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Abstract

Predicting high-bandwidth electrohydraulic actuator dynamics is often limited by two simplifying assumptions: constant discharge coefficient and neglect of transient fluid inertia. This work addresses both within a unified multi-scale framework. At the micro scale, 112 CFD simulations are used to develop a regime-aware closed-form correlation for $C_d(R_e)$ spanning laminar, transitional, and turbulent flow, with $R^2=0.978$. At the meso scale, transient fluid inertia is coupled with jet-momentum flow force. At the macro scale, these effects are incorporated into a reduced-order motor–spool–line model for real-time implementation. Validation on a direct-drive pilotless prototype, using laboratory tests, hardware-in-the-loop simulation, and operating-condition emulation, shows magnitude errors below 5% over 1–800 Hz, bandwidth and natural-frequency errors within $\pm 3.2\%$, and phase errors below 10° up to 600 Hz. Ablation results indicate that assuming constant C_d increases displacement error by 50% and phase-margin loss by up to 18° , neglecting transient inertia increases error by 28%, and omitting both increases error by 125%. The prototype achieves a 950 Hz natural frequency and a 650 Hz closed-loop –3 dB bandwidth. These results demonstrate that physics-informed multi-scale coupling is critical for predictive design and digital-twin deployment of next-generation high-bandwidth electrohydraulic systems.

27 **Keywords:** Electrohydraulic actuator; Servo valve; Transitional flow; Discharge coefficient;
 28 Computational fluid dynamics; Reduced-order modeling; Transient fluid inertia; Hardware-in-the-
 29 loop; Digital twin.

30

31 Nomenclature

Symbol	Description	Unit
A	Geometric orifice area	m^2
A_s	Pressure-sensitive spool area	mm^2
B_m	Motor friction coefficient	$\text{N}\cdot\text{m}\cdot\text{s}/\text{rad}$
B_s	Spool damping coefficient	$\text{N}\cdot\text{s}/\text{m}$
C_d	Discharge coefficient	—
$C_d(Re)$	Regime-aware discharge coefficient correlation	—
C_{line}	Line compliance	m^3/Pa
d_H	Hydraulic diameter	μm
F_x	Axial flow force	N
h	Orifice opening height	mm
J_m	Motor rotor inertia	$\text{kg}\cdot\text{m}^2$
K_b	Back-EMF constant	$\text{V}\cdot\text{s}/\text{rad}$
K_f	Flow-force damping coefficient	$\text{N}\cdot\text{s}/\text{m}$
K_h	Hydraulic stiffness	N/m
K_m	Motor torque constant	$\text{N}\cdot\text{m}/\text{A}$
K_s	Return-spring stiffness	N/m
L_a	Armature inductance	mH
L_e	Effective fluid-column length	m
M_t	Equivalent lumped transient fluid inertia	kg

Symbol	Description	Unit
M_{eff}	Effective spool mass	kg
P	Wetted perimeter	m
ΔP	Orifice pressure drop	Pa
Q	Volumetric flow rate	L/min
Re	Reynolds number	—
R_a	Armature resistance	Ω
R_{line}	Line resistance	bar/(L/s)
V_a	Armature voltage	V
w	Slot width	mm
x_v	Spool displacement	mm
Z_{line}	Line impedance	$\text{Pa}\cdot\text{s}/\text{m}^5$
θ	Jet deflection angle	deg
ρ	Fluid density	kg/m^3
μ	Dynamic viscosity	$\text{Pa}\cdot\text{s}$
ω_n	Natural frequency	rad/s
ζ	Damping ratio	—

32 1. Introduction

33 1.1 Background and motivation

34 Electrohydraulic actuators (EHAs) remain indispensable wherever high force density, stiffness, and
35 bandwidth must be delivered simultaneously, most prominently in aerospace flight control, precision
36 manufacturing, and robotic manipulation [1–4]. Despite sustained advances in electromechanical
37 actuation, electrohydraulic servo valves retain superior power-to-weight ratios and dynamic response
38 in bandwidth-critical regimes [5–8]. Exploiting the full performance envelope of modern EHAs,
39 however, requires accurate prediction of the flow-metering physics inside servo-valve orifices, at length
40 scales where conventional macro-scale assumptions cease to hold.

At the hydraulic diameters characteristic of precision metering geometries ($d_H = 20\text{--}500\ \mu\text{m}$), Reynolds numbers routinely span $Re = 100\text{--}5000$ during fine positioning tasks. Across this range the discharge coefficient varies non-monotonically from approximately 0.50 to 0.63, governed by Reynolds number, orifice edge geometry, and the formation dynamics of the vena contracta [9–14]. A 10% deviation in C_d at $Re < 500$ can erode closed-loop phase margin by more than 15° , a loss sufficient to destabilize control loops targeting bandwidths above 100 Hz [15–17]. Compounding this error, transient fluid inertia, routinely neglected in quasi-steady formulations, becomes a first-order contributor to spool dynamics above roughly 50 Hz, where rapid pressure transients during high-rate maneuvers generate reaction forces proportional to dQ/dt [18–20]. Its omission systematically underpredicts flow forces, by up to 28% in root-mean-square terms in the present study, consistent with reported identification errors in servo-hydraulic systems [21, 22]. For high-bandwidth applications, the nonlinear amplification of micro-scale metering errors into macro-scale instability constitutes a critical, and hitherto unresolved, modeling gap.

1.2 The scale-coupling challenge

Accurate EHA modeling requires rigorous coupling across three physically distinct scales.

Micro scale (orifice metering physics). As surface forces grow relative to inertial forces, viscous boundary layers occupy 70–90% of the micro-orifice cross-section, and precision-machining striations and edge imperfections critically modulate the vena contracta topology. Regime-aware $C_d(Re)$ characterization is therefore required to capture the non-monotonic laminar-to-turbulent transition that constant- $C_d \approx 0.61$ formulations cannot represent.

Meso scale (flow-force generation). The axial flow force on the valve spool comprises two mechanisms described by the Reynolds transport theorem:

$$F_x = \rho Q v_{\text{jet}} \cos \theta + \rho L_e dQ/dt \quad (1)$$

where the first term is the steady jet-momentum force and the second captures transient fluid inertia [18–20]. In miniaturized servo valves, small fluid volumes and short column lengths produce extremely rapid pressure transients, elevating the transient-inertia term from a secondary correction to a primary dynamic contribution. Omitting it systematically underpredicts flow forces and distorts the identified spool dynamics [21, 22].

69 **Macro scale (system-level dynamics).** Hydraulic transmission lines, compliant packaging, and
70 structural resonances form lightly damped impedance networks whose coupling with the valve
71 produces gain peaking and phase degradation inside the operational bandwidth [23–27]. Reduced-order
72 surrogates that capture this coupling are essential for system-level co-design of actuator geometry,
73 fluidic interconnects, and embedded control architecture [28–31], yet most existing models treat orifice
74 physics, flow forces, and system dynamics as decoupled sub-problems.

75 This scale-coupling paradox, in which the physics most commonly neglected in industrial models
76 becomes most consequential at precision-control scales, is the central scientific motivation of this work.

77 **1.3 Research gap and contributions**

78 This study bridges micro-scale flow physics and macro-scale actuator dynamics through a unified
79 micro–meso–macro predictive simulation framework, validated experimentally on a representative
80 direct-drive pilotless actuator. The proposed methodology resolves long-standing discrepancies in
81 discharge-coefficient assumptions and transient-inertia modeling. The specific contributions are as
82 follows.

83 **(1) A regime-aware, closed-form discharge correlation suitable for real-time embedding.** A
84 systematic campaign of 112 high-fidelity CFD simulations spanning $Re = 100\text{--}5000$ yields a
85 continuous algebraic correlation for $C_d(Re)$ ($R^2 = 0.978$). Unlike look-up tables or iterative solvers, the
86 formulation is computationally trivial and can be embedded directly in real-time control architectures
87 and reduced-order digital twins.

88 **(2) A multi-scale physics-coupling methodology.** A rigorous coupling strategy propagates the CFD-
89 derived $C_d(Re)$ correlation and the Reynolds-transport transient-fluid-inertia term seamlessly from the
90 micro-orifice scale to macro-scale mass–spring–damper dynamics, capturing the Reynolds-number-
91 dependent stiffness and damping variations that constant- C_d models fundamentally miss.

92 **(3) Rigorous triple-domain verification and validation.** Following ASME V&V 20 and ISO GUM
93 practice, closed-loop frequency-response predictions match measurements within 5% in magnitude
94 over 1–800 Hz, within $\pm 3.2\%$ in natural frequency and bandwidth, and within 10° in phase up to 600
95 Hz. Comprehensive ablation studies isolate the individual physical contributions and confirm
96 quantitatively that both regime-aware metering and transient fluid inertia are indispensable for accurate
97 stability prediction.

(4) **Quantitative decomposition of bandwidth-limiting mechanisms.** The framework decomposes dynamic performance limits into physically identifiable sources, providing actionable design targets for next-generation actuators.

(5) **Generalizability through scale-closure analysis.** Dimensional scaling analysis shows that the framework's core physics, namely regime-dependent discharge, transient fluid inertia, and flow-force coupling, grow in significance as device dimensions shrink toward precision scales, establishing a methodological pathway across disparate length scales.

2. Literature review

2.1 Electrohydraulic actuation and modeling

The foundational treatments of Merritt [32] and Blackburn et al. [33] established quasi-steady orifice-flow models with a constant discharge coefficient ($C_d \approx 0.61$) that have dominated hydraulic control practice for seven decades. These models presume fully turbulent flow, a condition rarely satisfied in precision servo valves whose metering orifices traverse the laminar and transitional regimes [10, 12, 13]. Recent evidence underscores the stability consequences of this simplification: Zhao et al. [15] showed that discharge-coefficient modeling errors directly degrade stability margins in electrohydraulic systems, and Li et al. [13] measured pronounced C_d variation across Reynolds number in hydraulic spool valves. In parallel, a substantial control literature has produced nonlinear adaptive, robust, gain-scheduled, and sliding-mode designs for electrohydraulic systems [16–19, 34, 35]; these controllers, however, typically inherit the constant- C_d plant model, leaving the underlying physics gap unresolved.

2.2 Computational fluid dynamics in valve design

CFD has become an essential tool for valve design and optimization. Lisowski and co-workers analyzed flow forces under cavitating conditions [36] and in proportional valves with rectangular metering edges [37], while Nishida and Ivantysynova examined under-lapped and overlapped metering configurations [38]. Vacca et al. [39] and Chen et al. [40] developed numerical approaches for steady-state flow-force evaluation, later extended to large-flow valves [41] and to energy-loss characterization [42], and Wang et al. [14] resolved transitional flow inside a spool valve. These studies focus predominantly on static characterization and do not address the transient-inertia effects that govern high-frequency dynamic prediction.

127 **2.3 Multi-scale modeling and system identification**

128 The need for approaches that bridge CFD and system-level dynamics is increasingly recognized. Rossi
129 and Vacca [43] presented multi-scale modeling from CFD to system dynamics, Garcia et al. [44]
130 developed predictive commissioning methodologies for high-bandwidth hydraulic systems, and Liang
131 et al. [45] proposed physics-informed digital twins for valve prognostics; co-simulation workflows [28]
132 and component-level design studies [29–31] have further broadened the toolset. System identification
133 has likewise evolved from black-box neural networks toward physics-informed formulations [46, 47,
134 49], including long short-term memory predictors for direct-drive servo valves [48]. What remains
135 missing, as recently emphasized in a survey of the seventy-year modeling gap [50], is a unified micro–
136 meso–macro coupling with an explicit, closed-form metering closure that ensures extrapolation safety
137 across the operating envelope.

