

REPLY TO DISCUSSION: BUCKLING AND POSTBUCKLING OF THE LYING SHEET†

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Professor Hobbs correctly pointed out that my article[1] on the buckling of the lying sheet can be applied to the vertical buckling of railroad tracks. Using linear beam theory, Martinet[2] and later Nusayr and Paslay[3] found the buckling force of a *symmetric, infinite* sheet. The nonlinear postbuckling problem was first attempted by Kerr[4] who modeled the symmetric problem by two rigid connected segments. Exact numerical solution was obtained by Wang[5]. The present article[1] studies the *asymmetric* case, which can be applied to the buckling of railways and pipelines that have joints[6]. I may add that the critical buckling load or "safe load" of these problems cannot be determined from a small-slope linear analysis.

It is indeed possible to study the effects of bottom imperfection. Such an analysis, for the symmetric, segmented model, was performed by Kerr[4]. The effect of thermal elongation is equivalent to a compressive displacement and can be predicted by the present work.

Of a different nature is the lateral buckling of railroad tracks, which does not have one-sided constraint as in the present article[1]. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe the local resistance of lateral buckling is uniform or even proportional to displacement as in the Winkler foundation. I am not sure lateral buckling can be analyzed in the same way as vertical buckling.

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† Author's reply to R. E. Hobbs' discussion on "Buckling and Postbuckling of the Lying Sheet" *Int. J. Solids Structures* 20 351-358, 1984.