



Designation: **E1629—07 E1629 – 12**

# Standard Practice for Determining the Impedance of Absolute Eddy-Current Probes<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E1629; 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 ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

## 1. ~~Scope~~ Scope\*

1.1 This practice covers a procedure for determining the impedance of absolute eddy-current probes (bridge-type, air or ferrite core, wire wound, shielded, or unshielded) used for finding material defects in electrically conducting material. This practice is intended to establish a uniform test methodology to measure the impedance of eddy-current probes prior to receipt of these probes by the purchaser or the specifier.

1.2 *Limitations*—This practice does not address the characterization or measurement of the impedance of differential, a-c coupled, or transmit/receive types of probes. This practice does not address the use of magnetic materials in testing/examination probes. This practice shall not be used as a basis for selection of the best probe for a particular application or as a means by which to calibrate or standardize a probe for a specific examination. This practice does not address differences in the impedance values that can be obtained when the probe and material are in relative motion, as in a rotating probe, since the procedure described here requires the probe and material to be stationary.

1.3 *Units*—The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are ~~for information only.~~ mathematical conversions to inch-pound units that are provided for information only and are not considered 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 The following document forms a part of this practice to the extent specified herein:

2.2 *ASTM Standards:*

**E1316 Terminology for Nondestructive Examinations**<sup>2</sup>

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—~~The terminology relating to eddy-current examination that appears in Terminology E1316 shall apply to the terms used in this practice.~~

3.1 *Definitions*—Definitions of terms relating to electromagnetic examination are given in Terminology E1316.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *eddy-current test block—reference standard*—for the purposes of the method described in this practice, a rectangular block made of an aluminum alloy (see 6.1.2) to which an active eddy-current probe is applied. The eddy-current reference standard can also be referred to as an eddy-current test block.

3.3 *Mathematical Symbols:*

3.3.1 *j*—a symbol used in electrical engineering to represent  $\sqrt{-1}$ . It is associated with the restriction to the flow of electrical current caused by capacitors and coils.

3.3.2 *N*— any number.

<sup>1</sup> This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E07 on Nondestructive Testing and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E07.07 on Electromagnetic Method.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

\*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

3.3.3  $| -N |$ —the magnitude of  $N$ , regardless whether  $N$  is positive, negative, or a vector quantity.

3.3.4  $\sqrt{N}$ —the square root of  $N$ .

3.3.5  $(-N)^2$ — $N$  squared, that is,  $N \times N$ .

3.3.6  $\Delta N$ —delta  $N$ , the change or difference in  $N$ .

3.4 *Abbreviations:*

3.4.1 *tan*—used for the tangent function. The  $\tan^{-1}$ , arc tangent or inverse tangent function, returns a value that is a measure of an angle and can be in either degrees or radians. When using a calculator to determine the  $\tan^{-1}$ , care should be taken to determine whether the answer is in degrees or radians since the numerical values that represent the same angle are different.

3.4.2 *cos*—used for the cosine function.

3.4.3 *sin*—used for the sine function.

## 4. Significance and Use

4.1 Eddy-current probes may be used for the nondestructive examination of parts or structures made of electrically conducting materials. Many of these examinations are intended to discover material defects, such as cracks, that may cause the part or structure to be unsafe or unfit for service. Eddy-current probes that fail to meet the performance level requirements of this practice shall not be used for the examination of material or hardware unless the probe is qualified by some other system or an agreement has been reached by the probe manufacturer and the purchaser, or both.

## 5. General Practice

5.1 *Use of Test Blocks—Eddy-Current Reference Standards*—The test blocks—eddy-current reference standards described in this practice shall not be used for purposes other than measuring the impedance of eddy-current probes as specified in this practice. They shall not be used for standardizing an examination or for determining sensitivity to flaws.

5.2 *Responsibility*—Initial determination of the impedance values of eddy-current probes shall be performed by the probe manufacturer in accordance with this practice. The results shall be delivered with the probe and maintained by the organization using the probe. The results should include a description of the measurement configuration and impedance values as listed in [X1.4](#). While the retesting of probes may be performed using this practice, only the results obtained before the probe is in use should be compared to the initial impedance values. The impedance results should not be compared to the initial values after a probe has been used.

