

Casting Simulation Analyses of A390 Aluminum Brake Shoe

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ABSTRACT

The A356 aluminium alloy was used on the casting of the brake shoe in the near years, but, the braking action was apt to cause the brake shoe to increase its body size because of its higher thermal expansion character of A356 alloy. The phenomenon would induce the brake lining to contact the brake drum abnormally and to decrease the braking efficiency. The A390 aluminium alloy with low coefficient of expansion can then be used to cast the brake shoe and thus to solve this problem. This research is aimed at evaluating how to cast the A390 aluminum alloy brake shoe by the CO₂ sand mold method, utilizing the computer-aided engineering (CAE) simulation software FLOW-3D to study the influences of gating system designs on the A390 alloy brake shoe, and to analyze the flow of filling and the solidification of brake shoe castings. In addition, the simulations are also conducted and expected to achieve the optimum design of gating and riser systems for the A390 alloy brake shoe, and the X-ray examinations for the practical castings poured are carried out to evaluate the validity of FLOW-3D simulations. The criteria of predicting the defects produced in castings which are built in the software FLOW-3D, including the solidification fraction, solidification time, solidification gradient, solidus velocity and Niyama porosity index were used to determine the gating system designs, and to find the position of the shrinkage in the brake shoe castings. The results of this study indicate that the gating system with design of the sprue well can alleviate the flowing impact of aluminum melt falling from the inlet of sprue to the runner. While the design of bilateral R corners joining the runner and the ingate can reduce the flowing velocity at the ingate. Besides, the non-pressurized gating system with 1:4:4 gating ratio can effectively control the velocity at the ingate and prevent the turbulence of melt flow compared to the other gating systems with gating ratio(1:2:2, 1:2:3 and 1:3:3). The practical castings show that the shrinkage defects occurred are in accordance with the results of simulation. Finally, the casting designs by the FLOW-3D would improve the quality of A390 alloy brake shoe castings.

Keywords : FLOW-3D ; brake shoe ; A390 aluminum alloy ; CO₂ sand mold ; CAE ; computer-aided engineering

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