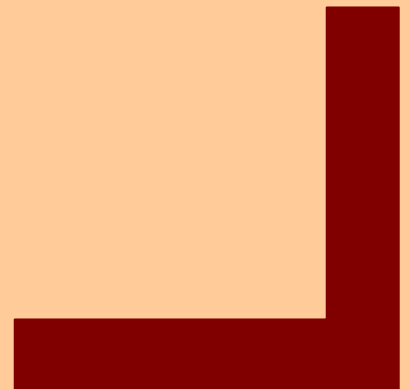




AGA Report No. 9

Measurement of Gas by Multipath Ultrasonic Meters

**Second Edition
April 2007**



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Transmission Measurement Committee



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FOREWORD

This report is published in the form of a performance-based specification for multipath ultrasonic meters for gas flow measurement. It is the result of a collaborative effort of users, meter manufacturers, flow measurement research organizations and independent consultants forming Task Group R-9 of AGA's Transmission Measurement Committee (TMC). In addition, comments to this report were made by the Committee on Gas Flow Measurement (COGFM) of the American Petroleum Institute (API), Gas Processor's Association (GPA), International Standard Organization's ISO/TC 30/SC 5/WG 1, Pipeline Research Council International (PRCI) and the committee members of International School of Hydrocarbon Measurement (ISHM).

This version of AGA Report No. 9 is intended to supersede all prior versions of this document. However, this document does not reference existing multipath ultrasonic meter installations. The decision to apply this document to existing installations shall be at the discretion of the parties involved.

Research conducted in support of this report and cited herein has demonstrated that multipath ultrasonic meters can accurately measure gas flow and, therefore, should be able to meet or exceed the requirements specified in this report when calibrated and installed according to the recommendations contained herein. Users should follow appropriate installation, use and maintenance of an ultrasonic meter as applicable in each case.

Various combinations of upstream fittings, valves and lengths of straight pipe can produce profile disturbances at the meter inlet that may result in flow-rate measurement errors. The amount of meter error will depend on the magnitude of the inlet velocity profile distortion produced by the upstream piping configuration and the meter's ability to compensate for this distortion. Research results and flow-meter calibration data have indicated that multipath ultrasonic flow meters can accurately measure gas flow rate when installed with upstream piping lengths and/or flow conditioning systems sufficient to maintain the integrity of the flow calibration. Other effects that may also result in flow-rate measurement errors for a given installation include levels of pulsation, range of operating pressures and ambient temperature conditions.

Flow-calibration guidelines are provided for occasions when a flow calibration is requested or required to verify the meter's accuracy or to apply a calibration factor to minimize the measurement uncertainty. (See Report text and Appendix A)

Unlike most traditional gas meters, multipath ultrasonic meters inherently have an embedded microprocessor system. Therefore, this report includes, by reference, a standardized set of international testing specifications applicable to electronic gas meters. These tests, summarized in Appendix B, are used to demonstrate the acceptable performance of the multipath ultrasonic meter's electronic system design under different influences and disturbances.

AGA Engineering Technical Note M-96-2-3, Ultrasonic Flow Measurement for Natural Gas Applications, is included in Appendix C, as a source of background information on ultrasonic gas metering. Contents of this technical note were based on the information available when the note was written in March 1996. Therefore, in case of any conflict between the information in the main report and the technical note (Appendix C), the content in the main report prevails.

The flow meter and/or flow conditioner performance verification test found in Appendix D is intended to provide a method by which an ultrasonic flow metering system can be shown to perform acceptably (i.e., within the performance specifications described in Sections 5.1, 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 of this document) under varying test flow conditions.

An example of overall measurement uncertainty calculations is provided in Appendix E with assumed numerical values for estimating measurement uncertainty for sites using ultrasonic gas flow meters.

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AGA Report No. 9, *Measurement of Gas by Multipath Ultrasonic Meters*, was revised by a Task Group of the American Gas Association's Transmission Measurement Committee under the joint chairmanship of **Paul LaNasa** of CPL & Associates and **Warren Peterson** of TransCanada Corporation. Individuals who made substantial contributions to the revision of this document are:

