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**Hydraulic fluid power — Method  
for evaluating the buckling load of a  
hydraulic cylinder**

*Transmissions hydrauliques — Méthode d'évaluation de la charge de  
flambage d'un vérin hydraulique*

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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](http://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](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 131, *Fluid power systems*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Cylinders*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO/TS 13725:2016) which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

- [Formulae \(18\)](#) and [\(27\)](#) have been corrected.
- The key to [Figure A.1](#) has been corrected.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

Historically, cylinder manufacturers in the fluid power industry have experienced very few rod buckling failures, most likely due to the use of adequately conservative design factors employed during cylinder design and to the recommendation of factors of safety to the users. Many countries and some large companies have developed their own methods for evaluating buckling load.

The method presented in this document has been developed to comply with the requirements formulated by ISO/TC 131.

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# Hydraulic fluid power — Method for evaluating the buckling load of a hydraulic cylinder

## 1 Scope

This document specifies a method for the evaluation of the buckling load which:

- a) takes into account a geometric model of the hydraulic cylinder, meaning it does not treat the hydraulic cylinder as an equivalent column,
- b) can be used for all types of cylinder mounting and rod end connection specified in [Table 2](#),
- c) includes a factor of safety,  $k$ , to be set by the person performing the calculations and reported with the results of the calculations,
- d) takes into account possible off-axis loading,
- e) takes into account the weight of the hydraulic cylinder, meaning it does not neglect all transverse loads applied on the hydraulic cylinder,
- f) can be implemented as a simple computer program, and
- g) considers the cylinder fully extended.

The method specified is based on the elastic buckling theory and is applicable to single and double acting cylinders that conform to ISO 6020 (all parts), ISO 6022 and ISO 10762. If necessary, finite element analyses can be used to verify as well as to determine the buckling load.

The method is not developed for thin-walled cylinders, double-rods or plunger cylinders.

The method is not developed for internal (rod) buckling.

The friction of spherical bearings is not taken into account.

NOTE This method is based mainly on original work by Fred Hoblit<sup>[2]</sup>. This method has been established in reference to the standard NFPA/T3.6.37<sup>[1]</sup>.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms and definitions

No terms and definitions are listed in this document.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

## 4 Symbols and units

### 4.1 General

The symbols and units used in this document are given in [Table 1](#). See [Figures 1](#) and [2](#) for labels of dimensions and other characteristics.

**Table 1 — Symbols and units**

Symbol	Meaning	Unit
$C$	stiffness of a possible transverse support at the free end of the piston rod	N/mm
$D_{1e}$	outside diameter of the cylinder tube	mm
$D_{1i}$	inside diameter of the cylinder tube	mm
$D_2$	outside diameter of the piston rod	mm
$e_a$	distance at the beginning of the tube where the loading of an eccentrically loaded column is equivalent to a concentric axial force, $F$ , and end moment, $M = F [x] e_a$	mm
$e_d$	distance at the end of the rod where the loading of an eccentrically loaded column is equivalent to a concentric axial force, $F$ , and end moment, $M = F [x] e_d$	mm
$E_1$	modulus of elasticity of cylinder tube material	N/mm <sup>2</sup>
$E_2$	modulus of elasticity of piston rod material	N/mm <sup>2</sup>
$F$	maximum allowable compressive axial load; modified by the factor of safety, (see $k$ below), it creates in the piston rod a maximum stress equal to the yield stress of the piston rod material	N
$F_c$	Euler buckling load of the cylinder	N
$I_1$	moment of inertia of the cylinder tube	mm <sup>4</sup>
$I_2$	moment of inertia of the piston rod	mm <sup>4</sup>
$k$	factor of safety [see <a href="#">Clause 1.c</a> ]	—
$L_1$	cylinder tube length (in accordance with <a href="#">Figure 1</a> )	mm
$L_2$	piston rod length (in accordance with <a href="#">Figure 1</a> )	mm
$L_3$	length of the portion of rod situated inside the cylinder tube, i.e. the distance between the centre points of the piston and the piston rod bearing (in accordance with <a href="#">Figure 1</a> ) with the rod fully extended	mm
$L_p$	length of the piston	mm
$M_a$	fixed-end moment at the beginning of the cylinder tube of a fixed hydraulic cylinder	N·mm
$M_{bc}$	moment at the junction of cylinder tube and piston rod	N·mm
$M_d$	fixed-end moment at the end of the piston rod of a fixed hydraulic cylinder	N·mm
$M_{max}$	maximum moment in the piston rod	N·mm
$R_a$	reaction at the beginning of the cylinder tube	N
$R_d$	reaction at the end of the piston rod	N
$R_{bc}$	reaction between cylinder tube and position rod	N
$x$	distance from the end of a beam	mm
$y$	deflection of a slender beam at distance $x$	mm
$g$	gravitational acceleration	mm/s <sup>2</sup>
$\Delta$	elongation of the possible transverse support at the free end of the piston rod	mm
$\theta$	angle (crookedness) between the deflection curve of the cylinder tube and the deflection curve of the piston rod (see <a href="#">Figure 2</a> )	rad
$\rho_1$	mass per unit volume of cylinder tube material	kg/mm <sup>3</sup>
$\rho_2$	mass per unit volume of piston rod material	kg/mm <sup>3</sup>
$\sigma$	stress	N/mm <sup>2</sup>



