



RDECOM



TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN. WARFIGHTER FOCUSED.

BRL-CAD: An Open Source Perspective

MIL-OSS Working Group 2, August 2010

Mr. Sean Morrison
morrison@arl.army.mil
410-278-6678

Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

***Background on BRL-CAD
What, who, why?***

***Tools & Techniques
for Geometry Analysis***

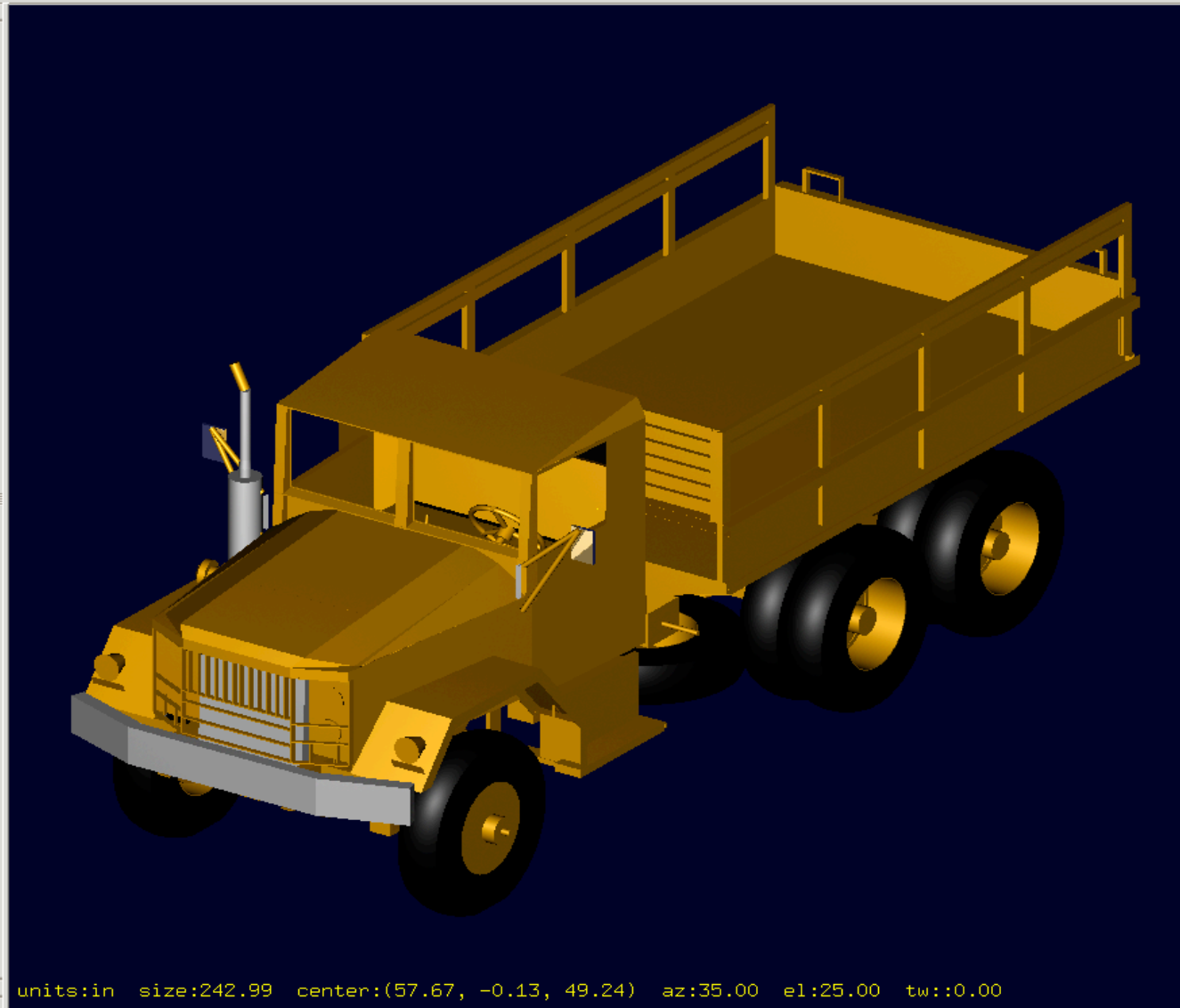
Conversion to Open Source

Open Problems & Future Directions





- Show List
- all.g
 - component
 - bed
 - frame
 - cab
 - suspension
 - misc
 - power.train
 - half
 - half.s
 - light1
 - light1.s
 - light2
 - light2.s
 - cab.g
 - cab
 - half
 - half.s
 - light1
 - light1.s
 - light2
 - light2.s
 - old.s79
 - old.s82
 - r682
 - s682
 - r683
 - s683
 - r684
 - s684
 - r685
 - s685



units:in size:242.99 center:(57.67, -0.13, 49.24) az:35.00 el:25.00 tw::0.00

General Shader Tree

Combination: light 1

Region: yes

Id: 0

Air:

Los:

GIFTmater:

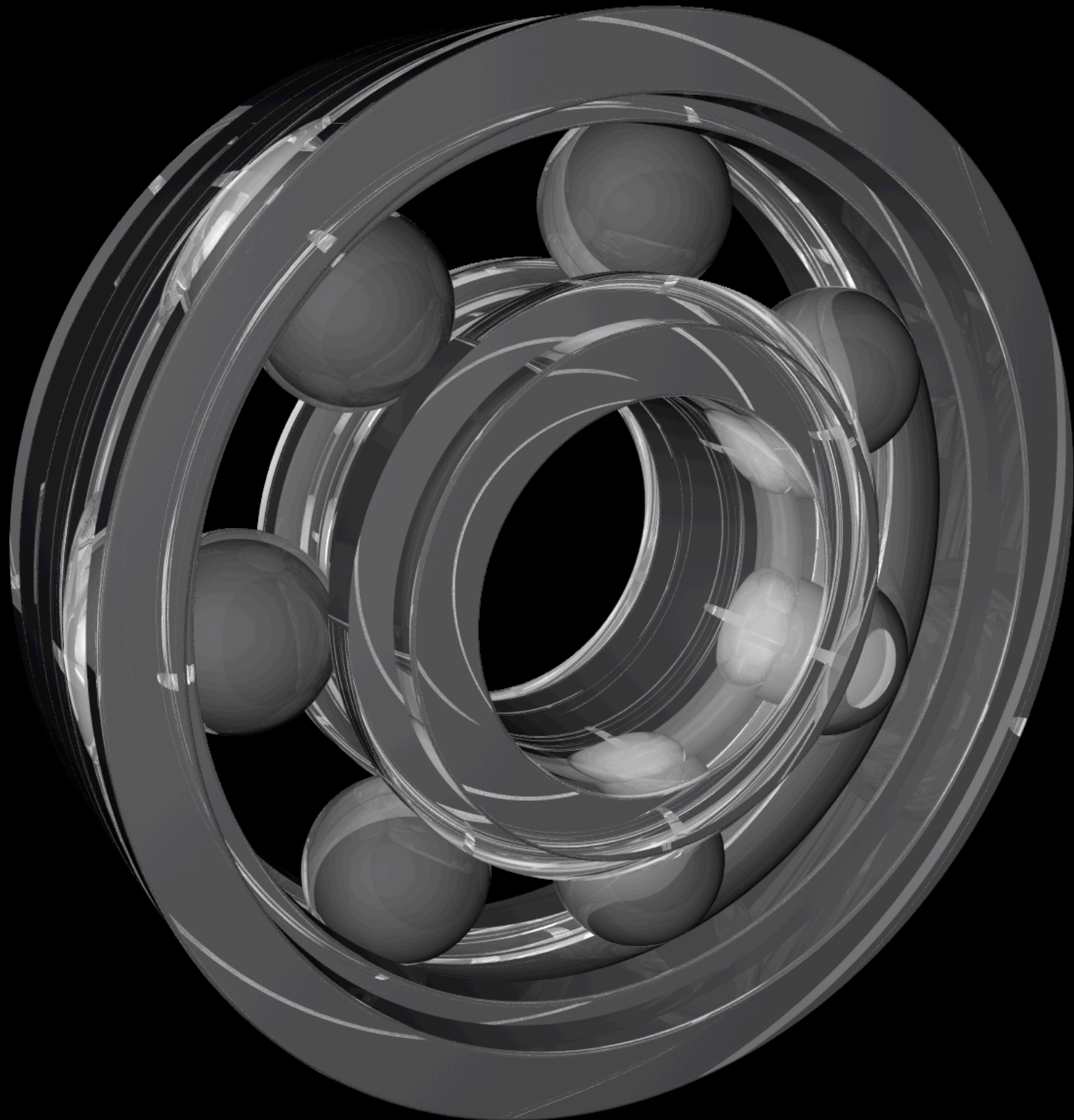
Rgb: 255 255 255

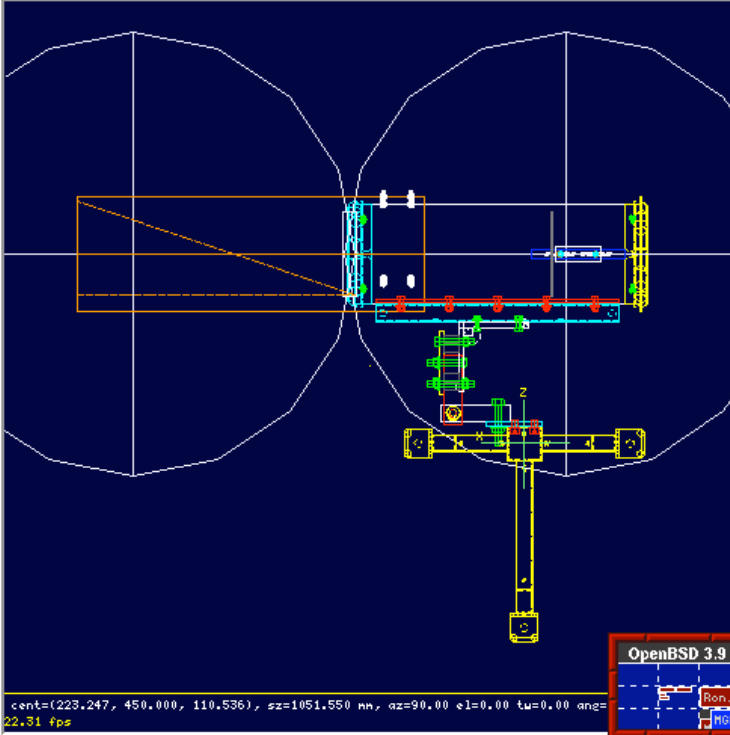
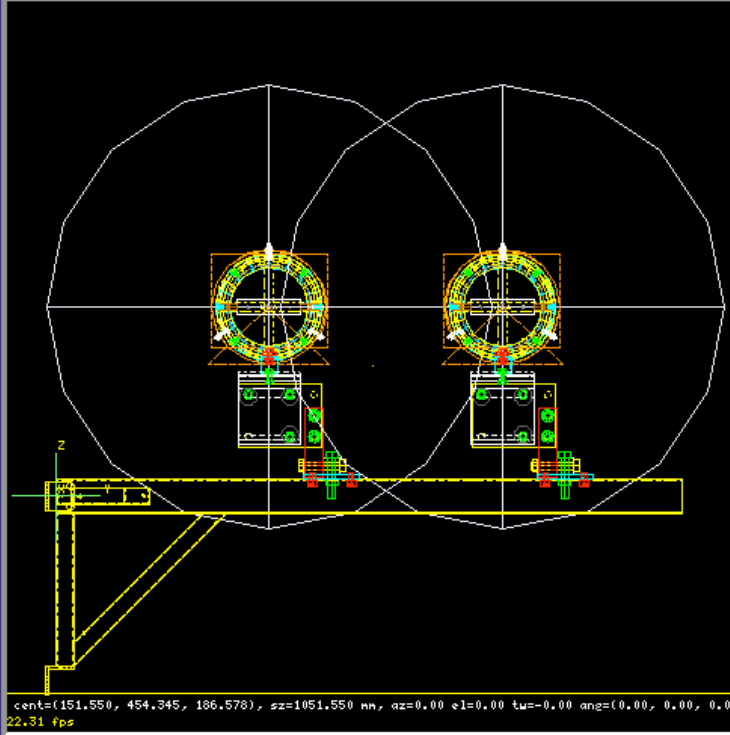
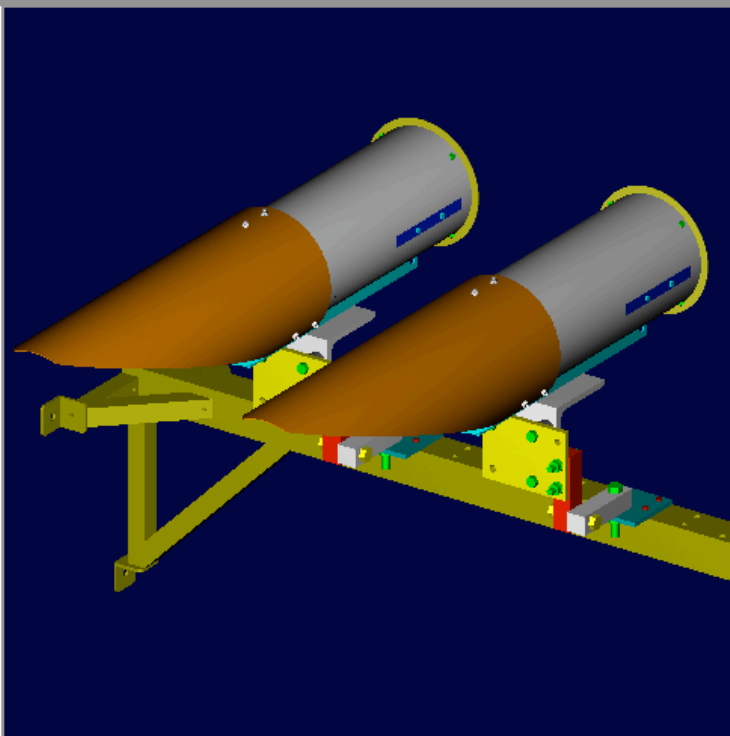
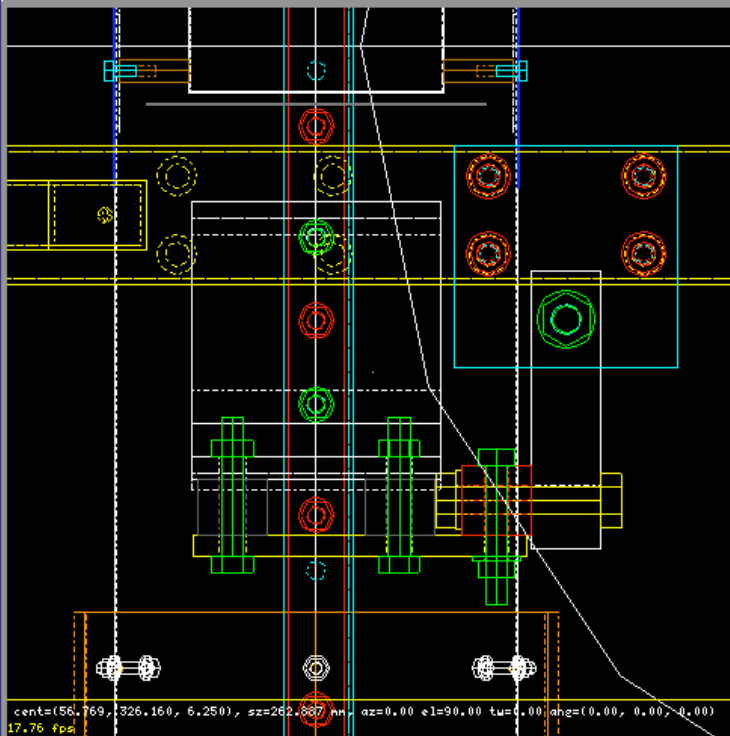
Inherit: no

