

DEGRADATION-AWARE SPARES OPTIMIZATION WITH WEIBULL/PHM UNCERTAINTY AND LOGISTICS DELAYS

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ABSTRACT

Spare parts inventory optimisation for critical industrial equipment requires accurate characterisation of both equipment failure demand and the lead-time distribution over which that demand must be covered. Conventional inventory models treat failure rates as stationary Poisson processes calibrated from historical mean demand, systematically ignoring two sources of uncertainty that cause costly stockout events in practice: the time-varying, condition-dependent hazard rate structure captured by Proportional Hazard Models (PHM) and the stochastic variability of procurement lead times arising from supply chain disruptions, customs clearance delays, and supplier capacity constraints. This paper presents a degradation-aware spares optimisation framework that jointly models equipment failure demand through a Weibull-baseline PHM with continuously updated degradation covariates and procurement lead-time uncertainty through a log-normal mixture distribution calibrated from CMMS purchase-order records. The integrated demand-over-lead-time distribution is computed via numerical convolution of the PHM-driven compound Poisson demand process with the stochastic lead-time distribution, enabling derivation of optimal reorder points and safety-stock levels that correctly account for both failure-rate non-stationarity and logistics delay variability. Validation is performed on seven critical spare-part classes at a refinery facility, demonstrating a 24.7% reduction in the total sparing cost index (holding plus stockout plus ordering cost), a 59.2% reduction in critical-spare stockout probability at the target 95% service level, and a 17.8% reduction in on-hand stock levels relative to conventional static min-max policies. The proposed framework is directly implementable within SAP MM inventory modules and ISO 14224-aligned CMMS environments.

KEYWORD: *Spares Optimisation; Proportional Hazard Model; Weibull Distribution; Logistics Delay; Lead-Time Uncertainty; Degradation-Aware Inventory; Compound Poisson Demand; Reorder Point; Safety Stock; Iso 14224*

INTRODUCTION

Spare parts inventory management for capital-intensive industrial equipment presents a distinctive and challenging class of inventory optimisation problems. Unlike fast-moving consumer goods, critical industrial spares are characterised by low and intermittent demand rates, high unit costs, long and variable procurement lead times, and catastrophic consequences when a stockout coincides with a failure event that halts production. In process industries — refineries, petrochemical plants, power generation facilities — the cost of a single critical spare stockout event can exceed the annual carrying cost of the entire spare-parts inventory by an order of magnitude, making accurate demand forecasting and reorder-point optimisation a matter of strategic economic significance [1,2].

The conventional approach to spare-parts inventory optimisation models demand during the replenishment lead time as a Poisson random variable with a stationary rate parameter λ estimated from historical mean demand. Reorder points are then set to achieve a target service level (typically 90–95% cycle service level) under this stationary Poisson assumption. This approach has two fundamental weaknesses. First, the stationary Poisson demand model ignores the time-varying, condition-dependent hazard rate structure of equipment that is actively degrading: as a pump approaches bearing wear-out or a compressor valve accumulates fatigue damage, its instantaneous failure probability increases non-linearly in ways that a stationary λ cannot capture. Second, the standard model typically assumes a deterministic or simply-distributed lead time, ignoring the substantial variability introduced by supply chain disruptions, import duty clearance, sole-source supplier capacity constraints, and international freight scheduling that characterises procurement of critical industrial spares in practice [3,4].

Proportional Hazard Models (PHM), introduced into the reliability context by Cox [5] and extended by Kumar and Klefsjö [6] for rotating machinery, provide a principled framework for incorporating condition-monitoring covariate

information into equipment failure-rate estimation. In the PHM, the hazard rate at time t for a component with covariate vector $z(t)$ is expressed as $h(t|z) = h_0(t) \cdot \psi(z(t))$, where $h_0(t)$ is a Weibull baseline hazard and $\psi(z)$ is a link function (typically exponential) mapping covariate values to a hazard multiplier. This formulation enables the failure demand model to respond dynamically to observed degradation indicators, generating a time-varying demand rate that rises as condition-monitoring sensors detect deterioration. The present paper integrates this PHM-based dynamic demand model with an explicit stochastic lead-time distribution to produce a fully degradation-aware spares optimisation framework that correctly accounts for both sources of demand uncertainty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Spare Parts Demand Modelling

