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### **REVIEW ARTICLE**

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# **REVIEW OF THE RATIONAL AND MATHEMATICAL BASIS OF THE SCENARIO THERMAL MODEL**

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## ABSTRACT

Mathematical models of human thermal responses can be used to provide useful information to prevent heat injuries, plan risk mitigation strategies, and evaluate potential responses to stressors. This paper reviews the mathematical principles used to operate the SCENARIO thermal model. SCENARIO is a rational first principles model that consists of seven compartments made up of five concentric cylinders that represent human core, muscle, fat, and vascular and avascular skin, a central blood compartment, and a clothing layer. Modeled interaction of heat exchange through these compartments allows for the prediction of thermal state over time. The model uses inputs of individuals characteristics and health status along within environmental conditions, clothing properties, and activity to generate physiological predictions (metabolism, heart rate, cardiac output, stroke volume, skin and core body temperature) over a given time course. This paper reviews the inputs, outputs, mathematical principles and general history of the SCENARIO model.

Keywords: physiology, biophysics, thermoregulation, clothing, environment, modeling

### INTRODUCTION

Ouantifying human physiological responses to environmental exposures has a rich history within the scientific community. Notable scientific work can be traced back to observational studies from Sir Charles Blagden is 1775 (1),mathematical representations of heat balance in solids by Fourier in 1822 (2),to conceptual representations of the human as sphere with internal core body heat exchange into the environment by Lefevre 1911 (3). Combining theories, tangible concepts, and mathematics to specifically quantify human responses took shape in 1934 when Burton applied Fourier's law to represent the human mathematically as a single cylinder (4). Possibly most notable with respect to rational modeling is the work by Pennes in 1948 (5) with the development of the bioheat transfer equation, where tissue, blood, and metabolism were specifically considered.

The U.S. military develops and uses human thermal models for understanding and preparing for operational exposures to extreme environments. In response to World War II, the country mobilized scientists to specifically address heat strain/stress that Soldiers were encountering in the hot and dry North African deserts and in the hot and humid Pacific Islands (6). Some of the most notable origins of these efforts can be traced back to scientists at the Harvard Fatigue Lab, University of Minnesota, and J.B. Pierce Foundation Laboratory at Yale University (7-11). In 1961, this work area was transformed into a US Army laboratory specifically dedicated to this field of research, the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM) (12, 13).

USARIEM, have continued to more accurately predict the specific interactions between the human, their clothing, and the environment (14-20). The Institute has focused several years of efforts to develop and refine models, methods, and usable decision aids for predicting thermoregulatory responses based on biophysics, physiology, clothing testing, and testing of human volunteers exposed to selected combinations of clothing, activities, and environmental conditions (21-30).

One of the more comprehensive US Army models is the SCENARIO model (31-34); named for its intended capability of running time-series predictions for a given human, set of activities, and environmental exposure (i.e., scenarios). Although widely used, the last review and update of the SCENARIO model was published in 2004 (34). This paper reviews the history of the SCENARIO model, its basis in the principles of thermal physiology, and the associated decision aids developed by USARIEM researchers for military end users.

### **History of SCENARIO**

The SCENARIO model was originally developed by Kraning and Gonzalez (31-34). The original version of it was used by Kraning as a platform to analyze human study data to test physiology hypotheses, and to help inform study designs for testing new physiological hypotheses. The concept during its creation was to use all of the "best available" mathematically algorithms to represent physiological functions. specific The inspirational primary sources for the model came from Atkins and Wyndham (35, 36), Gordon et al., (37), Stolwijk and Hardy (38-40), Montgomery (41, 42), Werner (43-46), Gagge (47-49), and Wissler (50, 51); while many of the biophysics equations for clothing came from work by Woodcock, Breckenridge, and Goldman (18, 52-66). Work conducted by Tan et al., (67) has provided some recent improvements that have optimized and improved the accuracy of the model.

