

METHODS OF SAMPLING AND TESTING
MT 102-07
METHOD OF DETERMINING AIR CONTENT OF
FRESHLY MIXED CONCRETE BY THE PRESSURE METHOD
(Modified AASHTO T152)

1 Scope:

- 1.1** This method covers determination of the air content of freshly mixed concrete from observation of the change in volume of concrete with a change in pressure.
- 1.2** This method is intended for use with concretes and mortars made with relatively dense aggregates for which the aggregate correction factor can be satisfactorily determined by the technique described in Section 5. It is not applicable to concretes made with lightweight aggregates, air-cooled blast-furnace slag, or aggregates of high porosity. In these cases, AASHTO T 196M/T 196 should be used. This test method is not applicable to nonplastic concrete such as is commonly used in the manufacture of pipe and concrete masonry units.
- 1.3** The text of this standard references notes and footnotes that provide explanatory information. These notes and footnotes (excluding those in tables and figures shall not be considered as requirements for this standard.
- 1.4** The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as the standard.

2 Reference Document:**2.1 AASHTO:**

T 121 Mass per Cubic Meter (Cubic Foot), Yield, and Air Content (Gravimetric) of Concrete
 T 141, Sampling Freshly Mixed Concrete
 T 152 Air Content of Freshly Mixed Concrete by the Pressure Method
 R 39 – making and Curing Concrete Test Specimens in the Laboratory

MT Materials Manual:

MT-105 Sampling Freshly Mixed Concrete

3 Significance and Use:

- 3.1** This test method covers the determination of the air content of freshly mixed concrete. The test determines the air content of freshly mixed concrete exclusive of any air that exists inside the voids within aggregate particles. For this reason, it is applicable to concrete made with relatively dense aggregate particles and requires determination of the aggregate correction factor. (See Sections 6.1 and 91.).
- 3.2** Thus test method and T 121M/T 121 and T 196M/T 196 provide pressure, gravimetric, and volumetric procedures, respectively, for determining the air content of freshly mixed concrete. The pressure method of this test method gives substantially the same air content as the other two test methods for concrete made with dense aggregates.
- 3.3** The air content of hardened concrete may be either higher or lower than that determined by this test method. This depends upon the methods and amount of consolidation effort applied to the concrete from which the hardened concrete specimen is taken; uniformity and stability of the air bubbles in the fresh and hardened concrete; accuracy of the microscopic examination, if used, time of comparison; environmental exposure; stage in the delivery, placement, and consolidation processes at which the air determined, that is, before or after the concrete goes through a pump; and other factors.

4 Apparatus:

4.1 *Air Meter* - There are two basic operational designs available employing the principle of Boyle's law. For purposes of reference, these will be designated Type A Meter and Type B Meter.

4.1.1 *Type A Meter* - An air meter consisting of a measuring bowl and cover assembly (Figure 1) conforming to the requirements of Sections 4.2 and 4.3. The operational principle of this meter consists of introducing water to a predetermined height above a sample of concrete of known volume, and the application of a predetermined air pressure over the water. The determination consists of the reduction in volume of the air in the concrete sample by observing the amount the water level is lowered under the applied pressure, the latter amount being calibrated in terms of percent of air in the concrete sample.

4.1.2 *Type B Meter* - An air meter consisting of a measuring bowl and cover assembly (Figure 2) conforming to the requirements of Section 4.2 and 4.3. The operational principle of this meter consists of equalizing a known volume of air at a known pressure in a sealed air chamber with the unknown volume of air in the concrete sample, the dial on the pressure gage being calibrated in terms of percent air for the observed pressure at which equalization takes place. Working pressures of 7.5 to 30.0 psi (51 to 207 kPa) having been used satisfactorily.

4.2 *Measuring Bowl* - The measuring bowl must be essentially cylindrical in shape, made of steel, hard metal, or other hard material not readily attacked by the cement paste, having a minimum diameter equal to 0.75 to 1.25 times the height, and a capacity of at least 0.20 ft³ (0.006 m³). It must be flanged or otherwise constructed to provide for a pressure tight fit between bowl and cover assembly. The interior surfaces of the bowl and surfaces of rims, flanges and other component fitted parts must be machined smooth. The measuring bowl and cover assembly must be sufficiently rigid to limit the expansion factor, D , of the apparatus assembly (Annex A1.5) to not more than 0.1 percent of air content on the indicator scale when under normal operating pressure.

