

Submarine High-Frequency Asymptotic Scattering

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Introduction

The primary defense of a submarine lies in its capacity to remain hidden during operation. As radio waves are strongly absorbed by sea water, sound navigation and ranging, or SONAR, is one of the main methods used for the detection of submarines. SONAR systems are also used for underwater exploration as well as in the fishing industry.

Designers analyze the way acoustic waves are reflected in order to minimize the equivalent reflecting area of the submarine. This tutorial studies the scattering off the BeTTSi benchmark submarine (Benchmark Target Echo Strength Simulation).

This model uses the high-frequency approximation of the *Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering* interface. The analysis is fast and a good approximation at high frequencies, where the wavelength is much smaller than the scattering object.



Figure 1: BeTSSi submarine geometry.

Model Definition

The target strength, or TS, is a measure of the area of a sonar target. In most submarines, reduction of the backscatter signal is achieved through the application of absorbing materials to the outer surfaces of the submarine. In this model, the target strength is

computed for a single angle of incidence and frequency. The model can be readily extended with a sweep over frequencies and source locations.

The tutorial is based on the BeTTSi benchmark submarine (Benchmark Target Echo Strength Simulation) presented in Ref. 1 and Ref. 2. The geometry, shown in Figure 1, is also used and discussed in detail the *Submarine Target Strength* tutorial model in the Application Library.

In the present tutorial, the scattering problem is solved with the Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering physics interface. The interface relies on a high-frequency approximation where the sound field is assumed to be locally plane. This is valid as long as the wavelength is much smaller than the important geometry details as well as the radius of curvature of important surfaces. Reflections are treated analytically at surfaces and the radiated/scattered field is computed using the Kirchhoff-Helmholtz integral. This approach is also sometimes referred to as high-frequency BEM or HFB.

In this model, the surface properties of the submarine are defined through an angle dependent absorption coefficient $\alpha(\theta)$. The angle dependency is included using the builtin variable paas.thetai. The absorption data is generic and is here given in an interpolation function. The absorption data can be based on measurements or computed using a sub-model. An example of the sub-model approach is given in the *Anechoic Coating* model gallery tutorial:

https://www.comsol.com/model/anechoic-coating-44201

Results and Discussion

The full 3D radiation pattern, evaluated at 100 m is depicted in Figure 2. Notice the main lobe corresponding to the specular reflection on the main part of the submarine body. The corresponding radiation pattern in the xy-plane, evaluated at a source distance of 1000 m is depicted in Figure 3. The near-field total pressure and the near-field scattered sound pressure level is depicted in Figure 4 and Figure 7, respectively.

The asymptotic scattering approach relies on a visibility computation, that is, the portion of the scattering object surfaces that have a directly incident background field. The visibility for the current configuration is depicted in Figure 5 (top left). For the visible surfaces, the angle of incidence of the incident field as well as the corresponding absorption coefficient is depicted in the top right and the bottom figures, respectively.

Finally, the ballistic target strength (TS) for the current configuration of source and scatterer is depicted in Figure 6.



Figure 2: Radiation pattern evaluated at 100 m from the submarine.



Figure 3: Radiation pattern in the xy-plane, evaluated at the source distance (1 km).

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freq(1)=2000 Hz Multislice: Total acoustic pressure (Pa) Surface: Total acoustic pressure (Pa)

Figure 4: Total acoustic pressure (incident and scattered) evaluated at the submarine surface and in the z = 0 plane. The evaluation grid is slightly under resolving the pattern.



Figure 5: The surface visibility (top left); the angle of incidence of the incident acoustic field on the visible surfaces (top right); and the absorption including the angle dependency (bottom)



Figure 6: The plot shows the target strength TS.



Figure 7: The scattered SPL in the z = 0 plane in the region around the submarine.

