Fragmentation Management for the Downstream Value Chain

Scott G. Giltner

Improving Processes. Instilling Expertise.

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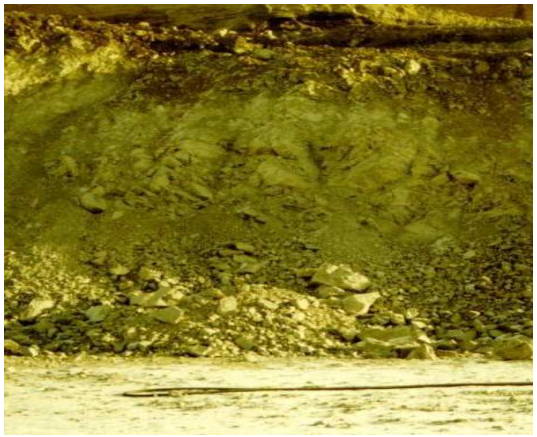
Topics to be Covered

- The purpose of drilling & blasting in producing crushed stone
- Relative cost of drilling & blasting vs other quarrying activities
- Cost/production opportunities offered with optimized fragmentation
- Factors affecting fragmentation
- Self-evaluation of fragmentation

Why Drill and Blast ?



Blasting intensity

- **Drill and Blast is the first step in the breakage and separation process. Therefore, it impacts all the the subsequent downstream process efficiencies.**
- **Drill and Blast is still the most cost effective method to break and move the large volumes of rock – when done correctly!**

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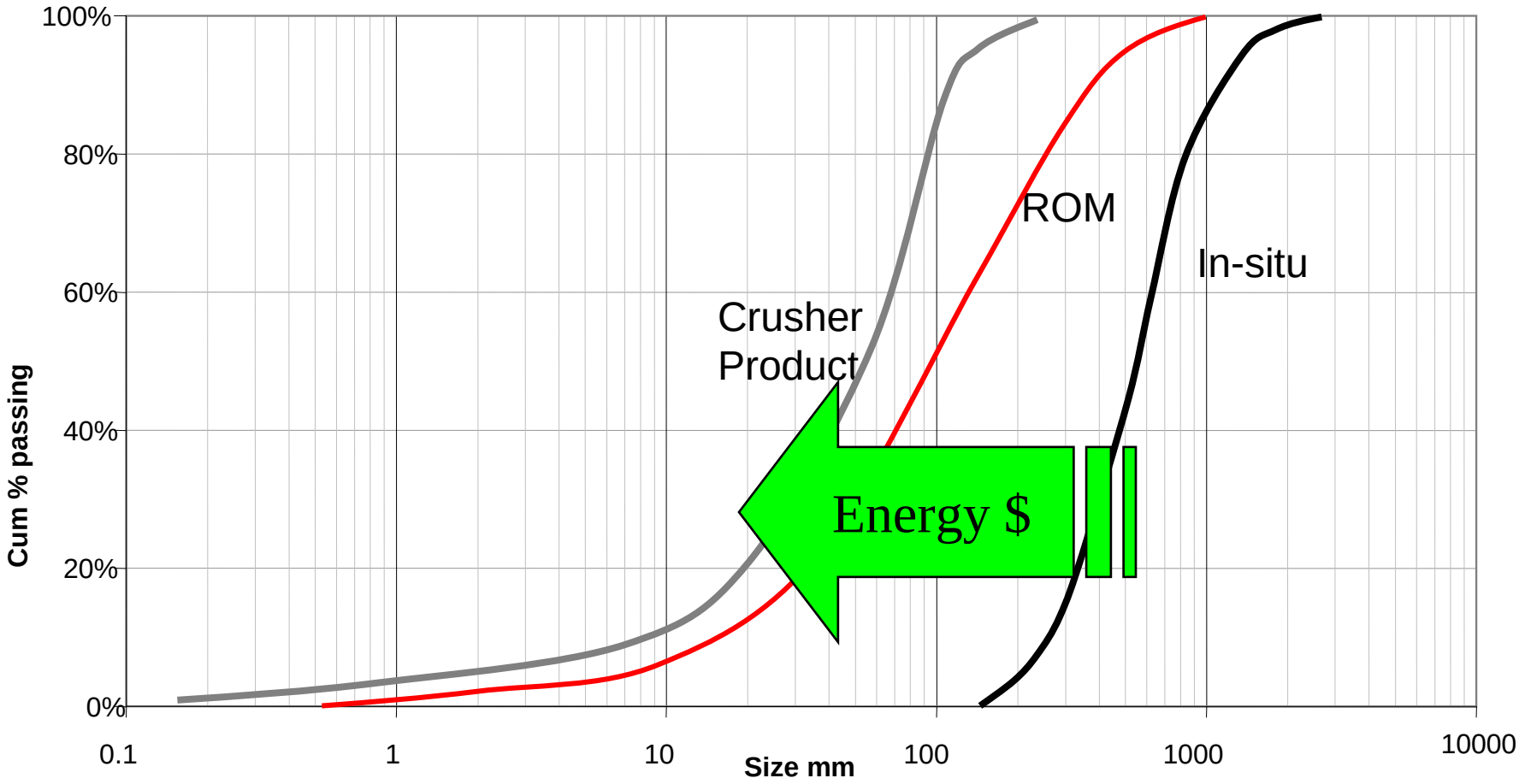
Rock Breakage Phases



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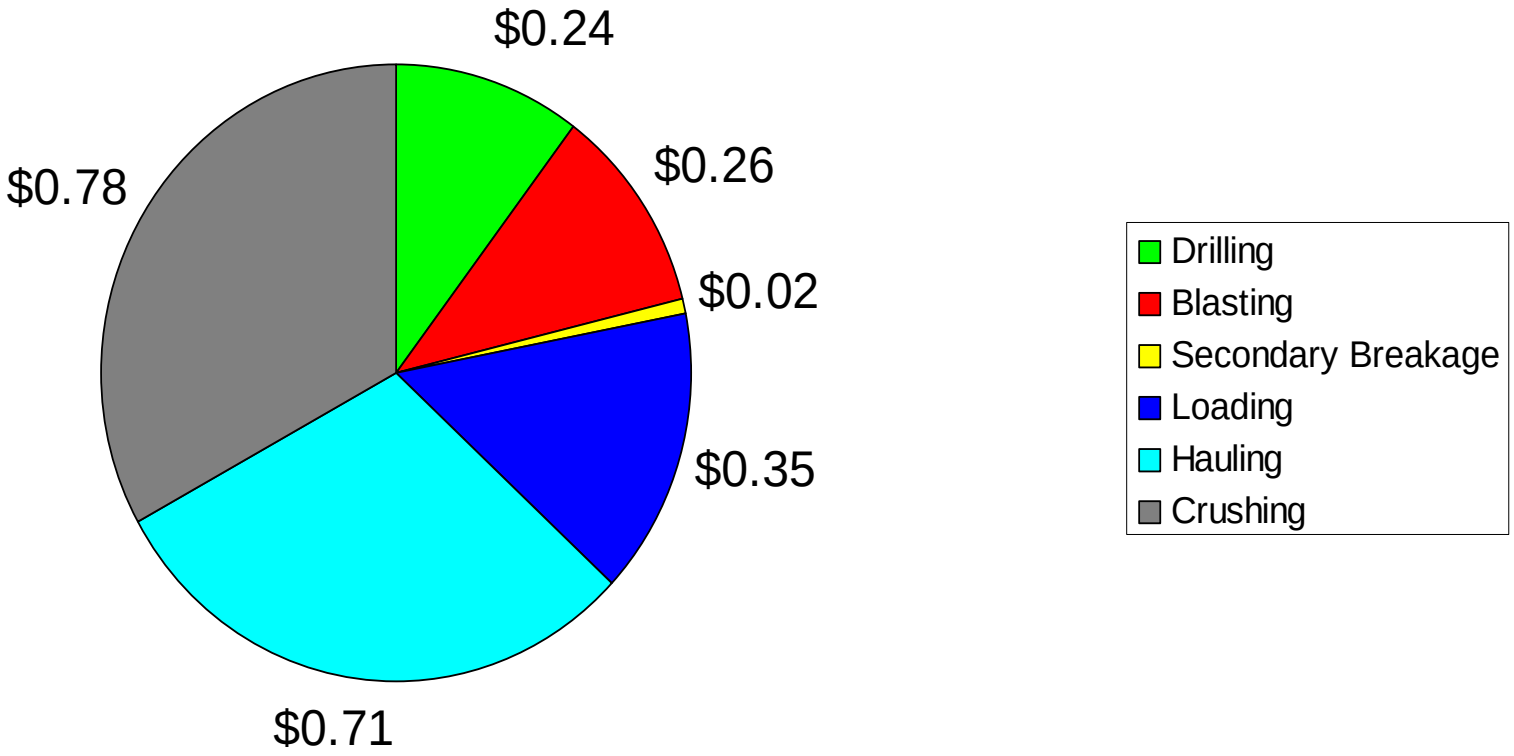
Relative Energy and Costs

