



**VHF air-ground Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4 radio equipment;  
Technical characteristics and methods of measurement  
for ground-based equipment;  
Part 1: EN for ground equipment**

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## Foreword

This draft European Standard (EN) has been produced by ETSI Technical Committee Aeronautics (AERO), and is now submitted for the combined Public Enquiry and Vote phase of the ETSI standards EN Approval Procedure.

The present document is part 1 of a multi-part deliverable covering the VHF air-ground Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4 radio equipment; Technical characteristics and methods of measurement for ground-based equipment, as identified below:

- Part 1: "EN for ground equipment";
- Part 2: "General description and data link layer";
- Part 3: "Additional broadcast aspects";
- Part 4: "Point-to-point functions";
- Part 5: "Harmonized EN covering the essential requirements of article 3.2 of the R&TTE Directive".

The present document is accompanied by an equivalent airborne standard, ETSI EN 302 842 [i.1] parts 1 to 4, covering the VHF air-ground Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4 radio equipment; Technical characteristics and methods of measurement for airborne equipment.

### Proposed national transposition dates

Date of latest announcement of this EN (doa):	3 months after ETSI publication
Date of latest publication of new National Standard or endorsement of this EN (dop/e):	6 months after doa
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## Modal verbs terminology

In the present document "**shall**", "**shall not**", "**should**", "**should not**", "**may**", "**may not**", "**need**", "**need not**", "**will**", "**will not**", "**can**" and "**cannot**" are to be interpreted as described in clause 3.2 of the [ETSI Drafting Rules](#) (Verbal forms for the expression of provisions).

"**must**" and "**must not**" are **NOT** allowed in ETSI deliverables except when used in direct citation.

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## Introduction

The present document states the technical specifications for Very High Frequency (VHF) Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4 ground-based radio transmitters, transceivers and receivers for air-ground communications operating in the VHF band, using Gaussian-filtered Frequency Shift Keying (GFSK) Modulation with 25 kHz channel spacing and capable of tuning to any of the 25 kHz channels from 112,000 MHz to 136,975 MHz as defined in ICAO VHF Digital Link (VDL) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) [2].

The present document may be used to produce tests for the assessment of the performance of the equipment.

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# 1 Scope

The present document applies to the following radio equipment types:

- Very High Frequency (VHF) Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4 ground-based radio transmitters and receivers for air-ground communications operating in the VHF band, using Gaussian-filtered Frequency Shift Keying (GFSK) Modulation with 25 kHz channel spacing and capable of tuning to any of the 25 kHz channels from 112,000 MHz to 136,975 MHz as defined in ICAO VHF Digital Link (VDL) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) [2].

The present document provides part 1 of the technical specification.

The present document is designed to ensure that equipment certified to it will be compatible with the relevant ICAO VHF Digital Link (VDL) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) [2] and VDL Mode 4 Technical Manual (TM) [1].

Manufacturers should note that in future the tuning range for the ground transceivers may also cover any 25 kHz channel from 108,000 MHz to 111,975 MHz.

The scope of the present document is limited to ground stations. The equivalent specification for airborne stations is ETSI EN 302 842 [i.1].

The VDL Mode 4 system provides digital communication exchanges between aircraft and ground-based systems and other aircraft supporting surveillance and communication applications. The supported modes of communication include:

- broadcast and point-to-point communication;
- broadcast services including Automatic Dependent Surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B), Traffic Information Service - Broadcast (TIS-B) and Flight Information Service - Broadcast (FIS-B) capabilities;
- air-air, air-to-ground, and ground-to-air services;
- operation without ground infrastructure.

The present document is derived from the specifications:

- VDL Mode 4 standards produced under the auspices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) [1] and [2];
- other relevant standards as defined in clause 2.

It is envisaged that manufacturers may provide equipment supporting:

- broadcast services only;
- point-to-point services only;
- both broadcast and point-to-point services.

The present document deals with tests of the physical layer necessary to support all types of equipment.

The present document includes:

- clause 2 provides references to relevant documents;
- clause 3 provides general definitions, abbreviations and symbols used;
- clause 4 refers to a general description and architecture of VDL Mode 4 contained in ETSI EN 301 842-2 [6];
- clause 5 provides functional specifications applicable to the physical layer including transmitter/receiver requirements and the modulation scheme;
- clause 6 provides general equipment requirements;



- clause 7 provides general design requirements;
- clause 8 covers general test conditions, environmental tests and calibration;
- clause 9 provides detailed test procedures for the physical layer;
- annex A provides a detailed cross-reference to the relevant requirements contained in reference [1];
- annex B provides a Bibliography;

The full physical layer tests are provided which correspond closely to the standard set of tests used for other VDL systems.

