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Standard**

ISO/IEC 23090-3

**Information technology — Coded
representation of immersive
media —**

**Part 3:
Versatile video coding**

*Technologies de l'information — Représentation codée de média
immersifs —*

Partie 3: Codage vidéo polyvalent

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Contents

Foreword	viii
Introduction	x
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Abbreviated terms	17
5 Conventions	19
5.1 General	20
5.2 Arithmetic operators	20
5.3 Logical operators	20
5.4 Relational operators	21
5.5 Bit-wise operators	21
5.6 Assignment operators	21
5.7 Range notation	22
5.8 Mathematical functions	22
5.9 Order of operation precedence	22
5.10 Variables, syntax elements and tables	23
5.11 Text description of logical operations	24
5.12 Processes	25
6 Bitstream and picture formats, partitionings, scanning processes and neighbouring relationships	26
6.1 Bitstream formats	26
6.2 Source, decoded and output picture formats	26
6.3 Partitioning of pictures, subpictures, slices, tiles, and CTUs	28
6.3.1 Partitioning of pictures into subpictures, slices, and tiles	28
6.3.2 Block, quadtree and multi-type tree structures	31
6.3.3 Spatial or component-wise partitionings	32
6.4 Availability processes	32
6.4.1 Allowed quad split process	32
6.4.2 Allowed binary split process	33
6.4.3 Allowed ternary split process	35
6.4.4 Derivation process for neighbouring block availability	36
6.5 Scanning processes	37
6.5.1 CTB raster scanning, tile scanning, and subpicture scanning processes	37
6.5.2 Up-right diagonal scan order array initialization process	42
6.5.3 Horizontal and vertical traverse scan order array initialization process	42
7 Syntax and semantics	43
7.1 Method of specifying syntax in tabular form	43
7.2 Specification of syntax functions and descriptors	44
7.3 Syntax in tabular form	46
7.3.1 NAL unit syntax	46
7.3.2 Raw byte sequence payloads, trailing bits and byte alignment syntax	47
7.3.3 Profile, tier, and level syntax	67

7.3.4	DPB parameters syntax	70
7.3.5	Timing and HRD parameters syntax	70
7.3.6	Supplemental enhancement information message syntax	72
7.3.7	Slice header syntax	72
7.3.8	Weighted prediction parameters syntax	75
7.3.9	Reference picture lists syntax	76
7.3.10	Reference picture list structure syntax	76
7.3.11	Slice data syntax	77
7.4	Semantics	101
7.4.1	General	101
7.4.2	NAL unit semantics	101
7.4.3	Raw byte sequence payloads, trailing bits and byte alignment semantics	110
7.4.4	Profile, tier, and level semantics	171
7.4.5	DPB parameters semantics	177
7.4.6	Timing and HRD parameters semantics	178
7.4.7	Supplemental enhancement information message semantics	183
7.4.8	Slice header semantics	183
7.4.9	Weighted prediction parameters semantics	194
7.4.10	Reference picture lists semantics	195
7.4.11	Reference picture list structure semantics	197
7.4.12	Slice data semantics	198
8	Decoding process	226
8.1	General decoding process	226
8.2	NAL unit decoding process	229
8.3	Slice decoding process	229
8.3.1	Decoding process for picture order count	229
8.3.2	Decoding process for reference picture lists construction	231
8.3.3	Decoding process for reference picture marking	237
8.3.4	Decoding process for generating unavailable reference pictures	238
8.3.5	Decoding process for symmetric motion vector difference reference indices	238
8.3.6	Decoding process for collocated picture and no backward prediction	239
8.4	Decoding process for coding units coded in intra prediction mode	240
8.4.1	General decoding process for coding units coded in intra prediction mode	240
8.4.2	Derivation process for luma intra prediction mode	242
8.4.3	Derivation process for chroma intra prediction mode	245
8.4.4	Cross-component chroma intra prediction mode checking process	247
8.4.5	Decoding process for intra blocks	248
8.5	Decoding process for coding units coded in inter prediction mode	285
8.5.1	General decoding process for coding units coded in inter prediction mode	285
8.5.2	Derivation process for motion vector components and reference indices	290
8.5.3	Decoder-side motion vector refinement process	314
8.5.4	Derivation process for geometric partitioning mode motion vector components and reference indices	320
8.5.5	Derivation process for subblock motion vector components and reference indices	322
8.5.6	Decoding process for inter blocks	352
8.5.7	Decoding process for geometric partitioning mode inter blocks	379
8.5.8	Decoding process for the residual signal of coding blocks coded in inter prediction mode	385