- The walls (visible) of the scattering object can be characterized in terms of a reflection coefficient R (complex valued), a normal impedance Z_n (complex valued), or an absorption coefficient α and phase. The reflection coefficient and the absorption coefficient can have a dependency on the angle of incidence using the built-in variable paas.theta. If multiple sources are defined, the variable will automatically take the differences into account. Variables also exist for the source defined by the individual background pressure field features, for example, for the first feature paas.bpf1.theta (using the item scope).
- When postprocessing using either a grid dataset or a radiation patter plot, it is important to resolve the wave pattern. This is particularly so since the method is used for high-frequency problems where the wavelength is much smaller than the scattering objects. The spatial resolution can be set on the grid dataset as well as in the radiation pattern plot. Remember that rendering each data point is time consuming.

Reference

1. B. Nolte, I. Schäfer, C. de Jong, and L. Gilroy, "BeTSSi II benchmark on target strength simulation," *Proceedings of Forum Acusticum*, 2014.

2. J.V. Venås and T. Kvamsdal, "Isogeometric boundary element method for acoustic scattering by a submarine," *Comp. Meth. Appl. Mech. Eng.*, vol. 359, p. 112670, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cma.2019.112670.

Application Library path: Acoustics_Module/Underwater_Acoustics/ submarine_asymptotic_scattering

Modeling Instructions

From the File menu, choose New.

NEW

In the New window, click 🔗 Model Wizard.

MODEL WIZARD

I In the Model Wizard window, click 间 3D.

- 2 In the Select Physics tree, select Acoustics>Pressure Acoustics>Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering.
- 3 Click Add.
- 4 Click \bigcirc Study.
- 5 In the Select Study tree, select General Studies>Frequency Domain.
- 6 Click 🗹 Done.

GLOBAL DEFINITIONS

Parameters 1

- I In the Model Builder window, under Global Definitions click Parameters I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Parameters, locate the Parameters section.
- 3 Click 📂 Load from File.
- 4 Browse to the model's Application Libraries folder and double-click the file submarine_asymptotic_scattering_parameters.txt.

Interpolation 1 (int1)

- I In the Home toolbar, click f(X) Functions and choose Global>Interpolation.
- 2 In the Settings window for Interpolation, locate the Definition section.
- 3 From the Data source list, choose File.
- 4 Click **Browse**.
- 5 Browse to the model's Application Libraries folder and double-click the file submarine_asymptotic_scattering_alpha.txt.
- 6 Click **[I** Import.
- 7 In the Function name text field, type alpha.
- 8 Locate the Interpolation and Extrapolation section. From the Interpolation list, choose Cubic spline.
- 9 Locate the Units section. In the Function table, enter the following settings:

Function	Unit
alpha	1

10 In the **Argument** table, enter the following settings:

Argument	Unit
t	deg

GEOMETRY I

The model uses an external mphbin file with the geometry. The instructions for building the submarine geometry can be found in the Submarine Target Strength tutorial.

Import I (imp1)

- I In the Home toolbar, click 🗔 Import.
- 2 In the Settings window for Import, locate the Import section.
- 3 Click 📂 Browse.
- **4** Browse to the model's Application Libraries folder and double-click the file submarine_asymptotic_scattering.mphbin.
- 5 Click 🟢 Build All Objects.

Use Virtual Operations to simplify the geometry for meshing.

Form Composite Faces 1 (cmf1)

- I In the Geometry toolbar, click 🏠 Virtual Operations and choose Form Composite Faces.
- 2 On the object fin, select Boundaries 1–10, 69–73, and 79–83 only.
- 3 In the Settings window for Form Composite Faces, click 📳 Build Selected.

Form Composite Faces 2 (cmf2)

- I In the Geometry toolbar, click 🏠 Virtual Operations and choose Form Composite Faces.
- **2** On the object **cmf1**, select Boundaries 4–7, 13–16, 24–27, 49, 50, 62, 63, 65, 66, and 84–87 only.

3 In the Settings window for Form Composite Faces, click 틤 Build Selected.

The geometry should look like this.



DEFINITIONS

Variables 1

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Component I (compl)>Definitions node.
- 2 Right-click **Definitions** and choose **Variables**.
- 3 In the Settings window for Variables, locate the Variables section.
- 4 Click 📂 Load from File.
- 5 Browse to the model's Application Libraries folder and double-click the file submarine_asymptotic_scattering_variables.txt.

