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New Insights into Secondary Organic Aerosol from the
Ozonolysis of α -Pinene from Combined Infrared Spectroscopy
and Mass Spectrometry Measurements

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1 Abstract

2 Understanding mechanisms of formation, growth and physical properties of secondary organic
3 aerosol (SOA) is central to predicting impacts on visibility, health and climate. It has been
4 known for many decades that the oxidation of monoterpenes by ozone in the gas phase readily
5 forms particles. However, the species responsible for the initial nucleation and the subsequent
6 growth are not well established. Recent studies point to high molecular weight highly
7 oxygenated products with extremely low vapor pressures (ELVOC, extremely low volatility
8 organic compounds) as being responsible for the initial nucleation, with more volatile species
9 contributing to particle growth. We report here the results of studies of SOA formed in the
10 ozonolysis of α -pinene in air at 297 ± 2 K using atmospheric solids analysis probe (ASAP) mass
11 spectrometry, attenuated total reflectance (ATR) Fourier transform infrared spectrometry and
12 proton transfer reaction (PTR) mass spectrometry. Smaller particles are shown to be less volatile
13 and have on average higher molecular mass components compared to larger particles, consistent
14 with recent proposals regarding species responsible for the formation and growth of particles in
15 this system. Thus the signatures of species responsible for particle development at various stages
16 are observable even in particles of several hundred nm diameter. Pinonaldehyde and acetic acid
17 were observed to evaporate from a film of impacted SOA at room temperature, from which the
18 ratio of their diffusion coefficients to the square of the average film thickness, D/l^2 , could be
19 obtained. For acetic acid and pinonaldehyde, $D/l^2 = 6.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $5.0 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ respectively,
20 the relative magnitudes being consistent with the size difference between acetic acid and
21 pinonaldehyde molecules. Limitations to quantifying the film thickness and hence absolute
22 values of the diffusion coefficient are discussed and highlight a need for novel experimental
23 methods for quantifying diffusion coefficients of organic species in SOA.

24 Introduction

25
26 Organic compounds are a major component of airborne particles.¹⁻⁴ A large fraction of the
27 organic component under many circumstances is not from direct emissions, but rather is formed
28 from low volatility products of the oxidation of volatile organic compounds (VOC) in air.^{5,6}
29 This introduces significant complexity in developing quantitative predictive models of
30 atmospheric particulate matter, especially given the large number of potential precursors and
31 oxidation processes. Models have typically under-predicted SOA mass compared to
32 measurements; even with recent improvements,⁷⁻¹¹ accurately predicting specific characteristics
33 such as O:C and volatility simultaneously remains a challenge.¹² However, given the key role of
34 particles in affecting visibility,^{5,6,13} health¹⁴⁻¹⁷ and climate,¹⁸ a detailed understanding of such
35 processes is critical.

36
37 There are two important aspects to the formation of particles in the atmosphere: (1) how the
38 initial seed particles are formed and (2) how they grow.¹⁹ It is well-established that sulfur
39 compounds such as sulfuric and methanesulfonic acids form seed particles in the presence of
40 ammonia, amines and water vapor.²⁰⁻²⁷ Homogeneous nucleation of low volatility organic
41 compounds is also a potential source of seed particles. As discussed in detail elsewhere,²⁸⁻³³ for
42 this to occur the compounds must have very low vapor pressures, recently dubbed ELVOC
43 (extremely low VOC).^{30,34} Biogenic precursors such as α -pinene are expected to be particularly
44 important because they have significant sources on a global basis and have structures and
45 molecular masses such that oxidation leads to higher molecular weight, polar products that will
46 have low volatility.

47
48 There is increasing evidence for homogeneous nucleation of large biogenic oxidation products.
49 For example, the reaction of O₃ with α-pinene was shown using cluster chemical ionization
50 mass spectrometry to generate gas phase oxidation products with molecular masses up to 621
51 amu.³⁵ Those with masses >430 amu were highly correlated with the formation of the smallest
52 particles that were measured in that study (10 nm) while those with masses in the 140 - 380 amu
53 range were correlated with larger particles, >20 nm.³⁵ Thermal desorption chemical ionization
54 mass spectrometry (TDCIMS) of particles formed in this reaction showed that 40 nm particles
55 were comprised of more carbonyl-containing compounds and low molecular weight organic
56 acids, while there was evidence of larger, lower vapor pressure acid products such as terpenylic
57 and pinic acids in the 10 and 20 nm particles.³⁶ These data suggest that particles are initially
58 formed by homogenous nucleation of ELVOC products, while subsequent growth occurs via
59 uptake of products having smaller masses and relatively higher vapor pressures. In a similar
60 system, correlations between gas phase ELVOC and SOA mass were observed both in the
61 absence and presence of inorganic seed particles³⁰ and ELVOC adduct ions have been identified
62 in chamber studies and ambient air.²⁹ High molecular weight oligomers have also been
63 identified by high resolution mass spectrometric techniques.³⁷⁻⁴⁶ Oligomerization is proposed
64 to occur via acid catalyzed aldol and gem-diol reactions between SOA 'monomers',^{39, 42, 47, 48}
65 generating esters, acetals and hemiacetals and/or the repeat addition of stabilized Criegee
66 intermediates to peroxy radicals.⁴¹

67
68 The physical properties of SOA are still far from fully understood. While it was assumed for
69 many years that SOA would be a relatively low viscosity liquid, a number of recent studies point

70 to it being a semi-solid or even glassy material under certain conditions.^{32, 49-68} In this case
71 diffusion of species will be much slower than in a liquid, which affects exchange with the gas
72 phase and the growth mechanism for the particles. While diffusion coefficients (D) for a given
73 viscosity (η) are often predicted through the Stokes-Einstein relationship that relates D inversely
74 to η ,^{65, 69} this relationship has been shown to be inapplicable for water diffusing in highly viscous
75 organic materials,^{70, 71} which likely includes SOA under some conditions. To date there has been
76 only one direct measurement of diffusion in α -pinene SOA, which is for pyrene incorporated
77 into the SOA as it formed.⁶⁶