	Specific energy kwh/t	Energy factor	Cost factor
Drill and Blast	0.1 – 0.25	1	1
Load and haul	0.2 – 0.5	1 - 5	2 - 10
Crushing	1 – 2	4 - 20	2 - 10

Lighten Up

Generally the harder the rock, the higher the factor.

Drilling & Blasting - Leverage



Drilling & Blasting - Leverage

- Drilling and blasting is the first step in the comminution processes
- A 10% increase in drilling and blasting cost can be compensated by
  - ✓ **4.6% reduction in excavation and hauling costs**

  or

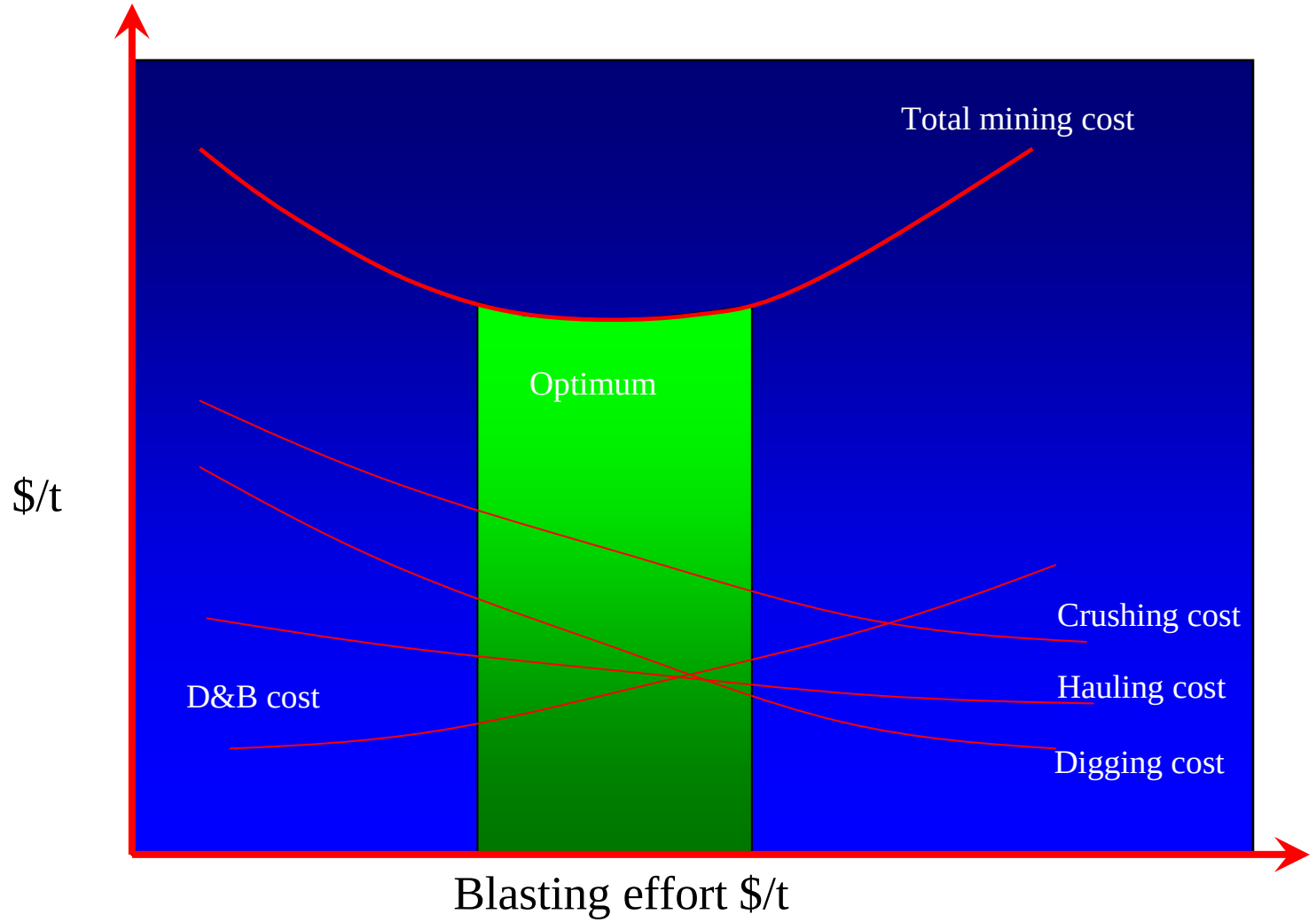
  - ✓ **6.4% reduction in crushing**

1% decrease in excavation/hauling = 2.1% increase in D&B

or

1% decrease in crushing/benefaction = 1.6% increase in D&B

Traditional Blast Optimization



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Common Fragmentation Issues

- Oversize breakage costs
- Excavator costs (diggability)
- Crusher costs (throughput)
- Recovery (fines)

