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**Determination of certain substances in electrotechnical products –
Part 7-1: Hexavalent chromium – Presence of hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI)) in
colourless and coloured corrosion-protected coatings on metals by the
colorimetric method**

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**Détermination de certaines substances dans les produits électrotechniques –
Partie 7-1: Chrome hexavalent – Présence de chrome hexavalent (Cr(VI)) dans
les revêtements incolores et colorés de protection anticorrosion appliqués sur
les métaux à l'aide de la méthode colorimétrique**



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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	3
INTRODUCTION	5
1 Scope	6
2 Normative references	6
3 Terms, definitions and abbreviations	7
3.1 Terms and definitions	7
3.2 Abbreviations	7
4 Reagents	7
4.1 General	7
4.2 Reagents	7
5 Apparatus	7
5.1 General	7
5.2 Apparatus	7
6 Sampling	8
7 Boiling water extraction procedure	8
8 Calibration	11
8.1 Permanent calibration instruments	11
8.2 Traditional calibration instruments	11
9 Calculation	11
10 Precision	12
11 Quality assurance and control	12
11.1 Colorimetric instrument performance verification	12
11.2 Limits of detection (LOD) and limits of quantification (LOQ)	12
12 Test report	13
Annex A (informative) International inter-laboratory study on corrosion-protected coatings – Data overview	16
Bibliography	18
Figure 1 – Screw body and screw head measurements	9
Figure A.1 – Concentration of chromium VI based on surface area for all samples	16
Figure A.2 – Concentration of chromium VI based on surface area – Expanded view between 0 µg/cm ² to 1 µg/cm ²	17
Table 1 – Comparison to standard solution and interpretation of results	11
Table 2 – Student’s <i>t</i> values used for calculation of method detection limit (LOD or MDL = <i>t</i> -statistic × standard deviation (sn-1))	13
Table 3 – Reporting table	14
Table 4 – Example of a completed reporting table	15

INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

**DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SUBSTANCES
IN ELECTROTECHNICAL PRODUCTS –****Part 7-1: Hexavalent chromium – Presence of hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI))
in colourless and coloured corrosion-protected coatings
on metals by the colorimetric method**

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It has the status of a horizontal standard in accordance with IEC Guide 108.

The first edition of IEC 62321:2008 was a 'stand-alone' standard that included an introduction, an overview of test methods, a mechanical sample preparation as well as various test method clauses.

This first edition of IEC 62321-7-1 is a partial replacement of IEC 62321:2008, forming a structural revision and generally replacing informative Annex B.

Future parts in the IEC 62321 series will gradually replace the corresponding clauses in IEC 62321:2008. Until such time as all parts are published, however, IEC 62321:2008 remains valid for those clauses not yet re-published as a separate part.

The text of this standard is based on the following documents:

FDIS	Report on voting
111/380/FDIS	111/393/RVD

Full information on the voting for the approval of this standard 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.

A list of all parts in the IEC 62321 series can be found on the IEC website under the general title: *Determination of certain substances in electrotechnical products*.

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

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INTRODUCTION

The widespread use of electrotechnical products has drawn increased attention to their impact on the environment. In many countries this has resulted in the adaptation of regulations affecting wastes, substances and energy use of electrotechnical products.

The use of certain substances (e.g. lead (Pb), cadmium (Cd) and polybrominated diphenylethers (PBDE's)) in electrotechnical products is a source of concern in current and proposed regional legislation.

The purpose of the IEC 62321 series is therefore to provide test methods that will allow the electrotechnical industry to determine the levels of certain substances of concern in electrotechnical products on a consistent global basis.

WARNING – Persons using this International Standard should be familiar with normal laboratory practice. This standard does not purport to address all of the safety problems, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user to establish appropriate safety and health practices and to ensure compliance with any national regulatory conditions.

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DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SUBSTANCES IN ELECTROTECHNICAL PRODUCTS –

Part 7-1: Hexavalent chromium – Presence of hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI)) in colourless and coloured corrosion-protected coatings on metals by the colorimetric method

1 Scope

This part of IEC 62321 describes a boiling water extraction procedure intended to provide a qualitative determination of the presence of hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI)) in colourless and coloured corrosion-protection coatings on metallic samples.