4.3 *Cover Assembly:*

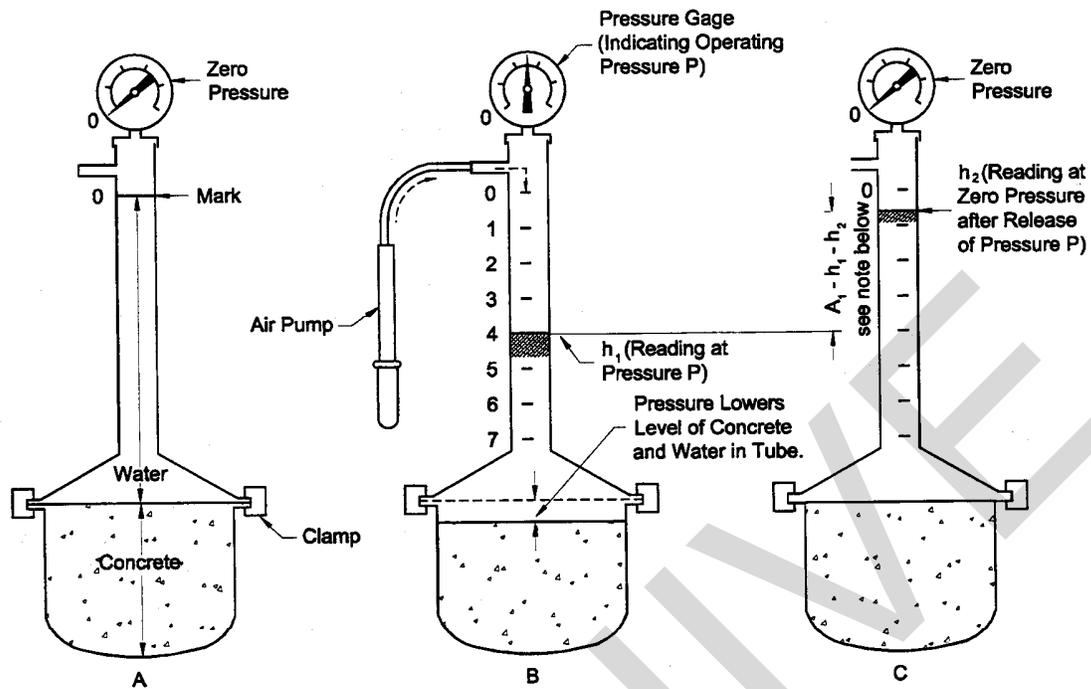
4.3.1 The cover assembly shall be made of steel or other hard metal not readily attacked by the cement paste. It must be flanged or otherwise constructed to provide for a pressure-tight fit between bowl and cover assembly and must have machined smooth interior surfaces contoured to provide an air space above the level of the top of the measuring bowl. The cover must be sufficiently rigid to limit the expansion factor of the apparatus assembly as prescribed in 4.2.

4.3.2 The cover assembly must be fitted with a means for direct reading of the air content. The cover for the Type A meter must be fitted with a standpipe, which may be a transparent graduated tube or may be a metal tube of uniform bore with a glass water gage attached. In the Type B meter, the dial of the pressure gage must be calibrated to indicate the percent of air. Graduations shall be provided for a range in air content of at least 8 percent easily readable to 0.1 percent as determined by the proper air pressure calibration test.

4.3.3 The cover assembly shall be fitted with air valves, air bleeder valves, and petcocks for bleeding off or through which water may be introduced as necessary for the particular meter design. Suitable means for clamping the cover to the bowl shall be provided to make a pressure-tight seal without entrapping air at the joint between the flanges of the cover and bowl. A suitable hand pump shall be provided with the cover either as an attachment or as an accessory.

4.4 *Calibration Vessel* - A measure having an internal volume equal to a percent of the volume of the measuring bowl corresponding to the approximate percent of air in the concrete to be tested; or, if smaller, it shall be possible to check calibration of the meter indicator at the approximate percent of air in the concrete to be tested by repeated filling of the measure. When the design of the meter requires placing the calibration vessel within the measuring bowl to check calibration, the measure shall be cylindrical in shape and of an inside depth 1/2 in. (13 mm) less than that of the bowl.

4 Apparatus: (continued)



Note: $A_1 = h_1 - h_2$ when bowl contains concrete as shown in this figure; when bowl contains only aggregate and water, $h_1 - h_2 = G$ (aggregate correction factor.)
 $A_1 - G = A$ (entrained air content of concrete).

