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Radiation protection instrumentation - Determination of uncertainty in measurement

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD 5
INTRODUCTION 7
1 Scope 8
2 Normative references 8
3 Terms and definitions 9
4 List of symbols 14
5 The ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008 and ISO/IEC Guide 98-3-SP1:2008 concept 16
5.1 General concept of uncertainty determination 16
5.1.1 Overview 16
5.1.2 Summary of the analytical method for steps 3 and 4 17
5.1.3 Summary of the Monte Carlo method for steps 3 and 4 17
5.1.4 Which method to use: Analytical or Monte Carlo? 18
5.2 Example of a model function 18
5.3 Collection of data and existing knowledge for the example 21
5.3.1 General 21
5.3.2 Calibration factor for the example 22
5.3.3 Zero reading for the example 23
5.3.4 Reading for the example 24
5.3.5 Relative response or correction factor for the example 25
5.3.6 Comparison of probability density distributions for input quantities 27
5.4 Calculation of the result of a measurement and its standard uncertainty (uncertainty budget) 28
5.4.1 General 28
5.4.2 Analytical method 28
5.4.3 Monte Carlo method 29
5.4.4 Uncertainty budgets 30
5.5 Statement of the measurement result and its expanded uncertainty 31
5.5.1 General 31
5.5.2 Analytical method 32
5.5.3 Monte Carlo method 32
5.5.4 Representation of the output distribution function in a simple form (Monte Carlo method) 35
6 Decision threshold and detection limit 35
7 Results below the decision threshold of the measuring device 37
8 Overview of the annexes 38
Annex A (informative) Example of an uncertainty analysis for a measurement with an electronic ambient dose equivalent rate meter according to IEC 60846-1:2009 40
A.1 General 40
A.2 Model function 40
A.3 Calculation of the complete result of the measurement 41
A.3.1 General 41
A.3.2 Low level of consideration of measuring conditions 42
A.3.3 High level of consideration of measuring conditions 44
Annex B (informative) Example of an uncertainty analysis for a measurement with a passive integrating dosimetry system according to IEC 62387:2020 47
B.1 General 47
B.2 Model function 47

B.3 Calculation of the complete result of the measurement 48
B.3.1 General 48
B.3.2 Low level of consideration of exposure conditions 48
B.3.3 High level of consideration of exposure conditions 50
B.3.4 Consideration of significant background subtraction 52
Annex C (informative) Example of an uncertainty analysis for a measurement with an electronic direct reading neutron ambient dose equivalent rate meter according to IEC 61005:2014 54
C.1 General 54
C.2 Model function 54
C.3 Calculation of the complete result of the measurement 55
C.3.1 General 55
C.3.2 Analytical method 55
C.3.3 Monte Carlo method 57
C.3.4 Comparison of the result of the analytical and the Monte Carlo method 58
Annex D (informative) Example of an uncertainty analysis for a calibration of a radon activity monitor according to the IEC 61577 series using a radon gas standard 60
D.1 General 60
D.2 Model function 60
D.3 Calculation of the complete result of the measurement 61
Annex E (informative) Example of an uncertainty analysis for a measurement of surface emission rate with a contamination meter according to IEC 60325:2002 63
E.1 General 63
E.2 Model function 63
E.3 Calculation of the complete result of the measurement 64
E.3.1 General 64
E.3.2 Effects of distance 64
E.3.3 Contamination non-uniformity 65
E.3.4 Surface absorption 65
E.3.5 Other input quantities 65
E.3.6 Uncertainty budget 66
Annex F (informative) Example of an uncertainty analysis and the determination of the characteristic limits for a field instrument to measure beta radiation 69
F.1 General 69
F.2 Model function 69
F.3 Calculation of the complete result of the measurement and the decision threshold and the detection limit 70
F.3.1 Calibration factor and non-linearity 70
F.3.2 Correction factor for the energy dependence due to beta radiation energy 71
F.3.3 Correction factor for radiation divergence 73
F.3.4 Further correction factors not considered above 73
F.3.5 Uncertainty budgets and results 73
F.3.6 Determination of the characteristic limits (decision threshold, detection limit and limits of the coverage interval) for a field measurement of beta radiation 78
Annex G (informative) Data set to be used for uncertainty estimations for measurements with radiation detection instruments used for the detection of illicit trafficking of radioactive materials 81
G.1 General 81
G.2 Model functions 82

