# October 2020 MDE

1. With reference to four stroke engines, explain the effects of EACH of the following:

   (a) advanced fuel injection; (3)

   (b) retarded fuel injection; (4)

   (c) low compression pressure. (3)

## October 2020 MDE

2. (a) Explain why air coolers are fitted after main engine turbo chargers. (6)

   (b) Explain the effects of undercooling the charge air on the engine. (4)

## October 2020 MDE

3. Describe a procedure for manually testing the set points on a diesel generator lubricating oil, low pressure alarm and shut down. (10)

## October 2020 MDE

4. With reference to scroll type fuel injection pumps:

   (a) describe how the delivered quantity of fuel may be varied; (5)

   (b) explain the purpose of the delivery valve; (3)

   (c) describe how fuel oil is prevented from spraying out if the high pressure pipe fails in service. (2)

## October 2020 MDE

5. (a) Explain what is meant by microbial degradation of a lubricating oil. (4)

   (b) State FOUR indications that could be observed if a lubricating oil was suffering from microbial degradation. (4)

   (c) Describe TWO actions that should be taken on detecting the early start of microbial degradation of the main engine lubricating oil. (2)

# October 2020 MDE

6. (a) Describe, with the aid of a sketch, a keel type cooling water system, labelling the MAIN components. (6)

   (b) Explain the purpose of EACH of the following in the cooling system:

   (i) header tanks; (3)

   (ii) vent lines. (1)

**7. Describe, with the aid of a sketch, the operation of a centrifugal type lubricating oil filter, labelling the MAIN components. (10)**

# October 2020 MDE

8. (a) Describe the procedure for renewing a bottom end bearing of a diesel engine. (8)

   (b) Describe the precautions necessary on initial startup of the engine. (2)

# October 2020 MDE

9. Sketch a fluid coupling, suitable for connecting an engine to a gearbox, labelling the main components. (10)

# October 2020 MDE

10. With reference to main reduction gearing:

   (a) explain why lubricating oil should be supplied before the gearing rotates; (4)

   (b) state the condition monitoring techniques that may be employed to assess the condition of the gearing. (6)

# October 2020 MDE

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## Effects of Injection Timing and Compression Pressure in Four-Stroke Engines:

Here's a breakdown of how injection timing and compression pressure affect four-stroke engines:

**(a) Advanced Fuel Injection:**

Injecting fuel earlier in the compression stroke can have both positive and negative effects:

- **Positives:**
  - **Improved Power Output:** In some cases, advanced injection can allow for a longer ignition delay, leading to a more complete burn and potentially higher power output.
  - **Reduced NOx Emissions:** Earlier injection allows for more time for fuel-air mixing before combustion, potentially reducing peak combustion temperatures and thereby lowering NOx emissions.
- **Negatives:**
  - **Increased Noise and Knocking:** Early injection can lead to pre-ignition (fuel igniting before the optimal timing), causing knocking and increased noise during operation.
  - **Potential Power Loss:** Excessive advancement can result in incomplete combustion as the fuel and air haven't fully mixed by the time ignition occurs, leading to power loss.

**(b) Retarded Fuel Injection:**

Delaying fuel injection timing towards the end of the compression stroke also has both advantages and disadvantages:

- **Positives:**
  - **Reduced NOx Emissions:** Similar to advanced injection with a slightly longer mixing time, retarded injection can contribute to lower peak combustion temperatures and potentially lower NOx emissions.
  - **Improved Fuel Economy:** In some cases, retarded injection can improve fuel efficiency as the fuel burns closer to the expansion stroke, potentially utilizing more of the energy from the combustion process.
- **Negatives:**
  - **Reduced Power Output:** Delayed injection leaves less time for complete combustion before the expansion stroke, potentially leading to a decrease in power output.
  - **Increased Hydrocarbon Emissions:** If the fuel injection is too late, there might be insufficient time for complete combustion, resulting in higher unburned hydrocarbon emissions in the exhaust.

**(c) Low Compression Pressure:**

Compression pressure is a crucial factor in the efficiency and performance of a four-stroke engine. Here's how low compression pressure affects the engine:

- **Reduced Power Output:** Lower compression pressure reduces the force pushing down on the piston during the power stroke, leading to a significant decrease in engine power output.
- **Increased Fuel Consumption:** Due to the lower efficiency of the combustion process with lower compression, the engine needs to burn more fuel to achieve the same power output, resulting in higher fuel consumption.
- **Incomplete Combustion:** In severe cases of low compression, there might be insufficient pressure and temperature for complete combustion, leading to increased emissions of unburned hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide.

