



Designation: ~~C1432-99~~ Designation: **C 1432 – 03 (Reapproved 2008)**

Standard Test Method for Determination of Impurities in Plutonium: Acid Dissolution, Ion Exchange Matrix Separation, and Inductively Coupled Plasma-Atomic Emission Spectroscopic (ICP/AES) Analysis¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation C 1432; 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 (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of 25 elements in plutonium (Pu) materials. The Pu is dissolved in acid, the Pu matrix is separated from the target impurities by an ion exchange separation, and the concentrations of the impurities are determined by inductively coupled plasma-atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES). ~~The elements determined are listed in Table 2.~~

1.2 This test method is specific for the determination of impurities in ~~Pu in~~ 8 M nitric acid (HNO_3) solutions. Impurities in other plutonium materials, including plutonium oxide samples, may be determined if they are appropriately dissolved (see ~~Practices~~ Practice C 1168) and converted to 8 M HNO_3 solutions.

~~1.3 Plutonium bearing materials are radioactive and toxic. Adequate laboratory facilities, glove boxes, and fume hoods, along with safe techniques, must be used in handling samples containing these materials. A detailed discussion of all the precautions necessary is beyond the scope of this test method; however, personnel who handle these materials should be familiar with such safe handling practices.~~

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.4 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 method standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use of this standard.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

~~C 697 Test Methods for Chemical, Mass Spectrometric, and Spectrochemical Analysis of Nuclear-Grade Plutonium Dioxide Powders and Pellets~~

~~E 757 Specification for Nuclear-Grade Plutonium Dioxide Powder, Sinterable~~

~~C 758 Test Methods for Chemical, Mass Spectrometric, Spectrochemical, Nuclear, and Radiochemical Analysis of Nuclear-Grade Plutonium Metal~~

~~C 759 Test Methods for Chemical, Mass Spectrometric, Spectrochemical, Nuclear, and Radiochemical Analysis of Nuclear-Grade Plutonium Nitrate Solutions~~

~~C 1168 Practice for Preparation and Dissolution of Plutonium Materials for Analysis~~

~~D 1193 Specification for Reagent Water~~

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 A sample of ~~Pu~~plutonium metal is dissolved in a small volume of 6 M hydrochloric acid (HCl). Then, ~~1 mL of~~ 10 M (HNO_3)~~0.2~~0.03 M hydrofluoric acid (HF) is added to the dissolved ~~Pu~~plutonium to oxidize the ~~Pu~~plutonium to the Pu (IV) state. The sample solution is loaded onto a nitrate anion exchange resin and eluted with 8 M HNO_3 ~~0.2~~0.006 M HF. The rinses contain the target metallic impurities and less than 15 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ Pu. The ~~Pu~~plutonium is stripped from the anion exchange resin with 0.1 M HCl. The rinses containing the metallic impurities are analyzed by ICP-AES.

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee C-26 on Nuclear Fuel Cycle and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee C26.05 on Methods of Test. Current edition approved June 10, 1999. Published August 1999.

² This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee C26 on Nuclear Fuel Cycle and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee C26.05 on Methods of Test. Current edition approved Dec. 1, 2008. Published January 2009. Originally approved in 1999. Last previous edition approved in 2003 as C 1432 – 03.

³ For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 12.01, volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

4. Significance and Use

- 4.1 This test method measures all elements listed in Specification C757, except sulfur (S) and tantalum (Ta).
- 4.2 This test method measures all of the cation elements measured in Test Methods C697, except silver (Ag), gold (Au), and bismuth (Bi). Phosphorus (P) requires a vacuum instrument.
- 4.1 This test method can be used on plutonium matrices in nitrate solutions.
- 4.2 This test method has been validated for all elements listed in Test Methods C 757 except sulfur (S) and tantalum (Ta).
- 4.3 This test method has been validated for all of the cation elements measured in Table 1. Phosphorus (P) requires a vacuum or an inert gas purged optical path instrument.

5. Interferences

5.1 Plutonium concentrations of less than 50 µg/mL in the final aqueous phase do not significantly affect the analytical results for most elements. Interference studies should be made to determine the degree of Pu and other elemental interferences on the target analytes; background and interelement corrections may be required.