G.3 Calculation of the complete result of the measurement 84
Annex H (informative) Guidance for how to derive an uncertainty budget from the results of the Monte Carlo 87
H.1 General description of the method 87
H.2 R code for the method described in H.1 88
Bibliography 89

Figure 1 – Triangular probability density distribution of values n for the calibration factor N 23
Figure 2 – Rectangular probability density distribution of values g_0 for the zero reading G_0 24
Figure 3 – Gaussian probability density distribution of values g for the reading G 24
Figure 4 – Comparison of different probability density distributions of values: rectangular (broken line), triangular (dotted line) and Gaussian (solid line) distribution 27
Figure 5 – Cumulative distribution function Q of the measured value (output quantity) for the example of low level of consideration of exposure conditions, see 5.3.5.2 33
Figure 6 – Probability density distribution (PDF) of the measured value (output quantity) for the example of low level of consideration of exposure conditions, see 5.3.5.2 34
Figure 7 – Decision threshold m^* and detection limit $m^\#$ 37
Figure C.1 – Results of the analytical (red dashed lines) and the Monte Carlo method (grey histogram and blue dotted and solid lines) for $\dot{H}^*(10)$ 58
Figure D.1 – Result of the analytical (red dashed lines) and the Monte Carlo method (grey histogram and blue dotted lines) for K_T 62
Figure F.1 – Energy and angular dependence of the response to $H'(0,07)$ of the survey meter for beta radiation 72
Figure F.2 – Results of the analytical (red dashed lines) and the Monte Carlo method (grey histogram and blue dotted and solid lines) for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ in an unknown beta radiation field 74
Figure F.3 – Results of the analytical (red dashed lines) and the Monte Carlo method (grey histogram and blue dotted and solid lines) for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ of a beta point source and turning the instrument for maximum indication in an unknown beta radiation field 77
Figure F.4 – Results of the Monte Carlo method for the determination of uncertainty (top), the decision threshold (middle) and the detection limit (bottom) for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ in an unknown beta radiation field 79
Figure F.5 – Results of the Monte Carlo method for the determination of uncertainty (top), the decision threshold (middle) and the detection limit (bottom) for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ of a beta point source and turning the instrument for maximum indication in an unknown beta radiation field 80

Table 1 – Symbols (and abbreviated terms) used in the main text (excluding annexes) 14
Table 2 – Standard uncertainty and method to compute the probability density distributions shown in Figure 4 28
Table 3 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a measurement with an electronic dosemeter using the model function $M = N\,K\,(G - G_0)$ and low level of consideration of the exposure conditions, see 5.3.5.2 31
Table 4 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a measurement with an electronic dosemeter using the model function $M = N\,K\,(G - G_0)$ and high level of consideration of the exposure conditions, see 5.3.5.3 31

Table A.1 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a dose rate measurement according to IEC 60846-1:2009 with an instrument having a logarithmic scale and low level of consideration of the measuring conditions, see text for details 43

Table A.2 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a dose rate measurement according to IEC 60846-1:2009 with an instrument having a logarithmic scale and high level of consideration of the measuring conditions, see text for details 45

Table B.1 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a photon dose measurement with a passive dosimetry system according to IEC 62387:2020 and low level of consideration of the exposure conditions, see text for details 49

Table B.2 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a photon dose measurement with a passive dosimetry system according to IEC 62387:2020 and high level of consideration of the measuring conditions, see text for details 51

Table B.3 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a photon dose measurement with a passive dosimetry system according to IEC 62387:2020 and low level of consideration of the measuring conditions and significant background subtraction 53

Table C.1 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a neutron dose measurement according to IEC 61005:2014 using the analytical method 56

Table C.2 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a neutron dose rate measurement according to IEC 61005:2014 using the Monte Carlo method 57

