Grandjean, Dudragne & Michaud (1976); (*j*) Prasad, Gabe & Le Page (1982); (*k*) Korp, Bernal & Martin (1981). \* 1-pyrazole.  $\dagger C_6H_{11} = cyclohexyl.$ 

Examination of the structure with *PLATON* (Spek, 1994*a*) showed that there were no solvent accessible voids in the crystal lattice.

Data collection: CAD-4/PC (Enraf-Nonius, 1992); MAD-NES (Pflugrath & Messerschmidt, 1989). Cell refinement: CAD-4/PC; MADNES. Data reduction: CAD-4/PC; MADNES; DATRD2 in NRCVAX94 (Gabe, Le Page, Charland, Lee & White, 1989). Program(s) used to solve structure: SOLVER in NRCVAX. Program(s) used to refine structure: NRC-VAX94; SHELXL93 (Sheldrick, 1993). Molecular graphics: NRCVAX94; ORTEPII (Johnson, 1976) in PLATON (Spek, 1994a); PLUTON (Spek, 1994b). Software used to prepare material for publication: NRCVAX94; SHELXL93.

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Lists of structure factors, anisotropic displacement parameters, Hatom coordinates and complete geometry have been deposited with the IUCr (Reference: AB1321). Copies may be obtained through The Managing Editor, International Union of Crystallography, 5 Abbey Square, Chester CH1 2HU, England.

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## **Energetic Materials: the Biguanidium** Nitrates

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### Abstract

The structures of two new potentially energetic biguanidium salts, biguanidium nitrate,  $C_2H_8N_5^+$ .NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> [(BIGH)NO<sub>3</sub>], and biguanidium dinitrate,  $C_2H_9N_5^{+}$ .-2NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> [(BIGH<sub>2</sub>)(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>], have been determined from X-ray data collected at 193 K. The mono- and diprotonated biguanidium nitrates are dense organic materials with efficient packing of planar anions and biplanar (twisted) cations connected by multiple hydrogen bonds. The experimental densities are compared with those obtained from empirical calculations.

## Comment

There is current interest (Borman, 1994) in the development of new energetic materials (such as explosives or propellants) and in understanding the properties of these materials, particularly with respect to their structures (Olah & Squire, 1991). One class of compounds that have solicited interest are derived from guanidinium nitrate (GN) and include, for example, diaminoguanidinium nitrate (DAGN) (Ritchie, Lee, Cromer, Kober & Lee, 1990) and triaminoguanidinium nitrate (TAGN) (Bracuti, 1979; Choi & Prince, 1979; Oyumi & Brill, 1985).



The utility of these compounds in the field of energetic materials is derived from their rapid thermal decomposition into all-gaseous products (Oyumi & Brill, 1985, and references therein). The effectiveness of materials as either explosives or propellants is related to the density of the solid, the gas volume produced and the heat of combustion (Gilardi & Karle, 1991). DAGN and TAGN have useful properties as propellants, their densities being fairly high for organic materials (1.61 and 1.59 Mg m<sup>-3</sup> for DAGN and TAGN, respectively). Our previous experience with biguanidium salts (Pinkerton & Schwarzenbach, 1978) suggested that these closely related cations might be used to prepare higher density nitrates.

Empirical calculations (Chichra, Holden & Dickinson, 1980; Stine, 1981; hereafter CHD and ST, respectively) for the monoprotonated and diprotonated biguanidium nitrates (BIGH)NO<sub>3</sub> and (BIGH<sub>2</sub>)(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, using appropriate atomic volumes, predicted densities of 1.63 (CHD) or 1.61 Mg m<sup>-3</sup> (ST) for (BIGH)NO<sub>3</sub> and 1.77 (CHD) or 1.74 Mg m<sup>-3</sup> (ST) for (BIGH<sub>2</sub>)(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>. Analogous calculations gave 1.74 (CHD) or  $1.68 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$ (ST) for DAGN, and 1.75 (CHD) or  $1.68 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$  for TAGN. We note that the observed densities for DAGN and TAGN are somewhat less than the calculated densities, and that the value predicted for  $(BIGH_2)(NO_3)_2$  is the highest of the four compounds. We have thus synthesized and characterized both the monoprotonated and diprotonated biguanidium nitrates and report our results herein.