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The concept of SCENARIO was to build a modular system that included both passive and active control systems along with physiological mechanisms relevant to thermoregulation cardiorespiratory (e.g., elements). Modularity of the design allows for continuous update to enabled use of the 'current best science' as per use of the "best available algorithms" to yield the most accurate predictions and create a true thermoregulatory model.

### **METHODS**

#### **SCENARIO** Structure

The SCENARIO model structurally represents the human in seven compartments made up of five concentric cylinders (core, muscle, fat, and vascular and avascular skin), a central blood compartment, and a clothing layer (Figure 1). Heat exchange between the cylinders occurs via conductance between each of the layers and by convection via blood circulation. Thermal states of each of the model layers are described using an energy balance equation; these equations comprise the passive heat exchange system. Heat exchange between the individual and surrounding environment occurs primarily at outer surface and is defined by radiant, convective, and evaporative heat exchanges. In addition to passive heat transfer between nodes. algorithms describe the active modes of thermoregulation via blood flow, sweating and to a minor extent shivering.

#### **Passive System**

The main rational function describing this balance represented in a total body heat content ( $Q_n$ ) at a given time point (t) by each  $n^{th}$  compartment is shown below as:

$$\frac{a}{dt}Q_{n(t)} = H_n(t) + (K_{n-1,n}[T_{n-1}(t) - T_n(t)]) - (K_{n,n+1}[T_n(t) - T_{n+1}(t)]) - (BF_n(t) \cdot \rho_{bl} + c_{bl}[T_n(t) - T_{bl}(t)])$$

where  $H_n(t)$  is rate of heat production,  $K_n$  is heat conductance between layers,  $T_n$  is temperature,  $T_{n-1}$  and  $T_{n+1}$  are temperatures of compartments adjacent to n,  $BF_n(t)$  is rate of blood flow through compartment n, and  $\rho_{bl}$ ,  $c_{bl}$ , and  $T_{bl}$  represent density, heat capacity, and temperature of the blood compartment. The rational balance of the heat content of the blood compartment ( $Q_{bl}$ ) is described as:

$$\frac{d}{dt}Q_{bl} = \rho_{bl} \cdot c_{bl}([(T_c - T_{bl})BF_{cr}] + [(T_{mu} - T_{bl})BF_{mu}] + [(T_{fat} - T_{bl})BF_{fat}] + [(T_{vsk} - T_{bl})BF_{vsk}]) - (C_{res} + E_{res})$$

where c, bl, mu, fat, and vsk represent core, blood, muscle, fat, and vascular skin layers,  $C_{res}$  and  $E_{res}$  are convective and evaporative heat transfer by respiration.

#### Active System

The active system for blood flow (BF) is broken down into segments for skin, core, and muscle. Skin blood flow  $(BF_{sk})$  is moderated by skin temperature  $(T_{sk})$ , posture, intensity, state transitions, work and dehydration. It is described linearly as a function of blood temperature  $(T_{bl})$ , compensated for by the influence of  $T_{sk}$  and volume of oxygen uptake (VO<sub>2</sub>) by adjusting the maximum skin blood flow  $(MaxBF_{sk})$ using a proportional control equation with conditional variables factored by percentage of this ( $PctMaxBF_{sk}$ ). This equation is show as:

$$BF_{sk} = (MaxBF_{sk}) \cdot \frac{PctMaxBF_{sk}}{100}$$

Maximum blood flow  $(MaxBF_{sk})$  is adjusted based on the work rate, where  $MaxBF_{sk}$  can range from 7.0 to 5.0 l·min<sup>-1</sup> and set based on three conditions of VO<sub>2</sub> ( $\leq 0.5$ , between 0.5 and 2.0, and  $>2.0 \text{ l} \cdot \text{min}^{-1}$ . If VO<sub>2</sub>  $\leq 0.5, MaxBF_{sk} = 7.0 \, \text{l} \cdot \text{min}^{-1}$ . If VO<sub>2</sub> > 0.5 and  $< 2.0, MaxBF_{sk} = 7.0 - 1.33(VO_2 - 0.5)$  l·min<sup>-</sup> If  $VO_2 \ge 2.0$ ,  $MaxBF_{sk} = 5.0 \ 1 \cdot min^{-1}$ . Additionally, there is a factor for adjusting *MaxBF*<sub>sk</sub> to compensate for gradual dehydration (weighting the change by 0.1%). Percentage of maximum blood flow  $(PctMaxBF_{sk})$  is a conditional equation that is calculated using a blood-skin threshold temperature  $(Th_{bl-BFsk})$  that is adjusted by work temperature intensity and skin and dehydration. This threshold allows for increases in blood flow for lower VO<sub>2</sub> and decreases based on higher VO<sub>2</sub>, seen as:

