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Standard Performance Specification for Flame Resistant and Electric Arc Rated Protective Clothing Worn by Workers Exposed to Flames and Electric Arcs¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F1506; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This performance specification identifies minimum performance requirements to determine the (a) arc rating of fabrics, (b) flame resistance of fabrics and subassemblies, (c) mechanical durability of the fabrics and subassemblies, (d) the minimum garment construction and performance requirements, and (e) the garment labeling requirements for the completed protective clothing worn by workers exposed to flames and electric arcs.

1.1.1 The minimum requirements for garment labeling are intended to provide end users with adequate information to select garments with the appropriate arc rating.

1.1.2 End users are required to perform an assessment to determine the level of hazard and the required arc rating of the protective clothing for their individual hazards.

1.1.2.1 The end user risk assessments are outside the scope of this standard.

1.2 This performance specification does not address coated or laminated protective clothing commonly used for rainwear applications in an arc hazard environment. Performance requirements related to this category of protective clothing are detailed in Specification **F1891**.

1.3 This performance specification does not address hand protection. Performance and test requirements related to hand protection are detailed in OSHA 1910.138, Specification **D120**, and Test Method **F2675/F2675M**.

1.4 The care and maintenance requirements for laundering electric arc flash protective clothing are outside the scope of this standard. Refer to Guides **F1449** or **F2757** related to industrial or home laundering.

1.5 *This standard should be used to evaluate and describe the properties of materials, products, or assemblies in response to heat and flame under controlled laboratory conditions. It*

should not be used to describe or appraise the fire hazard or fire risk of materials, products, or assemblies under actual fire conditions.

1.5.1 The results of this evaluation may be used as elements of a fire-risk assessment that takes into account all of the factors that are pertinent to an assessment of the fire hazard of a particular end use.

1.6 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are for information only.

1.7 The following precautionary caveat pertains only to the test methods portion, Section 7, of this performance specification: *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.8 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D120 Specification for Rubber Insulating Gloves

D123 Terminology Relating to Textiles

D1424 Test Method for Tearing Strength of Fabrics by Falling-Pendulum (Elmendorf-Type) Apparatus

D1776/D1776M Practice for Conditioning and Testing Textiles

D2261 Test Method for Tearing Strength of Fabrics by the Tongue (Single Rip) Procedure (Constant-Rate-of-Extension Tensile Testing Machine)

D2724 Test Method for Bond Strength of Bonded, Fused, and Laminated Apparel Fabrics

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

- D3776/D3776M** Test Methods for Mass Per Unit Area (Weight) of Fabric
- D3786** Test Method for Bursting Strength of Textile Fabrics—Diaphragm Bursting Strength Tester Method
- D5034** Test Method for Breaking Strength and Elongation of Textile Fabrics (Grab Test)
- D6413** Test Method for Flame Resistance of Textiles (Vertical Test)
- D7138** Test Method to Determine Melting Temperature of Synthetic Fibers
- F1449** Guide for Industrial Laundering of Flame, Thermal, and Arc Resistant Clothing
- F1891** Specification for Arc and Flame Resistant Rainwear
- F1959/F1959M** Test Method for Determining the Arc Rating of Materials for Clothing
- F2675/F2675M** Test Method for Determining Arc Ratings of Hand Protective Products Developed and Used for Electrical Arc Flash Protection
- F2757** Guide for Home Laundering Care and Maintenance of Flame, Thermal and Arc Resistant Clothing
- F2894** Test Method for Evaluation of Materials, Protective Clothing, and Equipment for Heat Resistance Using a Hot Air Circulating Oven
- 2.2 *AATCC Test Methods:*³
- Method 61** Colorfastness to Washing, Domestic and Laundering, Commercial: Accelerated
- Method 132** Colorfastness to Dry-Cleaning
- Method 135** Dimensional Changes Automatic Home Laundering of Woven and Knitted Fabrics
- Method 158** Dimensional Changes on Drycleaning in Perchloroethylene: Machine Method
- 2.3 *ANSI/ISEA Standard:*⁴
- 107-2015** American National Standard for High-Visibility Safety Apparel and Accessories
- 2.4 *CSA Standard:*⁵
- CSA Z96** High-Visibility Safety Apparel
- 2.5 *Federal Standards:*
- 29 CFR 1910.138** Hand Protection⁶
- 2.6 *ISO Standard:*⁷
- ISO 20471** High visibility clothing — Test methods and requirements
- 2.7 *NFPA Standard:*⁸
- NFPA 2112** Standard on Flame-Resistant Clothing for Protection of Industrial Personnel Against Short-Duration Thermal Exposures from Fire

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of textile terms used in this performance specification, refer to Terminology **D123**.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *afterflame, n*—persistent flaming of a material after the ignition source has been removed.

