

Fast and Ultimate Vibration Field Solution: From Problem Detection to Field Performance Validation

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Summary

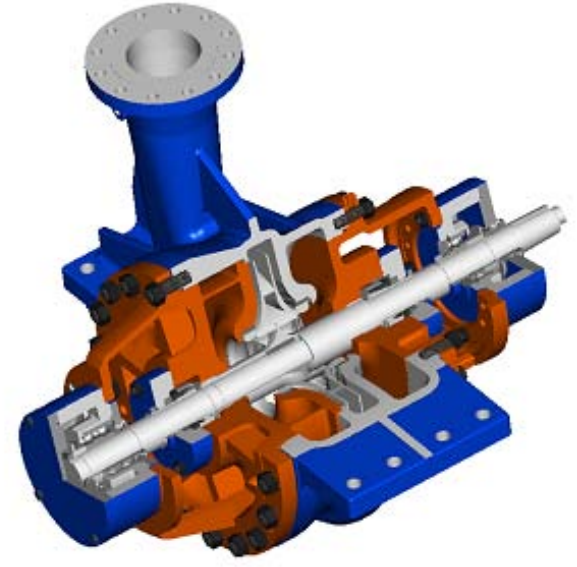
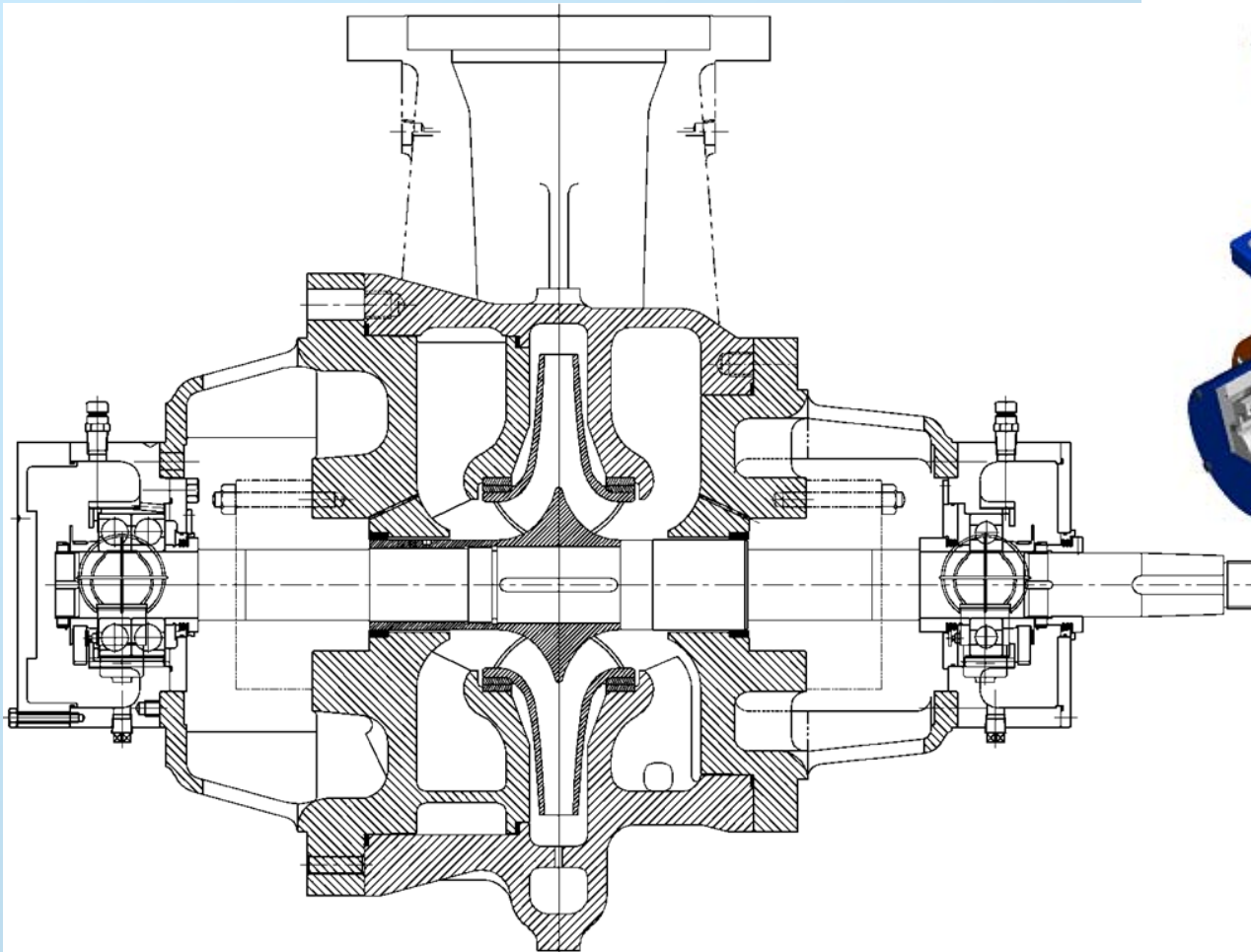
- The case
- Initial analysis
- Root cause analysis
- Solution implementation
- Results
- Conclusions

Description of the problem

During commissioning, customer reported unacceptable vibration levels on pumps tested with water.

The pump

The pump type/size is an API 12" discharge with top-top configuration, double suction impeller, double volute, antifriction bearings configuration, 360° mounted, center mounted (BB2)

