In this work, novel stability results for load frequency control (LFC) system considering time-varying delays, nonlinearly perturbed load, and time-varying disturbance of system parameters are proposed by using proportional-integral control strategy. Considering the nonlinearly exogenous load disturbance and system parameters disturbance, an improved stability criterion in the form of linear matrix inequalities (LMIs) is derived by novel simple Lyapunov–Krasovskii functionals (LKFs). The delay-dependent matrix in quadratic term, cross terms of variables, and quadratic terms multiplied by 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degrees of scalar functions are included in the new simple LKF. Taking the single-area and two-area LFC system installed with proportional-integral (PI) controller as example, our results surpass the previous maximum allowable size of time delay. Meanwhile, the relationship between time delay varying rate, load disturbance degree, gains of PI controller, and delay margin of the LFC system is researched separately. The results can provide guidance to tune the PI controller for achieving maximum delay margin, in which the LFC system can withstand without losing stability. At last, the simulation results verify the effectiveness and superiority of the proposed stability criterion.

1. Introduction

The usage of load frequency control (LFC) is widely in the power system, which restores the balance of the power system between load demand and generation supply [1–3]. The sudden change of load can bring threaten to the safe and economic operation of the power system. Thus, the analysis and research about LFC scheme of the power system are considered to be essential and important segment to guarantee the safe operation of the power system. The LFC scheme is also effectively applied in smart grid [4, 5].

A wide and dedicated open communication network is needed to transmit control signals, measurements between remote RTUs, and the control center in the conventional LFC system [3, 6]. The usage of the communication network leads to a series of inevitable problems, like time delays [7–11], packet losses, and so on. Hence, many researchers focus on the time delay phenomenon of the power control system and the impact of network delay on the communication-based power system [12–16]. From the perspective of stability analysis, it is of significant to seek the maximum allowable network delay that the power system with LFC scheme can withstand without losing stable.

Generally speaking, there are mainly two approaches to seek the upper bound of the time delay system, which have different restriction and conservatism. One is the direct approach, which is frequency domain method, such as tracing eigenvalue [17, 18], or cluster treatment of characteristic roots [19–21]. The advantage of these direct methods is that the accurate delay margin can be derived by
calculating eigenvalues of the whole system. However, the disadvantage of direct methods is that they can only be applied to constant time delays situation. The other is time domain method, which is based on Lyapunov stability theory and linear matrix inequalities (LMIs) techniques [22–26]. Though the time domain methods are more conservative than the frequency domain methods, the time domain methods can be applied in both constant and time-varying delays situation. So, the time domain methods based on Lyapunov stability theory are abroad exploited.

The main effort to diminish the conservatism of time domain methods has focused on two aspects, methods of constructing L-K functional and analyzing techniques for bounding the derivatives of L-K functional with regard to time. The former includes delay-division functional, functional with matrices dependent on the time delays [27], functional with two-integral or triple-integral terms [28], and so on. The latter techniques include improved majorization technique, free weighting matrix method [29], integral inequality including Jesen inequality [23], Wirtinger inequality [30], auxiliary function-based integral inequality [31], and reciprocal convex technique [32]. More and more researchers focus on the delay-dependent criteria for stability of the power system because the delay-dependent criteria have less conservatism than delay-independent criteria [22, 33].

Until now, there are a few excellent research studies about stability analysis of the delayed LFC systems. Ramakrishnan and Ray [34] focused on the delay-dependent robust stability problem for the LFC system with multiple time-invariant delays in $H_{\infty}$ framework. The model of the LFC system with both sampling and transmission delay was proposed in [35]. The stability analysis problem was considered in [3], which focused on the LFC system with electric vehicles and time delays. The novel linear operator inequality approach was proposed, and a delay-dependent stability criterion with less conservative was obtained. Unfortunately, the load disturbance and random disturbance of system parameters were not considered either in the stability analysis or simulation in the above literatures. It is worth noting that the bounded nonlinear load perturbation model was built without considering random disturbance of system parameters in literatures [22, 36, 37]. The augmented L-K functional including single and double integral terms was developed to analyze stability of the LFC system in these literatures. The novel LKF with delay-dependent matrix in quadratic term, cross terms of variables, and quadratic terms multiple by a higher degrees of scalar function proposed by this paper contains more information about state variables than the routine L-K functional adopted in [22, 36, 37], and the results in this paper are less conservative than those of [22, 36, 37].

This work proposes a novel stability criterion for the time-varying delay LFC power system considering non-linearly perturbed and random disturbance of system parameters. Considering unknown exogenous load disturbance and random disturbance of system parameters as constrained time-varying nonlinear function related to current and delayed state vectors, the delayed LFC system with PI controller can be described as a time-varying delay system. Then, the novel stability criterion of the LFC power system is expressed in the form of LMIs by a simple LKF and integral inequalities. The main opinion of constructing the new LKF is the application of delay-dependent matrix, cross terms of variables, and quadratic terms multiplied by 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degrees of scalar function. Moreover, the case studies are carried out taking the single-area and two-area LFC system installed with PI controller as example with simulation examples to verify the effectiveness and superiority of the proposed stability criteria.

2. System Description and Problem Formulation

The notations of $j$th area for the LFC system are given in Table 1. The subscript $j$ should be omitted for the single-area LFC system. For example, $K_{Pj}$ can be changed to $K_P$ in the single-area LFC system. It is worth noting that $\Delta P_{\text{tie}} = 0$ in the single-area LFC system.