78
79 We report here the results of studies, using a combination of experimental techniques, of the
80 composition of particles from α -pinene ozonolysis binned into two different size ranges (250 -
81 500 nm and >500 nm respectively) through the use of an impactor. Even with these larger
82 particle sizes compared to the prior studies, there is clear evidence of enhancement of higher
83 molecular mass components in the smaller size bin and more volatile components in the larger
84 particles. The rates at which pinonaldehyde and acetic acid diffuse out of SOA deposited on a
85 ZnSe surface are used to estimate the likely range of magnitudes of their diffusion coefficients.
86 These are shown to be several orders of magnitude smaller than would be expected for liquid
87 matrices⁶⁵ and hence are consistent with SOA from this reaction being a highly viscous material,
88 in agreement with a growing body of evidence from this^{49, 50} and other laboratories.^{51-59, 62-64, 66}

89
90
91
92

93 **Experimental**94 **SOA generation**

95 SOA from the ozonolysis of α -pinene under dry conditions was generated in our large volume,
96 slow flow, aerosol flow tube⁷² as has been described in detail previously.^{49, 50, 72} Ozone (~ 1
97 ppm) was generated by flowing high purity oxygen (Oxygen Services, Ultra High Purity,
98 99.993%) through a housing containing a Pen-Ray® mercury lamp (UVP, LLC, model 11SC-2)
99 and subsequently diluting to the desired concentration. The ozone concentration was monitored
100 by Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR, Mattson Instruments Inc., model 10000) and a
101 photometric O₃ analyzer (Teledyne, Model 400 E). The α -pinene ((1R)-(+)- α -pinene; Sigma
102 Aldrich, >99%) was added to the flow tube (after purification in an alumina column)
103 downstream of the ozone inlet and was injected into the dilution airflow to the desired gas-phase
104 concentration (~ 1 ppm) using an automated syringe pump (Pump Systems Inc, model NE-1000).
105 The clean dry dilution air was from a purge gas air generator (Parker Balston, model 75-62),
106 passed through carbon/alumina media (Perma Pure, LLC) and an inline 0.1 μm filter (Headline
107 Filters, DIF-N70). A scavenger for OH formed in the α -pinene-ozone reaction^{5, 73} was not added
108 in these experiments. The total flow rate in the flow tube was 34 L min⁻¹ corresponding to a total
109 residence time of 33 minutes at the sampling port at the end of the flow tube. The particle size
110 distributions were recorded using a scanning mobility particle sizer (SMPS, TSI, model 3080
111 classifier and 3776 condensation particle counter). The number mode diameter was 332 nm and
112 the mass-weighted mode was 552 nm.

113

114

115

116 ASAP-MS measurements

117 SOA was collected using a Sioutas impactor (SKC Inc) with ZnSe substrates operated at 9 L
118 min^{-1} . Different stages were used to split the SOA into two size regimes of 250-500 nm and
119 >500 nm. When collecting SOA between 250-500 nm the upper stage was greased (Dow
120 Corning, high vacuum grease) to prevent larger particles bouncing down to the lower stage. The
121 SOA was then physically transferred onto the tip of a glass melting point tube attached to an
122 atmospheric solids analysis mass spectrometer probe (ASAP-MS)^{74, 75} (Waters). Prior to use, the
123 melting point tube was cleaned by baking within the source at 450 °C for at least an hour. The
124 mass spectrometer was a LCT Premier time-of-flight mass spectrometer (Waters) and was used
125 in positive ion mode.

126

127 The source was operated at a constant temperature of 150 °C while temperature controlled
128 nitrogen flowed over the tip (8.3 L min^{-1}) to desorb the SOA components. The nitrogen
129 temperature was manually ramped from 100 °C to 450 °C in a stepwise fashion in increments of
130 50 °C. The presence of a small container of liquid water in the source compartment resulted in
131 the formation of H_3O^+ ions by corona discharge and these undergo proton transfer reactions with
132 the volatilized species to form $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ions. Mass spectra and total ion signals were acquired
133 across 100-1000 Da as a function of temperature

134

135 ATR-FTIR measurements of the SOA

136 SOA was sampled using a custom designed impactor⁴⁹ with a ZnSe ATR (attenuated total
137 reflectance) crystal substrate that had been cleaned prior to use by boiling in ethanol and

138 dichloromethane before placing in an argon plasma for 30 min (Plasma Cleaner/Sterilizer PDC-
139 32G, Harrick Scientific Products, Inc). The polydisperse SOA was impacted at a flow rate of 30
140 L min⁻¹ for a total time of 5 minutes. The ATR impactor has a d₅₀ cutoff diameter of 240 ± 12
141 nm⁴⁹ at 30 L min⁻¹, which captured most of the mass of the SOA.

142
143 IR spectra were recorded using a Nicolet™ 6700 FTIR spectrometer (Thermo Scientific). An
144 ATR crystal was housed in a commercially available HATR (Horizontal ATR) accessory (PIKE
145 Technologies, Madison WI). Background measurements of the clean crystal were measured for
146 subsequent analysis. Reference spectra of adsorbed and gas phase water were also taken by
147 flowing humid air over the clean crystal (adsorbed) and into the sampling compartment of the
148 spectrometer (gas-phase).

149
150 Once the polydisperse SOA was impacted onto the ATR crystal, the SOA covered crystal was
151 transferred immediately to a custom designed flow cell⁷⁶ (volume 22 cm³) through which clean
152 air was flowed. Infrared spectra of the SOA were recorded as single beam spectra and processed
153 to give absorbance spectra in the form log₁₀(S₀/S₁) where S₀ represents a background relative to
154 the spectrum of interest S₁. Spectra were recorded within ~5 min from the time of impaction
155 and subsequent spectra were recorded every 15 minutes to monitor changes in the SOA under the
156 flow (200 cm³ min⁻¹) of clean dry air (Oxygen Services, Ultra High Purity) for 20 hours.

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160

161 **PTR-MS measurements of volatilized components**

162 The outflow from the ATR flow cell was directed to a proton-transfer time-of-flight mass
163 spectrometer (PTR-MS) (PTR-ToF-MS, Ionicon Analytik) to detect species evaporating from the
164 SOA.

165
166 The PTR-MS acquisition was started prior to connecting the outflow of the ATR cell to the
167 PTR-MS inlet via a 30 cm length of Teflon tubing. The moment of connection was taken as time
168 t_0 . Spectra were acquired at a rate of 3 scans per minute and were recorded for ~8 hours. Mass
169 spectra were extracted using the PTR-MS TOF Viewer software (Ionicon Analytik version 1.4.0)
170 by averaging a total of 10 individual scans starting close to t_0 . Spectra after 8 hours in the clean
171 air flow were used to determine the background. Peaks that increased significantly from this
172 background were attributed to species evaporating from the SOA. The corresponding ion traces
173 for the individual species were extracted after mass calibration.