Command History

```
parent: 2.6user 0.0sys 0:02real 91% 0i+0d 0maxrss 0+605pf 7+305csw
children: 0.0user 0.0sys 0:02real 0% 0i+0d 0maxrss 0+0pf 0+0csw
Additional mem=0., #malloc=906, #free=814, #realloc=5 (92 retained)
2467809 solid/ray intersections: 778493 hits + 1689316 miss
pruned 31.5%: 274936 model RPP, 1530030 dups skipped, 538081 solid RPP
Frame 0: 698326 pixels in 1.32 sec = 527118.65 pixels/sec
Frame 0: 699083 rays in 1.32 sec = 527690.06 rays/sec (RTFM)
Frame 0: 699083 rays in 2.65 sec = 263845.03 rays/CPU_sec
Frame 0: 699083 rays in 2.92 sec = 239565.49 rays/sec (wallclock)
```

Archer>





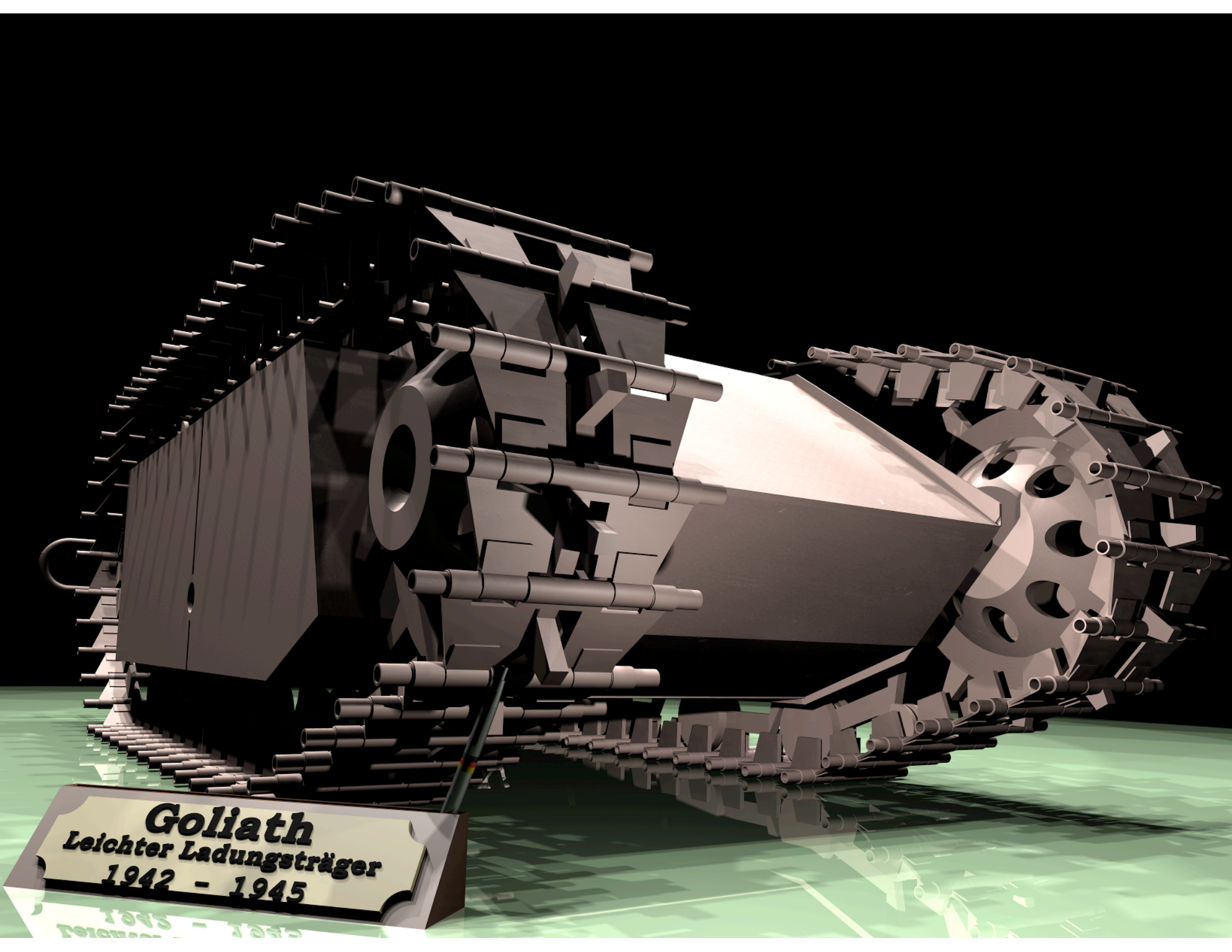
MGED 7.8.4 Command

```

NUBSP: 0 nu, 1052 cut, 1053 box (105
Tree: 763 solids in 83 regions
Model: X(-178,643), Y(-15,900), Z(-2
View: 35 azimuth, 25 elevation off c
Orientation: 0.248097, 0.476591, 0.7
Eye_pos: 1203.1, 1188.96, 780.559
Size: 876.292mm
Grid: (1.81052, 1.81052) mm, (484, 4
Beam: radius=0.90526 mm, divergence=
Low overhead scanline-per-CPU buffer

SHOT: cpu = 2.16406 sec, elapsed = 1
  parent: 2.1user 0.0sys 0:12real
  children: 0.0user 0.0sys 0:12real
Additional mem=0., #malloc=605, #fre
1409478 solid/ray intersections: 559
pruned 39.7%: 35735 model RPP, 4594
Frame 0: 234256 pixels in
Frame 0: 234256 rays in
Frame 0: 234256 rays in
Frame 0: 234256 rays in

Raytrace complete.
mged>
cent=(223.247 450.000 110.536) sz=1051.550
22.31 fps
  
```

Goliath
Leichter Ladungsträger
1942 - 1945

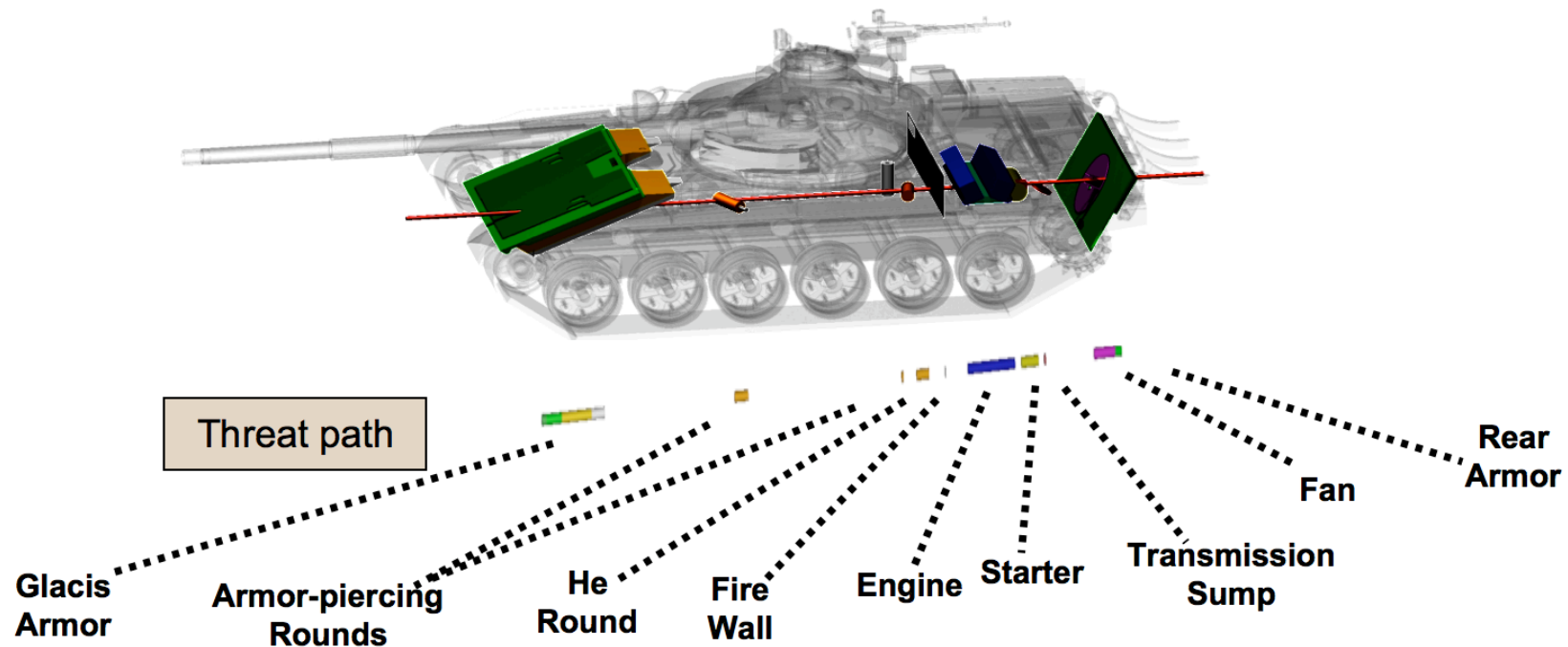
***Background on BRL-CAD
What, who, why?***

***Tools & Techniques
for Geometry Analysis***

Conversion to Open Source

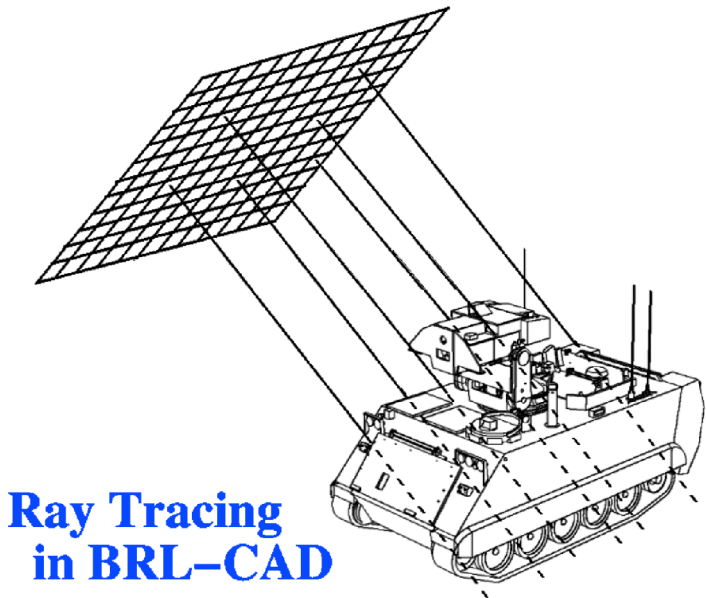
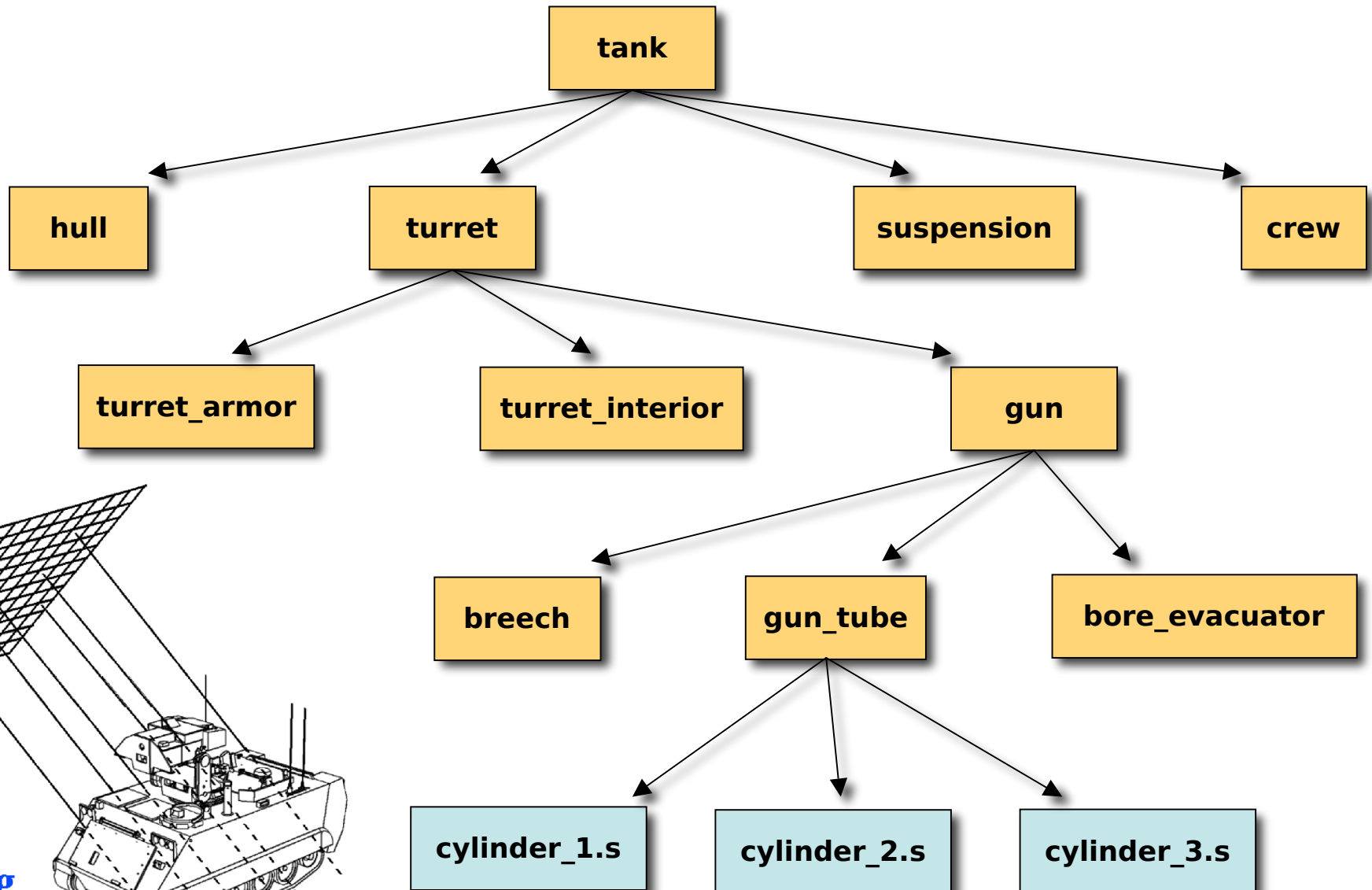
Open Problems & Future Directions