138 **2.4 Positioning of the present work**

139 Table 1 situates the proposed framework relative to existing methodologies. Unlike prior approaches,
140 this work integrates regime-aware $C_d(Re)$ physics, a transient-inertia closure, and real-time reduced-
141 order modeling within a single, experimentally validated framework.

142 **3. Representative electrohydraulic actuator architecture**

143 **3.1 System architecture**

144 The experimental platform is a direct-drive electrohydraulic actuator designed to reproduce the
145 dynamic characteristics of high-bandwidth servo systems (Fig. 1). A 12 V DC servo motor (Maxon) is
146 coupled directly, through a low-inertia aluminum shaft, to a hardened-steel spool (10 mm diameter, 0.5
147 mm metering slots, 0–3.5 mm travel) fitted with return springs for fail-safe centering. The valve body
148 is an ISO 4401-05-compliant NG10 four-way, three-position spool valve [55] mounted on a vibration-
149 damped aluminum plate; the manifold is rated for 21 MPa with an 18 MPa pilot relief.

150 The direct-drive architecture eliminates the hydraulic pilot stage entirely. This is particularly
151 advantageous for precision control, where pilot-stage stiction, supply-pressure sensitivity, and internal
152 leakage paths are documented sources of dynamic anomalies and in-service degradation [8, 51–54].
153 The single-stage design achieves (i) elimination of pilot-stage stiction, a documented source of phase-
154 margin erosion; (ii) removal of sensitivity to pilot-supply pressure fluctuation; (iii) a 5–20× reduction

155 in internal leakage paths; and (iv) a 27% volume reduction relative to conventional two-stage servo
156 valves.

157 **Fig. 1.** Conceptual illustration of the pilotless electrohydraulic actuator showing physics propagation
158 from the micro to the macro scale. The cross-section reveals the servo valve (with CFD mesh), where
159 the laminar-to-turbulent transition occurs across the Reynolds-number spectrum ($Re = 100\text{--}5000$); the
160 transition zone ($Re = 300\text{--}3000$) coincides with the range in which precision positioning tasks operate.
161 The electric motor drives the spool against an integrated position sensor, enabling high-bandwidth
162 closed-loop control (natural frequency ≈ 950 Hz) through the unified micro–meso–macro modeling
163 framework. Color-coded flow visualization illustrates how micro-scale physics propagates into macro-
164 scale stability.

165 **3.2 Electronics and control interface**

166 A microcontroller executes supervisory control through a relay H-bridge, driving the servo motor (K_m
167 $= 0.086$ N·m/A) with 500 Hz pulse-width modulation. The direct-drive configuration provides linear
168 current-to-displacement coupling without gain scheduling. The user interface comprises a 4×4 keypad
169 and a 16×2 LCD; RS-232 logging provides data acquisition at 9600 baud. Isolated 5 V/12 V rails with
170 Li-ion backup, thermal shutdown (>80 °C), and overcurrent protection ensure operational safety. An
171 external data-acquisition system (National Instruments CompactDAQ, 16-bit, hardware-synchronized)
172 characterizes the frequency response to 800 Hz, exceeding the Nyquist requirement for identifying the
173 650 Hz closed-loop bandwidth. The experimental arrangement is shown in Fig. 2.

174 **Fig. 2.** Experimental setup for the pilotless electrohydraulic actuator, comprising a DC servo motor
175 mechanically coupled to a Bosch directional control valve. Key components: (1) DC servo motor for
176 spool actuation; (2) precision mechanical coupling; (3) four-way directional control valve with standard
177 ISO 4413 ports (P = pressure, T = tank, A/B = work ports). The system enables micro-positioning of
178 the spool (resolution < 1 μm) for valve characterization across $Re = 100\text{--}5000$, supporting the micro-
179 meso–macro modeling framework presented in this work.

180 **3.3 Instrumentation and physical parameters**

181 High-fidelity instrumentation ensures accurate state reconstruction. Table 2 summarizes the geometric,
182 hydraulic, and electromechanical parameters of the platform.

183 4. Unified multi-scale modeling framework

184 4.1 Framework overview

185 The framework predicts dynamic performance by integrating physics across three scales: (i) at the
186 micro scale, high-fidelity CFD resolves laminar-to-turbulent flow at sub-millimetre openings ($h = 0.3$ –
187 3.5 mm, $Re = 100$ –5000) and yields a regime-aware $C_d(Re)$ correlation; (ii) at the meso scale, the
188 Reynolds transport theorem provides the axial spool force, comprising steady jet momentum and
189 transient fluid inertia; and (iii) at the macro scale, coupled motor electromechanics, spool dynamics,
190 and line impedance yield time- and frequency-domain response with quantifiable stability margins.

191 4.2 Micro-scale CFD modeling

192 4.2.1 Computational domain and setup

193 A sharp-edged rectangular micro-orifice ($L = 1.0$ mm, $d = 0.5$ mm, $w = 10$ mm), representative of servo-
194 valve metering slits, was modeled in ANSYS Fluent 2023R2. The domain included upstream and
195 downstream chambers with reference planes located at least four hydraulic diameters from the orifice
196 to ensure fully developed boundary conditions. Structured meshes with $y^+ \leq 1$ inflation layers and
197 fifteen divisions across the orifice throat resolved the boundary layer.

198 Mesh independence was verified through Grid Convergence Index (GCI) analysis across coarse (8,000-
199 element), medium (18,000-element), and fine (35,000-element) meshes. At the critical transitional
200 Reynolds number ($Re = 2000$), the deviation in C_d and ΔP between the medium and fine meshes
201 remained below 0.4% (Table 3), and the medium mesh was adopted for the production campaign.

202 Simulations used ISO VG 46 hydraulic oil ($\rho = 860$ kg/m³, $\mu = 0.03$ Pa·s). Regime-adaptive turbulence
203 modeling was employed: a laminar closure for $Re < 500$, the γ - Re_θ transition model for $500 \leq Re \leq$
204 2000, and the k - ϵ model for $Re > 2000$. Convergence was enforced with residuals below 10^{-5} and mass-
205 flow-rate stability below 0.1% over the final 500 iterations. Representative transitional-regime flow
206 physics are shown in Fig. 3.

207 **Fig. 3.** Transitional-regime flow physics: vena contracta formation at $Re = 1500$. Velocity streamlines
208 and magnitude contours for ISO VG 46 hydraulic oil through the 1.0 mm orifice show jet acceleration
209 to 5.9 m/s, followed by downstream turning and boundary-layer development. Clear vena contracta
210 formation validates the medium mesh (18,000 elements, $GCI < 0.3\%$, Table 3) for discharge-coefficient

prediction ($C_d = 0.614$ versus the constant 0.62 assumption). The streamline patterns confirm the intermittent separation and reattachment characteristic of the $Re = 500$ – 2500 transitional regime. Boundary conditions: inlet pressure 105.4 kPa, outlet atmospheric. This millimetre-scale validation establishes confidence prior to extrapolation toward smaller precision metering scales.

4.2.2 Correlation development

For each converged solution, the discharge coefficient was evaluated as

$$C_d = Q / [A \sqrt{(2\Delta P/\rho)}] \quad (2)$$

with the Reynolds number computed from

$$Re = \rho v d_H / \mu, \quad d_H = 4A/P \quad (3)$$

A unified dataset of 112 (Re , C_d) pairs ($h = 0.3$ – 3.5 mm, $Re = 100$ – 5000) was assembled. A hyperbolic-tangent form was selected because it bridges the asymptotic plateaus while preserving monotonicity and differentiability:

$$C_d(Re) = C_0 + C_1 \tanh[(\log_{10} Re - \log_{10} Re_c) / \Delta] \quad (4)$$

Nonlinear least-squares fitting (Python SciPy `curve_fit`; bounds $C_0 \in [0.3, 0.7]$, $C_1 \in [-0.3, 0.3]$, $Re_c \in [500, 3000]$, $\Delta \in [0.5, 2.0]$) yielded

$$C_d(Re) = 0.586 + 0.101 \tanh[(\log_{10} Re - \log_{10} 1850) / 1.2] \quad (5)$$

The fit achieves $R^2 = 0.978$ with a root-mean-square error of 0.022, corresponding to a relative error of 3.5% with respect to the mean discharge coefficient (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Discharge-coefficient correlation across flow regimes: CFD validation and model fitting. (a) CFD results (112 cases, $Re = 100$ – 5000) show the nonlinear C_d increase from 0.50 (laminar) to 0.63 (turbulent), captured by the fitted correlation with transition centred at $Re_c = 1850$ ($R^2 = 0.978$, RMSE = 0.022). (b) The model with $\pm 1\sigma$ mesh-convergence error bounds eliminates the 10–15% flow-gain error of constant- C_d assumptions. The tanh-based correlation captures the vena contracta sensitivity in the transitional regime that is essential for stability prediction.

235 4.3 Meso-scale flow forces

236 4.3.1 Governing equation

237 Applying the Reynolds transport theorem to a control volume enclosing the valve chamber yields the
238 total axial force on the spool:

$$239 \quad F_x = \rho Q v_{\text{jet}} \cos \theta + \rho L_e \frac{dQ}{dt} \quad (6)$$

240 in which the first term is the steady jet-momentum force and the second the transient fluid-column
241 inertia. For small perturbations about an operating point $(Q_0, \theta_0, L_{e,0})$, with $v_{\text{jet}} = Q/A_c$ and A_c the
242 contracted jet area, the flow force linearizes to

$$243 \quad \delta F_x = (\partial F_x / \partial Q)|_0 \delta Q + \rho L_e \frac{d(\delta Q)}{dt} \quad (7)$$

$$244 \quad (\partial F_x / \partial Q)|_0 = 2\rho Q_0 \cos \theta_0 / A_{c,0} \quad (8)$$

245 Projected onto the spool coordinate through the metering gradients of Section 4.3.2, these two terms
246 appear in the reduced-order dynamics as an equivalent flow-force damping coefficient K_f (N·s/m) and
247 an equivalent added fluid inertia M_t (kg). Both contributions are essential for predicting spool dynamics
248 above 50 Hz.

249 4.3.2 Connection to micro-scale metering

250 The regime-aware $C_d(Re)$ enters the dynamics through the small-signal flow relation

$$251 \quad \delta Q = (\partial Q / \partial x_v)|_0 \delta x_v + (\partial Q / \partial \Delta P)|_0 \delta \Delta P \quad (9)$$

252 where

$$253 \quad \partial Q / \partial x_v = C_d(Re_0) w \sqrt{(2\Delta P_0 / \rho)}, \quad \partial Q / \partial \Delta P = C_d(Re_0) x_v w \sqrt{(2\Delta P_0 / \rho)} / (2\Delta P_0) \quad (10)$$

254 The regime-aware formulation ensures that the metering sensitivities reflect the actual flow physics
255 across regime transitions, preventing the 10–15% flow-gain underestimation inherent in constant- C_d
256 models.

257 4.3.3 Parameter identification

258 The meso-scale parameters were obtained by multi-source identification: the jet deflection angle $\theta =$
259 18° from CFD exit-plane velocity vectors; the effective fluid-column length $L_e = 0.015$ m from the
260 manifold geometry and transient-pressure fits; the return-spring stiffness $K_s = 1000$ N/m from static
261 deflection; and the damping coefficients $B_s = 8$ N·s/m and $K_f = 1.2$ N·s/m from step-response calibration

using laser displacement and pressure transients. The distributed transient-inertia coefficient is $\rho L_e = 12.9 \text{ kg/m}^2$, and appears in the Reynolds-transport flow-force expression $F_{x,\text{trans}} = \rho L_e \text{d}Q/\text{d}t$. The equivalent lumped inertia projected into the reduced-order spool coordinate is $M_t = 0.013 \text{ kg}$, obtained by frequency-response identification. Accordingly, ρL_e must not be interpreted as a lumped mass, and M_t must not be obtained by direct numerical substitution of ρL_e into the second-order mechanical equation without coordinate projection.