$$PctMaxBF_{sk} = \alpha_{BFsk}(T_{bl} - Th_{bl-BFsk})$$

where  $\alpha_{BFsk} = 70.3 \ [\% \cdot C^{-1}]$  signifies a proportionality coefficient that can be adjusted for dehydration based on a percentage of body weight loss (%  $\downarrow$ W), as  $\alpha_{BFsk} = 70.3 \ [1-0.13 \cdot (\% \downarrow W)]$ .

#### Sweat rate

Sweat rate (SR) response is calculated functionally into a total sweating rate ( $\dot{m}_{sw}$ ) based on the relationship of blood and skin temperatures and the given thresholds (e.g.,  $Th_{bl}$ ,  $Th_{sk}$ ) and an associated metabolic rate (i.e., oxygen uptake, VO<sub>2</sub>). This is functionally described based on a calculated total surface area ( $A_D$ ) (68, 69), a multiplying factor ( $\lambda_{sr}$ ), and conditional gain coefficients, seen as:

$$\dot{m}_{sw} = A_D \cdot \lambda_{SR} (\alpha_{SR} [T_{bl} - Th_{bl-SR}] + \beta_{SR} [\bar{T}_{SR} - Th_{sk-SR}])^{\left(\frac{T_{sk} - Th_{sk-SR}}{10}\right)}$$

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where  $\lambda_{sr} = \frac{\left(160 \cdot \frac{VO2max}{W}\right) - 3.2}{3.84}$  represents normal rates for sedentary health males (70),  $\alpha_{sr}$  is a coefficient to describe the relative augmented effect or "gain" of the deviation in internal hypothalamic signal driving responses (71) where additional adjustments can be made for dehydration based on a factor of % W (72), and  $\beta_{SR}$  is gain for deviations from normal or basal skin temperature.

#### **Cardiorespiratory** Systems

Key functions related to central circulation include stroke volume (SV), cardiac output (CO), and the related heart rate (HR) and  $T_{sk}$ . The function for SV is based on the Fick equation, where SV=CO/HR. The original calculations assumed all started simulations began at rest. For these steps in the model, there is an assumed resting value of CO and HR (CO<sub>rst</sub> and HR<sub>rst</sub>), making the initial SV (SV<sub>i</sub>),  $SV_i = CO_{rst}/HR_{rst}$ . The steps of calculating HR beyond rest require a moving calculation of CO required  $(CO_{rea})$ represented as a sum of required blood flow to the core, muscles, fat, and vascular skin  $(BF_{cr},$  $BF_{mu}$ ,  $BF_{fat}$ , and  $BF_{vsk}$ ). This calculated  $CO_{req}$ value is then used to balance the ongoing calculations of HR from CO<sub>reg</sub>/SV.

#### RESULTS

#### SCENARIO Inputs and Outputs

SCENARIO requires initialization variables related to the individual, their metabolic rate and activity, environmental conditions, and clothing properties. Though inputs over time have varied a bit, the general structure of inputs can be seen in Table 1. One of the unique aspects of some variants of the model is the flexibility to account for userdefined state change conditions (e.g., changes in environmental conditions, work rates).

The format of the SCENARIO model iterates human status calculations of each of

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the dependent variables based on elapsed time to provide outputs that are time linked (Table 2). The main parameter outputs typically used are those related to the physiological state changes over a given simulated time period. An example output plot of core body temperature ( $T_c$ ),  $T_{sk}$ , and HR over time during work and rest is shown in Figure 2; while a comparison of  $T_c$  change to rate of heat loss (dQ/dt) is shown in Figure 3 and sweat rate (SR) and fluid loss is shown in Figure 4, both for the same simulation.