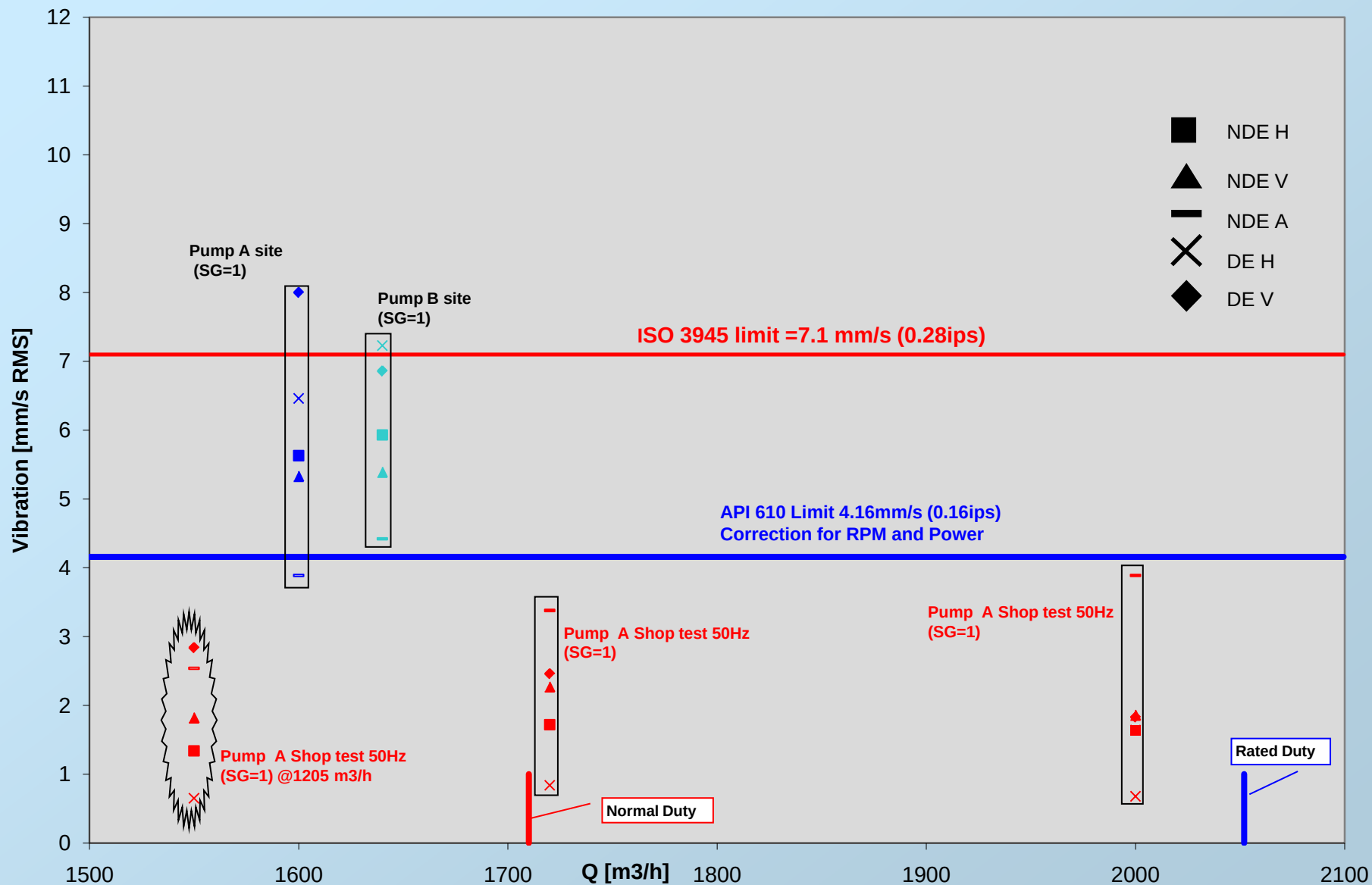


First steps of the investigation

On site inspection to verify mechanical integrity of pumps

Campaign of vibration measurement on all installed pumps

Initial analysis



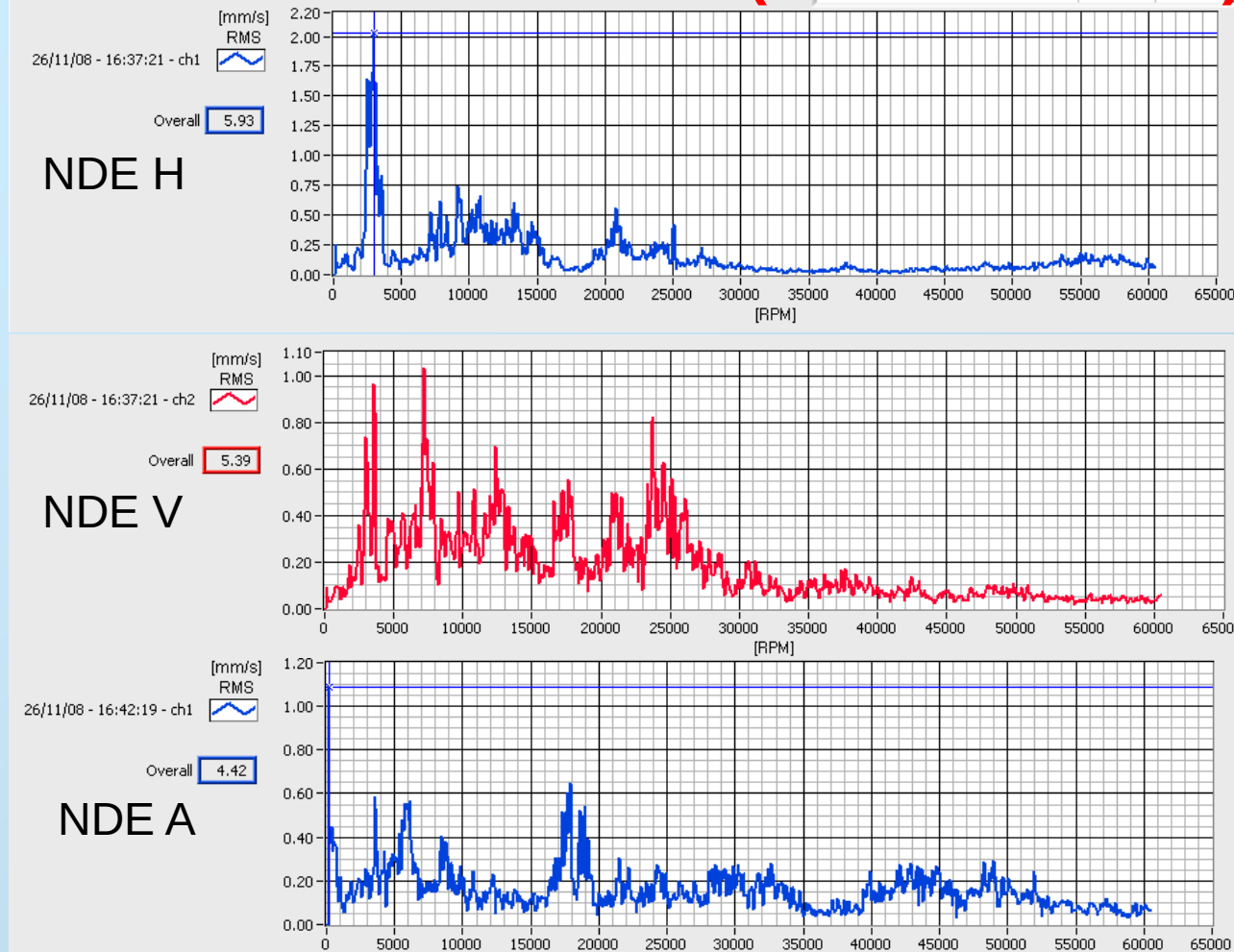
Initial analysis

Spectra analysis and main outcomes

- ✓ Confirmation of the measure taken by customer
- ✓ Similar behaviour on the two pumps
- ✓ Frequency spectra with broadband showing peaks distributed for many frequencies up to 500 -700 Hz (low - medium range).
- ✓ Filtered vibrations at key characteristic frequencies have (1x, VPF) have amplitude around 1.0 – 1.5 mm/s (0.04 – 0.06 ips). But overall value is around 5-6 mm/s(0.2-0.24 ips), due to the high number of peaks
- ✓ Spectra instability, with high variations in different moments
- ✓ Phase not stable
- ✓ The higher vibration values were detected on pump casing, and not on the bearing

Initial analysis – Vibration spectra

Field data (November 2008)



N=3580 rpm

1x=3580 rpm

VPF= 7x=25060 rpm

Q=1700 m³/hr (7490 gpm)

Close to Normal duty

SG=1

T=35°C

NPSHA/NPSHR=2.14

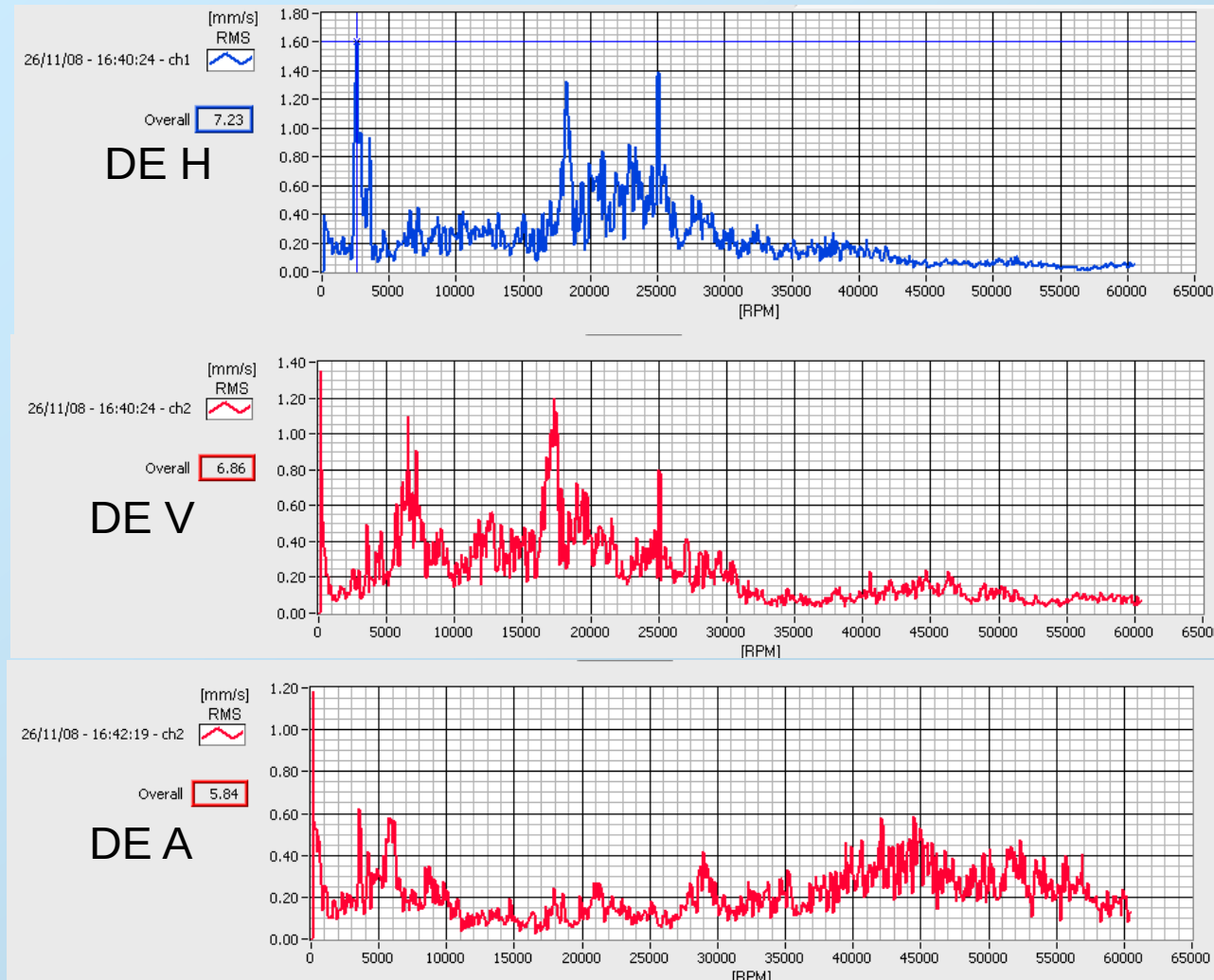
Remarks:

- a) Low amplitude at VPF
(< 1 mm/s = 0.04 ips)
- b) High activity mainly
across a range up
500 Hz (30000 rpm)

NDE vibration spectra

Initial analysis – Vibration spectra

Field data (November 2008)



DE vibration spectra

Remarks :

a) Max amplitude at VPF

(1.4 mm/s = 0.06 ips)

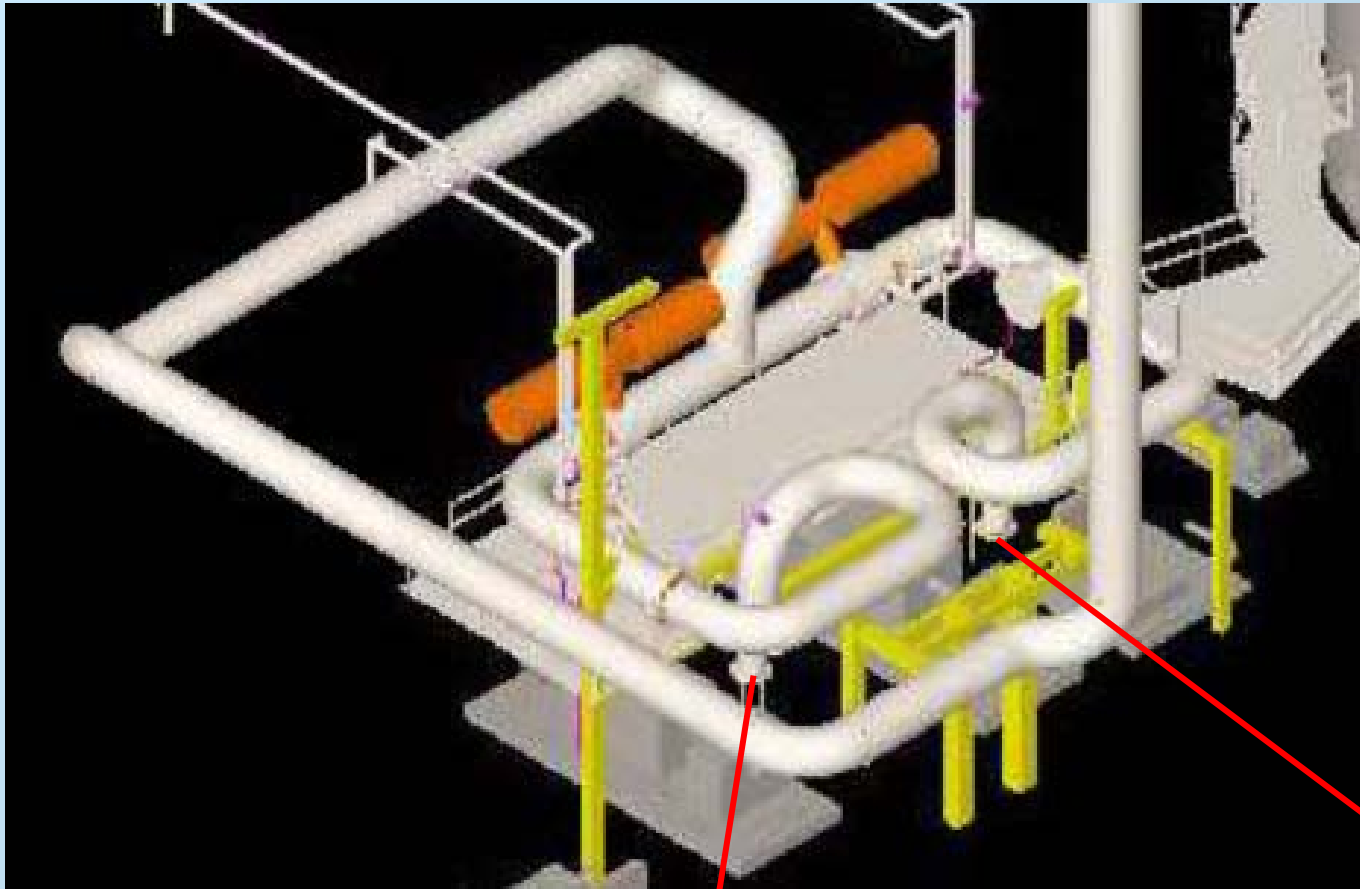
b) High activity distributed

and dominant across

a range up 500 Hz

(30000 rpm)