8.5.9	Decoding process for the reconstructed signal of chroma coding blocks coded in inter prediction mode	387
8.6	Decoding process for coding units coded in IBC prediction mode	389
8.6.1	General decoding process for coding units coded in IBC prediction mode	389
8.6.2	Derivation process for block vector components for IBC blocks	391
8.6.3	Decoding process for IBC blocks	396
8.7	Scaling, transformation and array construction process	397
8.7.1	Derivation process for quantization parameters	397
8.7.2	Scaling and transformation process	399
8.7.3	Scaling process for transform coefficients	400
8.7.4	Transformation process for scaled transform coefficients	403
8.7.5	Picture reconstruction process	424
8.8	In-loop filter process	428
8.8.1	General	428
8.8.2	Picture inverse mapping process for luma samples	429
8.8.3	Deblocking filter process	430
8.8.4	Sample adaptive offset process	462
8.8.5	Adaptive loop filter process	465
9	Parsing process	478
9.1	General	478
9.2	Parsing process for k-th order Exp-Golomb codes	479
9.2.1	General	479
9.2.2	Mapping process for signed Exp-Golomb codes	480
9.3	CABAC parsing process for slice data	480
9.3.1	General	480
9.3.2	Initialization process	482
9.3.3	Binarization process	507
9.3.4	Decoding process flow	518
Annex A	(normative) Profiles, tiers and levels	537
A.1	Overview of profiles, tiers and levels	537
A.2	Requirements on video decoder capability	537
A.3	Profiles	538
A.3.1	Main 10 and Main 10 Still Picture profiles	538
A.3.2	Main 10 4:4:4 and Main 10 4:4:4 Still Picture profiles	539
A.3.3	Multilayer Main 10 profile	540
A.3.4	Multilayer Main 10 4:4:4 profile	540
A.3.5	Operation range extensions profiles	540
A.4	Tiers and levels	544
A.4.1	General tier and level limits	544
A.4.2	Profile-specific level limits	546
A.4.3	Effect of level limits on picture rate	550
Annex B	(normative) Byte stream format	558
B.1	General	558
Annex C	(normative) Hypothetical reference decoder	561
C.1	General	561
C.2	Operation of the CPB	567
C.2.1	General	567
C.2.2	Timing of DU arrival	567

C.2.3	Timing of DU removal and decoding of DU	570
C.3	Operation of the DPB	573
C.3.1	General	573
C.3.2	Removal of pictures from the DPB before decoding of the current picture	573
C.3.3	Picture output	574
C.3.4	Current decoded picture marking and storage	575
C.4	Bitstream conformance	575
C.5	Decoder conformance	577
C.5.1	General	577
C.5.2	Operation of the output order DPB	578
C.5.2.1	General	578
C.5.2.2	Output and removal of pictures from the DPB	579
C.5.2.3	Additional bumping	580
C.5.2.4	"Bumping" process	580
C.6	General sub-bitstream extraction process	580
C.7	Subpicture sub-bitstream extraction process	582
Annex D	(normative) Supplemental enhancement information and use of SEI and VUI	588
D.1	General	588
D.2	General SEI payload	588
D.2.1	General SEI payload syntax	588
D.2.2	General SEI payload semantics	591
D.3	Buffering period SEI message	595
D.3.1	Buffering period SEI message syntax	595
D.3.2	Buffering period SEI message semantics	596
D.4	Picture timing SEI message	601
D.4.1	Picture timing SEI message syntax	601
D.4.2	Picture timing SEI message semantics	602
D.5	DU information SEI message	607
D.5.1	DU information SEI message syntax	607
D.5.2	DU information SEI message semantics	608
D.6	Scalable nesting SEI message	609
D.6.1	Scalable nesting SEI message syntax	609
D.6.2	Scalable nesting SEI message semantics	610
D.7	Subpicture level information SEI message	612
D.7.1	Subpicture level information SEI message syntax	612
D.7.2	Subpicture level information SEI message semantics	613
D.8	SEI manifest SEI message	616
D.8.1	SEI manifest SEI message syntax	616
D.8.2	SEI manifest SEI message semantics	617
D.9	SEI prefix indication SEI message	618
D.9.1	SEI prefix indication SEI message syntax	618
D.9.2	SEI prefix indication SEI message semantics	619
D.10	Constrained RASL encoding indication SEI message	620
D.10.1	Constrained RASL encoding indication SEI message syntax	620
D.10.2	Constrained RASL encoding indication SEI message semantics	620
D.11	Use of ITU-T H.274 ISO/IEC 23002-7 VUI parameters	621
D.12	Use of SEI messages specified in other documents	621
D.12.1	General	621