Figure 1—Illustration of the Pressure Method for Air Content—Type A Meter

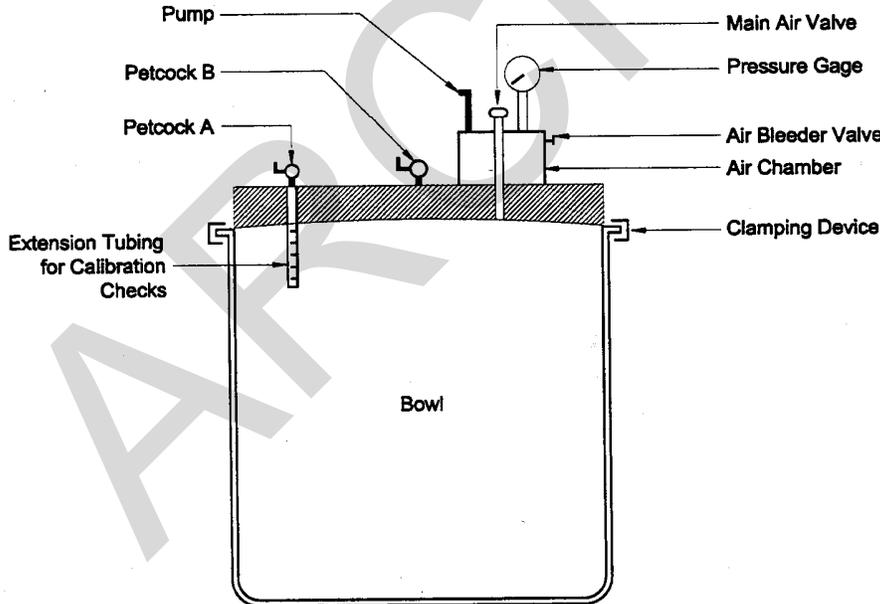


Figure 2—Schematic Diagram—Type B Meter

Note 1: A satisfactory measure of this type may be machined from No. 16 gage brass tubing, of a diameter to provide the volume desired, to which a brass disk 1/2 in. in thickness is soldered to form an end. When design of the meter requires withdrawing of water from the water-filled bowl

4 Apparatus: (continued)

~~and cover assembly to check calibration, the measure may be an integral part of the cover assembly or may be a separate cylindrical measure similar to the above described cylinder.~~

- 4.5** The designs of various available types of airmeters are such that they differ in operating techniques and therefore, all of the items described in 4.6 through 4.16 may not be required. The items required shall be those necessary for use with the particular design of apparatus used to satisfactorily determine air content in accordance with the procedures prescribed herein.
- 4.6** *Coil Spring or Other Device for Holding Calibration Cylinder in Place:*
- 4.7** *Spray Tube* - A brass tube of appropriate diameter, which may be an integral part of the cover assembly or which may be provided separately. It must be so constructed that when water is added to the container, it is sprayed to the walls of the cover in such a manner as to flow down the sides causing a minimum of disturbance to the concrete.
- 4.8** *Trowel* - A standard brick mason's trowel.
- 4.9** *Tamping Rod* - The tamping rod shall be a round, straight steel rod 5/8 in. (16 mm) in diameter and not less than 16 (400 mm) in length, having the tamping end rounded to a hemispherical tip the diameter of which is 5/8 in. (16 mm).
- 4.10** *Mallet* - A mallet (with a rubber or rawhide head) weighing approximately 1.25 ± 0.50 lb. (0.57 ± 0.23 kg) for use with measures of 0.5 ft.³ (14 L) or smaller, and a mallet weighing approximately 2.25 ± 0.50 lb. (1.02 ± 0.23 kg) for use with measures larger than 0.5 ft.³ (14 L).
- 4.11** *Strike-Off Bar* - A flat straight bar of steel or other suitable metal at least 1/8 in. (3 mm) thick and 3/4 in. (20 mm) wide by 12 in. (300 mm) long.
- 4.12** *Strike-Off Plate* - A flat rectangular metal plate at least 1/4 inch (6 mm) or a glass or acrylic plate at least 1/2 inch (12 mm) thick with a length and width at least 2 inches (50 mm) greater than the diameter of the measure with which it is to be used. The edges of the plate shall be straight and smooth within a tolerance of 1/16 inch (1.5 mm).
- 3.13** *Funnel* - with the spout fitting into spray tube.
- 4.14** *Measure of Water* - having the necessary capacity to fill the indicator with water from the top of the concrete to the zero mark.
- 4.15** *Vibrator* - as described in AASHTO R 39.1
- 4.16** *Sieves* - 1 1/2 inch (37.5 mm) with not less than 2 ft² (0.19 m²) of sieving area.

5 Calibration of Apparatus:

- 5.1** Make calibration tests in accordance with procedures described in the annex. Rough handling will affect calibration of both Type A and B meters. Changes in barometric pressure will affect the calibration of Type A meter but not Type B meter. The steps described in section A1.2 to A1.6, as applicable to the meter type under consideration, are prerequisites for the final calibration test to determine the operating pressure, P , on the pressure gauge of the Type A meter as described in Section A1.7, or to determine the accuracy of the graduations indicating air content on the dial face of the pressure gauge of the Type B meter. Normally, the steps in Sections A1.2 to A1.6 need be made only once (at time of initial calibration), or only occasionally to check volume constancy of the calibration cylinder and measuring bowl. On the other hand, the calibration test described in Section A1.7 to A1.9, as applicable to the meter type being checked, must be made as frequently as necessary to ensure that the proper gauge pressure, P , is being used for the Type A meter or that the correct air contents are being indicated on the pressure gauge air

5 Calibration of Apparatus: (continued)

content scale for the Type B meter. A change in elevation of more than 600 ft (183 m) from the location at which a Type A meter was last calibrated will require recalibration in accordance with Section A1.7.

6 Determination of Aggregate Correction Factor:

6.1 Procedure – Determine the aggregate correction factor on a combined sample of fine and coarse aggregate as directed in sections 6.2 to 6.4. It is determined independently by applying the calibrated pressure to a sample of inundated fine and coarse aggregate in approximately the same moisture condition, amount, and proportions occurring in the concrete sample under test.

