
Navodilo za merjenje gama spektrometrije radioaktivnih odpadkov (ISO 19017:2015)

Guidance for gamma spectrometry measurement of radioactive waste (ISO 19017:2015)

Leitfaden für gammaspektrometrische Messungen von radioaktivem Abfall (ISO 19017:2015)

Lignes directrices pour le mesurage de déchets radioactifs par spectrométrie gamma (ISO 19017:2015)

Ta slovenski standard je istoveten z: prEN ISO 19017

ICS:

13.030.30	Posebni odpadki	Special wastes
17.240	Merjenje sevanja	Radiation measurements
27.120.30	Cepljivi materiali in jedrska gorivna tehnologija	Fissile materials and nuclear fuel technology

oSIST prEN ISO 19017:2017

en,fr,de

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

**ISO
19017**

First edition
2015-12-15

Guidance for gamma spectrometry measurement of radioactive waste

*Lignes directrices pour le mesurage de déchets radioactifs par
spectrométrie gamma*

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Reference number
ISO 19017:2015(E)

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

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For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 85, *Nuclear energy, nuclear technologies, and radiological protection*, Subcommittee SC 5, *Nuclear fuel cycle*.

This first edition of ISO 19017 cancels and replaces ISO 14850-1:2006, which, in particular, did not take into account segmented measurements performed with collimators, the possible use of numerical simulation for calibration and uncertainty assessment, and gamma radiation detectors other than high-purity germanium semiconductors.

Introduction

A variety of non-destructive assay techniques are routinely used within the nuclear industry to measure or provide information to otherwise enable quantification of the radionuclide inventory of packages containing radioactive materials. This International Standard specifically considers gamma spectrometry measurements made on packages containing radioactive waste.

The methods and techniques discussed within this International Standard find application in the routine assay of various types of radioactive waste, packaged in a variety of ways, employing a variety of container sizes, and types. They range from basic techniques, which have been in use for many years, through to state of the art techniques that have been developed because of the increasing variety and forms being assayed and the demands to satisfy increasingly challenging performance criteria.

Where guidance is provided, this is viewed as best current practice and is based on experience of operating quantitative gamma spectrometry measurement systems, within a variety of applications, for the purpose of providing radionuclide identification and activity information.

The objective of this International Standard is to promote a consistent approach to gamma spectrometry measurements made on packages containing radioactive waste.

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Guidance for gamma spectrometry measurement of radioactive waste

1 Scope

This International Standard is applicable to gamma radiation measurements on radioactive waste.

Radioactive waste can be found in different forms and exhibit a wide range of characteristics, including the following:

- raw or unconditioned waste, including process waste (filters, resins, control rods, scrap, etc.) and waste from dismantling or decommissioning;
- conditioned waste in various forms and matrices (bitumen, cement, hydraulic binder, etc.);
- very low level (VLLW), low level (LLW), intermediate level (ILW) and high level radioactive waste (HLW);
- different package shapes: cylinders, cubes, parallelepipeds, etc.

Guidance is provided in respect of implementation, calibration, and quality control. The diversity of applications and system realizations (ranging from research to industrial systems, from very low level to high level radioactive waste, from small to large volume packages with different shapes, with different performance requirements and allowable measuring time) renders it impossible to provide specific guidance for all instances; the objective of this International Standard is, therefore, to establish a set of guiding principles. Ultimately, implementation is to be performed by suitably qualified and experienced persons and based on a thorough understanding of the influencing factors, contributing variables and performance requirements of the specific measurement application.

This International Standard assumes that the need for the provision of such a system will have been adequately considered and that its application and performance requirements will have been adequately defined through the use of a structured requirements capture process, such as data quality objectives (DQO).

It is noted that, while outside the scope of this International Standard, many of the principles, measurement methods, and recommended practices discussed here are also equally applicable to gamma measurements of items other than radioactive waste (e.g. bulk food, water, free-standing piles of materials) or to measurements made on radioactive materials contained within non-traditional packages (e.g. in transport containers).

2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

NOTE Definitions presented here are confined mainly to those terms not defined in common nuclear material glossaries or whose use is specific to this document. Important key terms are repeated here for the convenience of the reader.

