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Space engineering - Spacecraft mechanical loads analysis handbook

Raumfahrttechnik - Handbuch zur Analyse von mechanischen Lasten

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Ingénierie spatiale - Manuel d'analyse des charges mécaniques pour vaisseaux spatiaux

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SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

Table of contents

European Foreword **10**

Preface **11**

1 Scope **13**

2 References **14**

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms **15**

3.1 Terms from other documents 15

3.2 Terms specific to the present document 16

3.3 Abbreviated terms 17

4 Overview of the loads analysis process **21**

4.1 Introduction 21

4.2 Loads cycles 22

4.3 Logic and sequence of loads analysis 23

4.4 Loads and verification approach (prototype or protoflight) 24

4.5 Loads and levels of assembly 26

4.6 Mechanical loads for design and verification 27

4.6.1 Spacecraft flight environments and dynamic loads 27

4.6.2 Vibration environments and frequency range 27

4.6.3 Introduction to analysis and test types for verifying mechanical requirements 28

4.6.4 Static and quasi-static loads 30

4.6.5 Static loads test 32

4.6.6 Spacecraft-launcher coupled loads analysis 33

4.6.7 Sine vibration 34

4.6.8 Spacecraft design loads and test predictions versus LV/SC CLA results 36

4.6.9 Random vibration and vibro-acoustic environment 37

4.6.10 Shock testing 39

4.7 Basic principles, criteria and assumptions in structure and loads verification 40

4.7.1 Introduction 40

4.7.2 Equivalence criteria for loads and environments 40

4.7.3 Criteria for assessing verification loads 42

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
(standards.iteh.ai)
SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/2f8c66ae-9ab4d1-470c-b26b-67de12b00b65/sist-tp-cen-tr-17603-32-26-2022

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

4.7.4 Main inconsistencies of the loads verification process....42
4.8 Notching in sine and random vibration testing....43
4.8.1 Introduction....43
4.8.2 Example of requirements....44
4.8.3 Basic principles....44
4.8.4 Response and force limiting....45
4.8.5 Criteria for notching justification....46
4.8.6 Conclusions on notching in sine and random vibration testing....48
4.9 References....49

5 Background on structural dynamics....50
5.1 Introduction....50
5.1.1 The dynamic environment....50
5.1.2 Types of structural analysis....51
5.1.3 List of topics....51
5.1.4 Principal notations....52
5.2 Dynamic environments – analysis and specifications....54
5.2.1 Generalities....54
5.2.2 Example - the maiden flight of Ariane 1....55
5.2.3 Sine environment....57
5.2.4 Transient environment....62
5.2.5 Random environment....65
5.2.6 Sine-equivalent dynamics....74
5.2.7 Combined environments....83
5.3 Dynamic analysis....86
5.3.1 Frequency domain analysis....86
5.3.2 Modal approach....88
5.3.3 Effective mass models....92
5.3.4 Craig-Bampton models....93
5.4 Coupled analysis and notching in sine tests....107
5.4.1 FRF coupling....107
5.4.2 Modal approach....108
5.4.3 Simple example....109
5.4.4 Use of the shock response spectrum....111
5.5 Primary and secondary notching....115
5.5.1 Modes concerned by primary notching....115
5.5.2 Secondary notching....115
5.5.3 Simple example....116
5.5.4 Conclusions on notching in sine tests....118
5.6 Random tests....118

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
(standards.iteh.ai)
SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

5.6.1 Issues on random tests 118
5.6.2 Mechanical equivalence example 119
5.6.3 Notching in random vibration tests 121
5.7 Practical aspects of modal effective masses 124
5.8 Conclusions 126
5.9 References 126

6 Launcher / spacecraft coupled loads analysis 129
6.1 Introduction 129
6.1.1 General aspects 129
6.1.2 Launch loads and terminology used in the CLA process 130
6.1.3 The role of the CLA within the loads cycle 132
6.2 The phases of the CLA process 133
6.2.1 Introduction 133
6.2.2 Parameters driving the CLA process 134
6.2.3 Mathematical model verification and database integration 134
6.2.4 Finite element model reduction 134
6.2.5 Checks on the Craig-Bampton matrices and OTM 135
6.2.6 Frequency cut-off for computed modes 135
6.2.7 Coupling of the launcher and spacecraft models 135
6.2.8 Calculation of the generalized responses 135
6.2.9 Determination of the physical responses 135
6.2.10 Post-processing 135
6.2.11 Uncertainty factors 136
6.3 CLA output and results evaluation 137
6.3.1 Overview 137
6.3.2 Guidelines to response parameter selection 138
6.3.3 Equivalent sine input 138
6.3.4 Computation of static components from OTM 138
6.3.5 Relative displacements 139
6.3.6 Interface mechanical fluxes and overfluxes 139
6.3.7 Results review, verification and validation 144
6.3.8 Use of CLA results for structural verification 145
6.3.9 Reporting 145
6.4 Ariane 5 coupled loads analysis 148
6.4.1 Introduction to Ariane 5 CLA 148
6.4.2 Mission analysis organization and management 149
6.4.3 CLA events and load cases 150
6.4.4 Concomitant events and load cases combination 159
6.4.5 Flight phases and CLA standard load cases 160

