safety factor of 2 or more. This is the desired result. However, it is important to include the effect of stress concentration and welding, since otherwise the simplified procedure is meaningless.

If $0,5 \leq MSF \leq 1$:

The calculated fatigue life will exceed the design life with an effective safety factor of between 1 and 2. As MSF approaches 0,7 and beyond, the uncertainties in the simplified method become increasingly critical and further investigation using more advanced engineering methods is strongly recommended.

If $MSF > 1$:

The calculated fatigue life will be less than the design life. The fatigue life is unsatisfactory according to the simplified method. Further analyses and/or redesign are essential.

■ Life time behaves linear to these value

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Essences

- Fatigue Design is essential for metal keels
 - Provisions are existing for proper design
- Particularly, Designers need to have awareness and capabilities
- Production can be “common” marine standard, if instructions given on design drawings are appropriate

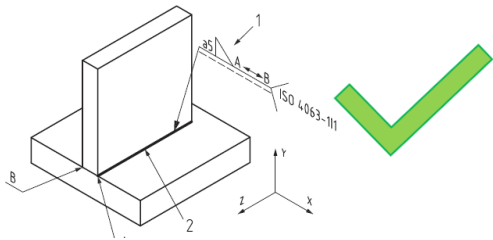
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Possible Solutions

- Increase required fatigue life by decreasing Total Damage Ratio “MSF” value in **ISO 12215-9**

The problem seems to also be that sometimes the designers don't know the “language” of the builders; proposed solution:

- Involve **ISO 12215-6** Annex C “Good Practice Welding Procedure”, to be detailed
- Involve a proper common “language”: **ISO 2553**



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List of existing Welding Standards

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Qualitätsanforderungen für das Schmelzschweißen		Zerstörungsfreie Prüfungen		Annahmekriterien für ZfP		Begriffe, Definitionen	
DIN EN ISO 3834-1 bis -5, DIN FB CEN ISO/TR 3834-6		Qualifizierung Personal Regeln für ZfP		Stahl Aluminium		Symbolische Darstellung Verfahren und Nr.	
Lichtbogenschweißen		Sichtprüfung		DIN EN ISO 5817 DIN EN ISO 10675-1		Begriffe & Definitionen	
Einteilung der Werkstoffe		Durchstrahlungsprüfung		DIN EN ISO 10675-2		Begriffe & Definitionen	
Empfehlungen zum Schweißen		Ultraschallprüfung		DIN EN ISO 11666, DIN EN ISO 23279, DIN EN ISO 22825, DIN EN ISO 15626		Mehrsprachige Benennung mit Bildern	
Temperaturmessung		Eindringprüfung		DIN EN ISO 23277		Schweißpositionen	
Schweißerprüfung		Magnetpulverprüfung		DIN EN ISO 18265		Schweißstoleranzen	
Bedienerprüfung		Wirbelstromprüfung		Schweißzusätze		Weitere Normen	
Schweißaufsicht		Härteprüfung		Allg. Produktnorm		Schweißerprüfung Kupfer	
Schweißanweisung		Beugungslaufzeitprüfung (TOFD-Verfahren)		QS-Anforderung für Herstellung		Schweißerprüfung Nickel	
Qualifizierung von Verfahren		Phased Array		Techn. Lieferbed.		Schweißerprüfung Titan	
Kalibrieren, Validieren, Verifizieren		Zerstörende Prüfungen		Richtlinien zur Beschaffung		Schweißerprüfung Gußeisen	
Wärmebehandlung		Querschugversuch		Prüfverfahren & QS		Bewertungsgruppen Hybrid	
Unregelmäßigkeiten, Schweißnahtvorbereitung		Längszugversuch SG		Prüfmethode		Verfahrensprüfung Kupfer	
Gruppen Schmelzschweißen		Kreuzzugprüfung		Wolframelektroden		Verfahrensprüfung Nickel	
Gruppen Strahlschweißen		Biegeprüfung		Zusätze zum Hartauftragen		Verfahrensprüfung Titan	
Thermisches Trennen		Bruchprüfung		Zusätze für Gußeisen		VP Gusseisen	
Nahtvorbereitung		Kerbschlagbiegeversuch				VP Auftragschweißen	
Verbindungselemente		Härteprüfung				VP Rohre in Rohrböden	
Druckbeanspruchte und Nicht innendruck- beanspruchte Bauteile		Mikro- und makrosko- pische Untersuchung				VP Hybrid-Prozess	
Geometrische Unregelmäßigkeiten		Ätzungen für Mikro- u. makroskopische Unters.				VP Schw. von Stahlguss	
Schmelz-, Preßschweißen		Kaltrissprüfverfahren				Schweißen von Gusseisen	
Geometrische Unregelmäßigkeiten		Bestimmung Ferritanteil				Schweißen v. Plattierungen	
Thermische Schmelz-						Schweißen von Betonstahl	
Bez.-System Unregelmäßigkeiten						Verfahren zur Beurteilung	
Schweißbarkeit						von Unregelmäßigkeiten bei metallischen Bauteilen	
Lichtbogenschweißleinrichtungen, Arbeitsschutz							
Schweißstromquellen							
Drahtvorschubgeräte, Brenner-, Stabelektrodenhalter, Steck- verbinder für Schweißleitungen							
Rohrleitungen, Gasschläuche, Anschlüsse, Manometer							
Gebrauchsstellenvorlagen, Brenner							
Schutzkleidung, -handschuhe							
Augenschutz							
Schweißvorhänge							
Umwelt-Checkliste							
Luftreinigungssysteme							
Schweißrauch Laborverfahren							
Schweißrauch Probenahme							

Thank you.

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