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BASIC SAFETY PUBLICATION

Effects of current on human beings and livestock – Part 1: General aspects

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	6
INTRODUCTION.....	9
1 Scope	11
2 Normative references	11
3 Terms and definitions	12
3.1 General definitions	12
3.2 Effects of sinusoidal alternating current in the range 15 Hz to 100 Hz	13
3.3 Effects of direct current.....	13
4 Electrical impedance of the human body	14
4.1 Internal impedance of the human body (Z_i).....	14
4.2 Impedance of the skin (Z_s).....	14
4.3 Total impedance of the human body (Z_T)	15
4.4 Factors affecting initial resistance of the human body (R_0).....	15
4.5 Values of the total impedance of the human body (Z_T).....	15
4.5.1 Sinusoidal alternating current 50/60 Hz for large surface areas of contact	15
4.5.2 Sinusoidal alternating current 50/60 Hz for medium and small surface areas of contact	18
4.5.3 Sinusoidal alternating current with frequencies up to 20 kHz	21
4.5.4 Direct current.....	22
4.6 Value of the initial resistance of the human body (R_0).....	23
5 Effects of sinusoidal alternating current in the range of 15 Hz to 100 150 Hz.....	23
5.1 Threshold of perception	23
5.2 Threshold of reaction.....	23
5.3 Immobilization.....	23
5.4 Threshold of let-go	23
5.5 Threshold of ventricular fibrillation	24
5.6 Other effects related to electric shocks.....	24
5.7 Effects of current on the skin	25
5.8 Description of time/current zones (see Figure 20).....	25
5.9 Application of heart-current factor (F).....	26
6 Effects of direct current.....	26
6.1 Threshold of perception and threshold of reaction	26
6.2 Threshold of immobilization and threshold of let-go	27
6.3 Threshold of ventricular fibrillation	27
6.4 Other effects of current.....	27
6.5 Description of time/current zones (see Figure 22).....	28
6.6 Heart factor	28
6.7 Effects of anodic versus cathodic d.c. currents	46
Annexes	50
Annex A (normative) Measurements of the total body impedances Z_T made on living human beings and on corpses and the statistical analysis of the results	51
Annex B (normative) Influence of frequency on the total body impedance (Z_T).....	54
Annex C (normative) Total body resistance (R_T) for direct current.....	55
Annex D (informative) Examples of calculations of Z_T	56

Annex E (informative) Theories of ventricular fibrillation.....	60
Annex F (informative) Quantities ULV and LLV	61
Annex G (informative) Circuit simulation methods in electric shock evaluation.....	62

Figure 1 – Impedances of the human body	28
Figure 2 – Internal partial impedances Z_{ip} of the human body	29
Figure 3 – Simplified schematic diagram for the internal impedances of the human body.....	30
Figure 4 – Total body impedances Z_T (50 %) for a current path hand to hand, for large surface areas of contact in dry, water-wet and saltwater-wet conditions for a percentile rank of 50 % of the population for touch voltages $U_T = 25$ V to 700 V, a.c. 50/60 Hz	31
Figure 5 – Dependence of the total impedance Z_T of one living person on the surface area of contact in dry condition and at touch voltage (50 Hz)	32
Figure 6 – Dependence of the total body impedance Z_T on the touch voltage U_T for a current path from the tips of the right to the left forefinger compared with large surface areas of contact from the right to the left hand in dry conditions measured on one living person, touch voltage range $U_T = 25$ V to 200 V, a.c. 50 Hz, duration of current flow max. 25 ms.....	33
Figure 7 – Dependence of the total body impedance Z_T for the 50 th percentile rank of a population of living human beings for large, medium and small surface areas of contact (order of magnitude 10 000 mm ² , 1 000 mm ² and 100 mm ² respectively) in dry conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25$ V to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz.....	34
Figure 8 – Dependence of the total body impedance Z_T for the 50 th percentile rank of a population of living human beings for large, medium and small surface areas of contact (order of magnitude 10 000 mm ² , 1 000 mm ² and 100 mm ² respectively) in water-wet conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25$ V to 200 V, a.c. 50/60 Hz.....	35
Figure 9 – Dependence of the total body impedance Z_T for the 50 th percentile rank of a population of living human beings for large, medium and small surface areas of contact (order of magnitude 10 000 mm ² , 1 000 mm ² and 100 mm ² respectively) in saltwater-wet conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25$ V to 200 V, a.c. 50/60 Hz	36
Figure 10 – Values for the total body impedance Z_T measured on 10 living human beings with a current path hand to hand and large surface areas of contact in dry conditions at a touch voltage of 10 V and frequencies from 25 Hz to 20 kHz.....	37
Figure 11 – Values for the total body impedance Z_T measured on one living human being with a current path hand to hand and large surface areas of contact in dry conditions at a touch voltage of 25 V and frequencies from 25 Hz to 2 kHz	37
Figure 12 – Frequency dependence of the total body impedance Z_T of a population for a percentile rank of 50 % for touch voltages from 10 V to 1 000 V and a frequency range from 50 Hz to 2 150 kHz for a current path hand to hand or hand to foot, large surface areas of contact in dry conditions	38
Figure 13 – Statistical value of total body impedances Z_T and body resistances R_T for a percentile rank of 50 % of a population of living human beings for the current path hand to hand, large surface areas of contact, dry conditions, for touch voltages up to 700 V, for a.c. 50/60 Hz and d.c.	39
Figure 14 – Dependence of the alteration of human skin condition on current density i_T and duration of current flow (for detailed description of zones, see 5.7)	40
Figure 15 – Electrodes used for the measurement of the dependence of the impedance of the human body Z_T on the surface area of contact	41
Figure 16 – Oscillograms of touch voltages U_T and touch currents I_T for a.c., current path hand to hand, large surface areas of contact in dry conditions taken from measurements.....	42
Figure 17 – Occurrence of the vulnerable period of ventricles during the cardiac cycle	43

