

METHOD FOR REPAIRING FUEL NOZZLE GUIDES FOR GAS TURBINE ENGINE COMBUSTORS USING COLD METAL TRANSFER WELD TECHNOLOGY

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BACKGROUND

The present disclosure relates to a gas turbine engine and, more particularly, to a weld repair therefor.

Gas turbine engines, such as those powering modern commercial and military aircraft, include a compressor for pressurizing an airflow, a combustor for burning a hydrocarbon fuel in the presence of the pressurized air, and a turbine for extracting energy from the resultant combustion gases. The combustor generally includes radially spaced inner and outer liners that define an annular combustion chamber therebetween. Arrays of circumferentially distributed combustion air holes penetrate multiple axial locations along each liner to radially admit the pressurized air into the combustion chamber. A plurality of circumferentially distributed fuel nozzles project into a forward section of the combustion chamber through a respective fuel nozzle guide to supply the fuel to be mixed with the pressurized air.

Combustor components may require repair. Oftentimes, the repair is performed with gas tungsten arc welding, plasma arc welding and laser welding.

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SUMMARY

A fuel nozzle guide for a combustor of a turbine engine according to an exemplary aspect of the present disclosure includes an annular base with a hub section, the hub section at least partially formed of a Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld.

A weld system according to an exemplary aspect of the present disclosure includes a fixture which supports a Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld torch and a rotary table which rotates relative to the Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld torch.

A method of repairing a fuel nozzle guide for a combustor of a turbine engine according to an exemplary aspect of the present disclosure includes removing a portion of a hub section that extends from an annular base of the fuel nozzle guide. Building up a lip of the hub section with a Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld to form

a weld buildup lip. Machining the weld buildup lip to a desired original predetermined dimension.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

5 Various features will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description of the disclosed non-limiting embodiment. The drawings that accompany the detailed description can be briefly described as follows:

Figure 1 is a schematic cross-section of a gas turbine engine;

Figure 2 is a perspective partial sectional view of an exemplary annular
10 combustor that may be used with the gas turbine engine shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is an exploded view of a forward assembly of the exemplary combustor with a fuel nozzle guide;

Figure 4 is a method of repair for the fuel nozzle guide;

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the fuel nozzle guide after a lip removal
15 step;

Figure 6 is a perspective view of the fuel nozzle guide after a CMT weld buildup step;

Figure 7 is a schematic view of a weld system for use with the method of repair;

20 Figure 8 is a perspective view of the fuel nozzle guide after a machining step;

Figure 9 is a schematic view of a workpiece holder which defines a height specific to a particular fuel nozzle guide for use with the method of repair; and

Figure 10 is a schematic view of another workpiece holder which defines a height specific to another particular fuel nozzle guide for use with the method of
25 repair.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Figure 1 schematically illustrates a gas turbine engine 20. The gas turbine
30 engine 20 is disclosed herein as a two-spool turbofan that generally incorporates a fan section 22, a compressor section 24, a combustor section 26 and a turbine section 28. Alternative engines might include an augmentor section (not shown) among other systems or features. The fan section 22 drives air along a bypass flowpath while the compressor section 24 drives air along a core flowpath for compression and

communication into the combustor section 26 then expansion through the turbine section 28. Although depicted as a turbofan gas turbine engine in the disclosed non-limiting embodiment, it should be understood that the concepts described herein are not limited to use with turbofans as the teachings may be applied to other types of turbine engines.

The engine 20 generally includes a low speed spool 30 and a high speed spool 32 mounted for rotation about an engine central longitudinal axis A relative to an engine static structure 36 via several bearing systems 38. It should be understood that various bearing systems 38 at various locations may alternatively or additionally be provided.

The low speed spool 30 generally includes an inner shaft 40 that interconnects a fan 42, a low pressure compressor 44 and a low pressure turbine 46. The inner shaft 40 is connected to the fan 42 through a geared architecture 48 to drive the fan 42 at a lower speed than the low speed spool 30. The high speed spool 32 includes an outer shaft 50 that interconnects a high pressure compressor 52 and high pressure turbine 54. A combustor 56 is arranged between the high pressure compressor 52 and the high pressure turbine 54. The inner shaft 40 and the outer shaft 50 are concentric and rotate about the engine central longitudinal axis A which is collinear with their longitudinal axes.

The core airflow is compressed by the low pressure compressor 44 then the high pressure compressor 52, mixed and burned with fuel within the combustor 56, then expanded over the high pressure turbine 54 and low pressure turbine 46. The turbines 54, 46 rotationally drive the respective low speed spool 30 and high speed spool 32 in response to the expansion.