Table 1 (continued)

Symbol	Meaning	Unit
$\sigma_e$	yield point of a material	N/mm <sup>2</sup>
$\sigma_{\max}$	maximum compressive stress	N/mm <sup>2</sup>
$\varphi_a$	angle of the deflection curve at the beginning of the cylinder tube	rad
$\varphi_b$	angle of the deflection curve at the end of the cylinder tube	rad
$\varphi_c$	angle of the deflection curve at the beginning of the piston rod	rad
$\varphi_d$	angle of the deflection curve at the end of the piston rod	rad
$\psi_a$	angle at the beginning of the cylinder tube (see <a href="#">Figure 2</a> )	rad
$\psi_d$	angle at the end of the piston rod (see <a href="#">Figure 2</a> )	rad

## 4.2 Additional notations

The following additional notations are also used in this document (use [Formulae \(1\)](#) to [\(6\)](#)):

$$s_1 = \sin(q_1 L_1) \quad (1)$$

$$c_1 = \cos(q_1 L_1) \quad (2)$$

$$s_2 = \sin(q_2 L_2) \quad (3)$$

$$c_2 = \cos(q_2 L_2) \quad (4)$$

$$q_1 = \sqrt{\frac{k \times F}{E_1 \times I_1}} \quad (5)$$

$$q_2 = \sqrt{\frac{k \times F}{E_2 \times I_2}} \quad (6)$$

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NOTE The origin of these notations (used for calculation) comes from the original work of Hoblit (see Reference [2]).

## 5 General principles

### 5.1 Purpose

The cylinder is a system consisting of three parts ([Figure 2](#)). Two parts, the cylinder tube and the rod outside of the tube, are considered as columns. This system is subject to compressive forces ( $F$ ,  $-F$ ). The third part is the connection between these two parts in the form of the small piece of the rod inside the tube and is modelled as a rotational spring. The purpose of this document is to determine the maximum allowable force,  $F_{\max}$ , that avoids reaching yield stress of the rod material,  $\sigma_e$ , as well as buckling.

### 5.2 Description

The cylinder is in static equilibrium. The cylinder is subjected to a deformation due to the compression forces ( $F$ ,  $-F$ ). This deformation is identified for each of the three parts of the cylinder by geometric unknowns (angles) and static unknowns (forces, moments) and a specific relation (Hoblit model) due to the rotational spring joining the cylinder tube and the rod.

Based on considerations of equilibrium and kinematics, a set of formulae is formulated. The type of fixations (e.g. pin-mounted or fixed at the two ends) defines the number of unknown values (from 9 to

13). There are as many formulae as unknown values. Six types of fixation are treated in this document (Table 2).

The system of formulae can be solved for an  $F$  value previously set. However, it is important to establish a particular value of  $F$ , noted  $F_c$ .  $F_c$  cancels the determinant of the system of formulae. This value should not be reached because it leads to an infinite value of the maximum stress of the rod ( $\sigma_{max}$ ).

It is therefore necessary to find the value of  $F$  ( $F_{max}$ ) between the zero value (in fact  $\epsilon \cdot F_c$ ) and  $F_c$  (in fact  $[1 - \epsilon] \cdot F_c$ ) that leads the stress in the rod to reach the yield stress of the rod material (when  $\sigma_{max} = \sigma_e$ ).

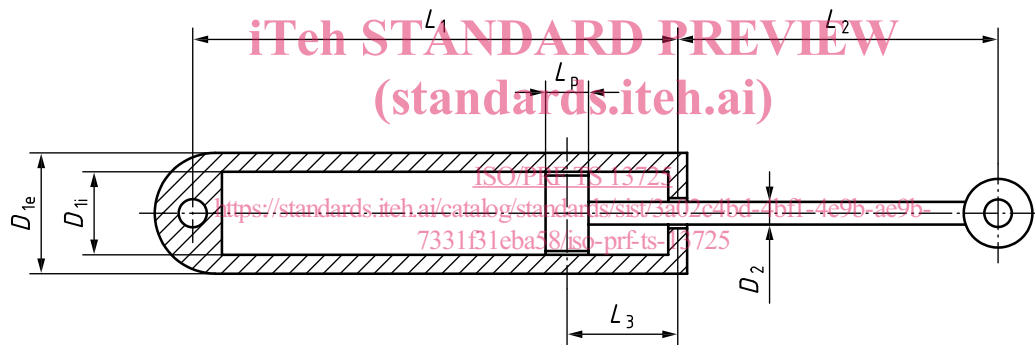
NOTE  $\epsilon$  is a seed value used in the method of proportional parts to solve the set of formulae.

### 5.3 Dimensional layout of hydraulic cylinder

Figures 1 and 2 depict the variables and principles used within this document (see also Annex A).