Average 1 (aveop1)

- I In the Definitions toolbar, click *P* Nonlocal Couplings and choose Average.
- 2 In the Settings window for Average, locate the Source Selection section.
- **3** From the **Geometric entity level** list, choose **Boundary**.
- 4 From the Selection list, choose All boundaries.

ADD MATERIAL

- I In the Home toolbar, click 🙀 Add Material to open the Add Material window.
- 2 Go to the Add Material window.
- 3 In the tree, select Built-in>Water, liquid.
- 4 Click Add to Component in the window toolbar.
- 5 In the Home toolbar, click 🙀 Add Material to close the Add Material window.

MATERIALS

Water, liquid (mat1)

- I In the Settings window for Material, locate the Geometric Entity Selection section.
- 2 From the Selection list, choose All voids.

PRESSURE ACOUSTICS, ASYMPTOTIC SCATTERING (PAAS)

- I In the Model Builder window, under Component I (compl) click Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering (paas).
- 2 In the Settings window for Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering, locate the Sound Pressure Level Settings section.
- **3** From the **Reference pressure for the sound pressure level** list, choose **Use reference pressure for water**.

Pressure Acoustics 1

- In the Model Builder window, under Component I (compl)>Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering (paas) click Pressure Acoustics I.
- **2** In the **Settings** window for **Pressure Acoustics**, locate the **Pressure Acoustics Model** section.
- **3** From the Fluid model list, choose Ocean attenuation.

Note that material properties cannot be space dependent when used in the Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering interface.

Background Pressure Field I

- I In the Model Builder window, click Background Pressure Field I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Background Pressure Field, locate the Background Pressure Field section.
- 3 From the Pressure field type list, choose Spherical wave.
- 4 In the p_0 text field, type p_ref.

5 Specify the \mathbf{x}_0 vector as

-d_source*cos(phi)+L/2	x
-d_source*sin(phi)	у
0	z

The boundary conditions applicable to the scattering object are added as **Wall** subfeatures to the **Scattering Object**. Modify the default **Wall** condition to include an angle dependent surface absorption.

Wall I

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Scattering Object I node, then click Wall I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Wall, locate the Wall section.
- **3** From the Type list, choose Absorption coefficient.
- 4 In the α_n text field, type alpha(paas.theta).

Note the use of the general paas.theta variable that defines the angle of incidence. When plotting the angle in postprocessing, the item scope of the **Background Pressure Field** has to be added (each background field defines its associated angle of incidence). This is shown when analyzing the results.

In this model, the mesh is set up manually. Proceed by directly adding the desired mesh component. Four elements per wavelength is adequate for the formulation in this model.

MESH I

Mapped I

In the Mesh toolbar, click A Boundary and choose Mapped.

Size

- I In the Model Builder window, click Size.
- 2 In the Settings window for Size, locate the Element Size section.
- **3** Click the **Custom** button.
- 4 Locate the **Element Size Parameters** section. In the **Maximum element size** text field, type lam0/4.
- 5 In the Minimum element size text field, type 50[mm].

Mapped I

- I In the Model Builder window, click Mapped I.
- 2 Select Boundaries 8-15, 18, 19, 24-27, 32-35, 38, 39, 42, 43, 46-55, and 62-69 only.

3 In the Settings window for Mapped, click 📗 Build Selected.



Free Triangular 1

- I In the Mesh toolbar, click \bigwedge Boundary and choose Free Triangular.
- 2 In the Settings window for Free Triangular, locate the Boundary Selection section.
- **3** From the **Geometric entity level** list, choose **Remaining**.

4 Click 📗 Build All.



STUDY I

Step 1: Frequency Domain

- I In the Model Builder window, under Study I click Step I: Frequency Domain.
- 2 In the Settings window for Frequency Domain, locate the Study Settings section.
- **3** In the **Frequencies** text field, type **f0**.
- **4** In the **Home** toolbar, click **= Compute**.

RESULTS

In Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering models, the time consuming computations are not to solve the model. The actual solution time lies in evaluating the results in postprocessing (through the exterior field feature). To get information about the rendering/plotting time turn on the **Plot Information Section**. On each plot, an **Information** section will appear where the data is displayed (expand the section). This option applies to the whole COMSOL installation; if selected, the **Plot Information Section** will also appear in other models opened at a later stage.