Consider the uncertainties in the power parameters of the actual LFC system. The state-space model with disturbance parameters and load disturbance of the multiarea LFC system (N area) is presented as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\dot{x}(t) &= (A + \Delta A(t))x(t) + \sum_{j=1}^{N}(B_j + \Delta B_j(t))x(t - h_j(t)) + C\Delta L_d(t), \\
x(t) &= \phi(t), \quad t \in [-\max(h_j(t)), 0],
\end{align*}
\]

where $x(t)$ represents state vector, $A$ and $B$ represent the system matrices related to the current state and delayed state vectors, $\Delta A(t) = NF(t)D_1$ and $\Delta B(t) = NF(t)D_2$ represent perturbation parameters, $\hat{F}(t)$ is a time-varying matrix, which satisfies $F^T(t)F(t) \leq I$, $N$, $D_1$, and $D_2$ are the constant matrix, $h_j(t)$ represents the network time-varying delay in $j$th area. $C$ represents the known matrix related to the disturbance vector.

The initial state can be described by a continuous function defined in $t \in [-\max(h_j(t)), 0]$.

2.1. LFC Modeling. In order to simplify the calculation, it supposes that $h_j(t) = h(t)$, which means the multiple delays are supposed to be equal and shown as a unified time-
where shown in Figure 1. area can be presented as follows:
\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{\partial}{\partial t} x(t) &= (A + \Delta A(t))x(t) + (B + \Delta B(t))x(t - h(t)) + C \Delta L_d(t)(0 \leq h(t) \leq h, \mu \leq \dot{h}(t) \leq \mu), \\
x(t) &= \phi(t), \quad t \in [-h, 0],
\end{align*}
\]
(2)

where \(B = \sum_{j=1}^{n} B_j\) and \(\Delta B(t) = \sum_{j=1}^{n} \Delta B_j(t)\). \(h\) and \(\mu\) represent the upper bound of time-varying delay and the delay derivative separately. The constraints of \(h > 0\) and \(0 < \mu < 1\) can make time-varying delay systems well-posed because the fast time-varying delay will cause a series of problems, like causality, minimality, inconsistency, and so on.

Furthermore, considering \(\Delta A(t) = NF(t)D_1\) and \(\Delta B(t) = NF(t)D_2\), the state-space model of multiple-area can be rewritten as follows:
\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{\partial}{\partial t} x(t) &= Ax(t) + Bx(t - h(t)) + C \Delta L_d(t) + NF(t)(D_1 x(t) + D_2 x(t - h(t)))(0 \leq h(t) \leq h, \mu \leq \dot{h}(t) \leq \mu), \\
x(t) &= \phi(t), \quad t \in [-h, 0].
\end{align*}
\]
(3)

For a typical two-area LFC system, the dynamic model is shown in Figure 1. \(e^{-sh(t)}\) is network time-varying delay notation. The state vectors, load disturbance vectors, and system matrices are presented as follows:

\[
x(t) = \begin{bmatrix} \Delta f_1(t) & \Delta P_{m1}(t) & \Delta P_{e1}(t) \end{bmatrix} \int ACE_1(t) \, dt \begin{bmatrix} \Delta f_2(t) & \Delta P_{m2}(t) & \Delta P_{e2}(t) \end{bmatrix} \int ACE_2(t) \, dt^T,
\]

\[
A = \begin{bmatrix}
-D_1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
-1 & 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
\gamma_1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
2\pi R_{12} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -2\pi R_{12} & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -D_2 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 & \gamma_2 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -\gamma_2 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
\end{bmatrix}
\]

### Table 1: Notations.

| \(\Delta f_j\) | Deviation of frequency | \(K_{pj}\) | Proportional gain | \(K_{ij}\) | Integral gain |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| ACE_j          | Area control error     | \(\Delta L_{dj}\) | Disturbance of load | \(D_j\) | Damping constant |
| \(M_j\)       | Generator inertia moment | \(T_{ij}\) | Turbine time constant | \(T_{gj}\) | Time-constant |
| \(\gamma_j\)  | Frequency bias factor  | \(\Delta P_{tie}\) | Tie-line power transfer | \(\Delta P_{mj}\) | Generator output |
| \(\Delta P_{eij}\) | Generator valve position | \(\bar{v}_i\) | Speed drop | \(R_{ij}\) | Synchronize coefficient |
For the $j$th area, $j = 1, 2$, the notations are presented in Table 1.

The dynamic model of the single-area LFC system is shown in Figure 1 without dotted lines. The state vector, disturbance vector, and system matrices of the single-area LFC system are reduced as follows:

$$x(t) = \begin{bmatrix} \Delta f(t) & \Delta P_m(t) & \Delta P_v(t) & \int \text{ACE}(t) \, dt \end{bmatrix}^T,$$

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{D}{M} & \frac{1}{M} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -\frac{1}{T_t} & \frac{1}{T_t} & 0 \\ -\frac{1}{\nu T_g} & 0 & \frac{1}{T_g} & 0 \\ \gamma & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix},$$

$$B = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ \frac{\gamma K_P}{T_g} & 0 & 0 & \frac{K_I}{T_g} \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix},$$

$$C = \begin{bmatrix} -\frac{1}{M_1} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -\frac{1}{M_2} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}^T,$$

$$\Delta L_d(t) = [\Delta L_{d1}(t) \Delta L_{d2}(t)]^T F(t) = [F_1(t) F_2(t)]^T.$$