4.4 Macro-scale system dynamics

4.4.1 Spool dynamics

The pilotless spool is modeled as a lumped second-order mechanical system:

$$M_{\text{eff}} \ddot{x}_v + B_{\text{eff}} \dot{x}_v + K_{\text{eff}} x_v = A_s \Delta P - F_x \quad (11)$$

with $m_s = 0.045 \text{ kg}$ and $A_s = 78.5 \text{ mm}^2$. Substituting the linearized orifice relations and embedding $C_d(Re)$ reduces the dynamics to the compact form

$$M_{\text{eff}} \ddot{x}_v + B_{\text{eff}} \dot{x}_v + K_{\text{eff}} x_v = u_{\text{hyd}} \quad (12)$$

with the effective coefficients

$$M_{\text{eff}} = m_s + M_t, \quad B_{\text{eff}} = B_s + K_f, \quad K_{\text{eff}} = K_s + K_h \quad (13)$$

where $K_h \approx 3.5 \times 10^7 \text{ N/m}$ is the hydraulic stiffness arising from line-impedance coupling. Because $K_s = 1000 \text{ N/m}$ is negligible beside K_h , the high natural frequency ($\approx 950 \text{ Hz}$) originates from hydraulic stiffness rather than the mechanical spring, a distinction that is critical for accurate bandwidth prediction.

4.4.2 DC servo-motor electromechanics

The motor is described by the coupled electrical and mechanical equations

$$V_a = L_a \text{d}i_a/\text{d}t + R_a i_a + K_b \omega_m \quad (14)$$

$$T_m = K_m i_a \quad (15)$$

$$J_m \text{d}\omega_m/\text{d}t = T_m - F_x r - B_m \omega_m \quad (16)$$

with $L_a = 1.2 \text{ mH}$, $R_a = 3.5 \text{ }\Omega$, $K_m = K_b = 0.086 \text{ N}\cdot\text{m/A}$, $J_m = 2 \times 10^{-6} \text{ kg}\cdot\text{m}^2$, $B_m = 5 \times 10^{-4} \text{ N}\cdot\text{m}\cdot\text{s/rad}$, and coupling radius $r = 5 \text{ mm}$. The armature inductance is retained to preserve fidelity above 1 kHz .

288 4.4.3 Hydraulic line impedance

289 The supply and return lines are modeled as lumped impedance elements,

$$290 \quad Z_{\text{line}}(s) = R_{\text{line}} + L_{\text{line}}s \quad (17)$$

291 with $R_{\text{line}} \approx 0.5 \text{ bar}/(\text{L/s})$, $L_{\text{line}} \approx 2 \times 10^7 \text{ Pa}\cdot\text{s}^2/\text{m}^5$, and $C_{\text{line}} \approx 0.5 \times 10^{-9} \text{ m}^3/\text{Pa}$. These elements introduce
292 lightly damped resonances (typically 400–600 Hz) that couple with the valve dynamics.

293 4.4.4 Reduced-order transfer function

294 Eliminating the armature current from Eqs. (14)–(16), reflecting the rotor inertia and friction through
295 the coupling radius ($\omega_m = \dot{x}_v/r$), and combining with the spool dynamics of Eq. (12) yields the open-
296 loop transfer function from armature voltage to spool displacement:

$$297 \quad x_v(s)/V_a(s) = (K_m/r) / \{(L_a s + R_a)(M' s^2 + B' s + K_{\text{eff}}) + (K_m K_b/r^2)s\} \quad (18)$$

298 with the reflected inertia and damping $M' = M_{\text{eff}} + J_m/r^2$ and $B' = B_{\text{eff}} + B_m/r^2$. Numerical evaluation
299 with the identified parameters of Appendix A (Table 5), together with closed-loop identification, gives
300 a DC gain of 3–5 mm/V, a dominant resonance at $\omega_n = 6.0 \times 10^3 \text{ rad/s}$ (955 Hz), a damping ratio $\zeta \approx$
301 0.65–0.75, and a closed-loop –3 dB bandwidth of 650 Hz.

302 4.5 Computational implementation

303 The unified framework was implemented as a hybrid workflow. Micro-scale CFD was conducted in
304 ANSYS Fluent 2023R2 (parallel, 12 cores) to generate the regime-aware correlation, and the resulting
305 algebraic closure (Eq. 5) was embedded in MATLAB/Simulink for macro-scale dynamics and
306 hardware-in-the-loop (HIL) simulation. The reduced-order model executes with a 10 μs step, enabling
307 real-time simulation suitable for HIL testing and digital-twin deployment.

308 5. Experimental validation platform

309 5.1 Test-rig configuration

310 The experimental setup (Fig. 5) comprises (1) a hydraulic power unit (21 MPa supply, 40 L/min
311 capacity; Rexroth A4VSO 45 cc/rev axial-piston pump driven by a 7.5 kW electric motor); (2) the
312 pilotless directional control valve with an integrated laser position sensor ($< 1 \mu\text{m}$ resolution); and (3)
313 a linear actuator with an adjustable inertial load (1.5–2.5 kg), representative of control-surface
314 dynamics. System pressure was regulated between 12 and 18 MPa. A 5 L accumulator and a charge

315 pump suppressed pressure ripple to below ± 0.3 MPa, and fluid cleanliness was maintained at ISO
316 4406:18/16/13 by 10 μm return filtration.

317 **Fig. 5.** Experimental validation setup: high-bandwidth pilotless actuator test rig, comprising (1) the
318 hydraulic power unit (21 MPa supply, 40 L/min), (2) the pilotless directional control valve with
319 integrated position sensor (< 1 μm resolution), and (3) a linear actuator with adjustable inertial load
320 (1.5–2.5 kg). The system enables closed-loop bandwidth characterization to 1 kHz and validates the
321 unified micro–meso–macro modeling framework across operating conditions.

322 **5.2 Verification and validation protocol**

323 Validation followed ASME V&V 20 and ISO GUM practice.

324 **Numerical verification.** Mesh independence was confirmed by GCI analysis (Table 3); solver
325 convergence was verified with residuals below 10^{-5} and mass-flow stability below 0.1% over 500
326 iterations; and code-to-code benchmarking against analytical laminar solutions and established
327 turbulent empirical data confirmed solver accuracy across regime transitions.

328 **Physical validation.** Three pathways were pursued: (i) laboratory characterization under controlled
329 boundary conditions (supply pressures 15–21 MPa; inertial loads 1.5–2.5 kg); (ii) hardware-in-the-loop
330 simulation with the reduced-order model executing in real time; and (iii) operating-condition emulation
331 across the full pressure and load envelope.

332 **5.3 Uncertainty quantification**

333 Total measurement uncertainty was quantified per ISO GUM (Table 4). Type A (statistical)
334 contributions were derived from $N = 5$ repeated measurements; standard deviations (e.g., $\sigma_{\text{disp}} \approx 0.08$
335 mm) were computed for displacement, pressure, and flow rate. Type B (systematic) contributions were
336 propagated from instrument calibration certificates (WIKA PS-23: $\pm 0.5\%$ FS; Micro-Epsilon ILD1700:
337 ± 1 μm). The combined uncertainty $u_c = \sqrt{(\sum u_i^2)}$ was expanded with a coverage factor $k = 2$ ($U = 2u_c$)
338 for 95% confidence.

339 6. Results and discussion

340 6.1 Micro-scale metering nonlinearity

341 The measured volumetric flow rate exhibits pronounced curvature across the smallest tested openings
342 ($h \leq 1$ mm), a direct signature of Reynolds-number-dependent metering within the transitional regime
343 ($Re \approx 300$ – 3000). The experimental static metering curves agree with the CFD-derived $C_d(Re)$
344 correlation within the measurement uncertainty bounds of Table 4.

345 6.2 Regime-aware $C_d(Re)$ correlation

346 The 112-case CFD campaign reveals a 26.3% variation in discharge coefficient ($C_d = 0.50$ to 0.63),
347 with peak sensitivity at $Re \approx 1850$. The hyperbolic-tangent correlation (Eq. 5) maps three regimes:
348 laminar ($Re < 300$), with a stable $C_d \approx 0.50$ – 0.53 ; transitional ($300 \leq Re \leq 3000$), in which C_d scales
349 logarithmically with Re ; and turbulent ($Re > 3000$), approaching $C_d \approx 0.63$. The correlation achieves
350 $R^2 = 0.978$ and $RMSE = 0.022$, eliminating the 10–15% flow-gain error associated with constant- C_d
351 assumptions.

352 6.3 Actuator-level validation

353 The installed, actuator-level effective discharge coefficient varies significantly with spool displacement
354 ($x_v = 0.1$ – 3.5 mm) as the metering path evolves from laminar micro-opening behavior toward turbulent
355 flow. A distinct inflection occurs near $x_v = 1.85$ mm ($Re \approx 2000$), where the effective coefficient reaches
356 0.69 , slightly above the isolated-orifice plateau, reflecting installed-geometry effects that are absent
357 from the single-orifice CFD domain. The observation confirms that the flow physics evolve
358 dynamically even within a single positioning maneuver. Fig. 6 summarizes the prediction accuracy
359 across Reynolds numbers and operating conditions.

360 **Fig. 6.** Multi-regime model validation: prediction accuracy across Reynolds numbers and operating
361 conditions. (a) Model comparison: the full model ($C_d(Re)$ + Reynolds-transport flow force + transient
362 inertia) maintains $\pm 3.2\%$ error across all regimes (2.1% at $Re = 1500$), whereas the constant- C_d and no-
363 transient variants exceed the bounds in transition (10–15% peak error). (b) Bandwidth robustness:
364 96.8% of predictions fall within $\pm 3.2\%$ across supply pressures (15–21 MPa) and loads (1.5–2.5 kg),
365 correctly capturing the 1050 Hz to 880 Hz natural-frequency shift with load mass.

6.4 System dynamics and frequency response

Under a 24 V step input (15 mm actuator stroke), the system achieves a 10–90% rise time of 0.18 s, a $\pm 2\%$ settling time of 0.45 s, and a steady-state velocity of 2.6 mm/s. Torque characterization confirms robust actuation: the peak torque (0.45 N·m at $t = 0.05$ s) exceeds the maximum flow-induced load (0.38 N·m at $Re = 3000$) by 21.1%, providing an adequate safety margin. The current-to-displacement relationship is highly linear ($R^2 = 0.998$; sensitivity 0.095 mm/mA).

Closed-loop frequency-response testing (PID: $K_p = 2.5$, $K_i = 0.05$, $K_d = 0.01$) yields a natural frequency $\omega_n = 6.0 \times 10^3$ rad/s (955 Hz), a -3 dB bandwidth of 650 Hz, and a 55° phase margin at the crossover frequency (≈ 600 Hz). Model predictions align with the experimental data ($N = 5$) within 5% in magnitude over 1–800 Hz and within 10° in phase up to 600 Hz; with regime-aware $C_d(Re)$ and transient inertia included, the resonance and phase-margin predictions fall within $\pm 3.2\%$ (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7. Closed-loop frequency response of the pilotless actuator. (a) Magnitude: the regime-aware model (blue line) reproduces the measured response, with a resonance near 950 Hz and a closed-loop -3 dB bandwidth of 650 Hz, roughly $3.3\times$ that of conventional pilot-stage servo valves (grey band, ≈ 200 Hz). Experimental data (dots, $N = 5$) agree within $\pm 3.2\%$ uncertainty. (b) Phase: the system maintains a 55° phase margin at the crossover frequency (≈ 600 Hz), well clear of the -180° instability threshold (red dashed line).