Figure 18 – Triggering of ventricular fibrillation in the vulnerable period – Effects on electro-cardiogram (ECG) and blood pressure	43
Figure 19 – Fibrillation data for dogs, pigs and sheep from experiments and for persons calculated from statistics of electrical accidents with transversal direction of current flow hand to hand and touch voltages $U_T = 220\text{ V}$ and 380 V a.c. with body impedances Z_T (5 %)	44
Figure 20 – Conventional time/current zones of effects of a.c. currents (15 Hz to 100 Hz) on persons for a current path corresponding to left hand to feet (for explanation see Table 11)	45
Figure 21 – Oscillogram of touch voltages U_T and touch current I_T for d.c., current path hand to hand, large surface areas of contact in dry conditions	45
Figure 22 – Conventional time/current zones of effects of d.c. currents on persons for a longitudinal upward current path (for explanation see Table 13)	46
Figure 23 – Let-go currents for 60 Hz sinusoidal current	46
Figure 24 – Effects of anodic versus cathodic d.c. currents	47
Figure 25 – Pulsed d.c. stimulation of single heart cells	48
Figure G.1 – Electric shock in electrical model by Hart [33] including startle reaction effect	63
Bibliography	65
Table 1 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand a.c. 50/60 Hz, for large surface areas of contact in dry conditions	16
Table 2 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand a.c. 50/60 Hz, for large surface areas of contact in water-wet conditions	17
Table 3 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand a.c. 50/60 Hz, for large surface areas of contact in saltwater-wet conditions	18
Table 4 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand for medium surface areas of contact in dry conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25\text{ V}$ to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz (values rounded to $25\ \Omega$)	19
Table 5 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand for medium surface areas of contact in water-wet conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25\text{ V}$ to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz (values rounded to $25\ \Omega$)	20
Table 6 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand for medium surface areas of contact in saltwater-wet conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25\text{ V}$ to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz (values rounded to $5\ \Omega$)	20
Table 7 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand for small surface areas of contact in dry conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25\text{ V}$ to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz (values rounded to $25\ \Omega$)	20
Table 8 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand for small surface areas of contact in water-wet conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25\text{ V}$ to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz (values rounded to $25\ \Omega$)	21
Table 9 – Total body impedances Z_T for a current path hand to hand for small surface areas of contact in saltwater-wet conditions at touch voltages $U_T = 25\text{ V}$ to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz (values rounded to $5\ \Omega$)	21
Table 10 – Total body resistances R_T for a current path hand to hand, d.c., for large surface areas of contact in dry conditions	22
Table 11 – Time/current zones for a.c. 15 Hz to 100 Hz for hand to feet pathway – Summary of zones of Figure 20	25
Table 12 – Heart-current factor F for different current paths	26
Table 13 – Time/current zones for d.c. for hand to feet pathway – Summary of zones of Figure 22	28

Table A.1 – Total body impedances Z_T , electrodes type A for dry condition and deviation factors F_D (5 % and 95 %)	51
Table A.2 – Total body impedances Z_T , electrodes type B for dry, water-wet and saltwater-wet conditions and deviation factors F_D (5 % and 95 %)	51
Table A.3 – Total body impedances Z_T for dry, water-wet and saltwater-wet conditions and deviation factors F_D (5 % and 95 %)	51
Table A.4 – Deviation factors F_D (5 %) and F_D (95 %) for dry and water-wet conditions in the touch voltage range $U_T = 25$ V up to 400 V for large, medium and small surface areas of contact	53
Table D.1 – 50 th percentile values for the total body impedance for a current path hands-feet medium surface area of contact for hands, large for feet, reduction factor 0,8, dry conditions, touch currents I_T and electrophysiological effects	58
Table G.1 – Body impedance examples (uncompensated)	63