Remark 1. When there are $N$ ($N > 1$) subareas connected by tie-lines forming a multiarea power system, the dotted line will be copied by $N$ times. The decentralized control strategy is applied in the multiarea power system, which means every control area is independent and has its own LFC center to maintain the balance of generation and load. As a result, the interactions between $i$th area and other areas,
\[
\sum_{j=1}^{N} \sum_{i=1}^{N} T_{ij} \Delta f_j \text{ are treated as disturbances for } i \text{ th area. Then, define } x_i(t) = \text{col}[f^T \Delta P_{p,i} \Delta P_{v,i} \{\text{ACE}_i^T \Delta P_{\text{line}-i}\}],
\]

where (4) is the expanded form of \( x_i(t) \) in two area power system. And the system matrices of multiareas are listed as follows:

\[
A = \begin{bmatrix}
A_{11} & A_{12} & \ldots & A_{1N} \\
A_{21} & A_{22} & \ldots & A_{2N} \\
\vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\
A_{N1} & A_{N2} & \ldots & A_{NN}
\end{bmatrix},
\]

\[
A_{ii} = \begin{bmatrix}
\frac{D_i}{M_i} & \frac{1}{M_i} & 0 & 0 \frac{1}{M_i} \\
0 & \frac{1}{T_{\text{chi}}} & \frac{1}{T_{\text{chi}}} & 0 & 0 \\
-\frac{1}{R_i T_{gi}} & 0 & \frac{1}{T_{gi}} & 0 & 0 \\
\beta_i & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1
\end{bmatrix},
\]

\[
A_{ik} = \begin{bmatrix}
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
2\pi T_{ik} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0
\end{bmatrix},
\]

where \( B = \text{diag}[B_1, B_2, \ldots, B_N] \),

\[
B_i = \begin{bmatrix}
0 & 0 & 1 \frac{1}{T_{gi}} & 0 & 0
\end{bmatrix}^T,
\]

\[
C = \text{diag}[C_1, C_2, \ldots, C_N],
\]

\[
C_i = \begin{bmatrix}
\beta_i & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1
\end{bmatrix},
\]

\[
F = \text{diag}[F_1, F_2, \ldots, F_N],
\]

\[
F_i = \begin{bmatrix}
-\frac{1}{M_i} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0
\end{bmatrix}^T.
\]

\[
\Delta L_d(t) = \text{diag}[\Delta L_{d1}(t) \ldots \Delta L_{dn}(t)].
\]

2.2. Disturbance Parameters and Load Disturbance Model of LFC System. This paper models the unknown disturbance of power system parameters as \( NF(t)(D_1 x(t) + D_2 x(t-h(t))) = Np(t, x(t), x(t-h(t))) \), which is nonlinear function related to current and delayed state vector. Owing to the restriction of \( F(t)^T F(t) \leq I \), the following inequalities can be obtained:

\[
\sum_{k=1}^{K} T_{ik} \Delta f_j \text{ are treated as disturbances for } i \text{ th area. Then, define } x_i(t) = \text{col}[f^T \Delta P_{p,i} \Delta P_{v,i} \{\text{ACE}_i^T \Delta P_{\text{line}-i}\}],
\]

Similarly, the load disturbance is considered as time-varying nonlinear function with current and delayed state vector as \( CA\Delta L_d(t) = g(t, x(t), x(t-h(t))) \), which satisfy the following norm-bounded constraints:

\[
\|g(t, x(t), x(t-h(t)))\| \leq \rho \|x(t)\| + \tau \|x(t-h(t))\|,
\]

\[
g^T(t, x(t), x(t-h(t)) g(t, x(t), x((t-h(t)))
\leq \rho^2 x^T(t) G x(t) + \tau^2 x^T(t-h(t)) H x(t-h(t)).
\]

3. Main Results

Before deriving the main results, Lemma 1 should be introduced. Lemma 1 bounds the integral of quadratic function multiplied by a 1st/2nd degree scalar function [26].
Lemma 1. For a positive definite matrix $M$ with appropriate dimensions and a vector $f(s)$, the following inequalites can be obtained for all scalar valued function $\kappa(s) \geq 0, s \in [t_1, t_2]$:

$$
- \int_{t_1}^{t_2} \kappa(s)f^T(s)Mf(s)ds \leq \alpha_1 \epsilon_1^T F_1^T M^{-1} F_1 \epsilon_1 + 2\epsilon_1^T F_1^T \int_{t_1}^{t_2} \kappa(s)\epsilon_1 ds,
$$

$$
- \int_{t_1}^{t_2} \kappa(s)f^T(s)Mf(s)ds \leq \alpha_2 \epsilon_2^T F_2^T M^{-1} F_2 \epsilon_2 + 2\epsilon_2^T F_2^T \int_{t_1}^{t_2} \kappa(s)\epsilon_2 ds.
$$

(10)

where $\alpha_1 = \int_{t_1}^{t_2} \kappa(s)$ and $a_2 = t_2 - t_1$. And $F_1$ and $F_2$ represent appropriate dimensional matrices and $\epsilon$, represents arbitrary vector. Then, we can obtain the delay-dependent robust stability criterion of system (3).

Theorem 1. Given constants $h$ and $\mu$, the considered system (3) is asymptotically stable if there exist positive matrices $P_1, P_2 \in \mathbb{R}^{2n \times 2n}$, $Q_1, Q_2, Q_3, Q_4 \in \mathbb{R}^{2n \times 2n}$, $L_1, L_2 \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$, and any matrices $K_1, K_2, K_3, K_4, K_5, K_6 \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ satisfying the following LMIs:

$$
P_1 + h(t)P_2 > 0
$$

$$
\begin{bmatrix}
\Omega_{\beta_1} & hK_1^T & hK_2^T & hK_3^T \\
* & -hQ_3 & 0 & 0 \\
* & * & -L_1 & 0 \\
* & * & * & \frac{-hL_2}{3}
\end{bmatrix} < 0,
$$

(11)

where $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ represent $h(t) = 0$ and $\dot{h}(t) = -\mu$, $h(t) = 0$ and $\dot{h}(t) = \mu$, $h(t) = h$ and $\dot{h}(t) = -\mu$, and $h(t) = h$ and $\dot{h}(t) = \mu$, the four situations, respectively. Moreover, the details about other notations are listed in Appendix.

