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Standard Practice for Verifying the Consistency of AE-Sensor Response Using an Acrylic Rod¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E2075/E2075M; 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 practice is used for routinely checking the sensitivity of acoustic emission (AE) sensors. It is intended to provide a reliable, precisely specified way of comparing a set of sensors, or telling whether an individual sensor's sensitivity has degraded during its service life, or both.

1.2 This practice is not a "calibration" nor does it give frequency response information.

1.3 ~~The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are provided for information only.~~

1.3 Units—The values stated in SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in non-conformance with the 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 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:*²

E650 [Guide for Mounting Piezoelectric Acoustic Emission Sensors](#)

E750 [Practice for Characterizing Acoustic Emission Instrumentation](#)

E976 [Guide for Determining the Reproducibility of Acoustic Emission Sensor Response](#)

E2374 [Guide for Acoustic Emission System Performance Verification](#)

3. Significance and Use

3.1 Degradation in sensor performance can occur due to dropping, mechanical shock while mounted on the test structure, temperature cycles, and so forth. It is necessary and desirable to have a simple measurement procedure that will check the consistency of sensor response, while holding all other variables constant.

3.2 While test blocks of many different kinds have been used for this purpose for many years, an acrylic polymer rod offers the best all-around combination of suitable acoustic properties, practical convenience, ease of procurement and low cost.

3.3 Because the acoustic properties of the acrylic rod are known to depend on temperature, this practice requires that the rod, sensors, and couplant be stabilized at the same working temperature, prior to verifying the sensors.

3.4 Attention should be paid to storage conditions for the acrylic polymer rod. For example, it should not be left in a freezing or hot environment overnight, unless it is given time for temperature stabilization before use.

3.5 Properly applied and with proper record keeping, this practice can be used in many ways. The user organization must determine the context for its use, the acceptance standards and the actions to be taken based on the lead break results. The following uses are suggested:

3.5.1 To determine when a sensor is no longer suitable for use.

3.5.2 To check sensors that have been exposed to high-risk conditions, such as dropping, overheating, and so forth.

3.5.3 To get an early warning of sensor degradation over time. This can lead to identifying conditions of use, which are damaging sensors, and thus, to better equipment care and lower replacement costs.

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E07 on Nondestructive Testing and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E07.04 on Acoustic Emission Method.

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² 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* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

3.5.4 To obtain matched sets of sensors, preamplifiers, instrumentation channels, or a combination thereof, for more uniform performance of the total system.

3.5.5 To save time and money, by eliminating the installation of bad sensors.

3.5.6 To verify sensors quickly but consistently in the field and to assist trouble-shooting when a channel does not pass a performance check.

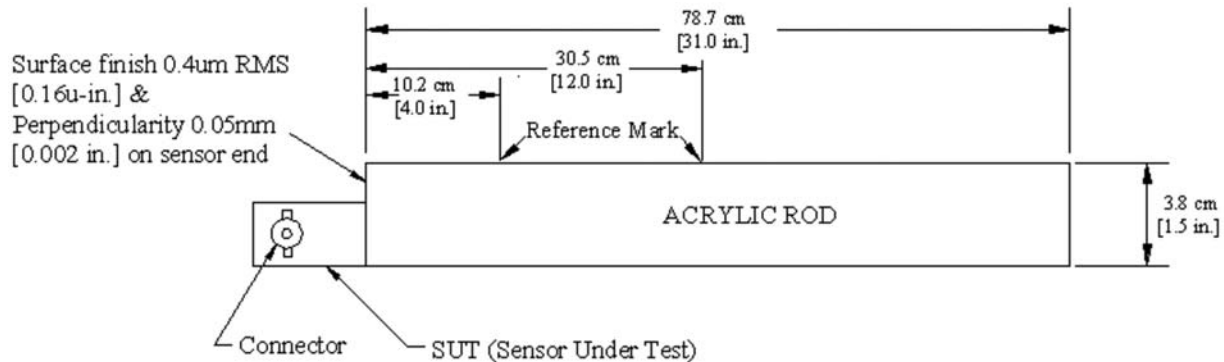


FIG. 1 Acrylic Rod Description

3.6 All the above uses are recommended for consideration. The purpose of this practice is not to call out how these uses are to be implemented, but only to state how the test itself is to be performed so that the results obtained will be accurate and reliable.

4. Apparatus

4.1 *Acrylic Polymer Cylindrical Rod* (Fig. 1), should be used. The actual material of the acrylic polymer rod is polymethylmethacrylate.³

4.1.1 Dimensions of the rod should be 78.7478.7 cm (31 in.) [31 in.] long by 3.813.8 cm (1.5 in.) [1.5 in.] in diameter, sensors end cut true and smooth with a surface finish of 0.4 μm RMS (0.16 μin.) [0.16 μin.].

4.1.2 Other lengths of rod are acceptable, provided that there is sufficient distance to attenuate and prevent reflected signals from the nonsensor end of the rod reaching the sensor.

4.1.3 A permanent reference mark, for example an “X”, is placed on the rod at a distance of 10.2 cm (4 in.) [4 in.], or 30.5 cm (12 in.) [12 in.], or both, from one end; marking the spots where the pencil lead is to be broken. It is convenient to provide a very small spotface, for example, 0.8 mm (0.03 in.) [0.03 in.] diameter and 0.1 mm (0.004 in.) [0.004 in.] deep at these reference mark points, to rest the tip of the pencil lead to avoid slippage during the lead break process.

NOTE 1—The surface finish of the cylindrical rod section could produce reflections that affect AE response. The surface finish should be maintained in a clean, undamaged condition.

4.2 *Hsu-Nielsen Pencil Lead Break Source*, 0.3 or 0.5-mm Hsu-Nielsen Pencil Lead Break Source, as described in Guide E976, with 2H pencil lead.

4.3 *Sensor(s)*, to be tested.

4.4 *Acoustic Emission Equipment*, with amplitude measurement capability, for recording sensor response. (Operating familiarity with the apparatus is assumed.)

4.5 *Couplant*, to be standardized and documented by the user of this practice.

5. Procedure

5.1 Ensure that the acrylic rod, sensors and couplant have been allowed to stabilize to the ambient temperature of the examination environment.

5.2 Place the prepared acrylic rod horizontally on a suitable hard, flat surface, such as a benchtop, with the reference mark(s) facing vertically up (12 o'clock). The rod may be secured with tape or other means no closer than 30.5 cm [12 in.] from the reference mark.

5.3 Prepare and power-up the AE measurement system including preamplifier (if used) and connecting cables; allow warm up time as necessary. Verify the system’s performance. Verification may be accomplished on the rod using a reference sensor that is dedicated to this purpose and not exposed to the hazards of field use; or, it may be accomplished by electronic procedures such as those described in Practice E750 or Guide E2374.

5.4 Mount the sensor to be tested on the flat end of the rod using the prescribed couplant and normal good application techniques (refer to Guide E650). Wipe off old couplant before mounting. Mount the sensor in the six o'clock position so that it is resting on

³ Some of the generic brand names of this material include, but are not limited to, Lucite, PMMA, plexiglass, perspex, and so forth.