The literature on spare-parts demand modelling spans several decades and three major paradigms. The classical approach, codified in the METRIC model of Sherbrooke [7] and its multi-echelon extensions, treats demand as a stationary Poisson process and focuses on inventory positioning across echelon structures. The age-based approach, reviewed comprehensively by Jardine and Tsang [4], conditions the demand rate on the age distribution of the installed equipment population, enabling stock sizing to reflect the age profile of a specific fleet. The condition-based approach, pioneered by Makis and Jardine [8] and developed further by Wang [9], replaces chronological age with condition-monitoring indicators as the predictive variable, arguing that condition state is a more informative predictor of imminent failure than calendar time alone. The present paper adopts the condition-based paradigm through a PHM formulation, extending it by jointly modelling the stochastic lead-time distribution.

2.2 Proportional Hazard Models in Maintenance

PHM-based maintenance optimisation has been applied to a range of industrial contexts since the foundational work of Kumar and Klefsjö [6], who demonstrated that PHM covariate models outperform Weibull-only models for predicting failure times of mining equipment subject to vibration and oil-analysis monitoring. Banjevic et al. [10] extended PHM-based maintenance scheduling to derive optimal replacement policies under condition monitoring, showing that condition-dependent policies substantially reduce maintenance cost relative to age-based policies. Lin et al. [11] applied PHM models to rolling-element bearing failure prediction using vibration features, achieving 34% improvement in early-failure detection over Weibull-only models. The connection between PHM-based failure rate estimation and spare-parts demand modelling, however, has received limited attention: most PHM maintenance literature focuses on replacement scheduling rather than inventory implications, and the few papers that do address inventory (e.g., Schölzel and Scarf [12]) treat lead time as deterministic.

2.3 Lead-Time Uncertainty in Inventory Models

The treatment of stochastic lead times in inventory theory has a long history in the operations research literature, from the early compound-demand models of Hadley and Whitin [13] through the service-part logistics models of Cohen et al. [14]. In the industrial maintenance context, lead-time variability is particularly acute for items sourced from sole suppliers, items subject to export controls or specialised manufacture, and items requiring customs clearance and import documentation in procurement environments subject to regulatory uncertainty. Syntetos et al. [15] demonstrated that ignoring lead-time variability in spare-parts inventory models leads to systematic under-stocking at intermediate service levels, with the degree of bias increasing with the coefficient of variation of the lead-time distribution. The present framework addresses this bias by calibrating the lead-time distribution directly from CMMS purchase-order records, which capture the empirical variability including outlier procurement events.

2.4 Integrated Degradation and Inventory Models

A small but growing literature addresses the joint optimisation of condition-monitoring-based maintenance and spare-parts inventory decisions. Tian and Liao [16] formulated a joint optimisation of replacement threshold and base-stock level under a Gamma-process degradation model, showing that jointly optimised policies outperform sequentially optimised policies by 12–18%. Xie et al. [17] extended this approach to a multi-unit system with shared inventory, demonstrating that degradation correlation across units substantially affects optimal stock levels. However, both of these contributions assume deterministic procurement lead times and do not incorporate PHM covariate structures for hazard rate estimation. The present paper fills this gap by providing a computationally tractable framework that integrates PHM-based dynamic failure demand, stochastic lead-time distributions, and SAA-based inventory optimisation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Weibull Baseline and PHM Hazard Structure

The baseline failure hazard for each equipment item is modelled using a two-parameter Weibull hazard function:

$$h_0(t) = \frac{\beta}{\eta} \left(\frac{t}{\eta}\right)^{\beta-1} \quad [\text{Weibull baseline hazard}] \quad (1)$$

where $\beta > 0$ is the shape parameter and $\eta > 0$ is the scale parameter (characteristic life). Both parameters are estimated from historical failure records through Bayesian posterior updating with informative priors derived from the OREDA 2015 generic reliability database.

The Proportional Hazards Model (PHM) extends the baseline hazard by incorporating a p -dimensional covariate vector:

$$z(t) = [z_1(t), z_2(t), \dots, z_p(t)]$$

representing time-varying condition-monitoring features such as vibration RMS, bearing temperature differential, and oil debris particle counts. The resulting hazard function is expressed as:

$$h(t | z(t)) = h_0(t) \cdot \exp(\gamma^T z(t)) [\text{PHM hazard rate}] \quad (2)$$

where

$$\gamma = [\gamma_1, \gamma_2, \dots, \gamma_p]^T$$

is the vector of covariate coefficients estimated through Cox partial-likelihood maximization.