Proof. The Lyapunov functionals are adopted as follows:

$$
V(t) = \int_{t-h(t)}^{t} \left[ \Xi_1^T(t, s)Q_1\Xi_1(t, s) + \Xi_2^T(s)Q_2\Xi_2(s) \right] ds + \int_{t-h(t)}^{t-h(t)} \left[ \Xi_1^T(t, s)Q_3\Xi_1(t, s) + \Xi_2^T(s)Q_4\Xi_2(s) \right] ds
$$

$$
+ \xi^T(t)(P_1 + h(t)P_2)\xi(t) + \int_{t-h(t)}^{t-h(t)} \left[ (h-t+s)\Xi_2^T(s)Q_5\Xi_2(s) + \xi^T(s)\left( (h-t+s)L_1 + (h-t+s)L_2 \right) \xi(s) \right] ds,
$$

(12)

where $\xi(t) = [x^T(t), x^T(t-h(t)), x^T(t-h)]^T$, $\Xi_1(t, s) = [x^T(t), x^T(s)]^T$, $\Xi_2(s) = [x^T(s), x^T(t-h)]^T$.

Then, define $\zeta(t) \in \mathbb{R}^{9n+1}$ as $\zeta(t) = [x^T(t)\xi^T(t-h(t))]^T$.

Computing the derivative of $V(t)$ along the trajectories of system (3):

$$
\dot{V}(t) = 2\xi^T(t)(P_1 + h(t)P_2)\xi(t) + 2\int_{t-h(t)}^{t-h(t)} \Xi_1^T(t, s)Q_3\Xi_1(t, s) ds + 2\int_{t-h(t)}^{t-h(t)} \Xi_2^T(t, s)Q_4\Xi_2(t, s) ds + \dot{h}(t)\xi^T(t)P_2\xi(t)
$$

$$
+ \Xi_1^T(t, t)Q_1\Xi_1(t, t) + (1 - \dot{h}(t))\Xi_1^T(t-h(t), t-h(t))Q_2\Xi_1(t-h(t)) + \Xi_2^T(t)Q_3\Xi_2(t) + h^2 \xi^T(t)L_1\xi(t)
$$

$$
+ (1 - \dot{h}(t))\Xi_2^T(t-h(t))Q_4\Xi_2(t-h(t)) - \Xi_1^T(t, t-h)Q_5\Xi_1(t, t-h) - \Xi_2^T(t-h)Q_6\Xi_2(t-h) + h^3 \xi^T(t)L_2\xi(t)
$$
\[- \int_{t-h}^{t} \Xi_T(s)Q_2 \Xi_2(s)ds - 2 \int_{t-h}^{t} (h - t + s) x_T(s) L_1 x(s)ds - 3 \int_{t-h}^{t} (h - t + s) x_T(s) L_2 x(s)ds \]
\[= \zeta_T(t) \left( He \left( G_1^T \left[ P_1 + h(t)P_2 \right] G_2 + G_3^T Q_1 G_4 + G_5^T Q_2 G_6 \right) + \Pi \right) \zeta(t) + f_a(t). \] (13)

The sum of all integral terms is expressed by \( f_a(t) \):
\[ f_a(t) = - \int_{t-h}^{t} \left\{ \Xi_T(s)Q_2 \Xi_2(s) + 2(h - t + s) x_T(s) L_1 x(s) + 3(h - t + s)^2 x_T(s) L_2 x(s) \right\} ds. \] (14)

Owing to \( -(h - t + s) \leq -(h(t) - t + s), \forall s \in [t - h(t), t] \), the following inequalities can be obtained:
\[ f_a(t) \leq - \int_{t-h(t)}^{t-h} \left\{ \Xi_T(s)Q_2 \Xi_2(s) + 2(h(t) - t + s) x_T(s) L_1 x(s) + 3(h(t) - t + s)^2 x_T(s) L_2 x(s) \right\} ds \]
\[- \int_{t-h(t)}^{t} \left\{ \Xi_T(s)Q_2 \Xi_2(s) + 2(h(t) - t + s) x_T(s) L_1 x(s) + 3(h(t) - t + s)^2 x_T(s) L_2 x(s) \right\} ds \]
\[= Y(t). \] (15)

Using Lemma 1 to estimate \( Y(t) \):
\[ Y(t) \leq \zeta_T(t) \left\{ \begin{array}{c}
(h - h(t))K_1^T Q_1 K_1 + 2K_1^T (e_4, e_2 - e_3)^T + (h - h(t))^2 K_2^T L_1^{-1} K_2 + 4K_2^T \left[ (h - h(t)) e_2 - e_4 \right]^T \\
+ 3(h - h(t)) K_2^T L_2^{-1} K_3 + 6K_3^T \left[ (h - h(t)) e_2 - e_4 \right]^T + (h(t) K_4^T Q_3 K_4 + 2K_4^T [e_5, e_1 - e_2]^T \\
h^2(t) K_5^T L_1^{-1} K_5 + 4K_5^T \left[ (h(t) e_1 - e_3 \right]^T + 3(h(t) K_6^T L_2^{-1} K_6 + 6K_6^T (h(t)e_1 - e_3)^T \\
+ \rho \right)^T P + [D_1 x(t) + D_2 x(t - h(t))]^T [D_1 x(t) + D_2 x(t - h(t))] \geq 0.
\end{array} \right\} \] (16)

The following inequality holds for any \( \zeta \geq 0 \) from (9) and (7), respectively:
\[ - \zeta g(\cdot)^T g(\cdot) + \rho x^T(t) G^T G x(t) + \rho x^T(t - h(t)) H^T H x(t - h(t)) \geq 0, \]
\[ - \rho \left[ D_1 x(t) + D_2 x(t - h(t)) \right]^T h(t) \geq 0. \] (17)