## 6. Specific Practice

6.1 *Test Method*—Impedance measurements shall be made on an aluminum alloy test reference block with a machined slot that conforms to the requirements of this practice. The operating frequency (as specified by the probe manufacturer) may vary for each probe examined, depending on the specific probe geometry, required skin depth, matching impedance, desired signal strength, and application. A commercial impedance measuring instrument that conforms to [6.1.1](#) shall be used to make the measurements. The measurements will be recorded on the worksheet ([Appendix X1](#)) to calculate the probe impedance. The calculated values shall be compared to the acceptable criteria ([6.3](#)) to determine probe acceptability.

6.1.1 *Test Equipment*—The test instrument shall be either a commercial impedance measuring instrument or an LCR meter with an oscillator capable of driving a current in the probe at the probe's operating frequency. The output shall display the probe impedance in either polar coordinates, providing a magnitude and a phase angle, or rectangular coordinates, providing resistive and reactive components of the impedance, or both formats, that is, in polar and rectangular coordinates. This instrument shall be certified as having been calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications, with the calibration sticker indicating the calibration date and the required interval or next calibration date.

6.1.2 *Test Blocks—Reference Standards*—The test block reference standard shall be fabricated from 7075-T6 aluminum alloy 1.9-cm (0.75-in.) thick, with slotted holes for testing bolt hole probes and a slotted flat section for testing surface probes. All test surfaces—surfaces of the reference standard shall be polished to an average finish  $15 \mu\text{m}$  (591  $\mu\text{in.}$ ). The conductivity of the aluminum alloy should be between 30 and 35 % IACS.

6.1.2.1 The slotted flat section shall have side measurements of at least six times the coil diameter or 5.1 by 5.1 cm (2 by 2 in.), whichever is larger. The slot shall be machined across the block's surface and shall measure at least 5.0 cm (2-in.) long. The slot cross section shall measure  $0.1 \pm 0.01 \text{ mm}$  ( $0.004 \pm 0.0004 \text{ in.}$ ) wide and  $0.5 \pm 0.025 \text{ mm}$  ( $0.02 \pm 0.001 \text{ in.}$ ) deep.

6.1.2.2 The test-holes shall be made for all of the nominal sizes of bolt hole probes to be examined. The edges of the holes shall be spaced 1.9-cm (0.75-in.) apart from each other and from the block-reference standard edges. The slot shall run the entire length of the hole and will be  $0.1 \pm 0.01\text{-mm}$  ( $0.004 \pm 0.0004\text{-in.}$ ) wide and  $0.5 \pm 0.025\text{-mm}$  ( $0.02 \pm 0.001\text{-in.}$ ) deep.

6.1.2.3 [Fig. 1](#) shows a representative test block reference standard with the holes used for testing two different sizes of bolt hole probes. The length of the block ( $x + 5.1 \text{ cm}$ ) depends on the number and size of the test holes required by the user, as well as the amount of clearance required between each hole and the block's-reference standard's edges.

6.2 *Measurement Procedure:*

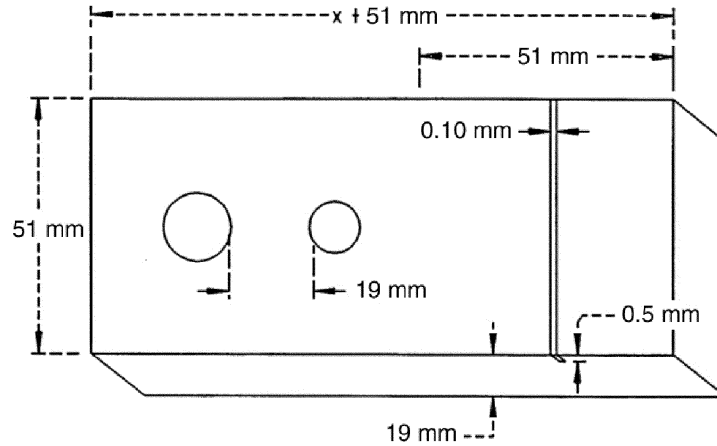


FIG. 1 Representative Test Block Eddy-Current Reference Standard

6.2.1 *Measurements*—Impedance values can be expressed in different ways. Impedances are most commonly given in either rectangular or polar coordinates. In polar form, the impedance is expressed as a magnitude,  $|Z|$ , with a corresponding phase angle,  $\theta$ , and often appears as  $|Z| \angle \theta$ . In rectangular form the impedance is expressed as a combination of a resistive component,  $R$ , and a reactive or imaginary (denoted by  $j$ ) component,  $X$ . This form often appears as  $R \pm jX$ . Fig. 2 shows two points measured in both forms and the resulting impedance change ( $Z$ ) calculation. This is typical of the way in which impedance changes are measured on actual eddy-current probes using the test method approach specified in this practice. The impedance of a probe is measured first off the slot and then on the slot in this method, and the difference between these two measurements is calculated. An error may occur in the calculations if appropriate coordinate conversions are not made (addition and subtraction are performed in the case of rectangular coordinates and multiplication and division in the case of polar coordinates).