- BRL-CAD* is a powerful open source solid modeling system that includes interactive geometry editing, ray tracing for rendering & geometric analyses, a robust geometric representation, data processing tools, and **more than 25 years** of development history.
- Development of BRL-CAD started in 1979 by departed wizard **Mike Muuss**, author of many contributions to computing including the infamous “ping” network tool.
- BRL-CAD was designed to provide tools, techniques, and methodology for representing, visualizing, and analyzing geometry. Particular emphasis is placed on validity, performance, and robustness for vulnerability and lethality analyses.

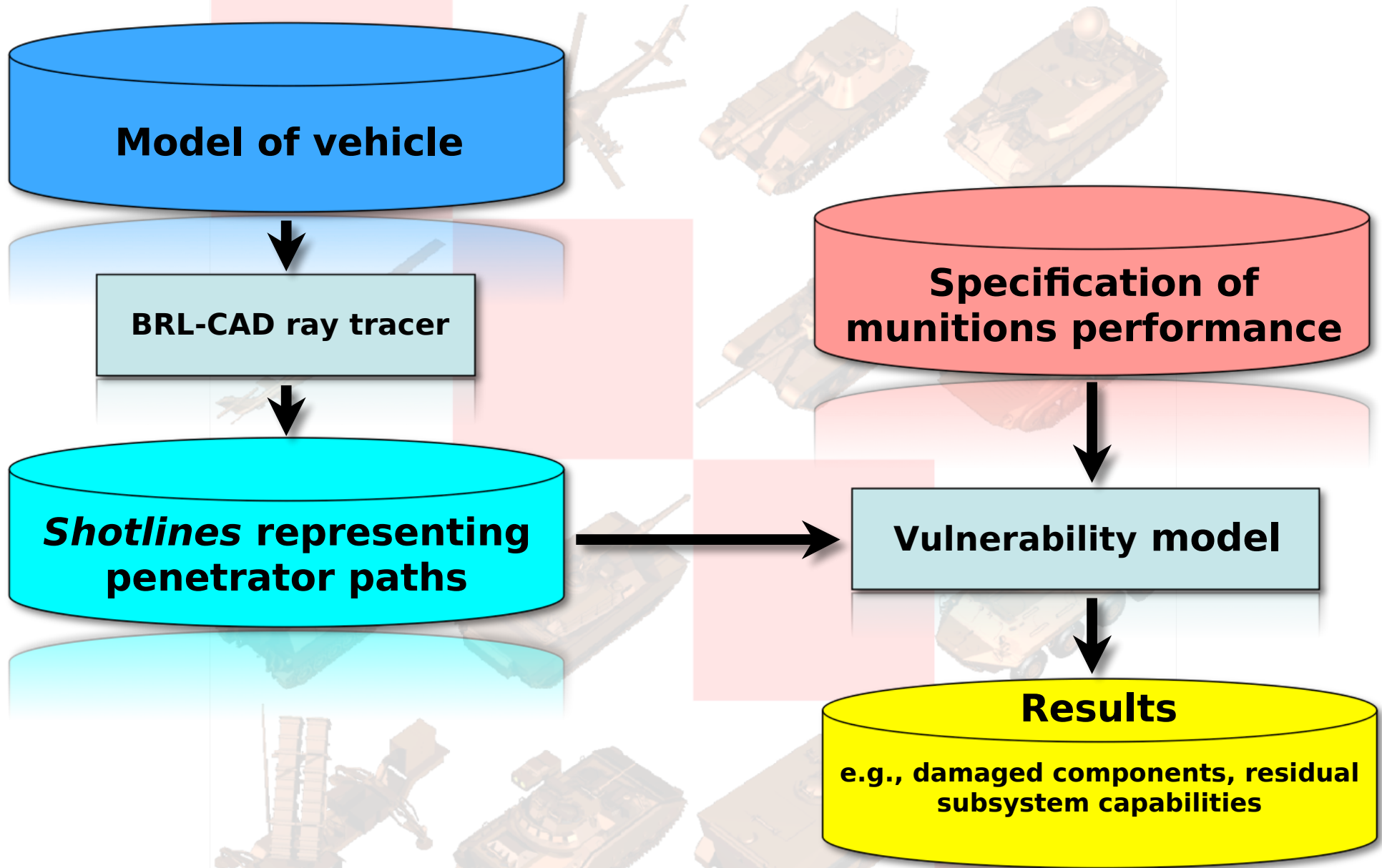


* BRL-CAD is correctly pronounced as “be are el cad”

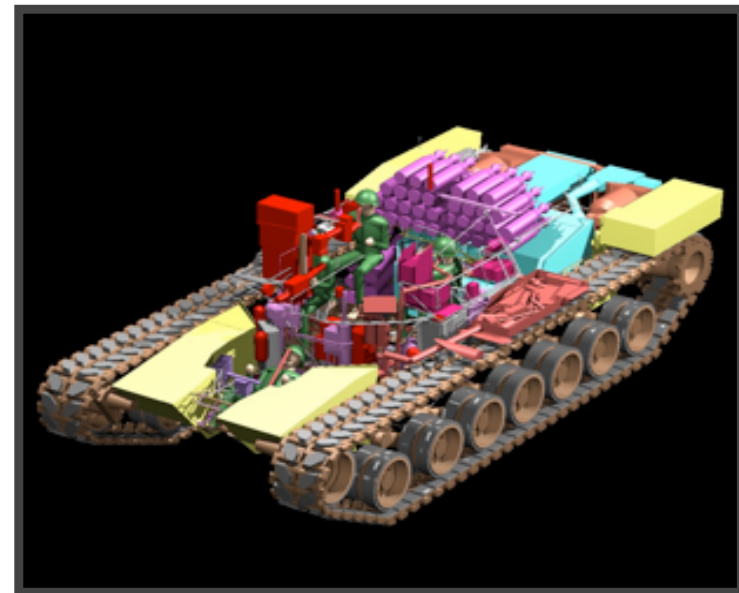
TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN. WARFIGHTER FOCUSED.



Ray Tracing
in BRL-CAD



- BRL-CAD is custom-tailored for engineering analysis work providing robust accurate geometric representation and high-performance geometry evaluation.
 - There is no conversion necessary which is crucial for ensuring robust, consistent, and correct analytic results. *Data conversions introduce errors and complicate validation & verification.*
- Solid modeling and ray tracing are used to represent material interactions and determine paths of propagation. Analyses require shooting millions of rays through highly detailed target descriptions (with millimeter accuracy).
 - This is a **niche** requirement not strongly supported by other CAD systems. BRL-CAD's solid ray tracing is designed to significantly *outperform* commercial ray tracers.
- Extensive model repositories exist at ARL and AFRL of foreign and U.S. assets.
 - Hundreds of *highly* detailed target descriptions represent a major investment in BRL-CAD spanning more than two decades.
- BRL-CAD provides scalability, portability, robustness, and verifiable accuracy that can perpetually and independently be adapted.
 - This allows the U.S. Government to not favor any CAD vendor, avoids expensive licensing, and protects ARL from corporate restructuring.
- **BRL-CAD is highly tuned to DoD needs, more than any other CAD system.**



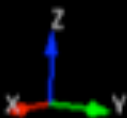
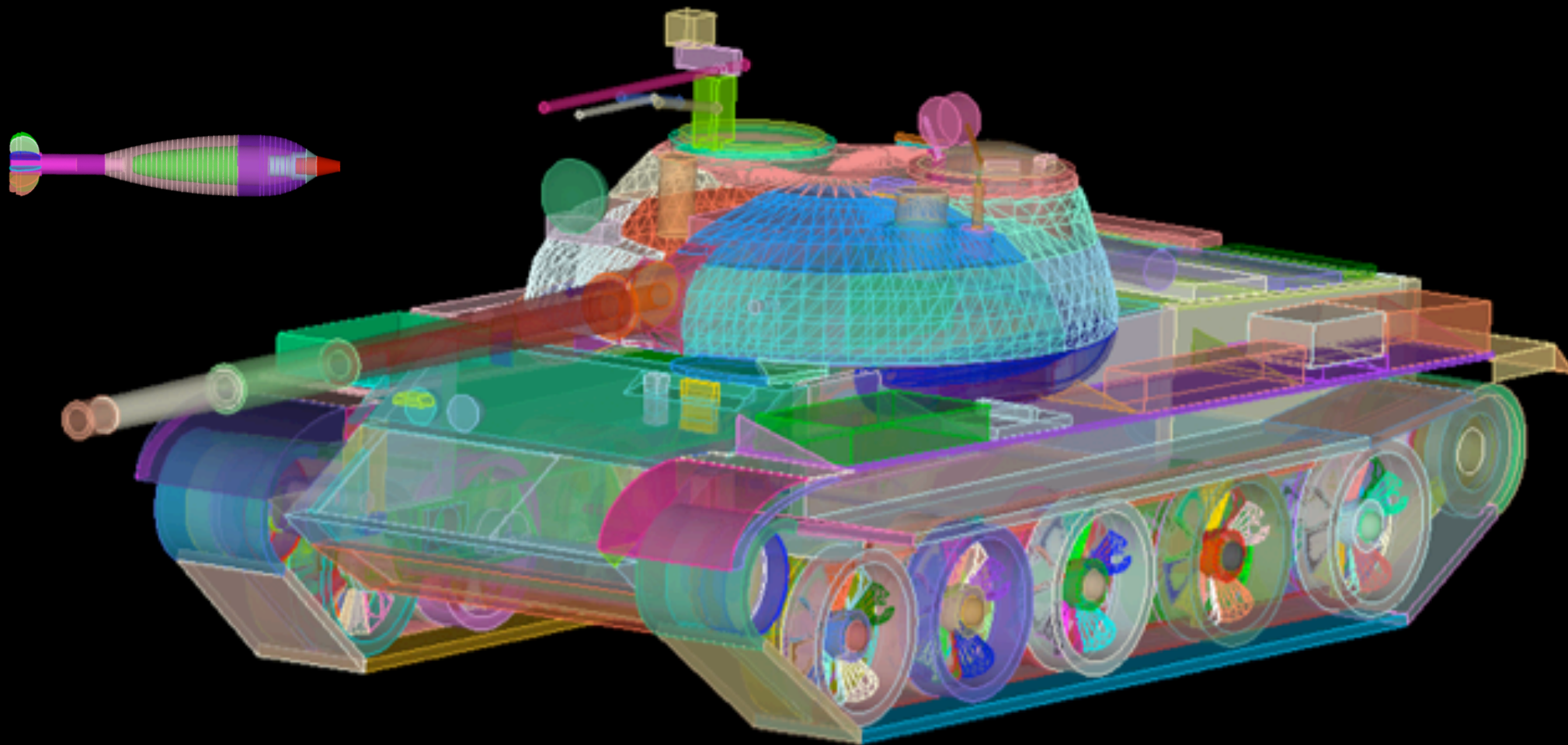
TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN. WARFIGHTER FOCUSED.