The structures of the delocalized cations (Figs. 1 and 2) are very similar to those previously reported for the chloride BIGH.Cl (Ernst, 1977), the carbonate (BIGH)<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> and the sulfates (BIGH)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>.2H<sub>2</sub>O and (BIGH<sub>2</sub>)SO<sub>4</sub>.H<sub>2</sub>O (Pinkerton & Schwarzenbach, 1978). Both cations are composed of two planar halves with one atom in common. The two halves are twisted with respect to each other due to the intramolecular H···H interaction [BIGH<sup>+</sup> 37.8 (1)°; BIGH<sub>2</sub><sup>2+</sup> 47.0 (1)°]. All bonds are short due to extensive  $\pi$  delocalization, producing bond orders greater than one. As previously noted, protonation of the bridge N atom leads to a small increase in the C—N bridge bond lengths (compared to the monoprotonated cation) with a concomitant shortening of the terminal C—N bonds.

Both crystal structures are characterized by an extensive hydrogen-bonding network. The packing diagram for (BIGH)NO<sub>3</sub> (Fig. 3) shows that there are layers of strongly hydrogen-bonded cations and anions. The layers are then connected by one additional hydrogen bond. The biguanidium cations form hydrogen-bonded dimers (Fig. 1) across an inversion center with the bridge N atom acting as the acceptor. It can also be seen from this diagram that all but two of the H atoms (H2B and H4A) take part in hydrogen bonding. However, H2B forms a square arrangement with O3 across a center of symmetry with rather longer contact distances [the sides of the 'square' are 2.43 (2) and 2.52 (2) Å, with angles at O and H of 86.5 (5) and 93.6 (6)°, respectively]. Here, the



Fig. 1. The BIGH<sup>+</sup> cation showing the atom-numbering and hydrogenbonding schemes (50% probability ellipsoids). [Symmetry codes: (a) x + 1, y, z; (b)  $x + \frac{1}{2}$ ,  $-y + \frac{1}{2}$ ,  $z - \frac{1}{2}$ ; (c)  $x - \frac{1}{2}$ ,  $-y + \frac{1}{2}$ ,  $z - \frac{1}{2}$ ; (d)  $-x + \frac{1}{2}$ ,  $y + \frac{1}{2}$ ,  $-z + \frac{1}{2}$ ; (e) -x, -y, -z.]



Fig. 2. The BIGH<sup>2+</sup> cation showing the atom-numbering and hydrogen-bonding schemes (50% probability ellipsoids). [Symmetry codes: (a)  $x + \frac{1}{2}$ , -y + 2, z; (b) -x + 1, -y + 1,  $z + \frac{1}{2}$ ; (c) -x + 1, -y + 1,  $z - \frac{1}{2}$ ; (d)  $-x + \frac{1}{2}$ , y,  $z - \frac{1}{2}$ ; (e)  $x + \frac{1}{2}$ , -y + 1, z.]

competing O atoms seem to force H2B into a less favorable position. It would appear that the putative square is distorted by the additional hydrogen bonds to the nitrate groups. The nitrate anion is unremarkable and accepts five hydrogen bonds.

The diprotonated biguanidium cation in  $(BIGH_2)$ - $(NO_3)_2$  has a hydrogen bond from every H atom to a nitrate O atom (Fig. 2). The nitrate groups have the expected geometry, and every O atom accepts at least one hydrogen bond. The hydrogen-bonding scheme for  $(BIGH_2)(NO_3)_2$  is now truly three-dimensional (Fig.



Fig. 3. Packing diagram for (BIGH)NO\_3 showing the hydrogen bonding and layer structure.



Fig. 4. Packing diagram for (BIGH<sub>2</sub>)(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> showing the threedimensional hydrogen-bonding scheme.

4) and, for this reason, the packing diagram is less informative because there are no obvious viewing directions. It is worth noting, however, that the H atom on the bridging N atom (H3A) forms a particularly strong hydrogen bond  $[O \cdots H \ 1.83 \ (3) \text{ Å}].$ 

The crystals of both compounds are very compact, as evidenced by their densities [(BIGH)NO<sub>3</sub> 1.62 (193 K),  $1.59 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$  (298 K); (BIGH<sub>2</sub>)(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> 1.75 (193 K),

 $1.73 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$  (298 K)], which are very close to the values predicted above. Indeed, both compounds have higher densities than either DAGN or TAGN, which would not have been predicted. It is tempting to ascribe this to more efficient packing or more favorable hydrogen bonding; however, the evidence is weak. It has been noted that density predictions for energetic-material salts tend to be less reliable than for neutral energetic molecules (Gilardi, 1994).

