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Karen is employed as an aerospace engineer by the US Army Research Laboratory, Vehicle Technology Directorate (VTD) which is collocated at NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton, VA. Karen works in the Crash Dynamics Group of the NASA Structural Dynamics Branch (SDB) and her primary research activities include studying the dynamic response of aircraft and rotorcraft structures subjected to crash loads through crash simulation and full- and sub-scale testing. She received her B.S. in Engineering Science and Mechanics from the University of Tennessee in 1981, her M.S. in Engineering Science and Mechanics from Virginia Tech in 1984, and her Ph.D. in Engineering Mechanics from Virginia Tech in 1990. Karen has worked as a research engineer since 1981, and her current areas of interest include composite materials, structural design for energy absorption, and crash simulation. She has given numerous technical presentations and authored or co-authored over 60 technical papers.