With reference to Figure 2, the combustor 56 generally includes an outer combustor liner 60 and an inner combustor liner 62. The outer combustor liner 60 and the inner combustor liner 62 are spaced inward from a combustor case 64 such that a combustion chamber 66 is defined there between. The combustion chamber 66 is generally annular in shape and is defined between combustor liners 60, 62.

The outer combustor liner 60 and the combustor case 64 define an outer annular plenum 76 and the inner combustor liner 62 and the combustor case 64 define an inner annular plenum 78. It should be understood that although a particular combustor is illustrated, other combustor types with various combustor liner panel arrangements will also benefit herefrom. It should be further understood that the

disclosed cooling flow paths are but an illustrated embodiment and should not be limited only thereto.

The combustor liners 60, 62 contain the flame for direction toward the turbine section 28. Each combustor liner 60, 62 generally includes a support shell 68, 70 which supports one or more liner panels 72, 74 mounted to a hot side of the respective support shell 68, 70. The liner panels 72, 74 define a liner panel array which may be generally annular in shape. Each of the liner panels 72, 74 may be generally rectilinear and manufactured of, for example, a nickel based super alloy or ceramic material.

The combustor 56 further includes a forward assembly 80 immediately downstream of the compressor section 24 to receive compressed airflow therefrom. The forward assembly 80 generally includes an annular hood 82, a bulkhead assembly 84, a multiple of fuel nozzles 86 (one shown) and a multiple of fuel nozzle guides 90 (one shown) that defines a central opening 92. The annular hood 82 extends radially between, and is secured to, the forwardmost ends of the liners 60, 62. The annular hood 82 includes a multiple of circumferentially distributed hood ports 94 that accommodate the respective fuel nozzle 86 and introduce air into the forward end of the combustion chamber 66. Each fuel nozzle 86 may be secured to the outer case 64 and projects through one of the hood ports 94 and through the central opening 92 within the respective fuel nozzle guide 90.

Each of the fuel nozzle guides 90 is circumferentially aligned with one of the hood ports 94 to project through the bulkhead assembly 84. Each bulkhead assembly 84 includes a bulkhead support shell 96 secured to the liners 60, 62, and a multiple of circumferentially distributed bulkhead heatshields segments 98 secured to the bulkhead support shell 96 around the central opening 92.

The forward assembly 80 introduces primary core combustion air into the forward end of the combustion chamber 66 while the remainder enters the outer annular plenum 76 and the inner annular plenum 78. The multiple of fuel nozzles 86 and surrounding structure generate a swirling, intimately blended fuel-air mixture that supports combustion in the forward section of the combustion chamber 66.

With reference to Figure 3, each of the fuel nozzle guides 90 has a generally annular base 100 with an outwardly or downstream extending frusto-conical hub section 102 that forms the central opening 92 dimensioned for a snug slip-fit

mounting of the fuel nozzle 86. The centerline of the fuel nozzle 86 is concurrent with the centerline F of the fuel nozzle guide 90.

The fuel nozzle guide 90 is typically a cast metal component subject to high wear due to exposure to the combustion chamber 66 and maintenance of the fuel nozzle 86. Typically, a lip 104 of the hub section 102 becomes highly worn such that a Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld technology is utilized with a semi automatic weld cycle to restore the lip 104 to original dimensions by the method disclosed herein (Figure 4).

With Reference to Figure 4, step 200 of a manufacture or repair for the fuel nozzle guide 90 includes machining of the lip 104 to remove a desired amount of material and provide a weld ready surface W (Figure 5). It should be understood that various geometries may be provided by the weld ready surface W and such surface may be flat or featured to facilitate a weld interface.

Step 202 of the repair includes a weld cycle via Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld technology with an automated or robot-assisted torch T to build up the lip 104 (Figure 6). Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld technology is based on short circuiting transfer, or in other words, on a deliberate, systematic discontinuing of the arc. Results are a sort of alternating "hot-cold-hot-cold" sequence. The "hot-cold" method significantly reduces the arc pressure. A wide process window and the high stability thereof define one Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) process. The weld wire material may be, for example, of a Hastelloy X, Stellite 31 or other aerospace grade weld material, such as nickel cobalt superalloy weld fillers. It should be understood that the weld material may be equivalent to the base material or may alternatively be a softer material than the base material. Every time short circuiting occurs, the control interrupts the power supply and controls the retraction of the weld wire. This motion takes place at a rate of up to, for example, about seventy (70) times per second. The weld wire retraction motion facilitates droplet detachment during the short circuit. The reduced thermal input also offers advantages such as low distortion and high precision.