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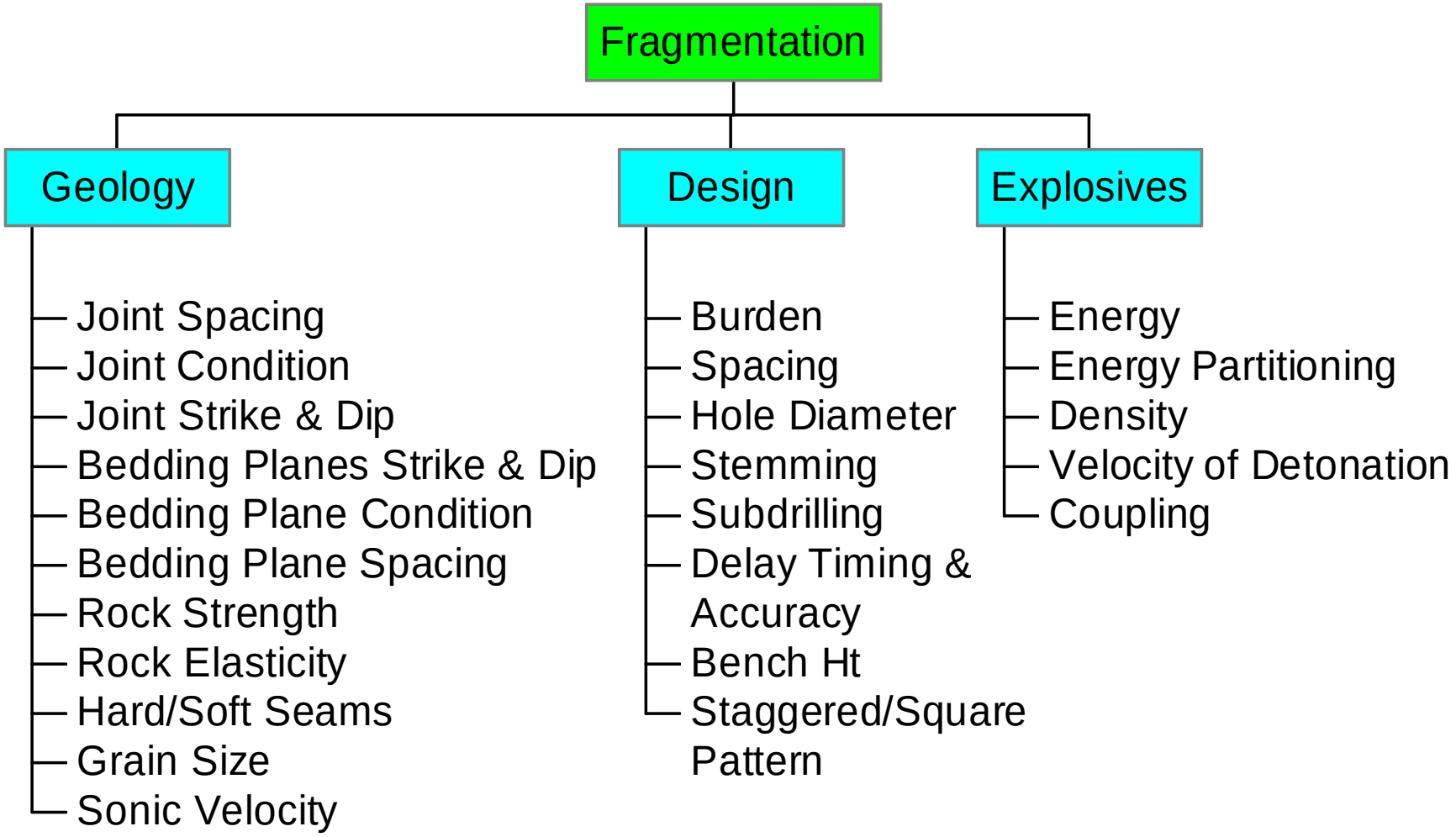
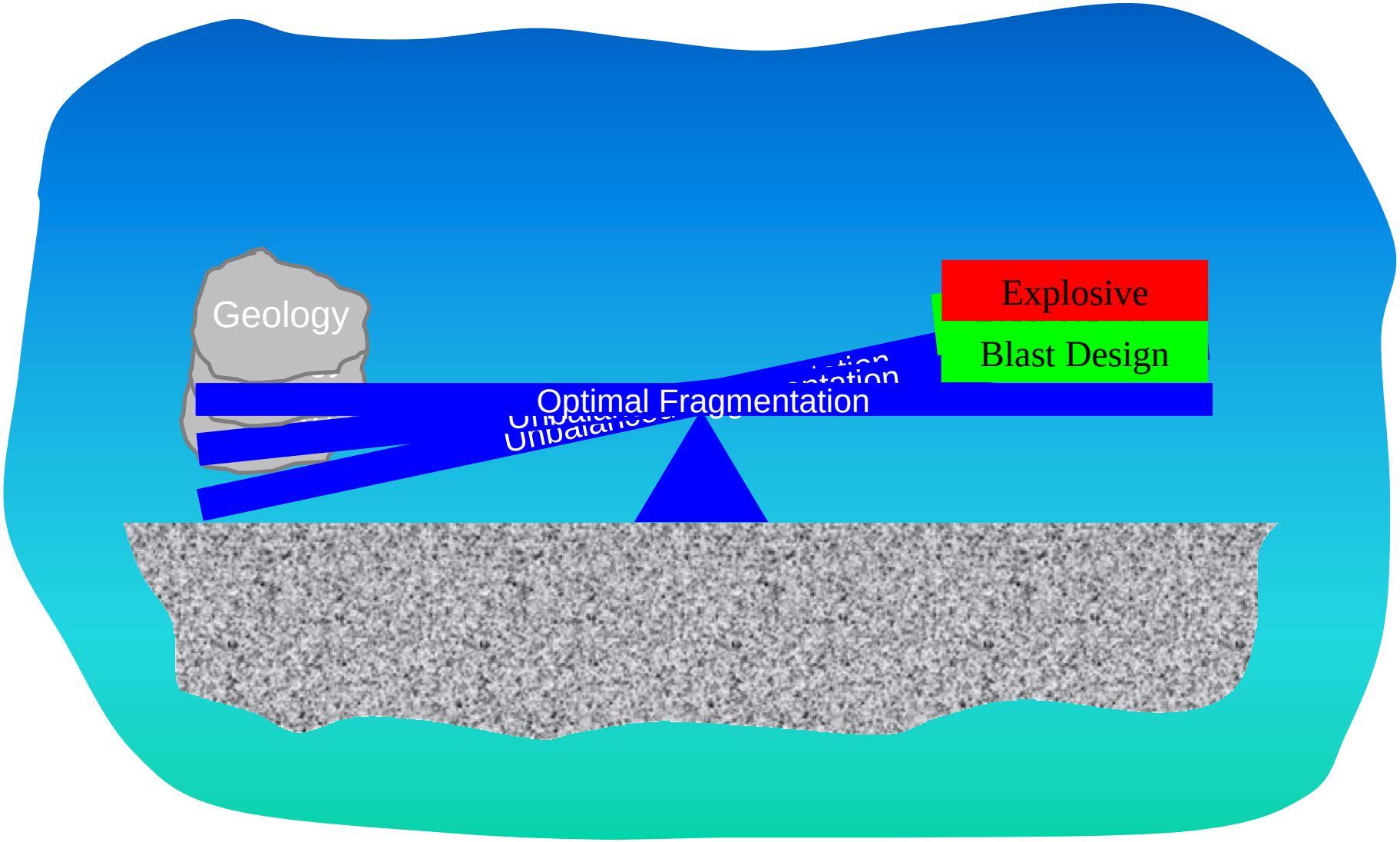
Fragmentation Optimization Opportunities

- Better digging and bucket fill factors
- Consistent crusher throughput and power draw
- Reduction in blast induced damage
- Reduction in material losses ***(more saleable product)***
- Potential to produce better priced end product

Factors Affecting Fragmentation



Balancing for Fragmentation



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Geology Factors

Structure describes the features which primarily determine the fragmentation performance of the rock mass.