6. Apparatus

- 6.1 An ICP-AES with a spectral bandpass of 0.05 nm or less is required to provide the necessary spectral resolution.
- 6.1 An ICP-AES equipped with a Charge Injection Device (CID) detector or an ICP-AES with a spectral bandpass of 0.05 nm or less is required to provide the necessary spectral resolution.³ The spectrometer may be either a simultaneous multielement or a sequential spectrometer. The spectrometer may be either an inert gas-path or vacuum instrument; the appropriate spectral lines should be selected for each specific instrument. Either an analog or digital readout system may be used.
- 6.2 The ICP-AES is interfaced to a glovebox. The torchbox is glovebox enclosed since Pu containing materials come in direct contact with the torch. The torchbox offers several safety features, such as a shielded window for observing the plasma, which

³ Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 11.01.

³ The sole source of supply of the apparatus known to the committee at this time is Thermo Jarrell Ash PolyScan Iris spectrometer (Thermo Electron Spectroscopy, Franklin, MA), or an Applied Research Laboratories 3580 ICP-AES instrument (Dearborn, MI). If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee, which you may attend.

TABLE 1 ICP-AES Percent Recovery and Repeatability Standard Deviation for Sixteen Spiked Samples^A

Parameter	Wavelength/Order (nm)	Actual Conc (µg/mL)	Mean Conc (µg/mL)	Average (%R)	R.S.D. (%)
Vanadium	Al 396.152 {67}	2.5	2.4	95	6
Aluminum	Al 396.152 {67}	2.5	2.4	95	6
Forward rf power	1.4 kW {58}	2.5	2.4	95	5
Barium	Ba 455.403 {58}	2.5	2.4	95	5
Reflected rf power	<10 W {84}	2.5	2.3	94	6
Beryllium	Be 313.042 {84}	2.5	2.3	94	6
Outer argon flow	106}	2.5 L/min	2.5	100	7
Boron	B 249.773 {106}	2.5	2.5	100	7
Auxiliary argon flow	02 {116}	2.8 L/min	2.5	101	12
Cadmium	Cd 226.502 {116}	2.5	2.5	101	12
Carrier argon flow	0.7 L/min {66}	2.5	2.6	104	20
Calcium	Ca 396.847 {66}	2.5	2.6	104	20
Observation height	15 mm above load coil {93}	2.5	2.3	92	8
Chromium	Cr 283.563 {93}	2.5	2.3	92	8
Nebulizer	Gross flow type 228.616 {115}	2.5	2.5	101	6
Cobalt	Co 228.616 {115}	2.5	2.5	101	6
Solution uptake rate	1}	2.5	2.4	97	6
Copper	Cu 324.754 {81}	2.5	2.4	97	6
Iron	Fe 259.940 {101}	2.5	2.5	101	12
Lead	Pb 220.353 {120}	2.5	3.1	122	12
Lithium	Li 670.784 {39}	2.5	2.2	87	6
Lithium	Li 670.784 {39}	2.5	2.2	87	6
Magnesium	Mg 280.270 {94}	2.5	2.4	95	6
Manganese	Mn 257.610 {102}	2.5	2.5	98	5
Molybdenum	Mo 202.030 {130}	2.5	2.6	103	10
Nickel	Ni 231.604 {114}	2.5	2.5	100	11
Silicon	Si 251.612 {104}	2.5	2.3	92	16
Sodium	Na 588.995 {45}	25.0	24.7	97	16
Strontium	Sr 421.552 {62}	2.5	2.4	95	5
Tin	Sn 189.989 {139}	2.5	2.7	109	19
Titanium	Ti 334.941 {79}	2.5	2.5	102	8
Tungsten	W 207.911 {127}	2.5	2.5	99	11
Vanadium	V 292.402 {90}	2.5	2.0	82	7
Zinc	Zn 213.856 {123}	2.5	2.5	100	8
Zirconium	Zr 339.198 {78}	2.5	2.5	101	10

^A These conditions are typical for an ARL #3580.

allows the operator to view the plasma without risking damage to the eyes. The torchbox is equipped with an interlock that shuts off high voltage power to the torchbox when the torchbox door is open. The interlock prevents the operator from being exposed to high voltages during routine cleaning. This setup is described in ASTM STP 951.

6.2 The ICP-AES is interfaced to a glovebox. The torch box is glovebox enclosed, since plutonium containing materials come in direct contact with the torch. This setup is described in ASTM STP 951.⁴

6.3 Vacuum manifold set at approximately 23 cm Hg (9 in. Hg) is optional.⁵

6.3 Vacuum manifold set at approximately 9 in. Hg (optional). A gravity system is also acceptable.

6.4 15 mL plastic disposable ion exchange columns.⁶ A gravity system is acceptable.