6.2.1.1 All performance tests shall be conducted within the temperature range from 15 to 27°C (60 to 80°F). The probe test frequency shall depend on the rated operating frequency of the particular probe under test (see X1.4.3.3).

6.2.2 *Probe Impedance in Air*—Attach the probe to the impedance measuring instrument, and position the probe at least 50.8 mm (2 in.) away from any electrically conducting material or hardware, or both. Measure the impedance and record the impedance values on the worksheet. Compare the measurement to the values listed in 6.3.1.

6.2.3 *Average Off-Slot Probe Impedance*—Place the probe on the surface of or in the hole in the test block, reference standard, as appropriate. For a surface probe, place the probe on four different positions on the face of the block, reference standard. The center of each position shall be at least four coil diameters from any edge, slot, or hole. For a bolt hole probe, rotate the probe face in the hole to four different positions that are away from the slot and the top and bottom of the hole. Measure the impedance and record the four impedance values on the worksheet in either polar or rectangular coordinates. If necessary, convert the polar values to  $R_{off}$  and  $X_{off}$  (resistive and reactive components). Calculate the magnitude of each of the measurements and record them on the worksheet. Determine the variation (scatter) in the magnitudes of the measurements as defined in X1.3.1.3 and compare it to the requirements given in 6.3.2. When acceptable values are obtained, average the four values to calculate  $R_{off avg}$  and  $X_{off avg}$ . Record the averages on the worksheet.

6.2.4 *Maximum On-Slot Impedance*—Position the probe face on the slot to obtain a maximum impedance reading. Perform this procedure four times, and record the four resulting impedances in rectangular coordinates,  $R_{on}$  and  $X_{on}$ , on the worksheet. Average the four values to calculate  $R_{on avg}$  and  $X_{on avg}$ . Record the averages on the worksheet.

6.2.5 *Probe Performance Criterion*—The probe impedance change caused by the slot,  $Z$ , is the magnitude of  $R_{on avg} - R_{off avg}$  and  $X_{on avg} - X_{off avg}$ . The fractional change is the absolute value of  $Z$  divided by  $|Z_{off avg}|$ . Appendix X1 contains the formulas for calculating the values of  $|Z|$  and  $|Z_{off avg}|$ . Record the calculated values on the worksheet and compare them to the requirements of 6.3.3 to determine acceptance.

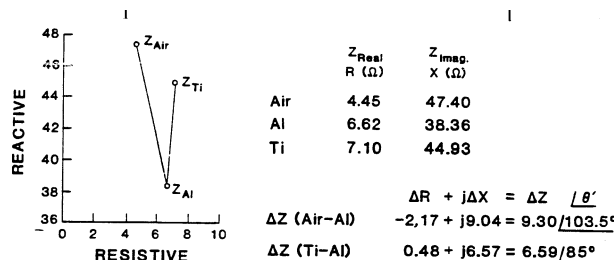


FIG. 2 Rectangular and Polar Coordinates and Resulting  $\Delta Z$

6.3 *Acceptance Criteria*—Acceptance of a probe being characterized by this practice requires that it meet all of the following criteria:

6.3.1 *Probe Impedance in Air*—Unless otherwise specified, the magnitude of the probe impedance in air shall be between 20 and 1000  $\Omega$ , and the phase shall be between 70 and 90 deg. An impedance value below 20  $\Omega$  indicates the possibility of a short circuit in the probe coil, and a value above 1000  $\Omega$  indicates a possible open circuit.

6.3.1.1 The magnitude of the impedance in air shall be within 10 % of the value specified for that type of probe by the probe manufacturer and be within the input impedance range specified for the measuring instrument.

6.3.2 *Measurement Scatter*—A variation greater than 4 % among the off-slot impedance measurements indicates that the values are too scattered. The measurements must be repeated using greater care in holding the surface probe more securely or fitting the bolt hole probe more snugly in the hole. Repeated high variation indicates that an analysis of the system should be performed using different examiners or known acceptable probes. The probe is unacceptable if the measurement scatter cannot be reduced to the acceptable value.