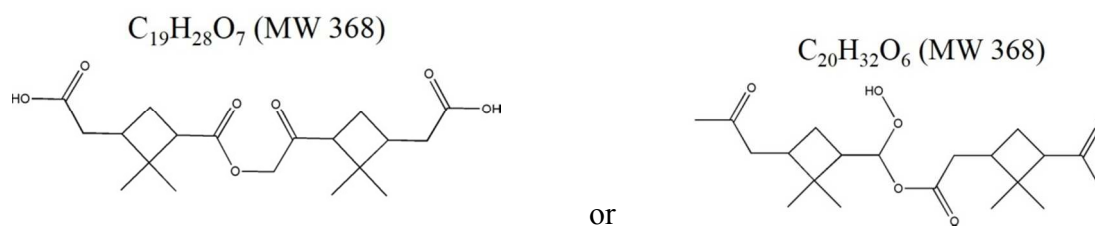
174

175 **Results and Discussion**

176 Figure 1 shows typical ASAP-MS total ion signals for SOA in the smaller (250 - 500 nm; red
177 curve) and larger (>500 nm; black curve) size bins respectively as a function of scan
178 number/desorption temperature. The signal for the larger SOA peaked at lower temperatures
179 compared to that for the 250 - 500 nm SOA, indicating that some of its components are more
180 volatile. The mass spectra were averaged (MassLynxTM, Waters) to give a total integrated
181 spectrum for the temperature range 100-450 °C for each sample. Six individual samples were
182 analyzed for each size range (250 nm and >500 nm). Figure 2 shows a typical integrated ASAP
183 mass spectrum for the 250 - 500 nm particles (Fig 2a) and for the larger particles (Fig. 2b) (peaks

184 highlighted in purple are observed in the background and hence were not included in subsequent
185 quantitative analyses). It is clear that the smaller particles have a greater contribution to the total
186 mass spectrum from higher molecular mass components, while peaks due to smaller products of
187 this reaction are more evident in the larger particles. This is consistent with the higher volatility
188 of the larger SOA seen in Fig. 1.

189 An obvious feature of the ASAP spectra is the strong peak at $m/z = 351$. This may be due to
190 dehydrated $[M+H-H_2O]^+$ fragments of previously proposed species with molecular weight of 368
191 amu:^{48, 77}



The $C_{19}H_{28}O_7$ diacid has been proposed to be formed from the reaction between pinic acid and 10-hydroxypinonic acid,⁴⁸ while the $C_{20}H_{32}O_6$ hydroperoxide has been proposed to result from the reaction of a stabilized Criegee intermediate with pinonic acid⁷⁷ formed from the ozonolysis of α -pinene. The relatively high intensity may indicate that such products are a major component of the SOA or alternatively, that the sensitivity to them in ASAP-MS is higher than for other components.

The integrated mass spectra were separated into mass ranges to represent SOA monomers (100-200 amu), dimers (201-400 amu) and oligomers (>401 amu) as illustrated in Figure 2. These boundaries are not intended to be absolute assignments of monomeric, dimeric and

204 oligomeric SOA components but rather to represent the mass ranges where such products are
205 likely to be found. Figure 3 shows the fraction of the total signal that falls into each mass range
206 for the smaller particles (red boxes) compared to the >500 nm particles (black boxes). As
207 suggested qualitatively by the mass spectra (Fig. 2), the larger particles have a relatively greater
208 contribution from low molecular mass components, while the smaller particles have more
209 contribution from higher molecular masses.

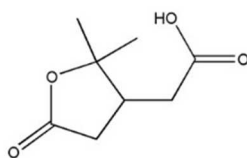
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211 Figure 4a shows a typical ATR-FTIR spectrum of polydisperse SOA immediately following
212 impaction. For comparison, ATR spectra of pinonic acid and pinonaldehyde identified in other
213 studies⁷⁸⁻⁹³ as common products of α -pinene ozonolysis are also shown (Fig. 4 b, c). As
214 expected, the SOA spectrum exhibits significant similarities to those for these oxygenated
215 products. Also shown in Fig. 4d is the difference spectrum for SOA after 20 hrs under a flow of
216 clean dry air. This spectrum is $\log(S_1/S_{20})$ where S_1 is the first single beam spectrum after
217 introducing the flow of air and S_{20} is that after 20 hrs, so that negative peaks represent functional
218 groups lost from the SOA. The loss of C=O at 1695 cm^{-1} is indicative of aldehydes/ketones that
219 have evaporated from the SOA. The loss at $\sim 3400\text{ cm}^{-1}$ could in part be due to a loss of
220 carboxylic acids although the major contributor in this region is likely water which can be taken
221 up during the brief handling in room air and then desorbed in the air flow. The change in this
222 region was variable from experiment to experiment.

223

224 The difference spectrum also shows that there is a loss of species with peaks at 1799 and 1768
225 cm^{-1} which were not obvious in the overall SOA spectrum (Fig. 4a) due to overlap with the
226 strong 1703 cm^{-1} peak (although a shoulder can be observed). There is also a loss of a peak at

227 1072 cm^{-1} . Carbonyl groups with a more electronegative atom such as oxygen directly attached
228 to the carbonyl carbon have the band due to the C=O stretching vibration shifted to higher
229 frequencies than those for aldehydes and ketones that occurs around 1700 cm^{-1} ; the same is true
230 if the C=O is part of a strained ring.⁹⁴ In addition, if they are part of an ester or lactone, bands
231 due to the symmetric and asymmetric C(O)-O stretch appear in the 1050 - 1370 cm^{-1} region.⁹⁴
232 Viable candidates for these bands in terms of α -pinene ozonolysis products include the species
233 responsible for the $m/z = 351$ ASAP peak discussed earlier and/or terpenylic acid



234 Terpenylic acid (MW 172)

235 which has been previously identified as a product from the attack of OH on α -pinene.⁹⁵⁻⁹⁷
236 Anhydrides which have been reported in the ozonolysis of alkene self-assembled monolayers
237 (SAMs)⁹⁸ are also a possibility.

