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Bimolecular sinks of Criegee intermediates derived from hydrofluoroolefins – a computational analysis†

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A novel range of stabilised Criegee intermediate (sCI) species with halogenated substituent groups have been identified as products to the reaction between with gaseous ozone and hydrofluoroolefins (HFOs), a series of recently-developed and increasingly prevalent haloalkene refrigerants. The bimolecular chemistry of this group of hydrofluoroolefin-derived sCIs (HFO-sCIs) has yet to be explored in any significant detail so this work evaluates the reaction chemistry of common tropospheric gaseous species with the following group of HFO-sCIs: *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CHOO & *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CFOO. Using high-level theoretical calculations (DF-HF/DF-LCCSD(T)-F12a//B3LYP/aug-cc-pVTZ), this study demonstrates that HFO-sCIs will deplete many pollutants (e.g. HCHO, SO₂ & H₂S) but also act as a source of other atmospheric contaminants (e.g. SO₃ & TFA). The bimolecular reactivity of the HFO-sCIs were compared against CH₂OO, the most frequently studied sCI, for which the general reactivity trend has been identified: $k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{syn-CF}_3\text{CHOO}) < k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{anti-CF}_3\text{CHOO}) \approx k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{CH}_2\text{OO}) \ll k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{anti-CF}_3\text{CFOO}) < k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{syn-CF}_3\text{CFOO})$. In general *syn* & *anti*-CF₃ substituents reduce overall sCI reactivity compared to similar non-halogenated sCI species, whereas both *syn* & *anti*-F substituents significantly increase HFO-sCI reactivity. While HFO-sCI reactivity is largely dictated by the identity and location of the sCI substituent groups, there are co-reactants that alter these observed trends in reactivity, for example HCl reacts more rapidly with CH₂OO than it does with *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CFOO.

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Environmental significance

Emissions of new short-lived hydrofluoroolefin coolants have become increasingly widespread in the last decade and the breakdown of these hydrofluoroolefins will generate many secondary products, including a range of hydrofluoroolefin-derived stabilised Criegee intermediates (HFO-sCIs). Criegee intermediates are important OH radical sources and strong tropospheric sinks for many pollutants, but HFO-sCI reactivity has not yet been fully characterised. This computation chemistry study provides a greater understanding of the implications of the increased tropospheric HFO-sCI abundance. The enhanced bimolecular reactivity found for HFO-sCIs in this study indicates that several of the HFO-sCIs have heightened capacities to: react with toxins (e.g. methanol & trifluoroacetic acid); produce hydroperoxides implicated with forestry damage; and convert SO₂ to SO₃, a process implicated with generating H₂SO₄ and aerosols.

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† Electronic supplementary information (ESI) available: A full breakdown of the master equation rate constants (k_{ME}) and canonical rate constants (k_{CAN}) through temperature range of 200 K < T < 500 K at $p = 760$ Torr for sCIs 1–5 reactions with the following co-reactants: HCHO, SO₂, HNO₃, TFA, HF, HCl, H₂S, H₂O, (H₂O)₂, MeOH; calculated product yields for sCIs 1–5 reactions with HCHO, SO₂; calculated values for sCI 1 + co-reactant rate constants at selected temperatures and pressures for direct comparison with experiment; calculated values for the effective rate constants for sCI + co-reactant reactions under various conditions; relative energies [kJ mol^{−1}] of stationary point for sCI + co-reactant reactions; computed dipole-dipole and gas collision limits; discussion on the partially barrierless sCI 4 + MeOH reaction; Cartesian coordinates and vibrational frequencies of all stationary points, and IRCs of all transition states in this study; an example MEMSER input file for the sCI 1 + HNO₃ (PDF). See DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1039/d3ea00102d>

1 Introduction

The recent commercialisation of highly volatile hydrochlorofluoroolefins and hydrofluoroolefins (referred to collectively herein as HFOs) for use as coolants in refrigerator units have been developed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce stratospheric ozone loss.^{1–6} Furthermore, as well as being used as blowing foam and as propellants, HFOs are very important working fluids for waste heat recovery applications in heat pumps, as they are stable, have favourable toxicity profiles and are compatible with many plastics and elastomers used in such set-ups.^{7,8} When haloalkenes breakdown it is the Cl & Br radicals that are primarily implicated in ozone destruction in the upper atmosphere and therefore only HFOs containing Cl & Br atoms (e.g. HCFO-1233zd(E)) appear to marginally affect stratospheric ozone levels.^{9–12} But their compact lifetime means HFOs



are often depleted in the troposphere and contribute to only minimal ozone depletion.^{9–12} Additionally, they are relatively non-toxic, have minimal impact on global warming due to their short lifespans, and have high ignition energies compared to the first generation of refrigerants used in the 19th century (*e.g.* NH₃, SO₂ & CH₃CHO).^{1–3,13–17} Moreover, whereas CO₂ dominates the lower IR wave numbers (600–750 cm^{−1}), HFCs/HCFCs are also strongly IR active in the higher wavenumbers (1000–1400 cm^{−1}), increasing their heat trapping ability.^{9,18} In contrast, the longevity of the second-generation chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) refrigerants leads to depletion of stratospheric O₃, which results in more cases of skin cancer from the greater ground-level penetration of the carcinogenic high-frequency UV light.^{19–21}

The growing interest in alternative refrigerants stems from the fact that, while the hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) and hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) replacements that have been phased in since the 1970s do not replicate this ozone depletion, the lengthy lifetimes and high levels of IR activity of HFCs & HCFCs give them very high global warming potentials (GWP₁₀₀).^{2,9,19,22–26} In areas as widespread as China, the USA and the EU, the phasing in of HFOs has been increasingly integrated into regional regulations, to try and eliminate HCFC & HFC emissions, and this has led to HFOs seeing increasing use in refrigerators, insulation and vehicle cooling units.^{1,27,28} For example, a UK government 2022 report on the “F gas regulation in Great Britain” documents that HFO-1234yf has dominated total refrigerant usage in new small vehicles since 2017 and HFO–HFC blends use could eliminate high GWP HFCs from transport refrigeration by 2050.²⁹ Modest concerns about both the tropospheric implications of HFO breakdown (*e.g.* TFA formation) and about the carbon-intensity of HFO production has meant that both the UK and the EU are currently assessing the role of HFOs in future climate regulations.³⁰ Many refrigerant experts and industrial leaders continue to strongly support HFO use and are consulting on such regulations with governments currently, especially as the alternatives to HFOs also have trade-offs in the areas of toxicity, flammability and/or high-pressure requirements.^{31,32} Examples of CFCs, HCFCs, HFCs and HFOs with their GWP₁₀₀ and ODP values and lifespan are displayed in Table 1.

One of the reasons for the short-lived nature of HFOs listed in Table 1, HFO-1234yf, HCFO-1233zd(E) and HFO-1234ze(E), all of

which are now widely used as refrigerants or insulation foam, is that the unsaturated >C=C< bond makes HFOs more susceptible to these chemical loss mechanisms.^{1,3–5,27,35–39} The gas-phase reaction of HFOs with radicals, such as OH & Cl, and other reactive species, like O₃, are important atmospheric loss mechanisms for many such tropospheric alkenes, for example isoprene reaction with O₃ is responsible for ~10% of the loss of this non-halogenated alkene globally.^{4–6,34,40–44} The importance of this HFO ‘ozonolysis’ loss process is increasing year-on-year because the rise of HFO emissions particularly in O₃-rich urban areas is likely to result in sizable increases tropospheric populations of the Criegee intermediate (CI) and aldehyde/ketone products of this process (see Fig. 1).^{4,5,45–48} A recent rise in tropospheric trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) abundance in Beijing has already been partially attributed to the reaction of OH radicals with HFOs and, as a similar increase in other HFO-derived products is likely in similar circumstances, determining the tropospheric impact these of new HFO-derived stabilised Criegee intermediates (HFO-sCIs) is very necessary.^{3,28,36,49–51}

The efficiency of ozonolysis as a tropospheric depletion mechanism for HFOs is disputed because while the presence of halogenated groups in the HFO reduces the overall effectiveness of most major alkene depletion pathways, such as *via* reaction with OH or Cl, this varies considerably depending on the HFO.^{45–47,52,53} The maximum ozonolysis yield for most HFOs reviewed are around 1%, but a few studies indicate that up to 10% of the removal of some haloalkenes occur *via* reaction with O₃, a significant enough pathway that HFO ozonolysis is being



Fig. 1 The general schematic for the ozonolysis of a standard alkene *via* a short-lived primary ozonide (POZ) intermediate products, which produces in a pair of final products: a Criegee intermediate (CI) and a carbonyl product (either aldehyde or ketone). A significant portion of the CI population is formed with a high degree of energy indicated by asterisk.

Table 1 A tabulation of important atmospheric attributes of examples from three different generations of refrigerants: chlorofluorocarbon (CFCs), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and hydrofluoroolefins (HFOs). Attributes featured include: global warming potential over 100 years (GWP₁₀₀), ozone depletion potential (ODP), atmospheric lifetime, and any hydrofluoroolefin-derived stabilized Criegee intermediates (HFO-sCIs) produced from the ozonolysis of this species

Name	Structure	GWP ₁₀₀	ODP	Lifetime (year)	HFO-sCIs	Ref.
HFO-1234yf	CF ₃ CF=CH ₂	4	0	10.5 days	CH ₂ OO <i>Syn-/anti</i> -CF ₃ CFOO	2, 4 and 9
HCFO-1233zd(E)	E-CF ₃ CH=CHCl	14	0.0005	26 days	<i>Syn-/anti</i> -ClCHOO <i>Syn-/anti</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	2, 5 and 33
HFO-1234ze(E)	E-CF ₃ CH=CHF	<1	0	16.4 days	<i>Syn-/anti</i> -FCHOO <i>Syn-/anti</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	2, 9 and 34
CFC-11	CFCl ₃	4660	1	45	—	2 and 9
CFC-12	CCl ₂ F ₂	10 200	0.82	100	—	2
HFC-134a	CF ₃ CH ₂ F	3710	0.0013	13.4	—	2 and 26
HFC-245fa	CF ₃ CH ₂ CHF ₂	858	0	7.7	—	2 and 9



investigated thoroughly at present.^{47,52} Furthermore, while direct CI branching fraction measurements for HFO ozonolysis are not found in the literature, indirect measurements of their aldehyde/ketone co-products show strong yields for CF_3CHOO species and other similar CIs (>40%).^{52,54} This indicates that ozonolysis of haloalkenes in general are a major pathway for producing HFO-sCIs, even if these halogenated sCIs are low in abundance and ozonolysis is not the dominant pathway for removal of HFOs. This is a highly important topic and of relevance to the study of Criegee intermediates. Relative HFO ozonolysis percentages have been avoided here due to this need for a much more thorough re-investigation.

CIs are produced from the ozonolysis of a large variety of both halo-alkenes and non-halogenated alkenes and the atmospheric role of these CIs have been the subject of increased scientific study in the literature in recent years.^{5,6,34,48} This is due to the fact that a large portion of the CIs produced by alkene ozonolysis (35–50%) are formed with such excess of internal energy that they undergo a rapid unimolecular fragmentation process, which is an important non-photolytic source of the atmospheric ‘detergent’ $\text{HO}^\bullet$ species. The remaining fraction are stabilised by collision, generating stabilised Criegee intermediates (sCIs), that can participate in bimolecular reactions with other atmospheric species. These sCIs deplete pollutants to such an extent that the simplest sCI, formaldehyde oxide (CH_2OO), can compete with the atmospheric ‘detergent’ $\text{HO}^\bullet$ species as a sink for polar pollutants, such as HNO_3 and SO_2 , especially in CH_2OO -rich boreal forest environments ($[\text{CH}_2\text{OO}] \sim 1\text{--}5 \times 10^4$ molec. per cm^3).^{42,55} To examine the capacity of sCIs to deplete pollutants is the purpose of this study, as well as much of the increased scientific examination of sCIs overall.