Due to its highly reactive nature, the concentration of Cr(VI) in a corrosion-protection coating can change drastically with time and storage conditions. Since storage conditions prior to sample submission are not often known or provided with the samples, this procedure determines the presence of Cr(VI) based on the levels detected in the coatings at the time of testing. For testing of freshly coated samples, a minimum waiting period of 5 days (after the coating process) is necessary to ensure the coatings have stabilized. This waiting period allows potential post-process oxidation of Cr(III) to Cr(VI) to occur prior to testing.

The presence of Cr(VI) is determined by the mass of Cr(VI) per surface area of the coating, in $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$. This approach is preferred since corrosion-protection coating weights are often difficult to measure accurately after production. From a coating technology perspective, the industry as a whole has transitioned to either using the non-Cr(VI) based chemistries – where little to no Cr(VI) should be present – or using the traditional Cr(VI) based chemistries – where significant levels of Cr(VI) are present and can be detected reliably. Given this industry shift, the presence or absence of Cr(VI) is often sufficient for compliance testing purposes.

In this procedure, when Cr(VI) in a sample is detected below the $0,10 \mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ LOQ (limit of quantification), the sample is considered to be negative for Cr(VI). Since Cr(VI) may not be uniformly distributed in the coating even within the same sample batch, a “grey zone” between $0,10 \mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ and $0,13 \mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ has been established as “inconclusive” to reduce inconsistent results due to unavoidable coating variations. In this case, additional testing may be necessary to confirm the presence of Cr(VI). When Cr(VI) is detected above $0,13 \mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$, the sample is considered to be positive for the presence of Cr(VI) in the coating layer.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

IEC 62321-1, *Determination of certain substances in electrotechnical products – Part 1: Introduction and overview*

IEC 62321-2, *Determination of certain substances in electrotechnical products – Part 2: Disassembly, disjointment and mechanical sample preparation*

ISO 78-2, *Chemistry – Layouts for standards – Part 2: Methods of chemical analysis*

ISO 3696, *Water for analytical laboratory use – Specification and test methods*

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviations

3.1 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in IEC 62321-1 apply.

3.2 Abbreviations

For the purposes of this document, the abbreviations given in IEC 62321-1 apply.

4 Reagents

4.1 General

Use only reagents of recognized analytical grade, unless otherwise specified.

4.2 Reagents

The following reagents shall be used:

- a) 1,5-diphenylcarbazide, analytical reagent grade.
- b) Potassium dichromate ($K_2Cr_2O_7$) stock solution: in a glass container, weigh (5.2 a)) and dissolve 0,113 g of $K_2Cr_2O_7$ (analytical reagent grade, dried at 100 °C for 1 h before use) in water (4.2 f)) and dilute with water (4.2 f)) to the mark of a 1,000 ml volumetric flask (5.2 e)). Cap or stopper the container tightly. The shelf life of this solution is one year.
- c) Potassium dichromate ($K_2Cr_2O_7$) equivalent comparison standard solutions, 0,10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ and 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$: in this method, the 0,10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$ and 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$ standards are equivalent to 0,10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ and 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$, respectively. Prepare the 0,10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ equivalent comparison standard by pipetting (5.2 f)) 2,5 ml of the $K_2Cr_2O_7$ stock solution (4.2 b)) into a 1,000 ml volumetric flask and dilute to mark. Prepare the 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ comparison standard by pipetting (5.2 f)) 3,3 ml of the $K_2Cr_2O_7$ stock solution (4.2 b)) into a 1,000 ml volumetric flask (5.2 e)) and dilute to mark.
- d) Acetone, analytical reagent grade.
- e) Orthophosphoric acid (H_3PO_4) solution (mass fraction of 75 %), analytical reagent grade.
- f) Water: Grade 1 specified in ISO 3696, which shall be free of interferences.