238
239 Figure 5a shows the loss of C=O and C-H groups under a flow of clean air for 20 hrs which
240 represents a decrease of $\sim 20\%$ over this time. As seen in Figure 5b, the ratio of the C=O to C-H
241 peaks increased by $\sim 10\%$ during evaporation of the SOA, as expected if more volatile, less
242 oxygenated products were being removed by evaporation. Zelenyuk and co-workers^{62, 66}
243 reported evaporative loss of $\sim 70\%$ of α -pinene ozonolysis SOA from individual particles up to
244 several hundred nm in diameter over 24 hrs. In the experiments reported here, the SOA forms a
245 film on the crystal, the concentrations of the reactants were higher and no OH scavenger was

246 added. The calculated depth of penetration of the infrared beam in the C-H stretch region at
247 2900 cm^{-1} is $0.57\text{ }\mu\text{m}$, and at 1700 cm^{-1} is $0.98\text{ }\mu\text{m}$.⁹⁹ As discussed below, the film is not evenly
248 spread on the crystal but its thickness in some locations may be greater than the depth of
249 penetration so that the observed evaporation (Fig. 5a) may be a lower limit. A contributing
250 factor to the discrepancies in the evaporation may also be that in the earlier studies^{62,66} there was
251 an initial rapid loss in the first few minutes during which more than $\sim 20\%$ of the volume fraction
252 was lost, followed by a smaller loss rate. The data in Fig. 5a were taken after the sample was
253 removed from the impactor and installed in the flow cell, which took approximately 5 min. Thus
254 a significant amount could have already evaporated by the time the first spectra were taken.

255
256 A search for gas phase products evaporating from the SOA on the ATR crystal was carried out
257 using PTR-MS to sample from the exit of the flow cell. Figure 6 shows the mass spectrum of
258 this gas stream. Although PTR-MS is a softer ionization method than electron impact, it still
259 results in significant fragmentation.¹⁰⁰ For example, pinonaldehyde (molecular mass 168) has a
260 weak $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ peak at $m/z = 169$ but a much stronger peak at $m/z = 151$ corresponding to the
261 addition of a proton and loss of water.^{87, 101-107} This makes definitive identification of gas phase
262 products in complex mixtures difficult. However, the ratio of the peaks at $m/z = 169/151$ that are
263 characteristic of pinonaldehyde is within experimental error of that reported for this compound
264 by Wisthaler et al.,¹⁰¹ and the exact masses of the 151 and 169 peaks are within 25 ppm of those
265 expected for this product. Carboxylic acids such as terpenylic acid readily lose water when they
266 become protonated, which would give a peak at $m/z = 155$ for the $[\text{M}+\text{H}-\text{H}_2\text{O}]^+$ fragment. The
267 PTR-MS peak at 155 was bimodal and could be resolved into two peaks which are tentatively
268 assigned to: 1) terpenylic acid or norpinic acid dehydrated fragments ($[\text{M}+\text{H}-\text{H}_2\text{O}]^+$, $\text{C}_8\text{H}_{11}\text{O}_3$,

269 exact mass to 23 ppm) and 2) norpinonaldehyde ($[M+H]^+$, $C_9H_{15}O_2$, exact mass to 28 ppm). The
270 strong peak at $m/z = 61$ corresponds to $[M+H]^+$ for CH_3COOH ¹⁰⁰ (acetic acid) which has
271 previously been identified by PTR-MS as a gas phase product of the ozonolysis of α -pinene⁸⁷
272 and for which there is also evidence in the particle phase.⁸⁶

273
274 Figure 7 shows the decays in the PTR-MS signals at $m/z = 151$ and 61 respectively as clean air
275 flowed over the SOA on the ATR crystal. In the simplest interpretation, these reflect primarily
276 the time for the species to diffuse through the SOA matrix. While they also include the residence
277 time in the ATR cell and travel time to the PTR-MS, these are of the order of tens of seconds and
278 therefore negligible in comparison to the decay times seen in Figure 7. As the $m/z = 151$ and m/z
279 = 61 peaks are decaying on the timescale of hours, diffusion must be slow relative to that in
280 liquids (where it would be effectively instantaneous on this experimental timescale),⁶⁵ suggestive
281 of kinetic limitations in a highly viscous material. The decay of the $m/z = 151$ and $m/z = 61$
282 peaks, assumed to be due to pinonaldehyde and acetic acid respectively, were used to estimate
283 the diffusion coefficients for these species in the SOA matrix.

284
285 If the generation of pinonaldehyde and acetic acid is limited only by diffusion in the SOA, then
286 the process measured by the PTR-MS is similar to that used to determine diffusion coefficients,
287 D , by outgassing from a sample.¹⁰⁸ For a thin film of thickness l , the time dependence of the
288 amount of gas desorbing is an exponential of the form:¹⁰⁸⁻¹¹⁰

289
290
$$\sum_{m=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{(2m+1)^2} \exp \left[-\frac{D(2m+1)^2 \pi^2 t}{l^2} \right]$$

291
292 The decay of the $m/z = 151$ and 61 signals in Figure 7 were fit to exponentials of this form, from
293 which values of D/l^2 can be derived. This approach gives $D/l^2 = 5.0 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ for $m/z = 151$ and
294 $6.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ for $m/z = 61$. The ratio of the diffusion coefficients for the species responsible for
295 the 61 and 151 peaks in the PTR-MS data is therefore $D_{61}/D_{151} = 1.4$. We note that the fit to the
296 m/z 151 data is excellent over the entire course of the experiment out to 3 hrs. The fit to m/z 61
297 is not quite as good, which might reflect the fact that acetic acid is a sticky compound which can
298 adsorb/desorb to surfaces in the system. If the initial data to 2 hrs for m/z 61 is fit by the model,
299 the value derived for D/l^2 is $9.0 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ and the ratio $D_{61}/D_{151} = 1.8$.

300
301 The Stokes-Einstein equation⁶⁹ which is often used to estimate diffusion coefficients predicts
302 that the magnitude of the diffusion coefficient should vary inversely with the size of the diffusing
303 molecule. The relative sizes of acetic acid and pinonaldehyde to which the peaks at 61 and 151
304 were assigned were calculated using the maximal estimate approach based on molar volumes.¹¹¹
305 The molar volume was calculated using the molecular weight of each species and the
306 corresponding densities (a density of 1.05 g cm^{-3} was used for acetic acid and 0.83 g cm^{-3} for
307 pinonaldehyde. In the absence of literature values for the density of pinonaldehyde, the density
308 of nonanaldehyde was used as an approximation.). The molecular diameter σ_v was calculated
309 according to¹¹¹

$$\sigma_v^3 = \frac{6V_M}{\pi N_A}$$

310 where V_M is the molar volume and N_A is Avagadro's number. The resulting estimated molecular
311 diameters are 0.56 nm and 0.85 nm respectively for acetic acid and pinonaldehyde, suggesting

312 the ratio of diffusion coefficients should be 1.5, in good agreement with the value of 1.4 derived
313 from the data in Figure 7.