6.2 Aggregate Sample Size – Calculate the weights of fine and coarse aggregate present in the sample of fresh concrete whose air content is to be determined, as follows:

$$F_s = (S/B) \times F_b$$

$$C_s = (S/B) \times C_b$$

where:

F_s = weight of fine aggregate in concrete sample under test, lb (kg);

S = volume of concrete sample (same as volume of measuring bowl), ft³ (m³);

B = volume of concrete produced per batch (Note 2), ft³ (m³);

F_b = total weight of fine aggregate in the moisture condition used in batch, lb (kg);

C_s = weight of coarse aggregate in concrete sample under test, lb (kg), and

C_b = total weight of coarse aggregate in the moisture condition used in batch, lb (kg).

Note 2 – The volume of concrete produced per batch can be determined in accordance with applicable provisions of T 121M/T 121.

Note 3 – The term “weight” is temporarily used in this standard because of established trade usage. The word is used to mean both “force” and “mass” and care must be taken to determine which is meant in each case (SI unit for force = Newton and for mass = kilogram).

6.3 Placement of Aggregate in Measuring Bowl – Mix representative samples of fine aggregate F_s , and coarse aggregate C_s , and place in the measuring bowl filled one-third full with water. Place the mixed aggregate, a small amount at a time, into the measuring bowl; if necessary, add additional water so as to inundate all of the aggregate. Add each scoopful in a manner that will entrap as little air as possible and remove accumulations of foam promptly. Tap the sides of the bowl and lightly rod the upper 1 in. (25 mm) of the aggregate about 8 – 12 times. Stir after each addition of aggregate to eliminate entrapped air.

6.4 Aggregate Correction Factor Determination:

6.4.1 Initial procedure for Types A and B Meters – When all of the aggregate has been placed in the measuring bowl, remove excess foam and keep the aggregate inundated for a period of time approximately equal to the time between introduction of the water into the mixer and the time of performing the test for air content before proceeding with the determination as directed in section 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

6 Determination of Aggregate Correction Factor: (continued)

- 6.4.2** *Type A Meter* – Complete the test as described in Sections 8.2.1 and 8.2.2. The aggregate correction factor, G , is equal to $h_1 - h_2$. (Figure 1) (Note 4)
- 6.4.3** *Type B Meter* – Perform the procedures as described in section 8.3.1. Remove a volume of water from the assembled and filled apparatus approximately equivalent to the volume of air that would be contained in a typical concrete sample of a size equal to the volume of the bowl. Remove the water in the manner described in Section A1.9 of the Annex for the calibration tests. Complete the test as described in Section 8.3.2. The aggregate correction factor, G , is equal to the reading on the air-content scale minus the volume of water removed from the bowl expressed as a percent of the volume of the bowl. (Figure 2)

Note 4 – The aggregate correction factor will vary with different aggregates. It can be determined only by test, since apparently it is not directly related to absorption of the particles. The test can be easily made and must not be ignored. Ordinarily the factor will remain reasonably constant for given aggregates, but an occasional check test is recommended.

7 Preparation of Concrete Test Sample:

- 7.1** Obtain the sample of freshly mixed concrete in accordance with applicable procedures of Method MT-105/T 141. If the concrete contains coarse aggregate particles that would be retained on a 2 inch (50 mm) sieve, wet-sieve a sufficient amount of the representative sample over a 1 1/2 inch (37.5 mm) sieve, as described in Mt-105/T 141 to yield more than enough material to fill the measuring bowl of the size selected for use. Carry out the wet-sieving operation with the minimum practical disturbance of the mortar. Make no attempt to wipe adhering mortar from coarse aggregate particles retained on the sieve.

8.1 Placement and Consolidation of Sample:

- 8.1.1** Dampen the interior of the measuring bowl and place it on a flat, level, firm surface. Place a representative sample of the concrete, prepared as described in Section 7, in the measuring bowl in equal layers. Consolidate each layer by the rodding procedure (Section 8.1.2) or by vibration (Section 8.1.3). Strike off the final consolidated layer (8.1.4). Rod concretes with a slump greater than 3 inches (75 mm). Rod or vibrate concrete with a slump of 1 to 3 inches (25 to 75 mm). Consolidate concretes with a slump of less than 1 inch (25 mm) by vibration.
- 8.1.2** *Rodding* - Place the concrete in the measuring bowl in three layers of approximately equal volume. Consolidate each layer of concrete by 25 strokes of the tamping rod evenly distributed over the cross section. After each layer is rodded, tap the sides of the measure smartly 10 to 15 times with the mallet to close any voids left by the tamping rod and to release any large bubbles of air that may have been trapped. Rod the bottom layer throughout its depth, but the rod shall not forcibly strike the bottom of the measure. In rodding the second and final layers, use only enough force to cause the rod to penetrate the surface of the previous layer about 1 in. (25 mm). Add the final layer of concrete in a manner to avoid excessive overfilling (8.1.4).
- 8.1.3** *Vibration* – Place the concrete in the measuring bowl in two layers of approximately equal volume. Place all the concrete for each layer before starting vibration of that layer. Consolidate each layer by three insertions of the vibrator evenly distributed over the cross section. Add the final layer in a manner to avoid excessive overfilling (Section 8.1.4). In consolidating each layer, do not allow the vibrator to rest on or touch the measuring bowl. Take care in withdrawing the vibrator to ensure that no air pockets are left in the specimen. Observe a standard duration of vibration for the particular kind of concrete, vibrator, and measuring bowl involved. The duration of vibration required will depend upon the workability of the concrete and the effectiveness of the vibrator.

