


Lecture 6: Solver Settings and Output File

16.0 Release

A visualization of fluid flow, showing blue, wavy, semi-transparent surfaces that represent the movement of a fluid over a surface.

Fluid Dynamics

A 3D rendering of a purple gear with a glowing white center, set against a background of other, fainter gears.

Structural Mechanics

A series of concentric green circles with a glowing center, representing electromagnetic fields or waves.

Electromagnetics

A 3D arrangement of teal and black rectangular blocks, some stacked and some floating, representing complex systems and multiphysics simulations.

Systems and Multiphysics

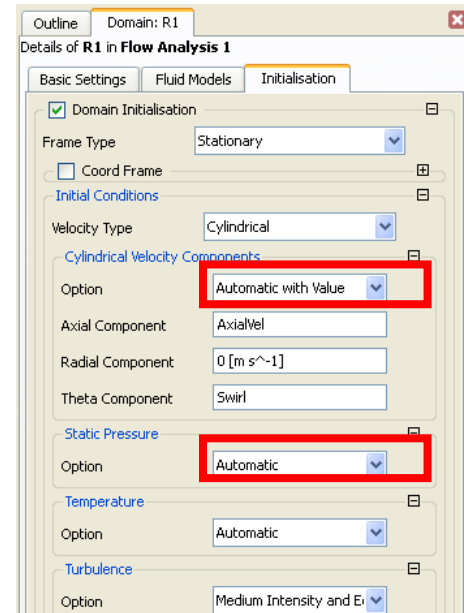
Introduction to ANSYS CFX

- **Lecture Theme:**
 - CFX requires inputs which tell it how to calculate the solution. By introducing the concepts of accuracy, stability and convergence, the purpose of each setting can be understood. Emphasis will be placed on convergence, which is critical for the CFD simulation
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - You will be able to choose appropriate solver settings for your CFD simulation
- **Outline**
 - Initialization
 - Solver:
 - Convergence Control
 - Residuals
 - Additional convergence checks
 - Output Control
 - CFX Solver Manager
 - CFX Solver Output File
 - Summary

- All solution variables must be assigned initial values
- A good initial guess can reduce solution time
- A poor initial guess may cause solver failure
- The initial values can be set in 3 ways:
 - Automatic option
 - CFX-Solver calculates initial values based on boundary condition values and domain settings
 - Automatic with Value option
 - User specified value will be used
 - Can use a constant value or an expression
 - From a previous solution (*see next slide*)



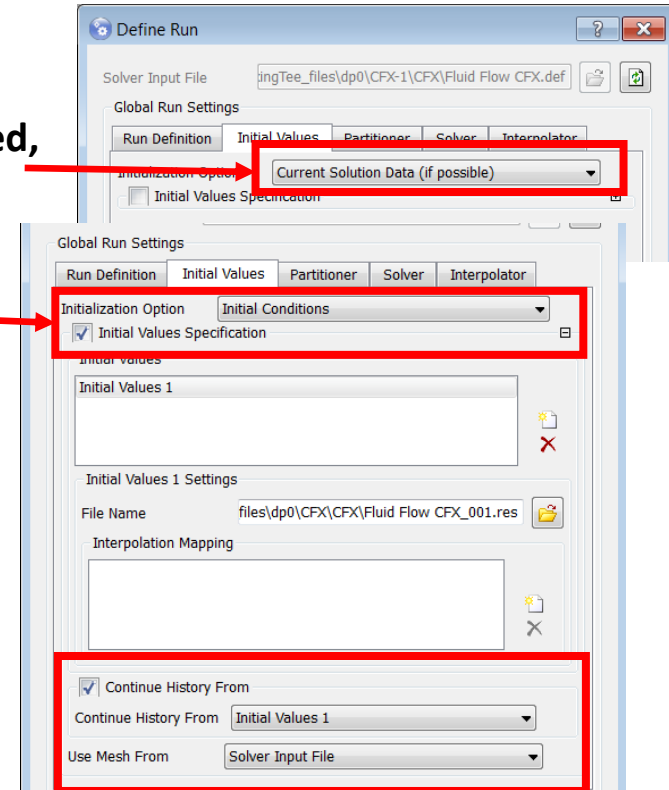
Insert Global Initialization from the toolbar or by right-clicking on Flow Analysis 1



Initialization – Using a Previous Solution

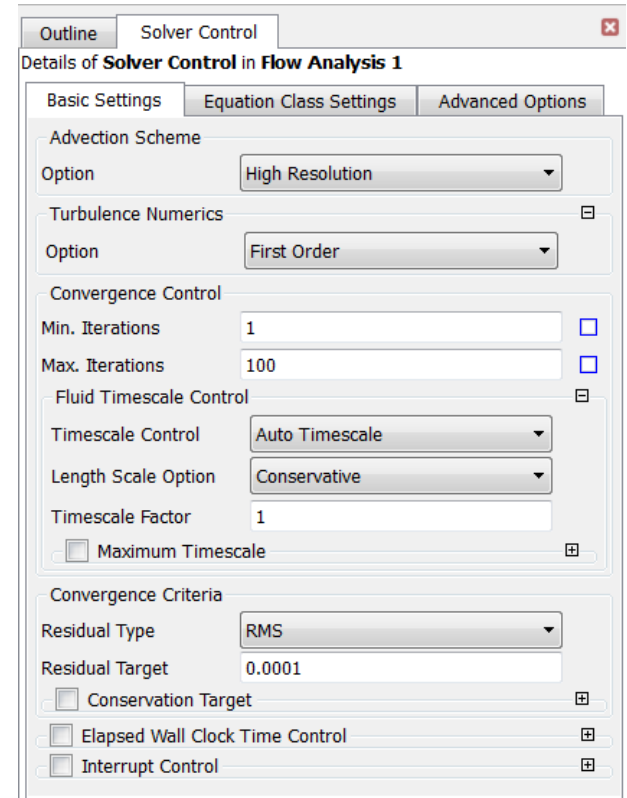
- **Initial Values tab**

- by default in Workbench results from a previous run are used, **Current Solution Data**
- to specify results file
 - set option to Initial Conditions
 - switch on ‘Initial Values Specification’
 - Select the file (res, .bak or _full.trn)
- **Continue History From** carries over convergence history & iteration counters
- **Use Mesh From:**
 - Solver Input File → Initial Values interpolated on to input file
 - Initial Values → only physics from the Solver Input File used

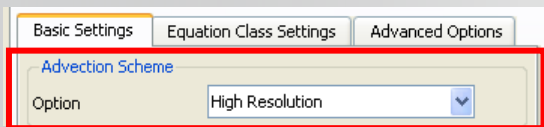


Solver Control – Options

- The Solver Control panel contains various controls that influence the behavior of the solver
- These controls are important for the accuracy of the solution, the stability of the solver and the length of time it takes to obtain a solution



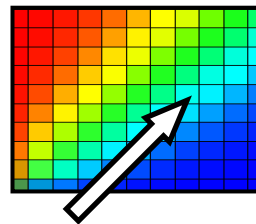
Advection Scheme Theory



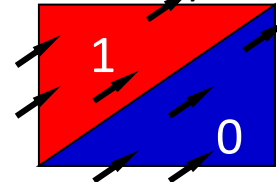
$$\phi_{ip} = \phi_{up} + \beta \nabla \phi \cdot \Delta \vec{r}$$