3.2.1.1 *Discussion*—In arc testing, a visible flaming on or near a test specimen which persists after the arc exposure has ended. The afterflame ceases when flaming is no longer visible.

3.2.2 *afterflame time, n*—the length of time for which a material continues to flame after the ignition source has been removed.

3.2.2.1 *Discussion*—In arc testing, the length of time for which a specimen continues to exhibit visible flaming as determined by a time display video recording of the specimen during arc testing.

3.2.3 *arc rating, n*—value attributed to materials that describes their performance to exposure to an electrical arc discharge.

3.2.3.1 *Discussion*—The arc rating is expressed in cal/cm² and is derived from the determined value of ATPV or E_{BT} (should a material system exhibit a breakopen response below the ATPV value).

3.2.4 *arc thermal performance value (ATPV), n*—in arc testing, the incident energy on a material or a multilayer system of materials that results in a 50 % probability that sufficient heat transfer through the tested specimen is predicted to cause the onset of a second-degree skin burn injury based on the Stoll⁹ curve, kW/m²(cal/cm²).

3.2.5 *breakopen threshold energy (E_{BT}), n*—the incident energy on a material or material system that results in a 50 % probability of breakopen.

3.2.5.1 *Discussion*—This is the value in J/cm² (cal/cm²) determined by use of logistic regression analysis representing the energy at which breakopen of the layer occurred.

3.2.6 *design test, n*—for arc and flame resistant textile materials, one made on a sample treated as representative of an industrial product; these tests will not generally be repeated in quantity production.

3.2.6.1 *Discussion*—Perform the design test only when a new or modified textile material, that is, fabric, is used to manufacture apparel. A modification in the fabric could be, but is not limited to, any of the following: the supplier, composition, weave type, weight, or dyeing and finishing process.

3.2.7 *fabric identifier, n*—for electric arc protective clothing, a unique indicator used to directly associate a specific flame resistant fabric and its manufacturing and performance information.

3.2.7.1 *Discussion*—As related to electric arc protective clothing, fabric manufacturing information includes, but is not

³ *AATCC Technical Manual*, available from American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, PO Box 12215, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2215.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org> and International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA), 1901 North Moore Street Suite #808 Arlington, VA 22209-1762, USA, <https://www.safteyequipment.org>.

⁵ Available from Canadian Standards Association (CSA), 178 Rexdale Blvd., Toronto, ON M9W 1R3, Canada, <http://www.csagroup.org>.

⁶ Available from Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210, <http://www.osha.gov>.

⁷ Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ISO Central Secretariat, BIBC II, Chemin de Blandonnet 8, CP 401, 1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland, <http://www.iso.org>.

⁸ Available from National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471, <http://www.nfpa.org>.

⁹ Derived from: Stoll, A. M., and Chianta, M. A., “Method and Rating System for Evaluations of Thermal Protection,” *Aerospace Medicine*, Vol 40, 1969, pp. 1232-1238 and Stoll, A. M., and Chianta, M. A., “Heat Transfer through Fabrics as Related to Thermal Injury,” *Transactions—New York Academy of Sciences*, Vol 33(7), Nov. 1971, pp. 649-670.

limited to the materials of construction (for example, fibers and the chemical treatment system if used), fabric design (for example, weave, knit, or nonwoven structure information, nominal basis weight and thickness, dyeing information if required, and flame resistant chemical treatment specifics if required), and Fabric Producer information. Fabric performance information includes, but is not limited to the fabric performance testing results for the performance specification requirements noted within this standard.

3.2.8 *fabric producer, n*—for electric arc protective clothing, the manufacturer(s) who produce and/or are responsible for the quality assurance testing and electric arc rating of a finished fabric used in garment construction.

3.2.8.1 *Discussion*—As related to electric arc protective clothing, an arc protective finished fabric is comprised of any or all of the following: (1) a planar woven, knit, or nonwoven structure produced from fibers and/or yarns, (2) is colored (dyed, pigmented, or otherwise meeting a garment manufacturer specification), and (3) is treated with flame retardant chemicals where required to meet the flame resistance requirements identified in this standard.