8.1 Placement and Consolidation of Sample: (continued)

Continue vibration only long enough to achieve proper consolidation of the concrete. Never continue vibration long enough to cause escape of froth from the sample.

Note 5 – Over vibration may cause segregation and loss of intentionally entrained air. Usually, sufficient vibration has been applied as soon as the surface of the concrete becomes relatively smooth and has a glazed appearance.

8.1.4 *Strike-Off* - After consolidation of the concrete, strike off the top surface by sliding the strike-off bar across the top flange or rim of the measuring bowl with a sawing motion until the bowl is just level full. On completion of consolidation, the bowl must not contain a great excess or deficiency of concrete. Removal of approximately 1/8 in. (3 mm) during strike off is optimum. When a strike-off plate is used, strike off concrete as prescribed in T121M/T 121.

Note 6 - A small quantity of representative concrete may be added to correct a deficiency. If the measure contains a great excess, remove a representative portion of concrete with a trowel or scoop before the measure is struck off.

Note 7 – *The use of the strike-off plate on cast aluminum or other relatively soft metal air meter bases may cause rapid wear of the rim*

8.1 Placement and Consolidation of Sample: (continued)

8.1.5 *Application of Test Method* – Any portion of the test method not specifically designated as pertaining to Type A or Type B meters shall apply to both types.

8.2 Procedure - Type A Meter:

8.2.1 *Preparation for Test* - Thoroughly clean the flanges or rims of the bowl and of the cover assembly so that when the cover is clamped in place a pressure-tight seal will be obtained. Assemble the apparatus and add water over the concrete by means of the tube until it rises about the halfway mark in the standpipe. Incline the apparatus assembly about 30 degrees from vertical and, using the bottom of the bowl as a pivot, describe several complete circles with the upper end of the column, simultaneously tapping the cover lightly to remove any entrapped air bubbles above the concrete sample. Return the apparatus assembly to a vertical position and fill the water column slightly above the zero mark, while lightly tapping the sides of the bowl. Bring the water level to the zero mark of the graduated tube before closing the vent at the top of the water column. (Figure 1A)

Note 8 – Some Type A meters have a calibrated starting fill mark above the zero mark. Generally, this starting mark should not be used since, as noted in Section 8.2.3, the apparent air content is the difference between the water level H , at pressure P and the water level h_2 at zero pressure after release of pressure P .

8.2.2 The internal surface of the cover assembly should be kept clean and free from oil or grease; the surface should be wet to prevent adherence of air bubbles that might be difficult to dislodge after assembly of the apparatus.

8.2.3 *Test Procedure* - Apply slightly more than the desired test pressure, P , (about 0.2 psi (1,380 kPa more) to the concrete by means of the small hand pump. To relieve local restraints, tap the sides of the measure sharply and, when the pressure gage indicates the exact test pressure, P , as determined in accordance with Section A1.7., read the water level, h_1 , and record to the nearest division or half-division on the graduated precision-bore tube or gage glass of the standpipe. (Figure 1B) For extremely harsh mixes it may be necessary to tap the bowl vigorously until further tapping produces no change in the indicated air content. Gradually release the air pressure through the vent at the top of the water column and tap the sides of the bowl lightly for about one

8.2 Procedure - Type A Meter: (continued)

minute. Record the water level, h_2 to the nearest division or half division. (Figure 1C) Calculate the apparent air content as follows:

$$A_1 = h_1 - h_2$$

where:

A_1 = apparent air content;

h_1 = water level reading at pressure, P ; and

h_2 = water level reading at zero pressure after release of Pressure, P .

8.2.4 *Check Test* - Repeat the steps described in 8.2.3 without adding water to reestablish the water level at the zero mark. The two consecutive determinations of apparent air content should check within 0.2 percent of air and shall be averaged to give the value A_1 to be used in calculating the air content, A_s , in accordance with Section 9.

8.2.5 In the event the air content exceeds the range of the meter when it is operated at the normal test pressure, P , reduce the test pressure to the alternative test pressure P_1 and repeat the steps outlined in Sections 8.2.2 and 8.2.3.

