

# TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION



**Photovoltaic (PV) systems – Requirements for testing, documentation and maintenance –**

**Part 3: Photovoltaic modules and plants – Outdoor infrared thermography**



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Part 3: Photovoltaic modules and plants – Outdoor infrared thermography**

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## CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	4
1 Scope.....	6
2 Normative references .....	6
3 Terms and definitions .....	7
4 Requirements of inspection equipment .....	9
4.1 General.....	9
4.2 Minimum requirements for IR-cameras used for inspecting PV plants .....	9
4.3 Requirements for photo cameras for documentation of the findings.....	10
4.4 Requirements for equipment to record the ambient conditions .....	10
5 Inspection procedure .....	11
5.1 General.....	11
5.2 Visual inspection.....	12
5.3 Environmental conditions .....	12
5.4 Imaging procedure .....	13
5.4.1 General .....	13
5.4.2 Using fast carriers for IR-camera, e.g. aerial drones .....	13
5.4.3 Emissivity .....	14
6 Software for evaluation.....	15
7 Evaluation .....	15
7.1 General.....	15
7.2 Evaluation of IR images .....	16
7.3 Thermal abnormalities .....	17
7.3.1 General .....	17
7.3.2 Classes of abnormalities (CoA).....	17
7.3.3 Abnormalities of PV modules.....	17
7.3.4 Abnormalities of other BOS components.....	17
7.4 Projection of temperature differences to nominal irradiance .....	18
7.4.1 General .....	18
7.4.2 Modules.....	20
7.4.3 Other BOS components .....	21
8 Inspection report .....	21
Annex A (normative) Inspection procedure explanations .....	24
A.1 Geometric resolution of the camera .....	24
A.2 Angle of view .....	24
A.3 Matrix for cell identification .....	25
Annex B (normative) Qualification of personnel.....	27
Annex C (normative) Matrix for thermal abnormalities of PV modules .....	28
Annex D (informative) Polygon measurement as a method of evaluation.....	32
Annex E (informative) Beaufort scale .....	34
Bibliography.....	36
Figure 1 – Impact of camera moving speed.....	14
Figure 2 – Dependence of the emissivity of glass on the angle of view [10].....	15
Figure 3 – Examples of influence of wind (left) and cloud movement (right) on observed temperature pattern .....	16

Figure 4 – Example infrared thermograms of a PV string combiner box with cables, contacts, fuses and switches before (left) and after (right) maintenance on a faulty contact.....	18
Figure 5 – Graphic representation of the correction factor for temperature differences to nominal irradiance/load conditions as a function of the relative irradiance/load .....	19
Figure 6 – Example of image reporting.....	23
Figure A.1 – Geometric resolution of the IR camera .....	24
Figure A.2 – Angle of view .....	25
Figure A.3 – View for the designation of cell position, viewed from the front of a 60-cell module, with the junction box at the top (rear side).....	26
Figure D.1 – Arithmetic mean value by polygon measurement .....	32
Figure D.2 – Arithmetic mean and spot value by polygon measurement .....	33
Table 1 – Minimum requirements for IR-cameras .....	9
Table 2 – Requirements for equipment to record the ambient conditions.....	11
Table 3 – Required inspection conditions.....	12
Table 4 – Allocation in classes of abnormalities .....	17
Table 5 – Example correction factors for temperature differences to nominal load conditions based on formula above and Figure 5 .....	20
Table E.1 – Beaufort scale taken from World Meteorological Organization (www.wmo.int) and Royal Meteorological Society (www.rmets.org) .....	34

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## INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

**PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SYSTEMS –  
REQUIREMENTS FOR TESTING,  
DOCUMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE –****Part 3: Photovoltaic modules and plants –  
Outdoor infrared thermography**

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Technical specifications are subject to review within three years of publication to decide whether they can be transformed into International Standards.

IEC TS 62446-3, which is a technical specification, has been prepared by IEC technical committee 82: Solar photovoltaic energy systems.

The text of this technical specification is based on the following documents:

Enquiry draft	Report on voting
82/1188/DTS	82/1242A/RVDTS

Full information on the voting for the approval of this technical specification can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above table.

This document has been drafted in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

A list of all parts in the IEC 62446 series, published under the general title *Photovoltaic (PV) systems – Requirements for testing, documentation and maintenance*, can be found on the IEC website.

