DETERMINATION OF CENTERS

OF GRAVITY OF MAN

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SEDERAL AVIATION AGENCY AVIATION MEDICAL SERVICE AEROMEDICAL RESEARCH DIVISION CIVIL AEROMEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA August 1962

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ABSTRACT

Data are presented concerning the location of the center of gravity of the adult male in various body positions and the ability to shift the c.g. voluntarily with various body motions. Maximum possible shifts of the c.g. from that of an erect standing posture were found to be 11% inches toward the head, 10 inches toward the feet, 8 inches anteriorly, 4% inches posteriorly and 4% inches laterally.

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INTRODUCTION

The data presented in this report concerning the location of the center of gravity of the adult male and the ability to shift the c.g. with various body motions were originally published as a Civil Aviation Medical Research Laboratory Report in 1953 (CAA Project No. 53-203). During the past nine years these data have proved most useful in studies to determine (1) effective restraint devices for protection against crash forces, (2) flight and balance characteristics of one-main helicopters, (3) design of flotation equipment, (4) orientation in falls and parachute jumps, (5) capsule stability, and (6) flying platform characteristics.

With the advent of the space age it is felt that these data deserve wider distribution as they will have obvious application in the design of artificial gravity fields, space work capsules for assembling space stations, lunar and planetary landing equipment, and locomotion devices on planets with gravitational fields greater or less than one gr

For these reasons the author is taking the liberty of republishing the data as a CARI report.

EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURE

A number of different techniques for locating and recording the c.g. were tested and the following chosen for use in this study. The equipment consists essentially of five platforms (Fig. 1a) mounted one above the other. The top platform, which supports the subject, consists of an adjustable seat with arm and foot rests. The bottom of the scat, the foot rest and the arm rests are adjustable to different angles and can be counterbalanced in each position by a sliding weight on the back of the seat. This adjustable chair can be rotated about a horizontal axis from the horizontal through approximately 20° to a second position and locked in position. The second and third platforms slide horizontally at right angles to one another by means of jack screws. Each of these platforms also has its own counterbalance system, keeping the equipment as a whole in perfect balance regardless of position with reference to the bottom platform. Details of these counterbalance systems are shown in Fig. 2. The fourth platform is separated from the bottom platform by means of a ball and socket joint in the center and four electrical contact points, one at each

corner of this four foot square platform. Each of these contact points lights a light in its corner if the platform is tilted in that direction. Hence, the platform may be assumed to be in balance when all four lights are out. A horizontal scale with one-fourth inch increments was mounted on the supporting structure of the tilt chair with its zero in vertical alignment with the reference point on the seat.

A vertical cable was stretched taut from the ceiling to the base platform in front of the horizontal scale and a camera sight set up approximately ten feet from the platform. The camera sight, vertical cable and ball and socket fulcrum were in alignment. A similar arrangement was placed at the end of the platform for reading lateral displacements of c.g. The subject was then placed in the supporting structure with the seat back in the horizontal position (Fig. 1a), the equipment balanced by means of turning the jack screws and a reading taken on the horizontal scale. This reading represents the vertical height of the c.g. of the subiect above the reference point when the subject is in normal upright sitting posture. The seat was then tilted approximately 20°, locked in position (Fig. 1b) and rebalanced. The reading from the horizontal scale obtained as described above was then set on the base leg of a special adjustable T-square and the base of this T-square placed upon the seat back with the zero of the square at the line of intersection of the seat back and seat bottom. A second reading (the horizontal distance of the c.g. of the subject from the reference point/) was then taken through the camera sight where the perpendicular member of the adjustable T-square intersected the vertical cable. By this method the location of the center of gravity of the mbject was determined directly with reference to the seat.

Although the total weight of the equipment and subject on the fulcrum may have reached 800 pounds, the equipment was sensitive enough that the weight of a silver half dollar placed on one corner would light the light in that corner. The breaker-over distance the platform had to be moved by turning the jack screw to turn out one pair of lights and turn on the opposite pair was about one-eighth inch. For 'his reason, accuracy of reading is believed to

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be within one-eighth of an inch with repeat readings on the same subject not varying more than one-fourth inch. The latter variation was probably caused by slight differences in the position of the subject as he remounted the piatform.

