



Designation: D 6760 – 02

# Standard Test Method for Integrity Testing of Concrete Deep Foundations by Ultrasonic Crosshole Testing<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 6760; 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 ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers procedures for checking the homogeneity and integrity of concrete in a deep foundation such as bored piles, drilled shafts, concrete piles or augercast piles. This method can also be extended to diaphragm walls, barrettes, dams etc. The test measures the propagation time and relative energy of an ultrasonic pulse between parallel access ducts installed in the pile or structure. This method is most applicable when performed between tubes that are installed during pile construction.

1.2 Similar techniques with different excitation sources or single access ducts, or both, exist, but these techniques are outside the scope of this test method.

1.3 All observed and calculated values shall conform to the guidelines for significant digits and rounding established in Practice D 6026.

1.3.1 The method used to specify how data are collected, calculated, or recorded in this standard is not directly related to the accuracy to which data can be applied in design or other uses, or both. How one applies the results obtained using this standard is beyond its scope.

1.4 *Limitations*—Proper installation of the access ducts is essential for effective testing and interpretation. The method does not give the exact type of defect (for example, inclusion, honeycombing, lack of cement particles, etc.) but rather only that a defect exists. The method is limited primarily to testing the concrete between the access ducts and thus gives little information about the concrete outside the reinforcement cage to which the access ducts are attached when the tubes are attached to the inside of the reinforcement cage.

1.5 *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 and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

### 2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 1143 Test Method for Piles Under Static Axial Compressive Load<sup>2</sup>

D 3740 Practice for Minimum Requirements for Agencies Engaged in the Testing and/or Inspection of Soil and Rock as Used in Engineering Design and Construction<sup>2</sup>

D 4945 Test Method High Strain Dynamic Testing of Piles<sup>2</sup>

D 5882 Test Method for Low Strain Integrity Testing of Piles<sup>2</sup>

D 6026 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Calculating and Reporting Geotechnical Test Data<sup>2</sup>

## 3. Terminology

### 3.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.1.1 *access ducts, n*—preformed steel or plastic tubes, or drilled boreholes, placed in the concrete to allow probe entry in pairs to measure pulse transmission in the concrete between the probes.

3.1.2 *anomaly, n*—irregularity or series of irregularities observed in an ultrasonic profile indicating a possible defect.

3.1.3 *depth interval, n*—the maximum incremental spacing along the pile shaft between ultrasonic pulses.

3.1.4 *integrity evaluation, n*—the qualitative evaluation of the concrete continuity and consistency between the access ducts or boreholes.

3.1.5 *specifier, n*—the party requesting that the tests are carried out, for example, the engineer or client.

3.1.6 *ultrasonic profile, n*—a combined graphical output of a series of measured or processed ultrasonic pulses with depth.

3.1.7 *ultrasonic pulse, n*—data for one specific depth of a short duration generated by a transmitter probe or sensed by the receiver probe.

## 4. Principle of the Test Method

4.1 The actual velocity of sound wave propagation in concrete is dependent on the concrete material properties, geometry of the element and wavelength of the sound waves. When ultrasonic frequencies (for example, >20 000 Hz) are generated, Pressure (P) waves and Shear (S) waves travel through the concrete. Because S waves are relatively slow, they are of no further interest in this method. In good quality

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<sup>2</sup> Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 04.08.

concrete the P-wave velocity would typically range between 3600 to 4400 m/s. Poor quality concrete containing anomalies (for example, soil inclusion, gravel, water, drilling mud, bentonite, voids, contaminated concrete, or excessive segregation of the constituent particles) has a comparatively lower P-wave velocity. By measuring the transit time of an ultrasonic P-wave signal between an ultrasonic transmitter and receiver in two parallel water-filled access ducts cast into the concrete during construction and spaced at a known distance apart, such anomalies may be detected. Usually the transmitter and receiver are maintained at equal elevations as they are moved up or down the access ducts. In some cases and for special processing the probes may be deliberately offset in relative elevation and the use of multiple receivers either in the same access duct or in multiple access ducts can also be allowed. The principles and limitations of the test and interpretation of the results are described in the References section.

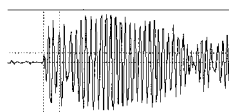
4.2 Two ultrasonic probes, one a transmitter and the other a receiver, are lowered and lifted usually in unison in their respective water-filled access ducts to test the full shaft length from top to bottom. The transmitter probe generates ultrasonic pulses at frequent and regular intervals during the probes' controlled travel rate. The probe depth and receiver probe's output (timed relative to the transmitter probe's ultrasonic pulse generation) are recorded for each pulse. The receiver's output signals are sampled and saved as amplitude versus time (see Fig. 1).