Initial analysis – Suction piping



Pump A Suction flange

Pump B Suction flange

Root Cause Analysis

Following the results and data collected in the first site campaign, a thorough Root Cause Analysis was conducted by pump designer

Potential Root Cause Analysis 1)

POSSIBLE CAUSE	Why yes	Why not	Result
Mechanical behaviour of the pump	High level of vibration is due to the mechanics of the pump (misalignment, unbalance, etc)	1. The spectra don't show evidence of the mechanical problem 2. Dismantling of pump A didn't highlight any issue	EXCLUDED
Major internal looseness Broken parts	Extreme bearing wear, internal looseness or broken parts can justify a low noise level like background in the spectra	1. Bearings, when inspected, didn't show any major damage 2. Dismantling of pump A didn't highlight any major looseness	EXCLUDED
Resonance	Resonance can justify a unstable phase	Resonance is centered on defined frequencies, and these frequencies are always the same. It's not compatible with the spectra variations measured	EXCLUDED

Potential Root Cause Analysis 2)

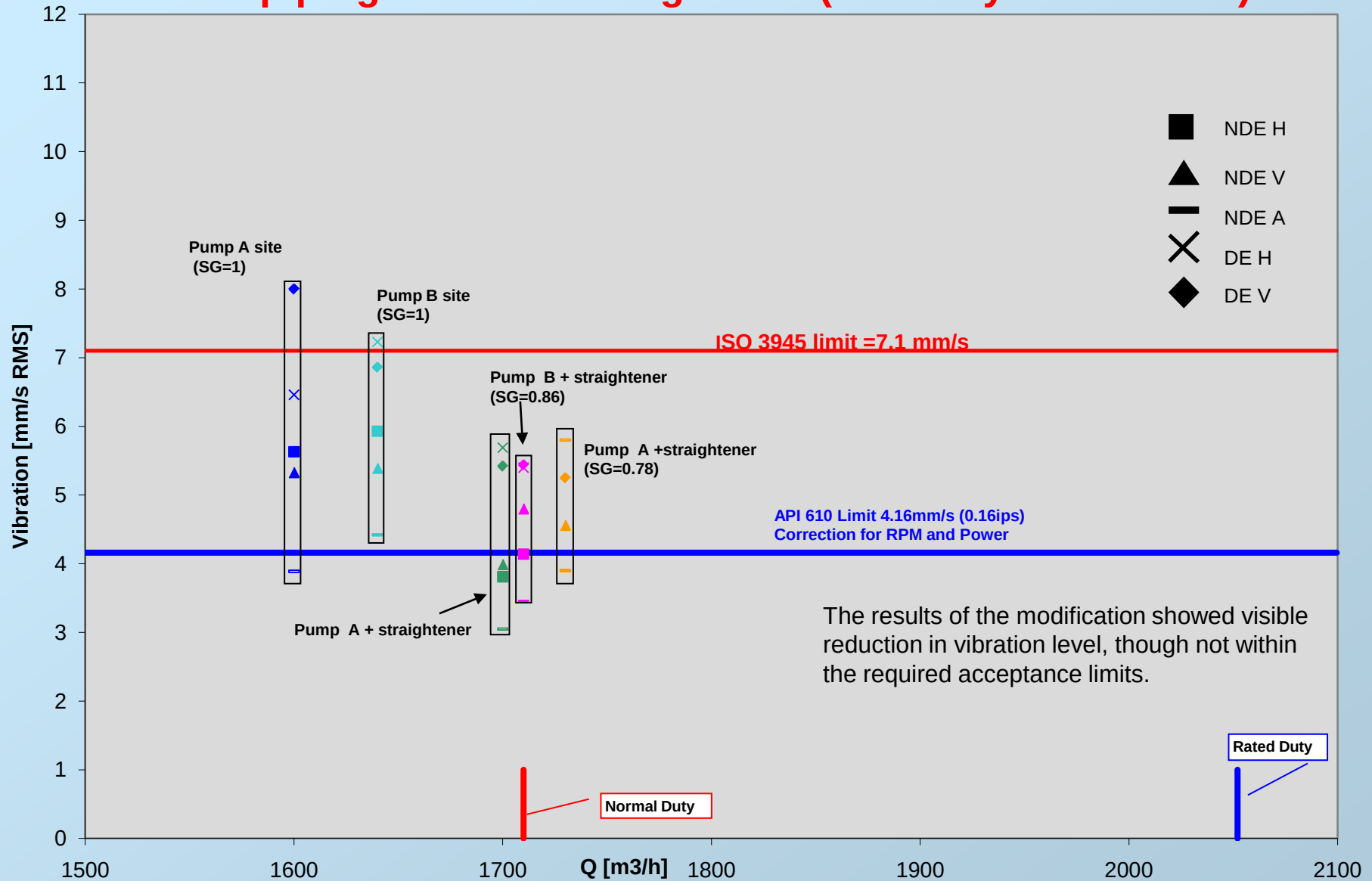
POSSIBLE CAUSE	Why yes	Why not	Result
Fluid dynamics of the piping	Unsteady and random spectra with a broadband distribution of many peaks of low frequencies are indicative of intense turbulence. Piping was not fully compliant with HI recommendations	Piping designed according to customer best practice	PROBABLE CAUSE
Fluid dynamics of the pump	Unsteady and random spectra with a broadband distribution of many peaks of low frequencies are indicative of intense turbulence. Pump operation at capacity below BEP is potential source of high turbulence	Same type of pump running well in other applications	PROBABLE CAUSE

Implementation of 1st phase: Suction piping

- ❖ The customer modified the piping layout as to have it compliant to Hydraulic Institute recommendation.
- ❖ The results of the modification showed visible reduction in vibration level, though not within the required acceptance limits.

Implementation of 1st phase

Suction piping with flow straightener (February-March 2009)



Root Cause Analysis – 2nd phase

Pump hydraulic design

- The solution has been focused on the pump hydraulic, as the remaining cause pointed out in the Root Cause Analysis
- The hydraulic design of the pump was studied with respect to the vibration analysis

Implementation of 2nd phase

General considerations

- 1) The peculiarity of broadband frequency spectra with presence of many peaks up to 500 – 700 Hz could be associated with turbulent flow induced by flow separation inside the impeller either at inlet (suction recirculation) and/or at outlet (discharge recirculation).
- 2) Vibration amplitude at VPF is in general a symptom more related with discharge recirculation which appears unlikely (low VPF level in all spectra).

Suction recirculation looks as the most probable mechanism of high turbulence and vibration source. Therefore the focus has to be directed to:

- a) Pump operation: if and how much below BEP and /or
- b) Impeller design: if suitable for the application (primarily inlet geometry)

Implementation of 2nd phase

Keywords

Recirculation:

For a trimmed impeller, the onset of suction recirculation may be closer to the normal point, even if this looks at first glance reasonable and complying with the API criteria.

Incidence angle at blade tip:

An incidence angle far away from the shock-less condition may lead to flow separation with flow unsteadiness inducing vibrations.

For pumps with high energy level at inlet - peripheral velocity at the impeller eye diameter above 35 m/s (115 ft/s) - the overall level of vibrations can be high even above acceptable limits for the bearing housings.

Implementation of 2nd phase

Hydraulic analysis

Design point:

$N = 3580$ rpm

$Q = 2900$ m³/h (12775 gpm)

$H = 418$ m (1373 ft)

$D_2 = 490$ mm (19.3 inch) max dia

NSPHR = 28 m (92 ft)

$N_{s_{des}} = 1794$

$N_{ss_{des}} = 9630$ (reasonable)

$Z = 7$ vanes, staggered

$D_{cw}/D_2 = 1.08$ (B-Gap)

$D_{eye} = 280$ mm (11 inch)

$U_{eye} = 52.5$ m/s (172.4 ft/s) (moderate)

$Q_{sl} = 3190$ m³/h (14053 gpm)

$Q_{sl}/Q_{des} = 1.1$ (sl = shockless)

