

WORLDWIDE REFINERY PROCESSING REVIEW-3Q08

Hydrocracking and Alkylation

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Hydrocracking	3
2.1 MARKET/TECHNOLOGY TRENDS & OPPORTUNITIES	3
2.1.1 <i>Market Conditions and Outlook</i>	4
2.1.1.1 Middle Distillates Demand	4
2.1.1.2 Capacity, Expansion, and Project Delays	5
2.1.1.3 Catalyst Market.....	8
2.1.2 <i>Technology Competition, Direction, and Future Prospects</i>	9
2.1.2.1 Changing Feedstock	9
2.1.2.2 Catalyst Developments	10
2.1.2.3 Process Design and Hardware Developments	12
2.1.2.4 Revamp and Integration Options	13
2.1.2.5 Research and Development	14
2.2 STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY	16
2.2.1 <i>Introduction</i>	16
2.2.2 <i>Commercial and Emerging Process Technology</i>	17
2.2.2.1 Albemarle	18
2.2.2.2 Axens.....	18
2.2.2.2.1 Mild Hydrocracking	18
2.2.2.2.1.1 HyC-10	19
2.2.2.2.1.2 H-Oil _{DC} (formerly T-Star).....	21
2.2.2.2.1.3 HyTail.....	22
2.2.2.2.2 Medium-Pressure Hydrocracking.....	23
2.2.2.2.3 Conventional (High-Pressure) Hydrocracking	23
2.2.2.3 Chevron Lummus Global	26
2.2.2.3.1 Mild ISOCRACKING	26
2.2.2.3.2 ISOCRACKING.....	26
2.2.2.3.3 Optimized Partial Conversion	30
2.2.2.3.4 Split-Feed Injection and Single-Stage Reaction Sequencing	31
2.2.2.3.5 ISOFLEX.....	32
2.2.2.3.6 Reactor Internals.....	34
2.2.2.4 DuPont Clean Technologies	34
2.2.2.5 ExxonMobil.....	36
2.2.2.5.1 Single-Stage MPHC	37
2.2.2.5.2 MPHC-PTU	39
2.2.2.5.3 MPHC-LCO	40
2.2.2.5.4 Two-Stage MPHC	42
2.2.2.5.5 Spider-Vortex Reactor Internals.....	44

2.2.2.6	Haldor Topsøe.....	44
2.2.2.6.1	Mild Hydrocracking.....	44
2.2.2.6.2	Staged Partial Conversion (SPC) Hydrocracking.....	45
2.2.2.6.3	Back-End Shift (BES) Process.....	45
2.2.2.6.4	Reactor Internals.....	45
2.2.2.7	Shell Global Solutions.....	45
2.2.2.7.1	Conventional Hydrocracking.....	45
2.2.2.7.2	Reactor Internals.....	48
2.2.2.8	Sinopec.....	49
2.2.2.8.1	Flexible Hydrotreating/Mild Hydrocracking Process.....	49
2.2.2.8.2	Medium-Pressure Hydro-Upgrading Process.....	50
2.2.2.8.3	FDC Single-Stage, Double-Catalyst Hydrocracking Process.....	52
2.2.2.9	UOP.....	53
2.2.2.9.1	MHC Unicracking.....	53
2.2.2.9.2	Unicracking.....	54
2.2.2.9.3	Partial-Conversion Unicracking.....	56
2.2.2.9.4	Dieselmax.....	61
2.2.2.9.5	HyCycle Unicracking.....	62
2.2.2.9.6	Advanced Partial Conversion Unicracking.....	63
2.2.2.9.7	HPNA Removal Systems.....	65
2.2.2.9.8	Reactor Internals.....	65
2.2.2.10	Summary of Hydrocracking Process Technologies.....	66
2.2.3	<i>Commercial and Emerging Catalysts</i>	70
2.2.3.1	Advanced Refining Technologies.....	70
2.2.3.2	Albemarle.....	70
2.2.3.3	Axens.....	72
2.2.3.4	Catalysts and Chemicals Industries.....	73
2.2.3.5	Chevron Lummus Global.....	73
2.2.3.6	Criterion Catalysts & Technologies.....	77
2.2.3.7	Haldor Topsøe.....	80
2.2.3.8	Nippon Oil.....	81
2.2.3.9	Sinopec.....	82
2.2.3.10	UOP.....	83
2.2.3.10.1	Maximizing Middle Distillates.....	83
2.2.3.10.2	Maximizing Naphtha Production.....	84
2.2.3.10.3	Catalyst Design Engine and Recently Developed Catalysts.....	85
2.2.3.11	Summary of Commercially Available Hydrocracking Catalysts.....	87
2.2.4	<i>Commercially Available Control and Optimization Systems</i>	88
2.3	PLANT OPERATIONS AND PRACTICES.....	92
2.3.1	<i>Process</i>	92
2.3.1.1	Shifting from Maximum Naphtha to Maximum Middle Distillate Yields.....	92
2.3.1.2	Reactor Configuration Options for Distillate Production.....	93
2.3.1.3	Changing Configuration to Boost Yields and Process Alternative Feeds.....	94
2.3.1.4	Integrated Processing Schemes.....	95
2.3.1.5	Setting Operational Pressure.....	95
2.3.1.6	Comparison of Quench Systems.....	97
2.3.1.7	Benefits of Moderate Pressure Hydrocracking (MPHC) in Clean Diesel Production.....	97
2.3.1.8	Mild Hydrocracking (MHC).....	99
2.3.1.8.1	Mild Hydrocracking: Feedstock, Conversion, and Product Quality.....	99
2.3.1.8.2	Retrofitting VGO Hydrotreaters to MHC Units.....	100
2.3.1.8.3	Options for Improving the Cycle Length of Mild Hydrocrackers.....	100
2.3.1.9	Undercutting LVGO to Increase Hydrocracker Utilization.....	101
2.3.1.10	Resid Hydrocracking to Increase Feed Flexibility.....	102