Note 9 – See Section A1.7 for exact calibration procedures. An approximate value of the alternative pressure, P_1 , such that the apparent air content will equal twice the meter reading can be computed from the following relationship:

$$P_1 = P_a P / (2P_a + P)$$

Where:

P_1 = alternative test pressure, psi (kPa);

P_a = atmospheric pressure, psi (kPa)(approximately 14.7 psi (101kPa) but will vary with altitude and weather conditions); and

P = normal test or operating pressure, psi (kPa).

8.3 Procedure - Type B Meter:

8.3.1 *Preparation for Test* - Thoroughly clean the flanges or rims of the bowl and the cover assembly so that when the cover is clamped in place a pressure tight seal will be obtained. Assemble the apparatus. Close the air valve between the air chamber and measuring bowl and open both petcocks on the holes through the cover. Using a rubber syringe, inject water through one petcock until water emerges from the opposite petcock. Jar the meter gently until all air is expelled from the same petcock.

8.3.2 *Test Procedure* - Close the air bleeder valve on the chamber and pump air into the air chamber until the gage hand is on the initial pressure line. Allow a few seconds for the compressed air to cool to normal temperature. Stabilize the gage hand at the initial pressure line by pumping or bleeding-off air as necessary, tapping the gage lightly by hand. Close both petcocks on the holes through the cover. Open the air valve between the air chamber and the measuring bowl. Tap the side of the measuring bowl smartly with the mallet to relieve local restraints. Lightly tap the pressure gage by hand to stabilize the gage hand and read the percentage of air on the dial of the pressure gage. Failure to close the main valve before releasing the pressure from either the container or the air chamber will result in water being drawn into the air chamber, thus introducing error in subsequent measurements. In the event water enters the air chamber, it must be bled

8.3 Procedure - Type B Meter: (continued)

from the air chamber through the bleeder valve followed by strokes of the pump to blow out the last traces of water. Release the pressure by opening both petcocks (Figure 2) before removing the cover.

9 Calculation:

9.1 *Air Content of Sample Tested* – Calculate the air content of the concrete in the measuring bowl as follows:

$$A_s = A_1 - G$$

where:

A_s = air content of sample tested, percent;

A_1 = apparent air content of the sample tested, percent (Section 8.2.3 and 8.3.2); and

G = aggregate correction factor, percent (Section 6).

9.2 *Air Content of Full Mixture* – When the sample tested represents that portion of the mixture that is obtained by wet-sieving to remove aggregate particles larger than a 1 ½ inch (37.5 mm) sieve, the air content may be calculated as follows:

$$A_t = 100A_sV_c / (100V_t - A_sV_c)$$

where (Note 10):

A_t = air content of the full mixture, percent;

V_c = absolute volume of the ingredients of the mixture passing 1 ½ inch (37.5 mm) sieve, airfree, as determined from the original batch weights, ft³ (m³);

V_t = absolute volume of all the ingredients of the mixture, airfree, ft³ (m³); and

V_c = absolute volume of the aggregate in the mixture coarser than a 1 ½ inch (37.5 mm) sieve, as determined from the original batch weights, ft³ (m³).

9.3 *Air content of the Mortar Fraction* - When it is desired to know the air content of the mortar fraction of the mixture, calculate it as follows;

$$A_m = 100A_sV_c / [100V_m + A_s(V_c - V_m)]$$

where (Note 10):

A_m = air content of the mortar fraction, percent; and

V_m = absolute volume of the ingredients of the mortar fraction of the mixture, airfree, ft³ (m³).

Note 10 – The values for use in Equations in Sections 9.2 and 9.3 are most conveniently obtained from data on the concrete mixture tabulated as follows for a batch of any size:

	Absolute Volume, ft ³ (m ³)
9 Cement _____	
Calculation: (continued)	

Water	_____	} V_m } V_c
Fine Aggregate	_____	
Coarse Aggregate	_____	
No. 4 (4.75 mm) to 1 ½ in. (37.5 mm)	_____	
Coarse aggregate 1 ½ in. (37.5 mm)	_____	
Total	_____	

ANNEX:**A1 Calibration of the Apparatus:**

- A1.1** The calibration tests shall be performed in accordance with the following procedures as applicable to the meter type being employed.
- A1.2** *Calibration of the Calibration Vessel* – Determine accurately the weight of water required to fill the calibration vessel w , using a scale accurate to 0.1 percent of the weight of the vessel filled with water. This step shall be performed for Types A and B meters.
- A1.3** *Calibration of the Measuring Bowl* – Determine the weight of water required to fill the measuring bowl, W , using a scale accurate to 0.1 percent of the weight of the bowl filled with water. Slide a glass plate carefully over the flange of the bowl in a manner to ensure that the bowl is completely filled with water. A thin film of grease smeared on the flange of the bowl will make a watertight joint between the glass plate and the top of the bowl. This step shall be performed for Types A and B meters.
- A1.4** *Effective Volume of the Calibration Vessel, R* – The constant R , represents the effective volume of the calibration vessel expressed as a percentage of the volume of the measuring bowl.
- A1.4.1** For Type A meters, calculate the R as follows (Note A1):

$$R = 0.98 w/W \quad (A1.1)$$

where:

w = weight of water required to fill the calibration vessel, and

W = weight of water required to fill the measuring bowl.