- **Upwind** advection scheme $\rightarrow \beta = 0$
 - robust but only first-order accurate
- **Specified Blend** scheme $\rightarrow 0 < \beta < 1$
 - when the correction is included it can overshoot or undershoot what is physically possible
- **High Resolution** scheme maximizes β throughout the flow domain while keeping the solution bounded

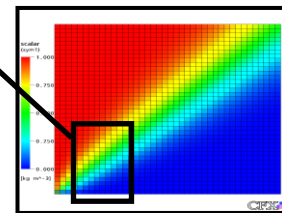
Flow is misaligned with mesh



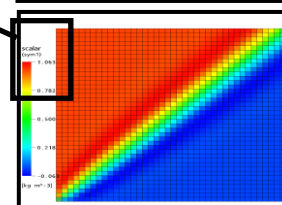
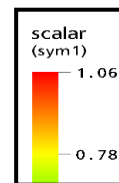
Theory



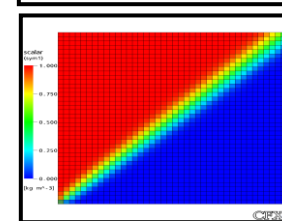
Upwind Scheme



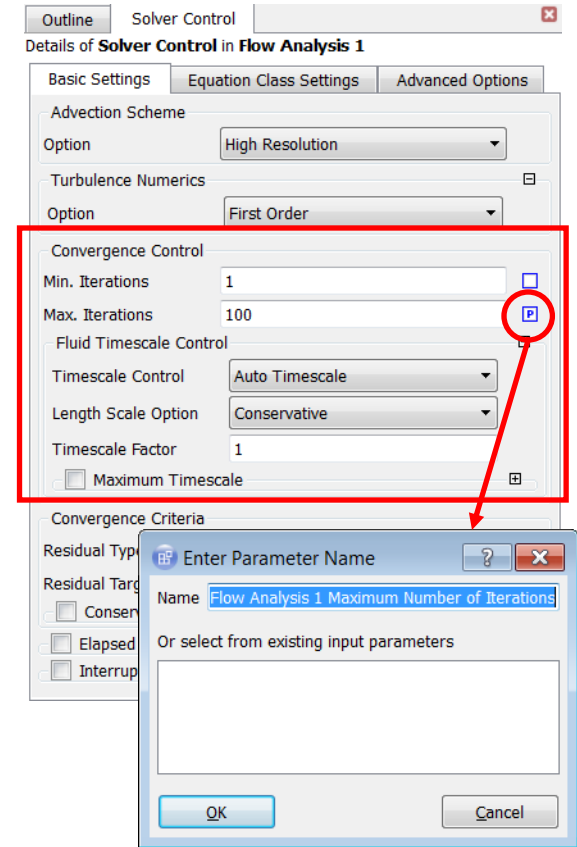
$\beta = 1.00$



High Resolution Scheme

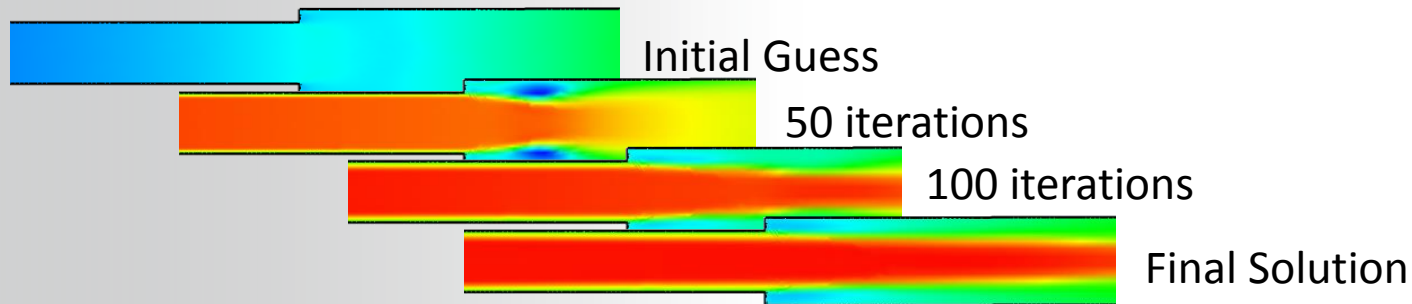


- The Solver finishes when it reaches Max. Iterations or convergence
 - If Max. Iterations is reached, you may not have a converged solution
 - Min. and Max. Iterations can be Workbench input parameters
- When the Solver finishes you should always check *why* it finished
- Fluid Timescale Control sets the timescale in a steady-state simulation



Timescale Background

- ANSYS CFX employs the so-called False Transient in steady-state simulations
 - A timescale is used to move the solution towards the final answer
- The timescale provides relaxation of equation non-linearities
- A steady-state simulation is a ‘transient’ evolution of the flow from the initial guess to the steady-state conditions
 - Converged solution is independent of the timescale used



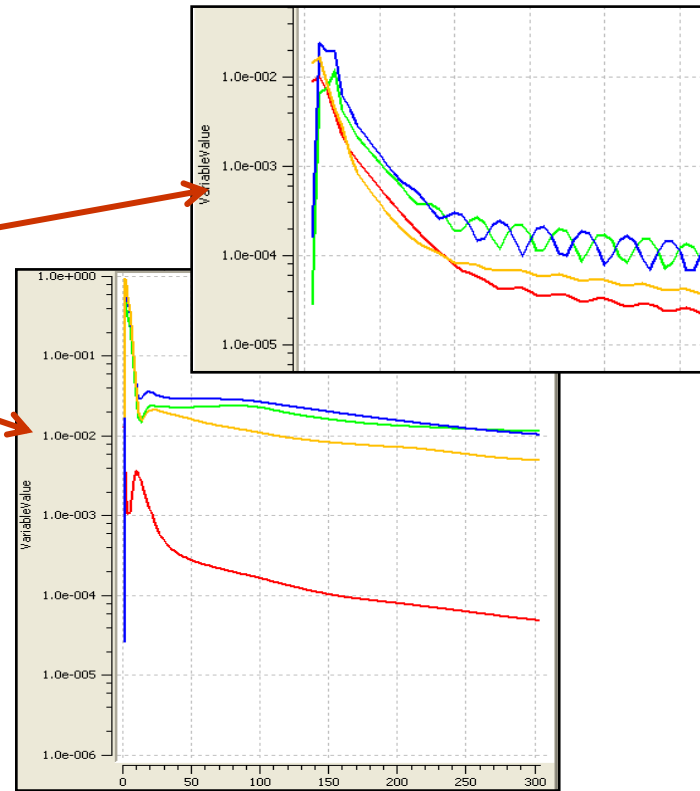
- **For obtaining good convergence, the selection of the timescale plays an important role**

- Timescale: too large → convergence becomes bouncy or may even lead to the failure
- Timescale: too small → convergence will be very slow