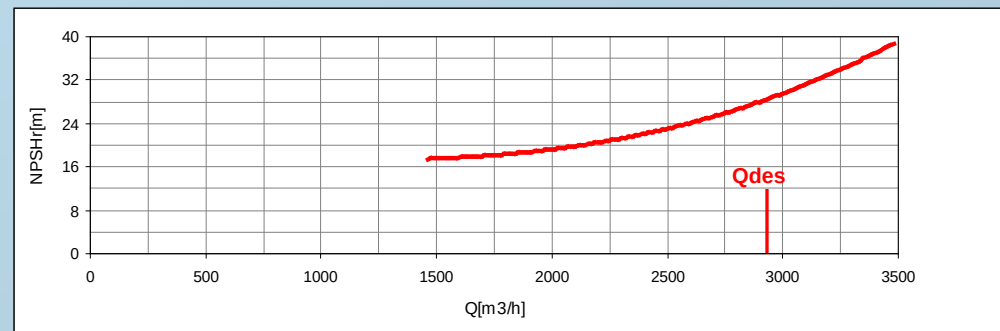
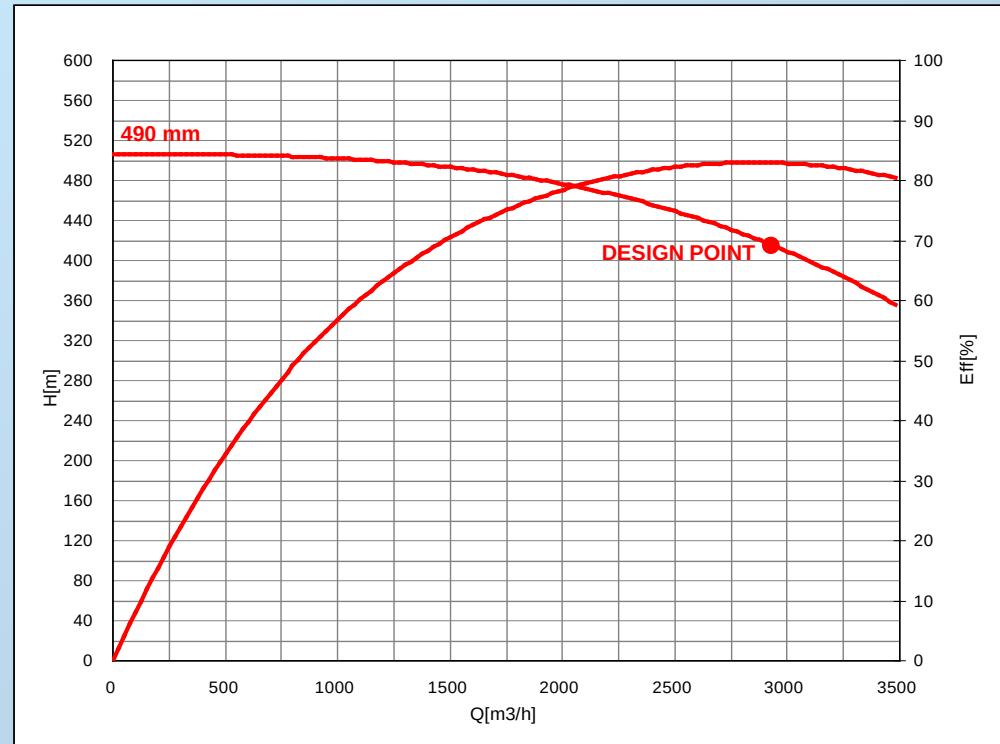
$Q_{sr} = 2090$ m³/h (9207 gpm)

(sr = suction recirculation)

$Q_{sr}/Q_{des} = 0.72$

$Q_{rs}/Q_{sl} = 0.65$

Test Curves



Implementation of 2nd phase

Impeller trimming

Rated point:

$N = 3580 \text{ rpm}$

$Q = 2052 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$ (9040 gpm)

$H = 259 \text{ m}$ (850.6 ft)

$D_{2\text{duty}} = 405 \text{ mm}$ (15.9 inch)

$\text{NPSHR} = 19.4 \text{ m}$ (63.7 ft)

$\text{NPSHA} = 39.6 \text{ m}$ (130 ft)

$\text{NPSHA} / \text{NPSHR} = 2.04$

$D_{2\text{duty}} / D_{2\text{des}} = 0.83$

$Q_{\text{bepduty}} = 2150 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$ (9471gpm)

$Q_{\text{rated}} / Q_{\text{bepduty}} = 0.95$ (Looks good !)

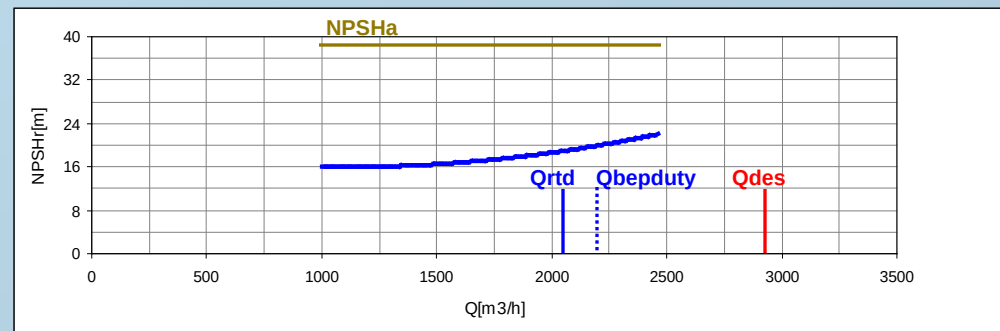
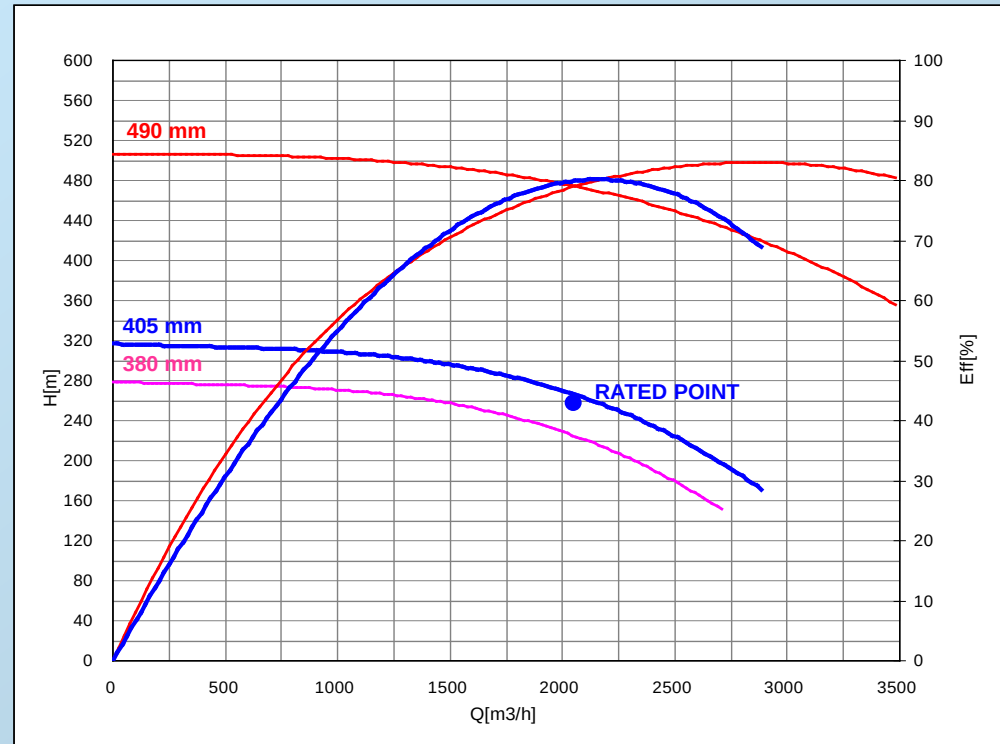
$Q_{\text{rated}} / Q_{\text{design}} = 0.74$ (Too low)

$Q_{\text{rated}} / Q_{\text{sl}} = 0.64$ (Too low)

$Q_{\text{rated}} / Q_{\text{sr}} = 0.98$ (Possibility of
suction recirculation start)

$D_{\text{cw}} / D_{2\text{duty}} = 1.30$ (B-Gap : very large
i.e . low vibrations at VPF)

Test Curves



Implementation of 2nd phase Impeller trimming

Normal point (specified):

$N = 3580 \text{ rpm}$

$Q = 1710 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$ (7533 gpm)

$H = 283 \text{ m}$ (929.4 ft)

$D_{2\text{duty}} = 405 \text{ mm}$ (15.9 inch)

$\text{NPSHR} = 18.5 \text{ m}$ (60.7 ft)

$\text{NPSHA} = 39.6 \text{ m}$ (130 ft)

$\text{NPSHA} / \text{NPSHR} = 2.14$

$Q_{\text{normal}} / Q_{\text{rated}} = 0.83$

$Q_{\text{normal}} / Q_{\text{bepduty}} = 0.8$ (OK for API 610)

$Q_{\text{normal}} / Q_{\text{bepdes}} = 0.59$ (Too low)

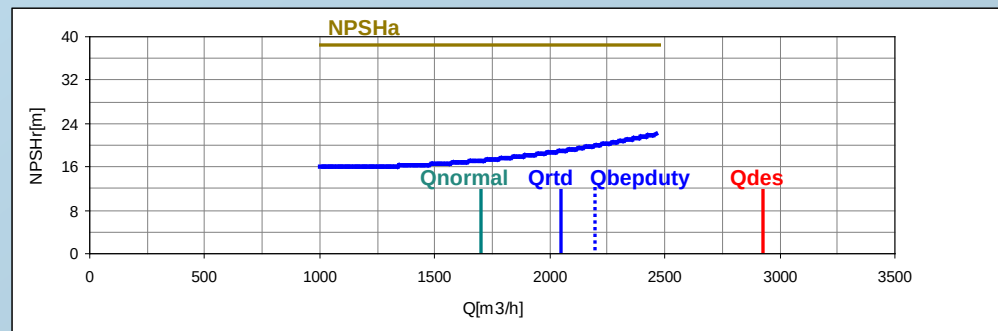
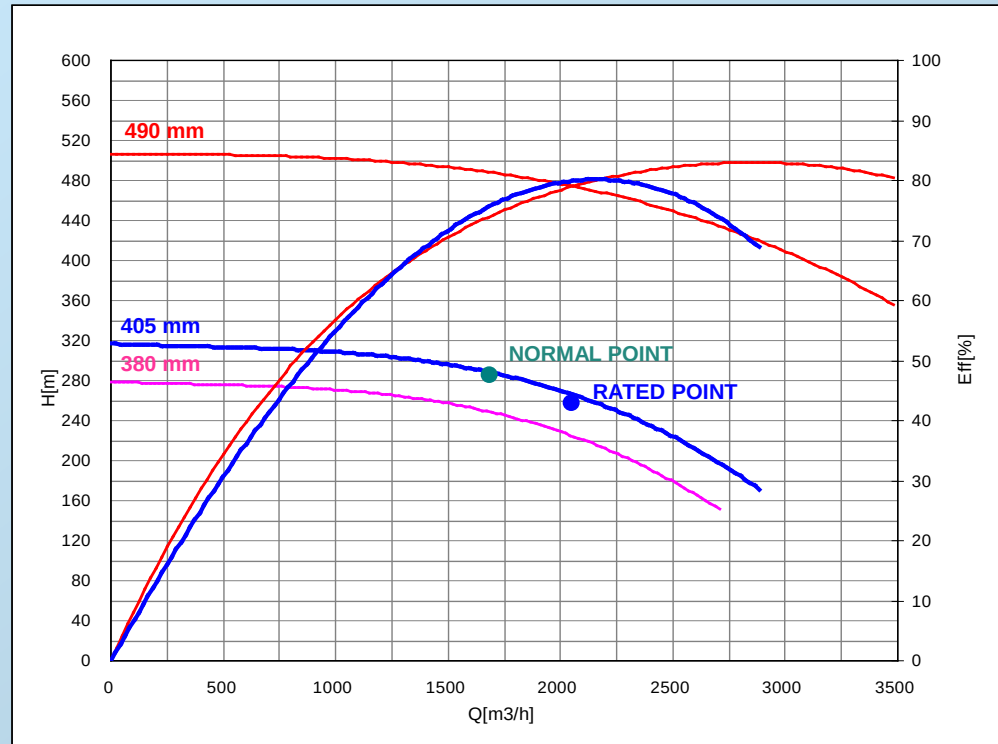
$Q_{\text{normal}} / Q_{\text{sl}} = 0.54$ (Too low)