**Finding the Optimal Balance:**

Engine manufacturers carefully design the injection timing and compression ratio to achieve a balance between power, efficiency, and emissions for a specific engine application. While adjustments might be possible in some cases, it's crucial to follow the manufacturer's recommendations to maintain optimal engine performance and avoid potential damage.020

October 2020 MDE

2. (a) Explain why air coolers are fitted after main engine turbo chargers. (6)

(b) Explain the effects of undercooling the charge air on the engine. (4)

## Air Coolers After Turbochargers: Importance and Effects

**(a) Why Air Coolers are Fitted After Turbochargers:**

Air coolers, also known as charge air coolers (CACs), are installed after the turbocharger in diesel engines for a critical reason:

- **Denser Air for More Power:** During compression by the turbocharger, air temperature rises significantly. Denser air contains more oxygen molecules per unit volume. The intercooler cools this hot compressed air before it enters the engine cylinders. This allows for:
  - **Increased Power Output:** Denser, cooler air allows for a larger and more efficient fuel burn, resulting in increased engine power output.
  - **Improved Efficiency:** Denser air promotes more complete combustion, leading to better fuel efficiency.

**(b) Effects of Undercooling the Charge Air:**

If the charge air is not adequately cooled before entering the engine, several negative consequences can occur:

- **Reduced Power Output:** Hotter air entering the cylinders is less dense, containing fewer oxygen molecules. This leads to a leaner air-fuel mixture, resulting in reduced power output compared to what would be achieved with cooler, denser air.

- **Increased Exhaust Gas Temperatures:** With less air for cooling during combustion, the overall temperature within the cylinder rises. This leads to higher exhaust gas temperatures, putting additional stress on engine components.
- **Increased Emissions:** Higher combustion temperatures can promote the formation of nitrogen oxides (NOX) in the exhaust. Undercooled charge air can contribute to exceeding emission regulations.
- **Increased Risk of Detonation:** Detonation, also known as knocking, is a phenomenon of uncontrolled burning within the engine cylinder. Hotter intake air can increase the risk of detonation, leading to potential engine damage.
- **Reduced Engine Life:** The combination of higher temperatures, increased stress on components, and potential detonation can accelerate wear and tear, reducing engine lifespan.

Therefore, proper functioning of the charge air cooler is essential for maintaining optimal engine performance, efficiency, and longevity.

## October 2020 MDE

3. Describe a procedure for manually testing the set points on a diesel generator lubricating oil, low pressure alarm and shut down. (10)

**Important Notes:**

- **Safety First:** Ensure all safety precautions are followed before performing this procedure. Refer to the manufacturer's manual for specific safety instructions related to your generator model.
- **Qualified Personnel:** Ideally, a qualified technician familiar with the generator and its control system should perform this test.
- **Alternatives:** Consult the manufacturer's manual to see if there are alternative methods for testing the set points, such as using diagnostic software or built-in testing functions.

**Procedure:**

1. **Preparation:**
    - **Generator Off and Secured:** Ensure the generator is completely off and disconnected from any electrical load. Lock out or tag out any switches to prevent accidental startup.
    - **Identify Components:** Locate the HT cooling water temperature sensor, the high-temperature alarm indicator (light or buzzer), and the engine shutdown mechanism (usually a relay or contactor). Refer to the generator manual or electrical schematics for guidance.
    - **Tools:** Gather necessary tools, which might include:
        - Reliable thermometer with a range exceeding the expected high-temperature set point.
        - Heat source (optional, for gradual temperature increase).
        - Safety glasses, gloves, and rags.
2. **Temperature Monitoring:**
    - Start the engine and allow it to run for a short period to reach normal operating temperature. Monitor the coolant temperature using the generator's built-in gauge or your separate thermometer at the designated point (refer to the manual).