During this study it became apparent that if any point on the pelvic structure was chosen as a reference point the centers of gravity of all men fell in a very small area. For this reason all vertical distances to the centers of gravity are measured from the inferior spine of the ischium. Horizontal measurements are either from the anterior or posterior plane of the body, depending upon the type of motion involved. For convenience of discussion the sixty-seven different body positions studied are divided into three groups: sitting, maximum displacement of c.g., and the effects on the c.g. of adding various weights to the body.

THE SAMPLE

The number of subjects tested was limited by the large number of positions being studied. Only five men were tested in all sity-seven positions, but they were carefully chosen to include a wide range of body sizes and weights. Authropometric measurements of these subjects are presented in Table Ia. In addition to the five tested in all positions, an additional twenty-seven men were check tested in one sitting and one standing position. In the sitting position (Fig. 4, B-sitting with hands in lap) the centers of gravity of all but one subject (97%) were found to fall within the range established for the original five subjects. In the standing position, all but three (91%) fell within the established range. An analysis of the anthropometric measurements of these four subjects (Table Ib, subjects number 12 sitting, and 7, 10, and 24 standing) shows the very abnormal distribution of weight between the trunk and legs. Subject number 12 has the major portion of his 202 pounds in his trunk with very short, light legs. His center of gravity falls 3/4 inch above the established range for the sitting position. Subject number 7 has extremely long, heavy lcgs and a short, light trunk, causing his c.g. to fall 7/8 inch below the established range for the standing position. Body characteristics of subjects 10 and 24 cause

their c.g. to fall 1 inch above the established range for the standing position. Their anthropometric measurements are presented in Table Ib.

SITTING

Studies were made on three different sitting groups. The first group (Fig. 4) represents man in the normal sitting position; that is, trunk erect, thighs 90° to the trunk and legs 90° to thighs, and presents data showing the effects upon the center of gravity of moving one and both arms to various positions. In addition to the arm movements, two tests were made to show the shift of center of gravity when the trunk was flexed forward from the sitting position. The vertical height of the center of gravity was measured either from the seat bottom or from the ischium, as it was assumed that the ischium was in centact with the seat bottom. Horizontal distances to the c.g in these tests were measured from the seat back.

The second group (Figs. 5, 6 and 7) concerns itself with the study of various pilot positions and shows the shift of center of gravity if the arms are moved to various positions for operation of controls with the legs at the comfort angle "" where the knees are $110^{\circ}, \pm 5^{\circ}$, and, in addition, two extreme positions for the feet, one in which the feet are back under the chair and one where the legs are fully extended.

The third group (Fig 8) represents the commercial airline passenger in the full reclining position and shows the displacement of the center of gravity of the body for the passenger when the arms are moved to various posit us and when the feet are on the floor or on the foot rest of the seat immediately in front. In this position the seat back makes an angle of 115° with the seat cushion. However, since both the trunk and pelvis are reclining at this angle, these tests and measurements were made by dropping the legs to the 115° angle. It must be noted here that vertical distances of the center of gravity were measured from the ischium parallel to the plane of the subject's back, while horizontal distances of the c.g were perpendicular distances from this plane. In F of Fig. 8 the passenger is not reclining but is assuming one position in a current study to

determine the best position for passengers in the event of a crash.

MAXIMUM DISPLACEMENT OF C.C.

In this study of shift of the center of gravity with maximum movements of the body the pelvis remains fixed and all movable body parts were shifted on the pelvis in a given direction. In the first group (Fig. 9) the shift of the center of gravity accompanying various anterior movements of body parts was studied and recorded. This included flexing the head forward, extending both arms straight forward, flexing the trunk forward (note the small amount of flexion of the trunk when the pelvis is held rigid), extending the legs straight forward and the final test in which all body parts were moved in unison to the maximum anterior position. The center of gravity was measured as the vertical height above the ischium and the horizontal distance from the posterior body plane.