314

315 The outgassing of pinonaldehyde and acetic acid could reflect not only diffusion in the SOA
316 but also potentially their generation in the SOA through secondary chemistry. If the latter is
317 comparable to or slower than diffusion, the rate of outgassing will be a combination of the
318 kinetics of formation in the SOA and diffusion. The fact that the ratio of D/l^2 for these two
319 products is consistent with the ratio of their molecular sizes lends support to diffusion being the
320 determining process in the outgassing. The Kelvin effect and capillary forces between particles
321 have not been taken into account here because as discussed below (Fig. 8), the impacted sample
322 forms a combination of large "spots" of many impacted particles and films of bounced particles
323 where such effects will not be significant.

324

325 In order to derive absolute values of the diffusion coefficients, the film thickness l must be
326 known. As shown recently in this laboratory,⁴⁹ and shown in Figure 8, the SOA forms a
327 complex pattern on the crystal due to some particles staying directly where the particles impact
328 initially (centerline), with others bouncing towards the periphery of the crystal (cloud). If all the
329 SOA were collected in the spot where they initially struck and stayed there, the maximum depth
330 of SOA would be 5 μm . It is clear from Figure 8 that this is not the case as there is significant
331 spreading across the whole crystal. If it were spread evenly over the crystal, it would form a film
332 of thickness ~ 150 nm.

333

334 As a result, there is no well-defined value of l that can be used to obtain the absolute value of
335 the diffusion coefficients at this stage. Realistically, l could vary anywhere from 150 nm to a
336 few microns. As an illustration, a film thickness of 0.75 μm would lead to values of D of 3×10^{-14}
337 $\text{cm}^2 \text{s}^{-1}$ and $4 \times 10^{-14} \text{cm}^2 \text{s}^{-1}$ for acetic acid and pinonaldehyde respectively. Taking into account
338 the order of magnitude or so uncertainty in l (which will be the major source of error in any
339 estimate of D), this is still many orders of magnitude smaller than would be expected for a liquid
340 matrix where diffusion coefficients of order 10^{-5} - $10^{-10} \text{cm}^2 \text{s}^{-1}$ would be expected.⁶⁵ Abramson et
341 al.,⁶⁶ made direct measurements of the diffusion of pyrene trapped in SOA particles during α -
342 pinene ozonolysis by measuring the pyrene remaining in particles after exposure to activated
343 charcoal which takes up gas phase pyrene and other volatile organics. They obtained a diffusion
344 coefficient for pyrene of $2.5 \times 10^{-17} \text{cm}^2 \text{s}^{-1}$. To our knowledge this⁶⁶ is the only direct
345 measurement of a diffusion coefficient to date of an organic species within an SOA matrix.
346 Their experiments were carried out with cyclohexane as an OH scavenger, which perceivably
347 could result in SOA of a higher viscosity than in our experiments. Other factors that may
348 contribute to the difference include that our studies involve flowing clean air over the SOA
349 rather than depending on gas-phase diffusion from the gas-particle interface to a charcoal
350 adsorbent at the bottom of the chamber. Diffusion coefficients may also be composition specific,
351 depending not only on the size but also the nature of the diffusing species. The variable film
352 thickness in our experiments limits our ability to estimate D , although no reasonable assumptions
353 for this thickness would account for the magnitude of the differences observed. In any event,
354 this highlights a real need for measurements of the diffusion coefficients of different organic
355 species in SOA matrices with a variety of experimental techniques to improve our current

356 understanding and ability to predict condensed phase kinetic limitations on diffusion of different
357 organic species in SOA.

358

359 **Conclusions**

360 SOA is a complex mixture of organic species which often exhibits behavior that challenges our
361 assumptions of its composition and physical properties. Developments in high-resolution soft
362 ionization mass spectrometry techniques have, in recent years led to the detection of previously
363 unknown components of and precursors to SOA such as oligomers³⁷⁻⁴⁶ and ELVOC.^{29, 30, 35} We
364 have shown using a combination of infrared, and gas- and particle-phase mass spectrometry that
365 smaller particles are less volatile and have larger high molecular weight fractions than the larger
366 particles. This is consistent with particle formation (in the absence of seed particles) by high
367 molecular weight oligomers and ELVOC, and subsequent growth by condensation of smaller gas
368 phase products. The evaporation rates of acetic acid and pinonaldehyde from SOA have been
369 used to estimate the ratio of diffusion coefficients to the square of the average film thickness,
370 D/l^2 for acetic acid and pinonaldehyde, giving $D/l^2 = 6.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ for acetic acid and $5.0 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$
371 for pinonaldehyde. Extracting absolute diffusion coefficients depends on assumptions made
372 about the SOA film thickness. The relative magnitudes of these D/l^2 are consistent with what
373 would be expected based on the relative sizes of acetic acid and pinonaldehyde. Reasonable
374 estimates of the film thickness of 150 nm to a few microns put the range of diffusion coefficients
375 in the range consistent with SOA being a highly viscous material as indicated in previous studies.
376 ^{32, 49-68}