3.2.9 *fabric weight, actual, n*—the measured value of a sample of fabric mass per unit area expressed in grams per square meter (ounces per square yard), from a lot of fabric as produced by the fabric manufacturer. This measurement is done in accordance with Test Methods **D3776/D3776M** before washing and after conditioning in accordance with Test Method **D1776/D1776M**.

3.2.10 *fabric weight, arc test, n*—The measured value of a specific sample of the fabric mass per unit area expressed in grams per square meter (ounces per square yard), that is used to generate the fabric's arc rating according to Test Method **F1959/F1959M**.

3.2.10.1 *Discussion*—This weight is sometimes referred to as "AAD" or "Average Areal Density" on arc test reports. Before recording this weight, fabric is prepared in accordance with the preparation instructions of Test Method **F1959/F1959M** without conditioning in accordance with Practice **D1776/D1776M**. Weight of the prepared fabric is required to be recorded prior to arc testing.

3.2.11 *fabric weight, nominal, n*—The target mass per unit area expressed in grams per square meter (ounces per square yard), for all production fabrics.

3.2.11.1 *Discussion*—This is the official published weight and should not change once established for each unique fabric identifier. Manufacturers may have different acceptable variances to the published weights.

3.2.12 *findings*—miscellaneous fabrics in garments such as zipper tapes, linings, pockets, waistbands, and facings.

3.2.13 *garment tracking and identification code, n*—for electric arc protective clothing, a unique identifier or code used to directly associate a specific flame resistant garment of single or multilayer construction and its manufacturing and performance information.

3.2.13.1 *Discussion*—As related to electric arc protective clothing, garment manufacturing information includes, but is

not limited to the materials of construction (sewing thread, fabrics, fasteners, closures, and associated hardware), fabric information utilized in garment design (for example, single and multilayer Fabric Producer information and fabric lot information), garment design information (for example, fabric layering information for multi-layer systems), and garment design information (for example, garment assembly facility identifier and identification number, lot number, or serial number). Garment performance information includes, but is not limited to the overall fabric system performance testing results for the performance specification requirements noted within this standard (for single or multilayer garment systems).

3.2.14 *momentary electric arc*—a discharge of electricity through a gaseous media, normally characterized by a voltage drop in the immediate vicinity of the electrodes, approximately equal to the ionization potential of the gaseous media.

3.2.15 *protective clothing, n*—as related to electric arc rated garments, an item of clothing that is specifically designed and constructed for the intended purpose of covering all, or parts of the body, to reduce the severity of injury when exposed to flames and electric arcs.

3.2.15.1 *Discussion*—Protective clothing can include a variety of items designed, constructed, and intended to be worn on the body.

3.2.16 *radiant heat*—heat communicated by energy propagated through space and transmitted by electromagnetic waves.

3.2.17 *thermal hazard*—the heat energy sufficient to cause burn injury to human tissue subjected to a momentary electric arc.

3.2.18 *trims and findings, n*—in garment manufacturing, the generic term used to identify various component subassemblies, any of which can be used individually, or in combination, for the manufacturing of garments or other textile structures, excluding primary fabric.

3.2.18.1 *Discussion*—These component subassemblies include, but are not limited to, slide fasteners (zippers), hook and loop (touch fasteners), patches, emblems, visibility enhancements, insignias, linings, pockets, waistbands, and facings.

3.2.19 *user*—the employer or entity purchasing the equipment to be utilized by workers for their protection; in the absence of such an employer or entity, the individual purchasing and utilizing the protective equipment.

3.2.20 *visibility enhancements*—as related to electric arc rated protective clothing, retroreflective and fluorescent subassemblies that are attached to the protective clothing to improve wearer conspicuity in different light conditions.

3.2.20.1 *Discussion*—Visibility enhancements can be attached to electric arc rated protective clothing by either of two means: stitching or thermal heat fusing. Conspicuity requirements are outside the scope of this standard. Examples of conspicuity standards include but are not limited to ANSI/ISEA 107, ISO 20471, CSA Z96.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This specification provides performance properties for electric arc rated protective clothing using objective data that

report the measurable results from recognized test methods. These measurable results provide information that the user can reference when selecting flame resistant and electric arc rated protective clothing.

4.1.1 This specification identifies the criteria for evaluating the performance of fabrics used to make electric arc rated protective clothing.

4.1.2 This specification identifies the criteria for evaluating the performance of trims and findings and visibility enhancements used for the manufacture of electric arc rated protective clothing.

4.1.3 This specification identifies the criteria for evaluating the structural integrity of the assembly used to construct the electric arc rated protective clothing.