Variable Group	Number of Variables	Variables
Individual	8*	<ul> <li>body mass (Wt; kg)</li> <li>height (Ht, m),</li> <li>percent body fat (%Fat),</li> <li>age (age, years)</li> <li>acclimation level (Accl; 0=none, 1=partial, and 2=fully)</li> <li>hydration status (set levels or by % dehydrated)</li> <li>initial core body temperature (Tc, °C)</li> <li>maximal rate of oxygen uptake (VO<sub>2</sub>max; mL·kg·min)</li> </ul>
Metabolic Rate	6*	<ul> <li>Body movement relative to still air (Vmove, m/s)</li> <li>Metabolic rate (VO<sub>2</sub>)</li> <li>Total metabolic rate (Mtot, W)</li> <li>Resting metabolic rate (Mrst, W)</li> <li>External work rate (Mwork, W)</li> <li>Activity Type (WorkMode, f=free walking, t=treadmill, r=rest, e=ergometer)</li> </ul>
Environmental Conditions	9*	<ul> <li>Ambient or dry bulb temperature (Tdb, °C)</li> <li>Mean radiant temperature (Tmr, °C)</li> <li>Black globe temperature (Tg, °C)</li> <li>Air movement (Vair, m/s)</li> <li>Ambient Vapor Pressure (Pvap)</li> <li>Relative Humidity (RH, %)</li> <li>Wet bulb temperature (Twb, °C)</li> <li>Dew point temperature (Tdp, °C)</li> <li>Natural wet bulb temperature (Tnwb, °C)</li> </ul>
Clothing Properties	2	<ul> <li>clothing insulation (Icl, clo)</li> <li>permeability factor (i<sub>m</sub>, N.D.)</li> </ul>

### Table 1. General Inputs Required for SCENARIO

\*Not all variables are required, as some can override others

Variable	Variable	Variable Descriptions
Group	Name	*Each at a given time point
	Mtot	The collective sum of metabolic rate (can be input)
	Mext	Total metabolic cost from external work (can be input)
	HR	Heart Rate
	SV	Stroke Volume
	CO	Cardiac Output
II	Tc	Core body temperature
питап	Tra	Right arterial blood temperature
	Tsk	Skin temperature (avascular)
	SR	Sweat rate
	BFvsk	Vascular skin blood flow
	dQ/dt	Rate of heat loss for the given time period

### Table 2. Time-dependent outputs from SCENARIO









Time (Minutes)



**Figure 3.** Example output plot of fluid loss and sweat rate (SR) during a series of work and rest overtime

### DISCUSSION

### SCENARIO as a Decision Aid

SCENARIO has taken shape in several forms as a computer-based decision aid and has been used as the underpinning for several development efforts. Program other developers have created several versions of the SCENARIO model as command line MS-DOS program, Quick Basic (QBasic), a C-code variant, and a Java version. As the creators, Kraning and Gonzalez were also the first program developers for the SCENARIO model. However, over time with changes in programming languages and computers systems, there have been several other notable contributors that have worked on the model, to include Furlong (73), Doherty (74, 75) Matthew (76, 77), extensive work by Berglund and Yokota (78-80), and various applied use cases (81-84).

Early versions provided meaningful platforms to test hypotheses and run modeling simulations of anticipated events. and However, one of the more important improvements came with the transition to object oriented programming, which allowed for a framework for development and further expansion. Versions of these collective works include the transition of the original SCENARIO model into the java version (SCENARIO-J) (78), and into the foundational basis for the Individual Capability Decision Aid (ICDA) (29, 30), a Disabled-Submarine thermal model (21), and the framework for a canine thermal model (CTM) (85-88).