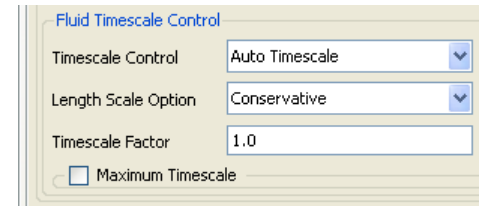
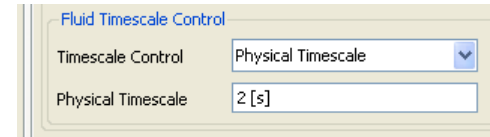
- **1/3 of (Length Scale / Velocity Scale) is often optimal**

- **Rotating machines: use $0.1/\omega$ to $1/\omega$ (ω in rad/s)**

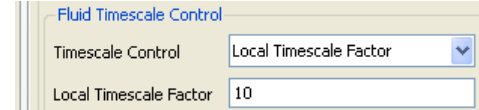
- **Free Convection:** $\Delta t_{\max} \approx \sqrt{\frac{dl}{\beta g \Delta T}}$



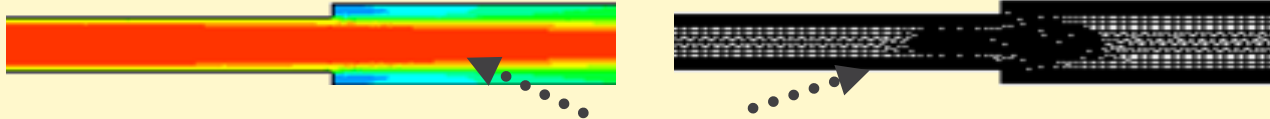
- **Physical Timescale**
 - constant value or expression
 - Often better than Auto Timescale → faster convergence
- **Auto Timescale**
 - Solver calculates a timescale based on boundary / initial conditions or current solution and domain length scale
 - Use a *Conservative* or *Aggressive* estimate for the domain length scale, or a specified value
 - Timescale is re-calculated as the flow field changes
 - Set *Maximum Timescale* to provide an upper limit
 - Timescale factor (default = 1) is a multiplier which can be changed to adjust the automatically calculated timescale



- **Local Timescale Factor**
 - Timescale varies throughout the domain



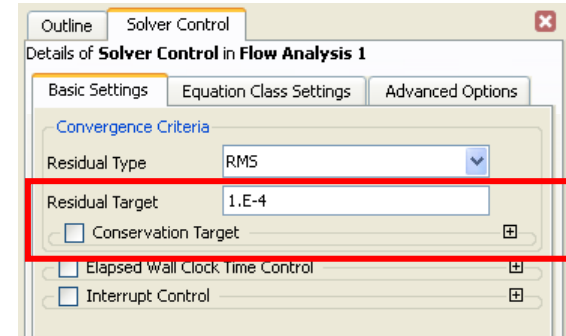
$$\text{Local Timescale} = \frac{\text{Local Mesh Length Scale}}{\text{Local Velocity Scale}}$$



Smaller Timescale in high velocity and/or fine mesh regions

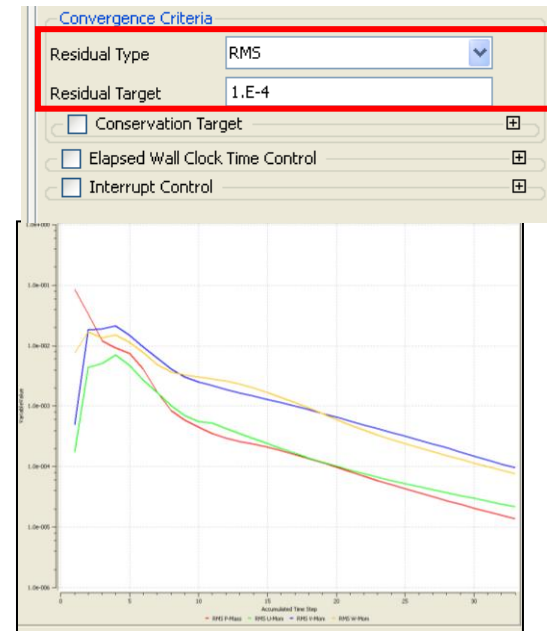
- Can accelerate convergence when vastly different local velocity scales exist
 - e.g. a jet entering a plenum
- Best used on fairly uniform meshes
- **Never use as final solution**; always finish off with a constant timescale

- **Convergence Criteria determine when the solution is considered converged and so when the Solver stops**
 - Assuming *Max. Iterations* is not reached
- **Residuals are a measure of how accurately the set of equations have been solved**
 - Solver iterates towards a solution → never reaches exact solution
 - Lower residuals = more accurate solution
- **Do not confuse accurately solving the equations with overall solution accuracy – the equations may or may not be a good representation of the true system!**



- Equations solved exactly: $[A] [\Phi] - [b] = [0]$
 - Iteratively solved: $[A] [\Phi] - [b] = [R]$
- Residual vector $[R]$ = error in the numerical solution

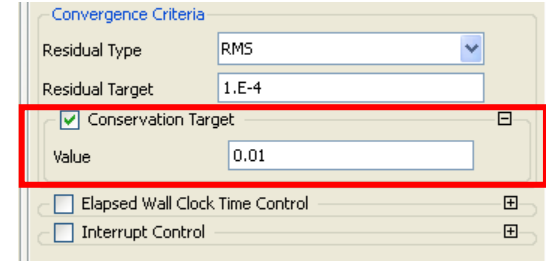
- **Residual Type**
 - **MAX:** maximum residual anywhere
 - **RMS:** gives a value typical for the whole model
 - **Root Mean Square (RMS)** = $\sqrt{\frac{\sum_i R_i^2}{n}}$
- **Residual Target**
 - dependent on the accuracy needed
 - **MAX residuals** < 1.0E-3
 - **RMS residuals** < 1.0E-4, 1.0E-5 or 1.0E-6



- Sets a target for the global imbalances

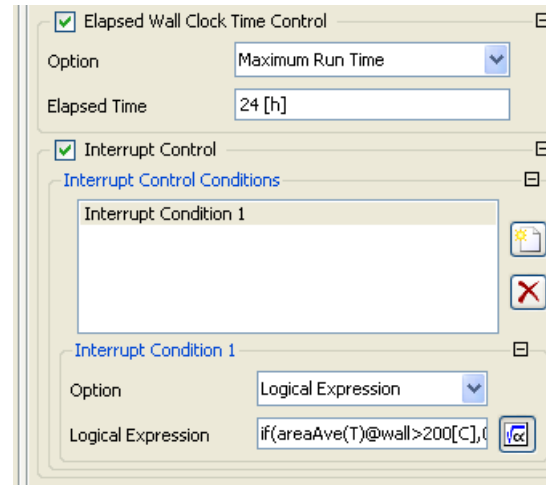
$$\% \text{ Imbalance} = \frac{\text{Flow Rate In} - \text{Flow Rate Out}}{\text{Maximum Flow Rate}}$$

- The imbalances measure the overall conservation of a quantity (mass, momentum, energy) in the entire flow domain
- Clearly in a converged solution Flow Rate In = Flow Rate Out
- It's good practice to set a *Conservation Target* and/or monitor the imbalances
- Set a target of 0.01 (1%) or less
 - For some applications < 0.01%
 - Solver must meet both the *Residual* and *Conservation Target* before stopping