3. **Alarm Test:**
   **Preferred Method (Gradual Increase):**
   - If feasible, gradually increase the coolant temperature using a controlled heat source (e.g., heat lamp) directed towards the cooling system. This allows for observing the alarm activation at the designated set point.
4. **Alternative Method (Manual Intervention):**
   - If a controlled heat source isn't available, you might carefully simulate a temperature rise by briefly disconnecting the sensor or simulating a high resistance with a resistor (consult a qualified electrician for safe implementation).
   - Monitor the instrument panel or alarm indicator. Once the coolant temperature reaches the alarm set point as specified in the manual, the high-temperature alarm should activate (usually a visual or audible signal).
   - Record the observed temperature at which the alarm activates.
5. **Shutdown Test (Use Caution):**
   - **Important:** Proceed with extreme caution as this test involves stopping the engine. Ensure no critical loads depend on the generator's operation during this test.
   - **Following the method chosen for Alarm Test:**
     - **Gradual Increase:** If using a controlled heat source, continue raising the coolant temperature slightly above the alarm set point. Observe if the engine shuts down automatically as programmed.
     - **Manual Intervention:** If using manual intervention, keep the sensor disconnected or resistance simulated for a very brief period (seconds) just beyond the alarm set point. The engine control system should trigger a shutdown.
   - Record the observed temperature at which the engine shuts down.
6. **System Reset and Verification:**
   - Once the alarm and shutdown functions have been tested, allow the engine to cool down naturally.
   - Reconnect the sensor (if disconnected) or restore normal operation if a resistor was used.
   - Verify that the engine starts and runs normally after the cooling system temperature has returned to a safe range.
7. **Documentation:**
   - Document the observed alarm and shutdown set points during the test and compare them to the manufacturer's specifications.
   - Document any discrepancies or malfunctions for further investigation or repairs.

**Important Reminders:**

- Exercise caution during the test, especially during the shutdown simulation.
- Consider alternative testing methods recommended by the manufacturer if available.
- If unsure about any step, consult a qualified technician for safe and proper execution of the procedure.

October 2020 MDE

4. With reference to scroll type fuel injection pumps:

(a) describe how the delivered quantity of fuel may be varied; (5)

(b) explain the purpose of the delivery valve; (3)

(c) describe how fuel oil is prevented from spraying out if the high pressure pipe fails in service. (2)

## Scroll Type Fuel Injection Pump:

**(a) Varying Delivered Fuel Quantity:**

Unlike jerk-type pumps, scroll type pumps achieve fuel metering through a fundamentally different mechanism. Here's how the delivered fuel quantity is varied:

- **Scroll Design:** The core of the pump is a spiral-shaped scroll housed within a cylindrical body.
- **Inner Rotor:** An eccentrically positioned inner rotor with blades rotates within the scroll.
- **Fuel Chambers:** As the rotor rotates, crescent-shaped cavities are formed between the rotor blades and the scroll wall, acting as fuel chambers.

**Fuel Metering Principle:**

1. **Fuel Intake:** During rotation, the expanding volume of the fuel chambers on the suction side draws fuel in through an inlet port.
2. **Fuel Trapping and Compression:** As the rotor continues to rotate, the scroll's shape progressively reduces the volume of the fuel chambers, trapping and compressing the fuel.
3. **Delivery Valve and Outlet Port:** A delivery valve is located at the outlet of the pump, connected to the high-pressure fuel line.
4. **Fuel Delivery:** When the pressure in a chamber exceeds the delivery valve's opening pressure, the valve opens, allowing the high-pressure fuel to flow through the line to the injector.
5. **Fuel Delivery Control:** The amount of fuel delivered per cycle is primarily determined by the geometry of the scroll and the rotor. However, some designs might incorporate a bypass valve or variable control sleeve to influence the filling and discharge processes, allowing for limited adjustment of the delivered quantity.

**(b) Purpose of the Delivery Valve:**

Similar to jerk-type pumps, the delivery valve in a scroll type pump serves a crucial purpose:

- **Location:** The delivery valve is positioned at the outlet of the pump, separating the high-pressure fuel section from the discharge line.
- **Function:** The valve remains closed by a spring until the pressure within the pump chamber reaches a predetermined level.
- **Operation:** As the trapped fuel gets compressed during rotor rotation, the pressure within the chamber builds up.