2.3.1.11	Posttreatment of Hydrocracker Naphtha for Downstream Catalytic Reformers.....	102
2.3.1.12	Process Revamp for Added H ₂ S Removal.....	103
2.3.1.13	Reactor Revamp to Improve ULSD Production.....	104
2.3.2	<i>Catalyst Selection and Deactivation</i>	105
2.3.2.1	Selection Process for Hydrocracking Catalysts.....	105
2.3.2.2	Catalyst for Processing Various Feeds.....	106
2.3.2.3	Effects of a Catalyst Change on Gasoline Quality.....	106
2.3.2.4	Catalyst Structure: Homogeneous vs. Stacked.....	107
2.3.2.5	Ex-Situ Presulfiding of Hydrocracking Catalysts.....	107
2.3.2.5.1	CRI.....	108
2.3.2.5.2	Eurecat.....	108
2.3.2.5.3	TRICAT.....	108
2.3.2.6	Hydrocracking Catalyst in the Last Bed of a ULSD Unit.....	109
2.3.2.7	Disproportionate Catalyst Deactivation in the First Bed of a Hydrocracker.....	109
2.3.2.8	Asphaltene Contribution to Catalyst Deactivation.....	110
2.3.2.9	Precious Metal Recovery from Catalysts.....	111
2.3.2.10	Switching from Noble Metal to Base Metal Systems.....	111
2.3.3	<i>Fouling, Particulate Deposition, and Corrosion</i>	112
2.3.3.1	Causes of Hydroprocessor Fouling and Possible Treatments.....	112
2.3.3.2	Elimination of Polynuclear Aromatics (PNA) Buildup.....	113
2.3.3.3	Iron Sulfide Buildup in VGO Hydrocrackers.....	114
2.3.3.4	Feed Filter Operation.....	115
2.3.3.5	Corrosion Due to Fluoride.....	116
2.3.3.6	Corrosion in Auxiliary Equipment.....	117
2.3.4	<i>Detecting and Preventing Process Variable Problems</i>	117
2.3.4.1	Increased Yield using Multivariable Predictive Control (MPC).....	117
2.3.4.2	Detecting Radial Temperature Spread and Preventing Reactor Runaway.....	120
2.3.4.3	Improving Hydrocracker Temperature Control.....	122
2.3.4.4	Ammoniation Passivation During Startup.....	125
2.3.4.5	Inline Hydrocracker Cleaning System.....	126
2.3.5	<i>Safety and Depressurization</i>	127
2.3.5.1	Hydrocracker Safety.....	127
2.3.5.2	Emergency Depressurization: Triggering Criteria, Rates and Modes.....	127
2.3.5.3	Operational Status of Emergency Depressurizing Valves and Interlocks.....	129
2.4	REFINING R&D ALERT!.....	129
2.4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	129
2.4.2	<i>General Hydrocracking to Improve Activity and Selectivity</i>	132
2.4.2.1	Process.....	133
2.4.2.1.1	Patents.....	133
2.4.2.1.2	Research.....	136
2.4.2.2	Catalyst.....	139
2.4.2.2.1	Patents.....	139
2.4.2.2.2	Research.....	144
2.4.2.3	Hardware.....	149
2.4.2.3.1	Research.....	149
2.4.2.4	Operation.....	150
2.4.2.4.1	Patents.....	150
2.4.2.4.2	Research.....	152
2.4.3	<i>Hydrocracking to Selected Products</i>	153
2.4.3.1	Process.....	153
2.4.3.1.1	Patents.....	153
2.4.3.1.2	Research.....	156