Some notable improvements have been made recently related to one of the main input elements, metabolic rate. From a resting and baseline perspective, most often thermoregulatory models use inputs of individual height and mass to determine a body surface area (BSA). This BSA is then used to interpreted resting metabolic rate (typically calculated as BSA \* 58.2 or 58.2  $W/m^2$ ). Until recently, a 1916 equation had been used that was based on a small sample of white males (68); however, recent methods have been developed to more accurately make predictions of BSA based on sex and other inputs (69). Additionally, the accuracy of these models during more dynamic activity conditions can be directly linked to shifts in metabolic demands (i.e., metabolic heat production) and therefore accurate predictions of metabolic costs are critical that have been tested to more realistic complex conditions This principle was directly (89-95). demonstrated by Tan et al., (67), where mathematical penalties were applied to metabolic rate predictions.

### Why SCENARIO?

While the originally designed SCENARIO model had several limitations for use as it was designed from data of young and healthy males; improvements have been made to account for individual and sex differences in physiological responses (34) as well as specific handling of circadian rhythm (75). Additionally, the modular design allows for testing and further improvement of the underlying equations to account for specific populations. Newer studies provide some promise for both testing and making these adjustments specific to age (96, 97), sex (98, 99), and various fitness levels (100, 101).

There are essentially three mathematical modeling methods for predicting human thermal responses, empirical, rational, or hybrid models. Empirical (functional) models use mathematical or statistically-based representations of observed relationships found in experimental data. Rational (mechanistic) models use mathematically representations of explicit phenomena based on first principles understanding of physics **E** 22

and physiology (biology, chemistry, physics). Independently, both empirical and rational methods are scientifically valid approaches. However, perhaps the most effective approach is a hybrid or mixed model method that uses a combination of the two. Hybrid models often framework use of rational а relationships/equation, but the equations may be adjusted or supplemented with data based metrics/values. The hybrid approach is most useful when the basic principles or rationale is known, but specific input/variable values need to be adjusted for a given population or set of conditions. The SCENARIO model is wellsuited to be a physiologically-based platform for a true hybrid or even the foundation of a combined or multi-model approach (102). In a multi-model approach, a series of models are assembled, then based on the specific criteria for a given case or scenario, either a specific model is selected from the ensemble, or several models may be run simultaneously, then compared. Ideally multiple models will converge on a single solution, but in some cased feedback from initial observations may favor one model. The later approach is similar to current practice in meteorology for severe storm forecasting, where the results/storm other predictions/predicted tracks and models parameters from multiple are compared, and the results from best performing selected models are or emphasized. The result from multiple models may also be combined to generate a range of probable outcomes.

The Heat Strain Decision Aid (HSDA) (22,26, 103-105) is the most widely recognized **USARIEM** example of an empirically-based thermal model; while SCENARIO is perhaps the most well-known rationally-based model (32-34). However. while both of their origins began within their respective classification, they are each both technically hybrid methods as they both rely on first principle methods for calculated the

physics of heat exchange, but also use data based content in the equations input. The main difference between them is the construction of their main output functions (e.g., method to predict core body temperature). The HSDA method uses an empirically-derived equation for projecting a core body temperature trajectory based on an equilibrium state within a given set of thermal conditions (106). SCENARIO combines physiologically based variables and calculations (e.g., blood flow, heart rate, cardiac output) to predict body core temperature. Both methods include approximations of underlying values such as effects of wind or wettedness on clothing properties (107, 108).

Across the open literature, several notable models exist that are designed specifically to predict thermal statuses in varied environments (39, 41, 46, 51, 109-117). Each of these models have provided key improvements to the field; however, each have had shortcomings when applied to broader environments or can pose challenges implementing. Several of these models were designed with specific application focuses, e.g., in hot, cold, or immersed environments. However, it remains a critical task to validate these models for specific use cases and conditions, and specialized clothing (118-120) and when possible to up- or down-select methods base on needs and their respective performance demands (121.122). Additionally, the ideal model or combination of models can be used to provide predictive abilities across a dynamic set of conditions (e.g., a person traveling on land in the heat, then immersed, then back on land in cooler or cold conditions).

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### Declarations

#### Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

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