*Background on BRL-CAD
What, who, why?*

***Tools & Techniques
for Geometry Analysis***

Conversion to Open Source

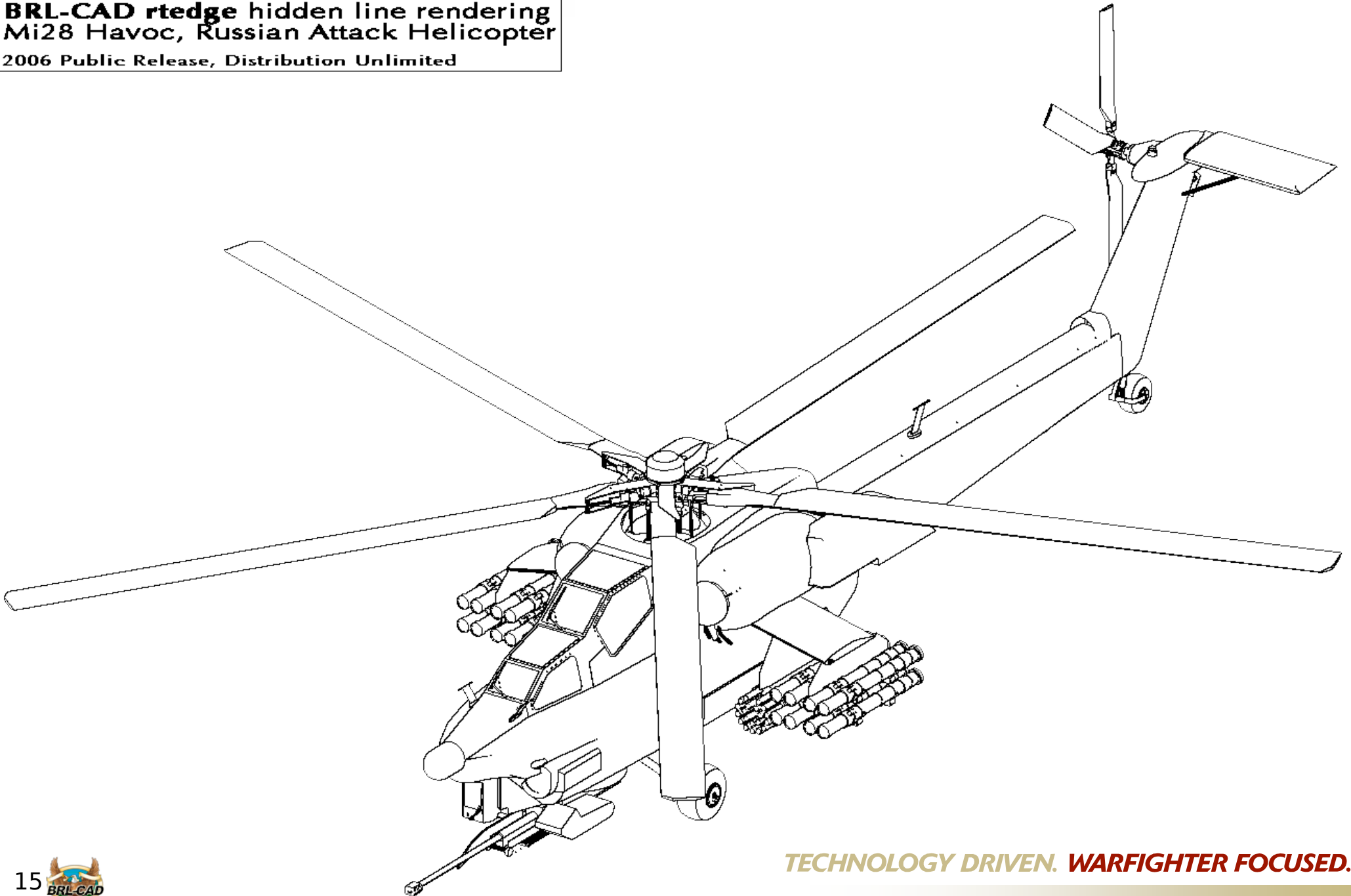
Open Problems & Future Directions

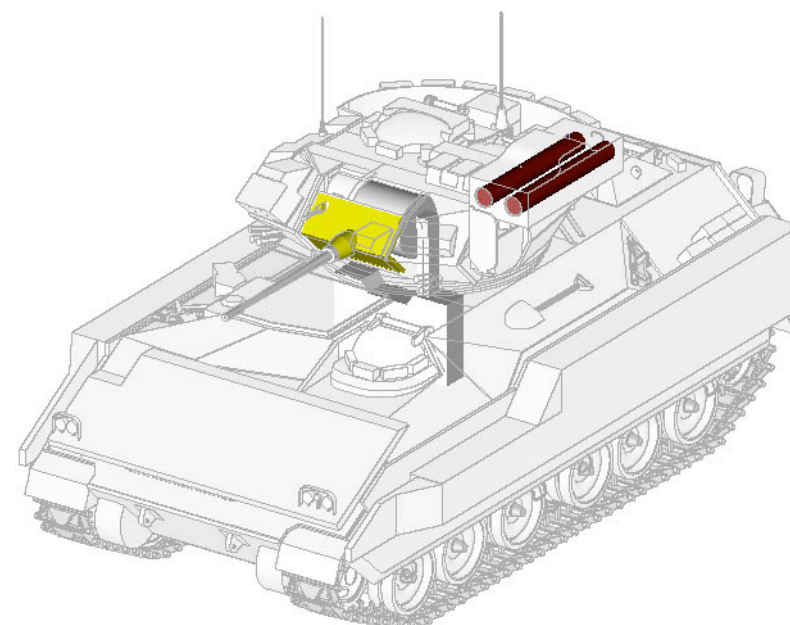
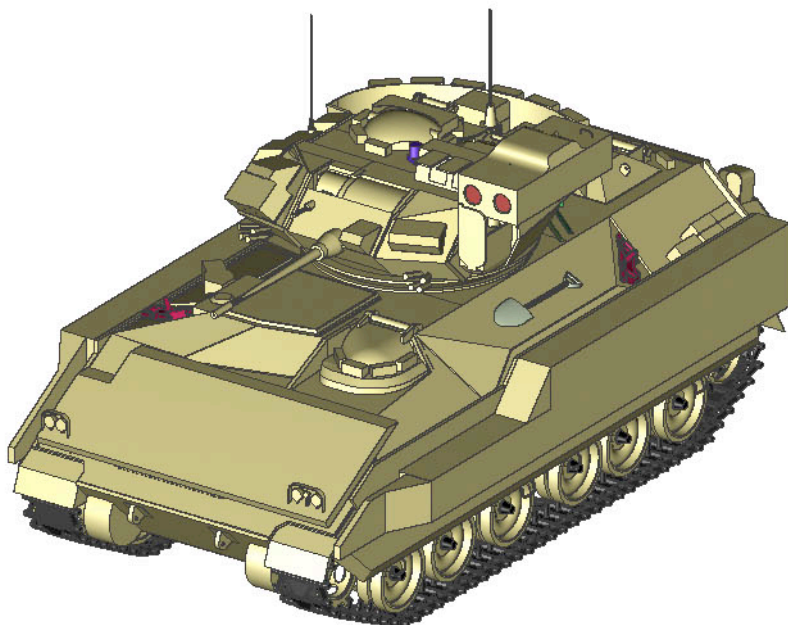
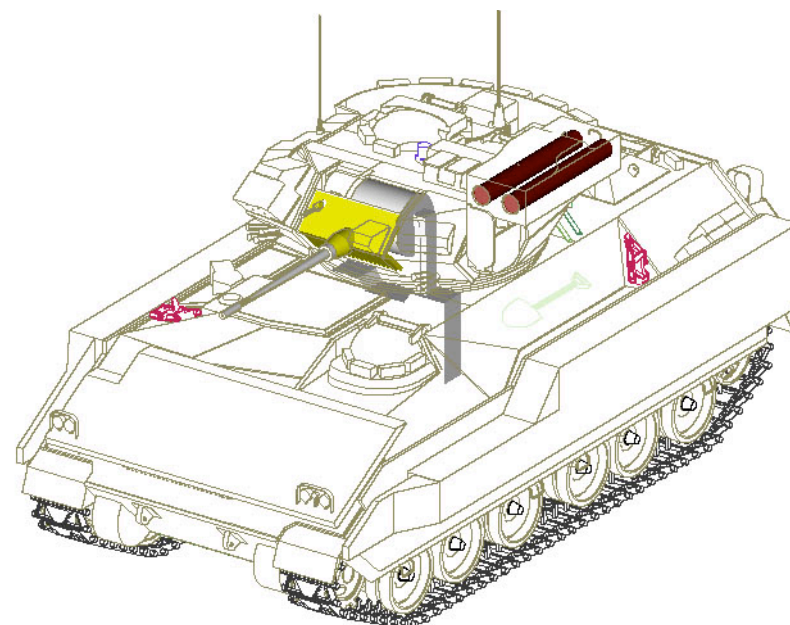
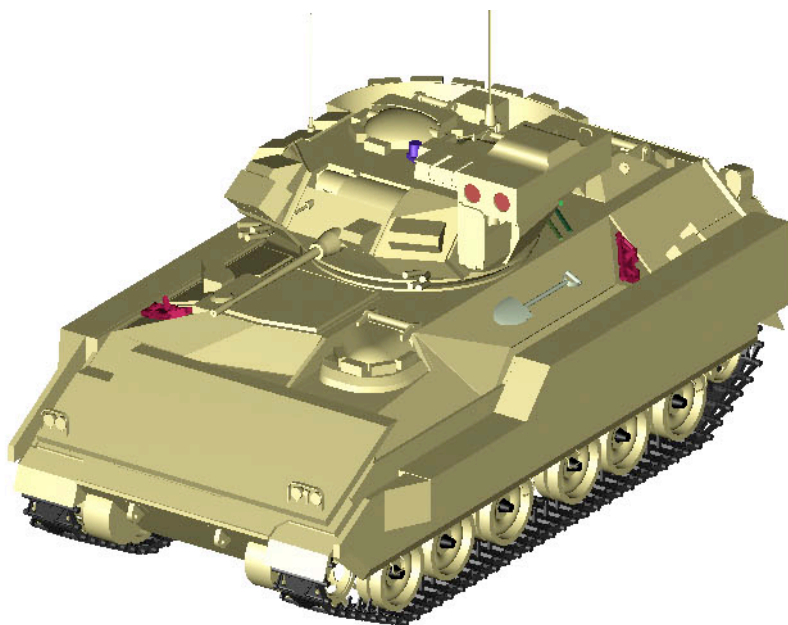


Converted from a BRL-CAD CSG representation to an explicit finite element mesh

TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN. WARFIGHTER FOCUSED.

BRL-CAD rledge hidden line rendering
Mi28 Havoc, Russian Attack Helicopter
2006 Public Release, Distribution Unlimited