For the posterior motions (Fig. 10) tests similar to those described in the anterior group were made. These individual tests were made to determine the effect on the center of gravity for posterior motions of head, arms, trunk, legs and all body parts moved in posterior direction. Again the center of gravity was measured vertically from the ischium and horizontally from the anterior body plane.

In the study of *lateral* shifts of c.g. (Fig. 11) individual tests were made for location of the center of gravity with the head flexed to the side, with the left arm sended laters by the the right arm across the enest, with the head and trunk flexed to one side, with the left leg in maximum abduction, with the left leg abducted and the right leg adducted, and a final test with all body parts moved laterally as far as possible. In all tests the pelvis was not moved and the center of gravity was measured vertically from the ischium and horizontally from the mid-sagittal plane.

In tests to move the center of gravity as far as possible toward the head (cephalad) (Fig. 12) indiv. ual tests for both arms extended over the head and for both legs flexed toward the head as well as one final test, with both legs and L in arms in maximum cephalad

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direction, were made. In these tests the center of gravity was measured vertically from the ischium and horizontally from the posterior body plane.

Only two tests were made for shifting center of gravity toward the feet (caudad) (Fig. 13), one with the subject standing with the trunk flexed as far as possible without extending the arms and the second with the arms extended. Here the pelvis was allowed to rotate but the vertical distance of the center of gravity was measured from the position of the ischium before flexion of the trunk in order to show the total caudad shift due to these movements. The horizontal distance of the c.g. was measured from the posterior body plane.

Finally, tests to determine shifts of center of gravity accompanying maximum abduction of arms and legs were made (Fig. 14 and 15). Individual tests were made to differentiate the c.g. for abduction of the arms, for abduction of the legs and for simultaneous abduction of arms and legs. For reference, the results of these tests are presented first showing the shift of the c.g. in the free body as measured from the ischium and secondly the shift of the c.g. of man standing giving vertical height of the c.g. from the ground.

ADDITION OF WEIGHTS TO BODY

Studies were made to locate the center of gravity of man sitting and standing with a twenty pound pack on his back (Fig. 16), with the center of gravity of the pack 18-5/8 inches above the ischium and β inches posterior to the back. The center of gravity of man wearing this pack in the two positions studied was found experimentally on the balancing equipment and then checked by mathematical calculations, using data previously obtained in this study for the center of gravity of man without the pack. We were pleased to find that the calculated and the experimental data checked within one-fourth inch. The significance of these tests is obvious as they show that the data presented in this report may be used as a basis for mathematical calculations of location of the center of gravity of man in various positions with the addition of various weights to

the body; for example, parachutes, back packs, chest packs, etc.

RESULTS

 $T_{i...}^{i...}$ results are presented both in graphical (Figs. 4 through 16) and tabular (Tables II through XIV) form with small diagramatic figures representing the body positions of the subjects. For any one position the geometrical average of the centers of gravity of all five subjects is shown as a black dot in Figs. 4 through 16 along with an arc of a circle which, if completed, would include the actual centers of gravity of all subjects.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It will be noted from a study of these graphs that the variation between subjects in any one position is sometimes greater than the shift of the center of gravity of the group due to any particular motion. Fig. 3 presents actual centers of gravity of each of the five sitting subjects for three different arm positions and shows the location of the geometrical averages of the group. It will be noted from this graph that the shifts of c.g. of all subjects follow a definite pattern. The completed circles in Figs. 4, 5, 6, and 7 enclose areas that include all subjects and all arm positions. In Fig. 4 this area has a two inch radius while a radius of one and one-half inches suffices in Figs. 5, 6, and 7.

Analysis of tests of maximum shift shows that man is capable of shifting his c.g. roughly 11-1/2 inches toward the head (Fig. 12), 10 inches toward the feet (Fig. 13), 8 inches anteriorly (Fig. 9), 4-1/2 inches posteriorly (Fig. 10), and 4-1/2 inches laterally (Fig. 11) from that of an erect standing posture.