Table C.3 – Results of the analytical and the Monte Carlo method 59

Table D.1 – List of quantities used in Formula (D.1) 60

Table D.2 – List of data available for the input quantities of Formula (D.1) 61

Table D.3 – Example of an uncertainty budget for the calibration of a radon monitor according to IEC 61577, see text for details 61

Table E.1 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a surface emission rate measurement according to IEC 60325:2002, see text for details 67

Table E.2 – Example of an uncertainty budget for a surface emission rate measurement according to IEC 60325:2002 for the determination of the uncertainty at an assumed true value of zero 68

Table F.1 – Results of the non-linearity test 70

Table F.2 – Energy and dose rate dependence for the quantity $H'(0.07)$ 72

Table F.3 – Uncertainty budget for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ in an unknown beta radiation field 73

Table F.4 – Results of the analytical and Monte Carlo method of the uncertainty analysis for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ in an unknown beta radiation field 74

Table F.5 – Uncertainty budget for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ of a beta point source and turning the instrument for maximum indication in an unknown beta radiation field 76

Table F.6 – Results of the analytical and Monte Carlo method of the uncertainty analysis for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ of a beta point source and turning the instrument for maximum indication in an unknown beta radiation field 76

Table F.7 – Characteristic limits for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ in an unknown beta radiation field 78

Table F.8 – Characteristic limits for the measurement of $H'(0,07)$ of a beta point source and turning the instrument for maximum indication in an unknown beta radiation field 79

Table G.1 – List of standards for the detection of illicit trafficking of radioactive materials 81

Table G.2 – Conversion coefficients from exposure rate to ambient dose equivalent rate for use in Formula (G.4) 84

Table H.1 – Resulting uncertainty budget from the method described above 88

INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

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Radiation protection instrumentation - Determination of uncertainty in measurement

FOREWORD

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IEC TS 62461, which previously was a Technical Report, has been prepared by subcommittee 45B: Radiation protection instrumentation, of IEC technical committee 45: Nuclear instrumentation. It is a Technical Specification.

This first edition of IEC TS 62461 cancels and replaces the second edition of IEC TR 62461 published in 2015. This edition constitutes a technical revision.

This edition includes the following significant technical changes with respect to the previous edition:

a) several minor corrections;
b) the addition of an example of the determination of the decision threshold and detection limit in accordance with ISO 11929.

The text of this Technical Specification is based on the following documents:

Draft	Report on voting
45B/1115/DTS	45B/1126/RVDTS

Full information on the voting for its approval can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above table.

The language used for the development of this Technical Specification is English.

This document was drafted in accordance with ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, and developed in accordance with ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 and ISO/IEC Directives, IEC Supplement, available at www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs. The main document types developed by IEC are described in greater detail at www.iec.ch/publications.

The committee has decided that the contents of this document will remain unchanged until the stability date indicated on the IEC website under webstore.iec.ch in the data related to the specific document. At this date, the document will be

– reconfirmed,
– withdrawn, or
– revised.

INTRODUCTION

ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008, *Uncertainty of measurement - Part 3: Guide to the expression of uncertainty in measurement (GUM:1995)* as well as its Supplement 1:2008, *Propagation of distributions using a Monte Carlo method* (GUM S1), are general guides to assess uncertainty in measurement. Furthermore, ISO 11929 is a general guide to assess the decision threshold and detection limit, as well as coverage interval for measurements of ionizing radiation. This Technical Specification lays emphasis on the application of these documents in the area of radiation protection and serves as a practical introduction to ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008 and its Supplement 1:2008 as well as ISO 11929.

The process of determining uncertainty delivers not only a numerical value of uncertainty; in addition, it produces the best estimate of the quantity to be measured, which can differ from the indication of the instrument. Thus, it can also improve the result of the measurement by using information beyond the indicated value of the instrument, e.g., the energy dependence of the instrument. Furthermore, measurement uncertainties and characteristic values, such as the decision threshold, the detection limit and limits of the coverage interval for measurements, as well as the best estimate and its associated standard measurement uncertainty, are of importance in metrology in general and for radiation detection and radiological protection in particular. The quantification of the uncertainty associated with a measurement result provides a basis for the trust an individual can have in a measurement result. Conformity with regulatory limits, constraints or reference values can only be demonstrated by taking into account and quantifying all sources of uncertainty. Characteristic limits provide the basis for deciding if a measurement method is suitable and reliable for the proposed measuring task.