- **Opening and Injection:** Once the pressure reaches the set limit, the delivery valve opens, allowing the high-pressure fuel to flow through the line towards the injectors for fuel injection.
- **Safety Function:** The delivery valve acts as a safety mechanism by preventing excessive pressure buildup within the pump and fuel lines that could lead to component damage.
- **Closing and Cycle Repeat:** After fuel injection occurs and the pressure drops below the set point, the delivery valve closes again, and the cycle repeats for the next injection event.

**(c) Preventing Fuel Spray in Case of High-Pressure Pipe Failure:**

Scroll type pumps typically incorporate a safety feature to prevent uncontrolled fuel spraying in case of a high-pressure pipe failure:

- **Overflow Valve or Bypass Port:** Some designs might use an overflow valve or bypass port located within the pump housing.
- **Operation:** In case of a high-pressure pipe rupture, the sudden pressure drop would cause the overflow valve to open or fuel to bypass an internal passage.
- **Fuel Return:** This allows the pressurized fuel to return back to the pump's low-pressure side (suction side) through this overflow or bypass mechanism.
- **Preventing Spray:** By redirecting the fuel back to the low-pressure side, the system prevents uncontrolled spraying of high-pressure fuel, minimizing the risk of fire or injury.

**Additional Notes:**

- Scroll type pumps are generally simpler in design compared to jerk-type pumps.
- Their flow rate is typically less sensitive to variations in engine speed compared to jerk pumps.

However, their fuel metering capabilities might be less precise than those of jerk-type pumps.20

October 2020 MDE

5. (a) Explain what is meant by microbial degradation of a lubricating oil. (4)

(b) State FOUR indications that could be observed if a lubricating oil was suffering from microbial degradation. (4)

(c) Describe TWO actions that should be taken on detecting the early start of microbial degradation of the main engine lubricating oil. (2)

## Microbial Degradation of Lubricating Oil:

**(a) Microbial Degradation:**

Microbial degradation of lubricating oil refers to the process by which microorganisms (bacteria, fungi) break down the components of the oil. These microbes utilize the oil as a food source, and their activity can lead to several negative consequences for the oil's performance and lifespan.

**(b) Indications of Microbial Degradation:**

Here are four indications that could be observed if a lubricating oil is suffering from microbial degradation:

1. **Increased Acidity:** Microbial activity often produces organic acids as byproducts. This can cause the oil's Total Base Number (TBN) to decrease, indicating a decline in its ability to neutralize acids and prevent corrosion.
2. **Increased Viscosity:** Microbial growth can lead to the formation of sludge and biomass within the oil, increasing its viscosity and hindering its ability to flow freely within the engine.
3. **Abnormal Odors:** Some microbes can produce foul-smelling byproducts, leading to a noticeable change in the oil's odor.
4. **Presence of Sediment:** Microbial colonies and debris can accumulate as sediment at the bottom of the oil sump or in oil analysis samples.

**(c) Early Detection Actions:**

If you suspect early microbial degradation in your engine's lubricating oil, two crucial actions should be taken immediately:

1. **Oil Sampling and Analysis:** Collect a fresh oil sample and send it for laboratory analysis. This analysis can confirm the presence of microbes and identify the specific types involved. It can also measure the TBN and viscosity to assess the extent of degradation.
2. **Identify and Address the Root Cause:** Microbial growth typically requires moisture as a catalyst. Investigate potential sources of water ingress into the lubrication system, such as leaks in cooling systems or condensation buildup. Addressing the root cause is essential to prevent further microbial growth.

By taking these steps promptly, you can potentially mitigate the damage caused by microbial activity and extend the lifespan of your engine oil. Early detection and appropriate action can help prevent costly repairs and downtime.

October 2020 MDE

6. (a) Describe, with the aid of a sketch, a keel type cooling water system, labelling the MAIN components. (6)

(b) Explain the purpose of EACH of the following in the cooling system:

(i) header tanks; (3)

(ii) vent lines. (1)

## (a) Keel Cooling System: Components

A keel cooling system is a closed-circuit cooling system for marine engines that utilizes seawater for heat transfer. Here are the main components:

- **Heat Exchanger (Keel Cooler):** This is a key component, typically mounted externally on the hull below the waterline. Engine coolant circulates through tubes or channels within the heat exchanger, transferring heat to the surrounding seawater flowing over the outside.
- **Circulation Pump:** An engine-driven or electrically powered pump is responsible for circulating the coolant through the closed loop within the system.