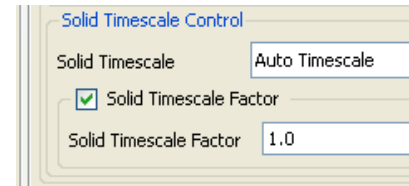
Elapsed Time and Interrupt Control

- **Elapsed Time Control**
 - Specify the maximum wall clock time for run
 - Solver will stop after this period regardless of whether it has converged
- **Interrupt Control**
 - Criteria based on logical CEL expressions
 - expression returns *true* → solver stops
 - Any value ≥ 0.5 is true
 - Examples:
 - If temperature exceeds a specified value
 - `areaAve(T)@wall>200 [C]`
 - If mesh quality drops below a specified value in a moving mesh case



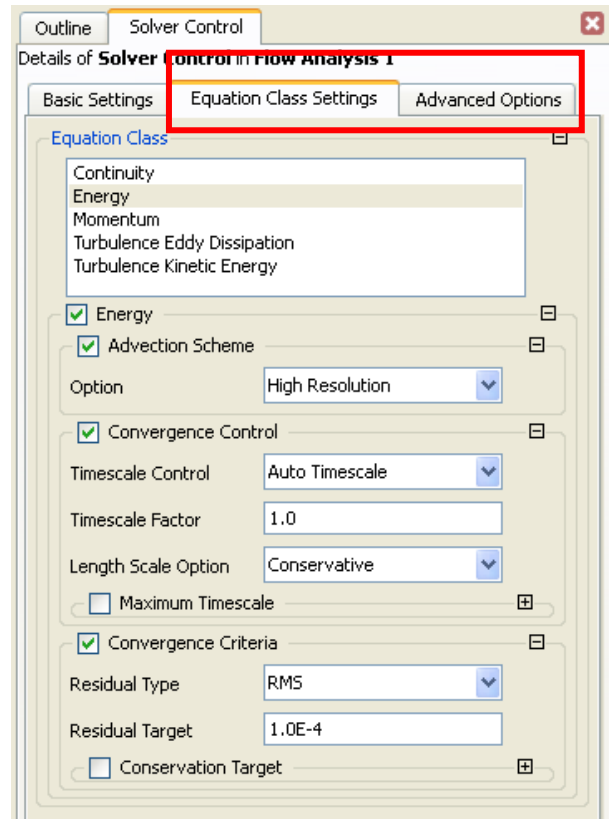
Solid Timescale Control

- Only available when a solid domain is included in the simulation
- Solid Timescale should be MUCH larger than the fluid timescale
 - 100 times larger is typical
 - energy equation is usually very stable in the solid
- The fluid timescale is estimated using Length Scale / Velocity Scale
- Auto Timescale calculates solid timescale as a function of the length scale, thermal conductivity, density and specific heat capacity
 - Or you can choose the Physical Timescale option and provide a timescale directly

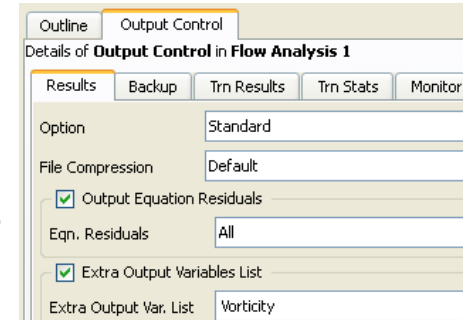


Equation Class Settings

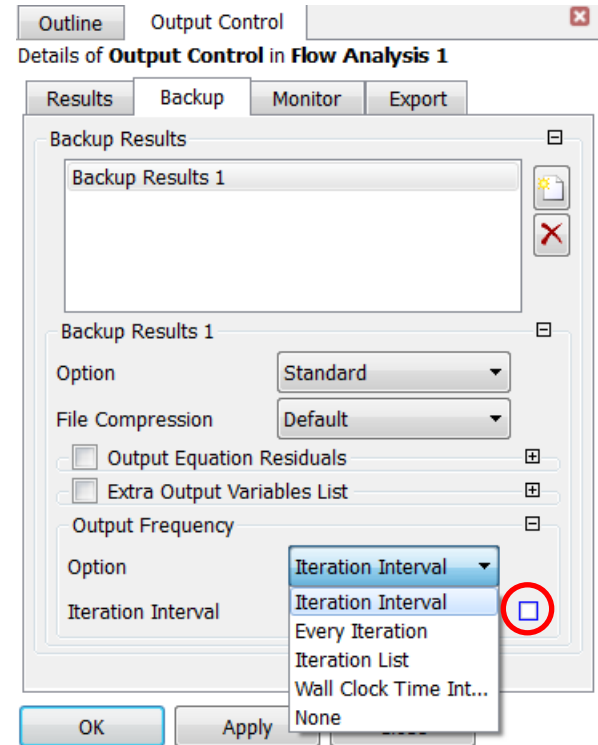
- The Equation Class Settings tab is an advanced option that can be used to set Solver controls on an equation-specific basis
 - Not usually needed
 - Will override the controls set on Basic Settings for the selected equation
- Advanced Options
 - Advanced solver control options
 - Rarely needed



- Control the output produced by the Solver
- Results tab controls the final .res file
 - *Selected Variables* probably insufficient information for a restart
 - *Output Equation Residuals* set to all and check where convergence problems occur
 - *Extra Output Variables List* variables not written to standard results file e.g. vorticity

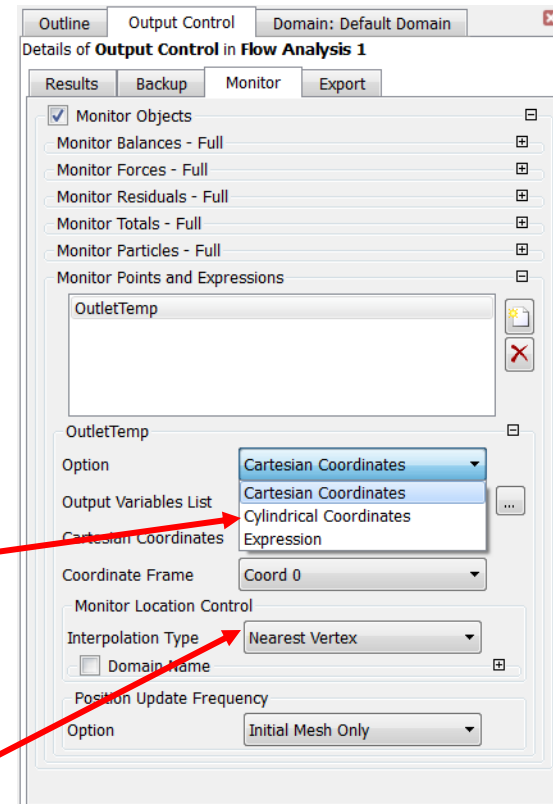


- **Backup controls if/when backup files are written**
 - Recommended in case of power failure, network interruptions, etc.
 - **Essential: Allows a clean solver restart**
 - **Smallest: Can restart the solver, with a residuals jump**
 - **If Output Frequency is set to Iteration Interval, it can be a Workbench input parameter**