5 Apparatus

5.1 General

All re-usable labware (glass, quartz, polyethylene, polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), etc.) including the sample containers shall be soaked overnight in laboratory-grade detergent and water, rinsed with water, and soaked for 4 h or more in HNO_3 (volume fraction of 20%) or in a mixture of dilute acids ($HNO_3:HCl:H_2O = 1:2:9$ by volume) followed by rinsing with water (4.2 f)). Alternative cleaning procedures are permitted, provided adequate cleanliness can be demonstrated through the analysis of method blanks.

5.2 Apparatus

The following items shall be used for the analysis:

- a) Analytical balance with an accuracy of 0,10 mg.
- b) Thermometer or other temperature measurement device capable of measuring up to 100 °C.

- c) Colorimetric instrument: either a spectrophotometer for use at 540 nm providing a light path of 1 cm or longer; or a filter photometer providing a light path of 1 cm or longer and equipped with a greenish-yellow filter having maximum transmittance near 540 nm.
- d) Boiling chips.
- e) Volumetric glassware: Class A or equivalent of acceptable precision and accuracy. Alternative volumetric equipment (e.g. automatic dilutors) with equivalent precision and accuracy can be used.
- f) Assorted calibrated pipettes: Class A glassware or other with equivalent precision and accuracy.
- g) Borosilicate glass or quartz beaker with a volume graduation of 250 ml, or equivalent.
- h) Heating device: capable of maintaining boiling of the extraction solution.
- i) Filter membranes (0,45 µm), cellulose-based or polycarbonate types preferred.
- j) Silicon carbide (SiC) grinding paper with 800 grit size, or equivalent.
- k) Watch glass.

6 Sampling

Samples shall not be stored in environments where oxidation of Cr(III) to Cr(VI) can occur. Samples shall be stored at ambient conditions upon arrival until the start of testing. Ambient conditions are defined as 45 % RH to 75 % RH (relative humidity) and temperature between 15 °C and 35 °C.

In some cases, disassembly or mechanical disjointment may be necessary to obtain samples for testing; refer to IEC 62321-2 for sample preparation.

Prior to the test, the sample surface shall be free of all contaminants, fingerprints and stains. If the surface is coated with thin oil, the oil shall be removed prior to the test by using a clean, soft laboratory wipe wetted with a suitable solvent, or by rinsing the surface with a suitable solvent at ambient temperature. The samples shall not be subject to forced drying at temperature in excess of 35 °C. Treatment in alkaline solutions shall not be performed as corrosion-protection coatings are broken down by alkalis.

If there is a polymer coating on a sample surface, gentle abrasion with a fine grinding paper (5.2 j)) may be performed to expose the corrosion protection layer for extraction; however, care shall be taken not to remove the entire corrosion protection coating beneath the polymer coating. Other top coat removal methods may be applied if they are shown to be of equal or greater effectiveness.

Since Cr(VI) is toxic to human beings, all potential Cr(VI)-containing samples and reagents used in the method shall be handled with appropriate precautions. Solutions or waste material containing Cr(VI) shall be disposed of properly. For example, ascorbic acid or other reducing agents can be used to reduce Cr(VI) to Cr(III) prior to disposal.

7 Boiling water extraction procedure

The boiling water extraction procedure is as follows:

- a) Prepare the test solution as follows: dissolve 0,5 g of diphenylcarbazide (4.2 a)) in 50 ml of acetone (4.2 d)). Dilute slowly, while stirring, with 50 ml of water (4.2 f)) (rapid mixing may result in precipitation of diphenylcarbazide). For maximum stability, store this test solution under refrigeration at 7 °C ± 2 °C in an amber glass bottle. Discard when the solution becomes discoloured.
- b) The sample to be tested should have a surface area of 50 cm² ± 5 cm². For fasteners or samples with smaller surface area, use a suitable number of samples to obtain the total required surface area. In cases where obtaining a total surface area of 50 cm² ± 5 cm² is

not possible, a reduced total sample surface area may be used by reducing the water extraction volume, while maintaining the same surface area to extraction volume ratio (1 cm²:1 ml). A minimum surface area of 25 cm² is recommended. Similarly, a higher sample surface area can be used by keeping the same ratio. The type of adjustment shall be recorded in the final report.