D.12.2	Use of the film grain characteristics SEI message	622
D.12.3	Use of the decoded picture hash SEI message	622
D.12.4	Use of the dependent random access point (DRAP) indication SEI message	623
D.12.5	Use of the equirectangular projection, generalized cubemap projection, and region-wise packing SEI messages	623
D.12.6	Use of the frame-field information SEI message	623
D.12.7	Use of the annotated regions SEI message	624
D.12.8	Use of the extended dependent random access point (EDRAP) indication SEI message	624
D.12.9	Use of the colour transform information SEI message	624
D.12.10	Use of the shutter interval information SEI message	624
D.12.11	Use of the neural network post-filter characteristics SEI message and the neural network post-filter activation SEI message	624
D.12.12	Use of the phase indication SEI message	628
D.12.13	Use of the SEI processing order and processing order nesting SEI messages	628
D.12.14	Use of the encoder optimization information SEI messages	629
D.12.15	Use of the source picture timing SEI message	629
D.12.16	Use of the object mask information SEI message	629
D.12.17	Use of the digitally signed content initialization, digitally signed content selection, and digitally signed content verification SEI messages	630
D.12.18	Use of the generative face video SEI message	630
D.12.19	Use of the generative enhancement face video SEI message	630
D.12.20	Use of the packed regions information SEI message	631

Bibliography

632

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

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 document 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 or www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs).

ISO and IEC draw attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO and IEC take no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO and IEC had received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at www.iso.org/patents and <https://patents.iec.ch>. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

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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. In the IEC, see www.iec.ch/understanding-standards.

This document was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 29, *Coding of audio, picture, multimedia and hypermedia information*, in collaboration with ITU-T (as ITU-T H.266).

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition (ISO/IEC 23090-3:2024), which has been technically revised. It also replaces ISO/IEC 23090-3:2024/Amd1.

The main changes are as follows:

- the addition of support for 15 SEI messages specified in Rec. ITU-T H.274 | ISO/IEC 23002-7, namely 1) SEI processing order, 2) processing order nesting, 3) encoder optimization information, 4) source picture timing information, 5) object mask information, 6) modality information, 7) text description information, 8) digitally signed content initialization, 9) digitally signed content selection, 10) digitally signed content verification, 11) generative face video, 12) generative enhancement face video, 13) AI usage restrictions request, 14) packed regions information, and 15) image format metadata.
- some updates to the interface text for support of the two neural-network post-filter (NNPF) SEI messages.

A list of all parts in the ISO/IEC 23090 series can be found on the ISO and IEC websites.

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 and www.iec.ch/national-committees.

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Introduction

Purpose

This document specifies a video coding technology known as versatile video coding. It has been designed with two primary goals. The first of these is to specify a video coding technology with a compression capability that is substantially beyond that of the prior generations of such standards, and the second is for this technology to be highly versatile for effective use in a broader range of applications than that addressed by prior standards. Some key application areas for the use of this document particularly include ultra-high-definition video (e.g., with 3840×2160 or 7620×4320 picture resolution and bit depth of 10 bits as specified in Rec. ITU-R BT.2100), video with a high dynamic range and wide colour gamut (e.g., with the perceptual quantization or hybrid log-gamma transfer characteristics specified in Rec. ITU-R BT.2100), and video for immersive media applications such as 360° omnidirectional video projected using a common projection format such as the equirectangular or cubemap projection formats, in addition to the applications that have commonly been addressed by prior video coding standards.

Profiles, tiers, and levels

This document is designed to be versatile in the sense that it serves a wide range of applications, bit rates, resolutions, qualities, and services. Applications include, but are not limited to, video coding for digital storage media, television broadcasting, video streaming services, real-time communication. In the course of creating this document, various requirements from typical applications have been considered, necessary algorithmic elements have been developed, and these have been integrated into a single syntax. Hence, this document is designed to facilitate video data interchange among different applications.