It is thus demonstrated that the protonated biguanidium species are good cations for preparing high-density solids with flat anions capable of accepting hydrogen bonds.

### Experimental

 $(BIGH)NO_3$  was prepared easily from aqueous solutions of biguanidium sulfate and barium nitrate followed by filtration and slow evaporation.  $(BIGH_2)(NO_3)_2$  was prepared by acidifying the above solution with nitric acid, followed by slow evaporation.

### (BIGH)NO<sub>3</sub>

Crystal data

C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>8</sub>N<sup>5</sup><sub>5</sub>.NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>  $M_r = 164.12$ Monoclinic  $P2_1/n$  a = 6.959 (1) Å b = 10.778 (2) Å c = 9.489 (2) Å  $\beta = 109.28 (2)^{\circ}$   $V = 671.8 (4) Å^3$  Z = 4 $D_x = 1.62 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$ 

## Data collection

Enraf-Nonius CAD-4 diffractometer  $\omega$  scans Absorption correction:  $\psi$  scans (North, Phillips & Mathews, 1968)  $T_{min} = 0.848, T_{max} =$ 0.998 1518 measured reflections 1403 independent reflections

#### Refinement

Refinement on F R = 0.046 wR = 0.048 S = 1.420 1321 reflections 132 parameters All H-atom parameters refined w =  $4F_o^2/[\sigma^2(F_o^2)]$ + 0.0016 $F_o^4$ ] Mo  $K\alpha$  radiation  $\lambda = 0.7107$  Å Cell parameters from 25 reflections  $\theta = 9-15^{\circ}$   $\mu = 0.136$  mm<sup>-1</sup> T = 193 K Prism  $0.40 \times 0.21 \times 0.19$  mm Colorless

1321 observed reflections  $[I > 3\sigma(I)]$   $R_{int} = 0.022$   $\theta_{max} = 25.97^{\circ}$   $h = 0 \rightarrow 8$   $k = 0 \rightarrow 13$   $l = -11 \rightarrow 11$ 3 standard reflections frequency: 50 min intensity decay: 0.01%

 $(\Delta/\sigma)_{max} = 0.001$   $\Delta\rho_{max} = 0.301 \text{ e} \text{ Å}^{-3}$   $\Delta\rho_{min} = -0.354 \text{ e} \text{ Å}^{-3}$ Extinction correction: none Atomic scattering factors from International Tables for X-ray Crystallography (1974, Vol. IV)

122.5 (2)

115.5 (2)

121.9 (2)

116.5 (2)

120.5 (2) 123.0 (2)