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Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Scope.....	1
1.2	Principle of Measurement.....	1
2.	TERMINOLOGY, UNITS AND DEFINITIONS.....	2
2.1	Terminology	2
2.2	Engineering Units	2
2.3	Definitions	3
3.	OPERATING CONDITIONS.....	6
3.1	Gas Quality	6
3.2	Pressures	6
3.3	Temperatures, Gas and Ambient.....	6
3.4	Gas Flow Considerations	6
3.5	Upstream Piping and Flow Profiles	7
3.6	Acoustic Noise.....	7
4.	METER REQUIREMENTS	9
4.1	Codes and Regulations.....	9
4.2	Quality Assurance	9
4.3	Meter Body.....	9
4.3.1	Maximum Operating Pressure	9
4.3.2	Corrosion Resistance	9
4.3.3	Meter Body Lengths and Bores.....	9
4.3.4	Ultrasonic Transducer Ports	10
4.3.5	Pressure Tap	10
4.3.6	Miscellaneous	10
4.3.7	Meter Body Markings	11
4.4	Ultrasonic Transducers.....	11
4.4.1	Specifications	11
4.4.2	Rate of Pressure Change.....	11

4.4.3	Exchange.....	11
4.4.4	Transducer Tests.....	12
4.5	Electronics	13
4.5.1	General Requirements.....	12
4.5.2	Output Signal Specifications.....	12
4.5.3	Electrical Safety Design Requirements.....	13
4.5.4	Component Replacement.....	13
4.6	Computer Programs.....	13
4.6.1	Firmware.....	13
4.6.2	Configuration and Maintenance Software.....	14
4.6.3	Inspection and Auditing Functions.....	14
4.6.4	Alarms.....	14
4.6.5	Diagnostic Measurements.....	14
4.7	Documentation.....	15
4.7.1	After Receipt of Order.....	16
4.7.2	Before Shipment.....	16
5.	METER PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS.....	17
5.1	General Meter Performance Requirements.....	17
5.1.1	Large Meter Accuracy.....	17
5.1.2	Small Meter Accuracy.....	18
5.2	Pressure, Temperature and Gas Composition Influences.....	19
6.	INDIVIDUAL METER & METERING PACKAGE TESTING REQUIREMENTS...20	
6.1	Leakage Tests.....	20
6.2	Dimensional Measurements.....	20
6.3	Zero-Flow Verification Test (Zero Test).....	21
6.4	Meter and Metering Package Flow-Calibration Test.....	21
6.4.1	Preparation for Flow Calibration.....	22
6.4.2	Calibration of Metering Package.....	23
6.4.3	Calibration Adjustment Factors.....	23
6.4.4	Calibration Test Reports.....	23
6.4.5	Final Considerations.....	24
7.	INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS.....	25
7.1	Environmental Considerations.....	25
7.1.1	Temperature.....	25
7.1.2	Vibration.....	25
7.1.3	Electrical Noise.....	25
7.1.4	Pulsation.....	25

7.2	Piping Configuration.....	25
7.2.1	Flow Direction.....	25
7.2.2	Piping Installations.....	25
7.2.3	Protrusions and Misalignments.....	27
7.2.4	Internal Surface.....	28
7.2.5	Thermowells and Sample Probes.....	28
7.2.6	Flow Conditioners.....	28
7.2.7	Orientation of Meter.....	28
7.2.8	Filtration.....	28
7.2.9	Meter Tube Ports.....	29
7.3	Associated Flow Computer.....	29
7.3.1	Flow Computer Calculations.....	29
7.4	Maintenance.....	30
8.	FIELD VERIFICATION TESTS	31
9.	ULTRASONIC METER MEASUREMENT UNCERTAINTY DETERMINATION ..	32
9.1	Types of Uncertainties.....	32
9.2	Meter Calibration Uncertainty	32
9.3	Uncertainties Arising From Differences Between the Field Installation and the Calibration Lab....	32
9.3.1	Parallel Meter Runs.....	32
9.3.2	Installation Effects.....	32
9.3.3	Pressure and Temperature Effects.....	33
9.3.4	Gas Quality Effects.....	33
9.4	Uncertainties Due to Secondary Instrumentation.....	33
9.5	Uncertainty Analysis Procedure	34
10.	REFERENCE LIST.....	35
APPENDIX A: MULTIPATH ULTRASONIC METER FLOW-CALIBRATION ISSUES.		39
A.1	Why Flow-Calibrate a Multipath Ultrasonic Meter?	39
A.2	Methods for Correcting a UM’s Flow-Measurement Error.....	41
A.3	Example of a Flow-Weighted Mean Error (FWME) Calculation.....	41
APPENDIX B: ELECTRONICS DESIGN TESTING.....		45
B.1	Static Temperature, Dry Heat.....	45
B.2	Static Temperature, Cold.....	45

B.3 Damp Heat, Steady State	45
B.4 Damp Heat, Cyclic	46
B.5 Random Vibration	46
B.6 Sinusoidal Vibration	46
B.7 Mechanical Shock	46
B.8 Power Voltage Variation	46
B.9 Short Time Power Reduction	46
B.10 Bursts (Transients)	47
B.11 Electrostatic Discharge	47
B.12 Electromagnetic Susceptibility	47