Note A1 – The factor 0.98 is used to correct for the reduction in the volume of air in the calibration vessel when it is compressed by a depth of water equal to the depth of the measuring bowl. This factor is approximately 0.98 for an 8-in. (203 mm) deep measuring bowl at sea level. Its value decreases to approximately 0.975 at 5000 ft (1524 m) above sea level and 0.970 at 13000ft (3962 m) above sea level. The value of this constant will decrease by about 0.01 for each 4-in. (102 mm) increase in bowl depth. The depth of the measuring bowl and atmospheric pressure do not affect the effective volume of the measuring vessel for Type B meters.

- A1.4.2** For Type B meters, Calculate R as follows (Note A1):

$$R = w/W \quad (A1.2)$$

- A1.5** *Determination of, or Check of, Allowance for Expansion Factor, D :*

A1 Calibration of the Apparatus: (continued)

A1.5.1 For meter assemblies of Type A, determine the expansion factor, D (Note A2) by filling the apparatus with water only (making certain that all entrapped air has been removed and the water level is exactly on the zero mark (Note A3) and applying air pressure approximately equal to the operating pressure, P , determined by the calibration test described in Section A1.7. The amount the water column lowers will be the equivalent expansion factor, D , for that particular apparatus and pressure (Note A5).

Note A2 – Although the bowl, cover, and clamping mechanism of the apparatus must of necessity be sturdily constructed so that it will be pressure-tight, the application of internal pressure will result in a small increase in the volume. This expansion will not affect the test results because, with the procedure described in Sections 6 and 8, the amount of expansion is the same for the test for air in concrete as for the test for aggregate correction factor on combined fine and coarse aggregates, and is thereby automatically cancelled. However, it does enter into the calibration test to determine the air pressure to be used in testing fresh concrete.

Note A3 – The water columns on some meters of Type A design are marked with an initial water level and a zero mark, the difference between the two marks being the allowance for the expansion factor. This allowance should be checked in the same manner as for meters not so marked and in such a case, the expansion factor should be omitted in computing the calibration readings in Section A1.7.

Note A4 – It will be sufficiently accurate for this purpose to use an approximate value for P determined by making a preliminary calibration test as described in Section A1.7 except that an approximate value for the calibration factor, K , should be used. For this test $K = 0.98R$ which is the same as Equation A1.2 except that the expansion reading, D , as yet unknown, is assumed to be zero.

A1.5 For meters of Type B design, the allowance for the expansion factor, D , is included in the difference between the initial pressure indicated on the pressure gauge and the zero percent mark on the air-content scale on the pressure gauge. This allowance shall be checked by filling the apparatus with water (making certain that all entrapped air has been removed), pumping air into the air chamber until the gauge hand is stabilized at the indicated initial pressure line, and then releasing the air to the measuring bowl (Note A5). If the initial pressure line is correctly positioned, the gauge should read zero percent. The initial pressure line shall be adjusted if two or more determinations show the same variation from zero percent and the test repeated to check the adjusted initial pressure line.

Note A5 – This procedure may be accomplished in connection with the calibration test described in Section A1.9.

A1.6 *Calibration Reading, K* – The calibration reading, K , is the final meter reading to be obtained when the meter is operated at the correct calibration pressure.

A1.6.1 For Type A meters, the calibration reading, K , is as follows:

$$K = R + D \quad (A1.3)$$

where:

R = effective volume of the calibration vessel (Section A1.4.1), and

D = expansion factor (Section A1.5.1, Note A6).

A1.6.2 For Type B meters, the calibration reading, K , equals the effective volume of the calibration vessel (Section A1.4.2) as follows:

$$K = R \quad (A1.4)$$

A1 **Calibration of the Apparatus:** (continued)

Note A6 – If the water column indicator is graduated to include an initial water level and zero mark, the difference between the two marks being equivalent to the expansion factor, the term D shall be omitted from Equation A1.4.