(BIGH <sub>2</sub> )(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub>		Table 2	2. Fractiona	l atomic c	oordinates and i	sotropic or
Crystal data		equivalent isotropic displacement parameters $({ m \AA}^2)$ for				
$C_{2}H_{0}N_{5}^{2+}.2NO_{3}^{-}$	Mo $K\alpha$ radiation	$(BIGH_2)(NO_3)_2$				
$M_r = 227.14$	$\lambda = 0.7107 \text{ Å}$					-11 - 41
Orthorhombic	Cell parameters from 25	$U_{iso}$ for H atoms, $U_{eq} = (1/3) \sum_i \sum_j U_{ij} a_i^* a_j^* a_i a_j$ for all others			all others.	
$Pca2_1$	reflections		x	у	Z	$U_{\rm eq}/U_{\rm iso}$
a = 14.0232 (8) Å	$\theta = 10 - 14^{\circ}$	01	0.1254 (1)	0.9811 (	2) 0.9719	0.0265(3)
b = 6.8842 (5) Å	$\mu = 0.157 \text{ mm}^{-1}$	02	0.0079(1)	1.0753 (	2) 1.1093(2) 2) 0.9843(2)	0.0240(3) 0.0262(3)
c = 8.9541(5) Å	T = 193  K	03	-0.00228(9) 0.3722(1)	0.5305 (	2) 0.9179(2)	0.0335 (4)
V = 864.4(2) Å <sup>3</sup>	Prism	05	0.3972 (1)	0.8212 (	2) 0.8372 (2)	0.0381 (4)
V = 804.4 (2) A	$0.35 \times 0.22 \times 0.10 \text{ mm}$	06	0.3126(1)	0.6208 (	2) 0.7072 (2)	0.0270(3)
Z = 4	$0.33 \times 0.22 \times 0.19$ mm	N1	0.6960(1)	1.0265 (	2) 0.6430(2)	0.0205 (4)
$D_x = 1.75 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$	Coloriess	N2	0.7889(1)	0.8210 (	2) 0.7831 (2)	0.0223(4)
		N3	0.6380(1)	0.7262 (	$\begin{array}{ccc} 2) & 0.6973(2) \\ 2) & 0.7350(2) \end{array}$	0.0183(3)
		N4 N5	0.5723(1) 0.6390(1)	0.4203 (	2) 0.7339(2) 2) 0.9359(2)	0.0233(4) 0.0240(4)
Data collection		N6	0.0390(1) 0.0440(1)	0.9560 (	2) = 0.9555(2) 2) = 1.0223(2)	0.0188(3)
Enraf-Nonius CAD-4	841 observed reflections	N7	0.3610(1)	0.6590 (	2) 0.8222 (2)	0.0195 (4)
diffractometer	$[I > 3\sigma(I)]$	CI	0.7099(1)	0.8608 (	3) 0.7121 (2)	0.0166 (4)
w/2A scans	$\theta_{\rm max} = 25.97^{\circ}$	C2	0.6173(1)	0.5769 (	3) 0.7933 (3)	0.0178 (4)
Absorption correction:	$h = -8 \rightarrow 0$	H1A	0.742 (2)	1.109 (4	) 0.636 (4)	0.056 (9)
Absorption conection.	$h = -0 \rightarrow 0$	H1 <i>B</i>	0.638 (2)	1.064 (4	) 0.608 (4)	0.036 (7)
$\psi$ scans (North, Phillips	$k = 0 \rightarrow 11$	H2A	0.830(2)	0.927 (3	) 0.799 (4) 0.818 (4)	0.036(7)
& Mathews, 1968)	$l = -1/ \rightarrow 0$	H2B	0.806(1)	0.708 (4	0.610(4)	0.038(8)
$T_{\min} = 0.949, T_{\max} =$	3 standard reflections	H44	0.545(2)	0.327 (4	0.794(5)	0.041(7)
0.998	frequency: 50 min	H4B	0.576(2)	0.409 (4	0.634 (4)	0.045 (8)
1026 measured reflections	intensity decay: 0.22%	H5A	0.645 (2)	0.702 (3	0.978 (4)	0.031 (6)
1026 independent reflections		H5 <i>B</i>	0.629 (2)	0.483 (4	) 0.998 (4)	0.032 (7)
		Ta	ble 3. Select	ed geomei	tric parameters (	Å, °) for
Refinement			(BIGF	I)NO₁ and	$(BIGH_2)(NO_3)_2$	2
Definition E	$(\Delta/\sigma) = 0.006$	(BIGH)	NO <sub>2</sub>	, -	(BIGH <sub>2</sub> )(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub>	
	$\Delta_{a} = 0.181 \text{ s}^{-3}$	01-N6		1.253(1)	01—N6	1.239 (2)
R = 0.027	$\Delta p_{\text{max}} = 0.101 \text{ c A}^{-3}$	O2—N6		1.246(1)	O2N6	1.241 (2)
wR = 0.037	$\Delta \rho_{\rm min} = -0.203  \text{e A}$	O3—N6		1.244 (1)	O3—N6	1.274 (2)
S = 0.854	Extinction correction: none				04N7	1.241(2) 1.234(2)
841 reflections	Atomic scattering factors				05—N7 06—N7	1.254 (2)
172 parameters	from International Tables	N1_C1		1 320 (2)	N1-C1	1.313 (3)
All H-atom parameters	for X-ray Crystallography	N2C1		1.334 (2)	N2-C1	1.307 (2)
refined	(1974, Vol. IV)	N3-C1		1.340(2)	N3—C1	1.376 (2)
$w = 4F_{a}^{2}/[\sigma^{2}(F_{a}^{2})]$		N3-C2		1.334 (2)	N3—C2	1.371 (3)
$+ 0.0064F_{2}^{4}$		N4C2		1.325 (2)	N4C2	1.317 (3)
		N5-C2		1.330 (2)	N5—C2	1.316 (3)
		01N6	03	119.5 (1)	01-N6-02	120.9 (2)
Table 1. Fractional atomic coordinates and isotropic or equivalent isotropic displacement parameters $(Å^2)$ for (BIGH)NO <sub>3</sub>		O2—N6	03	120.4 (1)	01-N6-03	119.1 (2)
		01—N6	02	120.1(1)	02-No-03	120.0 (2)
					04-N7-05	1189(2)
					05-N7-06	120.0 (2)
		C1-N3	C2	123.4 (1)	CI-N3-C2	126.8 (2)