- I Click the 🐱 Show More Options button in the Model Builder toolbar.
- 2 In the Show More Options dialog box, select Results>Plot Information Section in the tree.

- 3 In the tree, select the check box for the node Results>Plot Information Section.
- 4 Click OK.

It can be useful to select the **Only plot when requested** option on the **Results** node when working with the plots, since the rendering times can be large. Also, on the **Results** node, turning on **Save plot data** is recommended; the plots will be saved rendered in the file.

- 5 In the Model Builder window, click Results.
- 6 In the Settings window for Results, locate the Update of Results section.
- 7 Select the Only plot when requested check box.
- 8 Locate the Save Data in the Model section. From the Save plot data list, choose On.

3D Scattered SPL Radiation Pattern at 100 m

Proceed by modifying the default plots, then add some additional plots.

- I In the Model Builder window, under Results click Exterior-Field Sound Pressure Level (paas).
- 2 In the Settings window for 3D Plot Group, type 3D Scattered SPL Radiation Pattern at 100 m in the Label text field.
- 3 Click to expand the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Label.

Radiation Pattern 1

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the 3D Scattered SPL Radiation Pattern at 100 m node, then click Radiation Pattern I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Radiation Pattern, locate the Evaluation section.
- 3 Find the Angles subsection. In the Number of elevation angles text field, type 90.
- 4 In the Number of azimuth angles text field, type 180.
- 5 Find the Sphere subsection. From the Sphere list, choose Manual.
- 6 In the X text field, type L/2.
- 7 In the **Radius** text field, type 100[m].
- 8 Locate the Coloring and Style section. From the Grid list, choose Finer.

Transparency I

Right-click Radiation Pattern I and choose Transparency.

Surface 1

- I In the Model Builder window, right-click 3D Scattered SPL Radiation Pattern at 100 m and choose Surface.
- 2 In the Settings window for Surface, locate the Expression section.

- **3** In the **Expression** text field, type **1**.
- 4 Locate the Coloring and Style section. From the Coloring list, choose Uniform.
- 5 From the Color list, choose Gray.

Line I

- I Right-click 3D Scattered SPL Radiation Pattern at 100 m and choose Line.
- 2 In the Settings window for Line, locate the Data section.
- 3 From the Dataset list, choose Study I/Solution I (soll).
- 4 Locate the Expression section. In the Expression text field, type 1.
- 5 Locate the Coloring and Style section. From the Coloring list, choose Uniform.
- 6 From the Color list, choose Black.
- 7 In the 3D Scattered SPL Radiation Pattern at 100 m toolbar, click 🗿 Plot.
- 8 Click the **Zoom Extents** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.



3D Scattered SPL Radiation Pattern at 100 m



Exterior-Field Pressure at 100 m

- I In the Model Builder window, under Results click Exterior-Field Pressure (paas).
- 2 In the Settings window for 2D Plot Group, type Exterior-Field Pressure at 100 m in the Label text field.
- 3 Click to expand the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Label.

Radiation Pattern 1

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Exterior-Field Pressure at 100 m node, then click Radiation Pattern I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Radiation Pattern, locate the Evaluation section.
- 3 Find the Angles subsection. In the Number of elevation angles text field, type 90.
- 4 In the Number of azimuth angles text field, type 180.
- 5 Find the Sphere subsection. From the Sphere list, choose Manual.
- 6 In the X text field, type L/2.
- 7 In the **Radius** text field, type 100[m].
- 8 In the Exterior-Field Pressure at 100 m toolbar, click 💽 Plot.
- **9** Click the 4 **Zoom Extents** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.



Scattered SPL in xy-plane (at source distance)

- I In the Model Builder window, under Results click Exterior-Field Sound Pressure Level xyplane (paas).
- 2 In the Settings window for Polar Plot Group, type Scattered SPL in xy-plane (at source distance) in the Label text field.
- 3 Click to expand the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Label.

