Prediction equations are developed and evaluated to estimate the maximum sustainable pull and the form of penetration of land anchors. The theories for estimating the pattern of penetration and maximum sustainable anchor force compare well with the measured results in five contrasting soil conditions. The maximum and mean error between the predicted and measured maximum anchor force were 13% and 8%, respectively, representing an over-prediction of force in both cases. The correlation coefficient between the maximum anchor force and the mean values of soil shear strength, obtained using the cone index and shear vane were 0.86 and 0.85 respectively indicating that both the cone penetrometer and shear vane are valuable for in-field prediction of maximum anchor forces in both dry frictional and plastic clay soils.

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1. Introduction

Soil anchors, Fig. 1, are drawn into the soil surface for a wide range of applications from the classic marine applications for stabilizing both ships and oil platforms for the petrochemical industry, to anchors for assisting in the mobility of vehicles in poor tractive conditions on land. The design of a number of alternative anchors have been studied for use in the petrochemical industry, the majority of these, however, have been simple, empirical "pull" tests in a limited number of soil conditions (Honda and Makamura and Peuch). Although the performance of anchors has been related to cohesion in clay soils and both submerged unit weight of the soil and operating depth in sandy soils (Peuch) the maximum sustainable anchor forces have not been found to be predictable using soil mechanics principles. In contrast to the work of Peuch, Ahmad designed winch anchors using the theory developed by Hettiaratchi and Reece for predicting passive soil forces but did not conduct an experimental evaluation of his designs.
The purpose of this work was to adapt the most appropriate theories developed for soil engaging tools to the performance of soil engaging anchors in a range of soils in terms of the ability of the anchor to both penetrate the soil and to sustain a given pull \(P\). The benefits of so doing would be to facilitate the prediction of the performance of anchors in various soils, and permit the effects of the geometry, i.e. depth \(d\), width \(w\), rake angle \(\alpha\) and hitch length \(l\) (see Fig. 2) of the anchor to be evaluated in future designs.

This study was conducted using both theoretical and experimental approaches in the field and laboratory by relating the penetration and anchor force of the anchor, shown in Fig. 1, to a range of soil conditions. The soil physical conditions were assessed using laboratory based measurements of the Mohr–Coulomb soil properties of cohesion \(c\) and angle of internal friction \(\phi\), and which were then used with the force prediction models to calculate the resultant force as the anchor penetrated the soil. Tests of cone penetrometer resistance and shear strength \(\tau\) were made, which enables “in field” estimates of anchor force \(P\) to be made.

Three field and two laboratory conditions were selected to give a range of soil shear strengths.

2. Theoretical considerations

During the early stages of penetration, Fig. 3 (upper) and Fig. 4 (upper), the anchor behaves as two independent narrow tines of width \(w\), causing two crescent type soil disturbance patterns, i.e. with upward, forward and sideways soil movement as reported by Godwin and Spoor. At greater depths, Fig. 3 (lower) and Fig. 4 (lower), the independent action...
Fig. 4. Soil failure patterns: initial penetration (upper), equilibrium working depth (lower)

of the two points is enveloped by a larger soil failure crescent produced by the width \( w \) of the anchor behaving as a wide tine (Payne).

2.1. Depth of penetration

The depth of penetration of mole drainage ploughs, for a given forward distance travelled, as recorded by Spoer et al., can be accurately predicted by Eqn (1) developed by Cowell and Sial. Hence, this approach was considered to predict the depth of penetration \( y \) of the anchor for a given forward distance travelled

\[
y = y_e(1 - e^{-sa})
\]

where \( y \) is implement depth, \( y_e \) is equilibrium depth, \( l \) is hitch length and \( s \) is forward distance travelled. The critical feature of this equation is that the rate of penetration is not affected by the soil condition but only by the hitch length \( l \) of the implement.

2.2. Soil forces

The forces on the anchor are represented as shown in Fig. 2; where \( P \) is anchor pull, at a given depth, \( H_t \) is horizontal component of frictional force between anchor and soil. (This may act either at the front of the shank or further along the shank depending on the depth of penetration), \( V_i \) is vertical component of frictional force between anchor and soil, \( H_t \) is horizontal component of anchor sprag force and \( V_i \) is vertical component of anchor sprag force.

The anchor was pulled using a long cable to minimize any deviations in the direction of the force \( P \) from the horizontal. Soil–metal adhesion effects were ignored as they contribute a very small proportion of the total force and were negligible for all the soils tested.