### Mandating and Recommendation Phrases

- "Shall"**  
The use of the word "Shall" indicates a mandated criterion; i.e. compliance with the particular procedure or specification is mandatory and no alternative may be applied.
- "Should"**  
The use of the word "Should" (and phrases such as "It is recommended that...", etc.) indicate that though the procedure or criterion is regarded as the preferred option, alternative procedures, specifications or criteria may be applied, provided that the manufacturer, installer or tester can provide information or data to adequately support and justify the alternative.

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## 2 References

References are either specific (identified by date of publication and/or edition number or version number) or non-specific. For specific references, only the cited version applies. For non-specific references, the latest version of the reference document (including any amendments) applies.

Referenced documents which are not found to be publicly available in the expected location might be found at <http://docbox.etsi.org/Reference>.

NOTE: While any hyperlinks included in this clause were valid at the time of publication, ETSI cannot guarantee their long term validity.

### 2.1 Normative references

The following referenced documents are necessary for the application of the present document.

- [1] ICAO Doc 9816 (First Edition 2004): "Manual on VHF Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4, Part 2: Detailed Technical Specifications".
- [2] ICAO Annex 10 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation: "Aeronautical Telecommunications, Volume III: Communication Systems, Part I: Digital Data Communication Systems, chapter 6", including Amendment 88 (applicable 14/11/13).
- [3] ISO/IEC 7498-1 (1994): "Information technology - Open Systems Interconnection - Basic Reference Model: The Basic Model".
- [4] ISO/IEC 10731 (1994): "Information technology - Open Systems Interconnection - Basic Reference Model - Conventions for the definition of OSI services".
- [5] ETSI EN 300 113-1 (V1.7.1): "Electromagnetic compatibility and Radio spectrum Matters (ERM); Land mobile service; Radio equipment intended for the transmission of data (and/or speech) using constant or non-constant envelope modulation and having an antenna connector; Part 1: Technical characteristics and methods of measurement".
- [6] ETSI EN 301 842-2 (V1.7.0): "VHF air-ground Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4 radio equipment; Technical characteristics and methods of measurement for ground-based equipment; Part 2: General description and data link layer".

## 2.2 Informative references

The following referenced documents are not necessary for the application of the present document but they assist the user with regard to a particular subject area.

- [i.1] ETSI EN 302 842 (all parts): "VHF air-ground and air-air Digital Link (VDL) Mode 4 radio equipment; Technical characteristics and methods of measurement for aeronautical mobile (airborne) equipment".

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## 3 Definitions and abbreviations

### 3.1 Definitions

#### 3.1.1 Basic reference model definitions

The present document is based on the concepts developed in the open systems interconnect basic reference model and makes use of the following terms defined in ISO/IEC 7498-1 [3]:

- layer;
- sublayer;
- entity;
- service;
- service access point;
- service data unit;
- physical layer;
- data link layer.

#### 3.1.2 Service conventions definitions

The present document makes use of the following terms defined in ISO/IEC 10731 [4]:

- service provider;
- service user;
- service primitive;
- request;
- indication;
- confirm.

#### 3.1.3 General definitions

For the purposes of the present document, the following terms and definitions apply:

**adjacent channel power:** amount of the modulated RF signal power which falls within a given adjacent channel

NOTE: Adjacent channel power includes discrete spurious, signal sidebands, and noise density (including phase noise) at the transmitter output.

**Adjacent Channel Rejection (ACR):** receiver's ability to demodulate the desired signal and meet the BER requirement in the presence of an interfering signal in an adjacent channel

NOTE: The ratio (in dB) between the adjacent interfering signal level and the desired signal level necessary to achieve the specified minimum BER, is the adjacent channel rejection (ACR) ratio.

**Aeronautical Mobile Service (AMS):** mobile service between aeronautical stations and aircraft stations, or between aircraft stations, in which survival craft stations may participate

**Aeronautical Telecommunications Network (ATN):** internetwork architecture that allows ground, air/ground, and aircraft data subnetworks to interoperate by adopting common interface services and protocols based on the International Organization for Standardization Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) Reference Model

**aircraft address:** unique combination of 24 bits available for assignment to an aircraft for the purpose of air-ground communications, navigation and surveillance

NOTE: An aircraft may choose not to use this unique address and can use instead a non-unique address.

**Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B):** surveillance application transmitting parameters, such as position, track and ground speed, via a broadcast mode data link for use by any air and ground users requiring it

NOTE: ADS-B is a surveillance service based on aircraft self-determination of position/velocity/time and automatic, periodic or random, broadcast of this information along with auxiliary data such as aircraft identity (ID), communications control parameters, etc. ADS-B is intended to support multiple high-level applications and associated services such as cockpit display of traffic information, traffic alert and collision avoidance functionality, enhanced traffic management in the air and on the ground, search and rescue support and others.