6.3.3 *Probe Impedance Ratio*—These ratios will be determined by agreement between the eddy-current probe manufacturer and the probe purchaser.

## 7. Keywords

7.1 absolute eddy-current probes; eddy-current probes; impedance; nondestructive testing

## APPENDIXES

### (Nonmandatory Information)

## X1. WORKSHEET FOR CALCULATION OF RESULTS

### X1.1 General

X1.1.1 *Scope*—This appendix provides mathematical formulas and a worksheet for recording measurements and calculating results. It is recommended that a blank worksheet containing relevant fields such as identified in X1.4 be prepared for recording information and data from measurements in accordance with this practice, and this blank worksheet be photocopied for each probe tested. Appendix X2 contains an example of a completed worksheet.

### X1.2 General Practice

X1.2.1 These measurements should be performed using a test-an instrument that displays impedance in polar or rectangular coordinates, or both. To perform the necessary calculations, both forms of complex impedance (polar and rectangular) are necessary. Mathematical conversion will be necessary if the test instrument does not display the impedance in both forms.

X1.2.1.1 *Polar to Rectangular Conversion*—The conversions from polar ( $|Z| \angle$ ) to rectangular ( $R \pm jX$ ) can be performed using the following formulas:

$$R = |Z| \cos \theta \quad X = |Z| \sin \theta \quad (X1.1)$$

The use of a calculator with trigonometric functions (*cos* and *sin*) is recommended.

X1.2.1.2 *Rectangular to Polar Conversion*—The conversions from rectangular ( $R \pm jX$ ) to polar ( $|Z| \angle$ ) can be performed using the following formulas:

$$|Z| = \sqrt{R^2 + X^2} \quad \theta = \tan^{-1}(X/R) \quad (X1.2)$$

### X1.3 Specific Practice

X1.3.1 It will be necessary to perform the following calculations after recording the measured impedances:

X1.3.1.1 *Average Value*— This involves adding the four measurement values, that is ( $R_1 + R_2 + R_3 + R_4$  and  $X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4$ ), dividing each total by four, and recording those results in the appropriate space on the worksheet (see X1.4.6.1 or X1.4.6.2).

X1.3.1.2 *Impedance Magnitude*— $|Z| = \sqrt{R^2 + X^2}$ .

X1.3.1.3 *Measurement Scatter*—A percentage value obtained by choosing the highest and lowest values from the four off-flaw impedance magnitudes (see 6.2.3) and applying the following formula:

$$\frac{[(\text{highest value} - \text{lowest value})/\text{highest value}] \times 100}{(X1.3)}$$

X1.3.1.4 *Probe Impedance Change*—The average probe value calculated for the off-slot impedance is subtracted from the average maximum on-slot impedance value. The impedance change in rectangular form is converted to a polar magnitude,  $|Z|$ .

#### X1.4 Measurement Worksheet

X1.4.1 Operator's Name/ID and Date \_\_\_\_.

X1.4.2 *Measurement Instrument:*

X1.4.2.1 Type of instrument used \_\_\_\_\_,

X1.4.2.2 Instrument make and model number \_\_\_\_\_, and

X1.4.2.3 Instrument calibration date \_\_\_\_\_.

X1.4.3 *Probe Identification:*

X1.4.3.1 Manufacturer and serial number \_\_\_\_\_,

X1.4.3.2 *Probe Type*— bolt hole (size) \_\_\_\_\_, surface \_\_\_\_\_, other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_,

X1.4.3.3 Nominal operating frequency \_\_\_\_\_, and

X1.4.3.4 Specified impedance in air \_\_\_\_\_.

X1.4.4 *Temperature:*

X1.4.4.1 *Range*—The test shall be conducted within the temperature range from 15 to 27°C (60 to 80°F),

X1.4.4.2 Ambient (room) temperature \_\_\_\_\_ °C, and

X1.4.4.3 If thermocouple used then type and calibration date \_\_\_\_\_.

X1.4.5 *Measure Probe Impedance in Air*—Position the probe away from any metal (at least 50.8 mm (2 in.) away from any electrically conducting material or hardware), attach it to the impedance measuring instrument, and set the frequency to the manufacturer's specified operating frequency. Record the impedance in rectangular and polar coordinates (see X1.2.1.1 and X1.2.1.2 if conversions are necessary).

Impedance = \_\_\_\_\_  $R$  \_\_\_\_\_  $jX$  \_\_\_\_\_  $|Z|$  \_\_\_\_\_  $\theta$  \_\_\_\_\_  $(^\circ)$

Check  $|Z|$  and  $\theta$  for proper values (see 6.3.1).