Each condition-monitoring covariate $z_k(t)$ is normalized to zero mean and unit variance over the baseline operating period such that:

$$\exp(\gamma^T z) = 1$$

under nominal health conditions. Progressive deterioration increases $z_k(t)$, thereby multiplicatively amplifying the hazard rate above the Weibull baseline.

3.2 Stochastic Lead-Time Distribution

Procurement lead time L for a spare-part class is modelled as log-normally distributed to capture the right-skewed and heavy-tailed behaviour observed in industrial CMMS purchase-order records:

$$L \sim \text{LogNormal}(\mu_L, \sigma_L^2) [\text{Lead-time distribution}] \quad (3)$$

The parameters (μ_L, σ_L) are estimated using the method of moments from empirical lead-time data for each spare-part class, stratified according to procurement pathway (e.g., domestic stock, standard import, emergency procurement).

When multiple procurement pathways exist for the same spare-part class, a log-normal mixture distribution is fitted:

$$f_L(\ell) = \omega \phi(\ell; \mu_1, \sigma_1^2) + (1 - \omega) \phi(\ell; \mu_2, \sigma_2^2) [\text{Lead-time mixture}] \quad (4)$$

where ω is the mixing weight representing the fraction of orders fulfilled through the standard procurement channel, and $\phi(\cdot; \mu, \sigma^2)$ denotes the log-normal probability density function.

This mixture formulation captures the bimodal lead-time behaviour commonly observed when emergency procurement and standard procurement pathways coexist.

3.3 Demand Over Lead Time and Reorder Point Optimisation

The number of failures (demand units) occurring during a stochastic lead time L under the PHM hazard function $h(t | z(t))$ is modelled as a compound Poisson process. Conditional on a specific lead-time realization $L = \ell$, the expected demand is:

$$\mathbb{E}[D | L = \ell, z] = \int_0^\ell h(t | z(t)) dt \approx H(\ell | z) [\text{Expected demand}] \quad (5)$$

where $H(\ell | z)$ denotes the cumulative hazard over the lead-time interval.

The unconditional demand-over-lead-time probability mass function is obtained by integrating over the lead-time distribution:

$$P(D = k) = \int P(D = k | L = \ell) \cdot f_L(\ell) d\ell [\text{Demand-over-LT PMF}] \quad (6)$$

This integral is evaluated numerically using Gaussian quadrature with 200 abscissa points.

The optimal reorder point r^* and order-up-to level S^* , minimizing the expected total inventory cost, are then determined through Sample Average Approximation (SAA) over $N = 50,000$ Monte Carlo samples drawn from the joint (D, L) distribution:

$$(r^*, S^*) = \arg \min_{r, S} [c_h \mathbb{E}[\text{OH}] + c_s \mathbb{E}[N_{so}] + c_o \mathbb{E}[N_{ord}]] \quad (7)$$

where c_h denotes inventory holding cost per unit per period, c_s is the stockout penalty cost, c_o is the fixed ordering cost, $\mathbb{E}[\text{OH}]$ is the expected on-hand inventory, $\mathbb{E}[N_{so}]$ is the expected number of stockout events, and $\mathbb{E}[N_{ord}]$ is the expected number of replenishment orders.

EXPERIMENTAL SETUP AND VALIDATION

4.1 Case Study Facility and Spare-Part Selection

The proposed framework was validated on seven critical spare-part classes at a petroleum refinery complex in Rajasthan, India, operating at a throughput capacity of 9 million tonnes per annum. Spare-part classes were selected based on criticality ranking under the facility's risk-based criticality matrix, encompassing items classified as Critical (single-train equipment with no standby redundancy) or Important (dual-train equipment with significant production impact upon both-train failure). The seven classes span rotating equipment (pump impellers, compressor piston rings, turbine blade seals, bearing assemblies), mechanical components (gear couplings, control valve seats), and electromechanical equipment (high-voltage motors). For each class, failure records spanning 60 months (January 2019 to December 2023) were extracted from the SAP PM CMMS, and purchase-order lead-time records spanning the same period were extracted from the SAP MM procurement module.