They can be expressed by the augmented state vector \( \zeta(t) \), respectively:
\[ \zeta_T(t) e_5^T (- \zeta D)e_5 + e_1^T \left( \rho x^T G \right)e_1 + e_2^T \left( \rho x^T H \right)e_2 \geq 0, \]
\[ \zeta_T(t) e_5^T (- I)e_9 + e_1^T \left( D_1^T D_1 \right)e_1 + e_1^T \left( D_1^T D_2 \right)e_2 + e_2^T \left( D_2^T D_1 \right)e_1 + e_2^T \left( D_2^T D_2 \right)e_2 \zeta(t) \geq 0. \] (18)

By substituting (16) into (13) and adding the inequality (18), the following inequality can be obtained:
\[ \dot{V}(t) \leq \zeta^T(t) \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{He} \left( G_1^T P G_2 + G_1^T Q_1 G_4 + G_1^T Q_2 G_6 + H_1 + H_2 + H_3 \right) + \Pi + \Lambda + \Psi \end{array} \right] \zeta(t), \]  
\[ \text{where } G_1, G_2, G_3, G_4, G_5, G_6, H_1, H_2, H_3, \Lambda, \Pi \text{ have been defined in Appendix, and} \]

\[ \Psi = (h - h(t))K_1^T Q_1^{-1} K_1 + (h - h(t))^2 K_1^T L_1^{-1} K_2 + 3(h - h(t))K_3^T L_3^{-1} K_3 \]
\[ + h(t)K_4^T Q_2^{-1} K_4 + h(t)H_2^T L_2^{-1} K_5 + 3h(t)K_6^T L_2^{-1} K_6. \]

Finally, considering \( 0 \leq h(t) \leq h \) and \(-\mu < \dot{h}(t) < \mu \), inequality (9) is obtained by Schur complement, which ensures the following inequality:

\[ \dot{V}(t) \leq \zeta^T(t) \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{He} \left( G_1^T P G_2 + G_1^T Q_1 G_4 + G_1^T Q_2 G_6 + H_1 + H_2 + H_3 \right) + \Pi + \Lambda + \Psi \end{array} \right] \zeta(t), \]

\[ < - \varepsilon \| \zeta(t) \|^2, \exists \varepsilon > 0, \]
\[ \leq - \varepsilon \| \dot{x}(t) \|^2, \exists \varepsilon > 0. \]

Hence, the system is asymptotically stable. The proof is finished. \( \square \)

Remark 2. The condition of positive matrices \( P_1, P_2 \in \mathbb{R}^{4n \times 4n}, Q_1, Q_2, Q_3 \in \mathbb{R}^{2n \times 2n} \), and \( L_1, L_2 \in \mathbb{R}^{4 \times 2n} \) in Theorem 1 can guarantee the adopted Lyapunov functions \( V(t) \) being positive. Thus, the positive definite of \( V(t) \) and negative definite of \( \dot{V}(t) \) in time domain \([-h, 0]\) can guarantee asymptotic stability of system (3) in \([-h, 0]\).

Remark 3. Our work has investigated the stability condition of LFC system (3) under the limitation \( 0 \leq h(t) \leq h \) and \(-\mu < \dot{h}(t) < \mu \). The limitation conditions are \( 0 < h(t) < h, -\mu < \dot{h}(t) < \mu \). That is to say, the stability condition should be satisfied under the four situations, \( \beta_1: h(t) = h_1, \dot{h}(t) = -\mu, \beta_2: h(t) = h_1, \dot{h}(t) = \mu, \beta_3: h(t) = h_2, \dot{h}(t) = -\mu, \) and \( \beta_4: h(t) = h_2, \dot{h}(t) = \mu \). \( V(t) < 0 \) must be guaranteed under the four situations. Thus, inequality (9) under \( \beta_1 - \beta_4 \) in Theorem 1 must be satisfied simultaneously for system asymptotic stability.

Remark 4. The main contribution of this section is to propose a novel Theorem 1 in the form of LMIs which can derive a less conservative result of maximum allowable network delay for LFC system (3). The LKF constructed by literature [36] is \( V(t) = x^T(t)Px(t) + \int_{t-\tau}^t x^T(s)Q_1x(s)ds + \int_{t-\tau}^t x^T(s)Q_2x(s)ds + \tau \int_{t-\tau}^t x^T(s)Rx(s)ds \). Compared with that, the LKF proposed by this paper has four improvement points. (i) The augmented variable \( [x^T(t), x^T(t - h(t)), x^T(t - h), \int_{t-h}^t x^T(s)ds]^T \), rather than \( x(t) \) in [36], which can reduce the conservativeness by increasing the link between variables. (ii) The time-delay dependent matrix \( P_1 + h(t)P_2 \) is introduced in quadratic term, rather than constant matrix \( P \) in [36], which can reduce the conservativeness by introducing more messages about time-varying delay. (iii) The cross terms of variable \( \{x(t), x(s), x(s), x(s)\} \) in \( \Xi_1(t, s), \Xi_2(t, s) \) also can reduce the conservativeness by increasing the link between variables. (iv) The 4th, 5th, and 6th terms of the novel LKF multiplied by 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degrees of a scalar function \( h - t + s \). The increasing of \( h - t + s \) by one signifies the increasing the number of integral by one. Compared with the LKF of literatures [22, 36, 37], we increase the quadratic terms multiplied by 2nd and 3rd degrees of the scalar function \( h - t + s \), which may reduce the conservativeness compared with literatures [22, 36, 37].

Remark 5. If there is a small disturbance or no disturbed load in the LFC system, the delay-dependent robust stability criterion can be developed from Theorem 1 by setting \( \rho = 0, \tau = 0 \). If there is no or very small disturbance in LFC system parameters, set \( N = 0 \).