The theoretical literature (see Table 1) shows that the ozonolysis of prominent HFOs produces several particular HFO-derived stabilised Criegee intermediates (HFO-sCIs): CH_2OO , *syn*- & *anti*- FCHOO , *syn*- & *anti*- ClCHOO , *syn*- & *anti*- CF_3CHOO and *syn*- & *anti*- CF_3CFOO .^{4,5,45,46,53,56} Only the bimolecular chemistry of CH_2OO species has been explored in the experimental literature, although *syn*- & *anti*- CF_3CHOO and *syn*- & *anti*- ClCHOO have been experimentally identified.^{57–66} In a small number of studies, the bimolecular chemistry of HFO-sCIs has been interrogated using computational chemistry techniques: CH_2OO somewhat exhaustively,^{67–71} *syn*- & *anti*- FCHOO and *syn*- & *anti*- ClCHOO in reactions with CO_2 , H_2 , MeOH and CH_4 ,^{72–76} and *syn*- & *anti*- CF_3CHOO in reactions with CO_2 , $\text{CF}_3\text{CH}=\text{CH}_2$ and H_2 .^{72,73,77} The literature has very little analysis of *syn*- or *anti*- CF_3CFOO . As much of the bimolecular chemistry of *syn*- & *anti*- FCHOO and *syn*- & *anti*- ClCHOO has already been previously studied in the computational literature, the HFO-sCIs explored herein are instead CH_2OO , *syn*- CF_3CHOO , *anti*- CF_3CHOO , *syn*- CF_3CFOO and *anti*- CF_3CFOO , which are labelled as sCIs 1–5 and are displayed in Fig. 2.^{72–75}

Also displayed in Fig. 2 is the targeted range of co-reactants selected for this computational study, including both H_2O & $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ because the global abundance of water vapour ($\sim 0\text{--}40\,000$ ppm) means that these molecules are responsible for reacting with up to 95% of the total global flux of some atmospheric sCIs.^{67,68,78–83} As shown previously with the high abundance of TFA in Beijing, HFO breakdown produces a variety of



Fig. 2 Geometric structures of hydrofluoroolefin-derived stabilised Criegee intermediates, HFO-sCIs, labelled as sCIs 1–5, and co-reactants examined in this in this study. In each case, rate constants for each HFO-sCI + co-reactant reaction are evaluated.

secondary products, including HCHO , and so both TFA & HCHO are studied here as they like to have significant overlapping local concentrations with HFO-sCIs.^{3,4,28,36,49–51}

Some co-reactants (HNO_3 , HCl & H_2S) are selected for study here because there are some environments in which CH_2OO competes with OH radicals to facilitate the depletion of these co-reactants, as noted by Khan *et al.*⁴² Furthermore, some co-reactants studied here, such as SO_2 , are of interest because their reactions with sCIs are a competitive source for tropospherically relevant species such as SO_3 , which is considered vital in aerosol nucleation pathways.^{84,85} Another example is that sCI + MeOH & H_2O reactions produce a large proportion of the global flux of the α -alkoxyalkylhydroperoxides (AAAH) and α -hydroxy-hydroperoxides (HHP). These are oxidising species that cause both forest damage and SOA formation.^{67,68,72,78–80,83,86}

One last area of consideration in co-reactant targeting is that Kumar *et al.* propose that sCI reactivity with H_2X ($\text{X} = \text{O}, \text{S}, \text{Se},$ and Te) increases with the size of the X atom, referred to as heteroatom tuning of the co-reactants.⁸⁷ In this study, the co-reactants with low mass heteroatoms, H_2O & HF , are compared with species which have the same structures but larger heteroatoms of the same periodic group, H_2S & HCl , to see if all the HFO-sCIs in this chapter replicate the co-reactant heteroatom tuning patterns observed in the Kumar *et al.* study.⁸⁷ The last reactions featured are examined because the HCHO + sCIs 2 & 3 and sCI 1 + CF_3CHO reactions are part of the same multistep potential energy surface (PES) and so the theoretical rate constants (k_{THEO}) and product branching ratios (I_{THEO}) of sCI 1 + CF_3CHO can be determined with little additional computational cost. This is also the case for



HCHO + sCIs **4** & **5** and sCI **1** + CF₃CFO reactions which are all part of the same multistep potential energy surface.

By using computational chemistry methods to review reactions with this variety of common tropospheric gas species, this study aims to evaluate to what degree the bimolecular chemistry of HFO-sCI (*syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CHOO and *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CFOO) differs from that of CH₂OO, as well as the other non-halogenated sCIs.

2 Methodologies

This work employs a density functional theory (DFT) approach, using the hybrid B3LYP functional, and the Dunning correlation-consistent aug-cc-pVTZ basis set (B3LYP/aug-cc-pVTZ), is used to optimise the geometric structures of all minimum and transition state (TS) geometries, referred to collectively as stationary points.^{88–99} Each minimum or TS structure is verified through evaluation of the number of imaginary frequencies from subsequent harmonic frequency calculations, performed at the same level of theory as the optimisation. TSs identified in this manner are mapped to the geometric minima that they bisect using intrinsic reaction coordinate (IRC) calculations. For very shallow TSs and barrierless reactions, IRC calculations become computationally challenging, therefore in these cases relaxed potential energy scans are performed using incremental separation of a molecular bond (which forms a key component of the reaction coordinate) until the local minima is reached. The relax surface scans for non-barrierless channels each have a local energy maximum, which denote the location of the TS structure on the potential energy surface, whereas the energy diagram for barrierless channels only display asymptotic Morse-like behaviour. Optimisations, harmonic frequencies, IRCs and potential energy scans are all performed using the Gaussian09 computational chemistry programme.¹⁰⁰ All optimisations in this study were performed on singlet surfaces.

Rate constants and PESs are constructed by using DFT optimised structures with energies refined using a higher level, *ab initio* approach. Single point molecular energy calculations, for all stationary points, are calculated using a localised, density fitted coupled cluster method with the same Dunning basis set (DF-HF/DF-LCCSD(T)-F12a/aug-cc-pVTZ).^{91,94–96,101–111} These molecular energies are calculated in the MOLPRO computational chemistry package.¹¹² All zero-point energies or Gibbs free energies in this study are calculated using the zero-point and free energy corrections acquired from the DFT harmonic frequency calculations. All relative energies (ΔE) referenced herein in the main body of this manuscript and in all PESs are zero-point corrected. This overall computational approach, when applied to the variety of sizes of sCIs and co-reactants in this study, provides both accurate energies and manageable computational cost. This computational approach is used in other studies in the literature too and it effectively describes the chemistry of sCI reactions with TFA & alcohols.^{61,74} For further verification of the veracity of this computational approach, the theoretical rate constants (k_{THEO}) for the bimolecular sCI **1** reactions obtained in

this study are benchmarked against experimental rate constants (k_{EXP}) from the literature.

The open source Master Equation Solver for Multi-Energy Well Reactions (MESMER) software is used to calculate the micro-canonical kinetic reaction rates by deriving the individual energy-grained master equation (EGME) rate coefficients, which are then subsequently used to generate the overall master equation rate constant (k_{THEO}) and product branching ratios (Γ_{THEO}) of the system over a range of temperatures.¹¹³ Computational chemistry rate constants from other studies are also referred to as k_{THEO} constants, even if generated using differing methods. Master equation rate constants are referred to as k_{ME} values only in the ESI† to distinguish them from other theoretical rate constants. This software has been used extensively to solve analogous chemical problems, and has been utilised previously to evaluate Criegee intermediate reaction kinetics.^{76,84,114–119}

These MESMER calculations include a rigid rotor harmonic oscillator approximation, with structures and vibrational frequencies again taken from the DFT calculations, as shown by the example MESMER input in ESI Section S9.†¹¹³ An inverse Laplace transform (ILT) capture rate coefficient of $1 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ and an excess reactant concentration of $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ molecule cm}^{-3}$ are assumed.^{76,113} The collisional energy transfer factor, $\langle \Delta E_{\text{down}} \rangle$, was assigned as 300 cm^{-1} for all minima. This has been shown to be a good approximation for systems involving nitrogen as a gas bath.^{76,113,120} A 10 cm^{-1} grain size was routinely used for the EGME calculations, however, for the larger systems, grain sizes are adjusted to reduce computational expense (ESI Sections 1.1–1.4†).

Low mass atom motion within the reaction mechanism is sometimes facilitated by quantum tunnelling, often accelerating the reaction. The effect of tunneling on the rate constant is determined herein using a non-*ab initio* tunneling correction called the asymmetrical Eckart constant (k_{ECKART}).¹²¹ This k_{ECKART} is calculated and then integrated directly into the k_{THEO} and Γ_{THEO} values through the MESMER software package, unless the reaction barriers are too low to support this methodology (these exceptions are stated in the ESI Section S1.1†).^{76,113,121} In calculating the k_{ECKART} function, the probability of transmission through the one-dimensional energy barrier, $p(E)$, needs to be calculated using eqn (1)–(7):

$$p(E) = 1 - \frac{\cosh[2\pi(\alpha - \beta)] + \cosh[2\pi\delta]}{\cosh[2\pi(\alpha + \beta)] + \cosh[2\pi\delta]} \quad (1)$$

$$\alpha = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{C}} \sqrt{E} \quad (2)$$

$$\beta = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{C}} \sqrt{E - A} \quad (3)$$

$$\delta = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{C}} \sqrt{B - C} \quad (4)$$

$$A = \Delta H_{\text{f}}^{\ddagger,0\text{K}} - \Delta H_{\text{f}}^{\ddagger} \quad (5)$$

$$B = \sqrt{\Delta H_{\text{f}}^{\ddagger,0\text{K}}} - \sqrt{\Delta H_{\text{f}}^{\ddagger,0\text{K}}} \quad (6)$$



$$C = (h \cdot \text{im}(\nu^\ddagger))^2 \left[\frac{B^3}{A^2 - B^2} \right]^2 \quad (7)$$

Calculating the probability of transmission involves estimating the barrier width between the reactants and products using: the forward and reverse zero-point corrected energy barriers, $\Delta H_{\text{f}}^{\ddagger,0\text{K}}$ and $\Delta H_{\text{r}}^{\ddagger,0\text{K}}$, and the imaginary frequency of the associated TS describing the reaction coordinate, $\nu^\ddagger$. The k_{ECKART} value is then determined using $p(E)$ in eqn (8):

$$k_{\text{ECKART}} = \frac{e^{\Delta H_{\text{f}}^{\ddagger,0\text{K}}}}{k_{\text{B}}T} \int_0^\infty p(E) e^{-\frac{E}{k_{\text{B}}T}} dE \quad (8)$$

The irreversible final product formation processes are accommodated by the MESMER software by means of using an infinite “sink” approximation. In a system where a particular reaction channel that produces multiple products *via* a post-reaction complex (*i.e.* reactant $\rightarrow$ TS $\rightarrow$ post-reaction complex $\rightarrow$ product 1 + product 2) herein the formation of the post-reaction complex is treated as irreversible by MESMER when determining the k_{ECKART} & Γ_{THEO} values and it is assumed that $\sim 100\%$ of this post-reaction complex separates into the final individual bimolecular products. This approximation reduces the computational intensity of MESMER calculations and introduces an error of less than 1%.^{122,123} This use of the post-reaction complex can be seen in the MESMER example file in the ESI.†

In some multi-step reactions, a small number of the intermediate product $\rightarrow$ final products fragmentations involve progressing over an asymptotic Morse-like energy curve until the final separated products are formed, rather than fragmenting *via* a transition state. When Peltola *et al.* examined CH_2OO decomposing into $\text{HCO} + \text{OH}$ and Blitz *et al.* studied CH_3NH breaking down into $\text{CH}_3 + \text{NH}$, both used a reverse inverse Laplace transformation (reverse ILT) method in MESMER to interpret these chemical pathways,^{117,124} and both use the reverse ILT method with the experimental rate constant (k_{EXP}) of the equivalent forward reaction as the pre-exponential factor.^{117,124} However, as the reaction channels in this study where the reverse ILT method is used have no literature k_{EXP} values instead the dipole–dipole capture limit rate constant, $k_{\text{d-d}}$, (discussed in the next paragraph) are used as the pre-exponential factors instead. Furthermore, this reverse ILT method requires using the term `reverse = true` in the activation energy component and assigning both final products as separate sink structures.