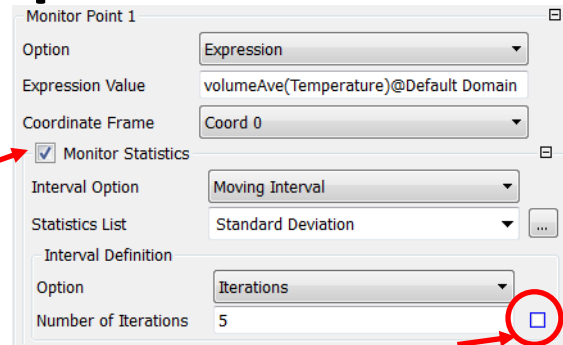
Output Control – Monitor

- **Allows you to create the Monitor Points**
 - Track values of interest as the Solver runs
- **In steady-state simulations you should create monitor points for quantities of interest**
 - One measure of convergence is when these values are no longer changing
- **Can track variable value at location defined by Cartesian or Cylindrical Coordinates or monitor a CEL Expression**
 - For Coordinates options, data can be interpolated to Nearest Vertex or use weighted-average of vertex values for containing element (Trilinear)

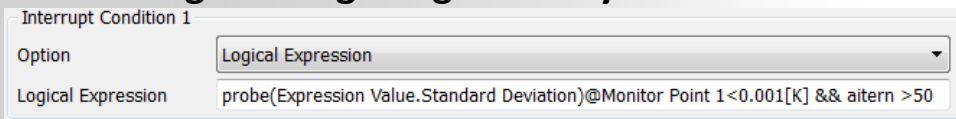


Output Control – Monitor an Expression

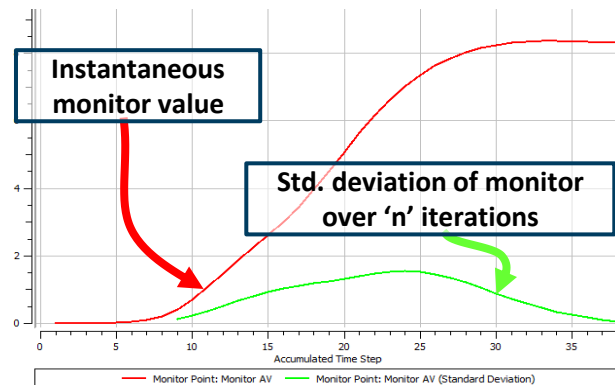
- Expression Option to monitor a CEL expression
- Additional option for expression to Monitor Statistics
- Can probe the statistics for an Interrupt Condition (Solver Control) to stop run once the value of a target quantity:
 - remains below a threshold value for a given period
 - no longer changes significantly



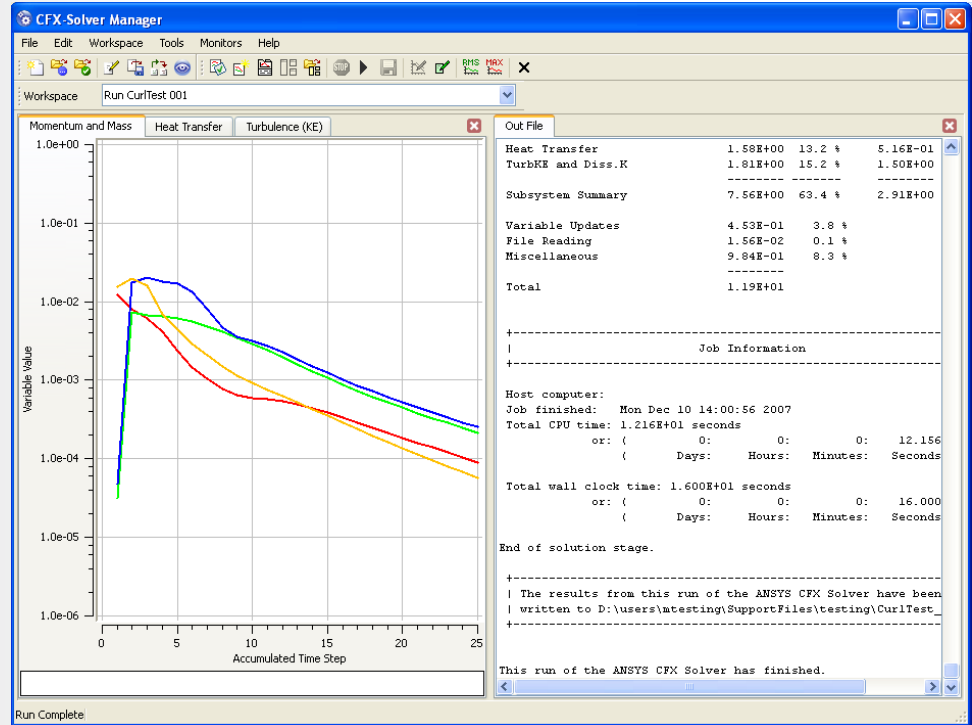
Interval can be Workbench input parameter



- Useful for automation

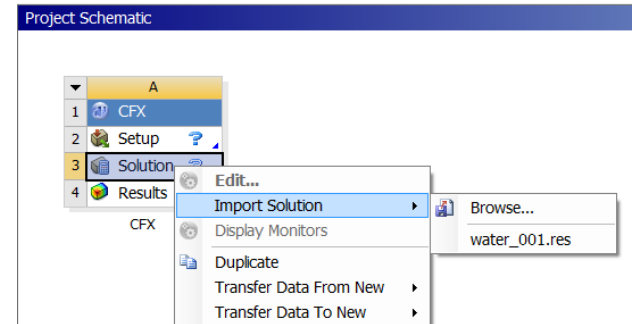
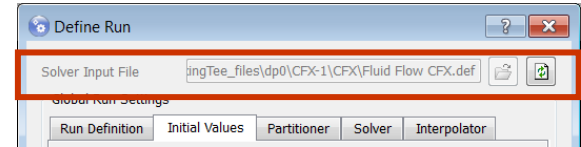


- The CFX-Solver Manager is a graphical user interface used to:
 - Define a run
 - Control the CFX-Solver interactively
 - View information about the emerging solution
 - Export data

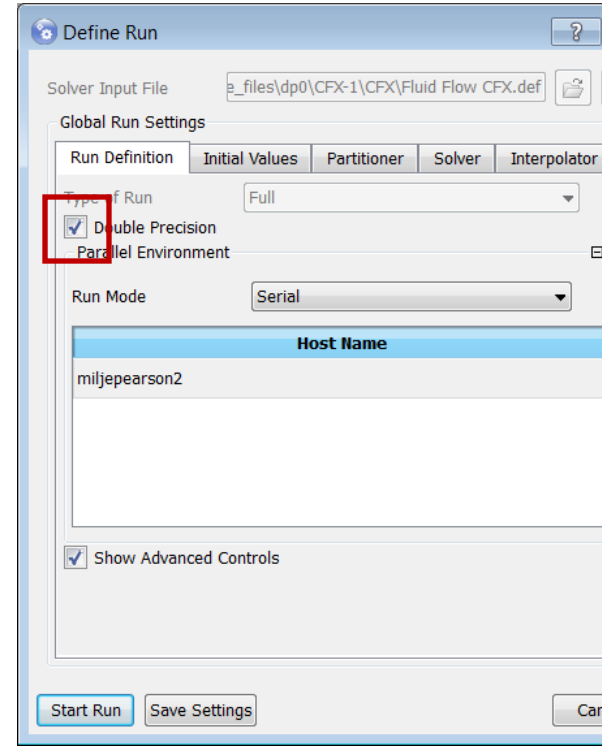


Defining a Run

- Solver Input File is usually the .def file (automatically set in WB)
- Can import a .res, .bak or _full.trn files into a new CFX system to restart a previous incomplete run
- To restart with changed physics, create a new .def file and initialise from previous solution as shown earlier