Considering the practicality of implementing the full syntax of this document, however, a limited number of subsets of the syntax are also stipulated by means of "profiles", "tiers", and "levels". These and other related terms are formally defined in Clause 3.

A "profile" is a subset of the entire bitstream syntax that is specified in this document. Within the bounds imposed by the syntax of a given profile it is still possible to require a very large variation in the performance of encoders and decoders depending upon the values taken by syntax elements in the bitstream, such as the specified size of the decoded pictures. In many applications, it is currently neither practical nor economical to implement a decoder capable of dealing with all hypothetical uses of the syntax within a particular profile.

In order to deal with this problem, "tiers" and "levels" are specified within each profile. A level of a tier is a specified set of constraints imposed on values of the syntax elements in the bitstream. Some of these constraints are expressed as simple limits on values, while others take the form of constraints on arithmetic combinations of values (e.g. picture width multiplied by picture height multiplied by number of pictures decoded per second). A level specified for a lower tier is more constrained than a level specified for a higher tier.

Coded video content conforming to this document uses a common syntax. In order to achieve a subset of the complete syntax, flags, parameters, and other syntax elements are included in the bitstream that signal the presence or absence of syntactic elements that occur later in the bitstream.

Encoding process, decoding process, and use of VUI parameters and SEI messages

Any encoding process that produces bitstream data that conforms to the specified bitstream syntax format requirements of this document is considered to be in conformance with the requirements of this document. The decoding process is specified such that all decoders that conform to a specified combination of capabilities known as the profile, tier, and level will produce numerically identical cropped decoded output pictures when invoking the decoding process associated with that profile for a bitstream conforming to that profile, tier and level. Any decoding process that produces identical cropped decoded output pictures to those produced by

the process described herein (with the correct output order or output timing, as specified) is considered to be in conformance with the requirements of this document.

Rec. ITU-T H.274 | ISO/IEC 23002-7 specifies the syntax and semantics of the video usability information (VUI) parameters and supplemental enhancement information (SEI) messages that do not affect the conformance specifications in Annex C. These VUI parameters and SEI messages may be used together with this document.

Versions of this document

Rec. ITU-T H.266 | ISO/IEC 23090-3 version 1 refers to the first approved version of this document. The first edition published by ISO/IEC as ISO/IEC 23090-3:2021 corresponded to the first version.

Rec. ITU-T H.266 | ISO/IEC 23090-3 version 2 refers to the integrated text additionally containing operation range extensions, a new level (level 6.3), additional supplement enhancement information, and corrections to various minor defects in the prior content of the document. The second edition published by ISO/IEC as ISO/IEC 23090-3:2022 corresponded to the second version.

Rec. ITU-T H.266 | ISO/IEC 23090-3 version 3 refers to the integrated text containing the specification of a new level (level 15.5) for the video profiles to provide a suitable label for bitstreams that can exceed the limits of all other specified levels, additional supplement enhancement information, and corrections to various minor defects in the prior content of the document. This document corresponds to the third version. At the time of publication of this document, a corresponding third edition of Rec. ITU-T H.266 was in preparation for publication by ITU-T.

Rec. ITU-T H.266 | ISO/IEC 23090-3 version 4 (the current version) refers to the integrated text containing the specification of 15 additional SEI messages through referencing the Versatile Supplemental Enhancement Information (VSEI) standard (Rec. ITU T H.274 | ISO/IEC 23002 7), namely 1) SEI processing order, 2) processing order nesting, 3) encoder optimization information, 4) source picture timing information, 5) object mask information, 6) modality information, 7) text description information, 8) digitally signed content initialization, 9) digitally signed content selection, 10) digitally signed content verification, 11) generative face video, 12) generative enhancement face video, 13) AI usage restrictions request, 14) packed regions information, and 15) image format metadata. The additions also includes some updates to the interface text for support of the two neural-network post-filter (NNPF) SEI messages and corrections to various minor defects in the prior content of the document. This document corresponds to the fourth version. At the time of publication of this document, a corresponding fourth edition of Rec. ITU-T H.266 was in preparation for publication by ITU-T.