- Jointing/Bedding
  - Defines maximum fragment size
  - Influences transmission of stress wave
  - Influences gas penetration
- Rock Strength & Elasticity
  - Determines how the rock mass responds to the explosive energy applied
  - Influences confinement on explosive

Rock Structure

Block size < 0.7 ft (0.2 m)

Block size > 6.5 ft (2 m)

Rock Structure

Block size
0.6 – 3 ft
(0.2 – 1 m)

Block size
0.3 – 0.8 ft
(0.1 – 0.25 m)

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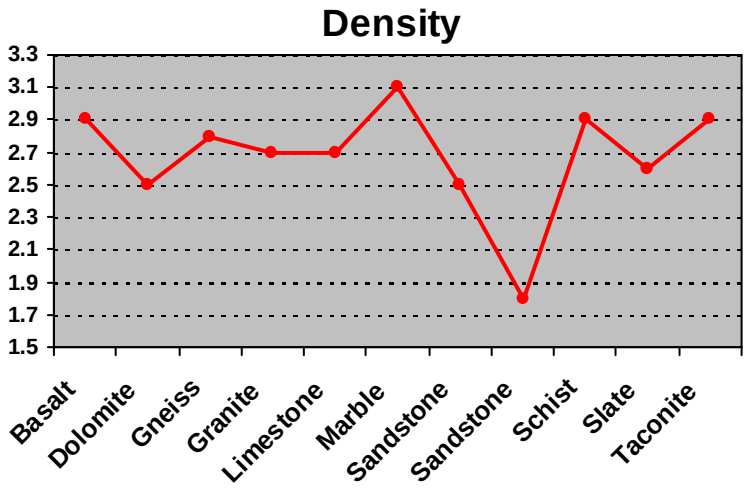
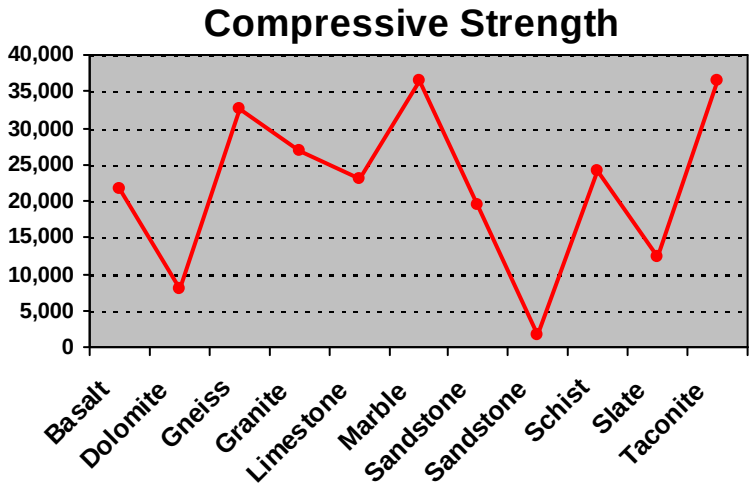
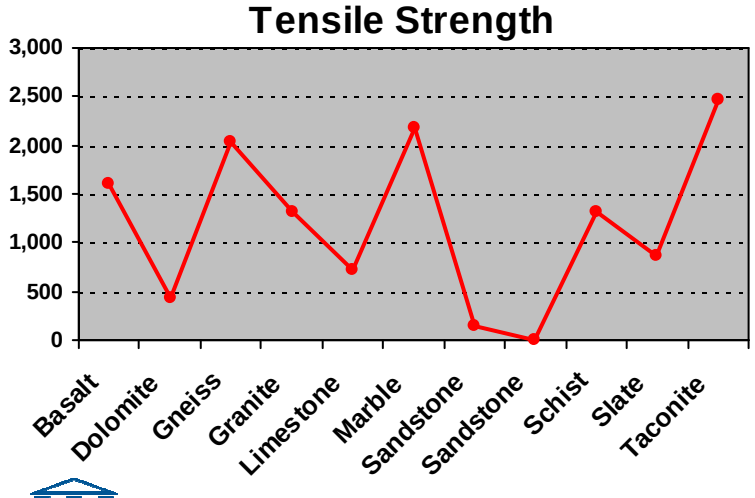
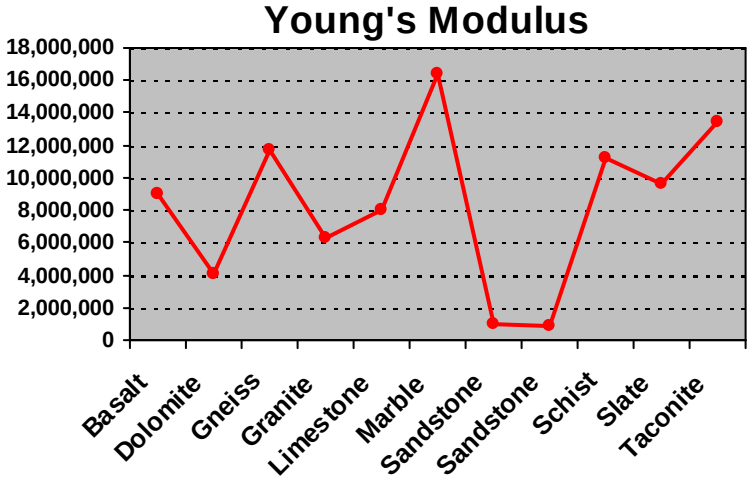
Rock Properties