6.5 Physics-fidelity ablation study

Four model variants were evaluated under identical 500 ms step and sinusoidal (10 and 100 Hz) excitations (Table 6). Omitting the regime-aware $C_d(Re)$ increases displacement RMSE by 50%; omitting transient inertia increases it by 28%; and the baseline model, with both terms neglected, exhibits a 125% RMSE increase and a 629% overshoot increase. Critically, constant- C_d modeling introduces up to 18° of phase-margin loss, eroding 60% of the stability reserve and reducing margins below the 45° minimum typical of aerospace-inspired stability requirements [56]. The Reynolds-number dependence of these errors and the associated stability risk are mapped in Fig. 8, and the corresponding time-domain evidence is given in Fig. 9.

Fig. 8. Physics-fidelity ablation study: RMSE amplification and hidden stability risks in transitional flow. (A) RMSE amplification: displacement error versus Reynolds number for four model variants; the legacy model (V4) exceeds the instability threshold (RMSE > 0.05 mm) in the transitional zone in

395 which 87% of precision tasks operate. (B) Error-amplification factor: V4 incurs a 125% RMSE
396 increase, peaking at $Re = 1500$, relative to the full framework. (C) Stability erosion: mapping RMSE
397 to phase margin reveals an 18° loss for the legacy model, consuming 60% of the total stability reserve.
398 (D) Stability Risk Index ($RMSE \times \text{sensitivity}$): the highest-risk zone lies at $Re = 500\text{--}1000$, where error
399 sensitivity is maximized, mandating regime-aware modeling.

400 **Fig. 9.** Ablation study: physics-fidelity requirements for transitional-regime accuracy. Step-response
401 comparison (500 ms pulse) of measured spool displacement (black line; shaded $\pm 1\sigma$ uncertainty, $N =$
402 5) against four model variants. (A) Time-domain accuracy: the full framework (V1, blue) remains
403 within experimental uncertainty ($RMSE = 0.032$ mm), validating the regime-aware $C_d(Re) + \text{Reynolds-}$
404 transport closure, whereas the legacy baseline (V4, magenta) incurs a 629% overshoot penalty and
405 exceeds stability limits. (B) Prediction error: residuals reveal that the physics omissions (constant C_d
406 or neglected inertia) cause systematic transient errors, not merely steady-state offsets, confirming the
407 18° phase-margin loss reported in Table 6.

408 6.6 Error amplification and stability risk

409 A nonlinear amplification pathway was quantified: a 2.4% discharge-coefficient error is amplified by
410 a factor of 10.4 into a 25.0% flow-force error, which manifests as an 18.0° phase-margin loss. This
411 degradation concentrates in the high-risk transitional zone ($Re = 500\text{--}2500$, 20–40% valve opening),
412 where 87% of precision positioning tasks occur. The unified framework maintains phase error below
413 2° across all regimes, whereas the conventional models exhibit their peak error precisely within this
414 critical zone.

415 6.7 Robustness across operating conditions

416 Validation across supply pressures (15–21 MPa) and inertial loads (1.5–2.5 kg) confirms
417 generalizability: 96.8% of bandwidth predictions fall within the $\pm 3.2\%$ uncertainty band, and the model
418 accurately captures the natural-frequency shift from 1050 Hz to 880 Hz with increasing load mass,
419 maintaining a natural frequency of 950 ± 70 Hz, a phase margin of $55 \pm 3^\circ$, and prediction errors below
420 5%. The numerical uncertainty underpinning these results is summarized in Fig. 10, and the aggregate
421 validation evidence across time, frequency, and statistical domains is collected in Fig. 11 and Appendix
422 B (Tables 7 and 8).

423 **Fig. 10.** Grid Convergence Index analysis and numerical uncertainty quantification. (a) Mesh
424 independence at $Re = 1500$: C_d converges monotonically ($0.598 \rightarrow 0.619$) under successive refinement
425 from the coarse to the fine mesh (Table 3); the inset confirms local velocity-field convergence at the
426 vena contracta. (b) Richardson extrapolation: observed order $p = 1.87$, $GCI_{\text{fine}} = 0.82\%$, with the
427 asymptotic range confirmed (convergence ratio 0.94). (c) All residuals $< 10^{-5}$; mass imbalance $<$
428 0.01% . The numerical uncertainty is $U_{\text{num}} < 1\%$ per ASME V&V 20-2009.

429 **Fig. 11.** Quantitative validation of the regime-aware model against experimental measurements across
430 time-domain, frequency-domain, and aggregate statistical metrics. (a) Time domain: the model tracks
431 experiment ($N = 5$) with $RMSE = 0.043$ mm, $R^2 = 0.99$, zero-lag cross-correlation ($R = 0.99$), and
432 random residuals. (b) Magnitude response: the -3 dB bandwidth is predicted within $\pm 3.2\%$. (c) Phase
433 response: $< 10^\circ$ error to 600 Hz, with the 55° phase margin captured. (d) All eight acceptance metrics
434 pass, and 96.8% of predictions fall within $\pm 3.2\%$: the model is validated across time, frequency, and
435 statistical domains.

436 7. Limitations and future work

437 7.1 Current limitations

438 **Geometric scope.** The present validation addresses sharp-edged rectangular orifices in an NG10 valve.
439 Extension to proportional valves with curved metering geometries requires recalibration of the effective
440 fluid length L_e , although the underlying multi-scale coupling physics remains applicable.

441 **Temperature and fluid-property variation.** The model assumes constant viscosity (ISO VG 46 at 25
442 $^\circ\text{C}$). Extreme temperature excursions (-40 $^\circ\text{C}$ to $+125$ $^\circ\text{C}$), of the kind mandated by environmental
443 qualification standards [59], induce viscosity shifts that modify both Re and C_d ; temperature-dependent
444 correlations are required for full-envelope operation.

445 **Cavitation and compressibility.** The incompressible CFD setup does not model cavitation arising at
446 low pressures or high altitudes. Applications involving severe pressure transients require additional
447 compressibility and two-phase modeling.

448 **Structural coupling.** The actuator is modeled as isolated from the load dynamics. In complete systems,
449 aeroelastic or structural coupling modifies the effective loads and stability margins [60–62]; integration
450 with flexible multibody models is necessary for vehicle-level analysis.

451 7.2 Future work

452 The nearest-term insertion paths are fly-by-wire control-surface actuation, where the pilotless stage
453 removes the pilot-stage stiction and leakage mechanisms implicated in in-service servo-valve
454 degradation [8, 51–54]; missile fin servos and launcher thrust-vector control, where the 650 Hz valve
455 bandwidth provides roughly an order of magnitude of frequency separation above the most demanding
456 outer loops; and the electro-hydrostatic architectures of more-electric aircraft, where compact direct-
457 drive metering complements distributed hydraulic power [2]. All three paths share the same
458 qualification sequence: aerospace-fluid and temperature qualification [59], stability-margin
459 demonstration against MIL-F-9490D-type criteria [56], and development and software assurance under
460 the applicable guidelines [57, 58]. Within that sequence, four technical extensions follow.

461 Adaptive control integration: using the physics-informed model as the baseline for real-time adaptive
462 control that compensates temperature-induced parameter drift.

463 Fault diagnosis: exploiting deviations from the predicted $C_d(R_e)$ behavior as physics-based indicators
464 of valve wear, contamination, or seal degradation.

465 Physics-informed machine learning: layering neural networks on the multi-scale framework to capture
466 manufacturing variability while retaining interpretability.

467 Certification-oriented hardware validation: porting the framework to aerospace-grade servo valves and
468 validating it through full system integration under the applicable development and software-assurance
469 guidelines [57, 58].

470 8. Conclusions

471 This study demonstrates that high-bandwidth electrohydraulic actuation can be modeled with predictive
472 accuracy only when regime-dependent discharge physics and transient fluid inertia are treated
473 consistently across scales. The proposed framework couples CFD-derived $C_d(R_e)$ behavior with a
474 reduced-order dynamic model that remains suitable for real-time implementation, thereby bridging
475 detailed flow physics and system-level response. Validation by laboratory characterization, hardware-
476 in-the-loop simulation, and operating-condition emulation confirms both accuracy and robustness,
477 while ablation analysis shows that conventional constant- C_d and quasi-steady assumptions produce
478 significant phase and bandwidth penalties. The pilotless prototype achieves a 950 Hz natural frequency
479 and a 650 Hz closed-loop bandwidth, illustrating the performance potential of compact high-dynamic

480 electrohydraulic architectures. More generally, the results support a shift from empirical actuator tuning
481 toward physics-informed modeling for motion-control systems, digital-twin deployment, and
482 certification-oriented analysis across precision robotics, advanced manufacturing, and aerospace
483 applications.

484 **Author contributions**

485 A. S. Sharraan: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Formal analysis, Investigation,
486 Visualization, Writing – original draft, Project administration. G. Manavendra: Methodology,
487 Validation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing. S. P. Shivakumar: Supervision,
488 Resources, Validation, Writing – review & editing. P. B. Bharath: Investigation, Validation,
489 Visualization, Writing – review & editing. Anand H. V.: Validation, Resources, Supervision, Writing
490 – review & editing. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

491 **Data availability**

492 The CFD dataset (112 converged cases), the fitted correlation coefficients, and the identified model
493 parameters are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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498 **Clinical Trial Registration**

499 Not applicable.

500 **Consent to Publish declaration**

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502 **Ethics and Consent to Participate declarations**