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Figures

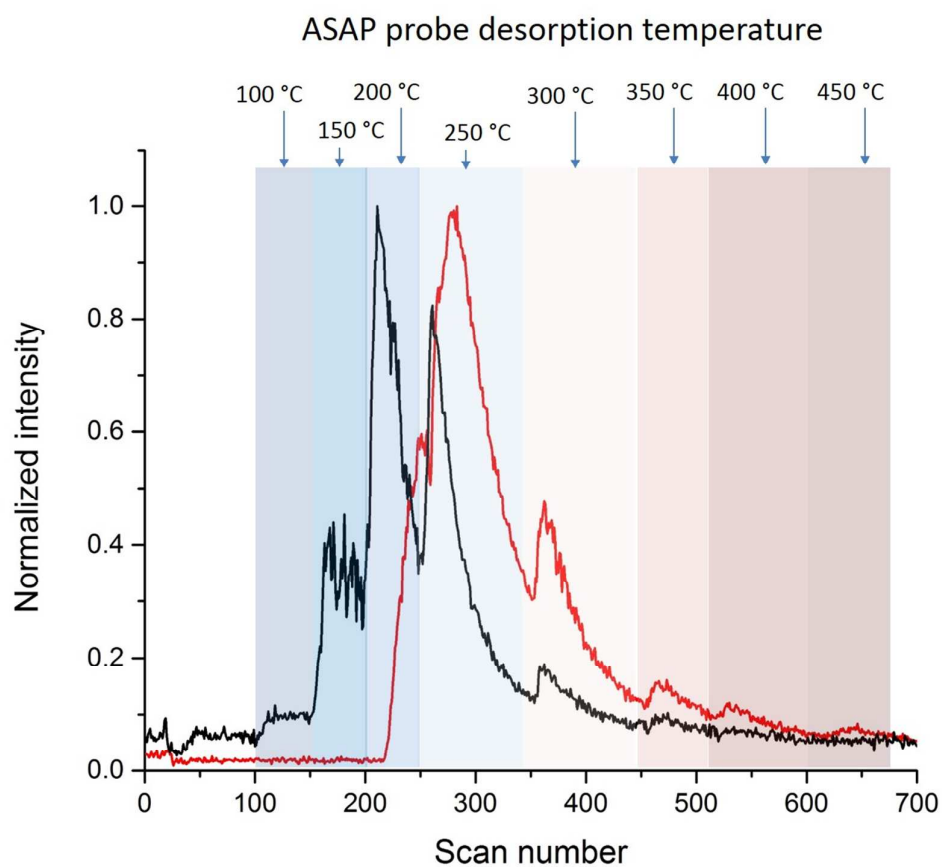


Figure 1: Total ion signal (TIS) for ASAP-MS analysis of SOA from the ozonolysis of α -pinene as a function of scan number and corresponding ASAP probe desorption temperature. The SOA was separated into fractions by particle size of 250-500 nm (red) and >500 nm (black) by impaction prior to analysis. TIS have been peak normalized for comparison.

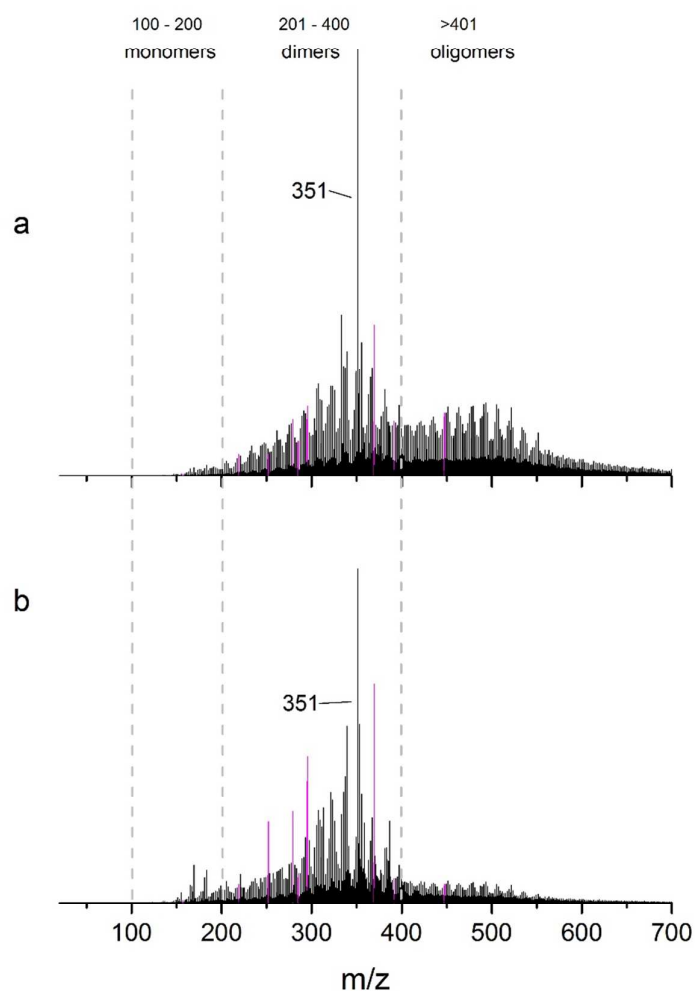


Figure 2: Typical ASAP mass spectra of SOA from the ozonolysis of α -pinene separated into size fractions of (a) 250-500 nm particles and (b) >500 nm particles by a Sioutas impactor prior to analysis. The spectra have been normalized to the peak at an m/z of 351. The peaks highlighted in purple are observed in background spectra and are not included in quantitative analyses of the spectra. Dashed lines represent the boundaries for the quantitative analysis to assign to monomers, dimers, and oligomers. These boundaries are for illustrative purposes only.