The surface area of complex geometry samples can be estimated according to its manufacturing specifications (e.g. mechanical drawings) if available, or by using its dimensions and shape. For example: a flat-headed countersunk screw may be considered as one metal cylinder (the screw body) adjacent to one metal cone (the screw head), as shown in Figure 1.

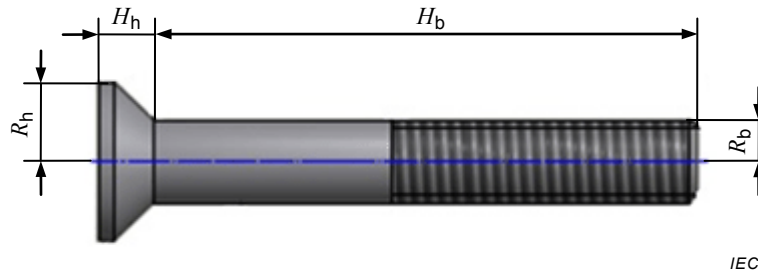


Figure 1 – Screw body and screw head measurements

Estimated surface area of the screw body:

$$S_b = 2\pi R_b H_b + \pi(R_b)^2 \quad (1)$$

where

S_b is the estimated surface area of the screw body;

R_b is the radius of the screw body; IEC 62321-7-1:2015

H_b is the height of the screw body.

Estimated surface area of the screw head:

$$S_h = \pi R_h \sqrt{H_h^2 + R_h^2} + \pi R_h^2 \quad (2)$$

where

S_h is the estimated surface area of the screw head;

R_h is the top radius of the screw head;

H_h is the height of the screw head.

Total estimated surface area of the screw:

$$S_t = S_h + S_b \quad (3)$$

where

S_t is the total estimated surface area of the screw.

NOTE The German Fastener Association, Deutscher Schraubenverband E.V. (DSV), offers a surface area program for fastener surface area calculation via the International Material Data System (IMDS). Limitations of this tool are documented within the program and users shall ensure this tool is applicable to the sample of interest.

- c) Add boiling chips (5.2 d)) and 50 ml of water (4.2 f)) to a beaker with volume graduation (5.2 g)). Bring the water (4.2 f)) to boiling temperature (5.2 b) and 5.2 h)) for at least 10 min to deoxygenate the water; maintain the water volume by covering the beaker (5.2 g)) with a watch glass (5.2 k)). After boiling for at least 10 min, totally immerse the sample into the boiling water. Cover the beaker (5.2 g)) with a watch glass (5.2 k)). Extract the sample for 10 min \pm 0,5 min once boiling is resumed. If necessary, add water (4.2 f)) to ensure sample is totally submerged during the extraction. Remove the sample and allow the resulting solution to cool to ambient temperature. The solution should be colourless

and free of precipitate. Adjust the volume to 50 ml. If the solution is milky or has a precipitate, filter the solution through a membrane filter (5.2 i)) into a dry beaker (5.2 g)) and adjust the volume back to 50 ml.