4.1.4 The users can incorporate the information in this specification for purchase contracts to ensure that the quality controls used for the manufacturing of the protective clothing meet the performance requirements identified in the standard.

4.1.5 This specification provides guidelines for acceptable repairs.

4.2 The selection and use of any flame resistant and electric arc rated protective clothing requires a vigilant and ongoing assessment by the worker and the supervisory personnel to any other high energy hazards in the surrounding area. This ongoing risk assessment by workers and supervisors helps to confirm that the location and distance from their position, to any hazard having an incident energy, is not greater than the arc rating (ATPV or Ebt) of the protective clothing being worn.

4.3 Because work practices can vary due to many factors, the user purchasing this protective clothing is responsible to prepare complete and detailed instructions and policies regarding the use of this protective clothing. This allows for risk assessment of hazards, work practices, and other concerns to be addressed.

5. Materials and Manufacture

5.1 Material tests shall be performed on textile materials as they are delivered to the clothing manufacturer.

5.1.1 Material tests may be performed on samples taken from finished garments.

5.2 Lot size for the initial (without laundering) flammability test shall be 4572 m (5000 yd) of manufactured fabric or the manufactured yardage, whichever is less. One sample of 1.0 m shall be taken from each lot.

5.3 Lot size for all other tests except design tests shall be 45 720 m (50 000 yd) or at least every three months, whichever is more frequent. One sample of 4.0 m shall be taken from each lot.

5.4 Design tests shall be run on the original and when changes are made to flame resistant textile materials, for example, fiber type, yarn type, weaving style, fabric weight, dyeing, or finishing procedure.

6. Garment Requirements

6.1 Thread, trims and findings, and fasteners or closures used in garment construction shall not contribute to the severity

of injuries to the wearer in the event of a momentary electric arc and related thermal exposure.

6.1.1 Sewing thread utilized in the construction of garments shall be made of an inherently flame-resistant fiber and shall not melt below a temperature of 260°C (500°F) when tested in accordance with Test Method **D7138**. Only three specimens are required to be tested.

6.1.2 Fasteners or Closures

6.1.2.1 All slide fastener tape utilized in the construction of flame-resistant garments shall be made of inherently flame-resistant materials.

6.1.2.2 Metal fasteners or closures shall be covered with a layer of material between the fastener or closure and the skin. The material used for this purpose shall meet the requirements of this performance specification.

NOTE 1—When metal fasteners or closures, for example, zippers, snaps, or buttons, or a combination thereof, are used in a manner in which they are in contact with the skin, they can increase heat transfer and burn injury due to heat conduction or melting onto the skin.

6.1.2.3 Specimens of hardware used in the construction of flame-resistant garments, including but not limited to buttons, fasteners, and closures, when visible on the outside of the garment, shall be tested for heat resistance according to Test Method **F2894**. The oven temperature shall be 260 +8/-0 °C (500 +14/-0 °F) and the oven exposure time shall be 5 min +15/-0 s. Specimens shall not melt and drip, separate, or ignite and shall remain sufficiently functional to allow the garment to be removed.

6.1.3 Visibility enhancements, which are designed to be attached to electric arc rated garments shall be tested and certified to NFPA2112 by the visibility enhancement manufacturer, or shall be tested in IAW **6.1.3.1** or **6.1.3.2**. Tests specified in **6.1.3.1** or **6.1.3.2** shall be repeated when changes are made to the design of the materials used in the visibility enhancement or at least bi-annually, that is, once every 6 months.

NOTE 2—This testing is intended to be on newly received product, not existing, previously tested material that has been in inventory.

6.1.3.1 Visibility enhancements, which are designed to be attached to electric arc rated garments by means of stitching, shall be tested independent of the fabric if available in sufficient sample width, and shall not melt and drip and shall demonstrate no more than a 2-s after-flame time when tested using Test Method **D6413**. When visibility enhancement is not available in sufficient sample width, the width of the sample shall be increased by attaching representative fabrics to the sides of the sample and shall not melt and drip and shall demonstrate no more than a 2-s after-flame time when tested using Test Method **D6413**. In both cases, char length and afterglow time shall not be measured.

6.1.3.2 Visibility enhancements which are designed to be attached to an electric arc rated garment by means of thermal fusing, are tested after first being attached to the arc rated fabric used in the garment and shall not melt and drip and shall demonstrate not more than a 2-s after-flame time when tested using Test Method **D6413**. Char length and afterglow time shall not be measured.