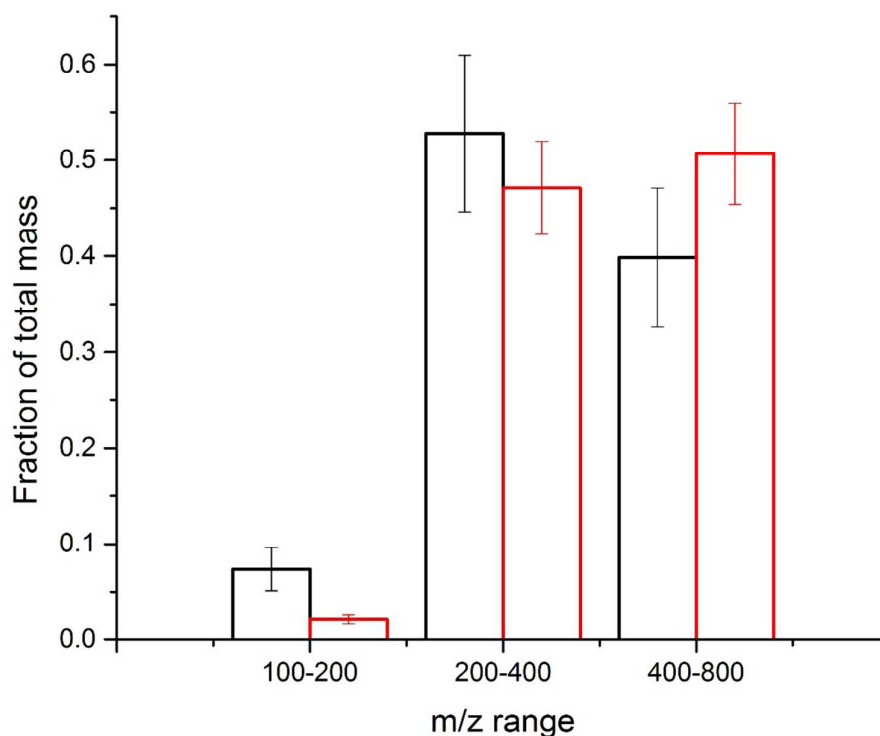


Figure 3: Fraction of the total signal detected by ASAP-MS as a function of m/z range for SOA from the ozonolysis of α -pinene. The SOA was separated into ranges by particle size of 250-500 nm (red) and >500 nm (black) by impaction prior to analysis. Six individual spectra were analysed for each size bin and the fractions represent the average of the six measurements and associated 1σ error. Contributions from contaminant peaks, highlighted in purple in Figure 2, were subtracted from the integrals before calculating the relative fractions. The contribution from contaminants was of order 2-4% of the total signal detected.

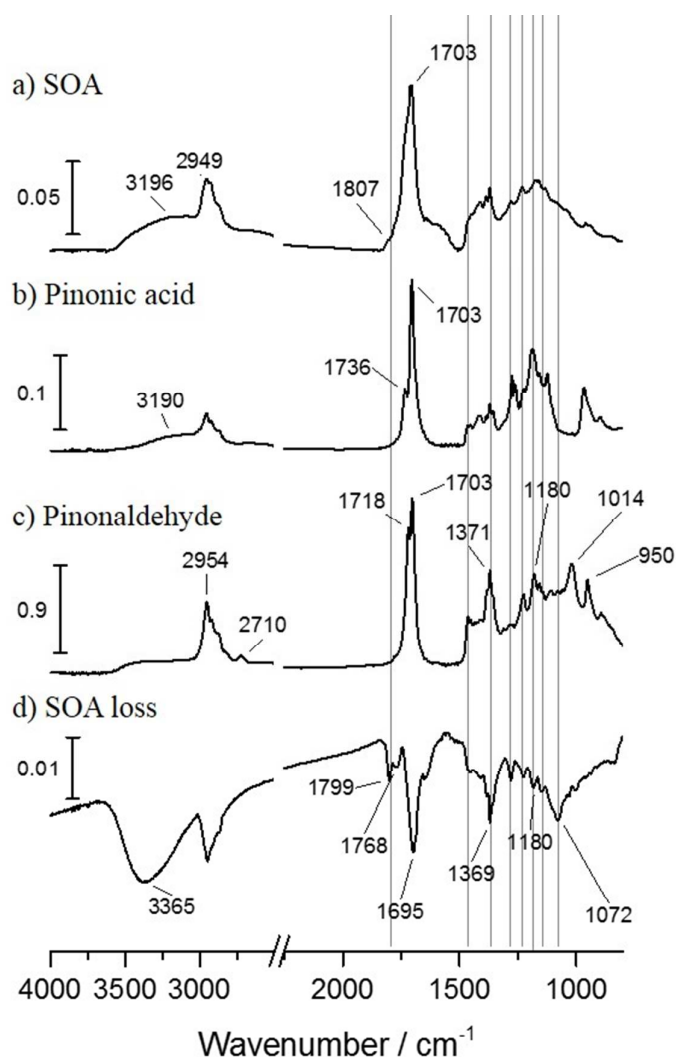


Figure 4: a) ATR-FTIR spectra of SOA from the ozonolysis of α -pinene. Absorbance (y axis) is $\log_{10}(S_0/S_1)$ where S_0 is the single beam spectrum of a clean crystal and S_1 the spectrum of the SOA covered crystal immediately following impaction. Contributions from gas-phase water have been subtracted; b) and c) are reference spectra of authentic samples of pinonic acid and pinonaldehyde. d) is the difference spectrum for SOA after 20 hrs of clean air flow over the sample. This spectrum is $\log_{10}(S_1/S_{20})$ where S_1 is the spectrum of the SOA covered crystal immediately following impaction and S_{20} is that after 20 hrs of clean air flow. Grey lines are to aid visual comparison between spectra.

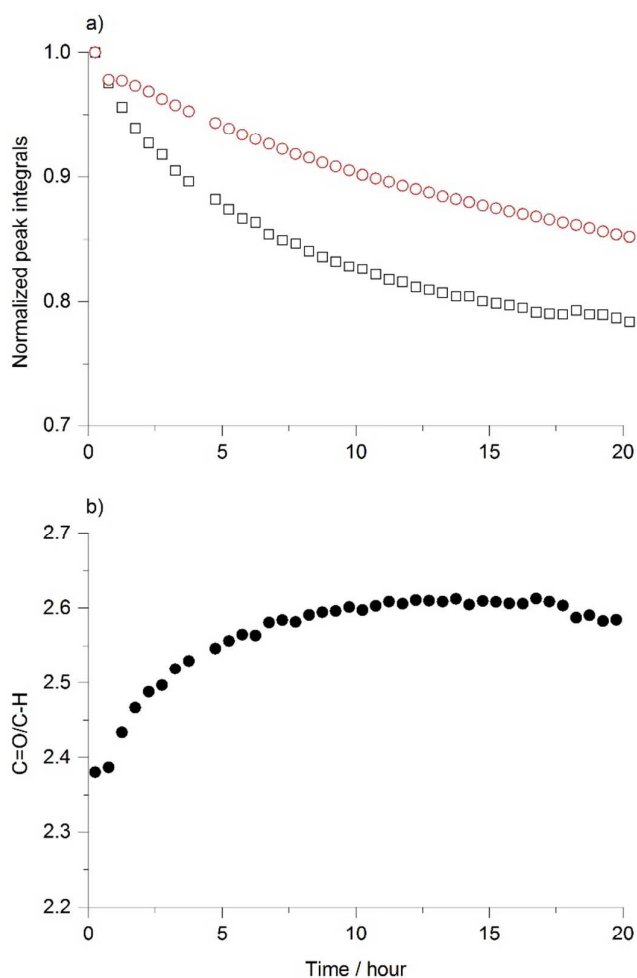


Figure 5: (a) Normalized (at $t=0$) integrated C-H peak (open black squares) and C=O peak (open red circles) for SOA as a function of time under a flow of clean air. (b) Ratio of C=O to C-H of peak integrals as a function of time under a flow of clean dry air for SOA from the ozonolysis of α -pinene. The C=O peak was the integrated area from $1658\text{-}1850\text{ cm}^{-1}$, but the peak at $\sim 1700\text{ cm}^{-1}$ dominates the signal. That for C-H was the integral from $2810\text{ - }3050\text{ cm}^{-1}$.