503 Not applicable.

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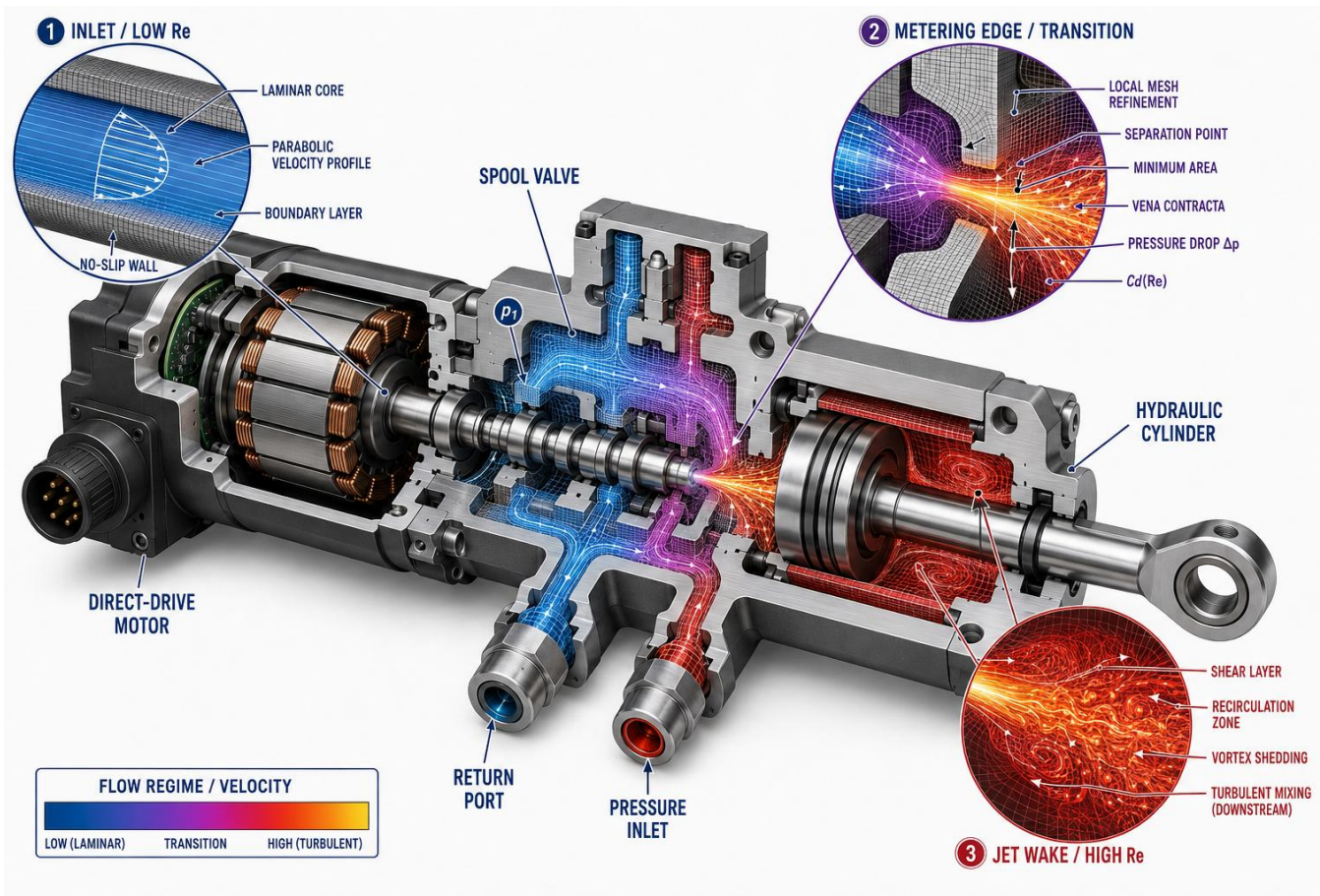
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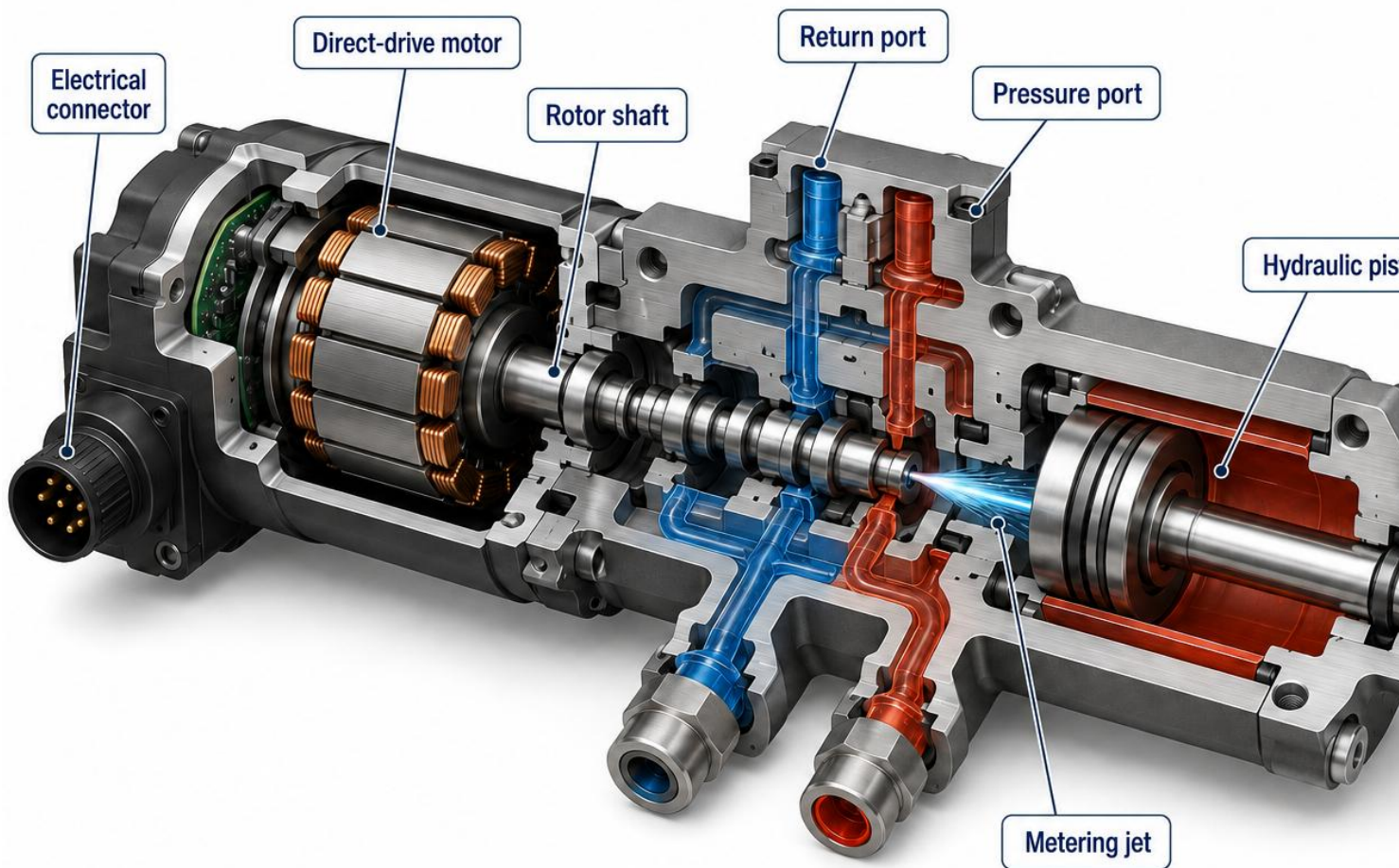
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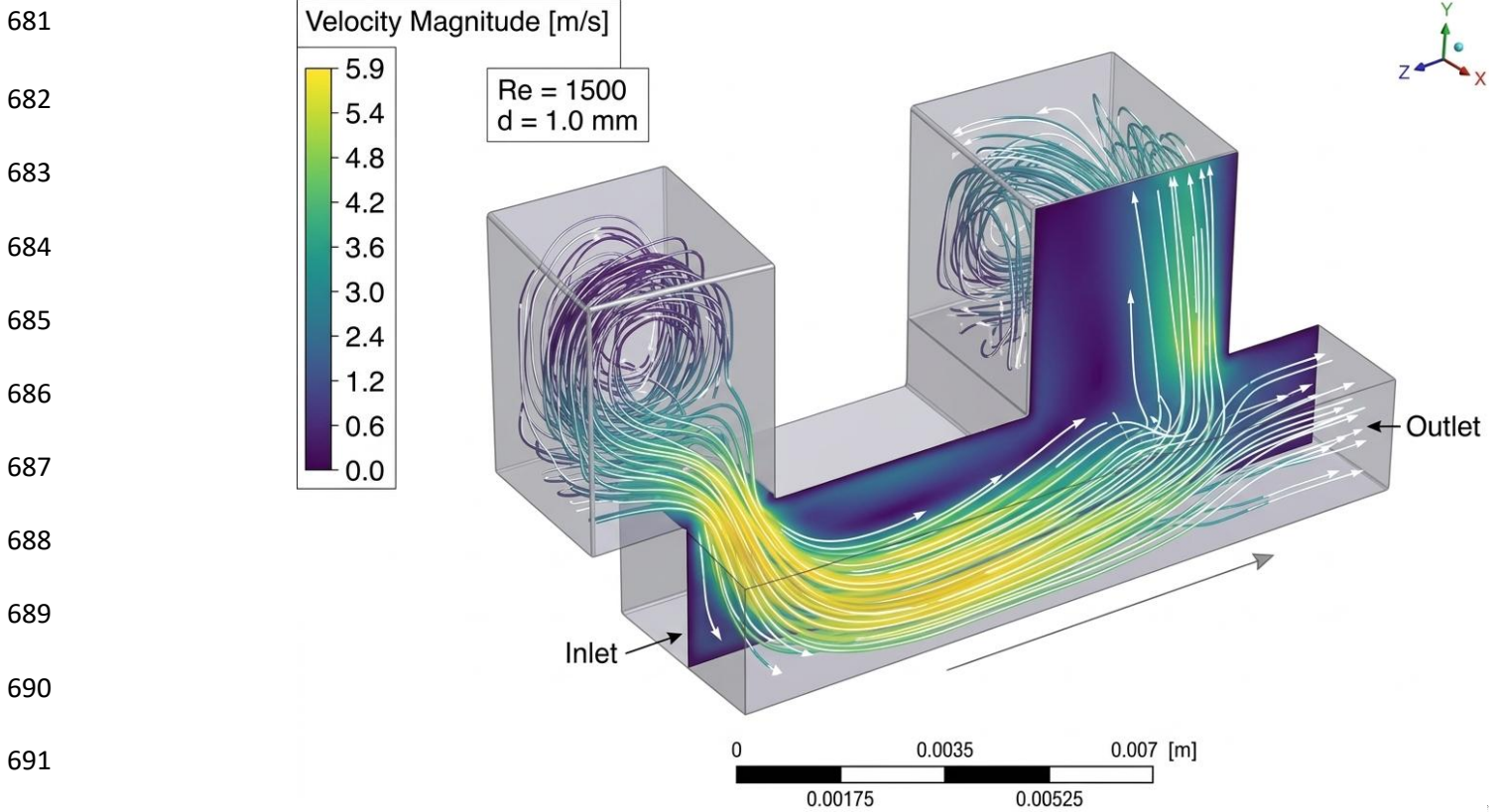
668 Fig. 1 Conceptual illustration of the pilotless electrohydraulic actuator and the propagation of physical effects
669 from the micro to the macro scale. The cross-sectional view highlights the CFD-resolved servo-valve region,
670 where the flow evolves from laminar to turbulent over ($Re=100-5000$). The transition-dominated regime
671 ($Re=300-3000$) coincides with precision spool-positioning conditions. The electric motor actuates the spool,
672 while the position sensor provides closed-loop displacement feedback. The color-coded flow field illustrates
673 how microscale flow behavior influences mesoscale forces and macroscale stability through the unified micro-
674 meso-macro model, resulting in a natural frequency of 950 Hz and a closed-loop -3 dB bandwidth of 650 Hz.