1 Scope

This Technical Specification gives guidelines for the application of the uncertainty analysis according to ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008 (GUM describing an analytical method for the uncertainty determination) and its Supplement 1:2008 (GUM S1 describing a Monte Carlo method for the uncertainty determination) for measurements of ionizing radiation. It does not include the uncertainty associated with the concept of the measuring quantity, e.g., the difference between $H_p(10)$ on the ISO water slab phantom and on the person.

This document explains the principles of ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008, its Supplement 1:2008 and the special considerations necessary for radiation protection at an example taken from individual dosimetry of external radiation. In the informative annexes, several examples are given for the application on instruments measuring ionizing radiation, for several of which the IEC has developed standards.

This document is intended to assist the understanding of ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008, ISO/IEC Guide 98-3-SP1:2008 and other papers on uncertainty analysis. It cannot replace these papers, nor can it provide the background and justification of the arguments leading to the concept of ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008 and ISO/IEC Guide 98-3-SP1:2008.

Finally, this document gives a very simple method to judge whether a measured result is significantly different from zero or not based on ISO 11929.

NOTE For a better readability the correct terms are not always used throughout this document. For example, instead of "random variables of a quantity" only the "quantity" itself is stated.

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.

IEC 60050-311:—[1], *International Electrotechnical Vocabulary (IEV) - Part 311: Electrical and electronic measurements - General terms relating to measurements*

IEC 60050-151, *International Electrotechnical Vocabulary (IEV) - Part 151: Electrical and magnetic devices*

ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008, *Uncertainty of measurement - Part 3: Guide to the expression of uncertainty in measurement (GUM:1995)*

ISO/IEC Guide 98-3-SP1:2008, *Uncertainty of measurement - Part 3: Guide to the expression of uncertainty in measurement (GUM:1995) - Propagation of distributions using a Monte Carlo method*

ISO 11929-1:2019, *Determination of the characteristic limits (decision threshold, detection limit and limits of the coverage interval) for measurements of ionizing radiation - Fundamentals and application - Part 1: Elementary applications*

ISO 11929-3:2019, *Determination of the characteristic limits (decision threshold, detection limit and limits of the coverage interval) for measurements of ionizing radiation - Fundamentals and application - Part 3: Applications to unfolding methods*

[1] Under consideration. Stage at the time of publication: IEC/CDV 60050-311:2026.

ISO 11929-4:2022, *Determination of the characteristic limits (decision threshold, detection limit and limits of the coverage interval) for measurements of ionizing radiation - Fundamentals and application - Part 4: Guidelines to applications*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the technical terms of IEC 60050-151, and IEC 60050-311 as well as the following definitions taken from ISO/IEC Guide 98-3:2008, and ISO/IEC Guide 98-3-SP1:2008 apply.

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

– IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

– ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

3.1
calibration factor
N
quotient of the conventional true value of a quantity, i.e., the conventional quantity value, and the indicated value for a specified reference radiation under specified reference conditions

3.2
complete result of the measurement
set of values attributed to a measurand, including a value, its uncertainty, coverage interval, coverage probability, and the unit

Note 1 to entry: The central value of the whole (set of values) can be selected as *measured value* and a parameter characterising the dispersion as *uncertainty*.

Note 2 to entry: The result of a measurement is related to the *indication given by the instrument* and to the values of correction obtained by calibration and by the use of a *model*.

Note 3 to entry: In this Technical Specification, the "measured value", see Note 1, is abbreviated by M.

Note 4 to entry: In this Technical Specification, the "indication given by the instrument", see Note 2, is abbreviated by G, and called "indicated value".

Note 5 to entry: In this Technical Specification, the "model", see Note 2, is called "model function", see 3.15 and 5.2.

3.3
conformity test
test for conformity evaluation

[SOURCE: IEC 60050-151:2001,151-16-15]

3.4
correction factor
K
factor to the indicated value to correct for deviation of measurement conditions from calibration conditions