In a few previous studies, sCI reactions with other trace atmospheric species (*e.g.* sCI 1 + HCOOH , CH_3COOH or $\text{CF}_3\text{-COOH}$) have produced such large k_{THEO} & k_{EXP} values that each sCI + co-reactant collision leads to a reaction.^{59–61,74,125} Under such conditions, it is proposed that k_{THEO} values can be more accurately modelled using a collision frequency model, such as the dipole–dipole capture limit, $k_{\text{d-d}}$. The $k_{\text{d-d}}$ value is calculated using eqn (9) and (10):

$$k_{\text{d-d}} = C \sqrt{\pi/\mu} (\mu_{\text{D1}}\mu_{\text{D2}})^{(2/3)} (k_{\text{B}}T)^{-1/6} \quad (9)$$

$$\mu = \frac{m_1 m_2}{m_1 + m_2} \quad (10)$$

C is a constant dependent on the anisotropy of the capture potential; μ_{D1} and μ_{D2} are the dipole moments of reactants 1 & 2; and μ is the total reduced mass of the system calculated using the mass of reactants 1 & 2 (m_1 & m_2).¹²⁶ The C value adopted can be either isotropic (4.08), adiabatic anisotropic (2.68) and non-adiabatic anisotropic (1.953).¹²⁶ The isotropic $k_{\text{d-d}}$ constant is used in this study, as it is much used in the literature for bimolecular sCI reactions.^{61,125}

Frequently in this study, the rate determining step is barrierless or $k_{\text{THEO}} > k_{\text{d-d}}$ (usually where $k_{\text{THEO}} \geq \sim 10^{-10}$) and so the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ is used as the overall rate constant, as it is a more true reflection of the tropospheric rate constant. As sCIs are polar in character, the isotropic $k_{\text{d-d}}$ value is used over the more traditional collision limit (k_{COLL}) too, as $k_{\text{d-d}}$ is better able to model the effect this polarity has on sCI — co-reactant collision frequency. However, the k_{COLL} values for each reaction, along with the adiabatic anisotropic and non-adiabatic anisotropic $k_{\text{d-d}}$ values, are all listed in the ESI Section S3† for comparison. The rate constants generated in this work are analysed using the effective first-order rate constant, k_{EFF} , which accounts for the concentration of the co-reactant:³⁵

$$k_{\text{EFF}} = k_{\text{THEO}}[\text{co-reactant}] \quad (11)$$

These k_{EFF} values in this work are calculated using previously reported co-reactant concentrations in example ‘important’ local environments. This data is displayed in Table 2 in the next section, alongside any known experimental rate constants for the same reactions. Further examples of other local co-reactant abundances in other environments and the effect they have on the k_{EFF} values are listed in ESI Section S4.†

3 Results & discussion

The bimolecular master equation rate constant (k_{THEO}), the dipole–dipole capture limit ($k_{\text{d-d}}$), and the effective rate constant (k_{EFF}), for the HFO-sCI reactions calculated in this study are found in Table 2. The co-reactant abundances featured in Table 2 are selected from locations where either the pollutant has a high enough concentration to be a potentially significant sCI sink and/or an area where humans may face a significant degree exposure of either the pollutant or the potential product of this reaction. These values are then used to generate the k_{EFF} values seen in Table 2 (to view the extended literature survey of the tropospheric abundances of the co-reactants, see ESI Section S4.2†). As most of these values are averages from single locations across a protracted period of time or a generalised upper-limit in certain urban environments from a variety of locations, most measurements occur over a range of temperatures that include 298 K. Either the k_{THEO} value or the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ value are in bold to highlight which the rate constant is used to calculate each k_{EFF} value. Any Γ_{THEO}



Table 2 A tabulation of the reaction kinetics and the atmospheric impact of all HFO-sCI reactions studied here. Characteristics of each reaction listed in table includes co-reactant identity and atmospheric abundance ([co-reactant]); Criegee intermediate labelled by number (sCI); computational master equation rate constant (k_{THEO});^a dipole-dipole capture limit ($k_{\text{d-d}}$); literature experimental rate constant (k_{EXP}); and effective rate constant ($k_{\text{EFF}} = k_{\text{THEO}}$ or $k_{\text{d-d}} \times [\text{co-reactant}]$)^b

[Co-reactant] (molec. per cm ³)	sCI	k_{THEO} (cm ³ s ⁻¹)	$k_{\text{d-d}}$ (cm ³ s ⁻¹)	k_{EXP} (cm ³ s ⁻¹)	k_{EFF} (s ⁻¹)
HCHO, 2.0×10^{12} (Urban heavy traffic) ¹²⁸	1	2.79×10^{-12}	1.06×10^{-9}	4.1×10^{-12} (ref. 127)	5.60
	2	2.69×10^{-13}	8.04×10^{-10}	—	0.54
	3	2.49×10^{-12}	6.46×10^{-10}	—	5.0
	4	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	7.20×10^{-10}	—	1447
	5	1.66×10^{-11}	7.07×10^{-10}	—	33.4
CF ₃ CHO	1	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	6.50×10^{-10}	—	—
CF ₃ CFO	1	1.98×10^{-12}	3.34×10^{-10}	—	—
SO ₂ , 4.1×10^{11} (Beijing urban area) ¹²⁹	1	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	7.25×10^{-10}	3.9×10^{-11} (ref. 63)	300
	2	1.90×10^{-12}	5.08×10^{-10}	—	0.79
	3	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	4.08×10^{-10}	—	169
	4	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	4.51×10^{-10}	—	186
	5	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	4.42×10^{-10}	—	183
HNO ₃ , 1.1×10^{11} (Houston, Texas) ¹³⁰	1	8.22×10^{-9}	8.45×10^{-10}	5.1×10^{-10} (ref. 59)	94
	2	2.06×10^{-11}	5.93×10^{-10}	—	2.3
	3	8.87×10^{-11}	4.76×10^{-10}	—	9.8
	4	9.25×10^{-8}	5.26×10^{-10}	—	58
	5	7.53×10^{-11}	5.16×10^{-10}	—	8.4
TFA, 3.3×10^7 (Beijing higher emission areas) ²⁸	1	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	7.54×10^{-10}	3.5×10^{-10} (ref. 61)	2.5×10^{-2}
	2	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	4.96×10^{-10}	—	1.7×10^{-2}
	3	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	3.98×10^{-10}	—	1.3×10^{-2}
	4	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	4.35×10^{-10}	—	1.5×10^{-2}
	5	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	4.27×10^{-10}	—	1.4×10^{-2}
H ₂ O, 6.2×10^{17} (~80% humidity Sao Paulo) ^{132,133}	1	1.18×10^{-16}	1.06×10^{-9}	2.4×10^{-16} (ref. 131)	73
	2	1.35×10^{-18}	8.38×10^{-10}	—	0.83
	3	1.12×10^{-16}	6.73×10^{-10}	—	70
	4	5.13×10^{-12}	7.54×10^{-10}	—	3.2×10^6
	5	2.27×10^{-13}	7.40×10^{-10}	—	1.4×10^5
(H ₂ O) ₂ , 8.7×10^{14} (~80% humidity Sao Paulo) ^{132,133}	1	3.28×10^{-12}	1.07×10^{-9}	7.5×10^{-12} (ref. 131)	2.9×10^3
	2	2.71×10^{-12}	7.99×10^{-10}	—	2.4×10^3
	3	3.74×10^{-12}	6.42×10^{-10}	—	3.3×10^3
	4	1.14×10^{-6}	7.14×10^{-10}	—	6.2×10^5
	5	1.46×10^{-9}	7.01×10^{-10}	—	6.1×10^5
MeOH, 8.4×10^{11} (Sao Paulo, Brazil) ¹³⁵	1	1.20×10^{-14}	8.15×10^{-10}	1.1×10^{-13} (ref. 134)	0.010
	2	9.43×10^{-17}	6.14×10^{-10}	—	7.9×10^{-5}
	3	3.30×10^{-14}	4.93×10^{-10}	—	0.028
	4	$\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$	5.50×10^{-10}	—	462
	5	3.31×10^{-11}	5.39×10^{-10}	—	28
H ₂ S, 1.2×10^{13} (industrial landfill) ¹³⁷	1	7.06×10^{-15}	5.68×10^{-10}	1.7×10^{-13} (ref. 136)	0.052
	2	1.96×10^{-16}	4.26×10^{-10}	—	1.4×10^{-3}
	3	5.72×10^{-15}	3.42×10^{-10}	—	0.042
	4	6.08×10^{-13}	3.81×10^{-10}	—	4.5
	5	1.23×10^{-14}	3.74×10^{-10}	—	0.091
HCl, 1.2×10^{11} (daytime Los Angeles) ¹³⁸	1	4.70×10^{-10}	6.06×10^{-10}	4.1×10^{-11} (ref. 59)	58
	2	4.04×10^{-15}	4.51×10^{-10}	—	5.0×10^{-3}
	3	7.28×10^{-11}	3.62×10^{-10}	—	8.96
	4	1.64×10^{-10}	4.03×10^{-10}	—	20
	5	1.13×10^{-10}	3.96×10^{-10}	—	14
HF, 3.7×10^{11} (near volcano vicinity ambient T) ¹³⁹	1	3.32×10^{-13}	8.15×10^{-10}	—	0.12
	2	6.67×10^{-18}	6.14×10^{-10}	—	2.5×10^{-6}
	3	2.86×10^{-15}	4.93×10^{-10}	—	1.1×10^{-3}
	4	1.19×10^{-11}	5.50×10^{-10}	—	4.4
	5	3.66×10^{-13}	5.39×10^{-10}	—	0.14

^a " $\gg k_{\text{d-d}}$ " refers to barrierless reactions that yield no k_{THEO} and that the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ value should be used instead. ^b In bold is the overall theoretical rate constant, which is the lowest between the k_{THEO} & $k_{\text{d-d}}$ values.

branching fractions of the two-step HFO-sCI reactions with aldehydes & SO₂ are not displayed in Table 2 and can be instead found in Sections 3.1 & 3.2.

3.1 HFO-sCI reaction with formaldehyde (HCHO)

During an ozonolysis event that generates a Criegee intermediate, a carbonyl containing species (aldehydes and ketones) are





Fig. 3 The general schematic for the ozonolysis of HFO-1234yf producing a short-lived primary ozonide (POZ) followed by one of the pairs of final products, a Criegee intermediate (sCI 5 or *anti*-CF₃CFOO) and a carbonyl product (formaldehyde).

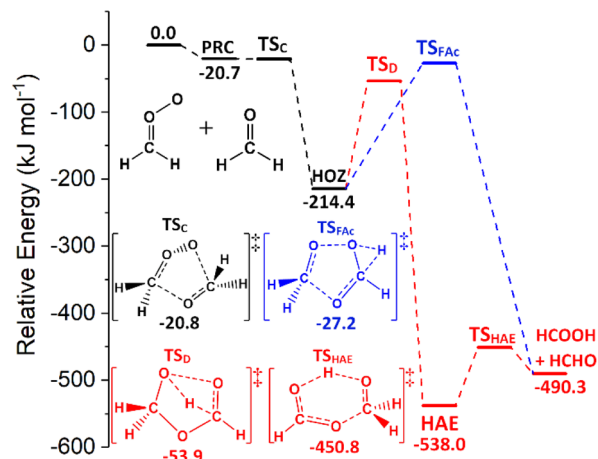


Fig. 4 The potential energy surface for the sCI 1 + HCHO reaction. The lowest energy transition state for each HOZ fragmentation pathway is displayed. The 1-step direct transfer channel via the TS_{FAC} barrier is in blue and a 2-step hydroxyalkyl ester (HAE) channel, via the TS_D & TS_{HAE} barriers, is red. Energies are relative to the raw reactants.

very common co-products and as such these carbonyl moieties are co-located with sCIs during formation such that a further reaction between these two proximate species is probable. Formaldehyde (HCHO) is produced from the ozonolysis of a variety of alkenes, notably for this work that includes HFO-1234yf (see Fig. 3), and therefore examining any possible secondary reaction with HCHO is likely vital to understanding the overall tropospheric chemistry of these HFO-sCIs.^{4,48,140}

Also, as HCHO emissions are strong in areas of heavy urban traffic (up to 170 $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$) and HFOs are used in vehicle coolant units, there is a high probability of emissions overlap between HCHO and HFO-sCIs.^{36,128,141,142} Additionally as HCHO is carcinogenic and toxic if inhaled, sCIs depletion of tropospheric HCHO should be included in many atmospheric models.^{143–145}

3.1.1 The sCI 1 + HCHO reaction. All sCI + HCHO reactions in this study undergo an initial 1,3-cycloaddition (TS_C) step to a short-lived heteroozonide (HOZ) intermediate and the HOZ almost instantaneously fragments. The fragmentation is likely rapid because the HOZ is formed with significant excess energy and the HOZ structure has a high degree of torsional strain. When the HOZ fragments, it can form acid + aldehyde products via two different mechanistic processes: a high energy, 1-step channel or a lower energy, 2-step channel via a hydroxyalkyl formate (HAE) species. The schematics and barrier heights of

the 1-step “TS_{FAC}” channel (in blue) and the 2-step “HAE channel” (in red) for sCI 1 + HCHO are seen in Fig. 4. The “TS_D” & “TS_{HAE}” labels are used to refer to the respective formation and breakup of the HAE species.