- **Thermostat:** This valve regulates the coolant temperature by controlling the flow of coolant through the heat exchanger. When the coolant reaches a set temperature, the thermostat opens, allowing coolant to flow through the heat exchanger for cooling.
- **Expansion Tank:** This tank accommodates the volume changes of the coolant due to temperature fluctuations. It also serves as a reservoir for any trapped air within the system.
- **Seawater Inlet and Outlet:** These connections allow seawater to enter the system, flow past the heat exchanger, and exit back into the sea after absorbing heat from the coolant.
- **Shut-Off Valves:** Valves positioned at strategic points in the system allow for isolation of sections for maintenance or repairs.
- **Strainers:** These filters placed on the seawater inlet line prevent debris and marine growth from entering the system and potentially clogging the heat exchanger.

## (b) Purpose of Specific Components:

**(i) Header Tanks:**

- **Function:** There might be one or two header tanks depending on the system design. A header tank acts as a reservoir for the coolant and provides space for coolant expansion due to temperature changes. This expansion space prevents excessive pressure buildup within the closed loop.
- **Additional Functions:** The header tank may also incorporate features like:
  - **Overflow Outlet:** This allows excess coolant to escape the system and prevent overfilling in case of a coolant mix error or expansion beyond the tank's capacity.
  - **Fill Point:** This allows for refilling or topping up the coolant level in the system.
  - **Level Indicator:** This helps visually monitor the coolant level within the system.

**(ii) Vent Lines:**

- **Function:** Vent lines play a crucial role in removing trapped air from the system. Air pockets within the system can impede proper coolant circulation and reduce heat transfer efficiency.
- **Operation:** Vent lines are typically located at high points in the system, such as the top of the header tank or at high points in the piping circuit. These lines allow trapped air to escape the system as the coolant fills the cavities during initial system filling or after topping up the coolant level. They might also be equipped with one-way valves that allow air to escape but prevent seawater ingress.

# October 2020 MDE

7. Describe, with the aid of a sketch, the operation of a centrifugal type lubricating oil filter, labelling the MAIN components. (10)

**Components:**

1. **Oil Inlet:** Port where the dirty lubricating oil enters the filter.
2. **Rotor:** Rotating element within the filter housing.
3. **Vanes:** Blades on the rotor that help impart centrifugal force to the oil.
4. **Filter Housing:** Enclosed chamber containing the rotor and other components.
5. **Clean Oil Outlet:** Port where the filtered lubricating oil exits the filter.
6. **Contaminant Collection Chamber:** Area where separated contaminants accumulate.

7. **Drain Plug:** Allows for removal of collected contaminants during maintenance.

**Operation:**

1. Dirty lubricating oil enters the filter through the **oil inlet (1)**.
2. The oil flows into the **rotor (2)** chamber.
3. The rotor spins at high speed due to an external power source (not shown).
4. As the rotor spins, the oil is subjected to **centrifugal force**. This force pushes denser particles like wear debris and dirt outwards, away from the oil.
5. The **vanes (3)** on the rotor help to further distribute the oil and increase the effect of centrifugal force.
6. The cleaner oil, less dense than the contaminants, remains near the center of the rotor.
7. Clean oil exits the filter through the **clean oil outlet (5)**.
8. Denser contaminants like wear debris and dirt are forced outwards and accumulate in the **contaminant collection chamber (6)**.
9. The **drain plug (7)** allows for periodic removal of collected contaminants for maintenance purposes.

October 2020 MDE

8. (a) Describe the procedure for renewing a bottom end bearing of a diesel engine. (8)

(b) Describe the precautions necessary on initial startup of the engine. (2)

## Renewing a Bottom End Bearing in a Diesel Engine (a):

Renewing a bottom end bearing, which includes the main bearings and crankpin bearings, is a complex and critical procedure on a diesel engine. It's recommended to be performed by a qualified mechanic due to the specialized tools and knowledge required. However, here's a general overview of the process:

1. **Engine Preparation:**
    - Drain engine oil and coolant.
    - Disconnect and remove all necessary components like exhaust manifolds, starter motor, and flywheel.
    - Secure the engine on a suitable stand for safe access to the bottom end.
2. **Crankshaft Removal:**
    - Disconnect the connecting rods from the crankshaft (may involve removing connecting rod bolts or capscrews).
    - Support the crankshaft with a lifting tool and carefully remove it from the engine block.
3. **Bearing Replacement:**
    - Thoroughly clean the bearing surfaces on the crankshaft journal (the smooth round part where the bearing sits) and the bearing housing in the engine block.
    - Remove the old main and crankpin bearings (may involve using specialized tools like bearing scrapers or pullers).
    - Inspect the crankshaft journals and bearing housings for any wear, cracks, or damage. If excessive wear is found, further repairs or crankshaft replacement might be necessary.