Overview of the design characteristics

The coded representation specified in the syntax is designed to enable a high compression capability for a desired image or video quality. The algorithm is typically not mathematically lossless, as the exact source sample values are typically not preserved through the encoding and decoding processes, although some modes are included that provide lossless coding capability. A number of techniques are specified to enable highly efficient compression. Encoding algorithms (not specified within the scope of this document) may select between inter, intra, intra block copy (IBC), and palette coding for block-shaped regions of each picture. Inter coding uses motion vectors for block-based inter-picture prediction to exploit temporal statistical dependencies between different pictures, intra coding uses various spatial prediction modes to exploit spatial statistical dependencies in the source signal within the same picture, and intra block copy coding uses block displacement vectors to reference previously decoded regions of the same picture to exploit statistical similarities among different areas of the same picture. Motion vectors, intra prediction modes, and IBC block vectors are specified for a variety of block sizes in the picture. The prediction residual can then be further compressed using a spatial transform to remove spatial correlation inside a block before it is quantized, producing a possibly irreversible process that typically discards less important visual information while forming a close approximation to the source samples. Finally, the motion vectors, intra prediction modes, and

block vectors can also be further compressed using a variety of prediction mechanisms, and, after prediction, are combined with the quantized transform coefficient information and encoded using arithmetic coding.

How to read this document

It is suggested that the reader starts with Clause 1 and moves on to Clause 3. Clause 6 should be read for the geometrical relationship of the source, input, and output of the decoder. Clause 7 specifies the order to parse syntax elements from the bitstream. See subclauses 7.1 to 7.3 for syntactical order and subclause 7.4 for semantics; e.g. the scope, restrictions, and conditions that are imposed on the syntax elements. The actual parsing for most syntax elements is specified in Clause 9. Finally, Clause 8 specifies how the syntax elements are mapped into decoded samples. Annexes A through D also form an integral part of this document.

Annex A specifies profiles, each being tailored to certain application domains, and defines the so-called tiers and levels of the profiles. Annex B specifies syntax and semantics of a byte stream format for delivery of coded video as an ordered stream of bytes. Annex C specifies the hypothetical reference decoder, bitstream conformance, decoder conformance, and the use of the hypothetical reference decoder to check bitstream and decoder conformance. Annex D specifies syntax and semantics for supplemental enhancement information (SEI) message payloads that affect the conformance specifications in Annex C. Rec. ITU-T H.274 | ISO/IEC 23002-7 specifies the syntax and semantics of the video usability information (VUI) parameters as well as SEI messages that do not affect the conformance specifications in Annex C. These VUI parameters and SEI messages may be used together with this document.

The term "this document" is used to refer to this Recommendation | International Standard.

In this document, the following verbal forms are used:

- "shall" indicates a requirement;
- "should" indicates a recommendation;
- "may" indicates a permission;
- "can" indicates a possibility or a capability.

Information marked as "NOTE" is intended to assist the understanding or use of the document. "Notes to entry" used in Clause 3 provide additional information that supplements the terminological data and can contain provisions relating to the use of a term.

Information technology — Coded representation of immersive media —

Part 3: Versatile video coding

1 Scope

This document specifies a video coding technology known as versatile video coding (VVC), comprising a video coding technology with a compression capability that is substantially beyond that of the prior generations of such standards and with sufficient versatility for effective use in a broad range of applications.

Only the syntax format, semantics, and associated decoding process requirements are specified, while other matters such as pre-processing, the encoding process, system signalling and multiplexing, data loss recovery, post-processing, and video display are considered to be outside the scope of this document. Additionally, the internal processing steps performed within a decoder are also considered to be outside the scope of this document; only the externally observable output behaviour is required to conform to the specifications of this document.

This document is designed to be generic in the sense that it serves a wide range of applications, bit rates, resolutions, qualities and services. Applications include, but are not limited to, video coding for digital storage media, television broadcasting and real-time communication. In the course of creating This document, various requirements from typical applications have been considered, necessary algorithmic elements have been developed, and these have been integrated into a single syntax. Hence, this document is designed to facilitate video data interchange among different applications.