C1-N3-C2

N1-C1-N2 N1-C1-N3 N2-C1-N3

N3-C2-N4

N3-C2-N5 N4-C2-N5

	100			
	x	y	z	$U_{\rm eq}/U_{\rm iso}$
01	-0.0128 (2)	0.18355 (9)	0.3222(1)	0.0308 (3)
02	-0.0235(1)	-0.01718 (9)	0.3236(1)	0.0299 (3)
03	0.2577(1)	0.07882 (9)	0.4369(1)	0.0299(3)
NI	-0.0627 (2)	0.1670(1)	-0.0557 (1)	0.0253 (3)
N2	0.1916 (2)	0.3048(1)	0.0504(1)	0.0280(3)
N3	0.2420 (2)	0.0877(1)	0.0852(1)	0.0224 (3)
N4	0.5335 (2)	0.0045(1)	0.2425 (1)	0.0282 (3)
N5	0.5651 (2)	0.1690(1)	0.1024(1)	0.0282 (3)
N6	0.0741 (2)	0.0813(1)	0.3608(1)	0.0215 (3)
C1	0.1288 (2)	0.1874(1)	0.0262(1)	0.0200(3)
C2	0.4448 (2)	0.0902(1)	0.1419(1)	0.0204 (3)
HIA	-0.138 (2)	0.227 (2)	-0.074 (2)	0.031 (4)
H1 <i>B</i>	-0.106 (2)	0.092(1)	-0.067 (2)	0.026 (4)
H2A	0.310(2)	0.323(1)	0.102 (2)	0.028 (4)
H2B	0.112 (2)	0.361 (2)	-0.003 (2)	0.035 (4)
H4A	0.460 (2)	-0.036 (2)	0.275 (2)	0.032 (4)
H4B	0.668 (2)	-0.008 (2)	0.274 (2)	0.031 (4)
H5A	0.515(2)	0.211 (2)	0.018(2)	0.037 (5)
H5B	0.694 (3)	0.167(2)	0.151 (2)	0.046 (5)

$U_{\rm iso}$ for H atoms,	$U_{\rm eq} = (1/3) \sum_i \sum_j$	$U_{ij}a_i^*a_j^*\mathbf{a}_i.\mathbf{a}_j$	for all others.

## Table 4. Hydrogen-bonding geometry (Å, °) for $(BIGH)NO_3$ and $(BIGH_2)(NO_3)_2$

N1-C1-N2 N1-C1-N3

N2-C1-N3

N3-C2-N3 N3-C2-N4 N3-C2-N5 N4-C2-N5

117.9(1)

116.9(1)

125.0(1)

117.2(1)

125.4 (1) 117.4 (1)

$D - H \cdot \cdot \cdot A$	D—H	$\mathbf{H} \cdot \cdot \cdot \mathbf{A}$	D—H· · ·A
(BIGH)NO <sub>3</sub>			
N1-H1A···O3 <sup>1</sup>	0.82(2)	2.22 (2)	159(1)
N1H1 <i>B</i> ···N3 <sup>ii</sup>	0.86(2)	2.14 (2)	173 (2)
N2	0.83(1)	2.23(1)	143(1)
N4-H4B···O2 <sup>iv</sup>	0.89(2)	2.05 (2)	171 (2)
N5-H5 $A \cdot \cdot \cdot O1^{\circ}$	0.89(2)	2.13 (2)	163 (2)
N5—H5B···O1 <sup>iv</sup>	0.86 (2)	2.15 (2)	164 (2)
Commentary and any (i) w	1 1 1 2 - 1	$\cdot$ (ii) $-x - y -$	-7 (iii) $1 - r = 1$

Symmetry codes: (i)  $x - \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2} - y, z - \frac{1}{2}$ ; (ii) -x, -y, -z; (iii)  $\frac{1}{2} - x, \frac{1}{2} + y, \frac{1}{2} - z$ ; (iv) 1 + x, y, z; (v)  $\frac{1}{2} + x, \frac{1}{2} - y, z - \frac{1}{2}$ .