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
(standards.iteh.ai)
SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/20c666e8-b4d1-470a-b26b-6751c13e09b5/sist-tp-cen-tr-17603-32-26-2022

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

6.4.6 Aspects of the Ariane 5 CLA methodology 163
6.5 The Arianespace spacecraft qualification process 165
6.5.1 Introduction 165
6.5.2 Quasi-static loads 166
6.5.3 Dynamic environment 168
6.6 Space Shuttle coupled loads analysis 174
6.6.1 Overview 174
6.6.2 CLA load events 175
6.6.3 Elements of the design and verification process for Space Shuttle payloads 176
6.7 References 179

7 Static loads 180
7.1 Introduction 180
7.2 Quasi-static loads 180
7.2.1 General aspects 180
7.2.2 Equivalence between dynamic conditions and CoG net accelerations 181
7.2.3 Quasi-static loads specification 182
7.2.4 Prediction of QSL and mechanical environment by base-drive analysis 184
7.3 Static test philosophy and objectives 184
7.4 Definition of static test configuration and load cases 185
7.4.1 Introduction 185
7.4.2 Boundary conditions 186
7.4.3 Loading systems 186
7.4.4 Load cases 187
7.4.5 Instrumentation 188
7.5 Static test evaluation 188
7.6 References 190

8 Sine vibration 199
8.1 Introduction 199
8.2 Sine vibration levels specification 199
8.2.1 Sine loads for spacecraft 199
8.2.2 Sine loads for payload and equipment 200
8.3 Simulation / test prediction 201
8.3.1 Introduction 201
8.3.2 Boundary conditions 201
8.3.3 Damping 202
8.3.4 Notch assessment 202
8.4 Sine vibration test 203

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
(standards.iteh.ai)
SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/2f666ce8-b4d1-470e-b26b-

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

8.4.1 Objectives 203
8.4.2 Notching process 204
8.4.3 Test preparation 206
8.4.4 Sine test campaign 219
8.5 References 229

9 Random vibration and vibro-acoustics 230
9.1 Introduction 230
9.1.1 Overview 230
9.1.2 Random vibration loads 231
9.1.3 Vibro-acoustic loads 231
9.2 Requirements 234
9.3 Random vibration specification 234
9.3.1 Introduction 234
9.3.2 Component vibration environment predictor, Spann method 234
9.3.3 Specifications derived from random and vibro-acoustic test data 236
9.3.4 VibroSpec 238
9.3.5 Test/analysis extrapolation method 240
9.4 Random vibration analysis 242
9.4.1 Finite element analysis and Miles' equation 242
9.4.2 Finite element analysis 243
9.4.3 Guidelines for FE random vibration response analysis 245
9.5 Random vibration testing 247
9.5.1 Introduction 247
9.5.2 Notching 247
9.6 Vibro-acoustic analysis 264
9.6.1 Introduction 264
9.6.2 Boundary element analysis 264
9.6.3 Statistical energy analysis 267
9.6.4 General guidelines for vibro-acoustic analyses 270
9.7 Acoustic testing 272
9.7.1 Introduction 272
9.7.2 Test plan/procedure 272
9.8 Verification of compliance 274
9.8.1 General aspects 274
9.8.2 An example based on the vibration response spectrum 275
9.9 Special topics in random vibration 278
9.9.1 Simulation of the random time series 278
9.9.2 Prediction of random acoustic vibration of equipment mounted on panels 281

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
(standards.iteh.ai)
SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/2fb66ee8-b4d1-470c-b26b-67dd2b00b65/sist-tp-cen-tr-17603-32-26-2022

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

9.9.3 Quick way to predict fatigue life (Steinberg method) 285
9.10 References 288

10 Shock 291
10.1 Introduction 291
10.2 Shock environment 291
10.3 Shock design and verification process 292
10.3.1 Shock input derivation to subsystems 293
10.3.2 Shock verification approach 294
10.3.3 Shock damage risk assessment 297
10.4 References 300