If the external load  $F$  on the cylinder is at its maximum with the rod fully extended, the worst case occurs when the cylinder is in the horizontal position. In this case, the maximum allowable compressive load is at its lowest and creates the maximum stress in the piston rod. For this reason, and also considering the way of calculation where  $L_3$  is insignificant compared with  $L_1$  and  $L_2$ ,  $L_3$  is the shortest distance between the two centre points of the piston and the bearing.

When an almost retracted cylinder is loaded with a pushing force, there can be a risk of internal buckling of the rod. Therefore, the rod is to be calculated separately if this is regarded as a risk.



NOTE  $L_3 = \frac{L_p + \frac{D_{1e} - D_{1i}}{2}}{2}$  is a possible minimum value of  $L_3$ .

Figure 1 — Cylinder

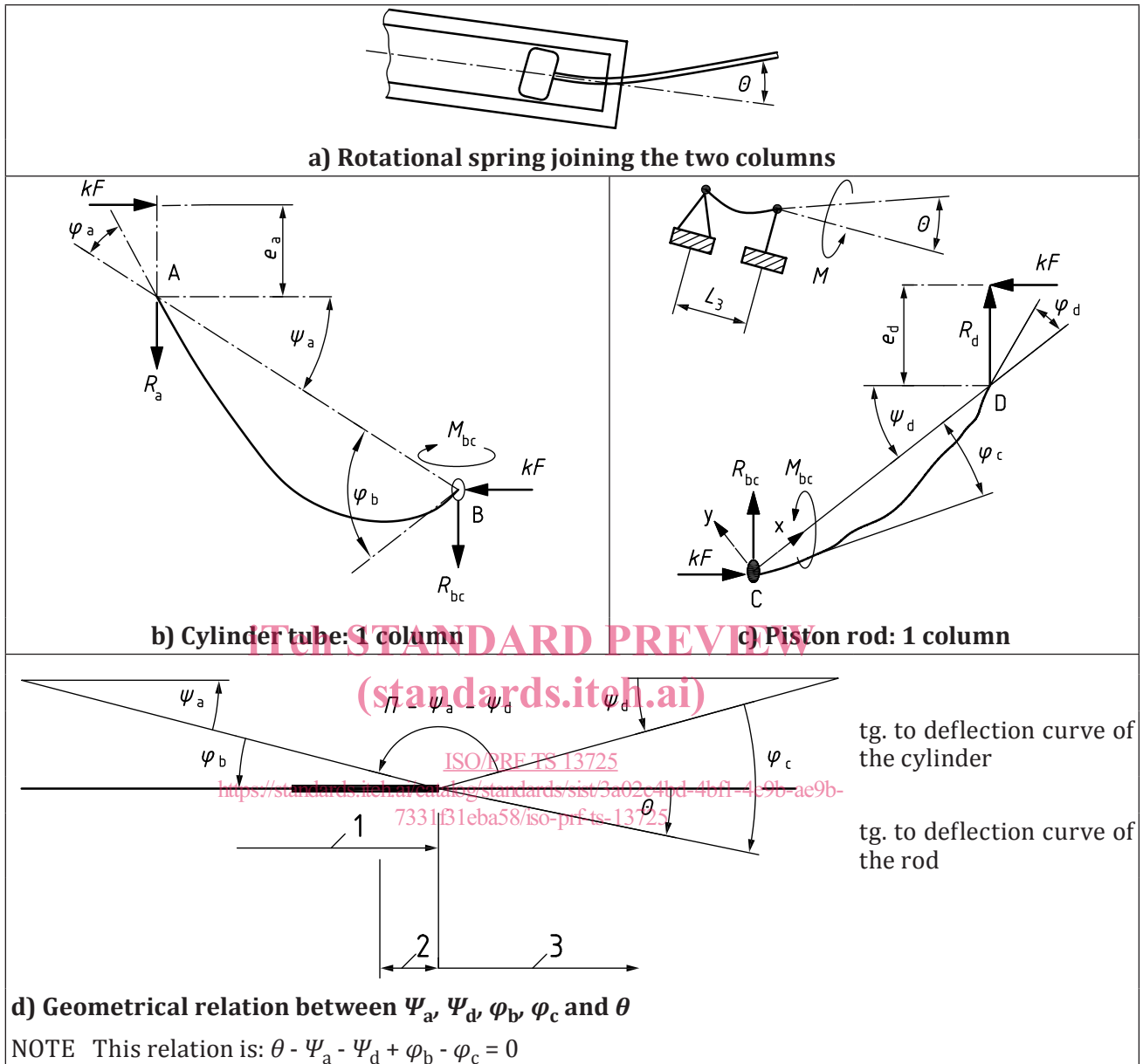


Figure 2 — Model of the hydraulic cylinder

#### 5.4 Common calculation of maximum stress in the rod (for all mounting types) $\sigma_{max}$

##### 5.4.1 General

The piston rod can be considered as the critical part of the cylinder if the thickness of the cylinder tube is sufficient. This condition should be verified before applying the generic method.