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INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

EFFECTS OF CURRENT ON HUMAN BEINGS AND LIVESTOCK –

Part 1: General aspects

FOREWORD

- 1) The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) is a worldwide organization for standardization comprising all national electrotechnical committees (IEC National Committees). The object of IEC is to promote international co-operation on all questions concerning standardization in the electrical and electronic fields. To this end and in addition to other activities, IEC publishes International Standards, Technical Specifications, Technical Reports, Publicly Available Specifications (PAS) and Guides (hereafter referred to as “IEC Publication(s)”). Their preparation is entrusted to technical committees; any IEC National Committee interested in the subject dealt with may participate in this preparatory work. International, governmental and non-governmental organizations liaising with the IEC also participate in this preparation. IEC collaborates closely with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in accordance with conditions determined by agreement between the two organizations.
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This consolidated version of the official IEC Standard and its amendment has been prepared for user convenience.

IEC TS 60479-1 edition 4.1 contains the fourth edition (2005-07) [documents 64/1427/DTS and 64/1463/RVC] and its amendment 1 (2016-07) [documents 64/2095/DTS and 64/2113/RVC].

In this Redline version, a vertical line in the margin shows where the technical content is modified by amendment 1. Additions are in green text, deletions are in strikethrough red text. A separate Final version with all changes accepted is available in this publication.

The main task of IEC technical committees is to prepare International Standards. In exceptional circumstances, a technical committee may propose the publication of a technical specification when

- the required support cannot be obtained for the publication of an International Standard, despite repeated efforts, or
- the subject is still under technical development or where, for any other reason, there is the future but no immediate possibility of an agreement on an International Standard.

Technical specifications are subject to review within three years of publication to decide whether they can be transformed into International Standards.

IEC 60479-1, which is a technical specification, has been prepared by IEC technical committee 64: Electrical installations and protection against electric shock.

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition, published as a technical report in 1994, and constitutes a technical revision.

The main changes with respect to the previous edition are listed below:

- Dependence of the total body impedance Z_T for 50th percentile rank of a population of living human beings for large, average and small surface areas of a contact in dry, water-wet and saltwater-wet conditions at touch voltage $U_T = 25$ V to 200 V a.c. 50/60 Hz.
- Oscillograms of touch voltages U_T and touch currents I_T for a.c., current path hand-to-hand, large surface areas of contact in dry condition taken from measurements given in Figure 16 with the relevant explanations in the main text.
- Fibrillation data for dogs, pigs and sheep obtained from experiments and for persons calculated from statistics of electrical accidents with transversal direction of current flow, hand-to-hand and touch voltages $U_T = 220$ V to 380 V a.c. with body impedances Z_T (5%) given in Figure 19 with the relevant explanations in the main text.
- Change of Curve B in Figure 20 from 10 mA to 5 mA: conventional time/current zones of effects of a.c. current (15 Hz to 100 Hz) on persons with the relevant explanations in the main text.
- Let-go currents for 60 Hz sinusoidal current given in Figure 23 with the relevant explanations in the main text.
- new structure to the body of the standard.
- Extension of the applicability of the total body impedance to a frequency range up to 150 kHz;
- Clarification of the difference in anodic versus cathodic d.c. pulses;
- Extension of the ventricular fibrillation threshold of single pulses down to 1 μ s pulse width;
- Addition of informative annexes:
 - Annex E: Theories of ventricular fibrillation;
 - Annex F: Quantities ULV and LLV;
 - Annex G: Circuit simulation methods in electric shock evaluation.

This technical specification has the status of a basic safety publication in accordance with IEC Guide 104.

The text of this technical specification is based on the following documents:

Enquiry draft	Report on voting
64/1427/DTS	64/1463/RVC

Full information on the voting for the approval of this technical specification can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above Table.

This publication has been drafted in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

IEC 60479 consists of the following parts under the general title *Effects of current on human beings and livestock*

Part 1: General aspects

Part 2: Special aspects:

Chapter 4: Effects of alternating current with frequencies above 100 Hz

Chapter 5: Effects of special waveforms of current

Chapter 6: Effects of unidirectional single impulse currents of short duration

Part 3: Effects of currents passing through the bodies of livestock

Part 4: Effects of lightning strokes on human beings and livestock

The committee has decided that the contents of the base publication and its amendment will remain unchanged until the stability date indicated on the IEC web site under "<http://webstore.iec.ch>" in the data related to the specific publication. At this date, the publication will be

- reconfirmed,
- withdrawn,
- replaced by a revised edition, or
- amended.

A bilingual version of this publication may be issued at a later date.

The contents of the corrigendum of October 2006 and June 2013 have been included in this copy.