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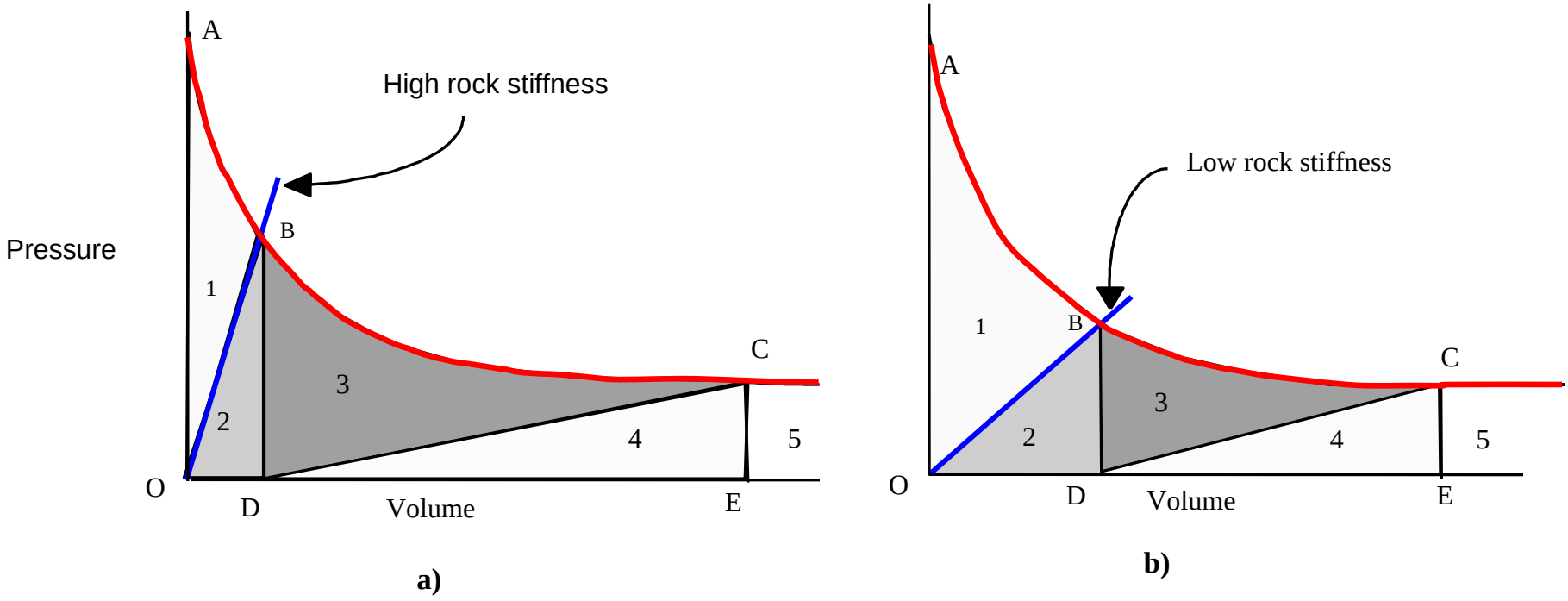
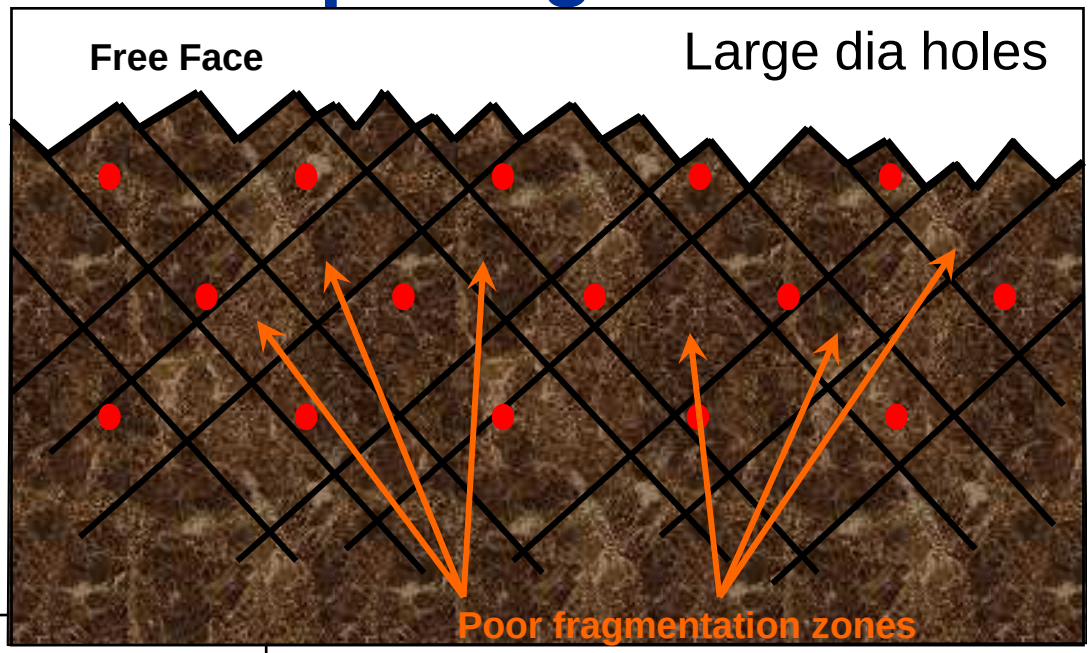
Effect of Rock Stiffness

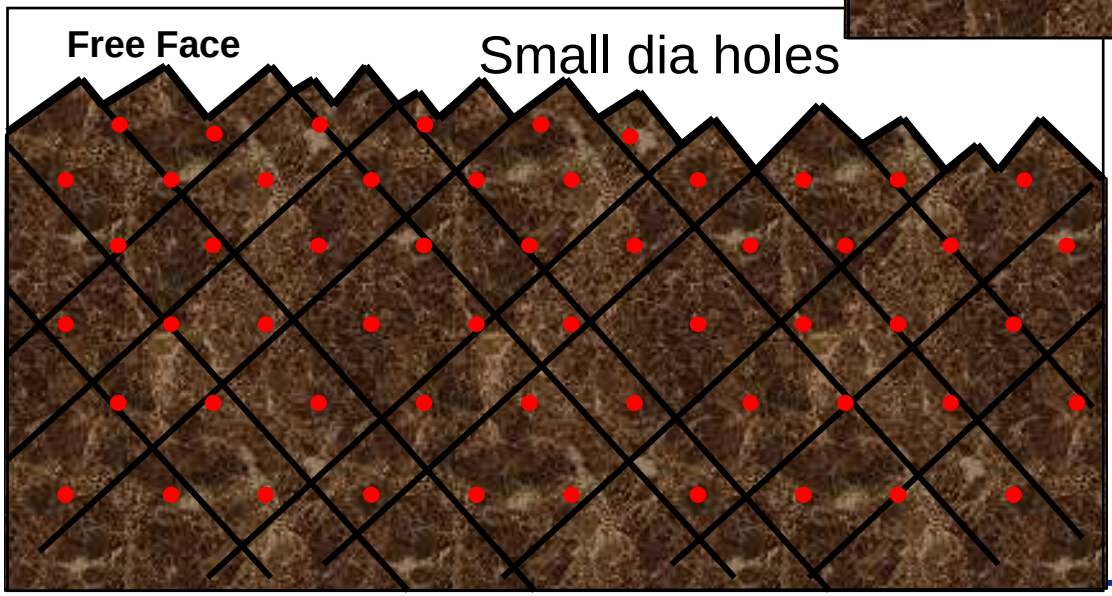


Blast Design Factors

- **Hole Diameter**
  - **Influences energy distribution and burden stiffness**
- **Burden/Spacing**
  - **Influences energy distribution and burden stiffness**
  - **Relationship with joint spacing affects oversize**
- **Bench Height**
  - **Influences burden stiffness**
- **Delay Time & Accuracy**
  - **Influences interaction between detonating holes**
- **Staggered/Square pattern**
  - **Determines distribution of energy in rock mass**

Hole Diameter & Burden/Spacing





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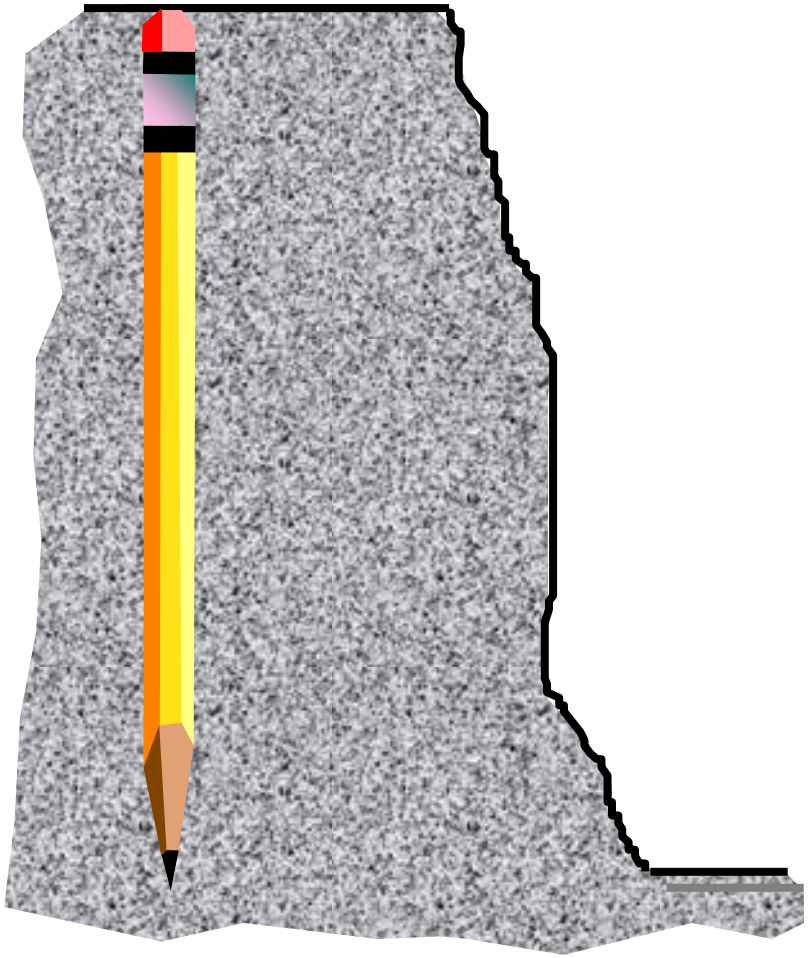
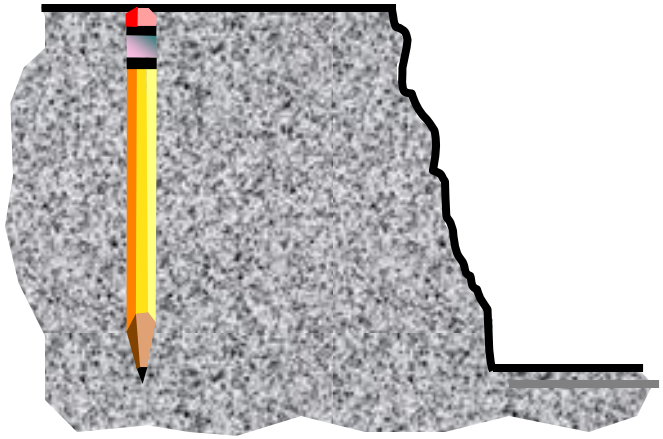
Burden Stiffness