4. Case Studies

In this section, the typical single-area and two-area LFC systems are carried out to analyze the delay margins based on Theorem 1. The parameters of the real two-area LFC system are listed as Table 2. For verifying the less conservativeness of our proposed method, the parameters of the two-area LFC system given in [37] are presented in Table 2 for comparison purposes. \( M, D, \gamma, T_g, T_1, \) and \( \bar{v} \) represent the...
inertia moments of generator, the generator damping coefficient, the frequency bias factor, time constant of the governor, the turbine time constant, and the speed drop separately. Delay margins with respect to different value of $\rho$, $\tau$, gains of PI controller are calculated for constant and time-varying time delays. Then, simulation studies based on MATLAB/Simulink are shown to investigate the effect of time delay on control performance and verify the improvement and effectiveness of the Theorem 1 proposed by this paper.

4.1. Theoretical Delay Margins

4.1.1. Single-Area LFC System. The parameters of Area 1 in Table 2 are adopted as single-area LFC system parameters.

Setting $K_p$ as very small, we investigate the effect of Integral (I) controller on delay margin under three situations of load disturbance ($\rho = 0, \tau = 0$; $\rho = 0, \tau = 0.025$; and $\rho = 0.025, \tau = 0.025$) for both constant and time-varying delays. Suppose $G$ and $H$ in (9) and $D_1$ and $D_2$ in (8) as $0.1I_n$, where $n$ represents the dimension of the system state vector $x(t)$. It can be seen that $n = 4$ in the single-area LFC system from (5). Theorem 1 is adopted to calculate the delay margins. The results are shown in Table 3 and Figures 2–4.

The following conclusions can be obtained from Table 3 and Figures 2–4:

(i) The increasing of $\rho$ and $\tau$ represents that the load fluctuation becomes more pronounced. With the increase in $\rho$ and $\tau$, the delay margin that PI controller can withstand without decrease in losing stability under the same value of $\mu$ and $K_I$. The effect of load disturbance on delay-dependent stability of the LFC system can be obtained.

(ii) It can be seen from Figures 2–4 that the increasing of $\mu$ causes the decreasing of delay margin $h$ with the same value of $K_I$ under the three situations of load disturbance ($\rho = 0, \tau = 0$; $\rho = 0, \tau = 0.025$; $\rho = 0.025, \tau = 0.025$). The effect of time delay changing rate on delay-dependent stability of the LFC system can be obtained.

(iii) Simultaneously, it can be seen from Figures 2–4 that maximum allowable network delay decreases with the increasing of $K_I$ with the same value of $\mu$ under the three situations of load fluctuation.

As for the nominal system condition ($\rho = 0, \tau = 0$) with constant ($\mu = 0$) and time-varying delay ($\mu = 0.9$), the maximum allowable network delays are listed in Table 4 compared with the other results from literatures [22, 36, 37]. It can be seen that the results calculated by Theorem 1 are less conservative than those of [22, 36, 37], owing to the progressiveness of Lyapunov functional and Lemma 1 adopted by this paper. Therefore, when compared with [22, 36, 37], the results proposed by this paper are more realistic.

Results of the maximum allowable network delays with regard to gains of PI controller ($K_p, K_I$) are listed in Table 5 and Figure 5 with constant delays ($\mu = 0$) and no load disturbance ($\rho = 0, \tau = 0$) and in Table 6 and Figure 6 with time-varying delays ($\mu = 0.9$) and load disturbance ($\rho = 0.025, \tau = 0.025$), separately. Results demonstrate that smaller $h$ is obtained under the bigger $K_p$, $K_I$, and a relatively larger $h$ is acquired for the smaller $K_p$, $K_I$. $h$ is reduced with the increasing of $K_p$ when $K_I \leq 0.05$. For $K_I \geq 0.1$, $h$ increases at first and then decreases with the increasing of $K_p$. This results implies that for a given $K_I$, there is an optimal value of $K_p$ which can acquire the maximum $h$, which can give guidance to tune PI controller to achieve maximum delay margins. Moreover, it can be found that $h$ of the time-varying delays is smaller and decreases faster than that of constant delays.

4.1.2. Two-Area LFC System. Maximum allowable network delay ($h$) is calculated by Theorem 1 for the two-area LFC system listed in Table 2 by simplifying the multiple delay as a single delay like (3) and gains of PI controller for two areas as same ($K_{pi} = K_p$, $K_{ii} = K_I$). In the two-area LFC system, both the values of $G, H, D_1,$ and $D_2$ are taken as $0.1I_n$, where $n = 9$.

In two-area LFC system case, for more clearly comparisons with literatures [22, 36, 37], the results are summarized in Table 7 with the condition of ($\rho = 0, \tau = 0$) under constant ($\mu = 0$) and time-varying delay ($\mu = 0.5$). Similarity, the listed results are less conservative than those of [22, 36, 37]. Also, the results of Table 7 show the effect of PI controller gains on the delay margins.

Also, the results of delay margin with respect to gains of PI controller are listed in Table 8 and Figure 7 with constant delay ($\mu = 0$) and no load fluctuation ($\rho = 0, \tau = 0$) and in Table 9 and Figure 8 with time-varying delay ($\mu = 0.9$) and load fluctuation ($\rho = 0.025, \tau = 0.025$), respectively. The delay margin changing trend with regard to gains of PI controller of the two-area LFC system is consistent with that of the single-area LFC system. Hence, the details can be omitted here.

4.2. Simulation Verification. The models of the single-area and two-area LFC system are built in MATLAB/Simulink separately. The simulation results verify the above calculation results. The state vectors ($\Delta f$) are selected as the observation since the load fluctuation directly affects the frequency of the LFC system.