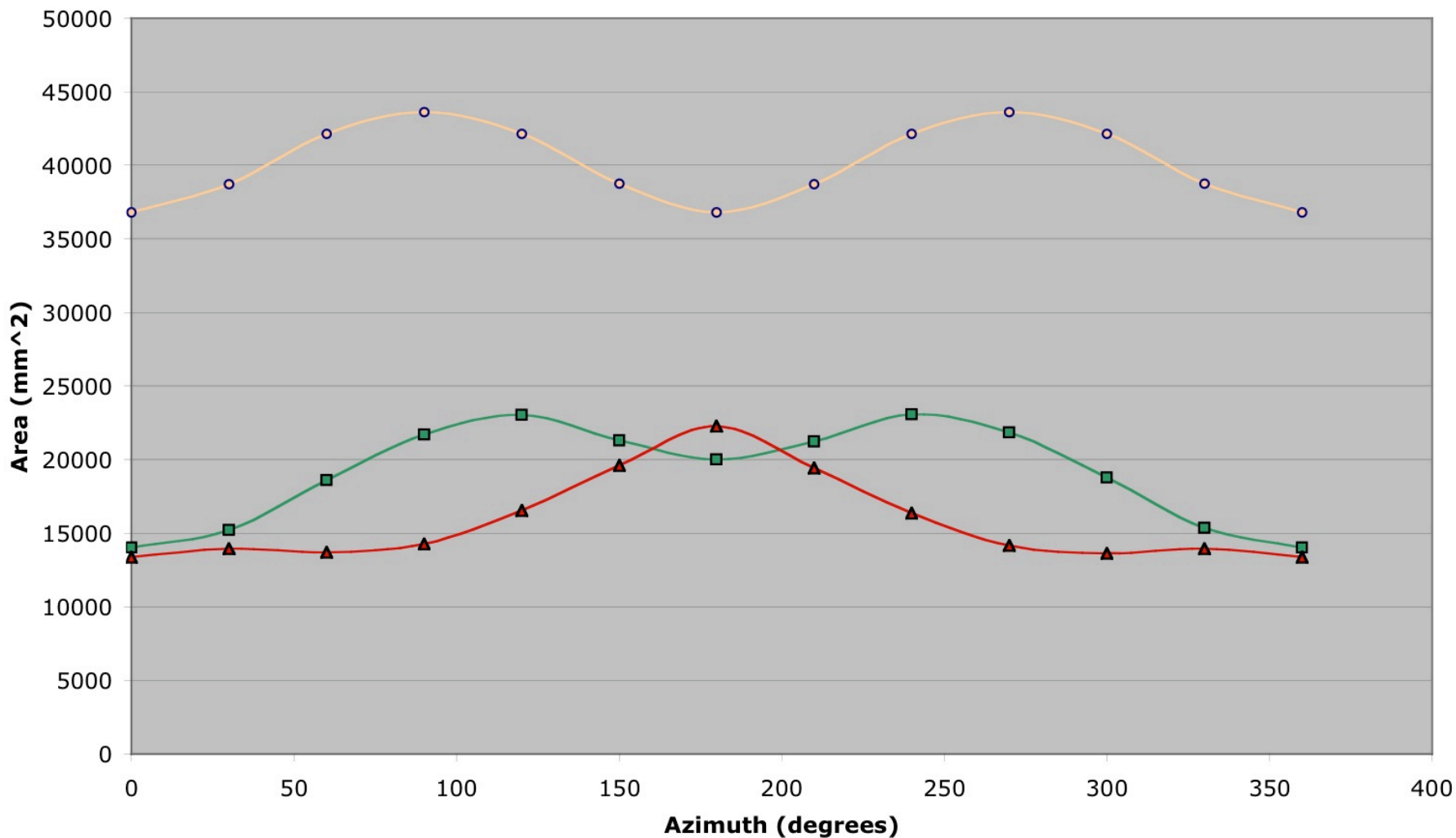




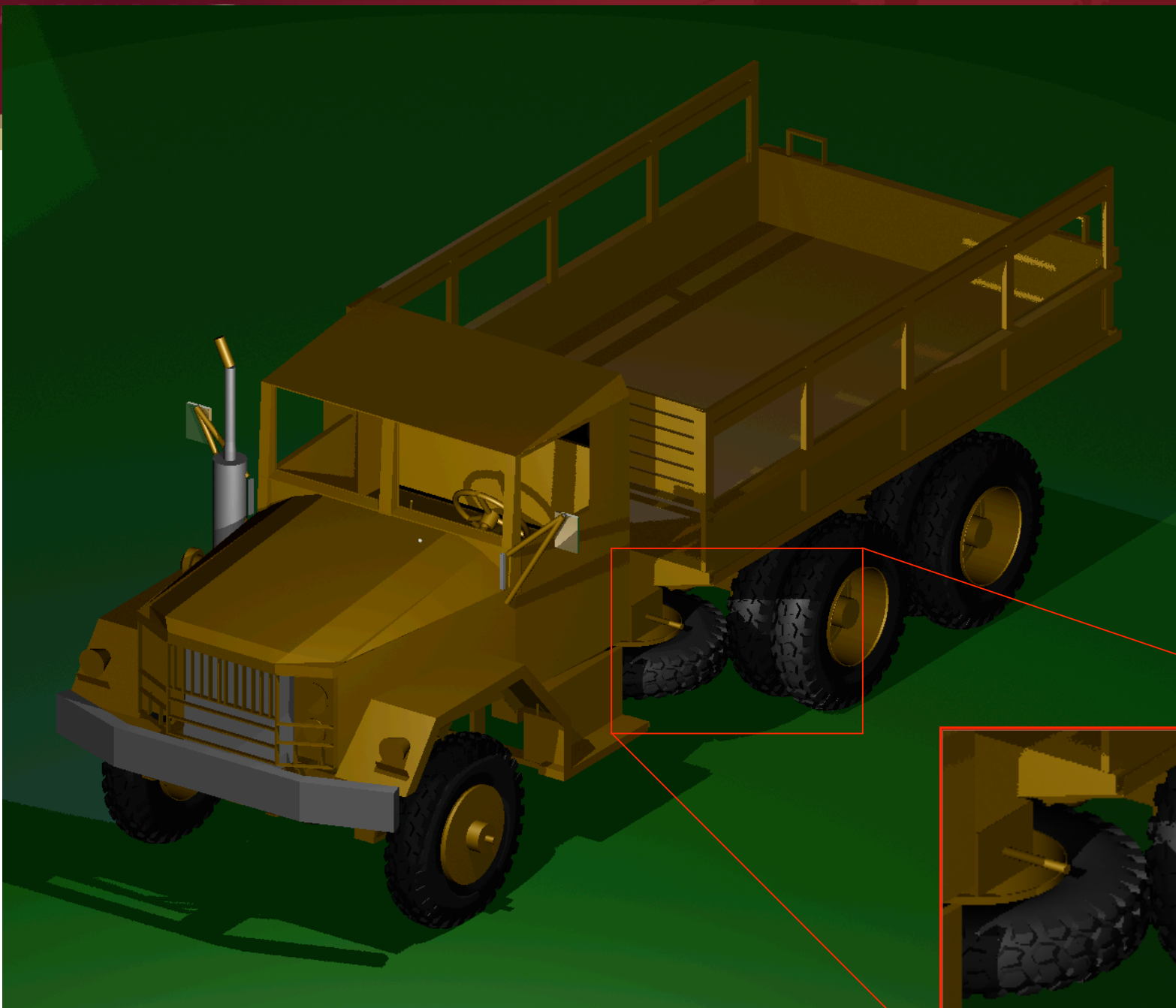
Presented Area, Volume, Centroid, Weight/Mass, Moments of Inertia, Line-of-sight Equivalence, Shape Factors, ... (and much more)



Helmet presented area coverage comparisons



Automatic Detailed Tire Modeling



Automated Procedural Modeling of Tires Using Constructive Solid Geometry

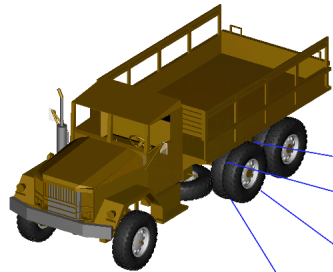
Introduction

Computer Aided Design Systems traditionally employ any of three geometric representation techniques when describing geometry - Constructive Solid Geometry (CSG) employing implicit primitives and boolean operators, Non-Uniform Rational B-Splines (NURBS), and Polygonal Meshes. Each technique has advantages and disadvantages - CSG models tend to be very efficient from the standpoint of disk storage, but models are limited to shapes that can be expressed using available primitives. NURBS models are very flexible in terms of shapes they can represent but visualizing them directly is challenging. Polygonal Meshes are relatively simple to manipulate and view but can be very expensive from the standpoint of storage - it may require thousands of vertices and edges to describe the geometry represented in a single CSG primitive.



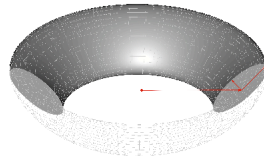
Examples of procedurally generated tires - from left to right, dimensions are 505/50R24, 315/50R50 and 325/40R32

Vehicle tires represent a challenge for CSG representation - the shape of a tire does not map in a straightforward way to most CSG primitives. The solution is an automated procedure that implements a generalized CSG representation of a tire and uses standard dimensional information used to describe tires to deduce all necessary specific geometric parameters needed to produce that specific tire geometry. This allows for a wide variety of tires to be modeled using the same core geometric design, producing very detailed and compact representations of a wide variety of tires with very little modeler effort.



The Elliptical Torus

A CSG tire representation involves cylinders, truncated general cones, ellipsoids, extruded sketches (if tread is modeled) and most importantly the Elliptical Torus. Because most modern tires do not have circular cross sections, and self-intersecting tori are not allowed as valid geometry in some CAD systems, the only available primitive that can approximate the necessary surface curvatures is the Elliptical Torus. The Elliptical Torus also has the constraint of not self intersecting, but its ability to represent shallow curves using large semimajor/semiminor axis ratios means this constraint is seldom a problem when representing a reasonable tire shape.



Elliptical Torus structure - vectors represent control parameters of the primitive in BRL-CAD

Size Advantages of CSG

Comparative Model Geometry Storage Requirements											
primitives	# faces	vertices	# of faces	primitives	# faces	vertices	primitives	# faces	vertices	primitives	# faces
1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
2	4	4	2	2	4	4	2	2	4	4	4
3	6	6	3	3	6	6	3	3	6	6	6
4	8	8	4	4	8	8	4	4	8	8	8
5	10	10	5	5	10	10	5	5	10	10	10
6	12	12	6	6	12	12	6	6	12	12	12
7	14	14	7	7	14	14	7	7	14	14	14
8	16	16	8	8	16	16	8	8	16	16	16
9	18	18	9	9	18	18	9	9	18	18	18
10	20	20	10	10	20	20	10	10	20	20	20
11	22	22	11	11	22	22	11	11	22	22	22
12	24	24	12	12	24	24	12	12	24	24	24
13	26	26	13	13	26	26	13	13	26	26	26
14	28	28	14	14	28	28	14	14	28	28	28
15	30	30	15	15	30	30	15	15	30	30	30
16	32	32	16	16	32	32	16	16	32	32	32
17	34	34	17	17	34	34	17	17	34	34	34
18	36	36	18	18	36	36	18	18	36	36	36
19	38	38	19	19	38	38	19	19	38	38	38
20	40	40	20	20	40	40	20	20	40	40	40
21	42	42	21	21	42	42	21	21	42	42	42
22	44	44	22	22	44	44	22	22	44	44	44
23	46	46	23	23	46	46	23	23	46	46	46
24	48	48	24	24	48	48	24	24	48	48	48
25	50	50	25	25	50	50	25	25	50	50	50
26	52	52	26	26	52	52	26	26	52	52	52
27	54	54	27	27	54	54	27	27	54	54	54
28	56	56	28	28	56	56	28	28	56	56	56
29	58	58	29	29	58	58	29	29	58	58	58
30	60	60	30	30	60	60	30	30	60	60	60
31	62	62	31	31	62	62	31	31	62	62	62
32	64	64	32	32	64	64	32	32	64	64	64
33	66	66	33	33	66	66	33	33	66	66	66
34	68	68	34	34	68	68	34	34	68	68	68
35	70	70	35	35	70	70	35	35	70	70	70
36	72	72	36	36	72	72	36	36	72	72	72
37	74	74	37	37	74	74	37	37	74	74	74
38	76	76	38	38	76	76	38	38	76	76	76
39	78	78	39	39	78	78	39	39	78	78	78
40	80	80	40	40	80	80	40	40	80	80	80
41	82	82	41	41	82	82	41	41	82	82	82
42	84	84	42	42	84	84	42	42	84	84	84
43	86	86	43	43	86	86	43	43	86	86	86
44	88	88	44	44	88	88	44	44	88	88	88
45	90	90	45	45	90	90	45	45	90	90	90
46	92	92	46	46	92	92	46	46	92	92	92
47	94	94	47	47	94	94	47	47	94	94	94
48	96	96	48	48	96	96	48	48	96	96	96
49	98	98	49	49	98	98	49	49	98	98	98
50	100	100	50	50	100	100	50	50	100	100	100
51	102	102	51	51	102	102	51	51	102	102	102
52	104	104	52	52	104	104	52	52	104	104	104
53	106	106	53	53	106	106	53	53	106	106	106
54	108	108	54	54	108	108	54	54	108	108	108
55	110	110	55	55	110	110	55	55	110	110	110
56	112	112	56	56	112	112	56	56	112	112	112
57	114	114	57	57	114	114	57	57	114	114	114
58	116	116	58	58	116	116	58	58	116	116	116
59	118	118	59	59	118	118	59	59	118	118	118
60	120	120	60	60	120	120	60	60	120	120	120
61	122	122	61	61	122	122	61	61	122	122	122
62	124	124	62	62	124	124	62	62	124	124	124
63	126	126	63	63	126	126	63	63	126	126	126
64	128	128	64	64	128	128	64	64	128	128	128
65	130	130	65	65	130	130	65	65	130	130	130
66	132	132	66	66	132	132	66	66	132	132	132
67	134	134	67	67	134	134	67	67	134	134	134
68	136	136	68	68	136	136	68	68	136	136	136
69	138	138	69	69	138	138	69	69	138	138	138
70	140	140	70	70	140	140	70	70	140	140	140
71	142	142	71	71	142	142	71	71	142	142	142
72	144	144	72	72	144	144	72	72	144	144	144
73	146	146	73	73	146	146	73	73	146	146	146
74	148	148	74	74	148	148	74	74	148	148	148
75	150	150	75	75	150	150	75	75	150	150	150
76	152	152	76	76	152	152	76	76	152	152	152
77	154	154	77	77	154	154	77	77	154	154	154
78	156	156	78	78	156	156	78	78	156	156	156
79	158	158	79	79	158	158	79	79	158	158	158
80	160	160	80	80	160	160	80	80	160	160	160
81	162	162	81	81	162	162	81	81	162	162	162
82	164	164	82	82	164	164	82	82	164	164	164
83	166	166	83	83	166	166	83	83	166	166	166
84	168	168	84	84	168	168	84	84	168	168	168
85	170	170	85	85	170	170	85	85	170	170	170
86	172	172	86	86	172	172	86	86	172	172	172
87	174	174	87	87	174	174	87	87	174	174	174
88	176	176	88	88	176	176	88	88	176	176	176
89	178	178	89	89	178	178	89	89	178	178	178
90	180	180	90	90	180	180	90	90	180	180	180
91	182	182	91	91	182	182	91	91	182	182	182
92	184	184	92	92	184	184	92	92	184	184	184
93	186	186	93	93	186	186	93	93	186	186	186
94	188	188	94	94	188	188	94	94	188	188	188
95	190	190	95	95	190	190	95	95	190	190	190
96	192	192	96	96	192	192	96	96	192	192	192
97	194	194	97	97	194	194	97	97	194	194	194
98	196	196	98	98	196	196	98	98	196	196	196
99	198	198	99	99	198	198	99	99	198	198	198
100	200	200	100	100	200	200	100	100	200	200	200

Although it is somewhat difficult to do a direct size comparison between data representation methods, these numbers represent an estimate of the size of the models needed to represent an example tire with tread in different modeling geometry types.

Comparison of Storage Requirements		
CSG	NURBS	Polymesh
1839	81984	431514

These numbers support the general rule of thumb - one order of magnitude increase for NURBS surfaces, two for Polymeshes.

It should be noted that the Polymesh estimates here are based on a rather coarse tessellation of the tire model and more accurate meshing would tend to rather steeply increase the size of the model.

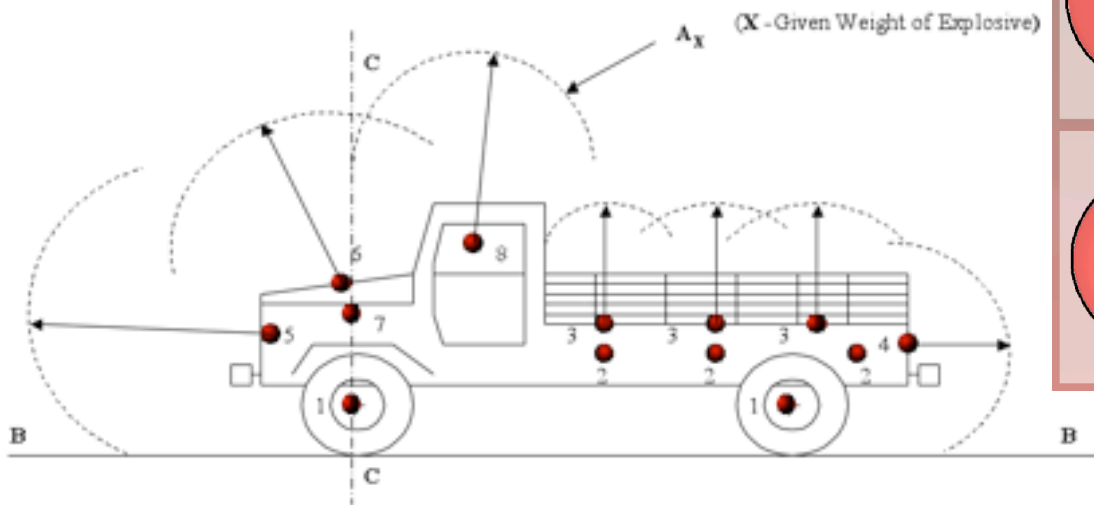
Defining the Tire Shape

Although the Elliptical Torus is a critical part of defining the tire shape, by itself it is not sufficient. Most modern tires have a relatively "flat" surface area that is intended to contact the road surface. This "flat" area then curves into the "walls" of the tire, which in turn terminate at the point where they connect with the wheel rim. In order to define these two areas, three Elliptical Tori must be precisely aligned and defined in such a fashion that they are "smooth". In this case, "smooth" is defined as no surface discontinuities at the intersection curves.