- d) Add 1 ml of orthophosphoric acid solution (4.2 e)) and mix well. Pour 25 ml of the solution using a graduated cylinder (5.2 e)) into another dry beaker (5.2 g)). Add 1 ml test solution (7 a)), mix, and observe the colour. After a 10 min reaction time, a red to violet colour indicates the presence of Cr(VI). The remaining portion of the extract will serve as the blank.
- e) If there is a colour interference (e.g. from a coating dye), a correction against the blank shall be performed. Transfer a portion of the sample solution to an absorption cell (5.2 c)). Measure the absorbance at 540 nm against the blank (7 d)) with the colorimetric instrument (5.2 c)). Make three measurements and take the average as the final absorbance of the sample. In some cases, depending on the type of spectrometer used, the correction for the blank may have to be made manually in the collected data.
- f) Place 50 ml of the 0,10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ equivalent comparison standard solution (4.2 c)) in a beaker (5.2 g)). Add 1 ml of orthophosphoric acid solution (4.2 e)) and mix well. Add 2 ml test solution (7 a)), mix, and wait 10 min for colour development. Measure the absorbance three times as above. Take the average of three measurements as the final absorbance of the standard solution.
- g) Place 50 ml of the 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ equivalent comparison standard solution (4.2 c)) in a suitable beaker (5.2 g)). Add 1 ml of orthophosphoric acid solution (4.2 e)) and mix well. Add 2 ml test solution (7 a)), mix, and wait 10 min for colour development. Measure the absorbance three times as above. Take the average of three measurements as the final absorbance of the standard solution.
- h) If the absorbance value obtained in 7 d) or 7 e) is less than absorbance of the 0,10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ equivalent comparison standard solution (4.2 c)) obtained in 7 f), the sample is considered to be negative for Cr(VI) (see Table 1).
- i) If the absorbance value obtained in 7 d) or 7 e) is in between the values of the 0,10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ and 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ equivalent comparison standard solutions (4.2 c)) obtained in 7 f) and 7 g), the sample is in the "grey zone" where the presence or absence of Cr(VI) in the sample is inconclusive (see Table 1).
- j) If the absorbance value obtained in 7 d) or 7 e) is greater than the absorbance value of the 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ equivalent comparison standard solution (4.2 c)) obtained in 7 g), the sample is considered to be positive for Cr(VI) (see Table 1).

In the case where the sample colour after the colorimetric reaction is significantly more intense than the 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ equivalent comparison standard such that the result can clearly be determined as positive for Cr(VI), measurement via a colorimetric instrument is not necessary. However, the report shall clearly state that the result is significantly above 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ based on visual observation and no colorimetric measurement was performed. Colorimetric measurement shall be performed if the Cr(VI) is not clearly above 0,13 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$.

Table 1 – Comparison to standard solution and interpretation of results

Colorimetric result (Cr(VI) concentration)	Qualitative result
The sample solution is < the 0,10 µg/cm ² equivalent comparison standard solution	The sample is negative for Cr(VI) – The Cr(VI) concentration is below the limit of quantification. The coating is considered a non-Cr(VI) based coating
The sample solution is ≥ the 0,10 µg/cm ² and ≤ the 0,13 µg/cm ² equivalent comparison standard solutions	The result is considered to be inconclusive – Unavoidable coating variations may influence the determination. Recommendation: if additional samples are available, perform a total of 3 trials to increase sampling surface area. Use the averaged result of the 3 trials for the final determination.
The sample solution is > the 0,13 µg/cm ² equivalent comparison standard solution	The sample is positive for Cr(VI) – The Cr(VI) concentration is above the limit of quantification and the statistical margin of error. The sample coating is considered to contain Cr(VI)

8 Calibration

8.1 Permanent calibration instruments

Colorimetric instruments designed specifically for hexavalent chromium detection at 540 nm may have a permanent calibration provided by the manufacture and no further calibration is needed. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions to ensure that the instrument is functioning properly and its working range is appropriate for this analysis.

8.2 Traditional calibration instruments

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/cdff11e6-1262-48be-bf51-1e62321-7-1:2015>

8.2.1 Traditional colorimetric instrument calibration shall be conducted using a blank and three standard solutions at a minimum. The standard solution concentrations shall bracket the two equivalent comparison standard solution concentrations (0,10 µg/ml and 0,13 µg/ml).

8.2.2 Zero the colorimetric instrument with the 0,0 µg/ml blank standard and save this solution to re-zero the instrument before reading samples and standards.

8.2.3 Read the standard solutions. Construct a calibration curve and determine a line equation by plotting absorbance values (ordinate or y-axis) against µg/ml of Cr(VI) (abscissa or x-axis) for each standard including the 0,0 µg/ml standard.

8.2.4 The calibration curve (linear fit with zero intercept) shall have a correlation coefficient ≥ 0,995 or a new curve shall be built.

8.2.5 Calibration curves can be used for up to one month from initial generation.

9 Calculation

The concentration of Cr(VI) shall be calculated according to Equation (4):

$$C(\text{VI}) = \frac{(C - B) \times V}{A} \times DF \quad (4)$$

where

C(VI) is the sample coating concentration of chromium (VI) (µg/cm²);