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Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Bar code symbol quality test specification — Direct part mark (DPM)

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Foreword

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This document was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/JTC 1, *Information Technology*, Subcommittee SC 31, *Automatic identification and data capture techniques*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO/IEC 29158:2020), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

— the definition of continuous grading has been deleted (it is now defined in ISO/IEC 15415);

— the rounding method has been revised to always round down.

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

Direct part marking (DPM) is a technology whereby, generally, an item is physically altered to produce two different surface conditions. This alteration can be accomplished by various means including, but not limited to, dot peen, laser mark, ink jetting and electro-chemical etch. The area of the alteration is called "the mark." The area that includes the mark and background as a whole, when containing a pattern defined by a bar code symbology specification, is called "a symbol."

When light illuminates a symbol, it reflects differently depending on whether it impinges on the background of the part or on the physical alteration. In most non-DPM bar code scanning environments, light is reflected off a smooth surface that has been coloured to produce two different diffuse reflected states. The DPM environment generally does not fit this model because the two different reflected states depend on at least one of the states having material oriented to the lighting such that the angle of incidence is equal to the angle of reflection. Sometimes, the material so oriented produces a specular (mirror like) reflectance that results in a signal that is orders of magnitude greater than the signal from diffuse reflectance.

In addition, from the scanner point-of-view, some marking and printing methods generate dots and are not capable of producing smooth lines. This is important for symbologies such as Data Matrix, which is specified to contain smooth continuous lines, but can be marked with disconnected dots in DPM applications.

Current specifications for matrix symbologies and two-dimensional print quality are not exactly suited to reading situations that have either specular reflection or unconnected dots or both. Additionally, symbologies specified to consist of smooth continuous lines may appear with unconnected dots. This is intended to act as a bridge between the existing specifications and the DPM environment in order to provide a standardized image-based measurement method for DPM that is predictive of scanner performance.

As with all symbology and quality standards, it is the responsibility of the application to define the appropriate parameters of this document for use in conjunction with a particular application.

This document was developed to assess the symbol quality of direct marked parts, where the mark is applied directly to the surface of the item and the reading device is a two-dimensional imager.

When application specifications allow, this method is also potentially applicable to symbols produced by other methods. This is appropriate when DPM symbols and non-DPM symbols are being scanned in the same scanning environment. The symbol grade is reported as a DPM grade rather than as an ISO/IEC 15415 grade.

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Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Bar code symbol quality test specification — Direct part mark (DPM)

1 Scope

This document describes the modifications to the symbol quality methodology defined in ISO/IEC 15415 and provides a symbology specification.

This document establishes alternative illumination conditions, some new terms and parameters, modifications to the measurement and subsequent grading of certain parameters, and the reporting of the grading results.

This document is intended for verifier manufacturers and application specification developers.

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 15415, *Information technology, Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Bar code symbol print quality test specification — Two-dimensional symbols*

ISO/IEC 19762, *Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) techniques — Harmonized vocabulary*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 15415, ISO/IEC 19762 and the following 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
reference symbol
high-contrast printed calibration card for which results are traceable back to national or international standards and for which the supplier supplies a calibration certificate

3.2
stick
line segment comprised of image pixels that is used to connect areas of the same colour that are near to each other

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