2.1

assay

procedure to determine quantitatively the amount of one or more radionuclides of interest contained in a package

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2.2

attenuation

physical process based on interaction between a radiation source and matter placed in the path of the radiation that results in a decrease in the intensity of the emitted radiation

Note 1 to entry: Attenuation experienced in *non-destructive assay* (NDA)(2.27) of waste packages includes *self-attenuation* (2.37) by the radioactive material itself as well as attenuation effects in the *waste matrix* (2.23), internal barrier(s) and external container(s).

2.3

attenuation correction factor

used to correct (compensate) for the effect of attenuation within an NDA measurement equal to the ratio between the un-attenuated and the attenuated radiation flux

Note 1 to entry: After attenuation correction the measured quantity is considered to be representative of the un-attenuated activity of the radioactive substance assayed.

2.4

bias

estimate of a systematic measurement error

2.5

calibration standard

primary standard

designated or widely acknowledged as having the highest metrological qualities and whose value is accepted without reference to other standards of the same quantity

Note 1 to entry: The calibration standard should be physically, radiologically, and chemically similar to the items to be assayed, for which the activity of the radionuclide(s) of interest and all relevant properties to which the measurement technique is sensitive are known with sufficient accuracy.

[SOURCE: www.french-metrology.com]

2.6

calibration

set of operations that establish, under specific conditions, the relationship between values of quantities indicated by a measuring system, or values represented by a material measure or a reference material and the corresponding values realized by Standards

Note 1 to entry: The result of a calibration permits either the assignment of values of measurands to the indications or the determination of indications with respect to indications.

Note 2 to entry: A calibration may also determine other metrological properties such as the effect of influence quantities.

Note 3 to entry: The result of a calibration may be recorded in a document, sometimes called a calibration certificate or a calibration report.

[SOURCE: www.french-metrology.com]

2.7

collimation

method to restrict the field of view of the detector to specific parts of the item to be measured

Note 1 to entry: A shield around the side of the detector that still allows the detector to view the entire item is technically not a collimator. Such shielding does not change the efficiency of the detector due to its presence.

2.8

collimator

device for collimating the radiation beam, usually constructed from highly attenuating material(s) such as tungsten or lead. Collimators can be of parallel wall type or divergent

2.9**collimated (detection) geometry**

measurement configuration where only a part of a waste package can contribute to the response of the detection system

Note 1 to entry: The whole activity is measured by scanning the entire package, or by assuming that the part of the package within the detector's field of view during one or more measurements is representative of the entire package.

2.10**compton continuum**

continuous pulse amplitude spectrum due to Compton electrons released in a detector

Note 1 to entry: The full-energy peaks are superimposed to this continuum and their "net areas" are determined by subtracting the average Compton level estimated below each peak, as detailed in ISO 11929 for instance.

[SOURCE: IEC 60050-395:2014]

2.11**container**

vessel into which the *waste form* (2.41) is placed for handling, transport, storage and/or eventual disposal

Note 1 to entry: Also the outer barrier protecting the waste from external intrusions.

[SOURCE: IAEA Radioactive Waste Management Glossary 2003 Edition]

2.12**coverage factor**

although the combined standard deviation is used to express the uncertainty of many measurement results, for some commercial, industrial, and regulatory applications (e.g. when health and safety are concerned), what is often required is a measure of uncertainty that defines an interval about the measurement result within which the value of the measurand can be confidently asserted to lie

Note 1 to entry: The measure of uncertainty intended to meet this requirement is termed expanded uncertainty and is obtained by multiplying the standard deviation by a coverage factor, suggested symbol *k*. In general, the value of the coverage factor *k* is chosen on the basis of the desired level of confidence to be associated with the interval within which the true value is supposed to lie.

[SOURCE: <http://physics.nist.gov/cuu/Uncertainty/coverage.html>]

2.13**data quality objectives process****DQO**

seven stage requirements capture process used to determine the type, quantity, and quality of data needed to support a decision

Note 1 to entry: The purpose of this process (published by the US Environmental Protection Agency) is to provide general guidance to organizations on developing data quality criteria and performance specifications for decision making.

2.14**dead time**

non-operative time of the detection system during the measurement period

Note 1 to entry: The length of time, directly following an instance of detection, associated with signal processing, during which the system is not able to process further gamma events. This is a system performance parameter which is usually expressed as a percentage of the measurement period. The measured counts would be less than the actual counts due to the dead time and hence needs to be corrected.