Computational assessments of the sCI 1 + HCHO reaction (Fig. 4) are characterised by a low energy TS_C barrier (~ -25 to -20 kJ mol^{-1}), which leads to high theoretical rate constants both here ($k_{\text{THEO}} \sim 2.79 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) and in the literature ($k_{\text{THEO}} \sim 4.03 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).^{71,146} The k_{THEO} value determined here is also similar to the k_{EXP} values measured for sCI 1 + HCHO by Luo *et al.*, $(4.11 \pm 0.25) \times 10^{-12}$, as well as those determined for studies of the analogous sCI 1 + CH₃CHO reaction (3.0×10^{-13} to $1.7 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).^{64,65,127,147}

The sCI 1 + HCHO reaction produces only one final product set, HCOOH + HCHO, and of the two HOZ fragmentation mechanism, the TS_D barrier of the two-step HAE channel has a lower energy than the TS_{FAC} barrier to the one-step HOZ fragmentation channel (Fig. 4). Both findings are authenticated by similar results in prior studies.^{71,146} Obtaining reliable TS_D & TS_{FAC} barriers is important because whereas the absolute height of the energy barrier(s) of the first reaction step dictates the k_{THEO} value, the crucial factor in determining the Γ_{THEO} branching fractions is the energy difference between the HOZ fragmentation barriers. This study also agrees with other computational studies in that the second step of the two-step HOZ fragmentation, the breakdown of the HAE, involves a very low TS_{HAE} barrier (Fig. 4).^{71,146}

Given that the HAE is formed with considerably higher energy than the HAE $\rightarrow$ TS_{HAE} barrier height, the MESMER results discussed here are calculated on the assumption that formation of the HAE is the final step of that reaction channel and that all the HAE population reacts further to produce their acid + aldehyde products, with negligible populations of HAE remaining. These MESMER simulations yield a very similar result ($\Gamma_{\text{THEO}} \sim 0.973$) to those in which the HCOOH + HCHO are set as the final products ($\Gamma_{\text{THEO}} \sim 0.978$). As this methodology has been shown to have little effect on the accuracy, this $\sim 100\%$ HAE $\rightarrow$ acid + aldehyde conversion principle is applied to the HCHO reactions with sCIs 2–5, for the purpose of reducing computational cost.

3.1.2 The HCHO + sCIs 2 & 3 and CF₃CHO + sCI 1 reactions. The cycloaddition of sCI 2 + HCHO & sCI 3 + HCHO produce different HOZ conformers, HOZs 1 & 2 respectively, but these HOZ conformers can interconvert via an inversion TS_{HOZ} mechanism. This TS_{HOZ} barrier is much lower in energy than both the cycloreversion and HOZ fragmentation mechanisms (Fig. 5). Therefore, these HOZs generally interconvert freely and are treated as a single HOZ species when using MESMER to calculate the product branching fractions. Furthermore, during any of these reactions, (*e.g.* sCI 2 + HCHO), the HOZ species can fragment to produce any of the other reactant pairs (here sCI 3 + HCHO or sCI 1 + CF₃CHO), via cycloreversion pathways. The HOZ species produced by these reactions can also fragment (Fig. 5) to produce two different “acid + carbonyl” sets of products, TFA + HCHO or HCOOH + CF₃CHO, either through a one-step channel (via TS_{TFA} or TS_{FAC2} respectively) or a two-step HAE channel (via TS_{D1} & TS_{HAE1} or TS_{D2} & TS_{HAE2}



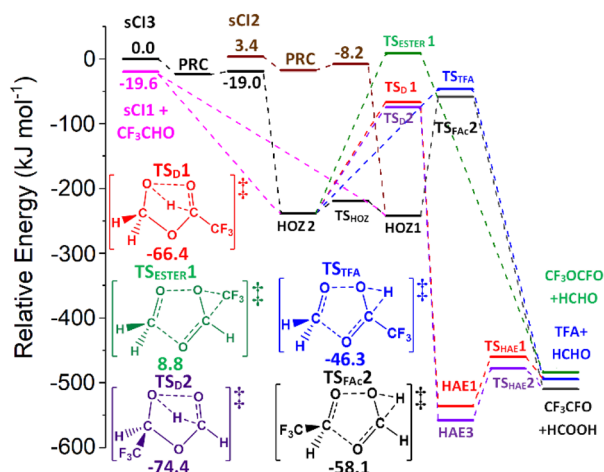


Fig. 5 The collective potential energy surface for sCIs 2 & 3 + HCHO and sCI 1 + CF₃CHO reactions with minima energy structures of each HOZ fragmentation displayed. Energies are relative to the raw sCI 3 + HCHO reactants.

respectively). HOZ fragmentation can also proceed *via* “TS_{ESTER}” mechanisms to produce CF₃OCHO + HCHO.

The relatively low TS_C barriers seen for the sCIs 2 & 3 reactions with HCHO in Fig. 5, lead to large k_{THERO} values (2.69 & $24.9 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$), although both reactions are less reactive than sCI 1 + HCHO (see Table 3). Studies of the bimolecular HFO-sCI chemistry are limited, but computational work on sCIs 1–3 reactions with H₂, CO₂ & CF₃CH=CH₂ are present in the literature and show similar trends to those identified here (Table 3).^{72,73,77} For instance, the barriers to the HFO-sCIs + CO₂ reaction follow the same reactivity order ($E_{\text{TS}}(\text{sCI } 2) > E_{\text{TS}}(\text{sCI } 1) > E_{\text{TS}}(\text{sCI } 3)$) seen for these HCHO reactions.⁷² Furthermore, the *anti*-orientated sCI 3 is more reactive with CF₃CH=CH₂ than the *syn*-orientated sCI 2, the same result observed for sCIs 2 & 3 + HCHO.⁷⁷

While the inclusion of a single –CF₃ group does not significantly enhance the reactivity of sCIs 2 & 3, the presence of a single –CF₃ substituent in the aldehyde co-reactant increases its reactivity to such a degree that the cycloaddition of sCI 1 + CF₃CHO is barrierless and the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ value ($\sim 6.50 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) is used as the rate constant. This could be due to a hypothetical inductive effect caused simply by adding any alkyl substituent to the aldehyde. But, despite the increased number of alkyl groups on CH₃CHO & (CH₃)₂CO the experimental literature suggests that their reactions with sCI 1 ($k_{\text{EXP}} \sim 10^{-1}$

$10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) do not show the enhanced reactivity seen for the sCI 1 + CF₃CHO reaction.^{65,71,147} However, the role of fluorine in –CF₃ substituents is explored in an experimental study by Taatjes and co-workers and they show that sCI 1 + (CF₃)₂COO has a larger k_{EXP} ($\sim 3.0 \pm 0.3 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) compared to the k_{EXP} of sCI 1 + (CH₃)₂COO ($\sim 2.3 \pm 0.3 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).⁶⁵ This confirms the high reactivity seen for sCI 1 + CF₃CHO must emerge from the inductive impact that the fluorenes in the –CF₃ substituents have on the aldehyde reactivity.

Both HCHO + sCI 2 and HCHO + sCI 3 (Fig. 6) produce high yields of the sCI 1 + CF₃CHO (~ 0.91 – 0.94), due to the barrierless nature of their cycloreversion mechanisms, with small contributions from $\Gamma_{\text{TFA+HCHO}}$ (~ 0.012 – 0.016) and $\Gamma_{\text{HCOOH+CF}_3\text{CHO}}$ (~ 0.052 – 0.068). In contrast, during the sCI 1 + CF₃CHO reaction, the production of HCHO + sCIs 2 & 3 gives very low branching ratios (<0.001) because the energy barriers for producing HCHO + sCIs 2 & 3 are much larger than other HOZ fragmentation pathways. Consequently, the overall Γ_{THERO} of sCI 1 + CF₃CHO is dominated by $\Gamma_{\text{HCOOH+CF}_3\text{CHO}} \sim 0.823$ with most of this contribution coming from the two-step HAE pathways ($\Gamma_{\text{TS}_{\text{D1}}} \sim 0.746$) with a smaller contribution from the one-step channel ($\Gamma_{\text{TS}_{\text{FAC}}} \sim 0.077$). The secondary product yield, $\Gamma_{\text{TFA+HCHO}} \sim 0.177$, also has most of its contribution emerge from the two-step HAE pathways, $\Gamma_{\text{TS}_{\text{D2}} \& \text{TS}_{\text{D3}}} \sim 0.166$. The TS_{ESTER} barrier is too high for the ester formation to have anything but a negligible yield for all three reactions.

While no experimental or theoretical product ratios for sCI 1 + CF₃CHO are available in the literature, some of the analysis of the similar sCI 1 + CH₃CHO & PhCHO reactions does include computational calculations of HOZ fragmentation energy barriers. Examination of both the sCI 1 + CH₃CHO & PhCHO systems show patterns consistent with this work, including: that the formation of smaller acid final products was preferred over larger acid products, that the 2-step HAE channel was the favoured formation mechanism for these acids, and that ester formation was negligible.

3.1.3 The HCHO + sCIs 4 & 5 and CF₃CFO + sCI 1 reactions. sCI 5 + HCHO exhibits has a low energy TS_C barrier ($\sim -28.9 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$) whereas the cycloaddition of sCI 4 + HCHO is barrierless. This demonstrates that sCI 4 is more reactive than sCI 5 and that both these HFO-sCIs are significantly more reactive than sCIs 1–3. sCIs with larger substituents (*e.g.* –CH₃ or –CF₃) in the *syn*-position have been shown to decrease sCI reactivity, however here it is observed that sCI 4, which has a *syn*-orientated

Table 3 A tabulation of key kinetic information of HCHO reactions with the sCIs 1–3 reactions from this study contrasted with that other bimolecular sCIs 1–3 reactions from the literature featuring: the relative energy of the lowest transition state barrier [ΔE_{TS}] and theoretical rate constants [k_{THERO}]. Energies are relative to raw reactants

sCI	#sCI	ΔE_{TS} [kJ mol ^{−1}]				k_{THERO} [$10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$]	
		H ₂	CO ₂	HCHO	CF ₃ CH=CH ₂	k_{HCHO}	$k_{\text{CF}_3\text{CH=CH}_2}$
CH ₂ OO	1	74.5	17.6	−20.8	−12.8	27.9	1.76
<i>Syn</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	2	—	32.6	−11.6	−13.8	2.69	77.9
<i>Anti</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	3	52.3	25.1	−19.0	−16.9	24.9	285
Reference		73	72	This study	77	This study	77





Fig. 6 The fractional populations of reactants and products for the **sCI 3** + HCHO reaction over time (the product branching fractions for the barrierless cycloreversion channels to **sCI 1** + CF₃CHO are calculated using the same reverse ILT method described in the Methods section.^{117,124} Excess HCHO reagent concentration is $\sim 1.0 \times 10^{16}$ molec. per cm³. For other details on the conditions of the reaction see ESI Section S11†).

larger group, has greater reactivity than the *anti*-orientated **sCI 5**.^{60,79,148–151} Unlike the **sCI 1** + CF₃CHO reaction, **sCI 1** + CF₃CFO does not have barrierless cycloaddition ($TS_C \sim -27$ to -22 kJ mol⁻¹) and the k_{THEO} value of this reaction ($\sim 2.0 \times 10^{-12}$ cm³ s⁻¹) is below the k_{d-d} capture limit. When compared to the k_{THEO} values of **sCI 1** + HCHO & CF₃CHO (~ 2.8 & 650×10^{-12} cm³ s⁻¹), it is clear that the inductive effect of the -CF₃ substituent in the CF₃CFO is largely cancelled out by the larger deactivating effect of the -F substituent that is also present in CF₃CFO.

sCI 4 & **sCI 5** reactions with HCHO are both integrated into the same reaction system as **sCI 1** + CF₃CFO and therefore all **sCI** + aldehyde reactant pairs can also be produced during HOZ fragmentation in this overall reaction system. The Γ_{THEO} for both the **sCIs 4** & **5** + HCHO reactions are dominated by yields of **sCI 1** + CF₃CFO (~ 0.84) with the remainder being the $\Gamma_{HCOOH+CF_3CFO}$ contribution (~ 0.16). In contrast, the **sCI 1** + CF₃CFO reaction has only negligible yields for **sCIs 4** & **5** + HCHO (< 0.0001)

because their cycloreversion TS_C barriers are > 100 kJ mol⁻¹ higher than the lower energy HOZ fragmentation barriers.