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2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 23001-11, *Information Technology — MPEG Systems technologies — Part 11: Energy-efficient media consumption (green metadata)*

Rec. ITU-T H.274 | ISO/IEC 23002-7, *Versatile supplemental enhancement information messages for coded video bitstreams*

ISO/IEC 23090-13, *Information technology — Coded representation of immersive media — Part 13: Video decoding interface for immersive media*

Rec. ITU-T T.35, *Procedure for the allocation of ITU-T defined codes for non standard facilities*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

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

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

3.1

access unit

set of *PU*s that belong to different *layers* and contain *coded pictures* associated with the same time for output from the *DPB*

3.2

adaptation parameter set

syntax structure containing *syntax elements* that apply to zero or more *slices* as determined by zero or more *syntax elements* found in *slice headers*

3.3

adaptive colour transform

cross-component transform applied to the decoded *residual* of a *coding unit* in the 4:4:4 colour format prior to reconstruction and loop filtering

3.4

adaptive loop filter

filtering process that is applied as part of the *decoding process* and is controlled by parameters conveyed in an *APS*

3.5

ALF APS

APS that controls the *ALF* process

3.6

associated GDR picture

previous *GDR picture* (when present) in *decoding order*, for a particular picture with *nuh_layer_id* equal to a particular value *layerId*, that has *nuh_layer_id* equal to *layerId* and between which and the particular *picture* in *decoding order* there is no *IRAP picture* with *nuh_layer_id* equal to *layerId*

3.7

associated IRAP picture

previous *IRAP picture* (when present) in *decoding order*, for a particular picture with *nuh_layer_id* equal to a particular value *layerId*, that has *nuh_layer_id* equal to *layerId* and between which and the particular *picture* in *decoding order* there is no *GDR picture* with *nuh_layer_id* equal to *layerId*

3.8

associated IRAP subpicture

previous *IRAP subpicture* (when present) in *decoding order*, for a particular subpicture with *nuh_layer_id* equal to a particular value *layerId* and subpicture index equal to a particular value *subpicIdx*, that has *nuh_layer_id* equal to *layerId* and subpicture index equal to *subpicIdx* and between which and the particular subpicture in *decoding order* there is no *GDR subpicture* with *nuh_layer_id* equal to *layerId* and subpicture index equal to *subpicIdx*

3.9

associated non-VCL NAL unit

non-VCL NAL unit (when present) for a *VCL NAL unit* where the *VCL NAL unit* is the *associated VCL NAL unit* of the *non-VCL NAL unit*

3.10

associated VCL NAL unit

preceding *VCL NAL unit* in *decoding order* for a *non-VCL NAL unit* with *nal_unit_type* equal to *EOS_NUT*, *EOB_NUT*, *SUFFIX_APS_NUT*, *SUFFIX_SEI_NUT*, *FD_NUT*, *RSV_NVCL_27*, *UNSPEC_30*, or *UNSPEC_31*; or otherwise the next *VCL NAL unit* in *decoding order*

3.11

bin

bit of a *bin string*

3.12

bin string

intermediate binary representation of values of *syntax elements* from the *binarization* of the *syntax element*

3.13

binarization

set of *bin strings* for all possible values of a *syntax element*

3.14

binarization process

unique mapping process of all possible values of a *syntax element* onto a set of *bin strings*

3.15

binary split

split of a rectangular $M \times N$ *block* of samples into two *blocks* where a vertical split results in a first $(M / 2) \times N$ *block* and a second $(M / 2) \times N$ *block*, and a horizontal split results in a first $M \times (N / 2)$ *block* and a second $M \times (N / 2)$ *block*

3.16

bi-predictive slice

B slice

slice that is decoded using *intra prediction* or using *inter prediction* with at most two *motion vectors* and *reference indices* to *predict* the sample values of each *block*

3.17

bitstream

sequence of bits, in the form of a *NAL unit stream* or a *byte stream*, that forms the representation of a sequence of *AUs* forming one or more coded video sequences (*CVSs*)

3.18

block

$M \times N$ (M -column by N -row) array of samples, or an $M \times N$ array of *transform coefficients*

3.19

block vector

two-dimensional vector that provides an offset from the coordinates of the current *coding block* to the coordinates of the reference block in the same decoded *slice*

3.20

byte

sequence of 8 bits, within which, when written or read as a sequence of bit values, the left-most and right-most bits represent the most and least significant bits, respectively

3.21

byte-aligned <bitstream>

positioned an integer multiple of 8 bits from the position of the first bit in the *bitstream*

3.22

byte-aligned <bit or byte or syntax element>

position at which it appears in a *bitstream* is byte-aligned