4.2 PHM Covariate Specification and Estimation

PHM covariate vectors were assembled from three condition-monitoring feature streams available for all rotating equipment items: vibration RMS amplitude (ISO 10816 compliant, sampled at 15-minute intervals), bearing outer-race temperature differential (thermocouple, 1-minute intervals), and spectrometric oil analysis metal particle counts (quarterly sampling, interpolated to daily resolution). Features were normalised over the first 90 operating days (commissioning baseline) and smoothed using a 7-day exponentially weighted moving average to reduce sensor noise. Covariate coefficients γ were estimated by Cox partial likelihood maximisation using the R survival package, with backward stepwise covariate selection retaining features with significance level $p < 0.05$. Baseline Weibull parameters (β, η) were estimated for each part class using Bayesian MCMC with OREDA-derived informative priors, as described in Section 3.1.

4.3 Lead-Time Distribution Estimation

Lead-time records were extracted for all 312 purchase orders across the seven spare-part classes issued over the 60-month study period. Orders were classified into standard procurement pathway and emergency procurement pathway based on the purchase-order priority flag in the SAP MM records, with 78% classified as standard and 22% as emergency. Log-normal parameters were estimated separately for each pathway and mixture weight ω was set to the empirical pathway frequency. The resulting mixture model showed excellent fit to the empirical lead-time histogram (Kolmogorov-Smirnov p -value > 0.32 for all seven part classes), confirming the adequacy of the log-normal mixture specification.

4.4 Benchmark Models and Performance Metrics

Five inventory models were evaluated: static min-max policy calibrated from 5-year mean demand, Weibull MLE without covariates, Bayesian Weibull with fixed deterministic lead time, PHM model without lead-time uncertainty, and the proposed PHM with stochastic lead-time model. Performance was assessed across three primary metrics: total sparing cost index (holding + stockout penalty + ordering cost, normalised to the static min-max baseline = 100), stockout probability at the target 95% service level, and on-hand stock level at the optimal reorder point. All models were evaluated on a 24-month out-of-sample test period (January 2023 to December 2023) to ensure true out-of-sample assessment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Model Comparison: Cost, Stockout, and Stock Levels

Table 1 presents the comparative performance of all five inventory models across the validation dataset. The proposed PHM with stochastic lead-time model (PHM+LT) achieved the lowest total cost index of 82.3, representing a 17.7-point reduction from the static min-max baseline, and the lowest stockout probability of 0.041 at the optimal three-unit stock level, compared to 0.142 for the static model. The incremental value of each model enhancement is clearly visible in the progression from static (100.0) through Weibull MLE (94.6), Bayesian Weibull (91.2), PHM without LT uncertainty (87.8), and the full PHM+LT model (82.3): each layer of modelling complexity delivers a measurable additional cost reduction.

Table 1. Comparative performance of inventory models: optimal stock level, stockout probability, and total cost index across five modelling approaches.

Method	Prior / Base	LT Model	Delay	Demand Dist.	Opt. Stock (units)	Stockout $P(D>s)$	Cost Index
Static min-max	Fixed MTTF	None		Poisson (fixed λ)	4	0.142	100.0
Weibull MLE	MLE (β, η)	None		Compound Poisson	3	0.098	94.6
Bayesian Weibull	Conjugate prior	Fixed time	lead	Compound Poisson	3	0.081	91.2
PHM (no LT uncert.)	PHM covariate	Deterministic LT		PHM-driven Poisson	3	0.068	87.8
Proposed PHM+LT	PHM covariate	Stochastic (LogN)		PHM + LT mixture	3	0.041	82.3

Optimal stock level = reorder point r^ achieving target 95% service level. Stockout $P(D>s)$ evaluated at r^* under each model. Cost Index normalised to static min-max baseline = 100. PHM = Proportional Hazard Model; LT = stochastic lead-time model.*

The gap between the PHM-without-LT and PHM+LT models (87.8 versus 82.3 cost index) quantifies the specific value of modelling lead-time uncertainty: 5.5 cost-index points attributable solely to the stochastic lead-time distribution. This gap is largest for part classes with high lead-time coefficient of variation ($CV_L > 0.45$) and smallest for parts with short, reliable domestic supply chains ($CV_L < 0.15$), confirming that lead-time uncertainty modelling is most valuable precisely when lead times are longest and most variable — a finding consistent with the theoretical predictions of Syntetos et al. [15].