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- **Delay Time & Accuracy**
  - **Influences interaction between detonating holes**
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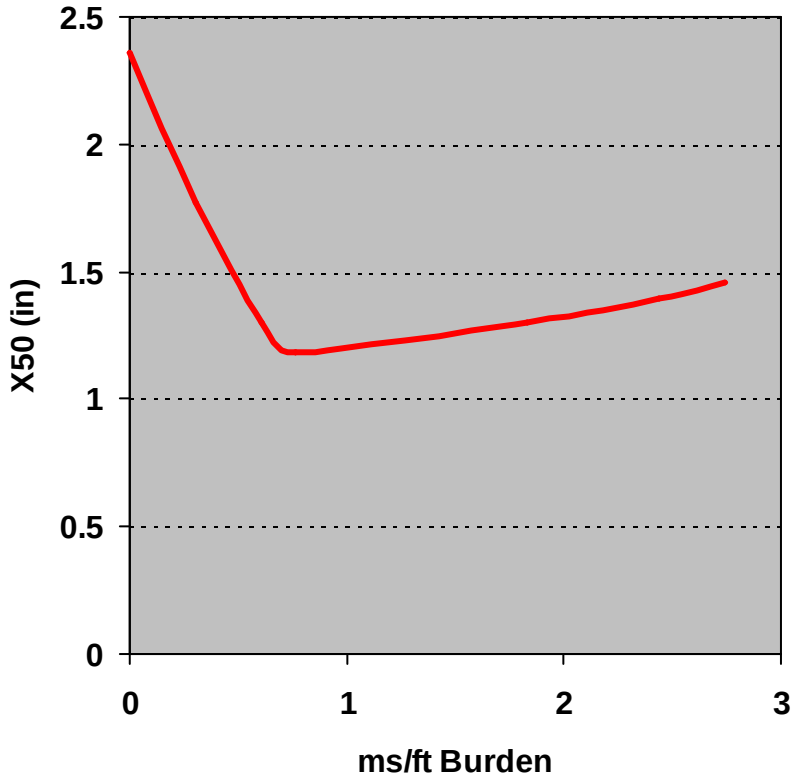
Interhole Delay Time & Fragmentation



(after Cunningham, 2005)

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Blast Design Factors

- Hole Diameter
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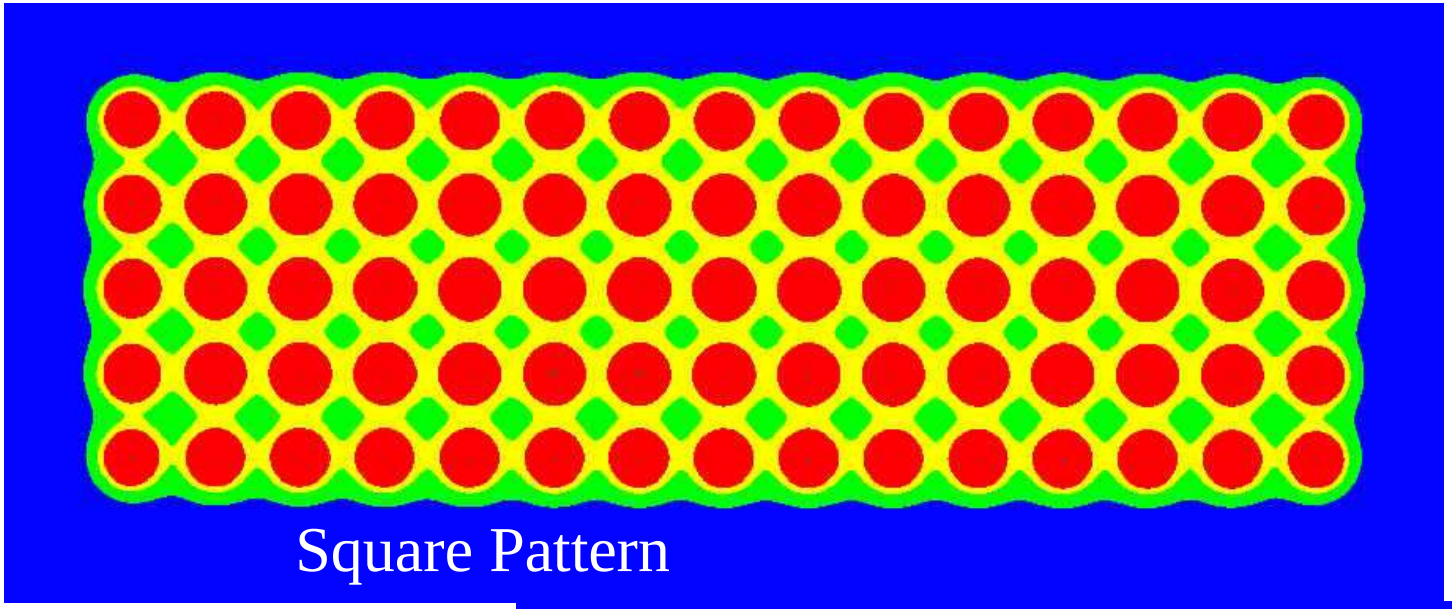
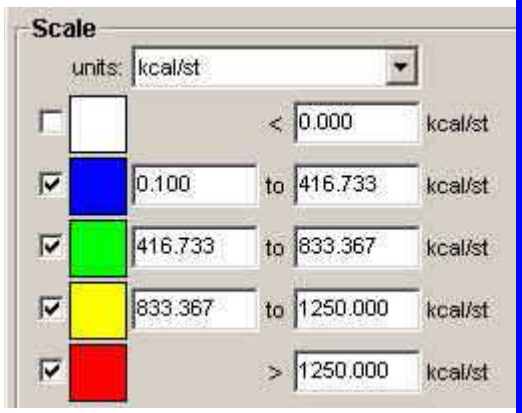
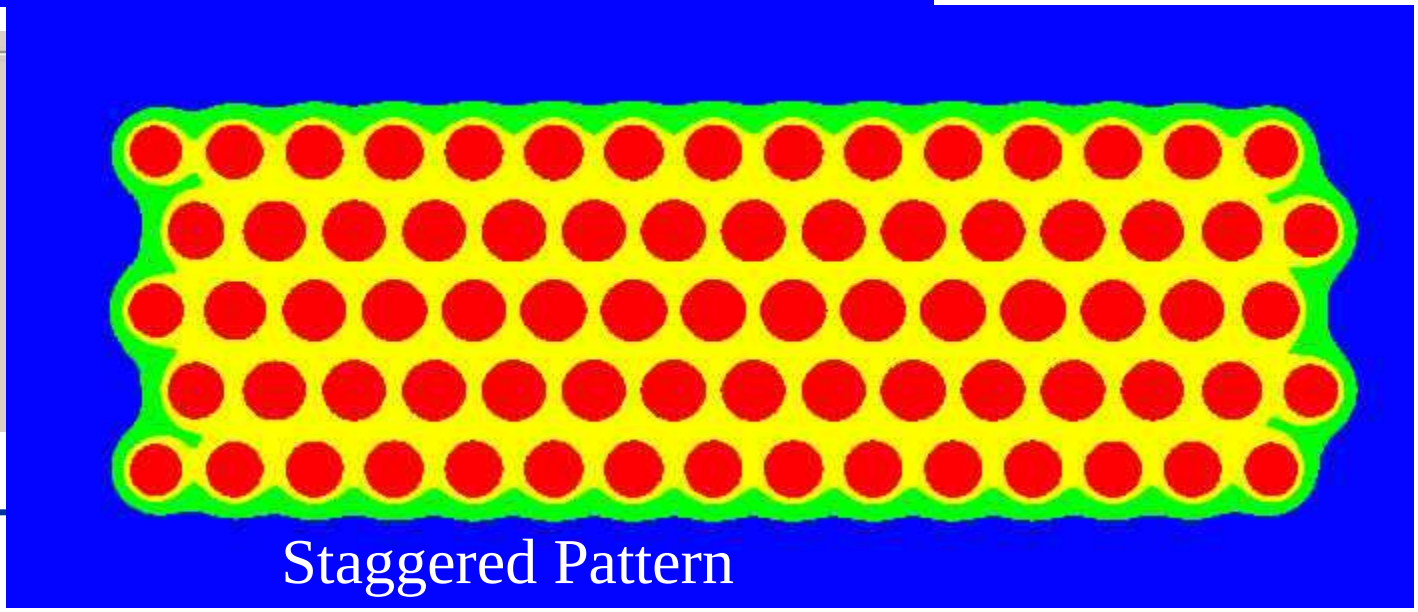
Explosive Energy Distribution