$Q_n = 59\% \text{ of } Q_{\text{des}} - \text{RED FLAG}$

$Q_{\text{normal}} / Q_{\text{s}} = 0.82$

Suction recirculation is root
cause of vibrations

Test Curves



Upgraded impeller design

New Impeller design point:

$N = 3580$ rpm

$Q = 2000$ m³/h (8810 gpm) close to rated

$H = 300$ m (985 ft)

$D_2 = 445$ mm (17.5 inch)

NSPHR= 23 m (75.5ft)

$Ns_{des} = 1911$

$Nss_{des} = 9270$ (reasonable)

$Z=7$ vanes, rake - no stagger

$D_{cw}/D_2=1.18$ (B-Gap, ample)

$D_{eye} = 255$ mm (10 inch)

$U_{eye} = 47.8$ m/s (157 ft/s) (reduced)

$Q_{sl} = 2120$ m³/h (9340 gpm)

$Q_{sl}/Q_{des} = 1.06$ (sl = shockless)

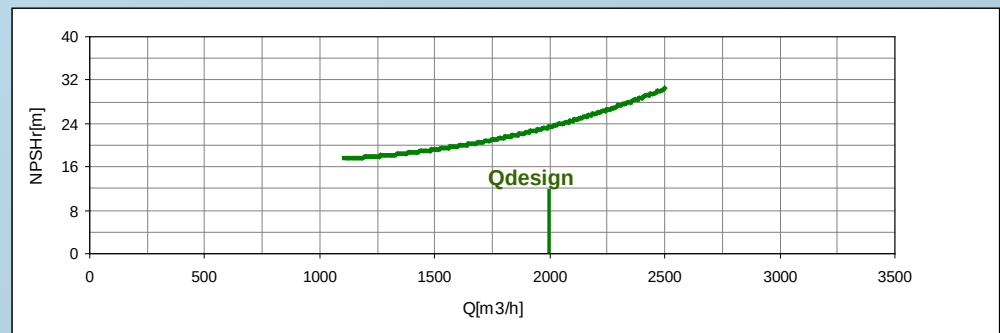
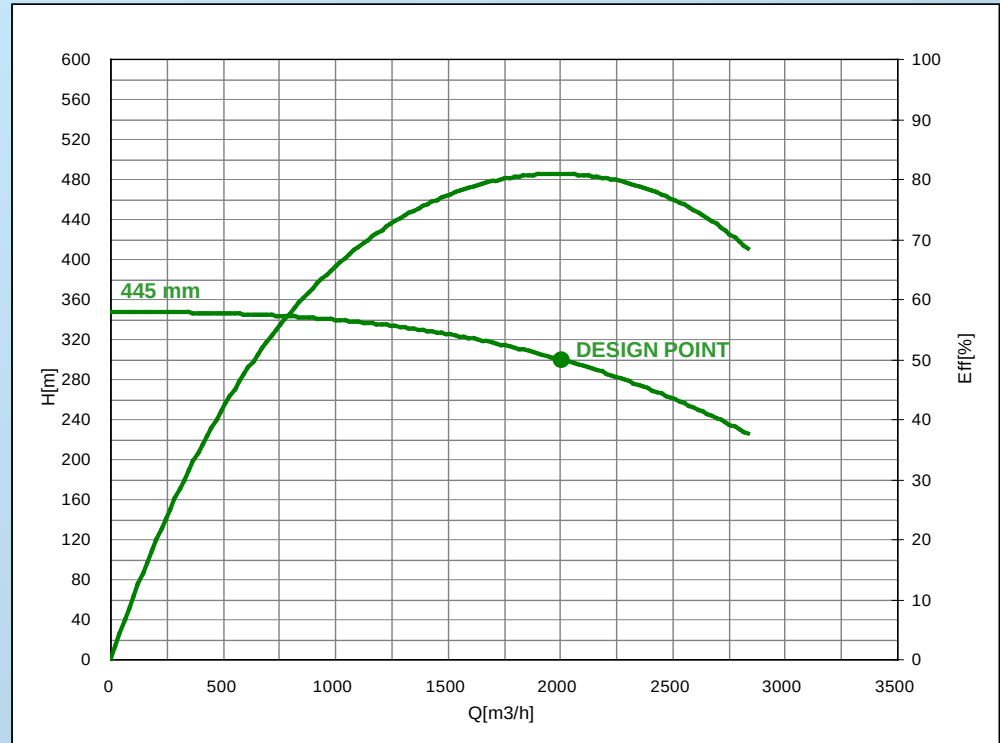
$Q_{sr} = 1400$ m³/h (6167 gpm)
(sr = suction recirculation)

$Q_{sr}/Q_{des} = 0.70$

$Q_{sr}/Q_{sl} = 0.66$

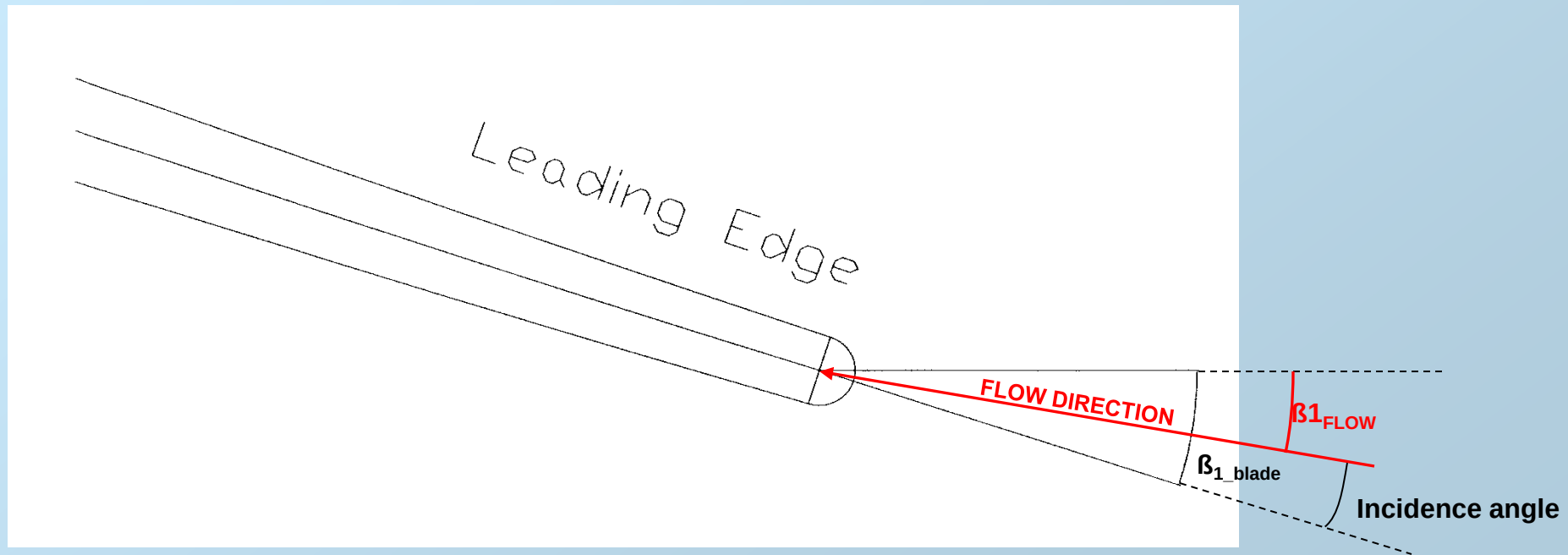
$Q_{sr}/Q_{rated} = 0.68$ ($<<1$)

Expected Curves



Implementation of 2nd phase

- Incidence angle = $\beta_{1_blade} - \beta_{1_FLOW}$



Implementation of 2nd phase

Hydraulic analysis (March 2009)

- Incidence analysis (*existing impeller*)

Point	Flow [m ³ /h]	β_{1_blade} (tip)	β_{1flow}	INCIDENCE
DESIGN	2900	17°	15.5°	1.5°
RATED	2052	17°	10.2°	6.8°
NORMAL	1710	17°	8.4°	8.6°

Could lead to suction recirculation (flow separation) with high level of broadband vibration for high energy pumps

New impeller design strategy

Constrains:

- 1) Upgrade impeller design with new pattern
- 2) Stringent expected delivery time from Contractor and End User

Impeller to be interchangeable with present pump configuration, i.e. double suction, double volute, existing bearing housing

Upgraded impeller design

(April 2009)

Incidence angle (design strategy for *new customized impeller*)

Point	Flow [m ³ /h]	β_{1_blade} (tip)	$\beta_{1flow}(tip)$	INCIDENCE
DESIGN	2000	16°	15.2°	0.8°
RATED	2052	16°	10.2°	0.4°
NORMAL	1710	16°	8.4°	3.1°

The incidence is near to the shockless condition for the rated capacity. Also it is far below the critical value (causing flow separation and suction recirculation) for the normal point

Comparison upgraded vs original impeller

Upgraded impeller ("Customized design")

$N = 3580 \text{ rpm}$

$D_{2\text{duty}} = 423 \text{ mm (16.7 inch)}$

$D_{2\text{duty}}/D_{2\text{des}} = 0.95$

$D_{\text{cw}}/D_{2\text{duty}} = 1.25$

$Q_{\text{bepduty}} = 1900 \text{ m}^3/\text{h (8370 gpm)}$

Rated point

$\text{NPSHR} = 23.2 \text{ M (76.2 ft)}$

$\text{NPSHA} / \text{NPSHR} = 1.70$

$Q_{\text{rated}}/Q_{\text{bepduty}} = 1.08 \text{ (Good)}$

$Q_{\text{rated}}/Q_{\text{design}} = 1.03 \text{ (Good)}$

$Q_{\text{rated}}/Q_{\text{sl}} = 0.97 \text{ (Good)}$

$Q_{\text{rated}}/Q_{\text{sr}} = 1.46 \text{ (Well above suction recirculation onset)}$