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INTRODUCTION

This basic safety publication is primarily intended for use by technical committees in the preparation of standards in accordance with the principles laid down in IEC Guide 104 and ISO/IEC Guide 51. It is not intended for use by manufacturers or certification bodies.

One of the responsibilities of a technical committee is, wherever applicable, to make use of basic safety publications in the preparation of its publications.

This technical specification provides basic guidance on the effects of shock current on human beings and livestock, for use in the establishment of electrical safety requirements.

In order to avoid errors in the interpretation of this technical specification, it ~~must~~ should be emphasized that the data given herein is mainly based on experiments with animals as well as on information available from clinical observations. Only a few experiments with shock currents of short duration have been carried out on living human beings.

On the evidence available, mostly from animal research, the values are so conservative that ~~the standard~~ this document applies to persons of normal physiological conditions including children, irrespective of age and weight.

There are, however, other aspects to be taken into account, such as probability of faults, probability of contact with live or faulty parts, ratio between touch voltage and fault voltage, experience gained, technical feasibilities, and economics. These parameters ~~have to~~ should be considered carefully when fixing safety requirements, for example, operating characteristics of protective devices for electrical installations.

The form of the ~~specification document~~ as has been adopted summarizes results so far achieved which are being used by technical committee 64 as a basis for fixing requirements for protection against shock. These results are considered important enough to justify an IEC publication which may serve as a guide to other IEC committees and countries having need of such information.

This technical specification applies to the threshold of ventricular fibrillation which is the main cause of deaths by electric current. The analysis of results of recent research work on cardiac physiology and on the fibrillation threshold, taken together, has made it possible to better appreciate the influence of the main physical parameters and, especially, of the duration of the current flow.

IEC TS 60479-1 contains information about body impedance and body current thresholds for various physiological effects. This information can be combined to derive estimates of a.c. and d.c. touch voltage thresholds for certain body current pathways, contact moisture conditions, and skin contact areas. ~~Information about touch voltage thresholds for physiological effects is contained in the IEC 61201.~~

This technical specification refers specifically to the effects of electric current. When an assessment of the harmful effects of any event on human beings and livestock is being made, other non-electric phenomena, including falls, heat, fire, or others should be taken into account. These matters are beyond the scope of this technical specification, but may be extremely serious in their own right.

~~Recent research work has also been conducted on the other physical accident parameters, especially the waveform and frequency of the current and the impedance of the human body. This fourth revision of IEC 60479-1 should be viewed as the logical development and evolution of the third edition.~~

~~Clause 2 of IEC 60479-1 (third edition) on the impedance of the human body contained little information on the dependence of the impedance on the surface area of contact and then only for dry conditions.~~

~~Therefore measurements were carried out on 10 persons using medium and small surface areas of contact in dry, water wet and saltwater wet conditions, current path hand to hand, at a touch voltage of 25 V a.c. 50 Hz. The impedance values for a percentile rank of 5 %, 50 % and 95 % have been calculated from these measurements.~~

~~Due to unpleasant sensations and the possibility of inherent danger, measurements using large surface areas of contact (order of magnitude 10 000 mm²) in dry, water wet and saltwater wet conditions and with medium and small surface areas of contact (order of magnitude 1 000 mm² and 100 mm²) in dry condition at touch voltages from 25 V up to and including 200 V a.c. have only been carried out on one person. By the use of deviation factors it was nevertheless possible to derive values of the total body impedance Z_T for a percentile rank of 5 %, 50 % and 95 % of a population of persons. With the same one person measurements were also made with still smaller surface areas of contact (10 mm² and 1 mm²) and between fingertips.~~

~~For the calculation of total body impedance Z_T for a percentile rank of 5 %, 50 % and 95 % of a population of persons for large surface areas of contact for touch voltages above 200 V up to 700 V and higher up to the asymptotic values the method to adapt values of Z_T measured on corpses to those of persons used for the second edition of IEC 60479-1 was improved by taking account of the different temperature of the corpses during measurements and the temperature of 37 °C for persons.~~

~~The present state of knowledge of a.c. impedance Z_T of the human body for large, medium and small surface areas of contact in dry, water wet and salt water wet conditions and of the d.c. resistance R_T of the human body for large areas of contact in dry conditions are presented.~~

~~It should be mentioned that the thresholds as order of magnitude are valid for all persons (men, women and children) independent of their state of health. Often concerns are expressed in that respect but if the background of such objections is examined it is found that such objections represent just opinions without experimental evidence. Some measurements indicate that the thresholds of perception and let-go for women are lower than for men. This may also be the case for children.~~

~~Furthermore in Clause 5 a heart current factor F for the current path foot to foot has been introduced. This is important for electrical risks caused by step voltages.~~

Further experimental data are under consideration, such as recent ongoing experimental work on "current induced heart fibrillation by excitation with discrete Fourier spectra" which is intended to contribute to frequency factor data.