The primary product of the **sCI 1** + CF₃CFO reaction is HCOOH + CF₃CFO ($\Gamma_{HCOOH+CF_3CFO} > 0.99$), with the direct H-transfer TS_{FAC} channel producing almost all the formic acid yield. The higher barriers to the HAE pathway compared to the direct H-transfer channel seen here for the **sCI 1** + CF₃CFO reaction system (see ESI Section S5†) is uncommon both in this study and in the literature.^{71,146} However, in a literature analysis of *anti*-PhCHOO + PhCHO, the direct H-transfer mechanism also has a higher barrier (-19.2 kJ mol⁻¹) to phenylacetic acid formation than the two step HAE channel (-17.6 kJ mol⁻¹).¹⁴⁶ As noted in Table 4, ester formation continues to be negligible for all **sCI** + aldehyde reactions.

3.1.4 Overview of sCI + aldehyde reactions. The key features of the **sCI** + aldehyde reactions are that the chemistry can be broadly divided into two steps: the cycloaddition into an HOZ intermediate, and the fragmentation of that intermediate into various products. The HFO-sCI + aldehyde reactions have large rate constants ($k_{THEO} \sim 10^{-13}$ – 10^{-10} cm³ s⁻¹) as the cycloaddition is either barrierless or proceeds *via* low energy TS_C barriers. The inclusion of -CF₃ substituents in the *syn*-position produces a reductive impact on the COO group of the **sCI**, as shown by the smaller rate constant of **sCI 2** compared to the unsubstituted **sCI 1** or the *anti*-substituted **sCI 3**. However, an -F substituent has an inductive effect on the **sCI**, particularly in the *anti*-position, as shown by the high reactivity of **sCI 4**. Considering the factors given above the reactivity of the HFO-sCIs studied here follows the following trend: $k_{THEO}(\text{sCI 2}) < k_{THEO}(\text{sCI 3}) < k_{THEO}(\text{sCI 1}) < k_{THEO}(\text{sCI 5}) < k_{d-d}(\text{sCI 4})$. The role these -H, -F or -CF₃ substituents have on the aldehyde reactivity trend, $k_{THEO}(\text{CF}_3\text{CFO}) < k_{THEO}(\text{HCHO}) < k_{THEO}(\text{CF}_3\text{CHO})$, is the opposite to that seen for the **sCIs**, $k_{THEO}(\text{CF}_3\text{CFOO}) < k_{THEO}(\text{CH}_2\text{OO}) < k_{THEO}(\text{CF}_3\text{CHOO})$. In the HOZ fragmentation stage of the **sCI 1** + HCHO/CF₃CHO/CF₃CFO reactions, the yield is dominated by formation of formic acid + an aldehyde, with **sCI 1** + CF₃CHO also producing sizable product branching fractions for HCHO + CF₃-COOH ($\Gamma_{THEO} \sim 0.16$). However, for **sCIs 2–5** + HCHO reactions, the dominant product is **sCI 1** + CF₃CHO/CF₃CFO ($\Gamma_{THEO} \sim 0.80$ – 0.99), due to the low barrier to formation of this product pair.

Table 4 A tabulated breakdown of the results from the HOZ fragmentation of all HFO-sCI + aldehyde & ketone studied here, giving the final product branching for each product set

Reaction sCI + HCHO	Final product branching ratio (Γ_{THEO})				
	$\Gamma_{\text{sCI1}+\text{R}_1\text{CR}_2\text{O}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{HCHO}+\text{R}_1\text{CR}_2\text{OO}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{HCOOH}+\text{R}_1\text{CR}_2\text{O}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{TFA}+\text{HCHO}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{ester}+\text{HCHO}}$
sCI 2 + HCHO	0.993 ^a	7.40×10^{-5}	0.006	0.001	1.78×10^{-7}
sCI 3 + HCHO	0.991 ^a	3.92×10^{-6}	0.007	0.002	1.02×10^{-7}
sCI 4 + HCHO	0.843	9.40×10^{-9}	0.156	—	3.06×10^{-5}
sCI 5 + HCHO	0.842	8.13×10^{-9a}	0.158	—	4.98×10^{-5}
sCI 1 + R ₁ CR ₂ O	$\Gamma_{\text{HCHO}+\text{anti-R}_1\text{CR}_2\text{OO}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{HCHO}+\text{syn-R}_1\text{CR}_2\text{OO}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{HCOOH}+\text{R}_1\text{CR}_2\text{O}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{TFA}+\text{HCHO}}$	$\Gamma_{\text{ester}+\text{HCHO}}$
sCI 1 + CF ₃ CHO	1.47×10^{-6}	2.49×10^{-5}	0.823	0.177	2.14×10^{-8}
sCI 1 + CF ₃ CFO	3.10×10^{-14}	3.51×10^{-12a}	> 0.999	—	1.74×10^{-7}

^a The product branching fractions of the barrierless cycloreversion channels that leads to either **sCI 1** + CF₃CHO or **sCI 4** + HCHO are calculated using the same reverse ILT method described in Method section.^{117,124}



3.2 HFO-sCIs reactions with sulphur dioxide (SO₂)

Toxic sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emitted from various sources, including the burning of fossil fuels and volcanic eruptions, has a major role as an effective gaseous sCI sink and the sCI + SO₂ reaction is therefore of significant prominence in the literature.^{63,78,81,82,84,85,131,149,152–158} This reaction is considered responsible for between ~1% of the loss of *syn*-CH₃CHOO in rural environments to ~22% of the loss of “*syn*-CH₃-*anti*-(*trans*-CH₂=CH)-COO” in boreal forests.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, the importance of this reaction is increased because the dominant final product of this reaction is SO₃, which is a source of organo-sulphates and is involved in the formation and growth of secondary organic aerosol (SOA) nuclei.^{84,85,160} The promotion of SOA nucleation, caused by increased SO₃ yields, is vital to understand because the prevalence of aerosols in urban environments can cause serious respiratory problems and premature death.^{161–165} Also, depending on the aerosol type, they can absorb and scatter solar radiation and therefore influence climate temperatures.^{161,164,165}

3.2.1 The sCI 1 + SO₂ reaction. All HFO-sCIs in this study, as well as many sCIs studied in the literature, react with SO₂ through a general two-step reaction scheme, *via* a short-lived 5-member ozonide ring.^{84,159} These pathways produce cyclic intermediates, which are often called heteroozonides too, but it can also be referred to as a secondary ozonide (SOZ) and to prevent confusion with the HCHO reaction, that SOZ label is used in these SO₂ reactions.⁸⁴ The SOZs produced from sCI 1 + SO₂ are generated in either an *exo*- (SOZ 1) or an *endo*- orientation (SOZ 2), depending on the orientation of the SO₂ (Fig. 7) in the cycloaddition transition state, TS_{EXO} and TS_{ENDO} respectively. As also observed in the experimental and theoretical literature, the sCI 1 + SO₂ reaction is highly reactive and so when both TS_{ENDO} and TS_{EXO} pathways were evaluated it was found that both reactions were barrierless.^{63,64,84,85,153,154,166} This meant that therefore means that the *k*_{d-d} limit (7.25×10^{-10} cm³ s⁻¹) is adopted as the rate constant for the sCI 1 + SO₂ reaction.

The SOZ interconversion *via* the inversion of the S atom is known to require >180 kJ mol⁻¹ excess energy, which exceeds barriers to both cycloreversion (*via* TS_{EXO} & TS_{ENDO}) and SOZ fragmentation (Fig. 8).⁸⁴ This would impede SOZ interconversion but, as the R₁ and R₂ substituents in sCI 1 are identical, SOZs 1 & 2 can freely interconvert over low energy pseudorotation TS_{SOZ} barriers (see Fig. 8), which this means that SOZs 1 & 2 behaves as a single SOZ species.

The next stage of the sCI 1 + SO₂ reaction is the fragmentation of the SOZ to produce either SO₃ + HCHO *via* the TS_{SO3}



Fig. 7 A Schematic of the cycloaddition process for sCI 1 + SO₂: featuring the *endo*- & *exo*-cycloaddition transition states (TS_{EXO} & TS_{ENDO}) and the *endo*- & *exo*-SOZ intermediate products (SOZs 1 & 2).

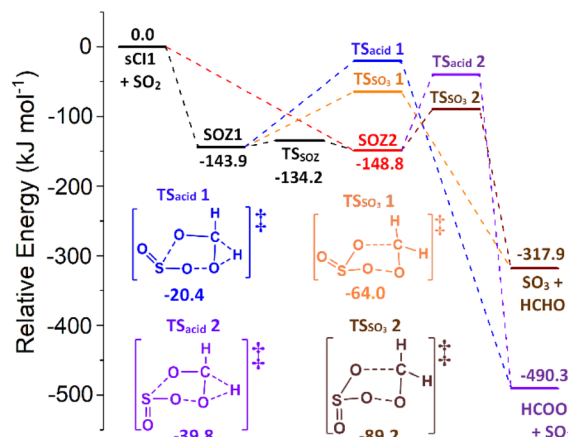


Fig. 8 The potential energy surface of sCI 1 + SO₂ with minima energy structures of each SOZ fragmentation displayed. Energies are relative to the raw reactants.

channel or SO₂ + HCOOH *via* the TS_{acid} channel. All SOZ fragmentation channels studied here are single-step mechanisms and the acid-producing mechanisms from each HFO-sCI + SO₂ reaction system exclusively produces a single acid species. Kuwett *et al.* have performed a comprehensive analysis of both SO₂ reactions with sCIs 1 & (CH₃)₂COO comprising a numerous range of major and minor SOZ fragmentation pathways, including a homolytic O–O bond fission to produce a 1,5-(bis)oxy diradical intermediate product.⁸⁴ While the self-reaction of this diradical intermediate produces important products, such as SOCO rings, sulphurous anhydrides or 1,3-(bis)oxy diradicals, its yield is so minor that 1,5-(bis)oxy diradical pathways are not explored for sCIs 1–5 + SO₂ here.⁸⁴

The final product branching fraction for sCI 1 + SO₂ is dominated by SO₃ + HCHO (*f*_{SO₃} ~ 0.966) with a subordinate yield HCOOH + SO₂ (*f*_{acid} ~ 0.034) because the TS_{SO3} 1 & 2 barriers (Fig. 8) are significantly lower in energy than the TS_{acid} 1 & 2 structures. This dominance of SO₃ + CF₃CHO in the *f*_{THEO} value is in agreement with that calculated in the literature (*f*_{SO₃} ~ 0.973–0.984).⁸⁴

3.2.2 The sCIs 2 & 3 + SO₂ reactions. The sCI 2 + SO₂ reaction is unique amongst the HFO-sCI + SO₂ reactions studied here in that the cycloaddition process is not barrierless and structures for the TS_{ENDO} & TS_{EXO} barriers can be readily computationally determined. The TS_{ENDO} barrier (–18.3 kJ mol⁻¹) is lower in energy than TS_{EXO} (–17.6 kJ mol⁻¹) and so the *endo*-orientated SOZ 2 yield is greater than *exo*-orientated SOZ 1 at a ratio of 0.69 : 0.31. Even though all other SO₂ reactions with sCIs 1–5 are barrierless, sCI 2 + SO₂ still has a substantially large theoretical rate constant (*k*_{THEO} = 1.90×10^{-12} cm³ s⁻¹). As both the TS_{EXO} & TS_{ENDO} channels of sCI 3 + SO₂ are barrierless, the *k*_{d-d} value (4.08×10^{-10} cm³ s⁻¹) is assigned as the rate constant and SOZs 3 & 4 are produced in equal fractions.