Table 2: Parameters of two-area LFC systems.

| Parameter | $T_1$/s | $T_2$/s | $\nu$ | $D$ | $\gamma$ | $M$/s | $T_{12}$ |
|-----------|---------|---------|-------|-----|---------|-------|----------|
| Area 1    | 0.3     | 0.1     | 0.05  | 1.0 | 21      | 10    | 0.1986   |
| Area 2    | 0.4     | 0.17    | 0.05  | 1.5 | 21.5    | 12    |          |
4.2.1. Single-Area LFC System. It can be seen from Table 4 that the maximum allowable network delay calculated by Theorem 1 is $h = 6.64$ under the condition of $\rho = \tau = 0, \mu = 0.9, K_P = 0.1, K_I = 0.2$. The time-varying delay $h(t)$ is supposed to be a sine function $h(t) = 3.32 + 3.32\sin(0.27t)$. Figure 9 shows that the state vector $\Delta f$ converges asymptotically to stable point for $h = 6.64$; however, the delay margin calculated by [22] is 4.67, calculated by [36] is 5.94, and calculated by [37] is 6.59. Moreover, if $h$ exceeds beyond 6.64, the system becomes unstable as shown in Figure 10 for $h = 7s$.

4.2.2. Two-Area LFC System. At first, when $h(t) = 0$, the state-space model of two-area LFC system becomes $\dot{x}(t) = (A + \Delta A + B + \Delta B)x(t) + C\Delta L_d(t)$. Figure 11 shows that the delay-free system is asymptotically stable. It can be seen from Table 9 that the maximum allowable delay

| $K_I$ | 0.05 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 1 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| $\rho = 0, \tau = 0$ | $\mu = 0$ | 32.89 | 15.752 | 7.82 | 3.8213 | 2.214 | 0.9824 |
| | $\mu = 0.5$ | 25.178 | 10.818 | 5.812 | 2.813 | 1.5123 | 0.5812 |
| $\rho = 0, \tau = 0.025$ | $\mu = 0$ | 26.124 | 12.453 | 6.512 | 3.541 | 2.112 | 0.8721 |
| | $\mu = 0.5$ | 24.981 | 9.718 | 4.774 | 2.572 | 1.417 | 0.4882 |
| $\rho = 0.025, \tau = 0.025$ | $\mu = 0$ | 25.516 | 12.011 | 5.918 | 3.211 | 1.812 | 0.743 |
| | $\mu = 0.5$ | 23.828 | 7.521 | 3.514 | 2.012 | 1.228 | 0.334 |
Table 4: Delay margin $h$ by Theorem 1 for single-area LFC with $\mu = 0$, $\rho = 0$, $\tau = 0$.

| $K_p$ | 0.05 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 1 | 0.05 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 1 |
|-------|------|-----|-----|-----|---|------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| $K_I$ |      |     |     |     |   |      |     |     |     |   |
| Theorem 1 | 32.89 | 7.82 | 3.8213 | 2.214 | 0.9824 | 32.98 | 7.89 | 3.83 | 2.29 | 1.12 |
| [22] | 27.92 | 6.69 | 3.12 | 1.91 | 0.88 | 27.03 | 6.94 | 3.29 | 2.02 | 0.96 |
| [36] | 27.92 | 6.69 | 3.12 | 1.91 | 0.88 | 27.05 | 6.94 | 3.29 | 2.02 | 0.96 |
| [37] | 30.91 | 7.33 | 3.38 | 2.04 | 0.92 | 31.61 | 7.79 | 3.61 | 2.19 | 1.01 |
| $\mu = 0$ |      |     |     |     |   |      |     |     |     |   |
| Theorem 1 | 27.87 | 6.54 | 3.02 | 1.82 | 0.78 | 22.84 | 6.64 | 3.14 | 1.86 | 0.79 |
| [22] | 20.45 | 4.59 | 1.81 | 1.011 | 0.48 | 17.39 | 4.67 | 1.85 | 1.05 | 0.48 |
| [36] | 26.37 | 6.25 | 2.85 | 1.68 | 0.74 | 20.25 | 5.94 | 2.87 | 1.75 | 0.74 |
| [37] | 27.26 | 6.43 | 2.91 | 1.71 | 0.75 | 22 | 6.59 | 3.11 | 1.84 | 0.75 |

Table 5: Delay margin $h$ by Theorem 1 for single-area LFC with $\mu = 0$, $\rho = 0$, $\tau = 0$.

| $K_p$ | 0.05 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 1 | 0.05 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 1 |
|-------|------|-----|-----|-----|---|------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| $K_I$ |      |     |     |     |   |      |     |     |     |   |
| Theorem 1 | 32.89 | 7.82 | 3.8213 | 2.214 | 0.9824 | 32.98 | 7.89 | 3.83 | 2.29 | 1.12 |
| [22] | 27.92 | 6.69 | 3.12 | 1.91 | 0.88 | 27.03 | 6.94 | 3.29 | 2.02 | 0.96 |
| [36] | 27.92 | 6.69 | 3.12 | 1.91 | 0.88 | 27.05 | 6.94 | 3.29 | 2.02 | 0.96 |
| [37] | 30.91 | 7.33 | 3.38 | 2.04 | 0.92 | 31.61 | 7.79 | 3.61 | 2.19 | 1.01 |
| $\mu = 0.9$ |      |     |     |     |   |      |     |     |     |   |
| Theorem 1 | 27.87 | 6.54 | 3.02 | 1.82 | 0.78 | 22.84 | 6.64 | 3.14 | 1.86 | 0.79 |
| [22] | 20.45 | 4.59 | 1.81 | 1.011 | 0.48 | 17.39 | 4.67 | 1.85 | 1.05 | 0.48 |
| [36] | 26.37 | 6.25 | 2.85 | 1.68 | 0.74 | 20.25 | 5.94 | 2.87 | 1.75 | 0.74 |
| [37] | 27.26 | 6.43 | 2.91 | 1.71 | 0.75 | 22 | 6.59 | 3.11 | 1.84 | 0.75 |

Figure 4: Delay margin $h \propto K_I$ for single-area with $(\rho = 0.025, \tau = 0.025)$.