Normal Point

$\text{NPSHR} = 21 \text{ m (69 ft)}$

$\text{NPSHA} / \text{NPSHR} = 1.89$

$Q_{\text{normal}}/Q_{\text{bepduty}} = 0.9 \text{ (Good for efficiency)}$

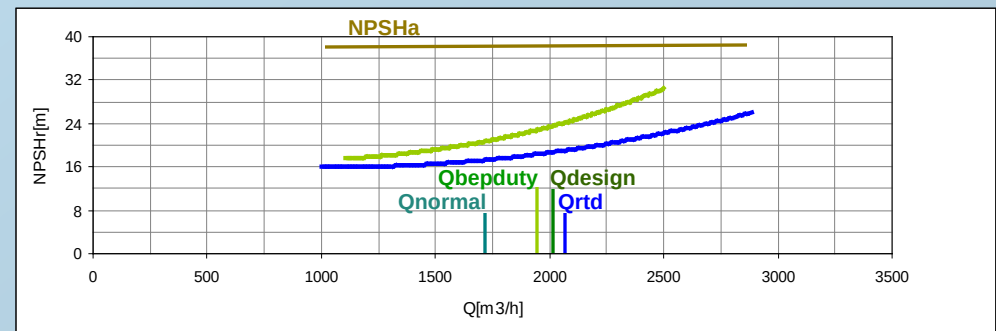
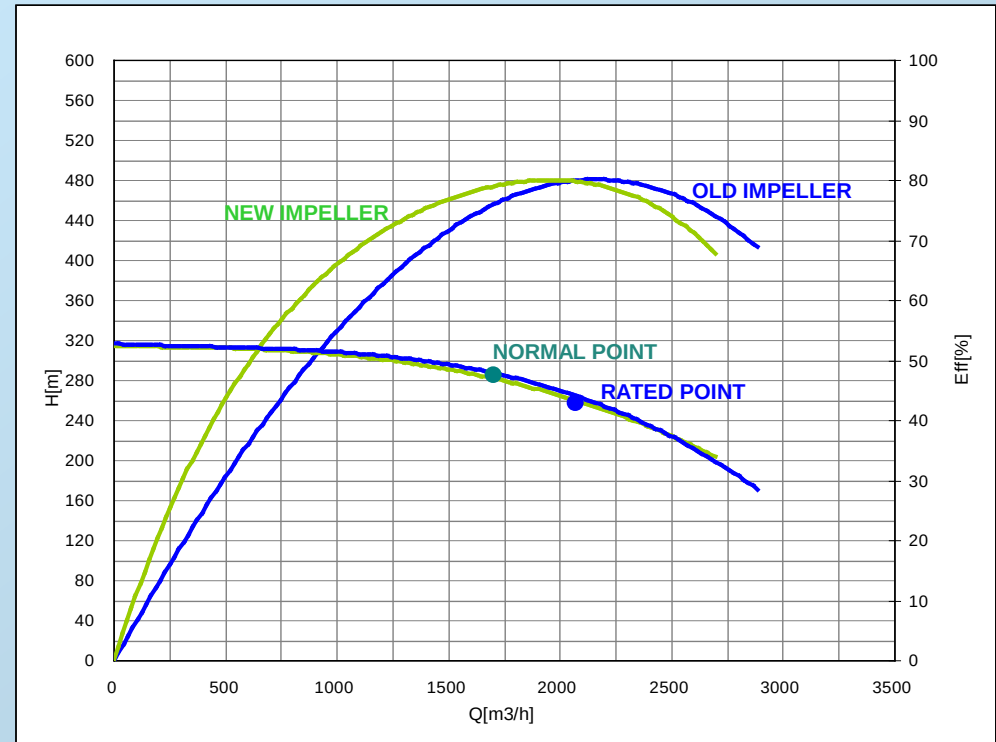
$Q_{\text{normal}}/Q_{\text{bepdes}} = 0.85 \text{ (Reasonable)}$