Square Pattern





Staggered Pattern

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Explosives Factors

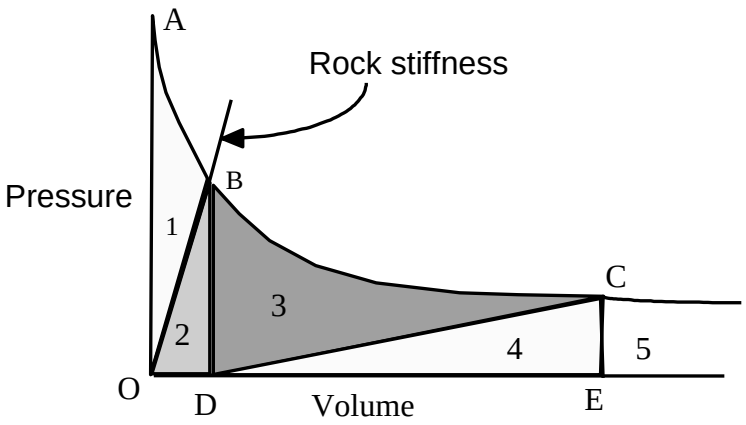
- **Velocity of Detonation**
  - **Indication of energy available**
  - **Indicator of energy partitioning (shock vs gas)**
  - **Determines how explosive energy is applied to rock mass**
- **Density**
  - **Influences total explosive energy available in a hole**
- **Coupling**
  - **Influences transfer of explosive energy to rock mass**

Explosive Selection

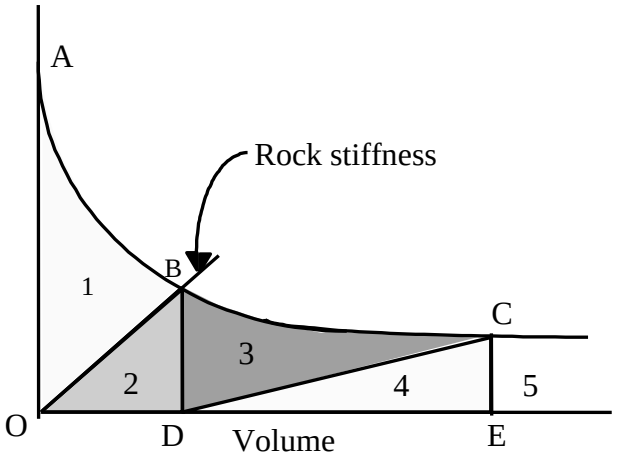
Hard and Brittle Rock

Soft and Plastic Rock

High VOD

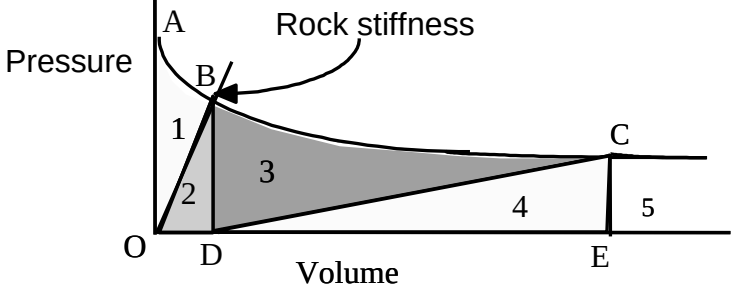


a)



b)

Low VOD



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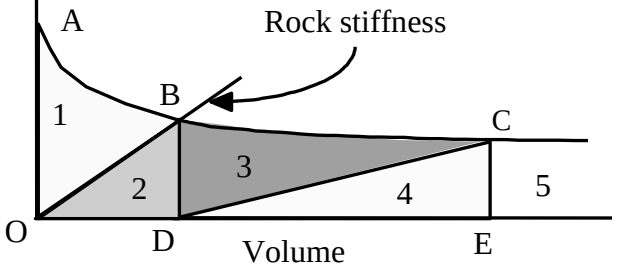

d)