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2.15

decision threshold**DT**

value of the estimator of the measurand, which when exceeded by the result of an actual measurement using a given measurement procedure of a measurand quantifying a physical effect, one decides that the physical effect is present

Note 1 to entry: The decision threshold is defined, such that in cases, where the measurements result, y , exceeds the decision threshold, y^* , the probability that the true value of the measurand is zero is less or equal to a chosen probability, α .

Note 2 to entry: If the result, y , is below the decision threshold, y^* , the result cannot be attributed to the physical effect; nevertheless it cannot be concluded that it is absent.

[SOURCE: ISO 11929:2010, 3.6]

2.16

detection geometry

describe the extent of detector collimation with respect to the item to be measured

Note 1 to entry: Two principle assay configurations are distinguished in this guideline: collimated geometry and open geometry.

2.17

detection limit**DL**

smallest true value of the measurand which ensures a specified probability of being detectable by the measurement procedure

Note 1 to entry: With the decision threshold defined above, the detection limit is the smallest true value of the measurand for which the probability of wrongly deciding that the true value of the measurand is zero is equal to a specified value, β , when, in fact, the true value of the measurand is not zero.

[SOURCE: ISO 11929:2010, 3.7]

2.18

emission computed tomography**ECT**

NDA method which allows the distribution of nuclide activity to be determined within sections of the waste package

Note 1 to entry: The technique is based upon the measurement spectra from segments of the waste matrix which the detector views through a collimator. In order to obtain accurate results, it is necessary to know the matrix density distribution within the section (or in 3D), typically by *Transmission Computed Tomography* (TCT) (2.38).

Note 2 to entry: ECT is also referred to as *Tomographic Gamma Scanning* (TGS) (2.39).

2.19

full-energy peak

peak of the gamma spectrum corresponding to the complete deposition of the energy of a photon emitted by a radionuclide

Note 1 to entry: No energy loss has occurred by photon interaction in the waste package or by the escape of secondary photons from the detector following the interaction(s) of the primary photon leading to its detection.

2.20

full width at half maximum**FWHM**

width of a gamma-ray peak at half of the maximum of the peak distribution

Note 1 to entry: This parameter is used to describe energy resolution. FWHM is often quoted when defining detector performance (e.g. FWHM for a given energy, such as 662 keV). FWHM can be given in energy units (e.g. keV) or in % if normalized to the gamma-ray energy.

2.21**intrinsic detection efficiency**

number of counts in the *full-energy peak* (2.19) at a given energy E (net area after subtraction of the Compton continuum and other sources of background in the gamma spectrum) divided by the number of photons at that energy that enter the detector

2.22**live time**

difference between the measurement period and the dead-time

2.23**matrix****waste matrix**

non-radioactive materials inside a *waste package* (2.29) in which the radioactive substances are dispersed

2.24**measurand**

particular quantity subject to measurement

[SOURCE: ISO 11929:2010, 3.2]

2.25**measurement accuracy**

closeness of agreement between a measured quantity value and a true quantity value of a measurand

2.26**measurement period**

time frame over which the measurement is made

2.27**non-destructive assay****NDA**

procedure based on the observation of spontaneous or stimulated nuclear radiation, interpreted to estimate the content of one or more radionuclides in the item which is under investigation, without affecting the physical or chemical form of the material

2.28**open (detection) geometry**

measurement configuration where all parts of a *waste package* (2.29) can contribute to the response of the detection system

2.29**package****waste package**

product of conditioning that includes the *waste form* (2.41) and any container(s) and internal barriers

[SOURCE: ISO 12749-3:2015, 3.5.2]

2.30**precision****statistical precision**

generic term used to describe the dispersion of a set of measured values under reproducible measurement conditions

2.31**radioactive waste**

material for which no further use is foreseen that contains or is contaminated with radionuclides

[SOURCE: ISO 12749-3:2015, 3.7.1]

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2.32

radioactivity

phenomenon whereby atoms undergo spontaneous random disintegration, usually accompanied by the emission of radiation

[SOURCE: IAEA Radioactive Waste Management Glossary 2003 Edition]

2.33

radionuclide

nucleus (of an atom) that possesses properties of spontaneous disintegration (*radioactivity* (2.32))

Note 1 to entry: Nuclei are distinguished by their mass and atomic number.