11 Dimensional stability 301
11.1 Introduction 301
11.2 Dimensional stability analysis 302
11.2.1 Thermo-elastic distortion analysis 303
11.2.2 1g-0g transition (gravity release) 310
11.2.3 Moisture absorption / release 311
11.3 Dimensional stability verification 313
11.3.1 Introduction 313
11.3.2 Thermal distortion test 313
11.3.3 Gravity release test 319
11.4 Material property characterisation testing 320
11.4.1 Coefficient of Thermal Expansion (CTE) characterisation 320
11.4.2 Coefficient of Moisture Expansion (CME) characterisation 321
11.5 References 322

12 Fatigue and fracture control 323
12.1 Introduction 323
12.2 Definitions 326
12.3 List of events 326
12.4 Load spectra per event 330
12.4.1 General 330
12.4.2 Existing load curves 330
12.4.3 Measured load curves 332
12.4.4 Calculating load curves 334
12.5 Generation of fatigue spectra 337
12.6 References 339

13 Micro-gravity and micro-vibrations 341
13.1 Introduction 341

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
(standards.iteh.ai)
SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/21b66ce8-b4d1-470c-b26b-

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

13.1.1 Background 341
13.1.2 Scope 342
13.2 Micro-gravity 342
13.2.1 General aspects 343
13.2.2 Derivation of micro-gravity specifications 354
13.2.3 Micro-gravity environment verification 362
13.3 Micro-vibration 369
13.3.1 General aspects 369
13.3.2 Micro-vibration analysis 371
13.3.3 Micro-vibration budget assessment 379
13.3.4 Pointing error synthesis 382
13.3.5 Micro-vibration verification test 383
13.4 Micro-gravity and micro-vibration disturbance sources 387
13.4.1 Scope 387
13.4.2 Review of potential disturbance sources 387
13.4.3 Characterisation of the disturbance sources forcing functions 398
13.5 References 435

14 Soft stowed packaging 437

14.1 Introduction 437
14.2 Packaging guidelines 438
14.3 Materials for packaging 439
14.3.1 Physical properties 439
14.3.2 Attenuation data for foam packed items 445
14.4 Soft stowed equipment verification flow 451
14.4.1 Hardware categories and criticality 451
14.4.2 General verification aspects 451
14.4.3 Off-the-shelf (OTS) items and already existing equipment 456
14.4.4 New equipment / hardware 458
14.2 References 463

15 Nonlinear structures 464

15.1 Introduction 464
15.2 Common spacecraft structure nonlinearities 464
15.2.2 Damping 465
15.2.3 Contact 466
15.2.4 Nonlinear stiffness 467
15.3 Nonlinearity detection 468
15.4 Handling of spacecraft structure nonlinearities 469
15.4.1 Introduction 469

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
(standards.iteh.ai)
SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/2fb66cc8-b4d1-470c-b26b-67dc12e00b65/sist-tp-cen-tr-17603-32-26-2022

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

15.4.2 Guidelines for testing 470
15.4.3 Nonlinearity characterisation and parameter estimation 472
15.4.4 Guidelines for structure modelling and analysis 474
15.4.5 Impact of nonlinearities on CLA flight load predictions 479
15.5 References 481

16 Finite element models 482

16.1 Introduction 482
16.2 Requirements for structure mathematical models 483
16.3 Introduction to V&V in computational mechanics 483
16.4 Spacecraft finite element model complexity and validation test 486
16.5 Uncertainty quantification during load cycles 487
16.5.1 Overview 487
16.5.2 Dynamic variability or uncertainty factor K_v 487
16.5.3 Model factor K_M 489
16.6 Verification and quality assurance for spacecraft finite element analysis 489
16.7 Mathematical model validation 491
16.7.1 General concepts and terminology 491
16.7.2 Why a mathematical model validation process 492
16.7.3 Categorization of the uncertainty and sources of disagreement between simulation and experimental outcomes 493
16.7.4 Specific aspects of the validation of spacecraft FEM for coupled loads analysis 493
16.7.5 Error localization and model updating by sensitivity and optimization 498
16.7.6 Specific aspects concerning base-drive sine vibration testing and “real-time” model validation 499
16.7.7 Stochastic approaches for model validation 500
16.8 References 501

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SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/2f666ce8-84d1-470e-b26b-

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European Foreword

This document (CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/CLC/JTC 5 “Space”, the secretariat of which is held by DIN.

It is highlighted that this technical report does not contain any requirement but only collection of data or descriptions and guidelines about how to organize and perform the work in support of EN 16603-32.

This Technical report (CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022) originates from ECSS-E-HB-32-26A.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN [and/or CENELEC] shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

This document has been prepared under a mandate given to CEN by the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association.

This document has been developed to cover specifically space systems and has therefore precedence over any TR covering the same scope but with a wider domain of applicability (e.g.: aerospace).