The fuel nozzle guide 90 is rotated by a weld system 110 (Figure 7) that also maintains the torch T in a stationary position and orientation as further described below. In the disclosed non-limiting embodiment, the CMT weld buildup height defines a height of about 0.080" (20mm - 21mm) in a continuous weld to define a single start and a single stop with a total weld time of approximately 111 seconds. It

should be understood that various weld buildup heights may alternatively or additionally be provided based on the component and or repair required.

In step 204, the weld may be finished through a machining operation to return the lip 104 of the hub section 102 to a desired original predetermined dimensional geometry (Figure 8). It should be understood that additional finishing operations
5 may alternatively or additionally be performed.

With reference to Figure 7, the weld system 110 general includes a fixture 112 which supports the torch T in a desired position and orientation relative to a rotary table 114 or “rotab.” The fixture 112 includes a torch holder 116 that is
10 readily adjusted through a rack and pinion, or, other arrangement to locate the torch T in a fixed position relative to the rotary table 114 and thereby relative to the fuel nozzle guide 90 or workpiece to be repaired. That is, the torch T is mechanically fixed along the Z-axis and thus into a desired position relative the fuel nozzle guide 90.

The torch T in the disclosed non-limiting embodiment is oriented to provide
15 between a perpendicular to about a ten (10) degree push or trail orientation relative to the fuel nozzle guide 90. It should be noted that other orientations may be used to maximize weld efficiency. It should also be noted that a computing device C (illustrated schematically) can be used to implement various functionality, such as
20 operation of the torch T and rotation of the rotary table 114. In terms of hardware architecture, such a computing device can include a processor, memory, and one or more input and/or output (I/O) device interface(s) that are communicatively coupled via a local interface as generally understood.

The rotary table 114 may include a workpiece holder 118 that defines a
25 working height H along the Z axis specific to each particular fuel nozzle guide 90. That is, one thick workpiece holder 118A is utilized for a relatively small fuel nozzle guide 90A (Figure 9) while another thin workpiece holder 118B is utilized for a relatively large or thick fuel nozzle guide 90B (Figure 10). Either holder may be mounted to the rotary table 114. Such specific workpiece holders permit a single
30 height setting for the fixture 112 to be utilized with various workpieces so as to facilitate high throughput operations. Each workpiece holder 118A, 118B may also include a unique attachment interface 120A, 120B to assure mistake proof installation to the rotary table 114.

It should be understood that relative positional terms such as "forward," "aft," "upper," "lower," "above," "below," and the like are with reference to the normal operational attitude of the vehicle and should not be considered otherwise limiting.

5 It should be understood that like reference numerals identify corresponding or similar elements throughout the several drawings. It should also be understood that although a particular component arrangement is disclosed in the illustrated embodiment, other arrangements will benefit herefrom.

10 Although particular step sequences are shown, described, and claimed, it should be understood that steps may be performed in any order, separated or combined unless otherwise indicated and will still benefit from the present disclosure.

15 The foregoing description is exemplary rather than defined by the limitations within. Various non-limiting embodiments are disclosed herein, however, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that various modifications and variations in light of the above teachings will fall within the scope of the appended claims. It is therefore to be understood that within the scope of the appended claims, the disclosure may be practiced other than as specifically described. For that reason the appended claims should be studied to determine true scope and content.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A fuel nozzle guide for a combustor of a turbine engine comprising:
5 an annular base with a hub section, said hub section at least partially formed of a Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld.
2. The fuel nozzle guide as recited in claim 1, wherein said hub section is frusto-
conical.
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3. The fuel nozzle guide as recited in claim 1, wherein said Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld defines a lip of said hub section.
4. A weld system comprising:
15 a fixture which supports a Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld torch; and a rotary table which rotates relative to said Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld torch.
5. The weld system as recited in claim 4, wherein said rotary table receives one of a multiple of workpiece holders, each of said multiple of workpiece holders define
20 a thickness specific to a particular fuel nozzle guide.
6. The weld system as recited in claim 4, wherein said fixture mechanically fixes said Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld torch.
- 25 7. The weld system as recited in claim 4, wherein said fixture mechanically positions said Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld torch through a rack and pinion arrangement.

8. A method of repairing a fuel nozzle guide for a combustor of a turbine engine comprising:
- removing a portion of a hub section which extends from an annular base of the fuel nozzle guide;
 - 5 building up a lip of the hub section with a Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld to form a weld buildup lip; and
 - machining the weld buildup lip to a desired original predetermined dimension.
- 10 9. The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising:
- rotating the fuel nozzle guide.
10. The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising:
- maintaining a torch which forms the Cold Metal Transfer (CMT) weld
 - 15 stationary.
11. The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising building up the weld buildup lip to define a height of about 0.080" (20mm - 21mm).
- 20 12. The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising building up the weld buildup lip as a continuous weld with a single start and a single stop.