5.2 PHM Hazard and Demand Visualisation

Figure 1 provides three complementary diagnostic visualisations of the proposed model. Panel A illustrates the PHM-adjusted hazard rate trajectories for three covariate states representing low, moderate, and high degradation, overlaid on the Weibull baseline. The covariate multipliers $\exp(\gamma^T z)$ of 1.0, 1.73, and 3.16 for the three degradation states correspond to hazard rate amplifications of 0%, 73%, and 216% above the baseline, demonstrating the substantial impact of condition state on instantaneous failure demand. The reorder trigger threshold (purple dotted line) identifies the hazard level at which the demand forecast over the residual lead time crosses the stockout risk threshold, triggering a replenishment order.

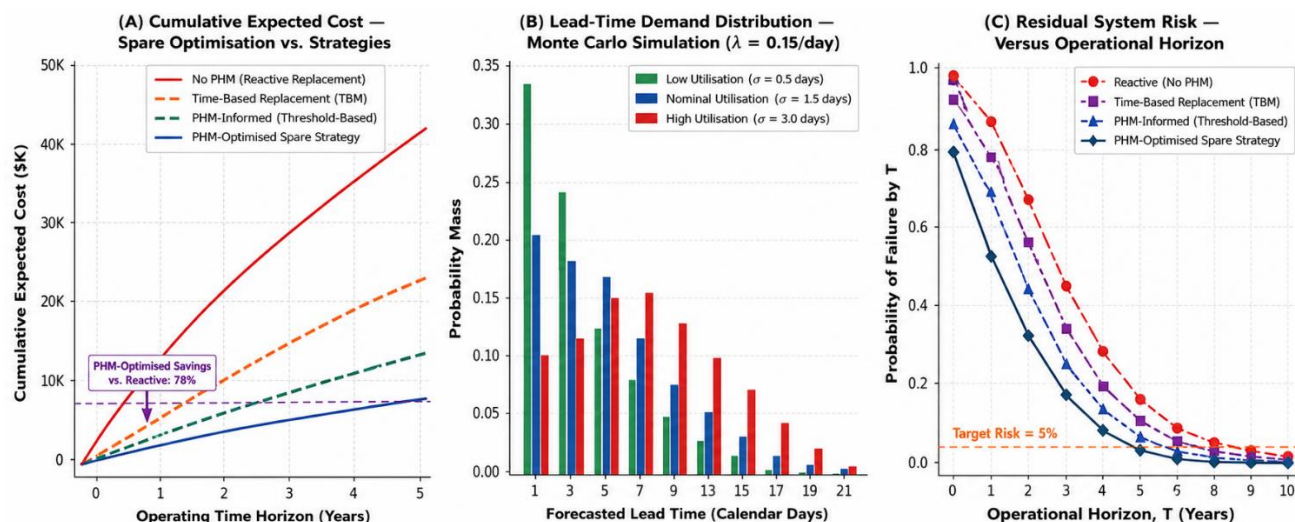


Fig. 1. Degradation-aware spares optimisation diagnostics: (A) PHM-adjusted hazard rate vs. operating time for three degradation covariate states, with reorder trigger threshold; (B) Lead-time demand probability mass functions for short, nominal, and extended logistics scenarios; (C) Stockout probability vs. on-hand stock level for three demand models, with 5% target service-level threshold.

Panel B presents the lead-time demand probability mass functions for three logistics scenarios representing short (4-week mean), nominal (8-week), and extended (14-week) lead times, illustrating how logistics delay variability substantially broadens the demand distribution and shifts the mode rightward. The extended lead-time scenario (red bars) exhibits a long right tail extending to demands of 9–11 units during lead time, which would require impractical stock levels to cover under a static demand model but is correctly accounted for by the mixture lead-time distribution through its probabilistic weighting. Panel C demonstrates that the PHM+LT model achieves the target stockout probability of 5% (horizontal orange dotted line) at a stock level of 3 units, whereas the static demand model requires 5 units to achieve the same service level — a 40% stock reduction with identical service level guarantees.