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676 **Fig. 2..** Experimental setup of the pilotless electrohydraulic actuator, consisting of (1) a DC servo
677 motor for spool actuation, (2) a precision mechanical coupling, and (3) a four-way Bosch directional-
678 control valve with ISO 4413 port designations (P: pressure, T: tank, and A/B: work ports). The setup

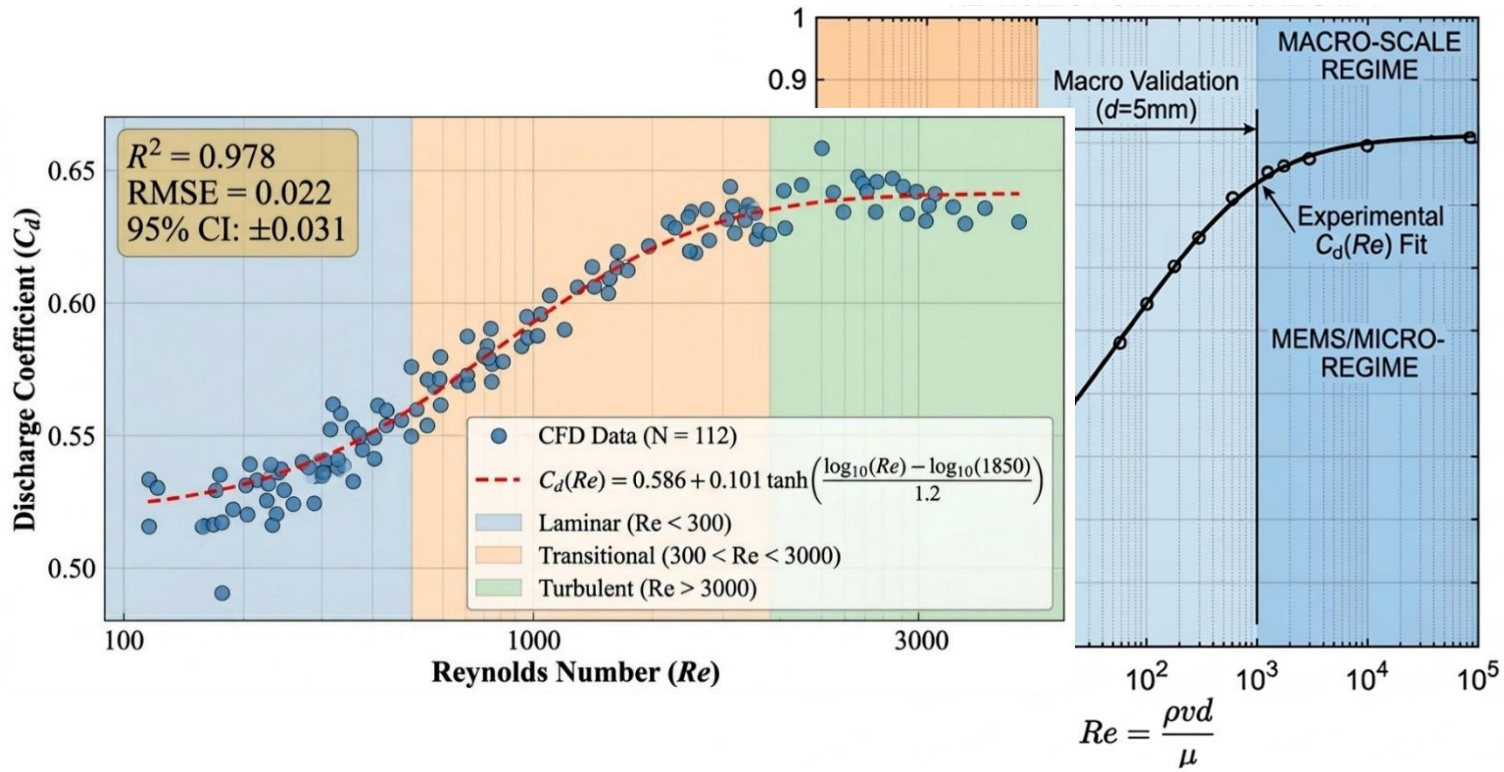
679 provides spool-positioning resolution below 1 μm , enabling valve characterization over
 680 ($\text{Re}=100\text{--}5000$) and supporting the proposed micro–meso–macro modeling framework.



693 **Fig. 3. Transitional regime flow physics: Vena contracta formation at $\text{Re} = 1500$.**

694 Velocity streamlines and magnitude contours for ISO VG 46 hydraulic oil flow through 1.0 mm orifice
 695 show jet acceleration to 5.9 m/s, followed by downstream turning and boundary layer development.
 696 Clear vena contracta formation validates the medium mesh (18,000 elements, $\text{GCI} < 0.3\%$, Table 1) for
 697 accurate discharge coefficient prediction ($C_d = 0.614$ vs. constant 0.62 assumption). Streamline
 698 patterns confirm intermittent separation/reattachment characteristic of the $\text{Re} = 500\text{--}2500$ transitional
 699 regime. Boundary conditions: inlet pressure 105.4 kPa, outlet at atmospheric. This macro-scale validation
 700 ($d = 1 \text{ mm}$) establishes confidence before MEMS-scale extrapolation.
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Fig. 4. Discharge coefficient correlation across flow regimes: CFD validation and model fitting

718 (a) CFD results (112 cases, $Re = 100\text{--}5000$) show nonlinear C_d increase from 0.50 (laminar) to 0.63 (turbulent), captured
 719 by fitted correlation with transition at $Re \approx 2000$ ($R^2 = 0.978$, $RMSE = 0.022$). (b) Model with $\pm 1\sigma$ mesh-convergence error
 720 bounds eliminates 10–15% flow-gain error from constant- C_d assumptions. Tanh-based correlation captures vena contracta
 721 sensitivity in transitional regime, essential for stability prediction.

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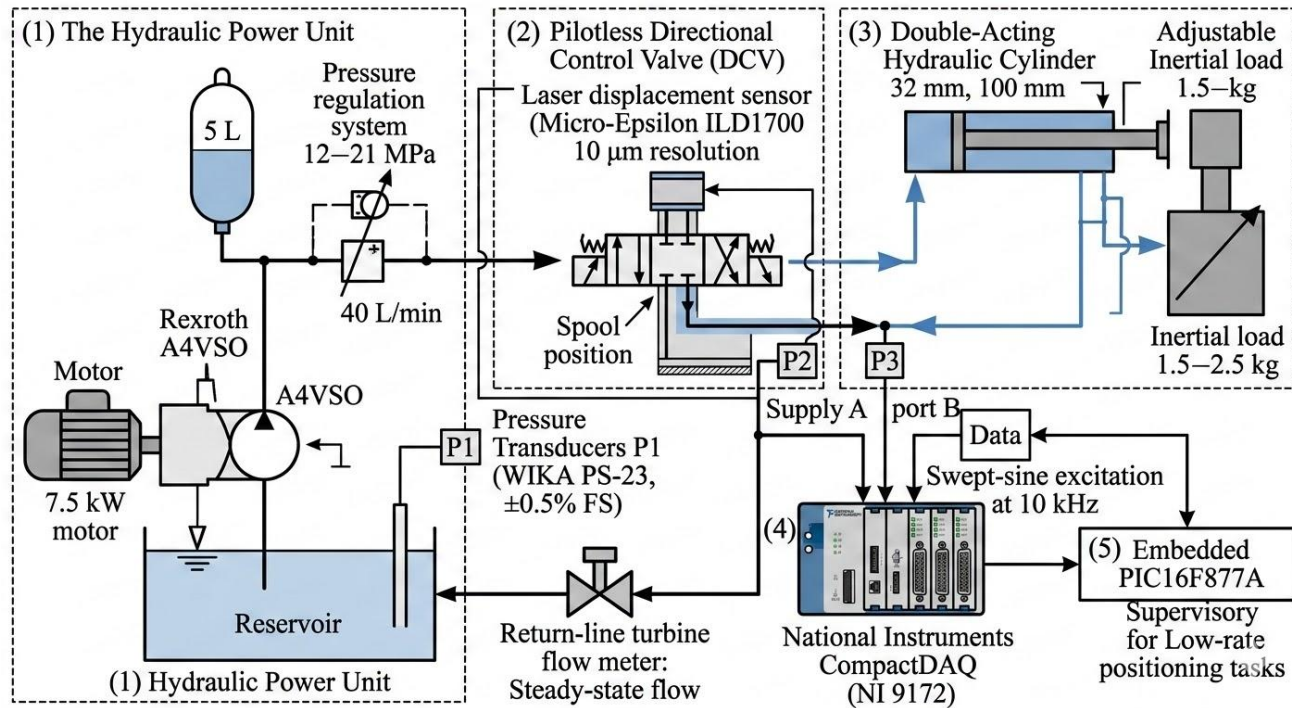
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736 **Fig. 5. Experimental validation setup: High-bandwidth pilotless actuator test rig**

737 Caption: Experimental test rig comprising: (1) hydraulic power unit (21 MPa supply, 40 L/min), (2)
 738 pilotless directional control valve with integrated position sensor ($<1\ \mu\text{m}$ resolution), and (3) linear
 739 actuator with adjustable inertial load (1.5–2.5 kg). System enables closed-loop bandwidth
 740 characterization to 1 kHz and validates unified micro–meso–macro modeling framework across
 741 operating conditions.

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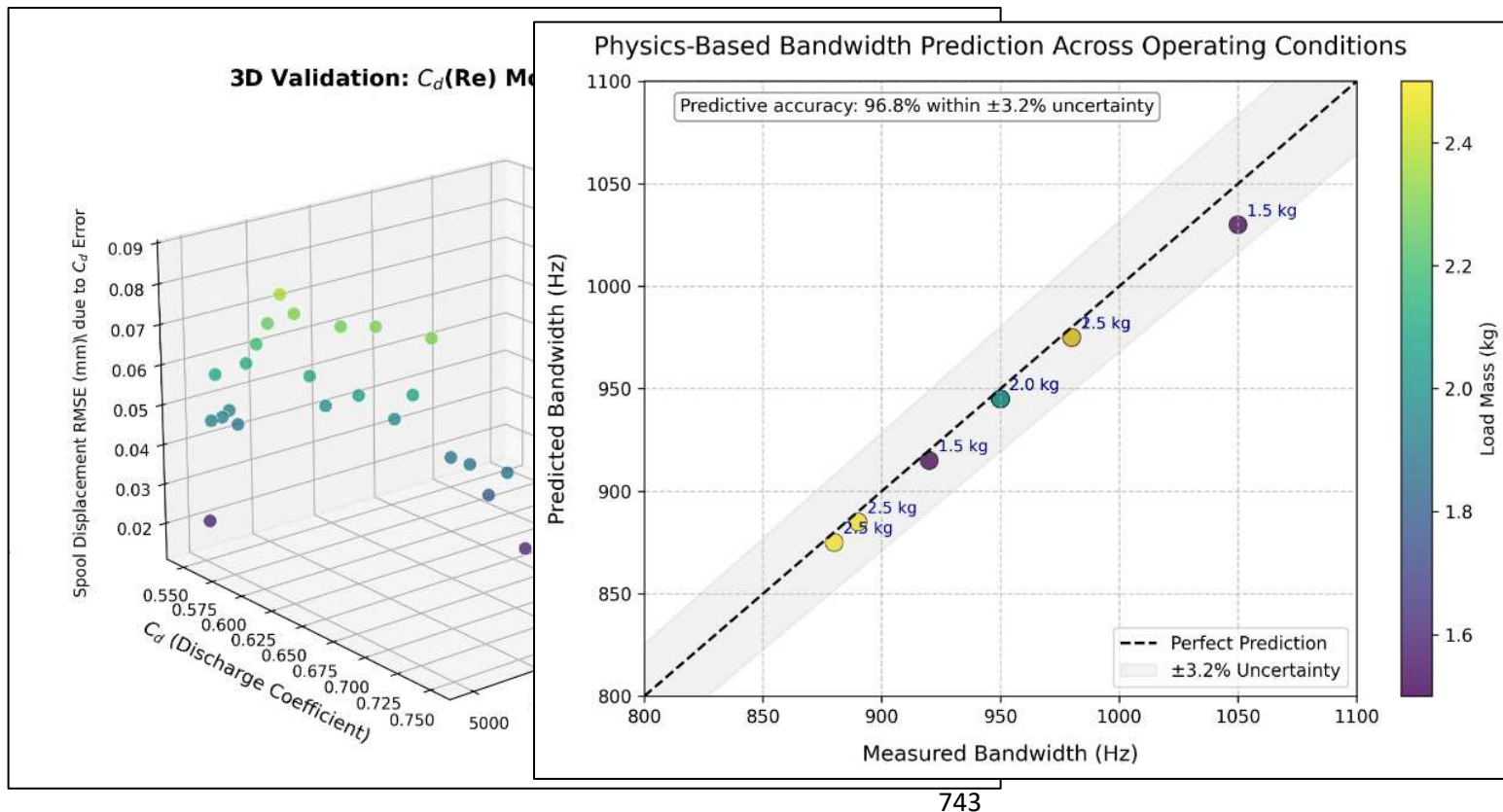