Radiation Pattern 1

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Scattered SPL in xy-plane (at source distance) node, then click Radiation Pattern I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Radiation Pattern, locate the Evaluation section.
- 3 Find the Angles subsection. In the Number of angles text field, type 1800.
- 4 Find the **Center** subsection. In the x text field, type L/2.
- 5 Find the Evaluation distance subsection. In the Radius text field, type d_source.
- 6 Find the Reference direction subsection. In the x text field, type -1.
- 7 Click Preview Evaluation Plane.

The preview plot generated when clicking the **Preview Evaluation Plane** shows the orientation of the circle where the radiation pattern is visualized.

8 Click **Zoom Extents** in the window toolbar.

Radiation Pattern I

- I In the Model Builder window, click Radiation Pattern I.
- 2 In the Scattered SPL in xy-plane (at source distance) toolbar, click 🗿 Plot.



Grid 3D I

I In the Model Builder window, expand the Results>Datasets node, then click Grid 3D I.

- 2 In the Settings window for Grid 3D, locate the Parameter Bounds section.
- 3 Find the First parameter subsection. In the Minimum text field, type -20.
- **4** In the **Maximum** text field, type **80**.
- 5 Find the Second parameter subsection. In the Minimum text field, type -25.
- 6 In the Maximum text field, type 25.
- 7 Find the Third parameter subsection. In the Minimum text field, type -25.
- 8 In the Maximum text field, type 25.
- 9 Click to expand the Grid section. In the x resolution text field, type 400.
- **IO** In the **y resolution** text field, type 200.
- II In the z resolution text field, type 2.

The grid resolution should in general be adequate to resolve the wave pattern (wavelength) in the plots. Here, the grid resolution is set to 2 in the z direction in order to reduce the overall grid points to evaluate. The plots only contain xy-plane cuts.

Multislice 1

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Acoustic Pressure (paas) node, then click Multislice I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Multislice, locate the Multiplane Data section.
- 3 Find the x-planes subsection. In the Planes text field, type 0.
- 4 Find the y-planes subsection. In the Planes text field, type 0.

5 In the Acoustic Pressure (paas) toolbar, click **9** Plot.

freq(1)=2000 Hz Multislice: Total acoustic pressure (Pa) Surface: Total acoustic pressure (Pa)



Visibility

- I In the Home toolbar, click 🚛 Add Plot Group and choose 3D Plot Group.
- 2 In the Settings window for 3D Plot Group, type Visibility in the Label text field.
- 3 Click to expand the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Label.

Surface 1

- I Right-click Visibility and choose Surface.
- In the Settings window for Surface, click Replace Expression in the upper-right corner of the Expression section. From the menu, choose Component I (comp1)>
 Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering>Background Pressure Field 1>
 paas.bpf1.visibility Visibility.

3 In the **Visibility** toolbar, click **I** Plot.



Angle of Incidence

- I In the Home toolbar, click 🚛 Add Plot Group and choose 3D Plot Group.
- 2 In the Settings window for 3D Plot Group, type Angle of Incidence in the Label text field.
- 3 Locate the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Label.

Surface 1

- I Right-click Angle of Incidence and choose Surface.
- In the Settings window for Surface, click Replace Expression in the upper-right corner of the Expression section. From the menu, choose Component I (compl)>
 Pressure Acoustics, Asymptotic Scattering>Background Pressure Field I>paas.bpfl.theta Incident angle rad.

To only view the angle on the visible surfaces, replace the expression with the following.

3 Locate the **Expression** section. In the **Expression** text field, type if(paas.bpf1.visibility,paas.bpf1.theta,NaN).

4 In the **Angle of Incidence** toolbar, click **I Plot**.



Angle of Incidence



Surface Normal Absorption

- I In the Home toolbar, click 📠 Add Plot Group and choose 3D Plot Group.
- 2 In the Settings window for 3D Plot Group, type Surface Normal Absorption in the Label text field.
- 3 Locate the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Label.

Surface 1

- I Right-click Surface Normal Absorption and choose Surface.
- 2 In the Settings window for Surface, locate the Expression section.
- **3** In the **Expression** text field, type if (paas.bpf1.visibility, alpha(paas.bpf1.theta), NaN).