2.4.3.2	Catalyst.....	156
2.4.3.2.1	Patents.....	156
2.4.4	<i>Heavy Oil/Resid Feeds</i>	158
2.4.4.1	Process.....	158
2.4.4.1.1	Patents.....	158
2.4.4.2	Catalyst.....	162
2.4.4.2.1	Patents.....	162
2.4.4.2.2	Research.....	164
2.4.5	<i>Hydrocracking Alternative Feedstocks</i>	165
2.4.5.1	Fischer-Tropsch Liquids.....	165
2.4.5.1.1	Process.....	165
2.4.5.1.1.1	Patents.....	165
2.4.5.1.1.2	Research.....	168
2.4.5.1.2	Catalyst.....	170
2.4.5.1.2.1	Patents.....	170
2.4.5.1.2.2	Research.....	171
2.4.5.2	Renewable Feeds.....	172
2.4.5.2.1	Process.....	172
2.4.5.2.1.1	Patents.....	172
2.4.5.2.1.2	Research.....	173
2.5	WORLDWIDE INSTALLED CAPACITY.....	173
2.6	CONSTRUCTION.....	176
2.6.1	<i>Recent Construction Activity</i>	176
2.6.2	<i>Completed Construction Projects</i>	182
2.7	REFERENCES.....	190

3. Alkylation 207

3.1	MARKET/TECHNOLOGY TRENDS & OPPORTUNITIES.....	207
3.1.1	<i>Market Conditions and Outlook</i>	207
3.1.1.1	Capacity Expansion.....	209
3.1.2	<i>Technology Competition, Directions, and Future Prospects</i>	209
3.1.2.1	HF vs. H ₂ SO ₄	209
3.1.2.2	Safety and Environmental.....	211
3.1.2.3	Looking to the Future.....	212
3.2	STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY.....	214
3.2.1	<i>Introduction</i>	214
3.2.1.1	Liquid Alkylation.....	215
3.2.1.1.1	H ₂ SO ₄ Alkylation.....	217
3.2.1.1.2	HF Alkylation.....	218
3.2.2	<i>Commercially Available Liquid Alkylation Technology</i>	218
3.2.2.1	Axens (Feed Pretreatment).....	218
3.2.2.2	CDTECH.....	219
3.2.2.2.1	CDAlky.....	219
3.2.2.2.2	CDAlkyPlus.....	221
3.2.2.3	DuPont STRATCO.....	223
3.2.2.3.1	Effluent Refrigerated Alkylation.....	223
3.2.2.3.2	Olefins Bypass to Resolve Isobutane Limitations.....	226
3.2.2.3.3	Feed Segregation.....	226
3.2.2.3.4	Butylene Feed Fractionation.....	228
3.2.2.3.5	Isobutylene Alkylation with Isopentane.....	228
3.2.2.3.6	ALKYSAFE.....	228
3.2.2.3.7	Integrated Alkylation and Onsite SAR/SGR.....	229