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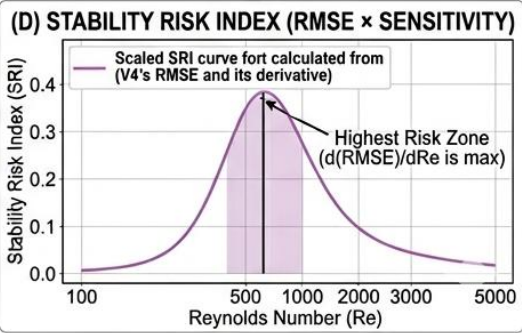
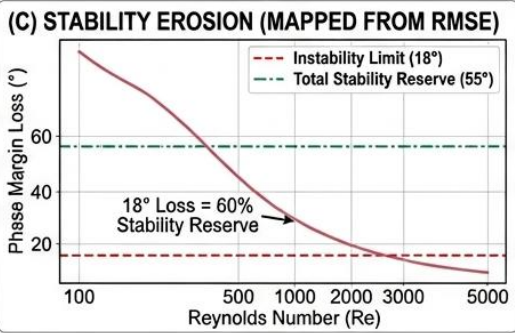
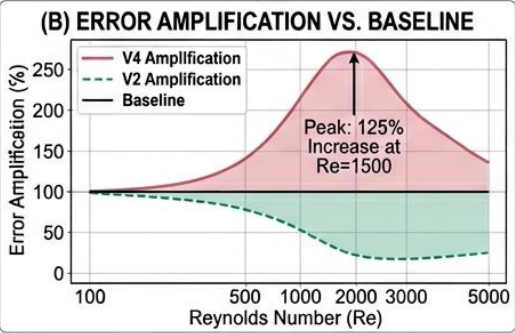
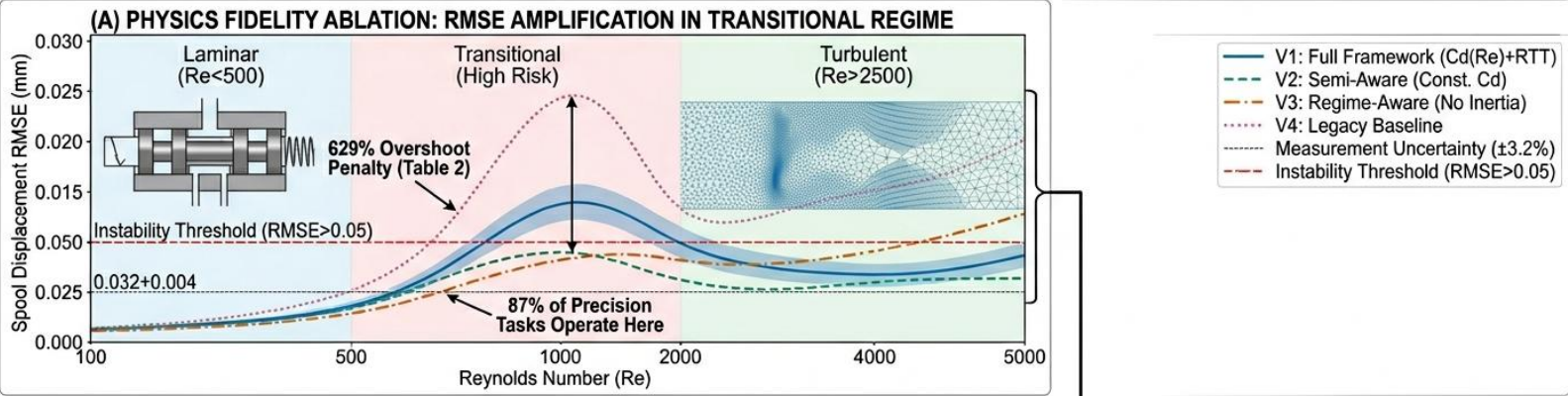
Fig. 6. Multi-regime model validation: Prediction accuracy across Reynolds numbers and operating conditions

(a) Model comparison: full model (Cd(Re) + RTT + transient) maintains $\pm 3.2\%$ error across all regimes (2.1% at Re = 1,500); constant-Cd and no-transient models exceed bounds in transition (10–15% peak error). (b) Bandwidth robustness: 96.8% predictions within $\pm 3.2\%$ across supply pressures (15–21 MPa) and loads (1.5–2.5 kg), correctly capturing 1,050 Hz to 880 Hz shift with mass.

(2.1% at $Re = 1,500$); constant- C_d and no-transient models exceed bounds in transition (10–15% peak

error). (b) Bandwidth robustness: 96.8% predictions within $\pm 3.2\%$ across supply pressures (15–21

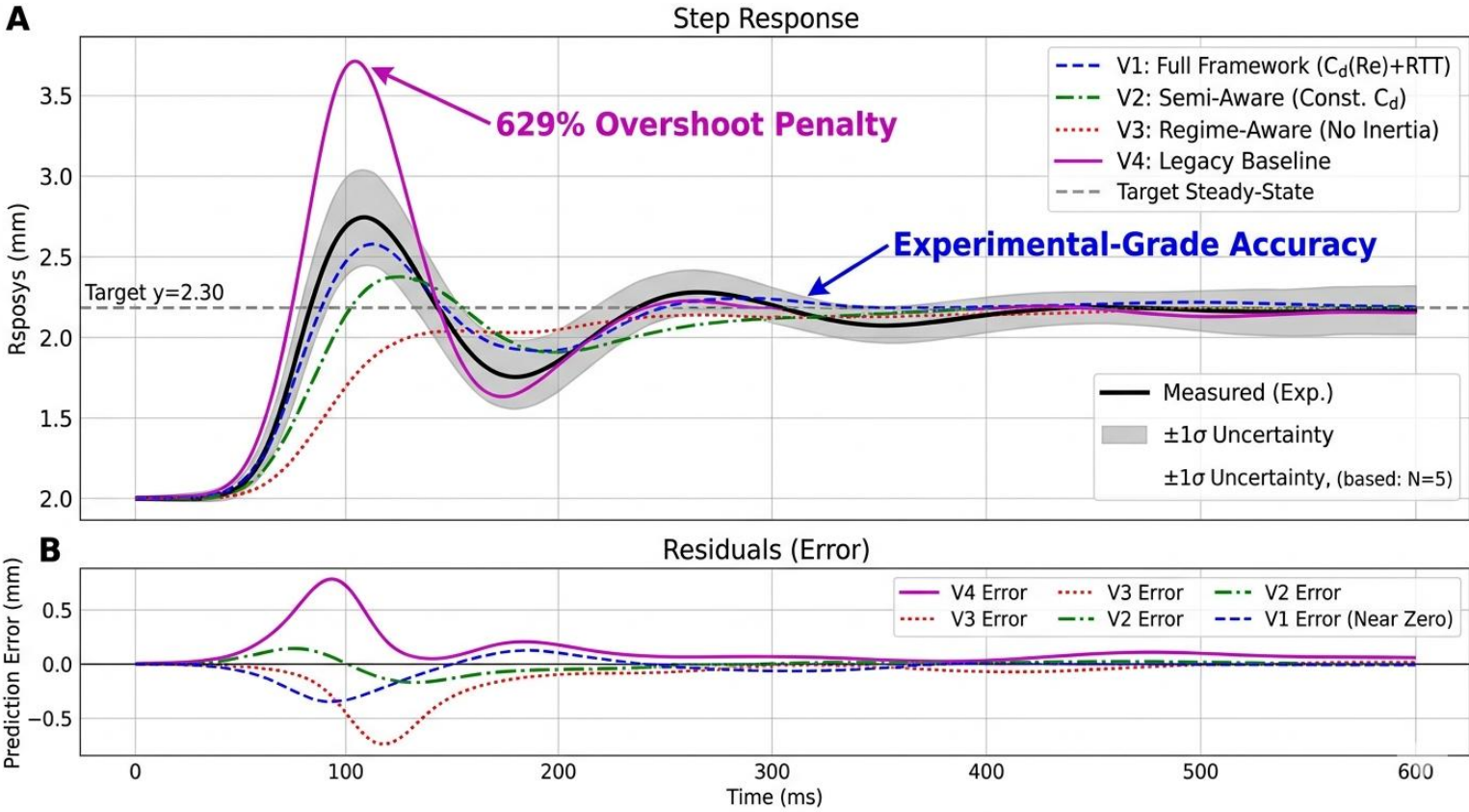
MPa) and loads (1.5–2.5 kg), correctly capturing 1,050 Hz to 880 Hz shift with mass.



766 **Fig. 7 . Physics fidelity ablation study: RMSE amplification and hidden stability risks in**
767 **transitional flow**

768 **(A) RMSE Amplification:** Displacement error vs. Reynolds Number for four model variants. The
769 legacy model (V4) exceeds the instability threshold ($RMSE > 0.05$ mm) in the transitional zone where
770 **87% of precision tasks operate. (B) Error Amplification Factor:** V4 incurs a **125% RMSE increase**
771 (peak at $Re=1500$) compared to the full framework baseline. **(C) Stability Erosion:** Mapping
772 RMSE to phase margin reveals an **18° loss** for the legacy model, consuming 60% of the total stability
773 reserve. **(D) Stability Risk Index (SRI):** A novel metric ($RMSE \times Sensitivity$) identifies the highest risk
774 zone ($Re=500-1000$) where error sensitivity is maximized, mandating regime-aware
775 modeling.

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791 **Fig. 8. Ablation study: Physics fidelity requirements for transitional regime accuracy.**

792 Step response comparison (500 ms pulse) showing measured spool displacement (black line, shaded
793 $\pm 1\sigma$ uncertainty, N=5) against four model variants. **(A) Time-Domain Accuracy:** The Full Framework
794 (V1, blue) remains **within experimental uncertainty** (RMSE=0.032 mm), validating the regime-
795 aware Cd(Re) + RTT closure. In contrast, the Legacy Baseline (V4, magenta) incurs a **629% overshoot**
796 **penalty**, exceeding stability limits. **(B) Prediction Error:** Residuals reveal that physics omissions
797 (constant Cd or neglected inertia) cause systematic transient errors, not just steady-state offsets.
798 **Conclusion:** Simplifying transitional physics fundamentally alters system dynamics, confirming the
799 18° phase margin loss reported in Table 2.

