Primary, Secondary and Over-Fire Air Split

Primary (PA), secondary (SA) and over-fire air flows in kg/s and actual m³/h from the total combustion air and the split for grate, AFBC, CFBC or PF firing.

Method: Ideal-gas humid air density; ASME PTC 4-2013 (air composition)

Input parameters

Unit system: SI

Parameter	Value	Unit
Total combustion air (wet) From the combustion air flow or FD fan sizing calculator.	93,600	kg/h
Primary air share Set by the firing system and the boiler maker.	40.000	%
Over-fire air share (0 if none)	15.000	%
Air temperature at the PA fan inlet Hot-air PA fans in some PF and AFBC plants take air after the air heater.	35.000	°C
Air temperature at the SA fan inlet	35.000	°C
Pressure at the fan inlets (absolute)	1.0132	bar
Air humidity (kg water per kg dry air)	0.013000	kg/kg

Calculated results

Parameter	Value	Unit
Primary air	37,440	kg/h
Secondary air	42,120	kg/h
Over-fire air	14,040	kg/h
Primary air, actual volume at the PA fan	32,938	m³/h
Secondary air, actual volume at the SA fan	37,056	m³/h
Over-fire air, actual volume (SA fan conditions)	12,352	m³/h
Secondary air share	45.000	%
Air density at the PA fan	1.1367	kg/m³
Air density at the SA fan	1.1367	kg/m³

Formula and method

$$\dot{m}_{PA} = x_{PA}\,\dot{m}_a \qquad \dot{m}_{OFA} = x_{OFA}\,\dot{m}_a \qquad \dot{m}_{SA} = \dot{m}_a - \dot{m}_{PA} - \dot{m}_{OFA} \qquad x_{SA} = 1 - x_{PA} - x_{OFA}$$

$$\rho = \frac{(1+\omega)\,p}{\left(\frac{1}{M_{da}} + \frac{\omega}{M_w}\right) RT} \qquad \dot{V}_{PA} = \frac{\dot{m}_{PA}}{\rho_{PA}} \qquad \dot{V}_{SA} = \frac{\dot{m}_{SA}}{\rho_{SA}} \qquad \dot{V}_{OFA} = \frac{\dot{m}_{OFA}}{\rho_{SA}}$$

Variables

$\dot{m}_a$	total combustion air, wet	kg/s
x_{PA}	primary air share	–
x_{OFA}	over-fire air share	–
T_{PA}	air temperature at the PA fan inlet	K
T_{SA}	air temperature at the SA fan inlet	K
p	pressure at the fan inlets	Pa
ω	air humidity	kg/kg
$\dot{m}_{PA}$	primary air	kg/s

$\dot{m}_{SA}$	secondary air	kg/s
$\dot{m}_{OFA}$	over-fire air	kg/s
$\dot{V}_{PA}$	primary air, actual volume	m³/s
$\dot{V}_{SA}$	secondary air, actual volume	m³/s
$\dot{V}_{OFA}$	over-fire air, actual volume	m³/s
x_{SA}	secondary air share	–
ρ_{PA}	air density at the PA fan	kg/m³
ρ_{SA}	air density at the SA fan	kg/m³
$M_{da}\$, \$M_w$	molar mass of dry air and water	kg/kmol
R	universal gas constant, 8 314.46	J/(kmol·K)

Method and standards

Mass split of the combustion air; humid-air densities by the ideal-gas law with the ASME PTC 4-2013 dry-air molar mass.

Assumptions and limits

- Over-fire air is taken from the SA fan (at SA conditions); if it has its own fan, use that fan's temperature.
- Seal air, coal-feeder air and sweep air are not split out; include them in the shares.
- Both fans are taken at the same inlet pressure; the fans' pressure rise and the air heater leakage on each side are not modelled (add leakage to the fan flows yourself).
- The shares are not checked against typical values for the firing system; they come from the boiler maker.

References

- Ideal-gas humid air density; ASME PTC 4-2013 (air composition)

Report details

Report reference	FCC-3H06-S7EY (the same inputs always give the same reference)
Generated	17 November 2026, 19:46 UTC
Calculator	Primary, Secondary and Over-Fire Air Split
Method last reviewed	10 November 2026
Software release	FireCAD Calc, release of 17 November 2026
Release checks	3 reference cases of this calculator, computed independently, are checked on every release

Results are for engineering estimation. Verify critical designs against the referenced standards and your own data.

This calculator online

https://calc.firecad.com/boilers-power-plant/combustion/sa-pa-fan-air-split

Open this case on calc.firecad.com →

Reopens the calculator with the inputs of this report.