$Q_{\text{normal}}/Q_{\text{sl}} = 0.81 \text{ (Acceptable)}$

$Q_{\text{normal}} / Q_{\text{sr}} = 1.22$

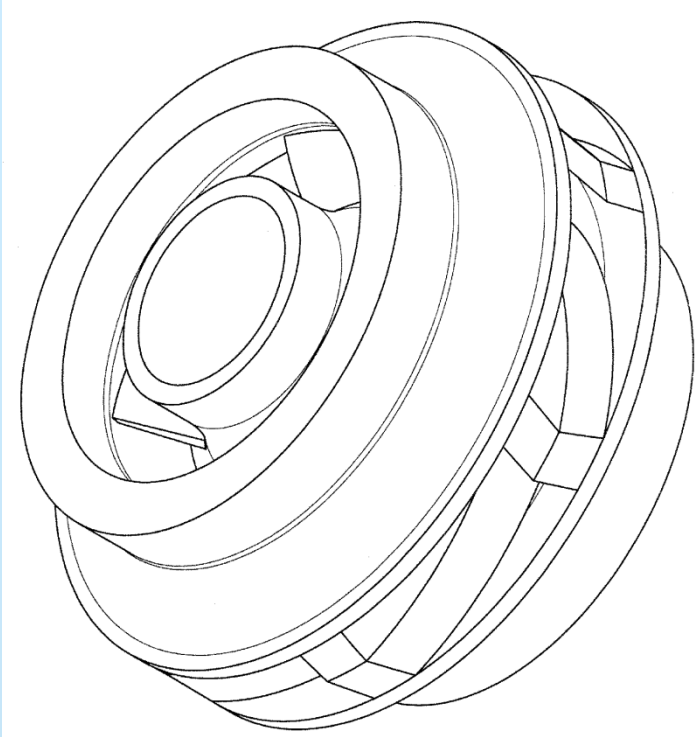
No suction recirculation

Expected versus Test Curves

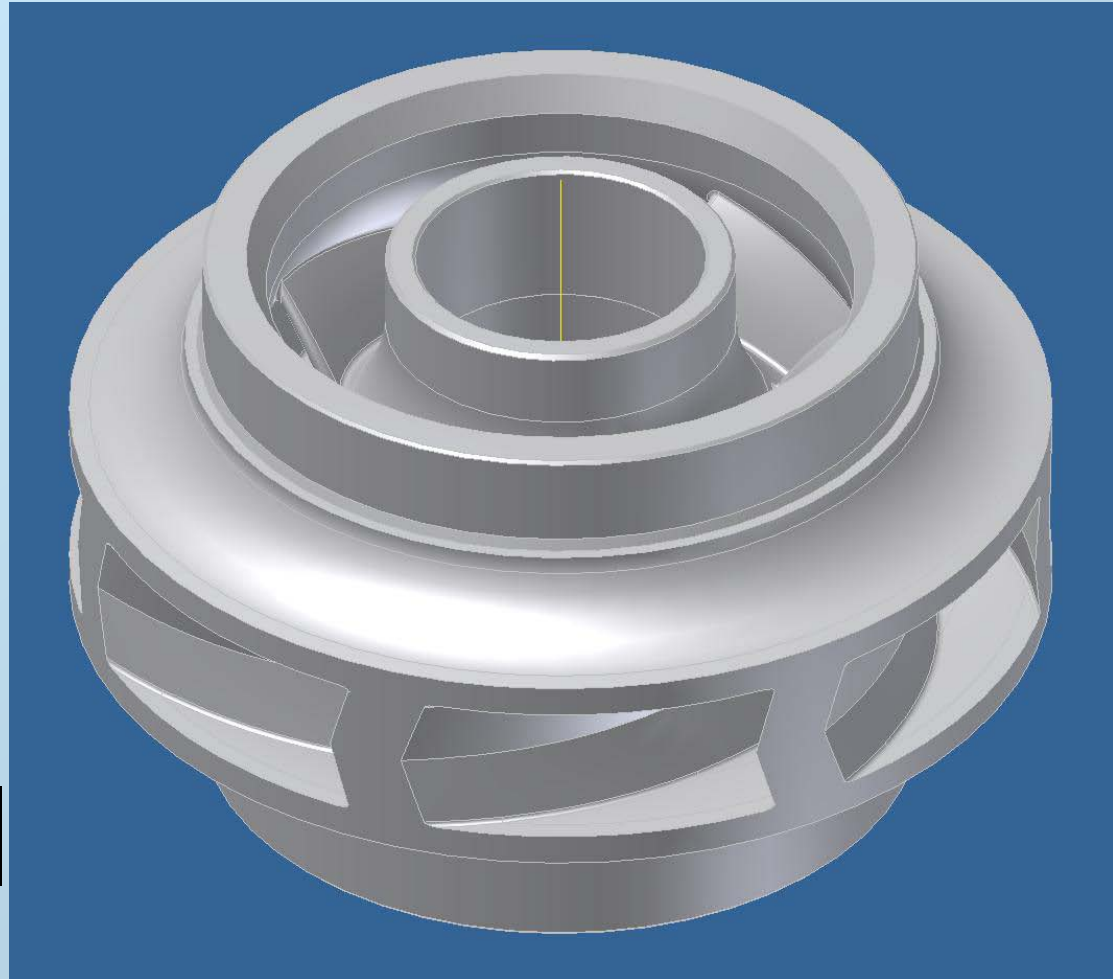


Upgraded impeller design

Features: Blade rake – No stagger



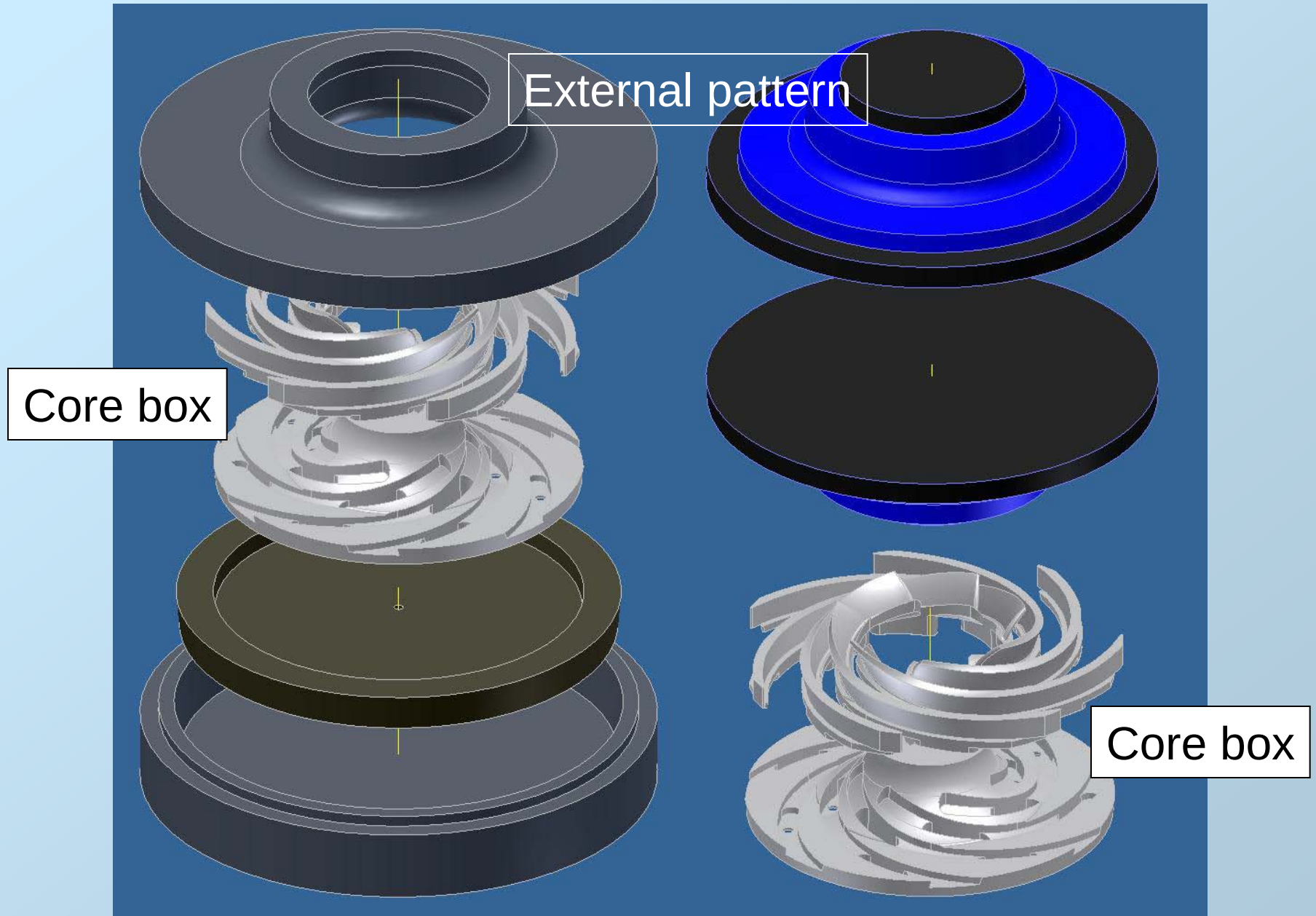
3D Virtual solid model



Fast impeller production

The virtual solid model was post processed to obtain all the pattern components through Rapid Prototyping for fast production, as required by Contractor and End User to complete the plant commissioning and release to production

Rapid Prototyping of all pattern components



3D scanning for accurate casting inspection

Once the casting was obtained a 3D scanning of the impeller allowed the complete geometrical inspection to verify the compliance of the casting to the original design.

This step was needed because:

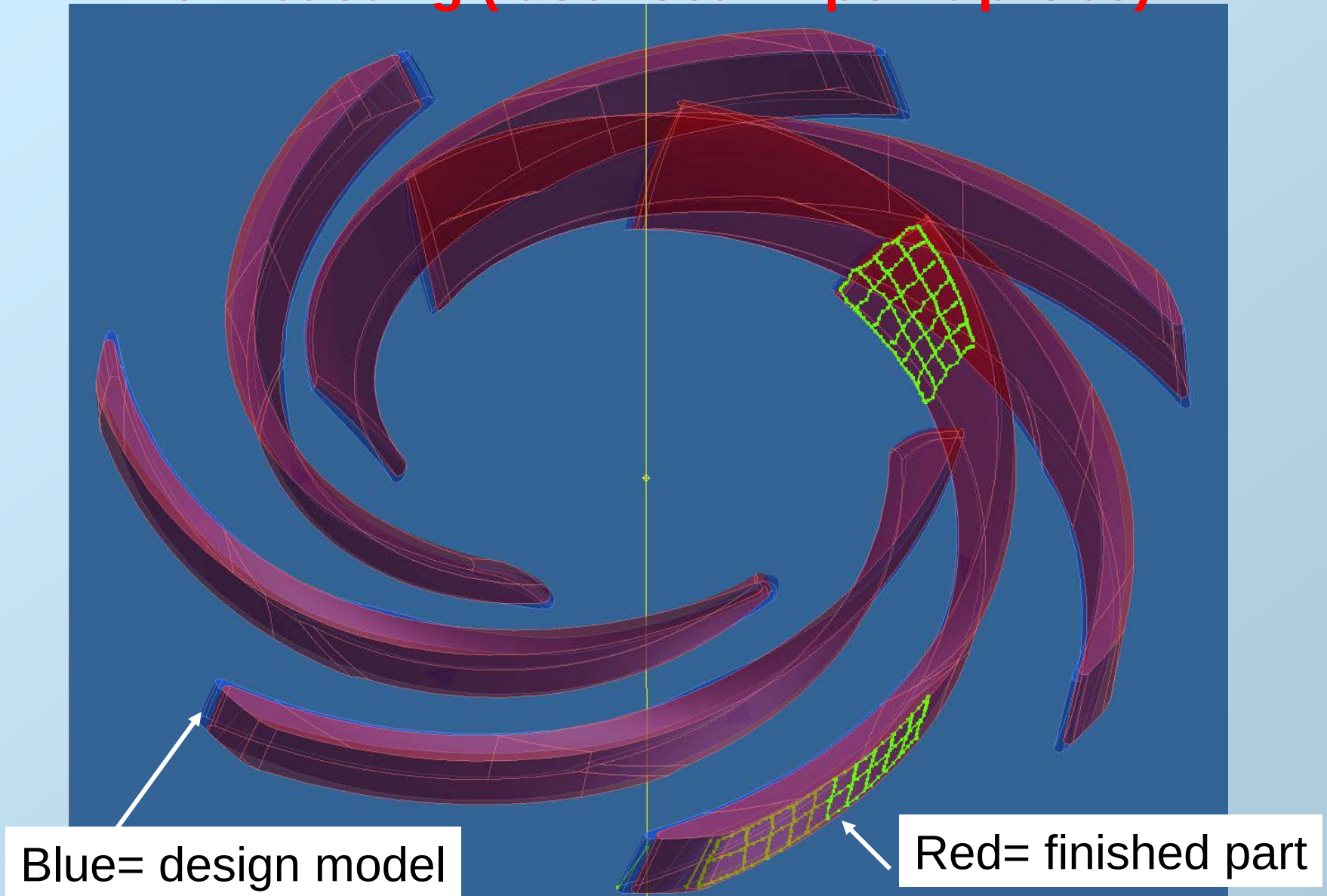
a) Incidence angle is very sensitive parameter.

In relation to suction recirculation onset and cavitation behaviour only tight tolerance for incidence and inlet blade angle is allowed ($\pm 0.5^\circ$)

b) The new impeller could not be tested at the shop.

The rotor had to be directly installed at site for quick plant restart, possibly avoiding any rework i.e. impeller outlet diameter to readjust head for any geometrical deviation (out of tolerance) at blade outlet (angle, span, thickness)

Shrouded Impeller blades are 3D scanned from casting (laser scan +point probe)



Machined impeller as shipped (June 09)



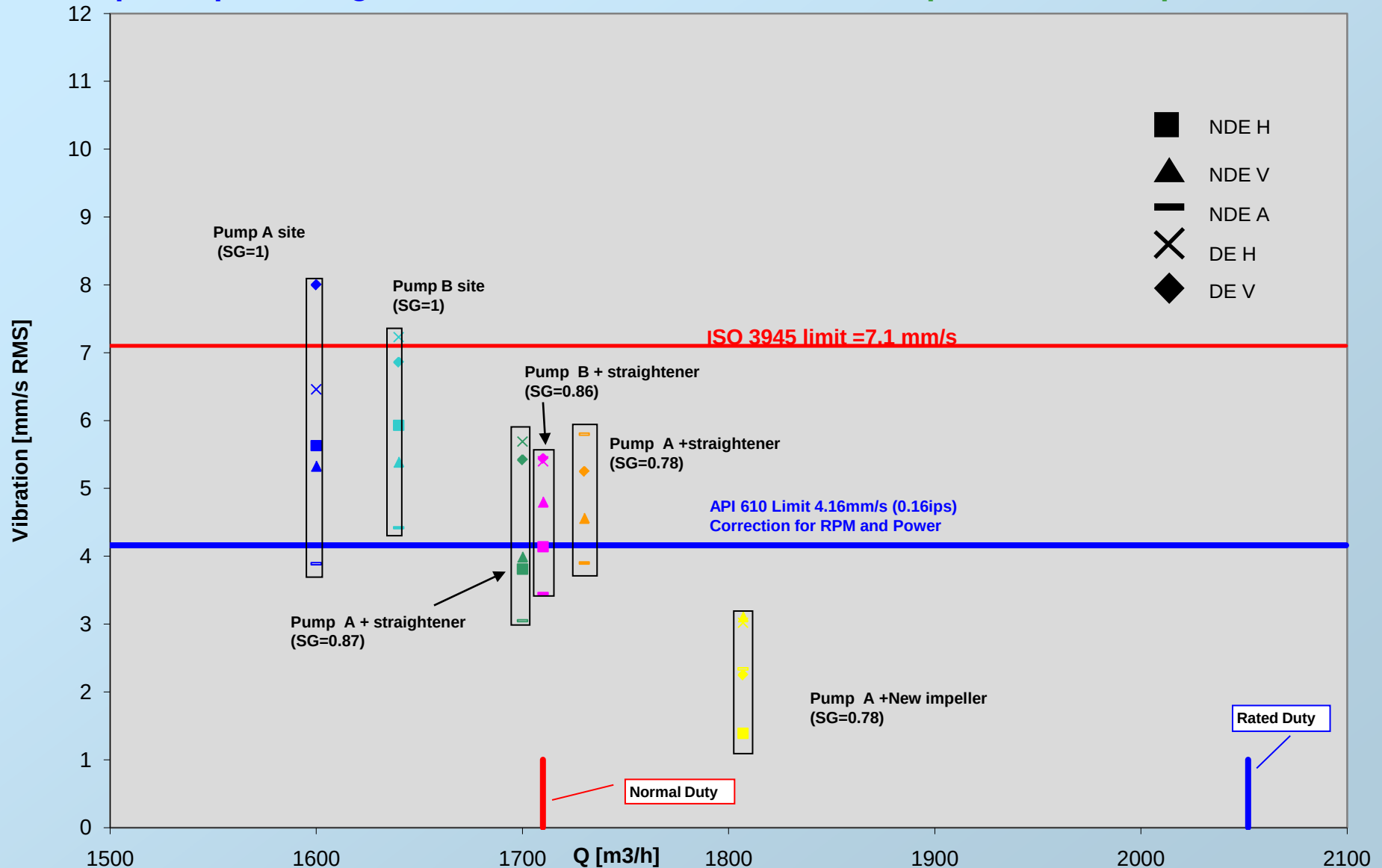
Remarks:

- 1) No shop test
- 2) Total lead time from hydraulic design to finished machined = 7 weeks

Preliminary field results pump A (July 2009)

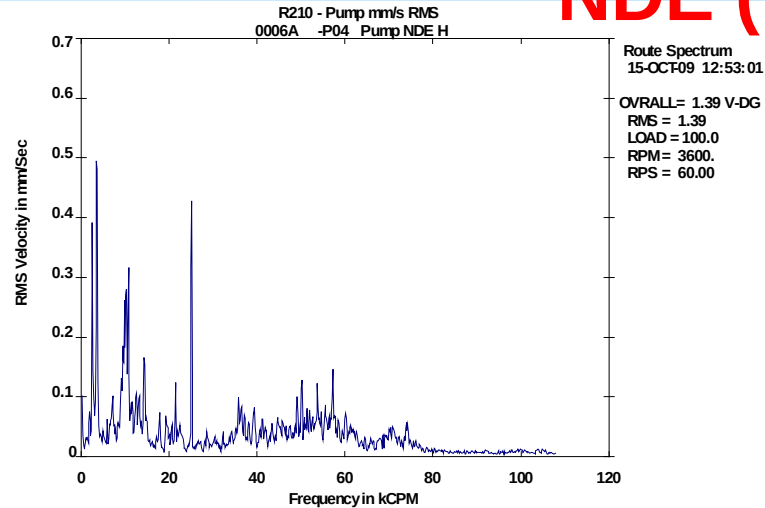
Pump accepted : August 2009

Plant released to full production : September 2009

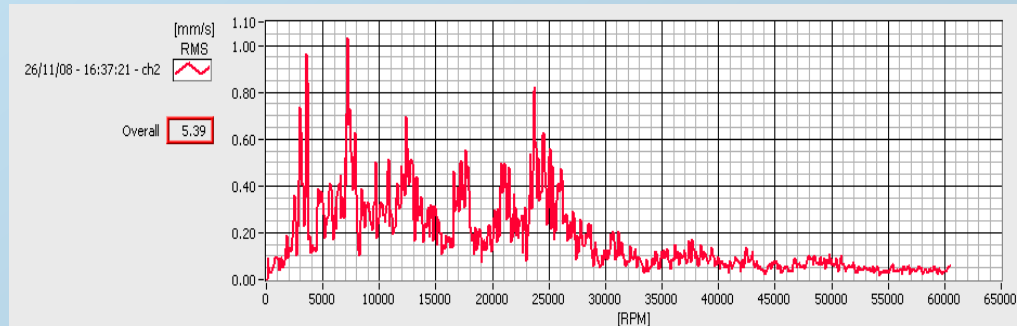
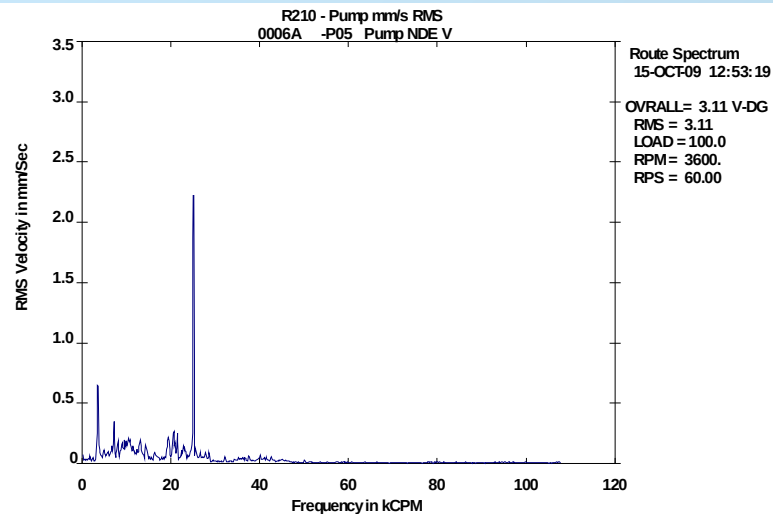
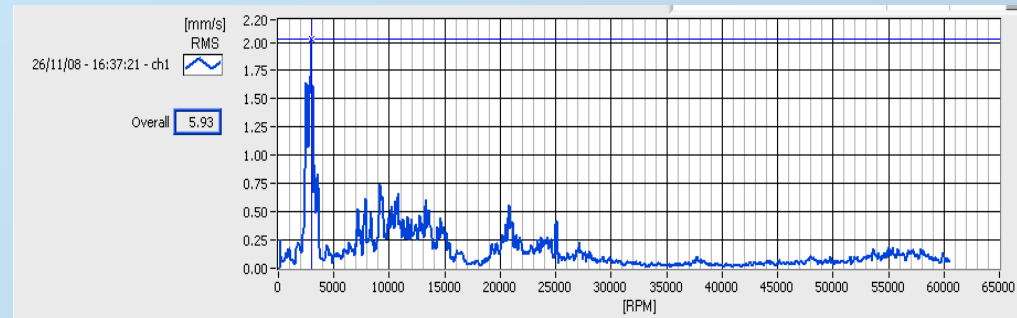


Field data comparison at normal capacity

NDE (October 2009)



Initial field data with old impeller



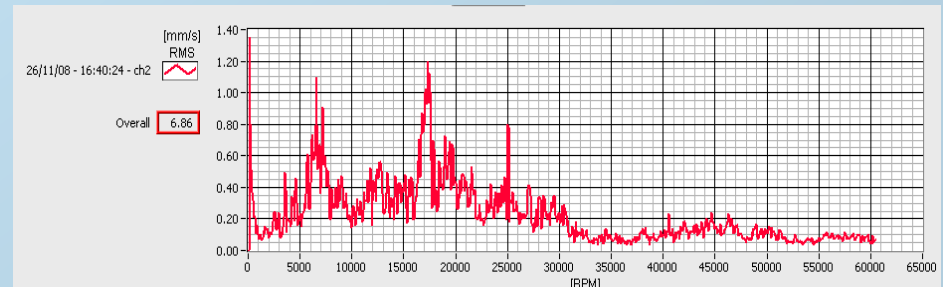
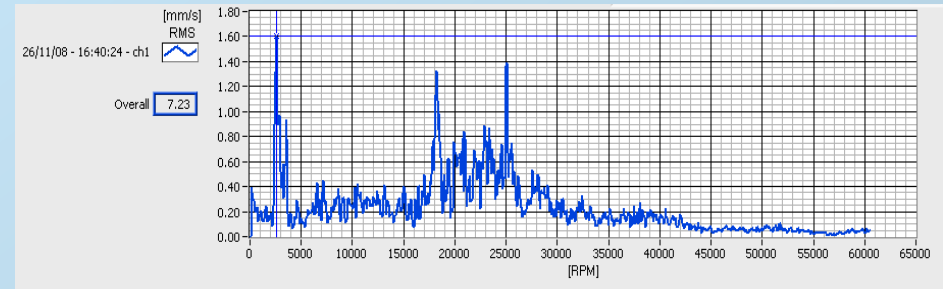
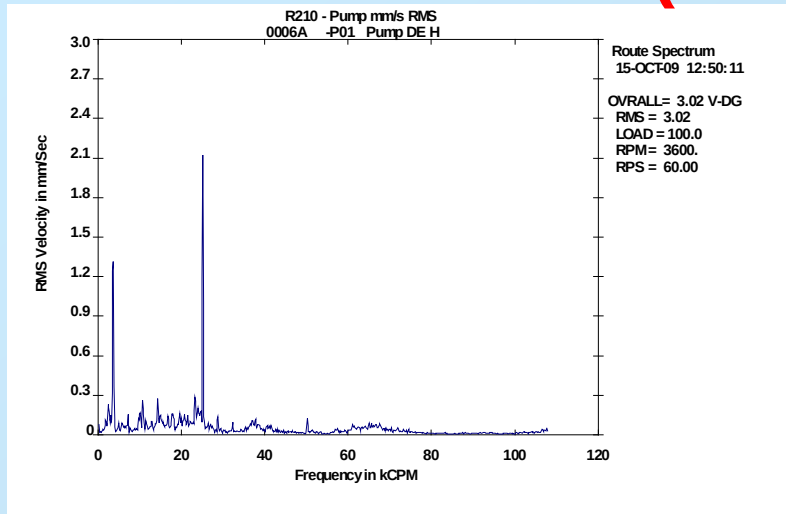
Final field data with new impeller

	Old	New
H mm/s(ips)	5.93 (0.23)	1.39 (0.05)
V mm/s(ips)	5.39 (0.21)	3.11 (0.12)

Field data comparison at normal capacity

DE (October 2009)

Initial field data with old impeller



Final field data with new impeller

	Old	New
H mm/s(ips)	7.23 (0.28)	3.02 (0.12)
V mm/s(ips)	6.86 (0.27)	2.25 (0.09)

Conclusions

An analytical diagnostics approach has been applied along with experimental investigation for identifying the vibration root cause. The vibration source was identified as mainly an internal hydraulic excitation due to high vane inlet angle not suitable for the expected operating range

A new impeller was designed with geometry fully optimized for the intended operating range , particularly the inlet geometry (**customized design**).

The new impellers were manufactured using a Rapid Prototyping process to meet customer impellent needs.

A 3D scanning protocol has been used to verify consistency of casting to the design and allow straight installation at site with minimal risk

The new impellers have been installed in the pumps and field data show a drastic reduction of all vibration components below API acceptance level with full satisfaction of Contractor and End User for ultimate solution of pump vibrations with fast field implementation allowing the start of plant production according schedule.