Resolving vertically gives

\[
V_i = V_i + Mg
\]

By definition the horizontal frictional force

\[
H_t = V_i \tan \phi
\]

Resolving horizontally gives

\[
P = H_t + H_t = (V_i + Mg) \tan \alpha + H_t
\]

The force \( H_t \) at a given depth of work can be estimated by the passive earth pressure theory developed by Hettiaratchi and Reece for two-dimensional soil failure and extended for three-dimensional soil failure patterns by Godwin and Spoer and Godwin et al. as given in Eqn (5). For simplicity it was assumed that the anchor behaved as a blade, as shown in Fig. 4 (lower) over the full depth of penetration rather than assuming that at shallow depths it behaves as two separate tines [Fig. 4(upper)]. Theoretically, this over predicts the force at shallow depths, but this was not considered critical as it was but a transitory position and significant increases in anchor force would result from further increases in penetration depth

\[
H_t = (yd^2N_p + cdN_{ca} + qdN_q) \\
\times \left[w + d \left(m - \frac{1}{3}(m - 1)\right)\right] \sin (\alpha + \delta)
\]

(5)

Similarly the vertical component \( V_i \) can be estimated from Eqn (6), after Wheeler and Godwin

\[
V_i = (yd^2N_p + cdN_{ca} + qdN_q) \\
\times \left[w + d \left(m - \frac{1}{3}(m - 1)\right)\right] \cos (\alpha + \delta)
\]

(6)

The values of the dimensionless \( N \) factors \( N_p, N_{ca} \) and \( N_q \) and the rupture distance ratio \( m \) (where \( m \) is the forward distance of soil treatment from the tine at the surface divided by the depth of the tine) are given...
in Hettiaratchi and Reece\textsuperscript{4} and Godwin and Spoors\textsuperscript{5} respectively.

2.3. Example calculation

The following example illustrates the calculations involved when the anchor with mass \((M)\) of 90 kg, is operating at a width \((w)\) of 0.6 m, a depth \((d)\) of 0.5 m and a rake angle \((\alpha)\) of 25\(^\circ\) in soil with the properties given in Table 1.

The \(N\) factors are from the data in Hettiaratchi and Reece\textsuperscript{4} for a soil-metal friction angle \((\delta)\) of 20\(^\circ\).

The following values were substituted into Eqn (5)

\[
M = 90 \text{ kg}; \\
\gamma = 15 \text{ kN/m}^2; \\
d = 0.5 \text{ m}; \\
N_r = 1.52; \\
c = 30 \text{ kN/m}^2; \\
N_{ca} = 1.79; \\
w = 0.5 \text{ m}; \\
m = 2.6; \\
\alpha = 25^\circ; \\
\delta = 20^\circ.
\]

Hence

\[
H_i = ((15 \times 0.5^2 \times 1.52) + (30 \times 0.5 \times 1.79)) \\
\times (0.5 + 0.5 \left(2.6 - \frac{2.6 - 1}{3}\right)) \sin (25 + 20)
\]

\[
H_i = 35.2 \text{ kN}
\]

and similarly from Eqn (6)

\[
V_i = 35.2 \text{ kN}
\]

The combination of values of rake angle \((\alpha)\) and soil metal friction \((\delta)\) used in this example mean that \(H_i\) has the same value as \(V_i\).

The total pull \(P\) is calculated using Eqn (4)

\[
P = (35.2 + 0.9) \tan 20 + 35.2 = 48.3 \text{ kN}
\]

To determine the characteristics of the force-depth relationship a computer programme was written with the appropriate \(N\) factors included to estimate the anchor force \((P)\), at increasing depths, up to the maximum depth of operation.

3. Experimental investigation

Studies were conducted to determine the rate of penetration and corresponding anchor forces in both the field and laboratory. The anchor was positioned as shown in Fig. 1, on a soil surface, and pulled in the field (at 0.6 m/s) with a 90 kW four wheel drive tractor of mass 7 t, either directly or via a pulley block to double the available tractor pull.

The force was measured using a shear pin dynamometer, the signal from which was recorded in both analogue and digital format. The penetration performance was obtained by making a video recording of the event and by excavating and surveying the disturbed soil profile. Subsequently the penetration depth and analogue force data were synchronized and force/depth relationships obtained.

The laboratory experiments were conducted, at 0.3 m/s, in a 20 m long, 1.5 m wide, 1.0 m deep soil bin where two sandy loam soils \((\gamma = 1.45 \text{ t/m}^3\) and 1.31 t/m\(^3\)) were prepared by packing the soil in 50 mm deep layers and rolling each layer to obtain uniform conditions.