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SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

Preface

The "Spacecraft Mechanical Loads Analysis Handbook" has been developed with the aim to harmonize methodologies, procedures and practices currently applied for the conduct of spacecraft and payloads loads analysis. It makes available to the European Space Community a set of well proven methods, procedures and guidelines for the prediction and assessment of structural design loads and for the evaluation of the test loads. In particular, recent advances in the area of structural dynamics and vibrations, in both methodology and performance, have the potential to make spacecraft system analysis and testing more effective from technical, cost, and hardware safety points of view. However, application of advanced analysis methods varies among the Space Agencies and their contractors. Identification and refinement of the best of these methodologies and implementation approaches has been an objective of the Working Group.

The handbook is intended to be a practical guide rather than a theoretical treatise. The emphasis is on dynamic environments of spacecraft, however other mechanical environments are addressed and often the principles are broad enough to be applicable in many cases to launch vehicles as well. It is assumed that the reader has a general knowledge of spacecraft structures and structural dynamics without necessarily being an expert in these disciplines.

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This first edition represents a collection of contributions by a number of engineers from throughout the European Space Community. It reflects the insight gained from their practical experience. The contributions have been harmonised and the handbook completed by the "harmonization team". The level of treatment varies among topics, depending on the issues each author feels is critical and the overall assessment performed by the harmonization team concerning the level of detail in each topic that is important to the loads analysis process.

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The book is not intended as a selfstanding textbook since in some cases it is rather complementary to other ECSS documents and more in general to textbooks and publications on spacecraft structures and structural dynamics. It can be a key tool for spacecraft designers, system and structural engineers who need to find out more about mechanical loads analysis and for those in charge of developing requirements and specifications.

The reader benefits best by reading the book sequentially, although most of the chapters are selfcontained, with references to other parts of the book provided as needed. An overview of the chapters is presented below:

- Chapter 4 gives an overview of the loads analysis process aimed at establishing appropriate loads for design and testing.
- Chapter 5 presents a summary of the principles of structural dynamics addressed throughout the different chapters of the present handbook.
- Chapter 6 addresses the launcher / spacecraft coupled loads analyses performed to check that a spacecraft design is compliant with the overall mechanical environment generated by a launcher during all flight phases and to ensure that the mission can be achieved.

SIST-TP CEN/TR 17603-32-26:2022

- Chapters 7 to 10 deal with analysis and testing related to the various types of mechanical environments generated by the launcher: static in chapter 7, sine vibrations in chapter 8, random vibrations (including vibro-acoustic environment) in Chapter 9, shocks in chapter 10.
- Chapter 11 is devoted to dimensional stability i.e. the behaviour of highly accurate structures to maintain their dimensions under all kinds of conditions.
- Chapter 12 deals with fracture control and fatigue life verification, discussing the various aspects involved in deriving fatigue load spectra to perform analyses or tests.
- Chapter 13 addresses the micro-gravity and micro-vibration environment for which the spacecraft systems should be designed and operated such that limit acceleration levels are not exceeded.
- Chapter 14 is related to soft stowed equipment and the verification process of items packed in foam, to assess the compatibility of the cargo item with the attenuated environments.
- Chapter 15 tackles the problems generated by a nonlinear behaviour of the structures, which can significantly affect the verification process.
- Chapter 16 addresses the mathematical models used for loads analysis, with emphasis on finite element analysis quality and acceptance of the results.

Funding and resources for the handbook were provided by the European Cooperation for Space Standardization leading to the creation of the initial Working Group. However the number of contributors soon increased with time and substantial additional volunteer support was provided by individuals and organizations.

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These additional resources have been crucial to the successful accomplishment of the “handbook project”. All the volunteer contributors that have sacrificed their time are gratefully acknowledged, as well as the contributors that made an effort beyond the allocated resources. This first edition of handbook is thus the result of two and a half years of effort by the “enlarged” Loads Analysis Working Group.

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A substantial effort has been made to eliminate mathematical and factual errors. Nevertheless it is possible (and likely) that some errors will be found through readers’ use of the handbook. Detected errors along with any omissions, corrections or comments may be sent to either the ECSS Secretariat or to the addresses below. If, as hoped, the book is of use to the space community, it could be updated and made more useful and practical.

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1 Scope

This document recommends engineering practices for European programs and projects. It may be cited in contracts and program documents as a reference for guidance to meet specific program/project needs and constraints.

The target users of this handbook are engineers involved in design, analysis and verification of spacecraft and payloads in relation to general structural loads analysis issues. The current know-how is documented in this handbook in order to make this expertise available to all European developers of space systems.

It is a guidelines document; therefore it includes advisory information rather than requirements.

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