Due to the high energy barrier for interconversion *via* inversion of the S atom (>180 kJ mol⁻¹), the SOZ 1 & 2 conformers, produced from the SO₂ reaction with the mono-substituted sCI 2, cannot interconvert with each other without





Fig. 9 Collective diagram of all SOZs produced by **sCIs** 2 & 3 + SO_2 reactions and the pseudorotation TS_{SOZ} barriers that facilitate $\text{SOZ } 1 \leftrightarrow \text{SOZ } 3$ and $\text{SOZ } 2 \leftrightarrow \text{SOZ } 4$ interconversions. Structures included and energies relative to **sCI** 3 + SO_2 .

reverting to the initial reactants. This likewise applies to the mono-substituted **sCI** 3 + SO_2 , which also produces *endo* and *exo* conformers $\text{SOZs } 3$ & 4 . During some **sCI** + SO_2 reactions, the SOZs produced can interconvert *via* a pseudorotation TS_{SOZ} mechanism and circumvent the higher barrier *via* S atom inversion, but this can only transpire during reactions with **sCIs** with the same R_1 & R_2 substituents (e.g. **sCI** 1 or $(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{COO}$). Instead, when $\text{SOZ } 1$ surmounts the pseudorotation $\text{TS}_{\text{SOZ } 1}$ barrier it isomerises into the $\text{SOZ } 3$ conformer and the $\text{TS}_{\text{SOZ } 2}$ pseudorotation makes possible the $\text{SOZ } 2 \leftrightarrow \text{SOZ } 4$ interconversion (Fig. 9). This also means that SO_2 reactions with **sCIs** 2 & 3 are part of the same integrated PES, through the $\text{TS}_{\text{SOZ } 1}$ & 2



Fig. 10 The collective potential energy surface for **sCIs** 2 & 3 + SO_2 reactions with minima energy structures of each SOZ fragmentation displayed. Energies are relative to the raw **sCI** 2 + SO_2 reactants.

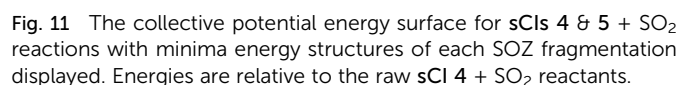
isomerisation channels (Fig. 9 and 10). This phenomena of $2 \times$ non-interchangeable sets of SOZs also applies to SO_2 reactions with **sCIs** 4 & 5 and, according to the literature, SO_2 reactions with *syn*- & *anti*- CH_3CHOO .⁸⁴

During the SOZ fragmentation of either **sCI** 2 + SO_2 & **sCI** 3 + SO_2 reactions, the reverse **sCI** + SO_2 reactant pairs can be produced through cycloreversion, as both reactions are part of the same potential energy surface. The SOZ fragmentation can also proceed through: TS_{SO_3} into SO_3 + CF_3CHO , TS_{acid} into SO_2 + TFA, or TS_{ester} into SO_2 + CF_3OCHO . It was noted above that the cycloaddition step of the SO_2 + **sCI** 2 reaction produced a large yield of the $\text{SOZ } 2$ & 4 conformer set and a small yield of the $\text{SOZ } 1$ & 3 conformer set, whereas the SO_2 + **sCI** 3 produced fairly even yields of each SOZ set. Furthermore, these stereochemically distinct SOZ sets each have their own fragmentation pathways, as $\text{SOZ } 1$ & 3 breakdown *via* $\text{TS}_{\text{SO}_3 } 2$, $\text{TS}_{\text{acid } 1}$ & $\text{TS}_{\text{ester } 1}$ and $\text{SOZ } 2$ & 4 fragments *via* $\text{TS}_{\text{SO}_3 } 1$, $\text{TS}_{\text{acid } 2}$ & $\text{TS}_{\text{ester } 2}$. The overall product branching ratio for **sCI** 2 + SO_2 is very similar to that of **sCI** 3 + SO_2 , so it appears that the differing SOZ yields seen in these two reactions has little overall effect on the product branching fraction.

sCI 2 + SO_2 does produce a small yield of **sCI** 3 + SO_2 from the cycloreversion channel, whereas the **sCI** 2 + SO_2 yield from **sCI** 3 + SO_2 reaction is negligible. This is because cycloreversion to **sCI** 2 + SO_2 has to overcome TS barriers, whereas cycloreversion to **sCI** 3 + SO_2 only has to overcome the energy of required to reform the raw reactants. The product branching fraction for ester formation is slight. The dominant final products for both the **sCIs** 2 & 3 + SO_2 reactions are CF_3CHO + SO_3 ($I_{\text{THEO}} \sim 0.995$) with only a very minor yield of TFA + SO_2 ($I_{\text{THEO}} \sim 0.003$).

3.2.3 sCIs 4 & 5 + SO_2 reactions. Both SO_2 reactions with **sCIs** 4 & 5 are barrierless, so their $k_{\text{d-d}}$ values (4.51 & $4.42 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) are used for the rate constants for these reactions and their *exo*- & *endo*- SOZ conformers are produced in almost equal yields. The **sCIs** 4 & 5 + SO_2 reactions are part of the same integrated reaction system and the phenomenon of 2 sets of non-interchangeable SOZs also applies to this system (Fig. 11) but this has little impact on SOZ fragmentation yields (Table 5).





3.2.4 Overview of sCI + SO₂ reactions. There are several key results from this analysis of the HFO-sCI + SO₂ reactions, including that all these reactions are initiated *via* a cycloaddition generating a short-lived SOZ ring, that then fragmented. **sCI 2** + SO₂ was the only reaction without a barrierless cycloaddition step, which confirms that the *syn*-orientated **sCI 2** is less reactive than the *anti*-orientated **sCI 3**. This contributes to producing an HFO-sCI + SO₂ general reactivity trend of: $k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{sCI } 2) < k_{\text{d-d}}(\text{sCI } 3) < k_{\text{d-d}}(\text{sCI } 5) < k_{\text{d-d}}(\text{sCI } 4) < k_{\text{d-d}}(\text{sCI } 1)$. Lastly, the most dominant products of these reactions were SO₃ + aldehydes ($I_{\text{SO}_3+\text{aldehyde}} \sim 0.96\text{--}0.99$) with only small yields of

3.3.2 HFO-sCl reactions with TFA. In general, sClIs 1–5 react with TFA to produce a hydroperoxy ester (HPE) species through a barrierless minimum energy pathway (*e.g.* Fig. 13).

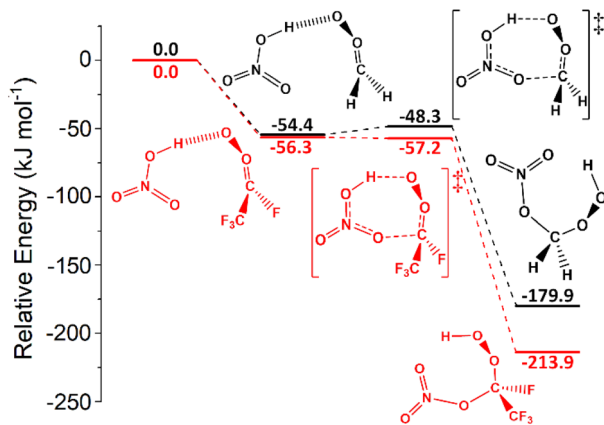


Fig. 12 The potential energy surfaces for the **sCI 1** + HNO_3 (black) and **sCI 4** + HNO_3 (red) reactions. Energies are relative to raw reactants.

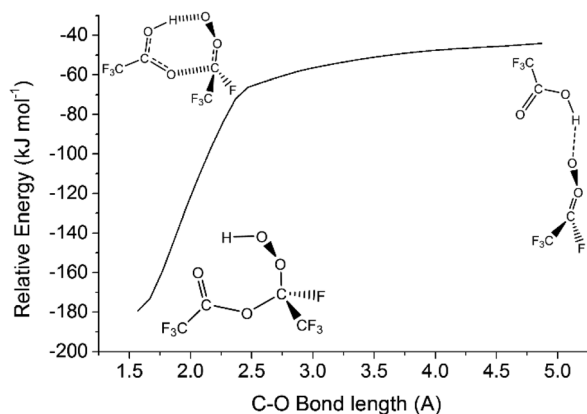


Fig. 13 The barrierless minimum energy pathway for the **sCI 4** + TFA reaction. Energies displayed here are derived from using the B3LYP/aug-cc-pVTZ approach. Energies displayed here are relative to raw reactants.

The barrierless minimum energy pathway calculated here for **sCI 1** + TFA is similar to literature schemes and its $k_{\text{d-d}}$ capture limit ($7.54 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) is found to be in close proximity to the k_{EXP} rate constant ($3.4 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).⁶¹

Altering the sCI substituents does not alter the barrierless nature of the HFO-sCI + TFA reaction profiles studied here (see ESI Section S8.5†). For this reason, all the **sCIs 1–5** + TFA reactions use the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ values as rate constants ($3.98\text{--}7.54 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).

3.4 HFO-sCI reactions with water monomer and dimer

Due to the high tropospheric concentration of water vapour, water acts as the most prevalent bimolecular sink for sCIs, and therefore examining the chemistry of **sCIs 1–5** reactions with H_2O & $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ is essential. **sCIs 1–5** reactions with H_2O proceed through only two reaction channels (TS_{H₂O} 1 and TS_{H₂O} 2), whereas **sCIs 1–5** reactions with $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ proceed via four pathways: TS_{(H₂O)₂} 1, TS_{(H₂O)₂} 2, TS_{(H₂O)₂} 3 and TS_{(H₂O)₂} 4 (see ESI Section S8.9†). One commonality between these reactions is that the primary product is an α -hydroxy-hydroperoxide (HHP), which

is implicated in both forest damage and generating crucial secondary products (inc. H_2O_2 , organic acids & aldehydes).^{86,170–176}

As the yields of the HHP products are sizable, the atmospheric fate of these HHPs is the subject of many scientific studies.^{67,68,131,150,157,177–179} Under standard conditions, photolysis, deposition, and reaction with hydroxyl radicals are usually the main sinks for HHPs, but the excess internal energy within the HHP at the point of formation increases the significance of thermal unimolecular HHP decay.^{131,177} The primary unimolecular decay mechanism for hydroxymethyl hydroperoxide (HMHP), the product of $\text{CH}_2\text{OO} + \text{H}_2\text{O}$, is the elimination of H_2O_2 to produce formaldehyde, with some yields from minor channels that produce either $\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{HCOOH}$ or $\text{OH} + \text{OCH}_2\text{OH}$.^{180,181} Sheps *et al.* showed in a study of $\text{CH}_2\text{OO} + (\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ that while $\sim 55\%$ of the HMHP remained stable, this excess energy led to $\sim 40\%$ of the HMHP fragmenting to produce H_2O_2 and formaldehyde, both of which are implicated in biogenic degradation.¹³¹ Halogenated HHPs produced from **sCIs 2–5** are also likely to be produced with excess energy, and therefore exploring the breakdown of these products may be useful in the future.

The k_{THEO} value produced for **sCI 1** + H_2O ($1.18 \times 10^{-16} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) is within the range of literature k_{EXP} values ($0.25\text{--}13 \times 10^{-16} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$), and is particularly close to the rate constant found by Sheps *et al.* (k_{EXP} [293 K, 50 Torr] $\sim 2.4 \times 10^{-16} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).^{64,78,131,182,183} Furthermore, both the k_{THEO} value in this study and the k_{EXP} value found in the literature agree that **sCI 1** + H_2O reactions slower than **sCI 1** reactions with HNO_3 , SO_2 or TFA.^{59,61,63,64,85,153,154,166}

The computational rate constants of the **sCIs 4 & 5** + H_2O reactions were found to have a negative temperature dependence, where $200 \text{ K} < T < 400 \text{ K}$, whereas **sCIs 1, 2 & 3** + H_2O all have a positive temperature dependence within the same range (see ESI Section 1.2†). The general reactivity trend for these sCI + H_2O reactions continues the trend observed throughout most of this study k_{THEO} (**sCI 2**) $< k_{\text{THEO}}$ (**sCI 3**) $\leq k_{\text{THEO}}$ (**sCI 1**) $< k_{\text{THEO}}$ (**sCI 5**) $< k_{\text{THEO}}$ (**sCI 4**). The theoretical trend of **sCI 4** being more reactive than **sCI 5** is partially obscured by rate constants being near to or exceeding the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ limit, however as neither the k_{THEO} values for **sCI 4** + H_2O ($5.13 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) or **sCI 5** + H_2O ($2.27 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) reach the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ limit, sCI + H_2O would provide an experimental case study to verify if k_{THEO} (**sCI 4**) does exceed k_{THEO} (**sCI 5**) in bimolecular reactions.