- Install new bearings of the appropriate size and type (consult engine manual for specifications). Some bearings might require slight fitting or adjustments.

4. **Crankshaft Reinstallation:**
   - Carefully place the crankshaft back into the engine block, ensuring proper alignment.
   - Reattach connecting rods to the crankshaft with new connecting rod bolts (following proper tightening sequence and torque specifications).
5. **Assembly and Reinstallation:**
   - Reinstall all previously removed components like flywheel, starter motor, and exhaust manifolds.
   - Replace engine oil filter and refill the engine with fresh, recommended oil.
   - Refill the coolant system and bleed any trapped air.
6. **Post-Repair Checks:**
   - Perform a thorough visual inspection for any leaks or loose connections.
   - Manually rotate the crankshaft to ensure smooth operation and proper bearing clearances (consult manual for specifications).

**(b) Precautions on Initial Startup:**

- **Double-Check Everything:** Before starting the engine, meticulously re-check all connections, bolts, and fluid levels to ensure everything is secure and properly filled.
- **Prime the Oil System:** Manually crank the engine (with spark plugs or injectors disabled) to allow the oil pump to circulate oil and prime the lubrication system.
- **Initial Start-up:** Start the engine for a short period and monitor for any abnormal noises, leaks, or vibrations.
- **Oil Pressure Check:** Verify proper engine oil pressure according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- **Gradual Break-in:** After initial checks, follow a break-in procedure as recommended by the engine manufacturer. This might involve running the engine at varied loads for a specific period to allow the new bearings to properly seat.

**Important Note:**

This is a simplified overview, and the specific procedure can vary depending on the engine model and manufacturer. Always refer to the engine's official service manual for detailed instructions, torque specifications, and safety precautions. It's crucial to have the proper tools, knowledge, and experience for such a critical task.02020

October 2020 MDE

9. Sketch a fluid coupling, suitable for connecting an engine to a gearbox, labelling the main components. (10)

# Fluid Coupling for Engine-Gearbox Connection:

A fluid coupling is a hydrodynamic device that transmits rotational power from an engine to a gearbox using the movement of a fluid. It acts like a clutch but relies on fluid motion instead of friction for power transfer. Here's a breakdown of the main components and how it works:

**Components:**

1. **Housing:** A sealed, oil-tight housing made of metal that encloses all the other components.
2. **Impeller (Pump):** A fan-like blade connected to the engine crankshaft. The impeller rotates with the engine, churning the fluid within the housing.
3. **Turbine (Runner):** Another fan-like blade connected to the gearbox input shaft. The turbine is positioned close to the impeller but does not touch it directly.
4. **Transmission Fluid:** Usually engine oil or specifically formulated fluid coupling oil fills the housing.

**Operation:**

1. **Engine Rotation:** As the engine runs, the impeller blade spins rapidly due to its connection to the crankshaft.
2. **Fluid Movement:** The rotating impeller creates a centrifugal force, pushing the transmission fluid outwards.
3. **Energy Transfer:** The moving fluid strikes the turbine blades, transferring kinetic energy from the impeller to the turbine.
4. **Gearbox Input:** The energy absorbed by the turbine causes it to rotate, driving the gearbox input shaft.

**Key Points:**

- **Non-Positive Drive:** Unlike a mechanical clutch, a fluid coupling does not create a rigid connection between the engine and gearbox. There is a slight amount of slip between the impeller and turbine, resulting in some power loss.
- **Smooth Engagement:** This "slip" allows for smoother engagement between the engine and gearbox, reducing jerking and minimizing drivetrain stress during gear changes.
- **Torque Multiplication (Optional):** In some designs, the turbine blades might be curved in a way that provides a slight torque multiplication effect at lower engine speeds, aiding with smoother initial acceleration.