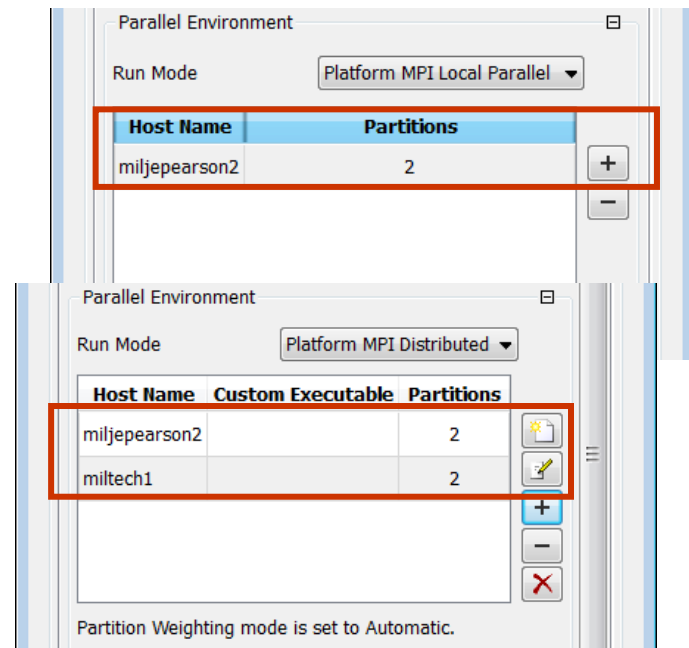


- **Define a new Solver run (contd...)**
 - **Double Precision: will use more significant figures in its calculations**
 - **Use when round-off error could be a problem – if ‘small’ variations in a variable are important, where ‘small’ is relative to the global range of that variable, e.g.:**
 - **Many Mesh Motion cases, since the motion is often small relative to the size of the domain**
 - **If you have a wide pressure range, but small pressure changes are important**
 - **Doubles solver memory requirements**
 - **Small values by themselves do not need double precision**



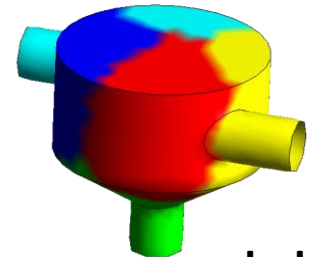
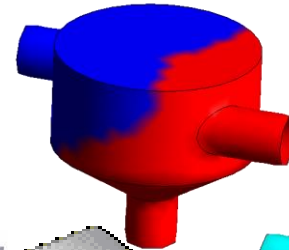
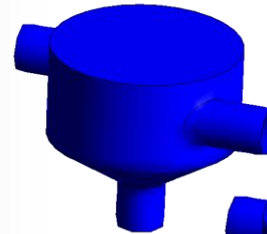
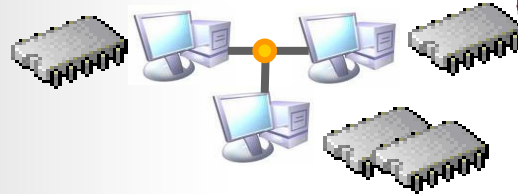
Defining a Parallel Run

- **By default Solver will run in serial**
 - Single solver process runs on a local machine
- **Set the Run Mode to a parallel option to use of multiple cores/processors**
 - Requires parallel licenses
 - Allows you to divide a large CFD problem into smaller partitions
 - **Faster solution times & solve larger problems by making use of memory (RAM) on multiple machines**
- **Local Parallel = running on a single machine**

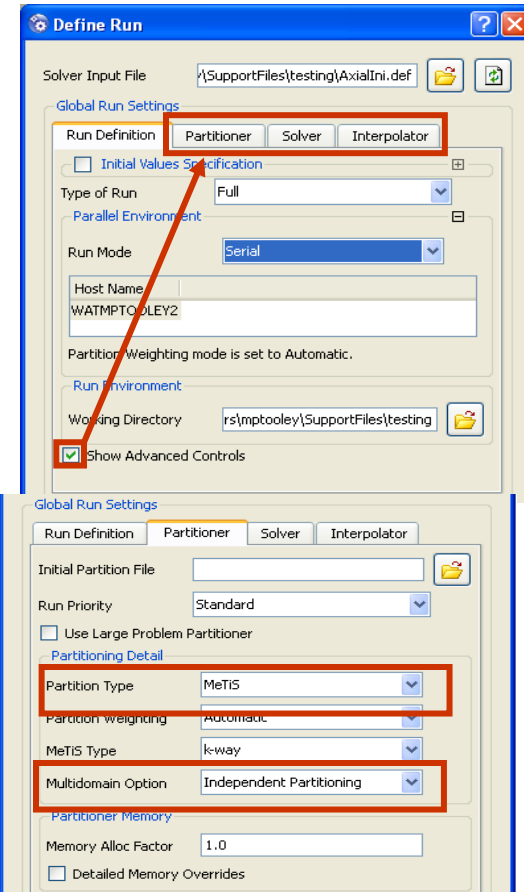


Defining a Parallel Run

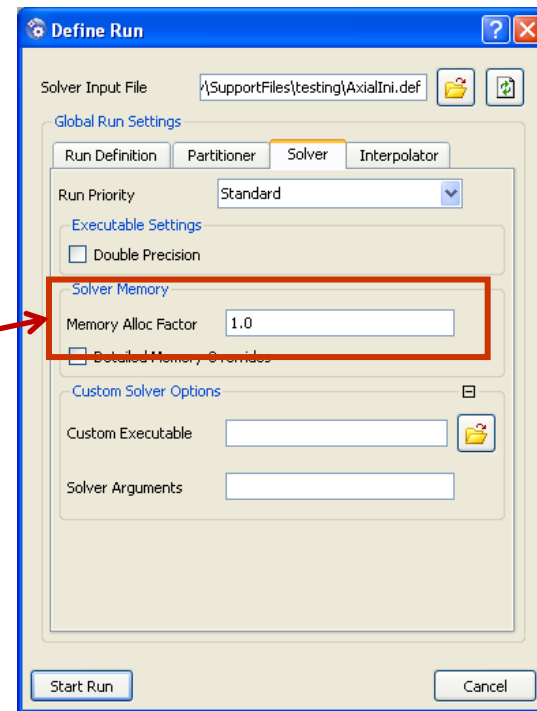
- **Serial**
- **Local Parallel**
- **Distributed Parallel**
- **Different communication methods are available, Platform MPI is recommended in most cases**



- ‘Show Advanced Controls’ toggle enables the Partitioner, Solver and Interpolator tabs
- ‘Partitioner’ tab
 - Partitioning is always a serial process
 - Can be a problem for very large cases
 - MeTiS (default) uses more memory than others. Change method to reduce memory required (see documentation)
 - Use Large Problem Partitioner (64-bit only)
 - Multidomain Option:
 - Independent Partitioning: Each domain is partitioned into ‘n’ partitions
 - Coupled Partitioning: Domains are combined and then partitioned into ‘n’ partitions