X1.4.6 *Measure Probe Impedance on ~~Test Block~~ Reference Standard:*

X1.4.6.1 *Off-Slot Impedance*—The surface probes should be at least four coil diameters from the slot, holes, or edges of the ~~block~~ reference standard. The coil of a bolt hole probe should be near the center of the thickness of the ~~test block~~ reference standard (see 6.2.3). Record the impedance measurements, in rectangular coordinates ( $R_{\text{off}}$  and  $X_{\text{off}}$ ), for each of the four positions selected in accordance with 6.2.3. Calculate and record the impedance magnitude,  $|Z_{\text{off}}|$ , for each measurement:

$Z_{off} =$	(1)	$R_{off}$	$jX_{off}$	$ Z_{off} $		
	(2)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	(3)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	(4)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

To obtain the average magnitude of the off-slot impedance, first add the four values in the  $R_{off}$  and  $X_{off}$  columns:  
 Total = \_\_\_\_\_ ()  
 Divide each value by 4:  $R_{off\ avg} =$  \_\_\_\_\_ ()  
 $jX_{off\ avg} =$  \_\_\_\_\_ ()

convert  $R_{off\ avg} + jX_{off\ avg}$  to  $|Z_{off\ avg}|$  using:  $|Z_{off\ avg}| = \sqrt{(R_{off\ avg})^2 + (X_{off\ avg})^2}$

$$(R_{off\ avg})^2 = \frac{\text{Total}}{4}, (X_{off\ avg})^2 = \frac{\text{Total}}{4}$$

$$(R_{off\ avg})^2 + (X_{off\ avg})^2 = \frac{\text{Total}}{4}$$

$$|Z_{off\ avg}| = \sqrt{(R_{off\ avg})^2 + (X_{off\ avg})^2} = \text{_____}$$

Calculate and record the impedance measurement scatter: Subtract lowest  $|Z_{off}|$  from highest  $|Z_{off}|$  and divide by highest. Multiply this value by 100 to get measurement scatter.

$$\text{Measurement Scatter} = \frac{|Z_{off\ high}| - |Z_{off\ low}|}{|Z_{off\ high}|} \times 100\%$$

highest  $|Z_{off}| =$  \_\_\_\_\_ Measurement scatter = \_\_\_\_\_ %  
 lowest  $|Z_{off}| =$  \_\_\_\_\_

If the scatter does not exceed 4 %, continue; otherwise, follow the recommendations of 6.3.2.

X1.4.6.2 *On-Slot Probe Impedance*—Position the probe to obtain the highest impedance reading with the probe coil positioned on the slot. Perform this measurement four times and record the impedance measurements. Using the rectangular coordinates ( $R_{on}$  and  $X_{on}$ ), calculate and record the average impedance magnitude,  $|Z_{on\ avg}|$ :

$Z_{on} =$	(1)	$R_{on}$	$jX_{on}$	$ Z_{on} $		
	(2)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	(3)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	(4)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

To obtain the average magnitude of the on-slot impedance, first add the four values in the  $R_{on}$  and  $X_{on}$  columns:  
 Total = \_\_\_\_\_ ()  
 Divide each value by 4:  $R_{on\ avg} =$  \_\_\_\_\_ ()  
 $jX_{on\ avg} =$  \_\_\_\_\_ ()

convert  $R_{on\ avg} + jX_{on\ avg}$  to  $|Z_{on\ avg}|$  using:  $|Z_{on\ avg}| = \sqrt{(R_{on\ avg})^2 + (X_{on\ avg})^2}$

$$(R_{on\ avg})^2 = \frac{\text{Total}}{4}, (X_{on\ avg})^2 = \frac{\text{Total}}{4}$$

$$(R_{on\ avg})^2 + (X_{on\ avg})^2 = \frac{\text{Total}}{4}$$

$$|Z_{on\ avg}| = \sqrt{(R_{on\ avg})^2 + (X_{on\ avg})^2} = \text{_____}$$

X1.4.7 *Probe Impedance Change*—Obtain  $Z$  by subtracting the average value of the off-slot impedance from the on-slot impedance:

$$R + jX = (R_{on\ avg} - R_{off\ avg}) + j(X_{on\ avg} - X_{off\ avg})$$

on-slot impedance =	$R$	$jX$	_____
off-slot average impedance =	_____	_____	_____
probe $R + jX =$	$R$	$jX$	_____