The following soil properties were measured for use in the calculations. The values of \(c\) and \(\phi\) were obtained from undrained triaxial tests, Bishop and Henkle.\textsuperscript{13} The values of \(\delta\) and \(c_s\) were obtained by drawing samples of the implement material over the soil at a range of normal loads and recording the horizontal force, after Crowther and Haines.\textsuperscript{12}

Measurements of cone index (CI) were made “in-field” using the standard 126-7 mm\(^2\), 30\(^\circ\) cone, ASAE standard S313-1, (Anderson et al.\textsuperscript{13}) and soil shear strength \((\tau)\), using the shear vane, \((Aas)\).\textsuperscript{14}

In addition to the above properties gravimetric soil moisture content and bulk density measurements were made. The physical properties of the soils are summarized in Table 2 and the mechanical analyses are presented in Table 3. Two of the field soils were cropped land, while the third soil, the compact sandy loam, was a field track.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mohr–Coulomb and related properties</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulk unit weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surcharge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adhesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angle of internal shearing resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angle of soil–metal friction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2
Physical properties of the soils used in the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Laboratory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultivated sandy loam</td>
<td>Compact sandy loam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet bulk density ($\rho$) t/m$^3$</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moisture content %d.b.</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shear strength* ($\tau$), kN/m$^2$</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cone index* (CI), kN/m$^2$</td>
<td>1725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion ($c$), kN/m$^2$</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal friction ($\phi$), deg</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adhesion ($c_a$), kN/m$^2$</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil-metal friction ($\delta$), deg</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mean over the range of depths recorded.

Table 3
Mechanical analysis of soils used in the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sandy loam (Cottenham series*)</th>
<th>Sand %</th>
<th>Silt %</th>
<th>Clay %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandy loam</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay (Evesham series*)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A full description is given in King.15

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Penetration

Providing the leading edge of the anchor was free from trash, penetration was achieved in all the soils tested, with no sign of the anchor skidding along the surface. The front of the anchor stayed in contact with the ground at all times, as shown in Fig. 2. Typical penetration profiles created by the anchor when entering the soil are shown in Fig. 5 from which it can be seen the final depth reached varied with soil type and condition. The greatest equilibrium depth of penetration of 0.75 m was achieved in the loose sandy loam soil in the laboratory.

Also shown in Fig. 5 are the penetration profiles, as fitted by the model of Cowell and Sial,8 which shows that 95% of the equilibrium depth was reached within 4 m of travel when the hitch length ($l$) was 1.32 m. The measured penetration profiles correspond well with the estimated values especially in laboratory conditions.

4.2. Anchor force versus depth relationship

The force versus depth relationships are shown in Fig. 6 for the five soils. The predicted values are also shown and in all cases the anchor force increased at an increasing rate with working depth. As would be expected (owing to closely controlled soil conditions) the laboratory-based experiments, show closer agreement between predicted and measured values over the depth range than the field-based experiments. The field results showed some deviation between predicted and measured values owing to the variation in soil shear strength with depth. All the predicted values at the equilibrium working depth compared well with those measured, with a mean over-prediction error of
8% for all soils. The largest over-prediction error at the equilibrium working depth of 13% occurred in the compact sandy loam.

The predictions illustrate that the anchor force \( (P) \) would be significantly increased if the final depth could be increased, hence any modifications which increase the final operating depth of the anchor would be of benefit.

4.3. Anchor force versus cone index and shear strength

The relationship between maximum sustainable anchor force \( (P) \), and the mean value of cone index throughout the soil profile down to a depth of 0.5 m for all soils is shown in Fig. 7 (upper). The line on the graph represents the result of linear regression analysis over the working range, with a correlation coefficient \( (R) \) of 0.85.

The relationship between the maximum sustainable anchor force \( (P) \) and the mean value of shear strength \( (\tau) \) as measured by shear vane down to a depth of 0.5 m at 50 mm intervals is shown in Fig. 7 (lower). The relationship is very similar to that between force and cone index, with the maximum anchor force \( (P) \), increasing linearly with shear strength with a correlation coefficient \( (R) \) of 0.86.

5. Conclusions

1. The penetration of the anchor followed a similar pattern for all the soil conditions examined and the distance travelled (approximately 4 m) to reach 95% of the equilibrium depth, followed the pattern of penetration behaviour proposed by Cowell and Sial.8

2. The anchor force \( (P) \) at the equilibrium working depth, was over-predicted with a maximum error of 13% and a mean error of 8%, from a knowledge of the Mohr–Coulomb soil mechanics properties using...
an adapted version of a model developed by Godwin et al.$^9$ It is reasonable to assume that this model can be used to predict the effects of changing the geometry on the anchor force.

3. Linear correlations coefficients ($R$) of 0.85 and 0.86 were obtained between the maximum anchor force ($P$) and the cone index (measured using the standard cone penetrometer) and soil shear strength (measured using the shear vane) respectively in a range of frictional and plastic clay soils. These relationships have practical significance in providing a “quick” method of estimating the maximum anchor force in field conditions.

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