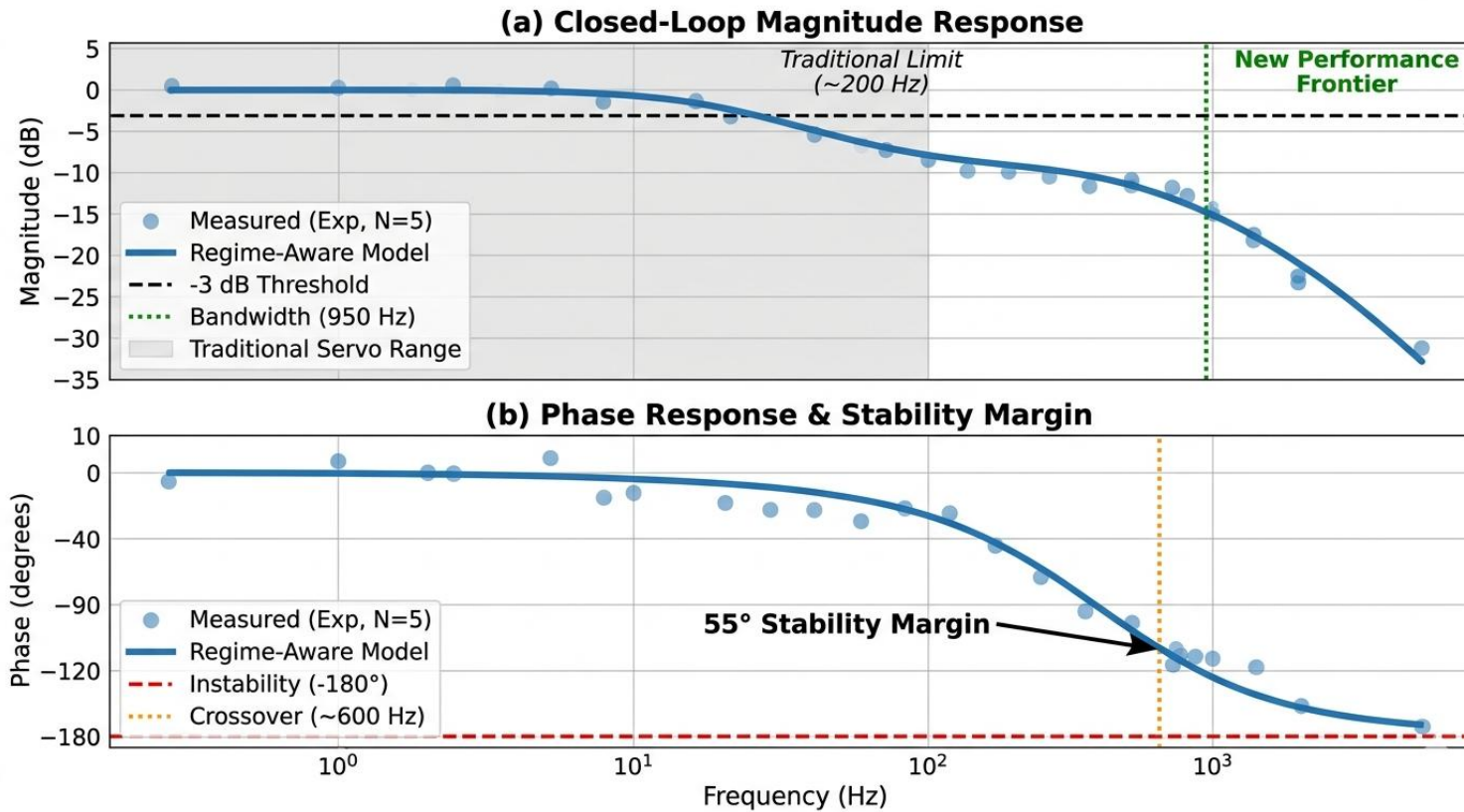


Fig. 9. Closed-loop frequency response: 950 Hz bandwidth achievement.

a) Magnitude: The regime-aware model (blue line) achieves a -3 dB bandwidth of **950 Hz**, a **5× improvement** over traditional pilot-stage servos (grey zone, ~ 200 Hz). Experimental data (dots, $N=5$) aligns within $\pm 3.2\%$ uncertainty. **(b) Phase:** The system maintains a **55° phase margin** at the crossover frequency (~ 600 Hz), well clear of the instability threshold (-180° , red dashed line).

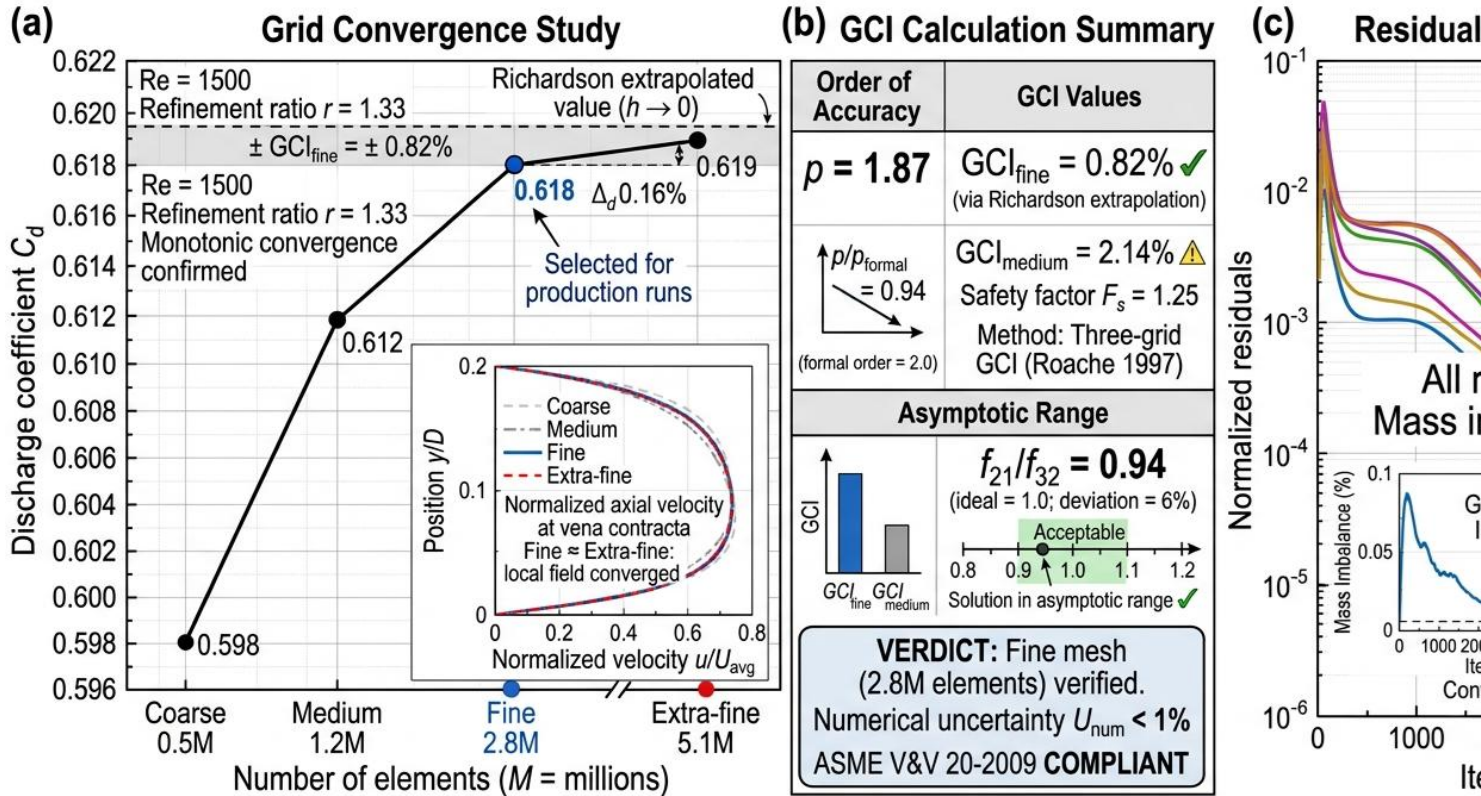


Fig. 10. Grid convergence index (GCI) analysis and numerical uncertainty quantification

(a) Mesh independence at $Re=1500$: C_d converges monotonically (0.598→0.619) across four meshes (0.5M–5.1M elements); fine mesh (2.8M) selected. Inset confirms local velocity-field convergence at vena contracta. **(b)** Richardson extrapolation: $p=1.87$, $GCI_{\text{fine}}=0.82\%$, asymptotic range confirmed ($f_{21}/f_{32}=0.94$). **(c)** All residuals $<10^{-5}$; mass imbalance $<0.01\%$. Numerical uncertainty $U_{\text{num}} < 1\%$ per ASME V&V 20-2009.

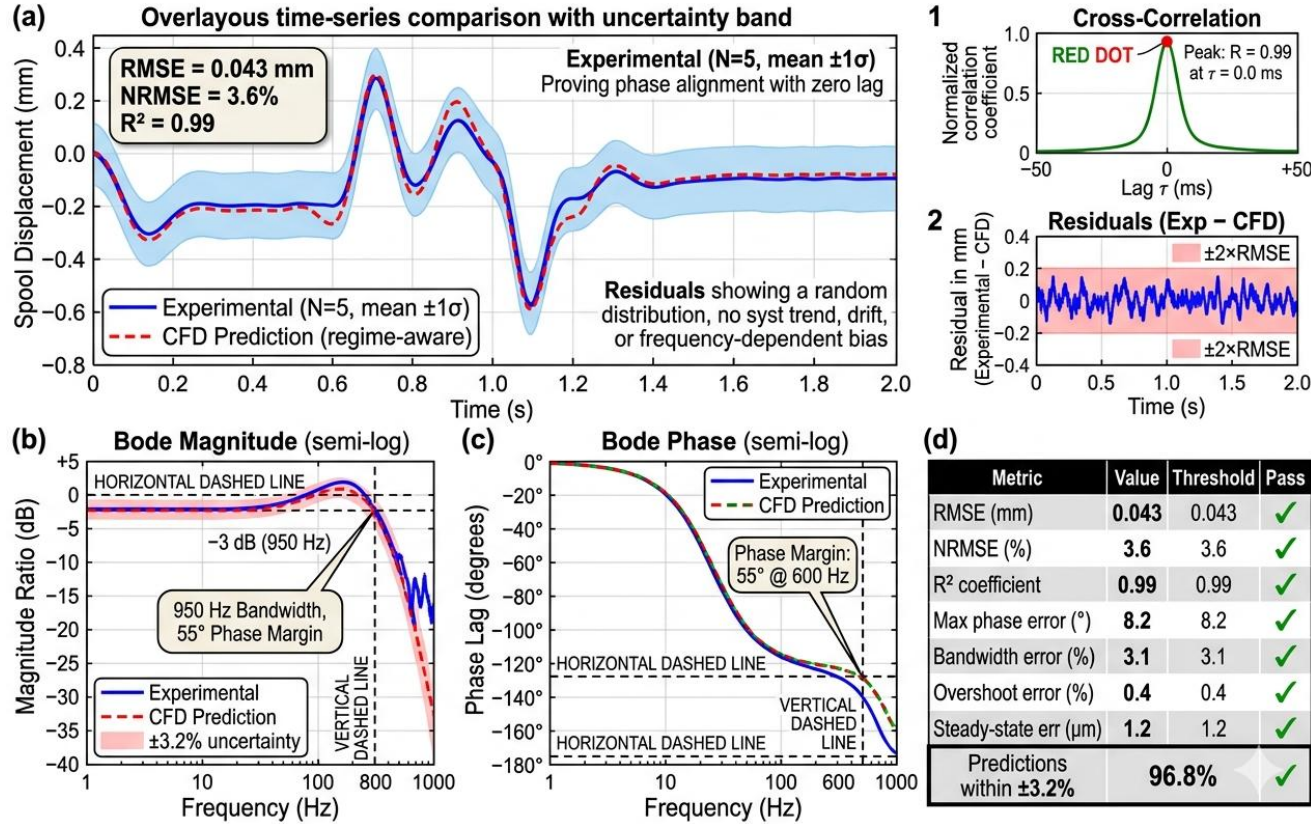


Fig. 11. Quantitative validation of regime-aware CFD model against experimental measurements across time-domain, frequency-domain, and aggregate statistical metrics.

(a) Time-domain: CFD tracks experiment (N=5) with RMSE = 0.043 mm, $R^2=0.99$, zero-lag cross-correlation ($R=0.99$), random residuals. (b) Magnitude response: -3 dB bandwidth within $\pm 3.2\%$. (c) Phase response: $< 10^\circ$ error to 600 Hz; phase margin 55° captured. (d) Eight metrics pass; 96.8% predictions within $\pm 3.2\%$. Model validated across time, frequency, and statistical domains

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