- On the Solver tab you adjust Solver Memory settings
 - The Solver estimates its memory requirements
 - Memory Alloc Factor is a multiplier for this estimate
 - Use when the solver stops with an ‘Insufficient Memory Allocated’ error
 - Can provide individual factors for each stack



Interactive Solver Control

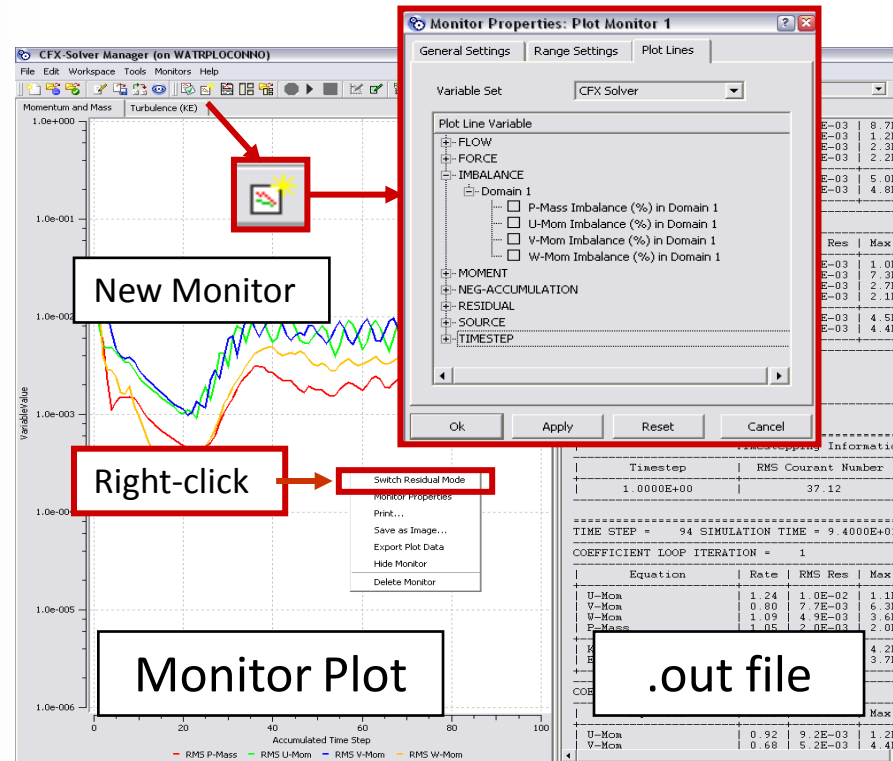
- During a solution, 'Edit Run in Progress' lets you make changes on the fly
 - Models generally cannot be changed, but numeric values can

The screenshot displays the ANSYS CFX-Solver Manager interface. The 'Edit Run in Progress' menu option is highlighted with a red box. The background shows a plot of variables over time and a table of simulation parameters. A red box highlights the 'Edit Run in Progress' menu item. A red arrow points from this menu item to a 'Edit Parameter' dialog box. The dialog box shows the 'Normal Speed' parameter set to 5 [m s⁻¹].

Name	Value
Root	
EXECUTION CONTROL:	
LIBRARY:	
FLOW:	
SOLUTION UNITS:	
SIMULATION TYPE:	
DOMAIN: Domain 1	
Coord Frame	Coord 0
Domain Type	Fluid
Fluids List	Water
Location	Assembly
BOUNDARY: Domain 1 Default	
BOUNDARY: in1	
Boundary Type	INLET
Location	in1
BOUNDARY CONDITIONS:	
FLOW REGIME:	
MASS AND MOMENTUM:	
Normal Speed	5 [m s ⁻¹]
Option	Normal Speed
TURBULENCE:	
BOUNDARY: in2	
BOUNDARY: out	

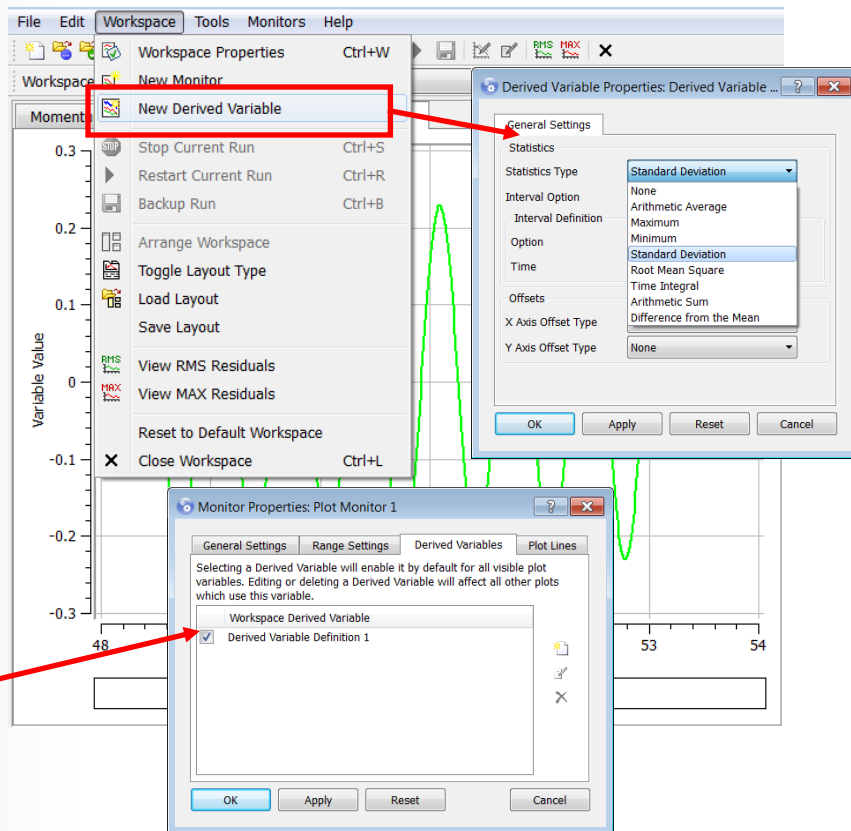
Additional Solution Monitors

- By default, monitor plots are created showing the RMS residuals for each equation solved, plus one plot for any monitor points
- Right-click to switch between RMS and MAX
- Additional monitors:
 - Imbalances
 - Boundary fluxes (FLOW)
 - Boundary forces
 - Tangential (viscous)
 - Normal (pressure)
 - Source terms