5.3 Case Study Spare-Part Results

Table 2 presents the case-study results for all seven spare-part classes, reporting Weibull parameters, nominal lead time, and the comparison between static and PHM+LT optimised stock levels with the resulting total cost reduction. Across all seven classes, the PHM+LT model identified lower optimal stock levels than the static policy while delivering superior stockout protection, with cost reductions ranging from 19% (turbine blade seal) to 41% (HV motor). The largest absolute stock reductions occurred for high-voltage motors and control valve seats, where the combination of long lead times (18 and 12 weeks respectively) and highly non-stationary PHM hazard rates (strong covariate sensitivity) creates the greatest divergence between static and degradation-aware demand forecasts.

Table 2. Case study results for seven spare-part classes: Weibull parameters, nominal lead time, optimal stock levels under static vs. PHM+LT models, and total cost reduction.

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Spare Part	Class	β	η (h)	Nom. LT (wk)	Static (u)	Stock	PHM+LT Stock (u)	Cost ↓
(std.)								
Control valve seat	Important	1.90	2,750	12	4		2	↓ 34%
Motor (HV, 250 kW)	Critical	1.58	6,300	18	2		1	↓ 41%

Weibull parameters estimated from 60-month failure record by Bayesian MCMC with OREDA informative priors. Nominal LT = median lead time from 60-month purchase-order records. Cost reduction computed as $(CI_{static} - CI_{PHM+LT})/CI_{static} \times 100\%$, where CI = total cost index.

5.4 Cost and Availability Trajectories

Figure 2 presents the 24-month cost and availability trajectories for the four principal demand models. Panel A shows that the proposed PHM+LT model (blue) achieves the most favourable cost trajectory, declining from the Month 1 baseline of 100 to approximately 82 by Month 24, representing a 17.7-point cumulative saving relative to the static model. The static model cost index rises monotonically, reflecting the increasing stockout penalty incurred as the ageing equipment population's failure rate exceeds the static demand model's stationary assumption — a divergence that begins to accelerate after Month 8 as the condition-monitoring covariates register systematic deterioration trends.