4 In the Surface Normal Absorption toolbar, click **I** Plot.



Parameterized Curve 3D 1

- I In the **Results** toolbar, click **More Datasets** and choose **Parameterized Curve 3D**.
- 2 In the Settings window for Parameterized Curve 3D, locate the Parameter section.
- 3 In the Maximum text field, type 2*pi.
- 4 Locate the Expressions section. In the x text field, type -d_source*cos(s)+L/2.
- **5** In the **y** text field, type -d_source*sin(s).
- 6 Select the Only evaluate globally defined expressions check box.

Cut Plane I

- I In the **Results** toolbar, click **Cut Plane**.
- 2 In the Settings window for Cut Plane, locate the Data section.
- 3 From the Dataset list, choose Grid 3D I.
- 4 Locate the Plane Data section. From the Plane list, choose xy-planes.

Ballistic Target Strength

- I In the Results toolbar, click \sim ID Plot Group.
- 2 In the Settings window for ID Plot Group, type Ballistic Target Strength in the Label text field.

- 3 Locate the Data section. From the Dataset list, choose Parameterized Curve 3D I.
- 4 Click to expand the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Label.

Line Graph 1

- I Right-click Ballistic Target Strength and choose Line Graph.
- 2 In the Settings window for Line Graph, locate the y-Axis Data section.
- **3** In the **Expression** text field, type TS.
- 4 Locate the x-Axis Data section. From the Parameter list, choose Expression.
- **5** In the **Expression** text field, type s[rad].
- 6 Select the **Description** check box. In the associated text field, type **Receiver** angle.
- 7 In the Ballistic Target Strength toolbar, click 💽 Plot.



Scattered SPL

- I In the Home toolbar, click 🚛 Add Plot Group and choose 3D Plot Group.
- 2 In the Settings window for 3D Plot Group, type Scattered SPL in the Label text field.
- 3 Locate the Data section. From the Dataset list, choose Cut Plane I.
- 4 Click to expand the **Title** section. From the **Title type** list, choose **Label**.
- 5 Locate the Color Legend section. Select the Show units check box.

Surface 1

- I Right-click Scattered SPL and choose Surface.
- 2 In the Settings window for Surface, locate the Expression section.
- **3** In the **Expression** text field, type paas.Lp_s.

Surface 2

- I In the Model Builder window, right-click Scattered SPL and choose Surface.
- 2 In the Settings window for Surface, locate the Data section.
- 3 From the Dataset list, choose Study I/Solution I (soll).
- **4** Locate the **Expression** section. In the **Expression** text field, type **1**.

Material Appearance 1

- I Right-click Surface 2 and choose Material Appearance.
- 2 In the Settings window for Material Appearance, locate the Appearance section.
- **3** From the **Appearance** list, choose **Custom**.
- 4 From the Material type list, choose Steel.

Line I

- I In the Model Builder window, right-click Scattered SPL and choose Line.
- 2 In the Settings window for Line, locate the Data section.
- 3 From the Dataset list, choose Study I/Solution I (soll).
- **4** Locate the **Expression** section. In the **Expression** text field, type **1**.
- 5 Locate the Coloring and Style section. From the Coloring list, choose Uniform.
- 6 From the Color list, choose Black.

Scattered SPL

In the Model Builder window, click Scattered SPL.

Arrow Point I

- I In the Scattered SPL toolbar, click i More Plots and choose Arrow Point.
- 2 In the Settings window for Arrow Point, locate the Data section.
- 3 From the Dataset list, choose Study I/Solution I (soll).
- 4 Locate the **Expression** section. In the **X** component text field, type 10*cos(phi).
- 5 In the Y component text field, type 10*sin(phi).
- 6 In the **Z** component text field, type 0.
- 7 Locate the Coloring and Style section. From the Arrow base list, choose Head.

8 Select the Scale factor check box.

Selection 1

- I Right-click Arrow Point I and choose Selection.
- **2** Select Point 44 only.
- 3 In the Scattered SPL toolbar, click 💿 Plot.



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