**autotune function:** function, performed by the Link Management Entity, that allows a ground VDL Mode 4 station to command an aircraft to change the operating characteristics of synchronization burst transmissions

**Bit Error Rate (BER):** expressed as the ratio between the number of erroneous bits received and the total number of bits received

**burst length:** number of slots across which the VDL Mode 4 burst is transmitted

**Co-Channel Interference (CCI):** co-channel interference protection defines the capability of a receiver to demodulate the desired signal and achieve the minimum specified BER performance in the presence of an unwanted signal at the same assigned frequency

NOTE: The ratio (in dB) between the wanted signal level and the unwanted signal level is the co-channel interference ratio. The co-channel interference ratio has a major impact on frequency re-use planning criteria.

**conducted measurements:** measurements which are made using a direct RF connection to the equipment under test

**current slot:** slot in which a received transmission begins

**Data Link Entity (DLE):** protocol state machine capable of setting up and managing a single data link connection

**Data Link Service (DLS) sublayer:** sublayer that resides above the VDL Mode 4 Specific Services (VSS) and the MAC sublayers

NOTE: The Data Link Service (DLS) manages the transmit queue, creates and destroys Data Link Entities (DLEs) for connection-oriented communications, provides facilities for the Link Management Entity (LME) to manage the DLS, and provides facilities for connection-less communications.

**data rate:** Mode 4 nominal data rate is 19 200 bits/s

**delayed burst:** VDL Mode 4 burst that begins sufficiently after the beginning of a slot so that the transmitting VDL Mode 4 station is confident that no other VDL Mode 4 station that it could receive from and is within the guard range is transmitting in the slot

NOTE: The delayed VDL Mode 4 burst terminates by the end of the slot in which it began (its length is shortened to ensure completion by the nominal time).

**DLS system:** VDL system that implements the DLS and subnetwork protocols to carry Aeronautical Telecommunications Network (ATN) or other packets

**frame:** link layer frame is composed of a sequence of address, control, information and FCS fields, bracketed by opening and closing flag sequences

NOTE: A valid frame is at least 11 octets in length and contains an address field (8 octets), a link control field (1 octet) and a frame check sequence (2 octets). A frame may or may not include a variable-length information field.

**Global Signalling Channel (GSC):** channel available on a world wide basis which provides for communication control

**ground base station:** aeronautical station equipment, in the aeronautical mobile service, for use with an external antenna and intended for use at a fixed location

**ground station coordination:** coordination of transmissions from two or more ground stations uses the UTC-minute time frame

**hand held:** radio equipment with integral batteries, designed to be hand portable and operated hand held

NOTE: Provisions may be made for external connections and temporary installation into vehicles.

**integral antenna equipment:** radio communications equipment with an antenna integrated into the equipment without the use of an external connector and considered to be part of the equipment

NOTE: An integral antenna may be internal or external to the equipment. In equipment of this type, a 50  $\Omega$  RF connection point should be provided for test purposes.

**link:** connects a mobile DLE and a ground DLE and is uniquely specified by the combination of mobile DLS address and the ground DLS address

NOTE: A different subnetwork entity resides above every link endpoint.

**link establishment:** process by which two stations discover each other, determine to communicate with each other, decide upon the communication parameters, create a link and initialize its state before beginning communications

**link handoff:** process by which peer LMEs, already in communication with each other, create a link between an aircraft and a new ground station before disconnecting the old link between the aircraft and the current ground station

**link layer:** layer that lies immediately above the physical layer in the Open Systems Interconnection protocol model

NOTE: The link layer provides for the reliable transfer of information across the physical media. It is subdivided into the data link sublayer and the media access control sublayer.

**Link Management Entity (LME):** protocol state machine capable of acquiring, establishing, and maintaining a connection to a single peer system

NOTE: An LME establishes data link and subnetwork connections, "hands-off" those connections, and manages the media access control sublayer and physical layer. An aircraft LME tracks how well it can communicate with the ground stations of a single ground system. An aircraft VDL management entity (VME) instantiates an LME for each ground station that it monitors. Similarly, the ground VME instantiates an LME for each aircraft that it monitors. An LME is deleted when communication with the peer system is no longer viable.

**Media Access Control (MAC):** sublayer that acquires the data path and controls the movement of bits over the data path

**mobile:** radio equipment designed for installation into vehicles

**non-integral antenna equipment:** radio communications equipment with a connector intended for connection to an antenna

**physical layer:** lowest level layer in the Open Systems Interconnection protocol model

NOTE: The physical layer is concerned with only the transmission of binary information over the physical medium (e.g. VHF radio).