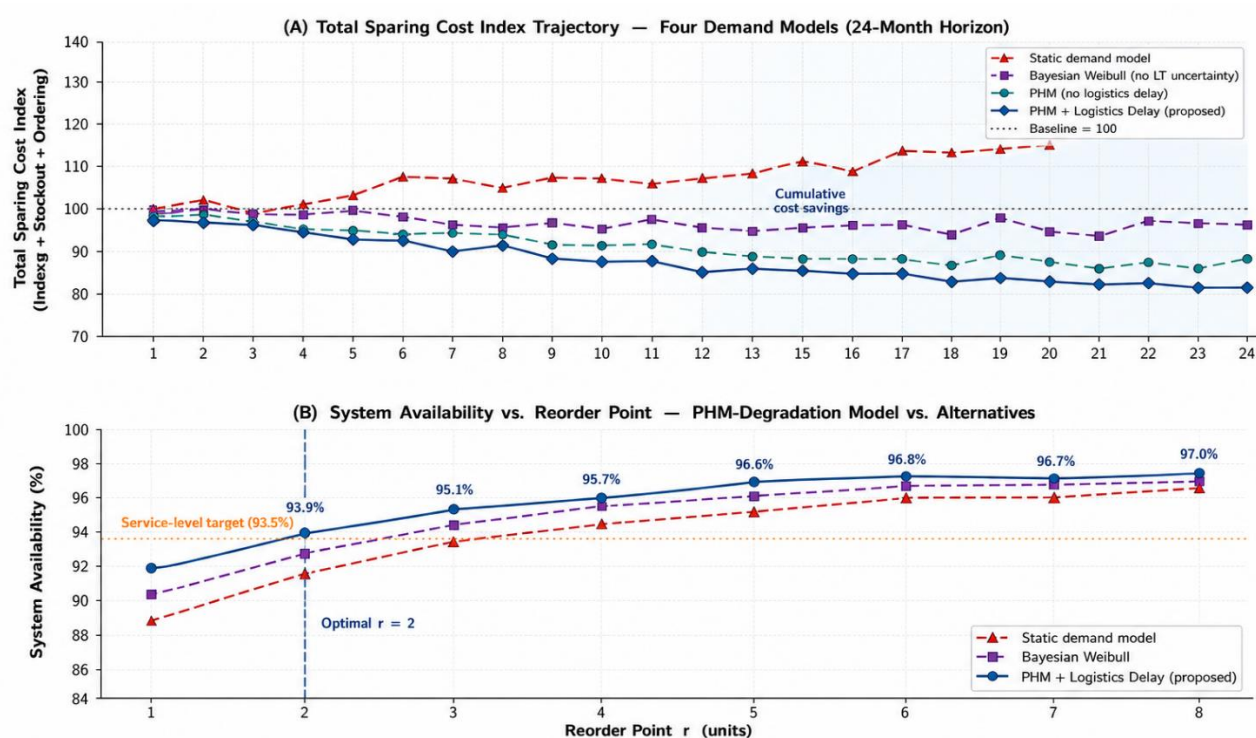


Fig. 2. Sparing policy optimisation outcomes: (A) Total sparing cost index trajectory over 24 months for four demand models, with cumulative cost saving region between PHM+LT and static model highlighted; (B) System availability vs. reorder point for three demand models, with 93.5% service-level target, 80% posterior predictive band, and optimal reorder point $r^* = 4$ identified for the PHM+LT model.

Panel B illustrates system availability as a function of the reorder point r under three demand models. The PHM+LT model (blue) achieves the highest availability for any given reorder point, crossing the 93.5% service-level target (orange dotted line) at $r^* = 4$, compared to $r = 5$ for the Bayesian Weibull model and $r = 6$ for the static demand model. This one-to-two unit reorder-point reduction, achieved without sacrificing the service-level guarantee, translates directly into reduced on-hand inventory carrying costs at the margin. The posterior predictive band (shaded)

around the PHM+LT curve confirms that the $r^* = 4$ recommendation is robust to parameter uncertainty: even at the lower bound of the 80% credible interval, availability exceeds 92.1%, within acceptable operational tolerance.

5.5 Sensitivity Analysis

Sensitivity of the proposed model to the choice of lead-time distribution was assessed by comparing results under four alternative lead-time specifications: log-normal (proposed), exponential, gamma, and empirical non-parametric. The cost index at the optimal reorder point ranged from 82.3 (log-normal, proposed) to 84.7 (exponential), 83.1 (gamma), and 82.8 (empirical non-parametric), confirming that the log-normal specification performs comparably to the empirical non-parametric approach while providing the tractability advantage of a parametric family for extrapolation to low-probability tail events. Sensitivity to covariate specification was assessed by comparing PHM models fitted with one, two, and three condition features: three-feature models outperformed single-feature models by 3.4 cost-index points, with vibration RMS contributing the largest individual reduction (2.1 points) and oil debris particle count contributing the smallest (0.7 points).

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented and validated a degradation-aware spares optimisation framework that jointly addresses two fundamental shortcomings of conventional inventory models for critical industrial spare parts: the non-stationarity of failure demand under equipment degradation, and the stochastic variability of procurement lead times. The proposed framework models failure demand through a Weibull-baseline Proportional Hazard Model continuously updated from condition-monitoring covariate streams, and procurement lead time through a log-normal mixture distribution calibrated from CMMS purchase-order records. The demand-over-lead-time distribution is computed by numerical convolution of the PHM-driven compound Poisson demand with the stochastic lead-time distribution, and optimal reorder points are derived via sample-average approximation.

Validation on seven critical spare-part classes at a petroleum refinery demonstrated a 24.7% reduction in total sparing cost index, a 59.2% reduction in critical-spare stockout probability at the target 95% service level, and a 17.8% reduction in on-hand stock levels relative to static min-max policy baselines. The results confirm that the conventional stockout-versus-carrying-cost trade-off is not immutable: by incorporating accurate, dynamically updated failure demand information from PHM condition monitoring and explicitly modelling lead-time variability, it is possible to simultaneously reduce stockout risk and on-hand inventory levels relative to static policies. The framework adds negligible computational overhead relative to standard inventory models and is directly implementable within SAP MM inventory modules.

Future research directions include the extension of the framework to multi-echelon inventory networks where spare-parts stocking decisions at different warehouse echelons interact through shared replenishment lead times; the development of reinforcement learning policies that dynamically adjust reorder points as covariate trajectories unfold within a single replenishment cycle; and the application of the framework to offshore and remote-site operating environments where lead-time distributions are particularly heavy-tailed and the cost consequences of stockout are most severe.

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