**Benefits:**

- **Reduced Drivetrain Wear:** Smoother engagement protects the gearbox and drivetrain components from wear and tear during gear changes.
- **Protects Engine:** The fluid coupling can help dampen torsional vibrations from the engine, reducing stress on the engine crankshaft and drivetrain.
- **Simple Design:** The design is relatively simple and requires minimal maintenance compared to a conventional clutch.

**Limitations:**

- **Power Loss:** As mentioned earlier, the fluid coupling experiences some power loss due to the inherent slip between the impeller and turbine.
- **Less Control (Drag Racing):** The lack of a positive drive makes fluid couplings less suitable for applications requiring precise engine-to-wheel power transfer, such as drag racing.

Fluid couplings are commonly used in various applications where smooth power transmission and protection of the drivetrain are crucial. This includes:

- **Heavy construction equipment:** Large excavators, cranes, and other heavy machinery often utilize fluid couplings for their smooth operation and drivetrain protection.
- **Locomotives:** Some diesel locomotives might employ fluid couplings between the engine and traction motors for smoother starts and reduced wear on the drivetrain.
- **Marine applications:** In some marine gearboxes, a fluid coupling might be used to dampen vibrations and provide a smoother power transfer from the engine to the propeller shaft.

October 2020 MDE

10. With reference to main reduction gearing:

(a) explain why lubricating oil should be supplied before the gearing rotates; (4)

(b) state the condition monitoring techniques that may be employed to assess the condition of the gearing. (6)

## Main Reduction Gearing Lubrication and Condition Monitoring:

**(a) Importance of Pre-Lubrication:**

Supplying lubricating oil to the main reduction gearing before rotation is crucial for several reasons:

- **Minimizing Friction and Wear:** During initial startup, the metal surfaces of gears and bearings are in close contact. Without a lubricating oil film separating these surfaces, significant friction and wear can occur. Pre-lubrication ensures a protective oil film is present from the start, minimizing friction and wear during this critical period.
- **Improved Gear Mesh:** Oil acts as a slight wedge between gear teeth, promoting a more even load distribution and smoother gear mesh. Pre-lubrication ensures this oil film is present, allowing for smoother engagement and reduced gear tooth wear during the initial rotation.
- **Heat Transfer:** Gear operation generates heat due to friction. The lubricating oil plays a vital role in absorbing heat from the gears and bearings and transferring it to other components like the oil cooler (if present). Pre-lubrication ensures the oil is circulating and ready to effectively remove heat from the start, preventing overheating of the gears.
- **Protection from Corrosion:** Lubricating oil can also provide a layer of protection against corrosion on gear and bearing surfaces. Pre-lubrication ensures this protective layer is present before moisture or contaminants can come into contact with the metal surfaces.

In summary, pre-lubrication helps ensure smooth operation, minimizes wear, prevents overheating, and protects against corrosion during critical startup and initial rotation of the main reduction gearing.

**(b) Condition Monitoring Techniques for Reduction Gearing:**

Several condition monitoring techniques can be employed to assess the health and potential problems within the main reduction gearing:

- **Oil Analysis:** Regular oil analysis involves extracting a sample of lubricating oil and analyzing it for properties like viscosity, presence of wear debris (metal particles), and water contamination. Changes in these properties can indicate potential issues like gear wear, bearing wear, or water ingress into the system.

- **Vibration Analysis:** Monitoring vibrations of the reduction gearing using vibration sensors can reveal imbalances, misalignment, or gear tooth defects. By analyzing the frequency and amplitude of vibrations, potential problems can be identified before they cause major failures.
- **Temperature Monitoring:** Monitoring the operating temperature of the reduction gearing can indicate potential issues like overloading, lubrication problems, or excessive wear.
- **Ultrasonic Inspection:** In some cases, ultrasonic inspection techniques can be used to detect internal cracks or defects in gear teeth or bearings. This non-destructive testing method can help identify potential problems before they escalate.
- **Borescope Inspection:** A borescope, a small camera inserted into the gearbox, can be used to visually inspect gear teeth and bearings for signs of wear, pitting, or damage. This can be helpful in identifying specific problems within the gearing.

By implementing a combination of these condition monitoring techniques, engineers can gain valuable insights into the health of the main reduction gearing. This proactive approach allows for early detection of potential problems, enabling timely maintenance actions to be taken and preventing costly breakdowns.