6.4 15-mL plastic disposable ion exchange columns.

6.5 30-mL plastic vials.

6.5 50 mL plastic vials.

6.6 Plastic micro and macro pipettes.

6.7A 500-mL fritted column.

6.7 1000 mL plastic volumetric flasks.

7. Reagents and Materials

7.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Reagent grade chemicals shall be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents shall conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society (ACS), where such specifications are available.⁷ Other grades ~~should~~ could be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

7.2 *Purity of Water*— Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean laboratory accepted demineralized or deionized water as described by Type 1 of Specification D 1193.

7.3 Ultra high purity acids shall be used for sample dissolution and calibration standards preparation unless otherwise noted.

NOTE 1—All reagents are prepared and stored in polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) containers. 1—The molarity of ultra high purity acids may vary from standard ACS specifications for concentrated acids.

NOTE 2—All reagents are prepared and stored in polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) containers.

7.4 *Hydrochloric Acid ((HCl) (sp-gr 1.18))* (HCl, 11.3 M), concentrated ultra high purity⁸ HCl.

7.5 *Hydrochloric Acid (HCl, 6 M)*—Add 500.531 mL of concentrated ultra high purity HCl (sp-gr 1.18) (11.3 M) to less than 500.450 mL of water and dilute to 1 L with water.

7.6 *Hydrochloric Acid (HCl, 0.1 M)*—Add 8.38.8 mL of concentrated ultra high purity HCl (sp-gr 1.18) (11.3 M) to water, while stirring, and dilute to 1 L with water. (Reagent grade HCl can be used in preparing this reagent.)

7.7 *Hydrofluoric Acid ((HF) (sp-gr 1.15))*, concentrated ultra high purity⁹ (HF, 28.3 M), concentrated ultra high purity⁸ HF.

7.8 *Nitric Acid ((HNO₃) (sp-gr 1.42))*, concentrated ultra high purity⁹ HNO₃.

7.8 *Nitric Acid (HNO₃, 15.8 M)*, concentrated ultra high purity⁸ nitric acid.

7.9 *Nitric Acid-Hydrofluoric Acid Mixture*, 10 M HNO₃/0.2 M HF—Add 7.2 mL of concentrated ultra high purity HF (sp-gr 1.15) to water, using a plastic pipet, while stirring; add 637-mL concentrated ultra high purity HNO₃ (sp-gr 1.42); (15.8 M) and dilute to 1 L with water.

⁴ An Applied Research Laboratories 3580 ICP-AES instrument (Fisons Instruments, Dearborn, MI) has been found to be acceptable. The ARL 3580 is a combination Paschen-Runge type spectrometer containing a 58 channel simultaneous spectrometer and a sequential spectrometer, both with a 1-m focal length and capable of operating in the 165 to 800-nm range.

⁴ Edellson, M. C., and Daniel, J. Leland, "Plasma Spectroscopy of the Analysis of Hazardous Materials: Design and Application of Enclosed Plasma Sources," *Conference Proceedings, ASTM STP 951*, ASTM, 1986.

⁵ Edellson, M. C., and Daniel, J. Leland, "Plasma Spectroscopy of the Analysis of Hazardous Materials: Design and Application of Enclosed Plasma Sources," *Conference Proceedings, ASTM STP 951*, ASTM, 1986.

⁵ The sole source of supply of the apparatus known to the committee at this time is Eichrom Technologies Vacuum Box System (Part # AC-24-BOX), Eichrom Technologies Inc., Darien, IL. If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee, which you may attend.

⁶ Speed Mate 10 Vacuum Extraction System, Applied Separations, Bethlehem, PA, has been found to be acceptable.

⁶ The sole source of supply of the apparatus known to the committee at this time is Ion exchange columns from either Applied Separation or Bio-Rad Inc. If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee, which you may attend.

⁷ Ion exchange columns from either Applied Separation or Bio-Rad Inc. have been found to be acceptable.

⁷ *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, DC. For Suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Annual Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.

⁸ *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, D.C. For suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Analar Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.

⁸ The sole source of supply of the apparatus known to the committee at this time is Ultrex (J. T. Baker, Inc.) and Seastar brands of ultra high purity acids. If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee, which you may attend.