4.3 Alternately, the signals may be modulated to a series of black and white lines corresponding respectively to the positive and negative peaks of the signal. In either case, the data are further processed and presented to show the first arrival of the ultrasonic pulse and the relative energy of the signal to aid interpretation. The processed data are plotted versus depth as a graphical representation of the ultrasonic profile of the tested structure. Special test methods to further investigate anomalies are employed where the probes are not raised together. The References section lists further sources of information about these special test techniques.

## 5. Significance and Use

5.1 This method uses data from ultrasonic probes lowered into parallel access ducts in the pile or structure to assess the homogeneity and integrity of concrete between the probes. The data are used to confirm adequate concrete quality or identify zones of poor quality. If defects are detected, then further investigations should be made by excavation or coring the concrete as appropriate, or by other testing such as Test Method D 1143, D 4945 or D 5882, and measures taken to remediate the structure if a defect is confirmed.

NOTE 1—The quality of the result produced by this standard is dependent on the competence of the personnel performing it, and the suitability of the equipment and facilities used. Agencies that meet the



**FIG. 1 1 ms Duration Ultrasonic Pulse from Receiver**

criteria of Practice D 3740 are generally considered capable of competent and objective testing and inspection. Users of this standard are cautioned that compliance with Practice D 3740 does not in itself assure reliable results. Reliable results depend on many factors; Practice D 3740 provides a means of evaluating some of those factors.

## 6. Apparatus

6.1 *Apparatus for Allowing Internal Inspection (Access Ducts)*—To provide access for the probes, access ducts can be preformed tubes, which are preferably installed during the pile or structure installation. The tubes shall preferably be mild steel. Plastic tubes, while not preferred, can be used in special circumstances if approved by the test agency but require more frequent attachment to the reinforcing cage to maintain alignment. The plastic material must not deform during the high temperatures of concrete curing. If no tubes are installed during construction, boreholes drilled into the pile or structure can be installed after installation. The internal diameter of the access ducts shall be sufficient to allow the easy passage of the ultrasonic probes over the entire access duct length. If the access duct diameter is too large it influences the precision of arrival time and calculated concrete wave speed. Access ducts typically have an internal diameter from 38 to 50 mm.

6.2 *Apparatus for Determining Physical Test Parameters:*

6.2.1 *Weighted Measuring Tape*—A plumb bob connected to a measuring tape shall be used as a dummy probe to check free passage through and determine the unobstructed length of each access duct to the nearest 100 mm. The plumb bob shall have a diameter similar to the diameter of the probes.

6.2.2 *Magnetic Compass*—A magnetic compass accurate to within 10° shall be used to document the access duct designations compared with the site layout plan. Alternately, access ducts can be labeled based on the site plan, structure orientation or other methods to document access duct designations assigned and used for reporting test results.

6.3 *Apparatus for Obtaining Measurements:*

6.3.1 *Probes*—Probes shall allow a generated or detected pulse within 100 mm of the bottom of the access duct. The weight of each probe shall in all cases be sufficient to allow it to sink under its own weight in the access ducts. The probe housing shall be waterproof to at least 1.5 times the maximum depth of testing.

6.3.2 *Transmitter Probe*—The transmitter probe shall generate an ultrasonic pulse with a minimum frequency of 30 000 Hz.

6.3.3 *Receiver Probe*—The receiver probe shall be of a similar size and compatible design to the transmitter probe and used to detect the arrival of the ultrasonic pulse generated by the transmitter probe.

6.3.4 *Probe Centralizer*—If the receiver or transmitter probes, or both, are less than half the access duct diameter, each probe shall be fitted with centralizers with effective diameter equivalent to at least 50 % of the access duct diameter. It shall be designed to minimize any possible snagging on irregularities in the inner access duct wall.

6.3.5 *Signal Transmission Cables*—The signal cables used to deploy the probes and transmit data from the probes shall be sufficiently robust to support the probes' weight. The cable shall be abrasion resistant to allow repeated field use and

maintain flexibility in the range of anticipated temperatures. All cable connectors or splices, if any, shall be watertight. Where the signal transmission cables exit the access duct, suitable cable guides, pulleys or cushioning material shall be fitted inside the access ducts to minimize abrasion and generally assist with smooth deployment of the probes.