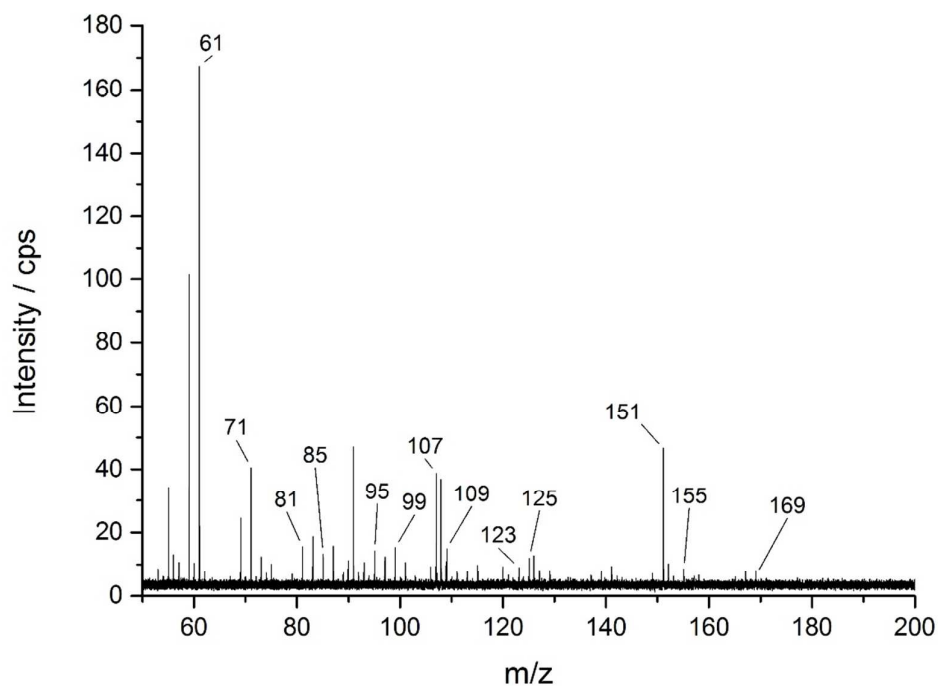


Figure 6: PTR-MS spectrum of air flowing over SOA from α -pinene ozonolysis. Spectrum is an average of 10 individual scans and is shown without background subtraction. Labelled peaks are those that were observable above the background. All other peaks in were present in background also and are therefore not assigned to species evaporating from SOA.

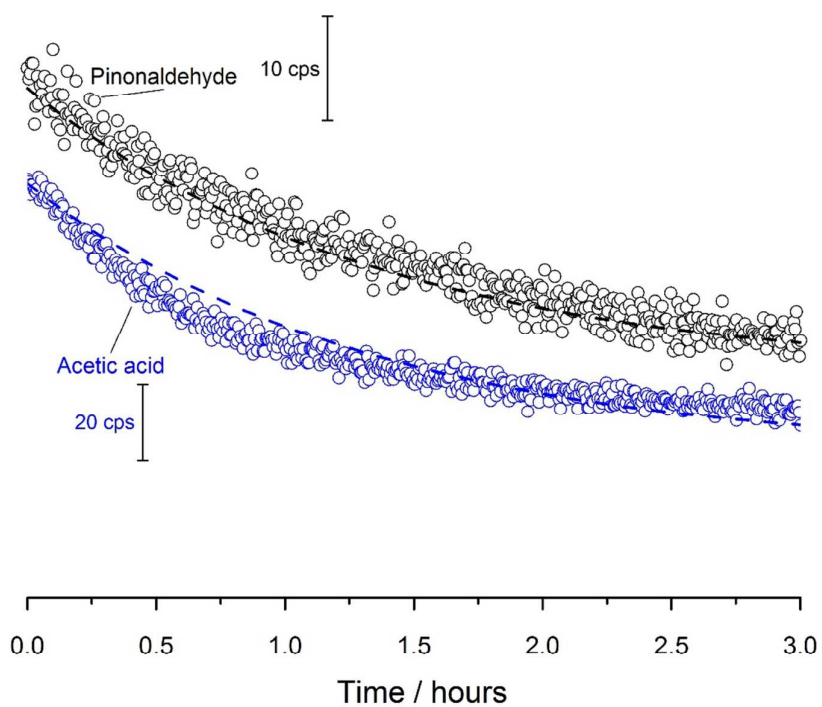


Figure 7: PTR-MS time traces for m/z 151 (black open circles) assumed to be acetic acid, and m/z 61 (blue open circles) assumed to be pinonaldehyde, extracted from PTR-MS spectra of air flowing over SOA. The vertical bars give the scale for the signal intensity for the Y-axis in counts per second (cps). Dashed lines are fits to modelled diffusion assuming a D/l^2 of $5.0 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ for m/z 151 and D/l^2 of $6.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$ for m/z 61 as described in the text.

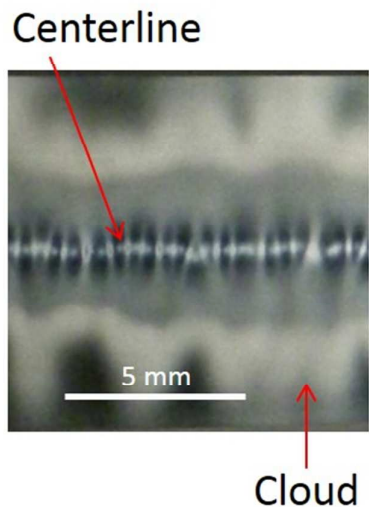


Figure 8: Digital photograph of SOA impacted onto a Ge ATR crystal (scale bar = 5 mm) at 30 L min^{-1} for 5 minutes. Ge was used as ZnSe does not provide the contrast needed to photograph the SOA. The ATR crystal is $8 \times 1 \text{ cm}$ (length by width) thus the photograph represents the full width of an SOA coated ATR crystal and a 1 cm portion of its length. The light color is impacted SOA and the dark colour is the Ge substrate. SOA particles impact initially at the centerline and may subsequently bounce forming the uneven coverage observed.