(BIGH <sub>2</sub> )(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub>			
$N1 - H1A \cdot \cdot \cdot O6^{1}$	0.86(3)	2.20 (3)	151 (3)
$N1 - H1B \cdot \cdot \cdot O2^{ii}$	0.91 (3)	2.05 (3)	154 (3)
$N2 - H2A \cdot \cdot \cdot O5^{i}$	0.94 (3)	2.00(2)	170(2)
N2—H2B···O4 <sup>m</sup>	0.87 (3)	2.09 (3)	167 (2)
N3—H3A···O3 <sup>11</sup>	0.93 (3)	1.83 (3)	168 (3)
N4—H4A···O3 <sup>in</sup>	0.94 (3)	2.04 (4)	157 (3)
N4—H4 <i>B</i> ····O4 <sup>™</sup>	0.92 (4)	2.11 (4)	155 (2)
N5—H5A···O1'	0.86(3)	2.20(2)	150(3)
N5—H5 <i>B</i> ····O6`	0.93 (3)	2.17 (3)	136(2)
Commentation and and (i) 1		x z 1. (i	

Symmetry codes: (i)  $\frac{1}{2} + x$ , 2 - y, z; (ii)  $\frac{1}{2} - x$ , y,  $z - \frac{1}{2}$ ; (iii)  $\frac{1}{2} + x$ , 1 (iv) 1 - x, 1 - y,  $z - \frac{1}{2}$ ; (v) 1 - x, 1 - y,  $\frac{1}{2} + z$ .

Preliminary examinations and intensity data collection were carried out using an Enraf-Nonius CAD-4 diffractometer. Backgrounds were obtained from analysis of the scan profiles (Blessing, Coppens & Becker, 1974). Both structures were solved by direct methods and all atoms, including H atoms, refined cleanly.

For both compounds, data collection: CAD-4 software (Enraf-Nonius, 1977); cell refinement: CAD-4 software; data reduction: MolEN PROCESS (Fair, 1990); program(s) used to solve structures: MULTAN80 (Main et al., 1980); program(s) used to refine structures: MolEN LSFM; molecular graphics: CAChe (CAChe Scientific, 1993); software used to prepare material for publication: MolEN CIF IN.

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Lists of structure factors, anisotropic displacement parameters and complete geometry have been deposited with the IUCr (Reference: BK1041). Copies may be obtained through The Managing Editor, International Union of Crystallography, 5 Abbey Square, Chester CH1 2HU, England.

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# 5,6,7,8-Tetrahydro-2,3-diphenvl-2a $\lambda^4$ -thia-2,3,4a,8a-tetraazacvclopent[cd]azulene-1[2*H*],4[3*H*]-diselone

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#### Abstract

The title compound,  $C_{19}H_{18}N_4SSe_2$ , crystallizes in the  $P\bar{1}$  space group with two molecules in the asymmetric unit. In both molecules, the chemically equivalent halves are identical within experimental error, except for conformational differences which arise from intermolecular interactions between the flexible seven-membered rings and surrounding Se atoms. The central triheterapentalene system is almost planar, with individual ring conformations consistent with three regions of conjugation separated by single bonds. The N-S bond lengths, stretched beyond the standard for a single bond, imply a three-centre interaction.

#### Comment

We have shown (Billing, Ferg, Lai, Levendis & Reid, 1993) that reaction of the cyclic thioureas [(3); n =2, 3, 4, Z = S] and selenoureas [(3); n = 2, 3, 4, Z = Se with 2,4-dinitrobenzyl chloride followed by deprotonation of the resulting salts with aqueous sodium carbonate yields the bases [(4); n = 2, 3, 4, Z = S, Se]. Treatment of the bases [(4); n = 2, 3, Z = S, Se] with heterocumulenes RNCX (X = S, Se) affords the triheterapentalenes containing the X - Z - X sequence (5) or triheterapentalenes (6) containing the N-Z-N sequence (Lai, 1992), depending on the bridge between the  $N_a$  and  $N_b$  atoms. To investigate further the influence of the bridge between the  $N_a$  and  $N_b$  atoms on the