6.3.6 *Probe Depth-Measuring Device*—The signal cables shall be passed over or through a pulley with a depth-encoding device to determine the depth to the location of the transmitter and receiver on the probes in the access ducts throughout the test. The design of the depth-measuring device shall be such that cable slippage shall not occur. Preferably a separate depth-measuring device, such as direct markings on the cables, shall monitor each probe separately so the exact depth of each probe is known at all times. (Alternately a single pulley can be connected to one electronic depth encoder, but then the probes must remain at the same known relative elevation difference for the entire test.) The depth-measuring device shall be accurate to within 1 % of the access duct length, or 0.25 m, whichever is larger.

6.4 *Apparatus for Recording, Processing and Displaying Data:*

6.4.1 *General*—The signals from the transmitter and receiver probes and the depth-measuring device shall be transmitted to a field rugged, dc battery powered, computerized apparatus for recording, processing and displaying the data in the form of an ultrasonic profile. A typical schematic arrangement for the test apparatus is illustrated in Fig. 2. The apparatus shall generate pulses from the transmitter probe either at fixed depth intervals or at fixed time intervals. In the latter case, the depth shall be recorded and assigned to each pulse captured by the apparatus for the instant of pulse generation. The rate of pulse generation by either method shall generate at least one ultrasonic pulse for every required depth interval, typically 50 mm or less. The apparatus shall have adjustable gain to optimize detection of the transmitted pulse by the receiver probe for the concrete under test.

6.4.2 *Recording Apparatus*—Each transmitted ultrasonic pulse shall immediately start the data acquisition for the receiver probe. Analog signals of an ultrasonic pulse measured by the receiving probe shall be digitized by an analog to digital converter with a minimum amplitude resolution of 12 bits and a minimum sampling frequency of 250 000 Hz. The apparatus shall read the depth-measuring device and assign a depth to each digitized ultrasonic pulse. The apparatus shall store these raw digitized ultrasonic pulses and the processed data from each ultrasonic profile for each pair of access ducts. All stored

data shall have identifying header information attached to it describing the test location, profile identifier, date stamp and all pertinent information regarding the test.

6.4.3 *Apparatus for Processing Data*—The apparatus for processing the data shall be a digital computer or microprocessor capable of analyzing all data to identify at least the first arrival and energy of the transmitted ultrasonic pulse at the receiver probe for each depth interval. The data shall then be compiled into a single ultrasonic profile for each duct pair.

6.4.4 *Apparatus for Display of Measured Data*—The apparatus shall be capable of displaying the raw receiver ultrasonic pulses to confirm data quality during acquisition. After data acquisition, the apparatus shall be capable of displaying the raw data of each ultrasonic pulse along the entire pile length. The apparatus shall also display the processed ultrasonic profile. The apparatus may optionally include a printer for on site output of results.

7. Procedure

7.1 *Installation of Preformed Access Ducts:*

7.1.1 *General*—The access ducts shall be supplied and installed during construction by or in cooperation with the contractor of the pile or structure to be tested. The total number of installed access ducts in the pile or structure should be chosen consistent with good coverage of the cross section. As a guide, the number of access ducts is often selected as one duct for every 0.25 to 0.30 m of pile diameter, with a minimum of three access ducts, spaced equally around the circumference. Typical access duct layout configurations for various structural elements are illustrated in Fig. 3.

7.1.2 *Preformed Access Tube Preparation*—The access tubes shall be straight and free from internal obstructions. The exterior tube surface shall be free from contamination (for example, oil, dirt, loose rust, mill scale, etc.), and for plastic tubes the surface shall be fully roughened by abrasion prior to installation, to ensure a good bond between the tube surface and the surrounding concrete. The ends of the tubes shall be undamaged and suitably prepared for the end caps and coupling system adopted. The access tubes shall be close-ended at the bottom and fitted with removable end caps at the top to prevent entry of concrete or foreign objects, which could block the tubes prior to testing operations.

7.1.3 *Preformed Access Tube Extensions*—If extension of the access tubes is necessary due to long tube lengths, access

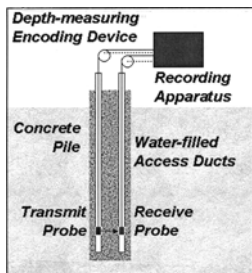


FIG. 2 Test Arrangement

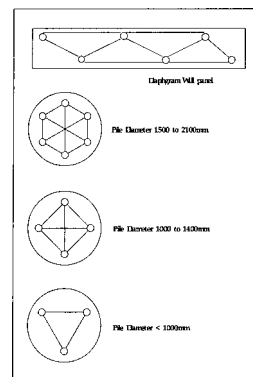


FIG. 3 Typical Access Duct Configurations