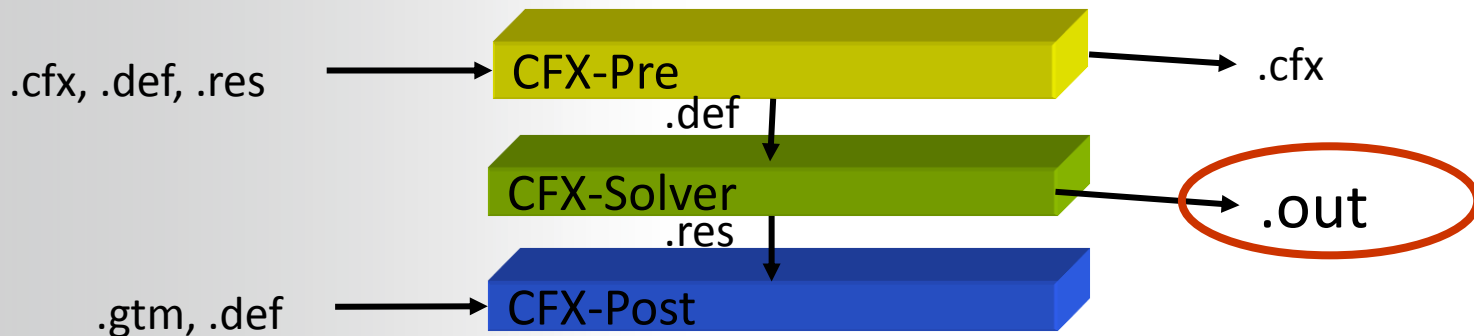
Monitoring Derived Variables

- **Visualise trends using Derived Variables**
 - Statistics (similar to option for monitored Expressions)
 - Offset from current plot
- **Not written to results file**
- **To create**
 - Workspace > New Derived Variable
- **To activate**
 - Workspace Properties > Derived Variables



Solver Output File

- Produced by the ANSYS CFX-Solver and contains information about simulation:
 - Model setup
 - The state of the solution during the run
 - Job statistics for the particular run



- Now lets take a detailed look at an out file

This run of the CFX-14.5 Solver started at 16:53:52 on 04 Dec 2012 by user jpearso on MILJEPEARSON2 (intel_xeon64.sse2_winnt) using the command:

```
"C:\Program Files\ANSYS Inc\v145\CFX\bin\perl\lib\cfx5solve.pl"
  -stdout-comms -batch -ccl -
```

Setting up CFX Solver run ...

CFX Command Language fo

Solver Information

LIBRARY:

CEL:

EXPRESSIONS:

PDiff = Pinlet -POutlet

Pinlet = massFlowAve(Total Pressure)@R1 Inlet

POutlet = massFlowAve(Total Pressure)@S1 Outlet

myPhysicalTimescale = 1 [rad]/myRotationSpeed

myRotationSpeed = 2880 [rev min⁻¹]

nRotor = 30

power = (torque_z()@R1 Blade + torque_z()@R1 Hub)*myRotationSpeed \
 /1[rad]*nRotor

END

END

MATERIAL: Air Ideal Gas

The out file

```

This run of the CFX-12.0 Solver started on 2015/03/13 at 14:00:00
user djhyde on WATDJHYDE2 (intel_xe)

"C:\Program Files\Ansys Inc\wl20\CFX\bin\win64\cfx5.exe"
  D:\users\djhyde\support\Mahesh\A

Setting up CFX Solver run ...
    
```

Physics definition
CFX Command Language (CCL)

```

+-----+
|                                             |
|               CFX Command Language for Run |
|                                             |
+-----+

LIBRARY:
MATERIAL: Air Ideal Gas
  Material Description = Air Ideal Gas (constant Cp)
  Material Group = Air Data, Calorically Perfect Ideal Gases
  Option = Pure Substance
  Thermodynamic State = Gas
PROPERTIES:
    
```

Output log showing solver progress and results.


```

+-----+
| Solver |
+-----+
  
```

The start of the Solver process

```

+-----+
| Memory Allocated for Run (Actual usage may be less) |
+-----+
  
```

Memory requirements shown here are for the Solver. If memory errors occur check if it's the Interpolator, Partitioner or Solver process

Data Type	Kwords	Words/Node	Words/Elem	Kbytes	Bytes/Node
Real	34643.8	461.13	204.39	135327.5	4844.52
Integer	10024.9	133.44	59.14	39159.8	1387.75
Character	3539.7	47.12	20.88	3456.8	122.6
Logical	65.0	0.87	0.38	253.9	3.46
Double	1208.0	16.08	7.13	9437.5	128.63

```

+-----+
| Mesh Statistics |
+-----+
  
```

Mesh quality checks, mesh statistics and GGI intersection details are shown here

	Minimum [deg]	Maximum	Maximum
R1	30.1 ok	42 !	383 ok
S1	31.4 ok	196 !	12 OK
Global	30.1 ok	196 !	383 ok



State of the Solution

Diagnostics shown as the solver iterates towards a solution

```

=====
OUTER LOOP ITERATION = 31                      CPU SECONDS = 2.709E+02
=====
|      Equation      | Rate | RMS Res | Max Res | Linear Solution |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| U-Mom              | 0.91 | 2.7E-05 | 8.1E-04 | 2.1E-02 OK      |
| V-Mom              | 0.85 | 9.5E-05 | 4.1E-03 | 2.3E-02 OK      |
| W-Mom              | 0.87 | 8.1E-05 | 5.1E-03 | 2.3E-02 OK      |
| P-Mass             | 0.87 | 1.7E-05 | 3.3E-04 | 9.5 5.3E-02 OK  |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| H-Energy           | 0.85 | 8.9E-05 | 3.4E-03 | 5.7 1.1E-02 OK  |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| K-TurbKE           | 0.86 | 7.4E-05 | 2.5E-03 | 5.7 4.9E-03 OK  |
| E-Diss.K           | 0.86 | 1.2E-04 | 3.7E-03 | 8.0 2.5E-03 OK  |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
  
```

$$Rate = \frac{R_n}{R_{n-1}}$$

“OK” = good , “ok” = on the limit, “F” = failed to solve the equation. Reducing the timestep may help avoid “ok” and “F”. “ok” and “F” can be ignored if they go away

Vertical list of solver output logs, partially obscured by a red bracket on the right side of the slide.

Final Imbalances

When the solution finishes, the Imbalances are shown

```

+-----+
|                                     |
|                               Normalised Imbalance Summary                               |
|-----+-----+-----+-----+
|      Equation      |      Maximum Flow      |      Imbalance (%)      |
|-----+-----+-----+-----+
| U-Mom              |      7.4643E+02        |      -0.0013            |
| V-Mom              |      7.4643E+02        |      0.0135             |
| W-Mom              |      7.4643E+02        |      0.0064             |
| P-Mass             |      1.1330E+02        |      0.0005             |
|-----+-----+-----+-----+
| H-Energy           |      6.4831E+06        |      -0.1837            |
|-----+-----+-----+-----+
  
```



- This section has covered the following important points:
- Initialization is key to providing a stable solution, especially for complex physics or flows with high solution gradients
- Convergence is one important part of judging solution progress.
 - Don't forget that the solver will terminate when the 'Max Iterations' has been reached, regardless of solution convergence levels
- Output Control:
 - Always monitor imbalances to ensure conservation
 - Use backups so that data can be rescued if the solver/hardware fails
 - Monitor quantities of interest as an additional aid when judging steady-state behaviour
- The output file gives important information about the physics, resource usage and solution progress

- **Flow around a NACA0012 airfoil**
 - Assessing Y^+ for correct turbulence model behavior
 - Modifying solver settings to improve accuracy
 - Reading in and plotting experimental data alongside CFD results
 - Producing a side-by-side comparison of different CFD results
- **This workshop includes a best practice study. If you do not complete it today, there will be time on day 2.**