The maximum shift of c.g. accompanying the movement of all body parts in a given direction is not the sum of the shifts produced by moving each part separately.

This study shows that in spite of the wide variety of body sizes and mass distributions there is surprisingly little variation in the location of the body c.g. when measured from a reference point on the pelvis. In a given body

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position the c.g. of at least 90% of the adult male population falls within a sphere 2 inches in diameter.

REFERENCES

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Report No. 1, 27th AAF Base Unit, AAF School of Aviation Medicine, Randolph Field, Texas, 15 August 1945.

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TABLE Ja

Anthropometric Measurements* of Original 5 Subjects

		J.	В.	М.	N.	T.
1.	Age	39	39	- 29	60	39
2.	Weight	152	152	225	177	113.25
3.	Stature	68	72	69.75	69.5	64.75
4.	Sitting Height (Anthro.)	34.75	37.5	38.5	37	33.5
5.	Trunk Height	23	24.5	24	22.5	23
6.	Eye Level (Anthro.)	30	32.25	31	31.25	28.5
7.	Buttocks Knee	23	24.5	24.5	23.5	22.5
S .	Patella Height	21	22.25	22	20.75	19.75
9.	Abdominal Girth	30.25	29	38	35	28
10.	Thigh Circumference	18.75	18	24	20.75	15.5
11.	Chest Depth	8	8.25	10.75	9.5	6.75
12.	Abdominal Depth	7.75	7.5	10	9.5	6.5

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*Weight in pounds; all other in inches

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Buttocks Knee Thigh Circumference Trunk Height Chest Depth ź Sitting Ht. (Anthro.) Abdominal Depth Éye Level (Anthro.) Abdominal Cirth Subject Weight Stature Patella Height 884 165.5 32 33.5 24 25.75 20 22.25 30 34.5 1 39 68.5 36.25 24 18 9.75 9.25 53 205 2 38 72 23.5 19 11.75 10.25 3 39 218 70.5 36.5 23 32 25.5 22 41 19.5 12.5 12 41 118 69.75 35.5 21.5 31 21.5 24.5 28 15.5 9 7.5 5 38 146.5 68.5 35.75 24 32 23 20 31 18 8.5 8 50 174.5 64.5 32 22 29.5 22.25 6 19 36 20.5 10.5 9.5 41 164 70.75 32.25 21.75 7 30 25.5 22.5 31 20.25 9.25 8 R 39 151 74.75 38 25 33.5 25 22.75 28 18.5 9.25 7.25 35 224 5 70 36 25 9 32.5 23.5 20.7537.5 23.5 11 10.25 38 10 164 61 31.25 22 28.5 19.75 18 36.25 29.5 11 19.75 Ì1 57 160 70 38 21.5 30.25 23.75 21.5 33.5 19 9 9 12 35 202.25 67,75 38.25 23.5 22.5 31.5 19.5 38 22.25 10.25 10.25 13 29 133. 67.5 35.25 22.5 30.75 21.75 20.25 31.75 17 8.25 7.25 14 43 175.75 67.5 35.75 23.25 31 22.5 20.5 37 20 10.25 9.75 15 44 153.5 69.25 35 24.5 32.5 23.5 20.75 29.75 19 9 7 18 43 145.5 66.25 35.5 24.25 31.5 22 19.5 31.5 19.25 8.25 8.5 35 150.5 17 65 34.25 23.25 30.5 21.75 20 18.75 32.75 8.5 8 18 33 135.5 66.5 34.75 23 30.5 22.5 8.5 19.5 28 18 7.5 19 167.25 29 73 38 25.25 32.75 24 22 30.5 29.25 10 8 20 137.5 35.5 23.5 33 68 30.5 23.5 20.25 27.75 18 7.5 7.25 21 167.25 33 72.5 38 24 33 24.25 22 32.25 20 8.5 8 22 38.75 45 194.5/ 68.75 23.5 32 37 22.5 20 21 10.5 . 9 23 29 134.35 69 37.25 24.25 32.75 21.5 20 24.75 18.5 8.25 6.5 24 35 177 69.5 38 23 31.75 \$23.5 20.25 31.75 21 9.25 9 69.25 25 31 153.25 35.25 21.5 30 24.75 21 29.5 18 9 8 26 147.25 24 72.5 37) 23 31.5 24.25 22.5 28.75 18.5 7 9

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TABLE ID

Anthropometric Measurements of Subjects Used for Check Tests

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137.75 69

36.75 24









FIGURE 3. Centers of gravity of all five subjects for three arm positions.