3.2.2.4	ExxonMobil.....	230
3.2.2.5	UOP.....	232
3.2.2.5.1	Hydroisom.....	232
3.2.2.5.2	Feed pretreatment.....	233
3.2.2.5.3	Gravity Circulated HF Alkylation.....	233
3.2.2.5.4	Forced Circulation HF Alkylation.....	235
3.2.2.5.5	ReVAP.....	236
3.2.2.5.6	Alkad.....	238
3.2.2.5.7	Inventory Management Process.....	240
3.2.3	<i>Emerging Alternative Alkylation Technologies</i>	240
3.2.3.1	Key Projects of the Past.....	240
3.2.3.1.1	Catalytica/Conoco/Neste Oy.....	240
3.2.3.1.2	Chemical Research & Licensing/Chevron.....	241
3.2.3.1.3	Hydrocarbon Technologies Inc.....	241
3.2.3.2	Liquid Acid Alkylation.....	242
3.2.3.2.1	Refining Hydrocarbon Technologies (RHT).....	242
3.2.3.3	Solid Acid Alkylation.....	244
3.2.3.3.1	Lummus Technology/Albemarle/Neste Oil.....	244
3.2.3.3.2	Exelus.....	247
3.2.3.3.3	Lurgi Öl Gas Chemie.....	250
3.2.3.3.4	UOP.....	251
3.2.3.4	Supported Liquid-phase Catalysts.....	253
3.2.3.4.1	Haldor Topsøe.....	253
3.2.3.5	Ionic Liquid Alkylation.....	255
3.2.3.5.1	PetroChina.....	255
3.2.4	<i>Summary of Alkylation Processes</i>	257
3.2.5	<i>Comparison of Commercially Available Advanced Control and Optimization Systems</i>	261
3.3	PLANT OPERATIONS AND PRACTICES.....	262
3.3.1	<i>General Alkylation</i>	263
3.3.1.1	Alkylating Alternative Feedstocks.....	263
3.3.1.1.1	Propylene.....	263
3.3.1.1.2	Amylenes.....	264
3.3.1.1.3	Isobutylene.....	265
3.3.1.1.4	Light Ends.....	266
3.3.1.1.5	Alkylating Feed from Cokers.....	266
3.3.1.2	Feed Contaminants.....	267
3.3.1.3	Important Operating Parameters Affecting HF and H ₂ SO ₄ Alkylation.....	268
3.3.1.4	Plugging and Foaming Problems in Alkylation Units.....	268
3.3.1.5	Minimizing Acid Consumption.....	269
3.3.1.6	Acid Runaway.....	270
3.3.1.7	Acid Storage.....	271
3.3.1.8	Measuring Circulating Acid Strength and Acid Levels.....	271
3.3.1.9	Employing Multi-Objective Optimization to Alkylation Processes.....	273
3.3.1.10	Isostripper Advanced Process Control (APC).....	274
3.3.2	<i>H₂SO₄ Alkylation</i>	274
3.3.2.1	ASO Formation and Disposal.....	274
3.3.2.2	Corrosion.....	275
3.3.2.3	Commercial Experience Using Co-catalysts in H ₂ SO ₄ Units.....	277
3.3.2.4	Spent H ₂ SO ₄ Regeneration and Treatment.....	279
3.3.2.4.1	Regeneration.....	279
3.3.2.4.2	Treatment.....	280
3.3.2.5	Electrostatic Precipitator.....	280

3.3.3	<i>HF Alkylation</i>	281
3.3.3.1	Corrosion.....	281
3.3.3.2	Chemical Cleaning in HF Alkylation Units Prior to Turnaround	282
3.3.3.3	HF Safety	282
3.3.3.4	HF Mitigation.....	283
3.3.3.5	HF Pump Seal Selection.....	283
3.3.3.6	Inspecting Joints in HF Alkylation Unit	284
3.4	REFINING R&D ALERT!.....	284
3.4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	284
3.4.2	<i>General Alkylation</i>	286
3.4.2.1	Patents	286
3.4.2.1.1	Research.....	290
3.4.3	<i>H₂SO₄ Alkylation</i>	290
3.4.3.1	Patents	290
3.4.3.2	Research	294
3.4.4	<i>HF Alkylation</i>	294
3.4.4.1	Patents	294
3.4.5	<i>Solid Acid Alkylation</i>	295
3.4.5.1	Patents	295
3.4.5.2	Research.....	304
3.4.6	<i>Supported Liquid Alkylation</i>	309
3.4.6.1	Patents	309
3.4.7	<i>Ionic Liquid Alkylation</i>	309
3.4.7.1	Patents	309
3.4.7.2	Research.....	313
3.5	WORLDWIDE INSTALLED CAPACITY	313
3.6	CONSTRUCTION	316
3.6.1	<i>Recent Construction Activity</i>	316
3.6.2	<i>Completed Construction Projects</i>	319
3.7	REFERENCES.....	323

4.	Latest Refining Technology Developments & Licensing	333
4.1	CATALYTIC REFORMING.....	333
4.2	BENZENE REDUCTION AND REMOVAL	333
4.3	COKING	334
4.4	RESID UPGRADING.....	335
4.5	HEAVY OIL, EXTRA-HEAVY OIL, AND BITUMEN UPGRADING.....	335
4.6	HYDROGEN PRODUCTION AND PURIFICATION	336
4.7	SULFUR PLANT	337
4.8	AROMATICS AND LIGHT OLEFINS PRODUCTION.....	337
4.9	GAS-TO-LIQUID AND COAL-TO-LIQUID	338
4.10	BIOFUELS PRODUCTION	340
4.11	CO ₂ EMISSIONS (CARBON CAPTURE AND SEQUESTRATION).....	341
4.12	AUTOMOBILE ENGINE DESIGN INNOVATIONS.....	342
4.13	MISCELLANEOUS	342
4.14	REFERENCES.....	344