Constraining the surfaces and the first derivatives of the surfaces to be equal at the point where the "tread" surface meets the "wall" of the tire is sufficient to result in a unique solution to the elliptical equations governing that aspect of the elliptical tori

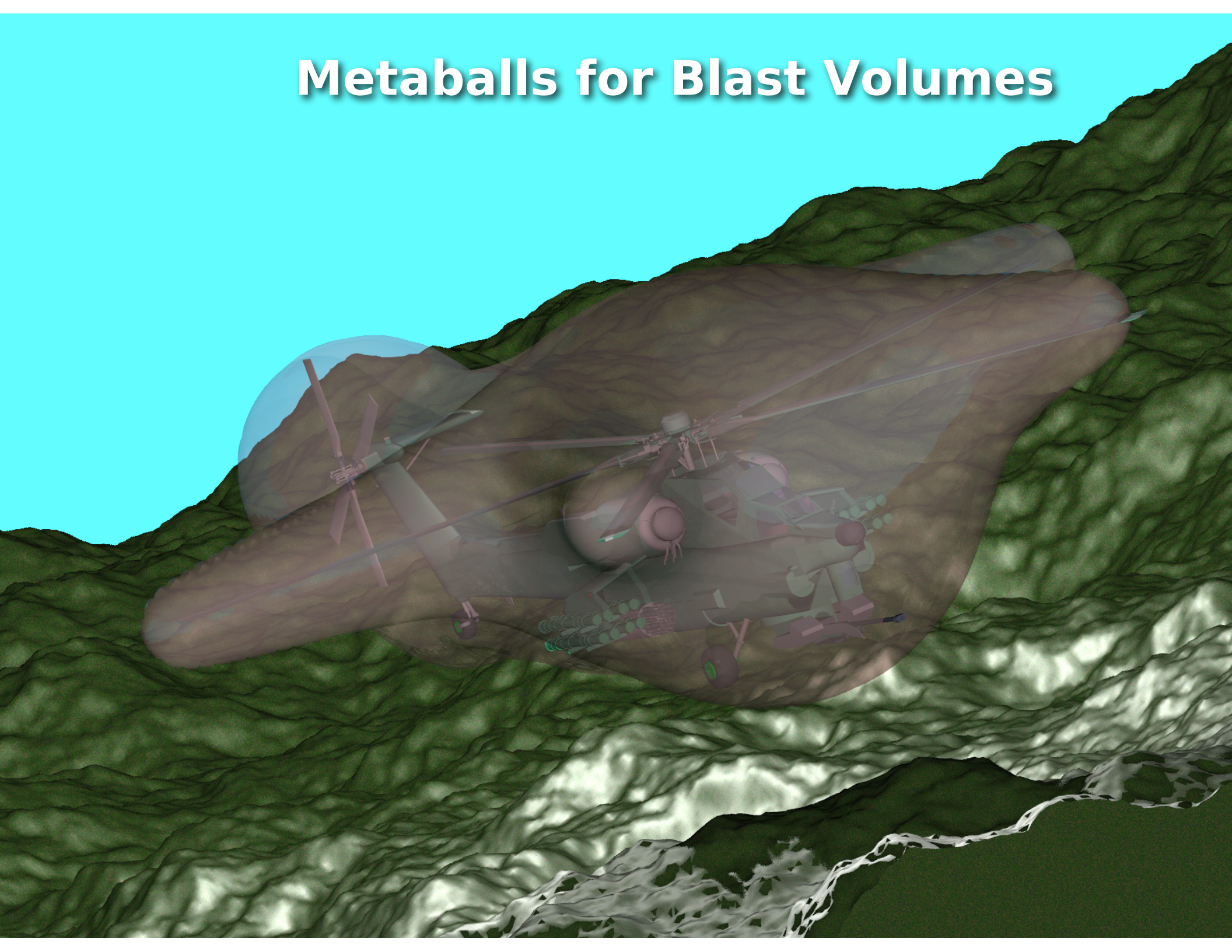
- The engineer traditionally:
 - Specifies a center of damage and lethal miss distance
 - Interpolates a 2D curve by hand
 - Extrapolates the 2D curves back into a 3D surface
- With metaballs, the 3D surface is automatically generated based on centers and lethal miss distances**

Truck with Blast Envelope	Glass Truck	Centers of Damage

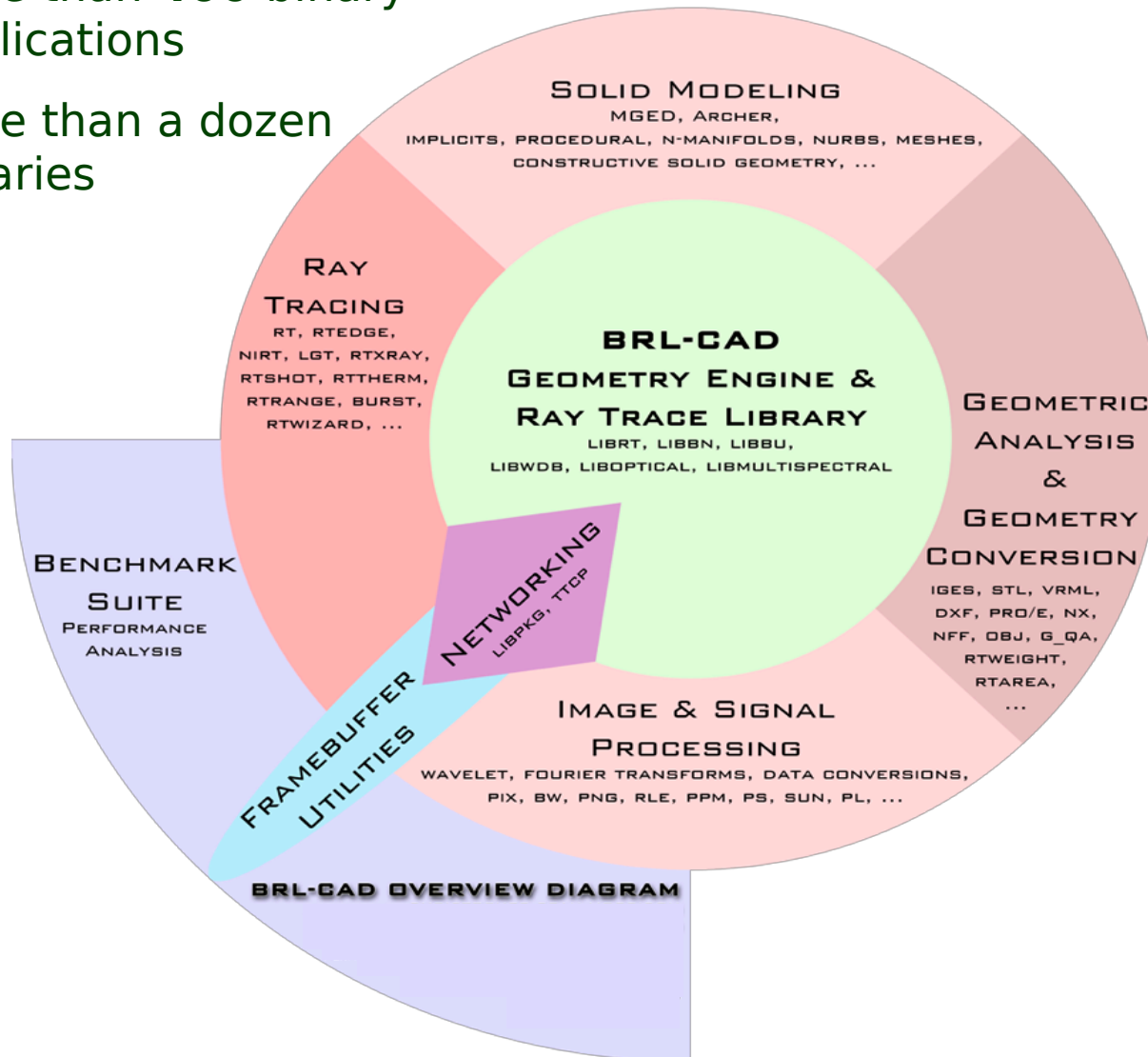


- - CD's
- 1 - Wheels
- 2 - Side Aft Frame
- 3 - Top Cntr Bed
- 4 - Cntr Aft Frame
- 5 - Radiator/Engine
- 6 - Engine
- 7 - Side Engine
- 8 - Driver/Steering/Controls

Metaballs for Blast Volumes

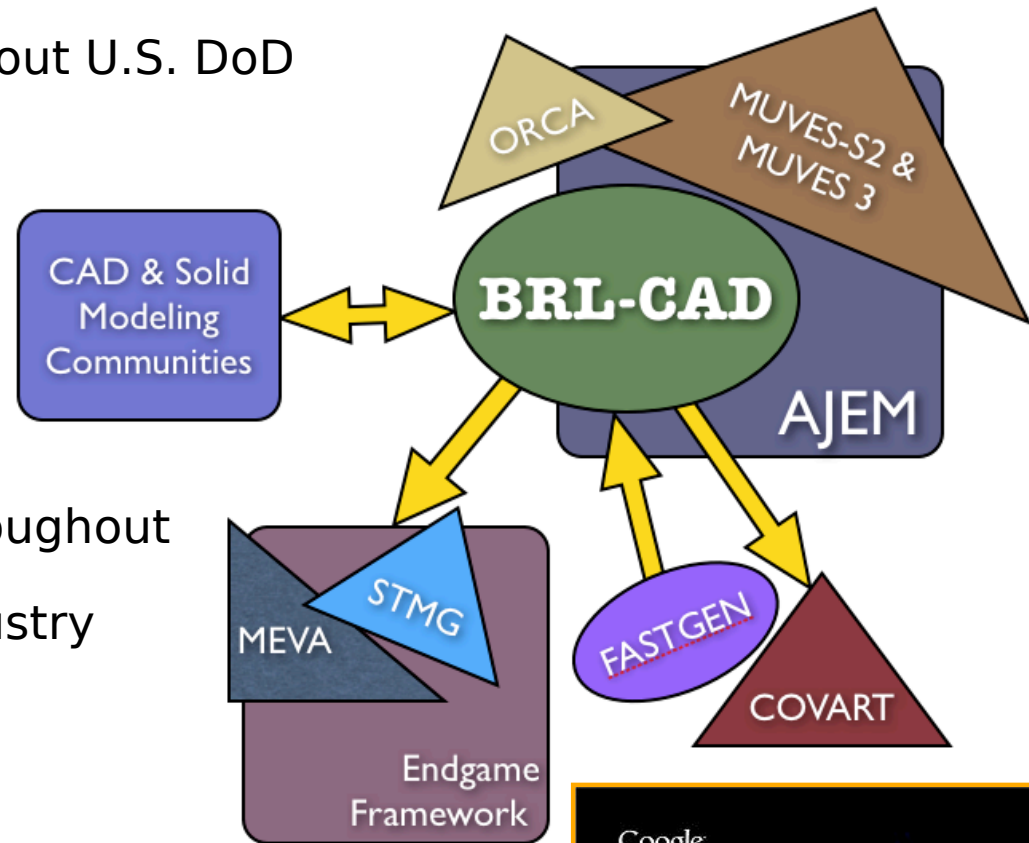


- More than *one million* lines of code
- More than **400** binary applications
- More than a dozen libraries



- Extensively cross-platform:
 - Windows,
 - Mac,
 - Linux,
 - UNIX,
 - ... *from desktops to supercomputers*
- Became Open Source software in 2004
 - *Open code,*
 - *Open access,*
 - *Open standards*
 - ... *It's free!*
- BRL-CAD became the first Open Source solid modeling system in production use under OSI*-approved license terms

- SLAD V/L analysts and target describers
- MUVES and AJEM users throughout U.S. DoD
 - Army, Air Force, Navy
- International collaborations: Senior National Representative V/L Assessment Methodology (VLAM) working group
 - United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, ...
- Extensive international ties throughout the Open Source community, academia, and commercial industry
 - University of Utah
 - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 - Johns Hopkins University
 - Texas A&M University
 - ... and many others ...
- Google Summer of Code
 - Exclusive Open Source opportunity



*Background on BRL-CAD
What, who, why?*

*Tools & Techniques
for Geometry Analysis*

Conversion to Open Source

Open Problems & Future Directions

... the long, manpower-intensive way ...

- Lots of playing “Devil’s Advocate”
- Obtain common understanding
- Continually dismay fears
- Quantify benefits
- Obtain buy-in
- Keep going

The journey to
make BRL-CAD
Open Source
began in **1998**.*

*Fortunately *much* has changed since then.

- Garner support within development team

They think it's impossible, but okay.
They were *almost* right.

- Obtain initial support from management

They didn't entirely understand, but didn't see cause to stop the effort either..

Lots of questions.

(This is much better now thanks to persistent efforts from folks like Risacher and Wheeler, but still an open issue.)

- Become an open source legal expert

Many, *many* questions and **FUD** to dispel. Required constant shepherding, even amongst the dev team, to keep support going and fears at bay. Nobody knowledgeable to help navigate the issues.

Had to have answers ready for all of the worst possible “**what if**” scenarios.. Many licenses to read in detail.

This was the most meticulously tedious step.

- Talk to Tech Transfer

They really didn't understand, but were willing to listen. Their focus was the worst case possible. They wanted to see evidence of *others* releasing as Open Source.

We seemed to be the first within the Army ...
(maybe first within DoD)
So we were stuck.

- Talk to Security / Public Affairs

Fortunately, BRL-CAD was designed from the beginning to be devoid of sensitive data. Without analysis codes or military data embedded, there were no objections.

In fact, this would mean substantially less overhead for them! (No more licenses to review and file.)

- Talk to Information Assurance

They didn't really understand nor have authority to halt the effort, but were consulted for blessing regardless.

They had the usual questions and fears that we had heard and answered many times over by this point. They didn't have objections.

- Talk to Legal

It took **months** to get a sit down.
Persistence!

Finally, we got to meet with patent counsel
and former NSA Secure Linux legal guru,
Steve Bloor. (woot!)

He understood everything.

- Consider the legalities of licensing

Bloor made our options clear. Public domain was downright trivial but had major risks. NOSA-style was also easy but had many limitations (less than ideal).