[SOURCE: IAEA Radioactive Waste Management Glossary 2003 Edition]

2.34

scanning profile

distribution of recorded system responses as a function of successive scan positions

2.35

segment (gamma) spectrum

emission gamma spectrum collected from only a part of a *waste package* (2.29)

2.36

segmented gamma scanning**SGS**

procedure to measure one or more *segment spectra* (2.35) of a waste package

Note 1 to entry: Segmented gamma scanning requires the use of a *collimated detection geometry* (2.9). There are several manifestations of SGS which are currently in use. For this International Standard we distinguish vertical, horizontal and angular scanning, see [Figure 3](#), which can be combined or used partly (in practice SGS usually refers to the combination of vertical scanning and continuous rotation).

- **vertical scanning** [see [Figure 3 a](#))] consists in acquiring vertically segmented gamma spectra representative of stacked slices of the package. The mechanical movement can be step-by-step, with an acquisition for each slice, or continuous with a time-segmented acquisition (mechanics is simpler and measurement time is shorter, but interpretation is more complex). Vertical scanning is most commonly used in combination with continuous rotation.
- **horizontal scanning** [see [Figure 3 b](#))], is most commonly used in combination with angular and vertical scanning for TGS, and also for objects without rotational symmetry in combination with vertical scanning.
- **angular scanning** [see [Figure 3 c](#))], is rarely used alone but as part of TGS systems. This can be functionally accomplished with a single detector or multiple detectors to limit acquisition time (as shown), and with step rotation or continuous rotation with timely segmented acquisition.

2.37

self-attenuation**self-absorption**

attenuation of the gamma radiation in a nuclear material itself (like Pu or U)

Note 1 to entry: This effect is here distinguished from the attenuation of the gamma radiation in nonnuclear materials like the waste matrix, internal shields, container, external shields, collimators, etc.

2.38

transmission computed tomography**TCT**

gamma or X-ray transmission technique to determine the matrix density distribution within sections of the waste package, by angular and horizontal scanning, as for ECT and in 3D with an additional vertical scanning

Note 1 to entry: 3D densitometry allows more accurate corrections for attenuation of gamma radiation within non-uniform matrices.

Note 2 to entry: Both in ECT and TCT, 2D sections can be reconstructed by angular and horizontal scanning, and the complete 3D information can be obtained by superimposing the slices vertically or by performing a continuous helical scan.

2.39

tomographic gamma scanning

TGS

typically a combination of emission computed tomography (ECT) and transmission computed tomography (TCT)

2.40

total detection efficiency

number of counts in the full-energy peak (net area) per photon of energy (E) emitted in the waste package

2.41

waste form

physical and chemical form after treatment or conditioning prior to packaging and which is a component of the *waste package* (2.29)

[SOURCE: ISO 12749-3:2015, 3.7.6]

3 Application

3.1 General

Measurement of gamma radiation emissions provides a non-destructive method of establishing the inventory of gamma-emitting radionuclides inside a waste package.

Gamma measurements can be performed using relatively unsophisticated techniques (such as Open Detector Geometry, see 4.2) and measurement procedures where the waste and matrix are well understood or where source and matrix can be considered to be uniformly distributed (such that a simple form of measurement can provide a representative result).

Alternatively, there may be little or no knowledge of the sources present, the activity distributions, the matrix composition or homogeneity; in these cases, it is often necessary to consider more complex techniques (such as Collimated Detector Geometries, see 4.3).

Depending on gamma irradiation level, shields and/or a collimated geometry may also be necessary to keep the detector and acquisition system count rates within operating limits.

3.2 Typical applications

Gamma radiation measurement systems are currently employed in a variety of radioactive waste package measurement applications, such as the following:

- inventory assignment ahead of waste processing, storage or transport;
- inventory verification ahead of waste processing, storage or transport;
- waste inspection during interim storage or final disposal,
- quality checking of waste conditioning processes;
- free release measurements.

NOTE Gamma spectroscopy is used in many applications beyond the scope of this International Standard, such as process control, radioactivity assessment of environmental media (soil, vegetation, water, etc.), characterization of post-accident clean-up debris, bulk material measurements, etc. The same principles and good practices may often apply in these fields.