In contrast, HFO-sCI + $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ reactions are faster as a result of **sCI 5** + $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ having a lower reaction barrier than **sCI 5** + H_2O (Fig. 14). The greater reactivity of sCI + $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ reactions is evidenced by k_{EXP} values found for **sCI 1** + $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ ($4.0\text{--}8.2 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$), which are in close proximity to the large k_{THEO} value calculated here ($3.28 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).^{78,131,156–158,184} In line with previous HFO-sCI reactions, **sCI 2** + $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ has the lowest k_{THEO} value ($2.71 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) but unusually the **sCI 3** reaction with $(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ has a greater k_{THEO} value ($3.74 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) than **sCI 1**. None of the $4 \times \text{TS}_{(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2}$ channels for H_2O reactions with either **sCI 4** or **sCI 5** are barrierless, but the very high reactivity of these reactions leads to very large k_{THEO} values (1.14×10^{-6} & $1.46 \times 10^{-9} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$). This means that the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ constants of **sCIs 4 & 5** + H_2O ($\sim 7 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) are used as





Fig. 14 The potential energy surfaces for the sCI 5 + H₂O (in black) and sCI 5 + (H₂O)₂ (in red) reactions. Energies are relative to raw reactants.

the rate constants instead. Overall the reactivity trend for HFO-sCI + (H₂O)₂ reactions: k_{THEO} (sCI 2) < k_{THEO} (sCI 1) $\approx$ k_{THEO} (sCI 3) < $k_{\text{d-d}}$ (sCI 5) $\approx$ $k_{\text{d-d}}$ (sCI 4).

Criegee intermediates exhibit a mixed biradical and zwitterionic character and it has been shown that the more reactive zwitterionic dominated COO moieties have the larger ratio of OO and CO bond lengths, $R_{\text{OO}}/R_{\text{CO}}$ or q .^{68,74} Given these observations, sCIs 2 & 3 ($q = 1.064$ & 1.071) appear to have a more biradical COO moiety than sCI 1 ($q = 1.078$), whereas sCIs 5 & 4 ($q = 1.101$ & 1.114) are more zwitterionic. Anglada *et al.* noted in a computational study of sCI + H₂O reactions that the degree of this zwitterionic nature of the carbonyl oxide moiety, and consequentially its reactivity, can be tuned by modification of the substituents.⁶⁸ Furthermore, in a computational study of sCI + alcohol reactions it is noted that the electron-withdrawing nature of F substituents in *syn*- & *anti*-FCHOO is likely to increase the unsaturated nature of the zwitterionic carbonyl oxide. This then generates a more electropositive central C atom, which is more vulnerable to nucleophilic attack by the alcohol's electronegative O atom. This study shows the same positive relationship between electron-withdrawing groups, zwitterionic COO moiety and high reactivity seen in the literature, as shown by the fact that increases in q values in the HFO-sCI series mostly correlates with the growth in rate constant: k_{THEO} (sCI 2) < k_{THEO} (sCI 3) $\approx$ k_{THEO} (sCI 1) < k_{THEO} (sCI 5) < k_{THEO} (sCI 4).

3.5 Impact of heteroatom tuning on HFO-sCI reactions

It has been suggested that for sCI + H₂X (X = O, Si, Se & Te) reactions, as the central X atom in the H₂X co-reactant is substituted with larger group XVI elements, the rate constant increases.⁸⁷ In this section, the computational analysis of the sCIs 1–5 + H₂S reactions is compared with sCIs 1–5 reactions with H₂O (& MeOH) to determine if these heteroatom tuning trends apply to HFO-sCIs too. To see if the effects observed from heteroatom tuning group XVI-centred co-reactants also apply to group XVII-centred co-reactants, analysis of HFO-sCI + HF & HCl reactions is also included in this section.



Fig. 15 A comparison of the impact that heteroatom tuning of the group XVI-centred co-reactant (identity in the legend) has on the bimolecular rate constant (k_{THEO}) of different HFO-sCI reaction. Of note in this figure is the large increase in reactivity for sCIs 4 & 5 + H₂O and MeOH that is not observed for H₂S reactions.

3.5.1 HFO-sCI reactions with hydrogen sulphide (H₂S). The HFO-sCI + H₂S reactions proceed through two hydrogen abstraction transition states to produce hydrosulphide alkyl hydroperoxide, following a reaction process similar to that observed for most sCI + H₂S reactions studied in the computational and experimental literature.^{87,136,185} The rate constant for sCI 1 + H₂S determined here ($k_{\text{THEO}} \sim 7.06 \times 10^{-15} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) is larger than that for sCI 1 + H₂O in this study ($k_{\text{THEO}} \sim 1.18 \times 10^{-16} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$). This difference in reactivity is substantiated by the fact that a literature k_{EXP} value for sCI 1 + H₂S observed by Smith *et al.* ($1.7 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) is much larger than the k_{EXP} range observed in the literature for sCI 1 + H₂O ($0.25\text{--}13 \times 10^{-16} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).^{64,78,131,136,182,183} When analysing sCIs 2 & 3 reactions with H₂S each also show much larger k_{THEO} values than their reactions with H₂O, as observed in Fig. 15. Therefore, the theoretical results of H₂S reactions with sCIs 1–3 help to substantiate the general trend observed by Kumar *et al.* and the experimental literature that, if the central X atomic element of H₂X is substituted with an element further down group XVI on the periodic table, then the k_{THEO} value for the sCI + H₂X reaction increases.⁸⁷

One other point that may be noteworthy is that sCI 3 & sCI 1 exhibit similar rate constants throughout all three reactions featured in Fig. 15, as well as throughout much of this study. In much of the literature the non-fluorinated equivalent to sCI 3, *anti*-CH₃CHOO, exhibits a higher bimolecular rate constant to sCI 1 in reactions with H₂O, MeOH & SO₂.^{61,74,79,148,151} This may well be due to the presence of hyperconjugative α -H atoms in the *anti*-CH₃ substituent and that α -F atoms on the *anti*-CF₃ group rather than hyperconjugative α -H atoms reduces the inductive impact the substituent has on sCI 3 reactivity.⁵⁶

In contrast to the patterns seen for the sCIs 1–3 + H₂S reactions, the rate constants observed for the H₂S reactions with sCIs 4 & 5 are both smaller than those of the equivalent H₂O reactions (Fig. 15). To determine whether this stagnation of the sCI + H₂S rate constant was due to increased overall steric bulk,





Fig. 16 The potential energy surfaces for selected sCI reactions with HF and HCl. On the potential energy surfaces on the left, feature **sCI 1** + HF, in black, and **sCI 4** + HF, in red. On the potential energy surfaces on the right, feature **sCI 1** + HCl, in black, and **sCI 4** + HCl, in red. Energies are relative to raw reactants.

the k_{THEO} values were for the HFO-sCI reactions with the bulkier MeOH (which also proceeds *via* a hydrogen abstraction mechanism) were determined. However, no such stagnation in the rate constants of **sCI 4** & **5** + MeOH reactions emerges (Fig. 15).

3.5.2 HFO-sCIs reactions with HF & HCl. The Gr17-centred HX compounds, HF & HCl, react with sCIs *via* similar hydrogen abstraction mechanisms as the sCI + H_2X reactions, which means the heteroatom tuning trends seen for the HFO-sCI + H_2X reactions may be replicated.^{59,186} For instance, **sCI 1** + HCl has a considerably lower barrier (Fig. 16) to reaction than **sCI 1** + HF, following the trend that the co-reactant with larger heteroatoms (HCl) will have greater reactivity in reactions with sCIs 1–3. The resulting k_{THEO} value for **sCI 1** + HF ($3.32 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) is smaller than both the k_{THEO} value ($4.70 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) and its literature k_{EXP} rate constant ($1.7 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) for **sCI 1** + HCl.⁵⁹ All sCIs 1–3 reactions with HCl yield a rate constant that is $\sim 10^3$ – $10^4 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ larger than the equivalent HFO-sCI + HF reaction, much larger than the equivalent reactivity difference of sCIs 1–3 + H_2S over that of H_2O ($\sim 10^1$ – $10^2 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$).

Fig. 16 displays that the fluorinated **sCI 4** has much lower reaction barrier with HF than the unsubstituted **sCI 1** has, demonstrating the continued activating effect that the –F substituent has on the sCI reactivity. The inductive impact of the –F substituent results in **sCI 4** and **sCI 5** having substantially larger rate constants (1.19×10^{-11} & $3.66 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) compared to the **sCI 1** + HF reaction. In contrast, the energy barrier of the **sCI 4** + HCl reaction does not decrease compared to that of **sCI 1** + HCl (Fig. 16), replicating the observation that heteroatom tuning does not have an inductive effect on reactions involving sCIs 4 & 5. In fact, –F substituents in sCIs 4 & 5 in combination with the heteroatom tuning of the co-reactant leads not just to the same stagnation effect seen for sCIs 4 & 5 + H_2S reactions, but instead to a reductive effect on reactivity for the sCIs 4 & 5 + HCl reactions, compared to sCIs 4 & 5 + HF. This reductive effect is so clear that the rate constants for HCl reactions with **sCI 4** ($1.64 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) and **sCI 5** ($1.13 \times 10^{-10} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) are both smaller than that of the equivalent **sCI 1** reaction for the only time in this study. The cause of these stagnation/reductive effects can potentially be explained in

terms of the repulsion between the sCI substituent groups and increased steric interactions, although a deeper exploration into such factors would probably require experimental analysis and verification.⁵⁶

4. Atmospheric implications of HFO-sCIs bimolecular sinks

HFO emissions, and subsequently HFO-sCIs, are projected to become much more abundant as the use of HFO become increasingly widespread in refrigerators, insulation and vehicle cooling units, as is being seen in China, the USA and the EU.^{1,27,28} The chemistry of sCIs and other atmospheric species are typically included in atmospheric models in sets of like chemistries or taxonomic groups, where their reactivity can be estimated on the basis of their structure, and this work suggest sCIs 2–5 can be grouped into any such wider sCI classification system.^{40,70,187,188} Similar taxonomic groupings are already used in atmospheric models to estimate the chemistry of large groups of molecules and therefore reduce the computational processing power required to run simulations.¹⁸⁹ However, integrating HFO-sCIs into a wider taxonomic sCI framework faces particular difficulties, principally because of the differing effects non-halogenated groups (– CH_3 and –H) and halogenated groups (– CF_3 and –F) have on the conjugation, hyper-conjugation and steric interactions the sCI.^{56,72–75} One example of this is the difficulty of including the stagnation/reduction in reactivity of sCIs 4 & 5 seen during reactions with H_2S & HCl, a phenomenon not exhibited by other sCIs studied here or in the prior literature.^{59,64,78,87,131,136,182,183} This shows that system-by-system computational analysis, or indeed ultimately experimental analysis is still vital for understanding the chemistry of many bimolecular sCI reactions.

The effective rate constants, k_{EFF} , a product of the rate constant and the atmospheric abundance of the co-reactant, is used here as a primitive system of measuring the potential tropospheric impact of each bimolecular HFO-sCI reaction studied (Table 1).

The sCI reactions with water are the dominant bimolecular sink for the HFO-sCIs due to the abundance water



vapour.^{42,67,68,70,150,179} However, whether the sCI reaction with H₂O or (H₂O)₂ is more prevalent depends not only on the relative abundance of the H₂O or (H₂O)₂, but also on the identity of the sCI. For instance, the $k_{\text{EFF}}((\text{H}_2\text{O})_2)$ for **sCI 2** is around 10^3 s^{-1} larger than the equivalent $k_{\text{EFF}}(\text{H}_2\text{O})$, because the natural abundance of H₂O ($6.2 \times 10^{17} \text{ molec. per cm}^3$) over that of (H₂O)₂ ($8.7 \times 10^{14} \text{ molec. per cm}^3$) is overcome by the fact that the **sCI 2** has a $10^6 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ larger $k_{\text{THEO}}((\text{H}_2\text{O})_2)$ than $k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{H}_2\text{O})$. **sCIs 1 & 3** also exhibit larger $k_{\text{EFF}}((\text{H}_2\text{O})_2)$ than $k_{\text{EFF}}(\text{H}_2\text{O})$ by between 10^1 – 10^3 s^{-1} , meaning that tropospheric removal of the sCI occurs more readily *via* reaction with the water dimer than the monomer. But, whereas the rate constants for **sCIs 4 & 5** + H₂O reactions are much enhanced, the **sCIs 4 & 5** + (H₂O)₂ systems are so reactive that the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ capture limits are used as the rate constants, and the gap between these $k_{\text{d-d}}((\text{H}_2\text{O})_2)$ and $k_{\text{THEO}}(\text{H}_2\text{O})$ values is much reduced. Consequently, the $k_{\text{EFF}}(\text{H}_2\text{O})$ for **sCI 5** is similar to the equivalent $k_{\text{EFF}}((\text{H}_2\text{O})_2)$ value and the $k_{\text{EFF}}(\text{H}_2\text{O})$ for **sCI 4** is larger than $k_{\text{EFF}}((\text{H}_2\text{O})_2)$, as seen in Table 6.