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TABLE II

Sitting With Seat 90° to Back, Legs 90° to Thighs

	Body Position	Location of Av. c. g.	Horizontal & Vertical Kange For Subjects
. A .	Both arms down at sides	(8%, 9%)	± 5"
B.	Both hands in lap	(8%, 9%)	± 3
С.	One arm forward, one hand in lap	(9%, 10%)	± %"
. D .	Both arms straight forward	(9%, 10%)	· ± 3"
Е.	Both arms extended over head	(8%, 12)	± %"
F.	One arm over head, one hand in lap	(8%, 10%)	± %"
C.	Both arms extended laterally	(8%, 10%)	± %"
- H.	One arm extended laterally, one hand in lap	(8%, 10%)	± *"
I.	Both arms extended posteriorly	(8, 13%)	± %"
J.	Trunk flexed on thighs, arms extended forward	(15%, 5-3/16)	± 1%"
K,	Trunk flexed on thighs, arms down	(14-15/16, 5)	± 1%"





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FIGURE 4. Displacement of the body C. G. by arm movements; sitting with seat 90° to back, legs 90° to thighs.

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TABLE III

Sitting Back Erect, Seat 90° to Back, Legs 50° to Thighs

Horizontal &

	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	Vertical Range For Subjects
A.	One hand on stick control, one on control at side of seat	(7%, 9%)	± %"
₿.	One hand on overhead control, one on control at side of seat	(8, 10%)	± %"
	Both hands on overhead control Trunk Tead on thighs, arms ar and knees	(8%, 10-9/16) (13%, 4%)	±1" ±1"

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FIGURE 5. Position of body C. G. of pilot operating controls in various protitions; back crect, seat 90° to back, legs 50° to thighs.

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TABLE IV

Sitting Back Erect, Seat 90° to Back, Legs 110° to Thighs

·- `	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	Horizontal & Vertical Range For Subjects
	One hand on stick control, one on control at side of seat	(9-1/16, 93)	± %"
• B. .	One hand on overhead control, one on control at side of rest	(9-5/16, 10%)	土 第"
ຕຸ	Both hands on overhead control	(93, 10-9/16)	± 1%"

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TABLE V

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Sitting Back Erect, Seat 108° to Back Legs 180° to Thighs

2	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	Vertical Range For Subjects
Α.	One hand on stick control, one on control at side of seat	(9%, 8%)	± 1"
В.		(10%, 8%)	± 1"
С.	Both hands on overhead control	(10-9/16, 8-15/16)	± 3"

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FIGURE 7. Position of body C. G. of pilot operating controls in various positions; back erect, seat 108° to back, legs 180° to thighs.

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TABLE VI

Displacement of Body C. G. of Commercial Airline Passa agers

Body Position	Location of Av. C. C.	Horizontal & Vertical Range
Trunk 125°, Knees 145° A. Hands in lap b. Arms arms	· · ·	For Subjects
C. One arm formand	(9%, 7%) (9%, 7%)	± 3" ± 3"
D. Both arms forward E. Holding to seal back	(9%, 7%) (10%, 8%)	± 1" ± 1" ± 3"
Trunk 115°, Kneer 000	(94, 54) (124, 10-7/18)	± 1" ± 1"
Hands in lap H. Arms across chest	(7%, 6%)	
L. One arm forward J. Both arms forward	(8%, 7%) (8%, 7%)	± 1" ± %"
K. Holding to seat back	(8%, 7%) (7%, 8%)	±1" ±3" ±3"





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FIGURE 8. Displacement of body C. G. of commercial airline passengers.