APPENDIX C: ULTRASONIC FLOW MEASUREMENT FOR NATURAL GAS APPLICATIONS49

C.1 Introduction	50
C.1.1 Task Group Scope	50
C.1.2 Engineering Technical Note Scope	50
C.2 Principle of Operation	51
C.2.1 Introduction	51
C.2.2 Theory of Ultrasonic Flow Measurement	52
C.3 Technical Issues	59
C.3.1 Speed of Sound in Natural Gas	59
C.3.2 Installation Requirements.....	64
C.3.3 Meter Construction.....	67
C.3.4 Performance Characteristics.....	68
C.3.5 Field Checks.....	70
C.4 Evaluation of Measurement Performance	71
C.4.1 Signal Amplitude.....	72
C.4.2 Pulse Shape	72
C.4.3 Noise	73
C.4.4 Batch Diagnostics.....	74
C.4.5 Diagnostic Message Block Example.....	74
C.5 Error Analysis	77
C.5.1 Bias.....	77
C.5.2 Variance	79
C.6 Calibration	81
C.6.1 Dry Calibration.....	81
C.6.2 Flow Calibration.....	82

C.6.3 Calibration Facilities.....	82
C.6.4 Transducer Replacement	82
C.7 Recommendations	85
C.7.1 Industry.....	85
C.7.2 Users.....	85
C.7.3 Manufacturers.....	85
C.7.4 Researchers.....	85
TABLE C1: Ultrasonic Meter Research Literature.....	87
TABLE C2: Ultrasonic Meter Research Activities	89
Appendix C References.....	90
APPENDIX D: FLOW METER AND/OR FLOW CONDITIONER PERFORMANCE VERIFICATION TEST	91
APPENDIX E: EXAMPLES OF OVERALL MEASUREMENT UNCERTAINTY CALCULATIONS – ULTRASONIC METER	93
E.1 General	93
E.2 The Mathematical Model.....	93
E.3 Contributory Variances	93
E.3.1 Uncertainty in the Uncorrected Volume Flowrate, Q_f	93
E.3.2 Uncertainty in the Measurement of Pressure	94
E.3.3 Uncertainty in the Measurement of Temperature	94
E.3.4 Uncertainty in the Determination of Compressibility	94
E.4 Combined Uncertainty (percent).....	95
E.5 Expanded Uncertainty	95
APPENDIX F: FORM FOR PROPOSALS ON AGA REPORT NO. 9.....	97

1. Introduction

1.1 Scope

This report was developed for multipath ultrasonic transit-time flow meters used for the measurement of natural gas. Multipath ultrasonic meters have at least two independent pairs of measuring transducers (acoustic paths). Typical applications include measuring the flow of gas through production facilities, transmission pipelines, storage facilities, distribution systems and large end-use customer meter sets.

1.2 Principle of Measurement

Multipath ultrasonic meters are inferential meters that derive the gas flow rate by measuring the transit times of high-frequency sound pulses. Transit times are measured for sound pulses transmitted and received between pairs of transducers positioned on or in the pipe. Pulses transmitted downstream with the gas flow are accelerated by the flow and pulses transmitted upstream against the gas flow along the identical acoustic path are decelerated. The difference in these transit times along the acoustic paths is related to the average gas flow velocity. Numerical calculation techniques are then used to compute the average axial gas flow velocity and the gas volume flow rate at line conditions through the meter.

The accuracy of an ultrasonic gas meter depends on several factors, such as:

- Precisely measured dimensions of the meter body and ultrasonic transducer locations
- The velocity integration technique inherent in the design of the meter
- The shape of the velocity profile at the meter
- Levels of pulsation that may exist in the flowing gas stream
- The accuracy of the transit-time measurements
- Flow calibrations.

The accuracy of the transit-time measurement depends on:

- The electronic clock accuracy and stability
- Accurate, consistent detection of sound pulse transmit and receive times
- Proper compensation for signal delays of electronic components and transducers
- Dimensional integrity of the meter body.

Ultrasonic meter (UM) accuracy is dependent on these fundamental characterizations and their continued integrity over time. These accuracy dependencies may be adversely influenced by operational degradation of the UM over time (e.g., dirt build up on the internal surfaces of the meter, electronics drift, etc.). Emphasis on UM diagnostic data collection and interpretation in this document is made to impress upon users the need to continuously monitor UM integrity so that accuracy is maintained.