Everything else required full rights. Copyright was even better.

- Make it happen, acquire rights

The U.S. Government has no default copyright. At least, not nationally... BUT, copyright can be established and assigned.

How? Contract modification, *substantial* derivative work, copyright claim on derivative, assignment.

(There's even standard clauses!)

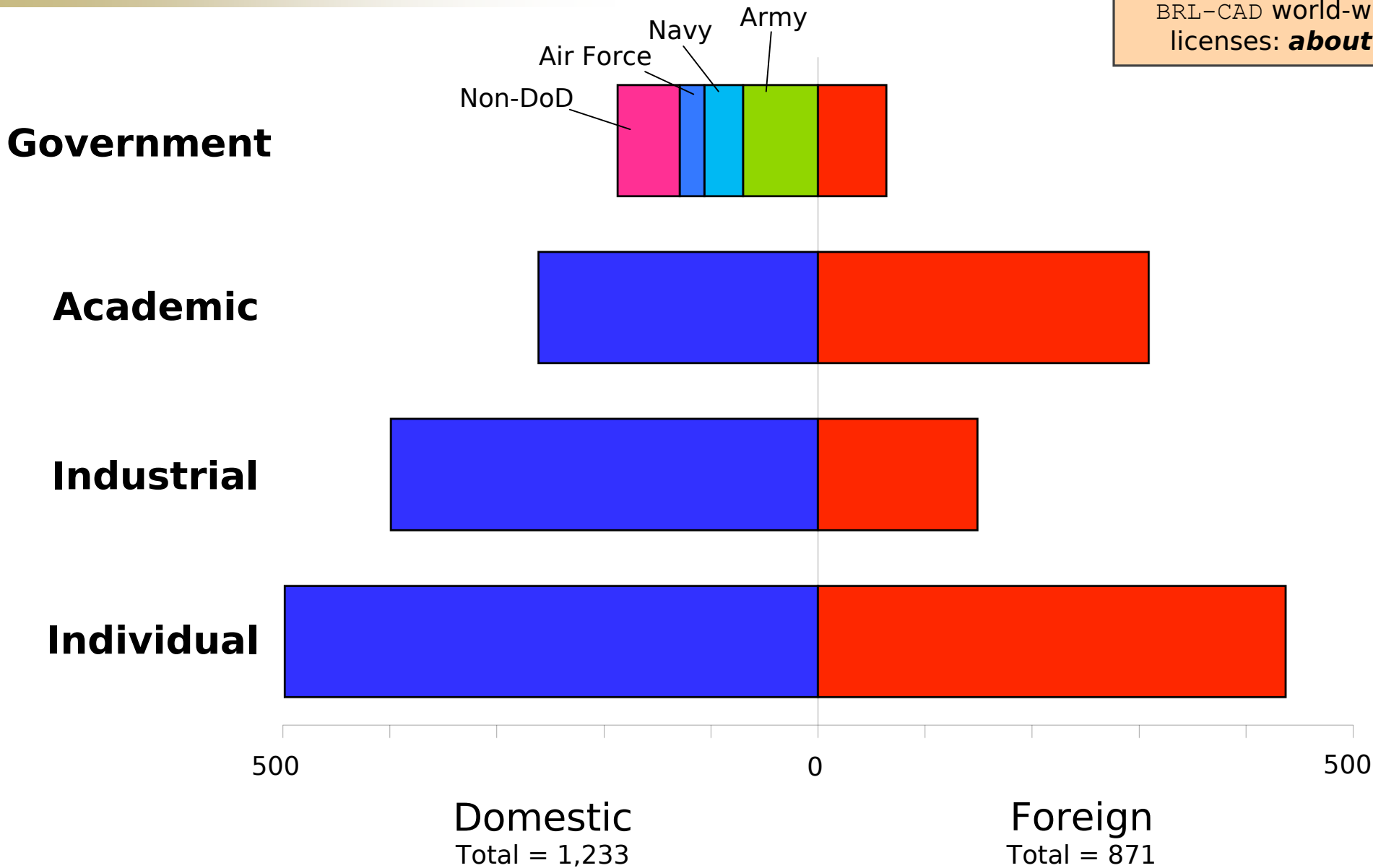
- Get the okay from Management

Once copyright was acquired, it finally became a “simple” matter of release approval from management.

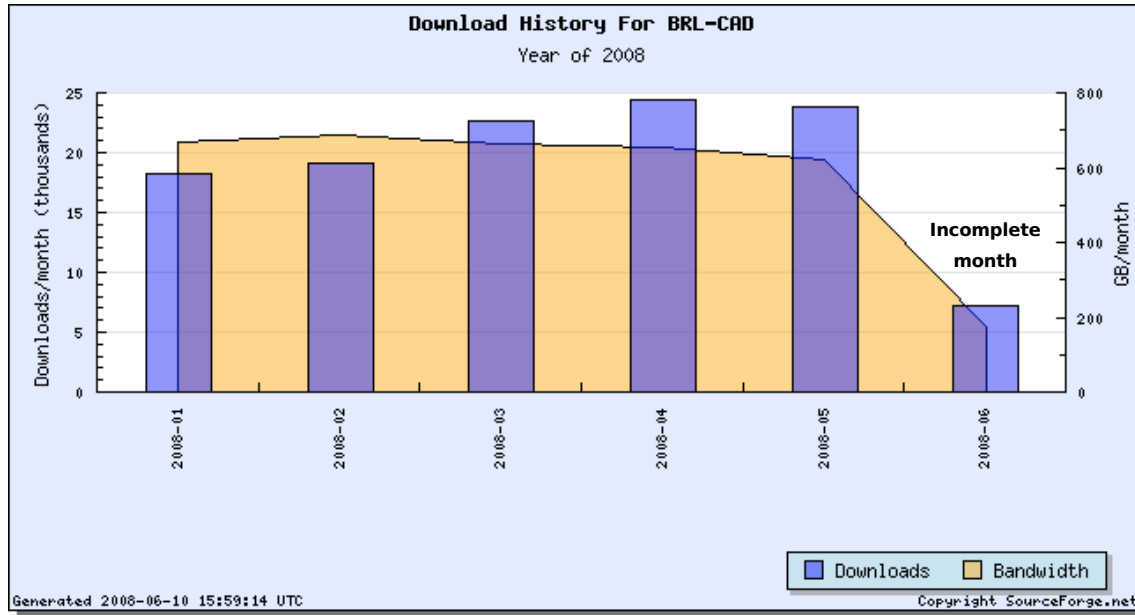
We showed a substantial quantifiable process savings in addition to numerous “hypothetical” potential benefits. We’d done our homework. The code was ready.

After more than five years of persistent effort, we got the okay to release as Open Source in **December 2004.**

BRL-CAD world-wide site licenses: **about 2000**



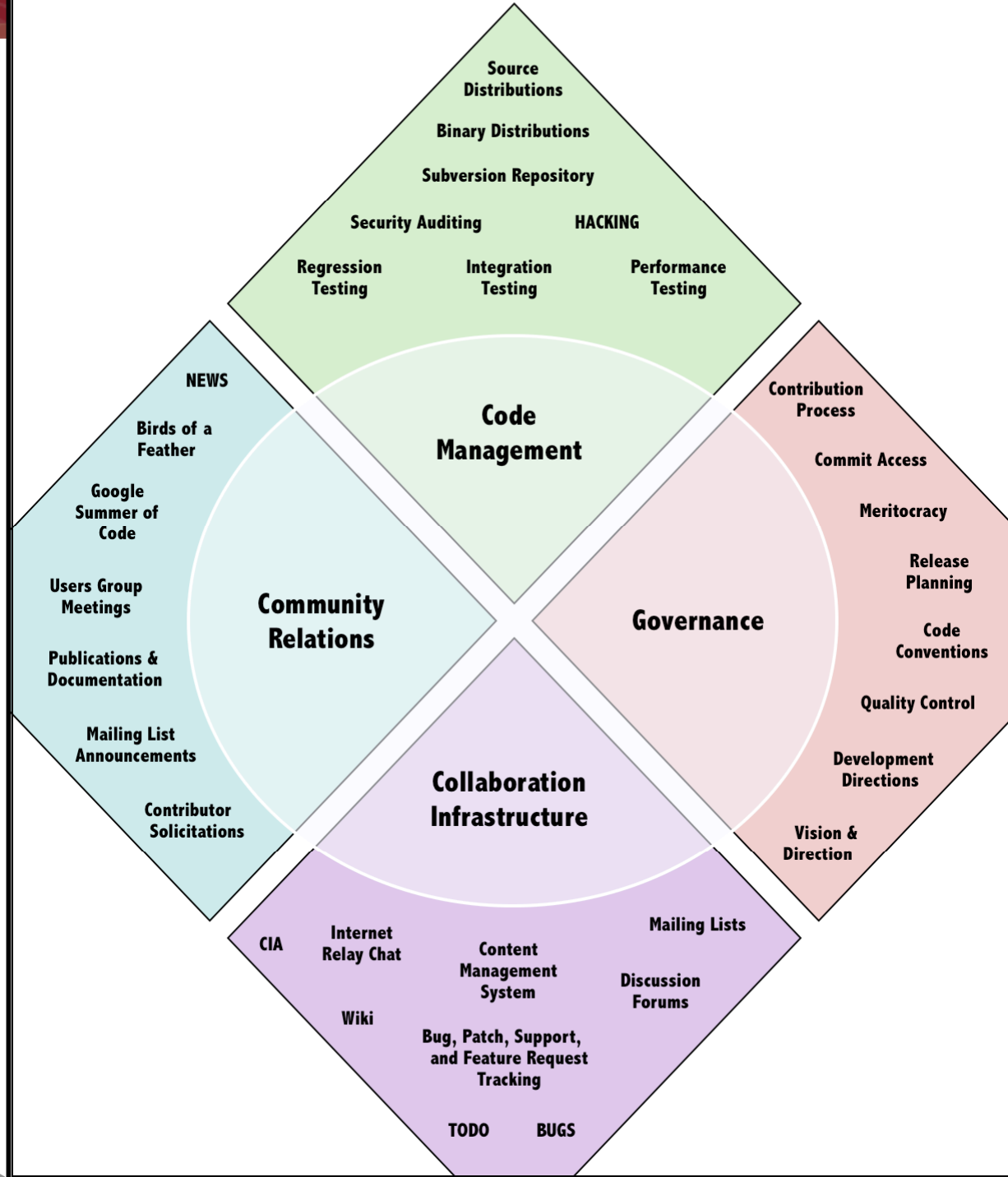
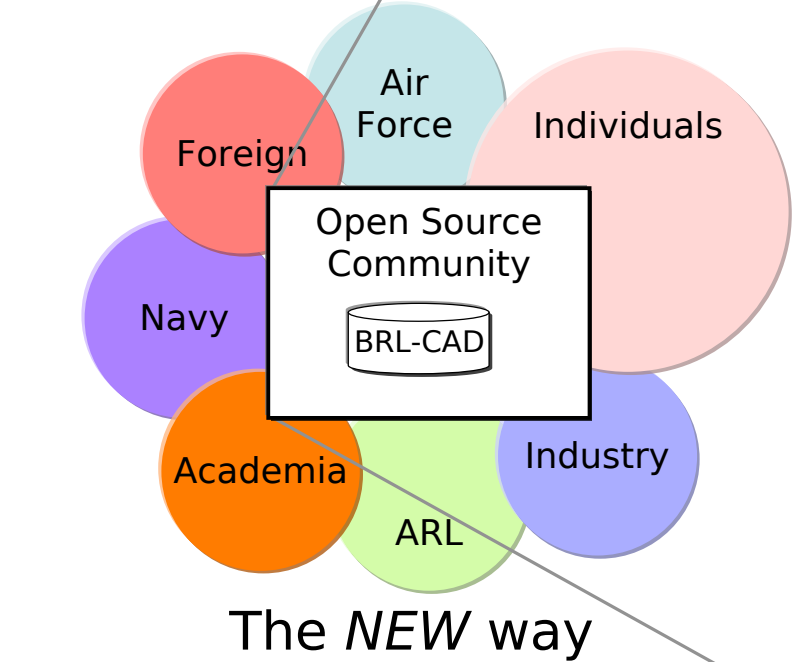
BRL-CAD downloads in first month: **more than 2000**



“the world’s oldest source code repository”

- August 2007,
Robin Luckey, Ohloh Inc.