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TABLE VII

Displacement of Body C. G. by Anterior Movements

Horis

C. D. F.	Body Position Body standing straight Head forward Both arms extended forward Head and trunk forward Both legs straight forward All body parts in maximum anterior position	Location c? Av. C. C. (4, 5%) (4%, 5%) (5%, 7) (5%, 4) (9, 11) (12, 10%)	• Vertical Range For Subjects ± 3" ± 3" ± 13" ± 13" ± 13"



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TABLE VIII

Displacement of Body C. C. by Posterior Movements

•	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	Horizor tal & Vertical Range For Subjects
E.	Standing, body straight Head back Arms back Head & trunk back Legs back All body parts in maximum posterior position	(5%, 6) (5%, 5%) (5%, 6%) (7%, 5%) (6%, 7%) (9%, 6%)	± 1%" ± 1" ± 1" ± 1%" ± 1%" ± 1%"

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TABLE IX

Displacement of Body C. G. by Lateral Movements

	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	Horizontal & Vertical Range For Subjects
B.	Head flexed to side	(0, 5%) (%, 5%)	± %" ± %"
D.	One arm extended laterally One arm extended across chest Head and trunk in lateral	(%, 6%) (%, 6%)	
F	flexion One log abducted	(1%, 5%)	± %"
Ċ.	Maximum lateral merement of both legs	(1%, 6%)	± %" ± %"
H.	All body parts moved laterally	(4%, 7%)	± 1%"



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TABLE X

Displacement of Body C. G. by Cephalad Movements

	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	Horizontal & Vertical Range For Subjects
А. В.	Body standing straight Both arms extended over head	(5, 5%)	± X"
	Both legs in maximum position	(5%, 8%) (10%, 15)	± %" ± 1%"
D.	toward head All body parts in maximum cephalad position	(11%, 17%)	± 1%"





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•	Body Position	Location of Av. C. C.	Horizontal & Vertical Range For Subjects
Α.	Body standing straight Trunk and head in maximum flexion toward feet	(5, +5%) (7%, -%)	± %" ± 3%"
С.	Trunk, head and arms in maximum position toward feet	(10%, — 4%)	± 1%"

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TABLE XI Displacement of Body C. C. by Caudad Movements



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TABLE XII

Displacement of C. G. by Abduction of Arms and Legs

	Body Position	Av. C. C.	Vertical Range For Subjects
A. B. C. D.	Standing, body straight Both arms abducted Both legs abducted Both legs and both arms abducted	(0, 5%) (0, 7-1/16) (0, 6%) (0, 8%)	

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FIGURE 14. Displacement of body C. G. by abduction of arms and legs (pelvis remaining fixed in one position).

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TABLE XIII

Displacement of Body C. C. by Abduction of Arms and Legs as Measured from Floor Level

	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	For Subjects
B. C.	Body standing straight Standing, both arms abducted Standing, both legs abducted Both arms and both legs abducted	(0, 38%) (0, 36%) (0, 36%) (0, 37%)	± 1%" ± 1%" ± 2%" ± 2%"

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FIGURE 15. Displacement of body C. C. by abduction of arms and legs as measured from floor level,

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TABLE XIV

Displacement of C. G. by 20 lb. Back Pack (C. C. of Pack 18%" above ischium, 6" Back) in Sitting and Standing Positions

	Body Position	Location of Av. C. G.	Horizontal & Vertical Range For Subjects
A.	 Sitting without pack Sitting with pack Standing without pack Standing with pack 	(8%, 9%)	± 1%"
B.		(7%, 10%)	± 1%"
C.		(5, 5%)	± 3%"
D.		(3%, 7%)	± 3%

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Vertical distance (inches) of C.G. from ischium Horizontal distance (inches) of C. G. from posterior body plane

FIGURE 16. Displacement of C. C. by 20 lb. back pack (C. C. of pack 18%" above ischium, 6" back) in sitting and standing positions.

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