A1.7 *Calibration Test to Determine Operating Pressure, P, on Pressure Gauge, Type A Meter* – If the rim of the calibration cylinder contains no recesses or projection, fit it with three or more spacers equally spaced around the circumference. Invert the cylinder and place it at the center of the dry bottom of the measuring bowl. The spacers will provide an opening for flow of water into the calibration cylinder when pressure is applied. Secure the inverted cylinder against displacement and carefully lower the cover assembly. After the cover is clamped in place, carefully adjust the apparatus assembly to a vertical position and add water at air temperature, by means of the tube and funnel, until it rises above the zero mark on the standpipe. Close the vent and pump air into the apparatus to the approximate operating pressure. Incline the assembly about 30 degrees from vertical and, using the bottom of the bowl as a pivot, describe several circles with the upper end of the standpipe, simultaneously tapping the cover and sides of the bowl lightly to remove any entrapped air adhering to the inner surfaces of the apparatus. Return the apparatus to a vertical position, gradually release the pressure (to avoid loss of air from the calibration vessel) and open the vent. Bring the water level exactly to the zero mark by bleeding water through the petcock in the top of the conical cover. After closing the vent, apply pressure until the water level has dropped an amount equivalent to about 0.1 to 0.2 percent of air more than the value of the calibration reading, K , determined as described in Section A1.6. To relieve local restraints, lightly tap the sides of the bowl and when the water level is exactly at the value of the calibration reading, K , read the pressure, P , indicated by the gauge and record to the nearest 0.1 psi (690 kPa). Gradually release the pressure and open the vent to determine whether the water level returns to the zero mark when the sides of the bowl are tapped lightly (failure to do so indicates loss of air from the calibration vessel or loss of water due to a leak in the assembly). If the water level fails to return to within 0.05 percent air of the zero mark and no leakage beyond a few drops of water is found, some air probably was lost from the calibration cylinder. In this case, repeat the calibration procedure step-by-step from the beginning of this paragraph. If the leakage is more than a few drops of water, tighten the leaking joint before repeating the calibration procedure. Check the indicated pressure reading promptly by bringing the water level exactly to the zero mark, closing the vent, and applying pressure, P , just determined. Tap the gauge lightly with a finger. When the gauge indicates the exact pressure, P , the water column should read the value of the calibration factor, K , used in the pressure application within about 0.05 percent of air.

Note A7 – Caution: The apparatus assembly must not be moved from the vertical position until pressure has been applied which will force water about one-third of the way up into the calibration cylinder. Any loss of air from this cylinder will nullify the calibration.

A1.8 *Calibration Test to Determine Alternative Operating Pressure P_1 – Type A Meter* – The range of air contents which can be measured with a given meter can be doubled by determining an alternative operating pressure P_1 such that the meter reads half of the calibration reading, K , (Equation A1.3). Exact calibration will require determination of the expansion factor at the reduced pressure in Section A1.5. For most purposes the change in expansion factor can be disregarded and the alternative operating pressure determined during the determination of the regular operating pressure in Section A1.7.

A1.9 *Calibration Test to Check the Air Content Gradations on the Pressure Gauge, Type B Meter* – Fill the measuring bowl with water as described in Section A1.3. Screw the short piece of tubing or pipe furnished with the apparatus into the threaded petcock hole on the underside of the cover assembly. Assemble the apparatus. Close the air valve between the air chamber and the measuring bowl and open the two petcocks on holes through the cover assembly. Add water through the petcock on the cover assembly having the extension below until all air is expelled from the second petcock. Pump air into the air chamber until the pressure reaches the indicated pressure line. Allow a few seconds for the compressed air to cool to normal temperature. Stabilize the gauge hand at the initial pressure line by pumping or bleeding off air as necessary, tapping the

A1 **Calibration of the Apparatus:** (continued)

gauge lightly. Close the petcock not provided with the tube or extension on the underside of the cover. Remove water from the assembly to the calibrating vessel controlling the flow, depending on the particular meter design, by opening the petcock provided with the tube or extension and cracking the air valve between the air chamber and the measuring bowl, or by opening the air valve and using the petcock to control the flow. Perform the calibration at an air content that is within the normal range of use. If the calibration vessel (Section A1.2) has a capacity within the normal range of use, remove exactly that amount of water. With some meters the calibrating vessel is quite small and it will be necessary to remove several times that volume to obtain an air content within the normal range of use. In this instance, carefully collect the water in an auxiliary container and determine the amount removed by weighing to the nearest 0.1 percent. Calculate the correct air content, R , by using Equation A1.2. Release the air from the apparatus at the petcock not used for filling the calibration vessel and if the apparatus employs an auxiliary tube for filling the calibration container, open the petcock to which the tube is connected to drain the tube back into the measuring bowl (Note A7). At this point of the procedure the measuring bowl contains the percentage of air determined by the calibration test of the calibrating vessel. Pump air into the air chamber until the pressure reaches the initial pressure line marked on the pressure gauge, close both petcocks in the cover assembly, and then open the valve between the air chamber and the measuring bowl. The indicated air content on the pressure gauge dial should correspond to the percentage of air determined to be in the measuring bowl. If two or more determinations show the same variation from the correct air content, the dial hand shall be reset to the correct air content within 0.1 percent. If the dial hand was reset to obtain the correct air content, recheck the initial pressure mark as in Section A1.5.2. If a new initial pressure reading is required, repeat the calibration to check the accuracy of the graduation on the pressure gauge described earlier in this section. If difficulty is encountered in obtaining consistent readings, check for leaks, for the presence of water inside the air chamber (Figure 2), or the presence of air bubbles clinging to the inside surfaces of the meter from the use of cool, aerated water. In this latter instance, use de-aerated water, obtained by cooling hot water to room temperature.

Note A8 – If the calibrating vessel is an integral part of the cover assembly, the petcock used in filling the vessel should be closed immediately after filling the calibration vessel and not opened until the test is complete.