- More than **200,000** downloads and **2,000,000** website hits per year (as of 2010)
- Activity (both interest and development) is **increasing** year over year
- Presently receiving about **three-to-five staff-years** of contributed effort from the Open Source community including source code enhancements, bug fixes, documentation, website development, and more...
- Received roughly an additional staff-year of effort in 2008 and 2009 by being accepted into the **Google Summer of Code**



*Background on BRL-CAD
What, who, why?*

*Tools & Techniques
for Geometry Analysis*

Conversion to Open Source

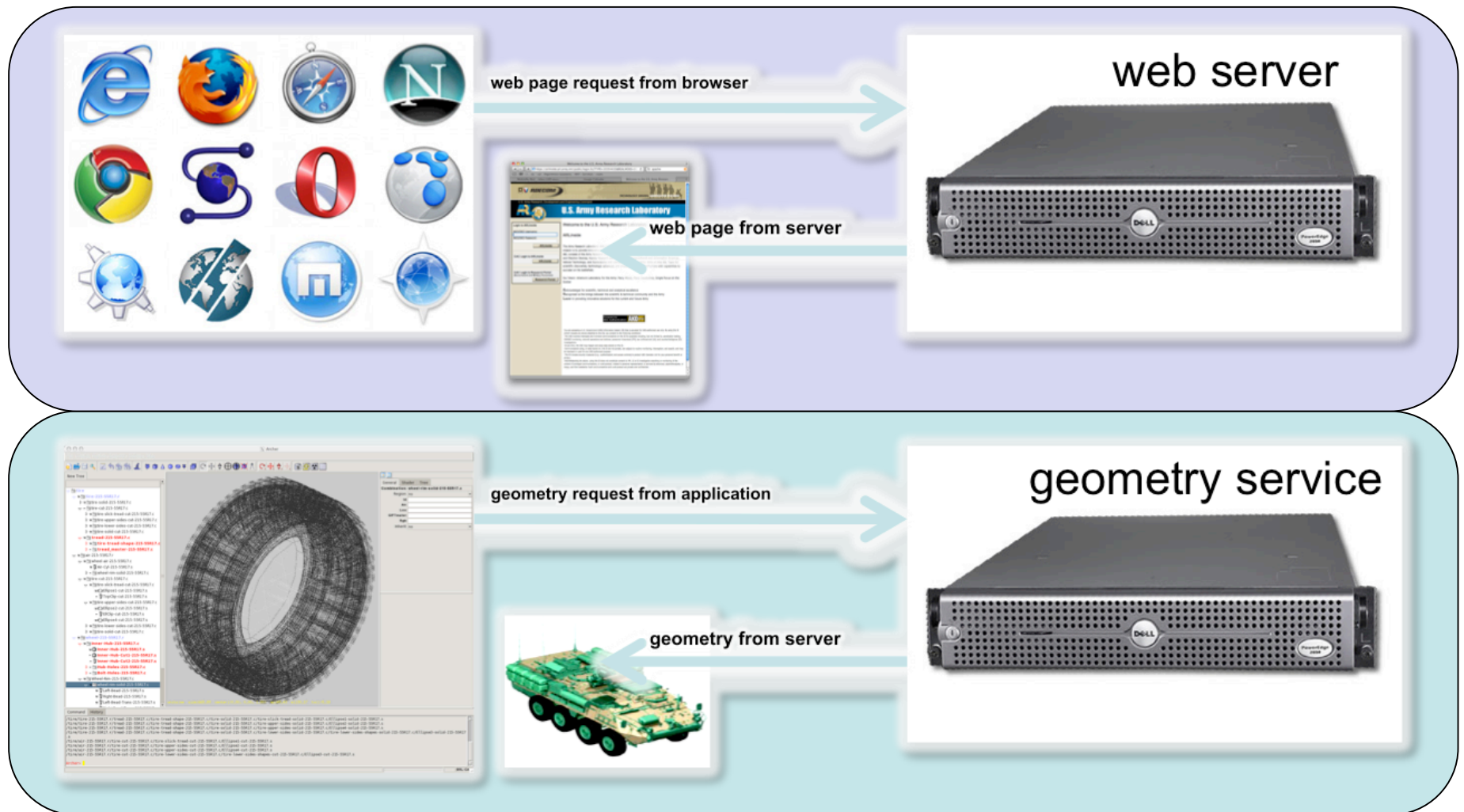
Open Problems & Future Directions

- NIH: “Not Invented Here”
- Perceptions of government code
- Open communication with the community
- Avoiding the waterfalls with agility
- Collaboration
- Meritocracy
- Diversity
- **“GLOSS”**



TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN. **WARFIGHTER FOCUSED.**

The *BRL-CAD Geometry Service* is an interface for accessing revision-controlled geometry from a data repository. Sitting on top of an embeddable *geometry engine*, the service provides and stores geometry data similar to how a web server delivers web pages.



Thank you!

Questions? Comments?

Christopher Sean Morrison

morrison@arl.army.mil

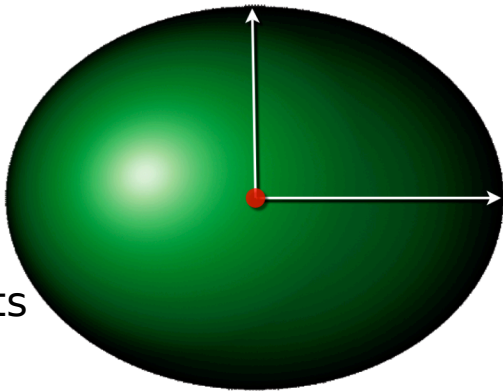
410-278-6678

Several of the images contained within this presentation were created with the support and efforts of many individuals. The following deserve special recognition and thanks:

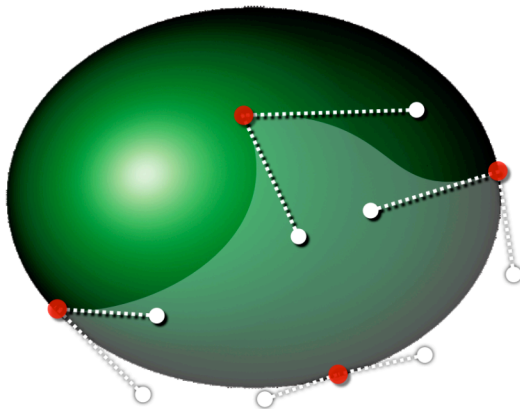
Mike Muuss
Lee Butler
Erik Greenwald
Cliff Yapp
Ron Bowers
Mike Gillich
Justin Shumaker
Stephen Kennedy
Karel Kulhavy
Edwin Davisson

Additional Information about BRL-CAD

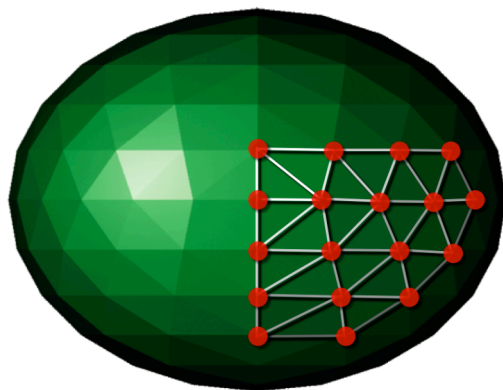
CSG
implicits



BREP
NURBS



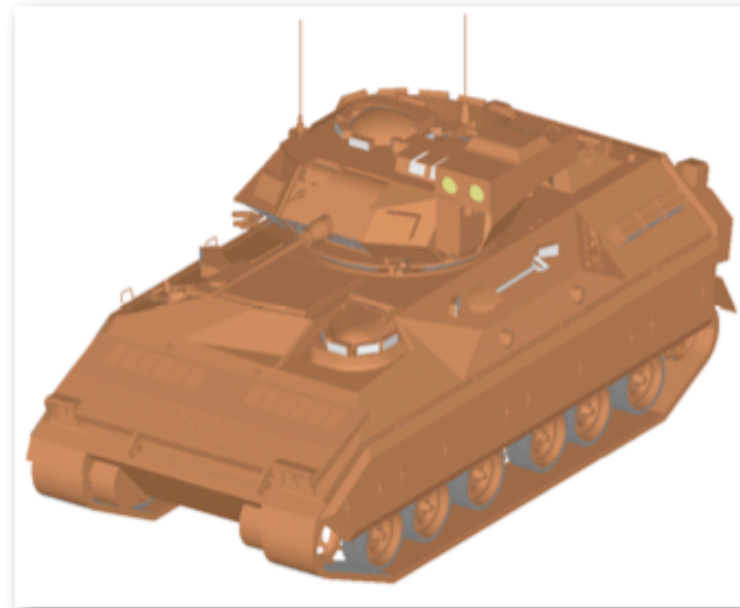
BREP
facets



Geometric Definition	Applications of Use
<p>4 values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radius • Position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit primitives with constructive solid geometry (CSG) provide a representation format that is very compact and numerically robust (no cracks) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Solidity constraint is guaranteed making it well-suited for solid modeling and engineering analysis purposes
<p>200 values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface • Patches • Knot • Values • Weights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spline surface boundary representations are prevalent in commercial CAD systems for their modeling flexibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — More recently they are also the subject of real-time ray tracing computer graphics research
<p>1000 values or more (configurable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual • Polygons • Vertices • Normal values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polygonal boundary models are commonly used by display systems (e.g., OpenGL and DirectX) for interactive rendering and real-time visualization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Many advancements have been made over the years on high-performance ray tracing of triangle models

Exponential
Geometric Growth

CSG <u>implicts</u>	2 MB
BREP NURBS	20 MB
BREP facets	200 MB

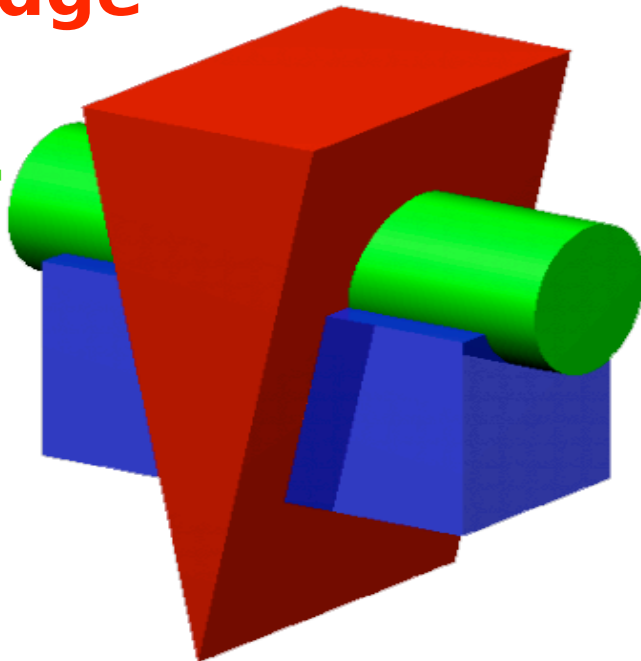


wedge

$(\text{wedge} \cap \text{block}) - \text{cylinder}$

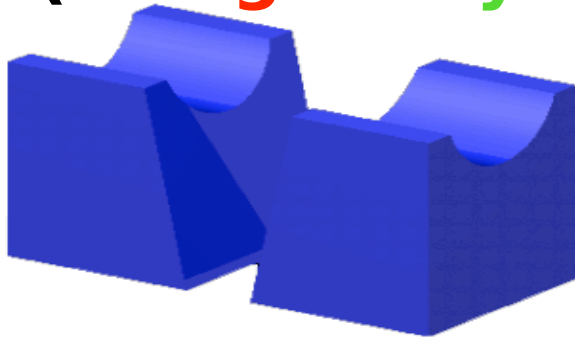
cylinder

block

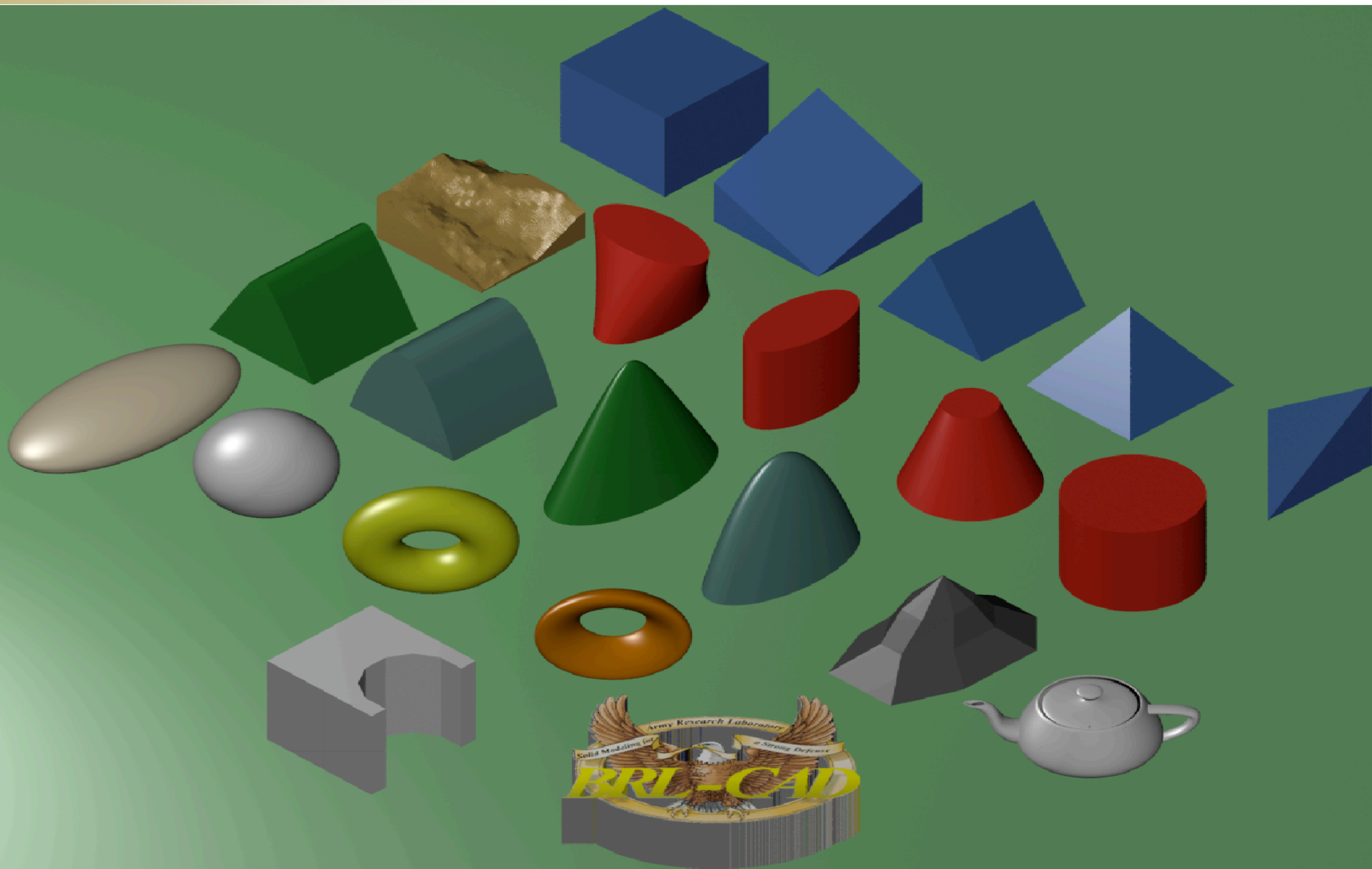


wedge - block - cylinder

block - (wedge \cup cylinder)



Some of BRL-CAD's Primitives



Morrison is the open source project lead and principal software architect for BRL-CAD. His primary areas of expertise are in computer graphics, open source project management, solid modeling, system administration, information security, human-computer interface and interaction design, software testing, and computational geometry.



He is involved numerous open source projects including BRL-CAD, BZFlag, FTGL, and with ties throughout the open source community.

'brlcad' on Freenode IRC