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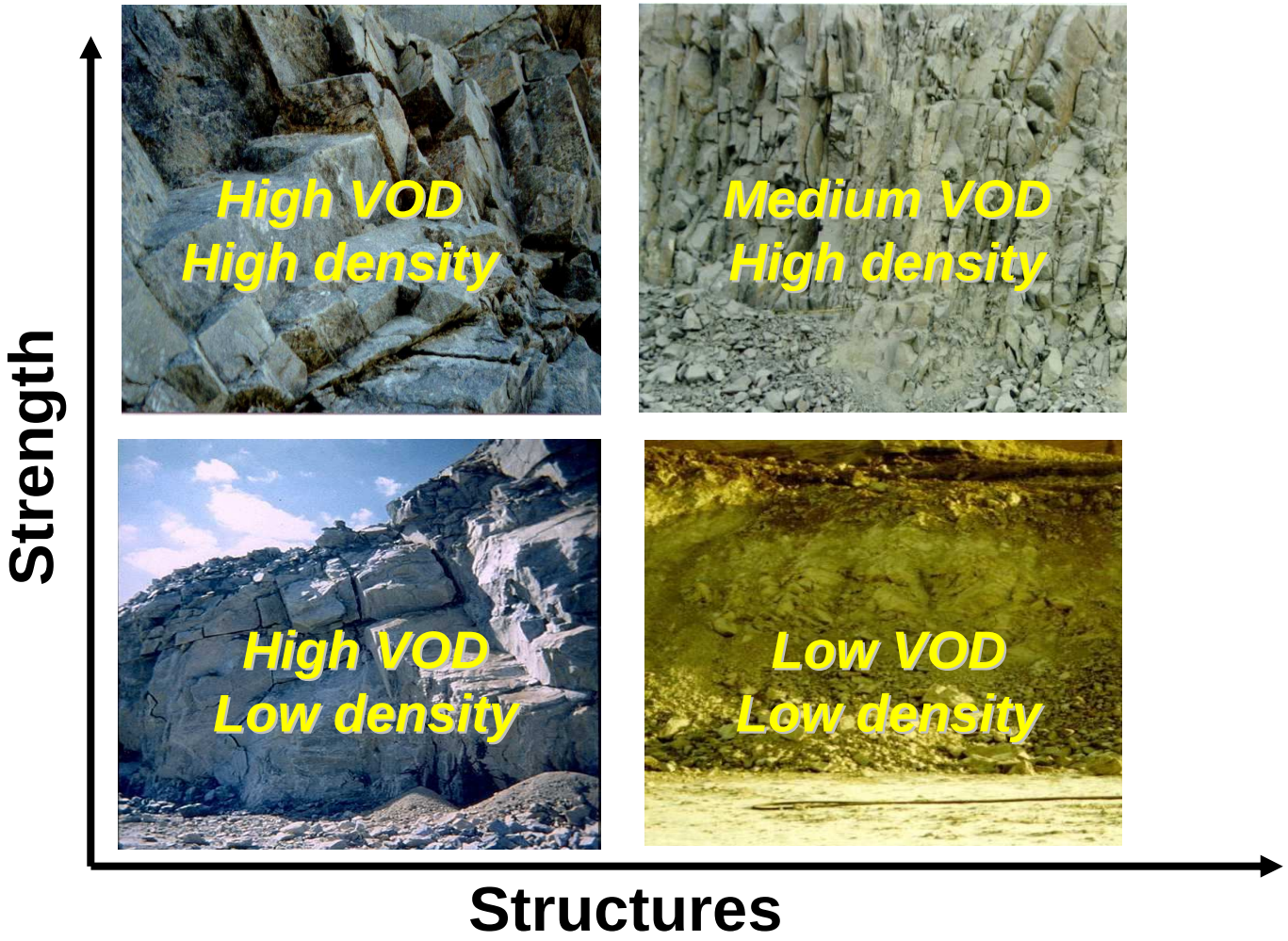
Explosive Selection to Meet Rock Structure and Strength Properties



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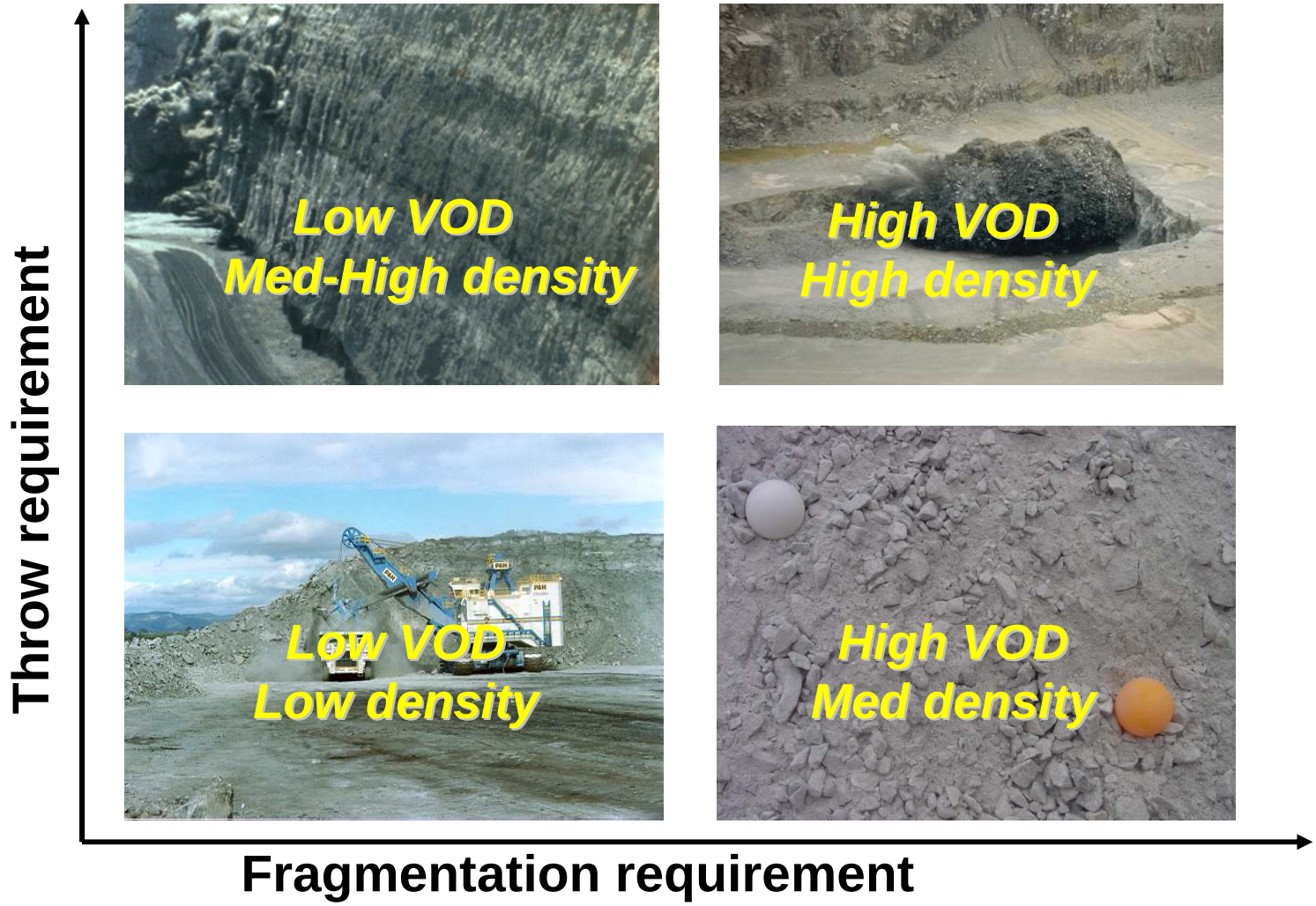
Explosive Selection to Meet Blast Objectives



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In Summary Fragmentation Results..

- **Have significant impact on quarry economics**

Therefore Fragmentation Optimisation …..

- **Should consider all the downstream processes rather than just drill and blast costs**
- **Should consider quality as well as quantity**
- **Should be site specific**
- **Should be flexible to cope with site specific changes and market conditions**

‘Take Home’ Questions on Fragmentation

- Does the shovel/loader bucket fill with a single smooth pass?
- Does the shovel/loader remain stable during digging (no rocking or violent movements)?
- Does the muckpile flow during digging?
- Do the haul trucks dump at the crusher without delay?
- Is the throughput and power draw of the crusher consistent?
- Is secondary breakage required on a regular basis?
- Are the desired product sizes produced without waste (fines or other unsaleable/low profit products)?

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