This great preference for HFO-sCI + H₂O & (H₂O)₂ reactions leads to the significant production of fluorinated α -hydroxyhydroperoxides, which have been implicated in forest damage and associated with generating important secondary products like H₂O₂, organic acids and aldehydes, albeit that the primary emission locations for HFO are likely to be in urban environments.^{86,170–176} HFO-sCI + MeOH reactions are not as competitive as the equivalent H₂O & (H₂O)₂ reactions, but because, MeOH is emitted from vehicles that run off biofuel and HFOs are used in vehicle coolant units, the HFO-sCI & MeOH species have greater concentration overlap in many urban environments.^{135,190,191} Under such circumstances, emissions of α -alkoxyalkyl hydroperoxides (AAAHs), a significant functionalised peroxide, are increased and these AAAHs have also been implicated in forest damage and SOA formation.^{67,68,78–80,83,86,170}

HFO-sCI reactions with aldehydes are quite uncompetitive compared to the reactions with H₂O & (H₂O)₂ but the products of their reactions include organofluoride aldehydes and TFA, both

known to contribute to respiratory problems.¹⁹² Furthermore the **sCIs 2–5** reactions with HCHO lead to high yields of **sCI 1** sometimes with a large excess of energy, that easily leads to CI fragmentation and therefore contributes to the tropospheric population of the ‘atmospheric detergent’ OH radical.^{70,82}

The sCI + SO₂ reaction is known to act as a sink for ~20% of some sCIs in boreal forest, however the high uptake of the reactions with H₂O & (H₂O)₂ means that they do not contribute hugely to the overall depletion of **sCIs 2–5**.¹⁵⁹ However the SO₂ reactions with **sCIs 2–5** also seem to produce SO₃ at a higher efficiency than reactions with **sCI 1** and (CH₃)₂COO, and this tropospheric SO₃ will then contribute to atmospheric H₂SO₄ and aerosol formation.^{84,193–196}

TFA may have a disproportionate impact on HFO-sCI bimolecular chemistry because both HFO-sCIs and TFA emerge from the breakdown of HFOs and so they may see a large population overlap with HFO-sCIs. The large rate constants from sCI reactions with TFA, HNO₃ and HCl found here indicate a high reactivity between sCIs and other organic and inorganic acids. However, even in seaside areas, where HCl concentrations are elevated, the contribution that **sCI 1** could make the minor and the role of **sCIs 4 & 5** would be even more reduced, due to the high k_{EFF} values of the sCI + H₂O & (H₂O)₂ reactions. The non-water reactions (*e.g.* sCI reactions with HF, SO₂ & H₂S) would contribute more to the depletion of HFO-sCI population in dry environments, such as near active volcanoes.^{82,139,197–199}

After collisional stabilisation, sCIs are less energetic so fewer unimolecular fragmentation mechanisms have energy barriers low enough to compete with bimolecular reactions as sinks for sCIs under tropospheric temperature and pressure conditions.⁴² According to Guidry *et al.*, the central mechanism for the fragmentation of both *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CHOO is *via* a 1,3-ring closure to produce a dioxirane ring, both of which produce energy barriers (~80 kJ mol⁻¹) higher than *anti*-CH₃CHOO (~70 kJ mol⁻¹) and more similar to those of CH₂OO (70–100 kJ mol⁻¹).²⁰⁰ The unimolecular rate constant (k_{UNI}) of

Table 6 A tabulation of the effective rate constants (k_{EFF}) for the HFO-sCI + co-reactant reactions, determined in this study using the product of the theoretical rate constant and the co-reactant abundance. This table shows a primitive calculation of the atmospheric impact of each reaction. If the k_{EFF} value is written in italics, the dipole–dipole capture limit ($k_{\text{d-d}}$) was used to calculate the k_{EFF} value because the master equation rate constant (k_{THEO}) exceeded the $k_{\text{d-d}}$ limit or because the reaction was barrierless

Co-reactant	$k_{\text{EFF}} (\text{s}^{-1})$				
	CH ₂ OO	<i>Syn</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	<i>Anti</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	<i>Syn</i> -CF ₃ CFOO	<i>Anti</i> -CF ₃ CFOO
	sCI 1	sCI 2	sCI 3	sCI 4	sCI 5
HCHO	5.6	0.54	5.0	1447	33.4
SO ₂	300	0.79	169	186	183
HNO ₃	94	2.3	9.8	58	8.4
TFA	2.5×10^{-2}	1.7×10^{-2}	1.3×10^{-2}	1.2×10^{-2}	1.2×10^{-2}
H ₂ O	73	0.83	70	3.2×10^6	1.4×10^5
(H ₂ O) ₂	2.9×10^3	2.4×10^3	3.3×10^3	6.2×10^5	6.1×10^5
MeOH	0.010	7.9×10^{-5}	0.028	462	28
H ₂ S	0.085	1.4×10^{-3}	0.042	4.5	0.091
HCl	58	5.0×10^{-3}	8.96	20	14
HF	0.12	2.5×10^{-6}	1.1×10^{-3}	4.4	0.14



a reaction path and k_{EFF} are both equivalent and effective tools to show the efficiency of the respective reaction path as an sCI sink but, while Wang *et al.* have identified *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CHOO experimentally, no k_{UNI} values were identified in either the Wang *et al.* or Guidry *et al.* studies.^{66,200} Therefore, the k_{UNI} for CH₂OO ($\sim 0.3 \text{ s}^{-1}$) is used here instead as it may be the closest analogue to that of *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CHOO.^{42,70} On the basis of these premises, while the k_{UNI} value used here is greater than many of the k_{EFF} value for *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CHOO found in Table 6, the k_{EFF} value for other reactions, particularly *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CHOO + (H₂O)₂, are greater still. This indicates that bimolecular reactions can compete with unimolecular decomposition.

No equivalent k_{UNI} analogue could be found for *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CFOO especially considering the role of the -F substituent in CI fragmentation in isolation is also challenging. One study by Ljubić and Sabljčić calculated that the *anti*-F substituent induced a lower *anti*-FCHOO fragmentation barrier ($\text{TS}_{\text{UNI}} \sim 47.3 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$), whereas *syn*-FCHOO saw no such effect ($\text{TS}_{\text{UNI}} \sim 83.5 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$).²⁰¹ It is quite possible that the *anti*-F substituent could therefore theoretically induce a higher k_{UNI} for *syn*-CF₃-CFOO, but this might be offset by the lack of any tunnelling effect and the steric hinderance of the *syn*-CF₃ substituent. Nevertheless, no computational or experimental literature exists of the *syn*- & *anti*-CF₃CFOO unimolecular fragmentation reactions, and an assessment of these reactions has been not been deliberated here, due to the need for a more in-depth analysis of these reactions than the kind of provisional evaluation that would be covered in this study.

5. Conclusion

It has been shown that the individual steric and electronic features of HFO-sCIs impact upon their bimolecular chemistry in a way that transcends the choice of tropospheric co-reactant species. The chemistry of **sCI 2** (*syn*-CF₃CHOO) & **sCI 3** (*anti*-CF₃CHOO) have consistency with existing reactivity trends in the literature, particularly that sCIs with a *syn*-orientated sterically bulky group are significantly less reactive than *anti*-orientated sCIs. However, **sCI 3** is distinctive because it exhibits similar rate constants to the unsubstituted **sCI 1** (CH₂OO), whereas sCIs with similar orientations like *anti*-CH₃CHOO yields larger rate constants. The literature indicates that the presence of hyper-conjugative α -H atoms in the *anti*-CH₃ group has an inductive impact on the sCI, but here the presence of α -F atoms in the *anti*-CF₃ group appears to reverse this activating effect.

The especially large bimolecular rate constants for **sCI 4** (*syn*-CF₃CFOO) & **sCI 5** (*anti*-CF₃CFOO) emerge from the inductive -F substituents they possess. Moreover, the inductive impact of the -F substituent is greater in the case of **sCI 4** because of the *anti*-position of the -F substituent, and so the k_{THEO} (**sCI 4**) exceeds the k_{THEO} (**sCI 5**). However, with some notable exceptions, the HFO-sCIs studied here follow the reactivity series: k_{THEO} (**sCI 2**) < k_{THEO} (**sCI 3**) $\sim$ k_{THEO} (**sCI 1**) < k_{THEO} (**sCI 5**) < k_{THEO} (**sCI 4**).

One exceptionally distinct observation in this study is that the overall sCI reactivity series is influenced by the choice of co-reactant, as shown when contrasting the reactivity of **sCIs 1–5** reactions with different group-XVI and group-XVII centred co-

reactants. When sCI + H₂O & HF are compared with sCI + H₂S & HCl respectively, **sCIs 1–3** reactions with H₂S & HCl produced comparatively larger rate constants, in line with previous literature observations.⁸⁷ However, this does not always apply as the -F substituent appear to obstruct the large S and Cl atoms from reaching the reaction site during **sCIs 4 & 5** reactions with H₂S and HCl and this leads to a smaller rate constant.

This work demonstrates that for all sCIs considered, reaction with H₂O or (H₂O)₂ is the biggest tropospheric sink of HFO-sCIs, due primarily to the natural abundance of water vapour. Furthermore, these sCI reactions with water produced functionalised hydroxide products called α -hydroxy-hydroperoxide (HHP) that have been implicated with biogenic damage.^{42,67,68,78–80,83,86,134,170} While bimolecular reaction with other trace pollutants are less likely to be sinks for HFO-sCIs, **sCIs 2–5** all have a significant capacity to react with tropospheric species such as MeOH, TFA & HNO₃ and yield other functionalised hydroperoxides.

The uncommon nature of these HFO-sCIs is also demonstrated in the multi-step reactions with HCHO, where **sCIs 2–5** react (*via* a short-lived HOZ) to produce another sCI, a highly energised **sCI 1**, a product not commonly found in other studies of sCI + aldehyde reactions.^{65,71,147} A similar full mechanistic analysis of the reactions using a two-step HFO-sCI + SO₂ systems show that these reactions have very high rate constants and all produce high yields of SO₃ + R₁R₂CO (0.90–0.99). This production of SO₃ would also lead to H₂SO₄ formation and aerosol nucleation. Furthermore, HFO-sCI reactions with both HCHO & SO₂ systems are found to produce CF₃CHO or CF₃CFO, which are known to contribute to respiratory problems.

In summary, HFO-sCIs are shown to have very unique chemistry, because the -F substituent has a large activation affect on the COO group, whereas the α -F atoms in the CF₃ group are mildly deactivating. If any sCI taxonomic classification is established, **sCIs 2 & 3** could be categorised as part of *syn*-sCI and *anti*-sCI groups respectively, whereas **sCIs 4 & 5** could be categorised in a separate “electronegative substituent” taxonomic group.

Author contributions

The manuscript was written through contributions of all authors. All authors have given approval to the final version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

Abbreviations

sCI	Stabilized Criegee intermediate
AAAHs	Alkoxyalkyl hydroperoxides
HHP	Hydroxy-hydroperoxides
HFO-sCIs	Hydrofluoroolefin-derived stabilized Criegee intermediate



TFA	Trifluoroacetic acid
HOZ	Heteroozonide
SOZ	Secondary ozonide
NAHP	Nitrooxyalkyl hydroperoxide
HAE	Hydroxyalkyl formate
CH ₂ OO	sCI 1
<i>syn</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	sCI 2
<i>anti</i> -CF ₃ CHOO	sCI 3
<i>syn</i> -CF ₃ CFOO	sCI 4
<i>anti</i> -CF ₃ CFOO	sCI 5

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