Figure 5: Delay margin $h \propto (K_P, K_I)$ (single-area with $\mu = 0, \rho = 0, \tau = 0$).
Table 6: Delay margin $h \propto (K_p, K_i)$ for single-area LFC with $\mu = 0.9, \rho = 0.025, \tau = 0.025$.

| $h$ | $K_p$ | $K_i$ |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 0.05 | 22.541 | 21.031 |
| 0.1  | 11.830 | 12.163 |
| 0.15 | 8.133  | 8.153  |
| 0.2  | 6.584  | 7.702  |
| 0.4  | 3.612  | 3.923  |
| 0.6  | 2.011  | 2.048  |
| 1.0  | 0.821  | 0.727  |

Table 7: Delay margin $h$ by Theorem 1 for two-area LFC with $\varrho = 0, \tau = 0$.

| $K_p$ | $h$ (s) | $h$ by Theorem 1 |
|-------|---------|------------------|
| 0     | 0.2     | 7.51             |
| 0     | 0.4     | 3.54             |
| 0.2   | 0.6     | 6.14             |
| 0.4   | 0.82    | 1.74             |
| 0.6   | 1       | 0.57             |
| 1     | 0.2     | 3.52             |
| 1     | 0.4     | 3.23             |
| 1     | 0.6     | 3.02             |
| 1.0   | 1       | 2.95             |

Table 8: Delay margin $h \propto (K_p, K_i)$ for two-area LFC with $\mu = 0, \varrho = 0, \tau = 0$.

| $h$ | $K_p$ | $K_i$ |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 0.05 | 28.442 | 28.387 |
| 0.1  | 14.699 | 14.821 |
| 0.15 | 7.51   | 7.82   |
| 0.2  | 3.54   | 3.72   |
| 0.4  | 0.81   | 0.92   |
| 1    | 0.81   | 0.92   |
calculated by Theorem 1 is $h = 6.78$ under the condition of $\rho = \tau = 0.025, \mu = 0.9, K_P = K_I = 0.2$. Then, it can be seen from Figure 11 that the two-area LFC system is asymptotically stable under $h = 6.78$. Moreover, if $h$ exceeds beyond 6.78, the system becomes unstable as shown in Figure 12 for $h = 7s$.
5. Conclusion

The stability criterion for the time-varying delay LFC system with nonlinearly load disturbance and random disturbance of system parameters has been investigated by adopting a novel simple LKF and integral inequality (Lemma 1). Considering the exogenous load disturbance and random disturbance of system parameters as constrained nonlinearly function, a time-varying delay system is modeled to describe the delayed LFC system. The novel simple LKF includes delay-dependent matrix in quadratic term, cross terms of variables, and quadratic terms multiplied by 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degrees of scalar function. Lemma 1 is adopted to bound the quadratic terms multiplied 1st and 2nd degrees of scalar function emerging in the derivative of LKF. The results of the novel simple LKF contributing to reduce conservatism and the relationships between the time delay varying rate, load disturbance degree, the gains of PI controller, and delay
Data Availability
The raw/processed data required to reproduce these findings cannot be shared at this time as the data also form part of an ongoing study.

Conflicts of Interest
The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

Authors’ Contributions
The manuscript was approved by all authors for publication.

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Appendix

\[
\Omega = H \left( G_T \left( P_1 + h(t)P_2 \right) G_2 + G_T ^2 Q_1 G_4 + G_T ^2 Q_2 G_6 + H_1 + H_2 + H_3 \right) + \Pi + \Lambda,
\]

\[
G_1 = [e_1^T e_2^T e_3^T + e_5^T]^T,
\]

\[
G_2 = [A_1^T e_6^T e_7^T + e_3^T]^T,
\]

\[
G_3 = [h(t)e_1^T e_2^T]^T,
\]

\[
G_4 = [A_4^T e_9]^T,
\]

\[
G_5 = [(h-h(t))e_1^T e_2^T]^T,
\]

\[
G_6 = [A_6^T e_9]^T,
\]

\[
H_1 = [e_1^T e_2^T - e_3^T]K_1 + [e_5^T e_7^T - e_9^T]K_4,
\]

\[
H_2 = 2[(h-h(t))e_1^T - e_3^T]K_2 + 2(h(t)e_1^T - e_3^T)K_5,
\]

\[
H_3 = 3[(h-h(t))e_1^T - e_3^T]K_4 + 3(h(t)e_1^T - e_3^T)K_6,
\]

\[
\Pi = \hat{h}(t)[e_1^T e_2^T e_3^T + e_5^T]P_2[e_1^T e_2^T e_3^T + e_5^T]^T + [e_1^T e_2^T]Q_1[e_1^T e_2^T]^T - (1-h(t))[e_1^T e_2^T]Q_1[e_1^T e_2^T]^T + (1-h(t))[e_1^T e_2^T]Q_2[e_1^T e_2^T]^T - [e_1^T e_2^T]Q_2[e_1^T e_2^T]^T
\]

\[
+ (1-h(t))[e_1^T e_2^T]Q_2[e_1^T e_2^T]^T - [e_1^T e_2^T]Q_2[e_1^T e_2^T]^T + h[e_1^T A_4^T]Q_1[e_1^T A_4^T]^T + A^T \left( h^2L_1 + h^3L_2 \right) A,
\]

\[
\Lambda = -e_9^T (\zeta I) e_9 + e_9^T (\bar{\zeta}^2 G^T G)e_9 + e_9^T (\zeta^2 M^T H) e_9 - e_9^T I e_9 + e_9^T (D_1^T D_1) e_9 + e_9^T (D_2^T D_2) e_9 + e_9^T (D_3^T D_3) e_9 + e_9^T (D_4^T D_4) e_9 + e_9^T (D_5^T D_5) e_9 + e_9^T (D_6^T D_6) e_9,
\]

\[
i = 1, 2, \ldots, 9,
\]

\[
e_0 = 0_{nx9},
\]

\[
A_C = [AB_0_{nx9} I_{nxN}],
\]

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