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

- transformed into an International standard,
- reconfirmed,
- withdrawn,
- replaced by a revised edition, or
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# PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SYSTEMS – REQUIREMENTS FOR TESTING, DOCUMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE –

## Part 3: Photovoltaic modules and plants – Outdoor infrared thermography

### 1 Scope

This part of IEC 62446 defines outdoor thermographic (infrared) inspection of PV modules and plants in operation. The inspection can include cables, contacts, fuses, switches, inverters, and batteries. This inspection supports the preventive maintenance for fire protection, the availability of the system for power production, and the inspection of the quality of the PV modules. Included in this document are the requirements for the measurement equipment, ambient conditions, inspection procedure, inspection report, personnel qualification and a matrix for thermal abnormalities as a guideline for the inspection.

This document defines outdoor thermography on photovoltaic (PV) modules and Balance-of-system (BOS) components of PV power plants in operation, using passive techniques (standard system operating conditions under natural sunlight, without any external power or irradiation sources). IEC 60904-12-1 covers general methods for laboratory or production-line PV module thermographic imaging but not the specific details that are most relevant to outdoor imaging of operational power plants including BOS components.

Two different levels of inspections are currently used:

- a) A simplified thermographic inspection. This is a limited inspection to verify that the PV modules and BOS components are functioning, with reduced requirements for the qualification of personnel. For example, during a basic commissioning of a PV plant. Authoritative conclusions regarding module quality are not possible with this inspection, and examples of abnormalities are provided to aid the inspector.
- b) A detailed thermographic inspection and analysis. This may include thermal signatures which differ from the examples provided, and therefore requires a deeper understanding of the thermal abnormalities. For example, it may be used for periodic inspections according to the IEC 62446 series and for trouble-shooting the cause of underperforming systems. Absolute temperature measurements may be made. An authorized expert in PV plants, together with thermography experts can perform the inspection.

### 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 60050-131, *International Electrotechnical Vocabulary – Part 131: Circuit theory*

IEC 60216-2, *Electrical insulating materials – Thermal endurance properties – Part 2: Determination of thermal endurance properties of electrical insulating materials – Choice of test criteria*

IEC 60216-5, *Electrical insulating materials – Thermal endurance properties – Part 5: Determination of relative thermal endurance index (RTE) of an insulating material*



IEC 60269-1, *Low-voltage fuses – Part 1: General requirements*

IEC 61095, *Electromechanical contactors for household and similar purposes*

IEC 61215-1, *Terrestrial photovoltaic (PV) modules – Design qualification and type approval – Part 1: Test requirements*

IEC 61439-1, *Low-voltage switchgear and controlgear assemblies – Part 1: General rules*

IEC 61724-1, *Photovoltaic system performance – Part 1: Monitoring*

IEC 61730-1, *Photovoltaic (PV) module safety qualification –Part 1: Requirements for construction*

IEC 61730-2, *Photovoltaic (PV) module safety qualification –Part 1: Requirements for testing*

IEC TS 61836, *Solar photovoltaic energy systems – Terms, definitions and symbols*

IEC 62109-1, *Safety of power converters for use in photovoltaic power systems – Part 1: General requirements*

IEC 62446-1, *Photovoltaic (PV) systems – Requirements for testing, documentation and maintenance – Part 1: Grid connected systems – Documentation, commissioning tests and inspection*

IEC 62446-2:–, *Photovoltaic (PV) systems – Requirements for testing, documentation and maintenance – Part 2: Grid connected photovoltaic (PV) systems – Maintenance of PV systems*<sup>1</sup>

IEC 62930:–, *Electric cables for photovoltaic systems with a voltage rating of 1,5 kV d.c.*<sup>1</sup>

ISO 9488, *Solar energy – Vocabulary*

ISO 9712, *Non-destructive testing — Qualification and certification of NDT Personnel*

VATh- Directive, *Electrical Infrared Inspections – Low Voltage. Planning, execution and documentation of infrared surveys on electrical systems and components ≤1kV* ([http://www.vath.de/docs/richtlinien/VATh-Richtlinie\\_Elektro\\_NS+PV\\_engl\\_web.pdf](http://www.vath.de/docs/richtlinien/VATh-Richtlinie_Elektro_NS+PV_engl_web.pdf))

EN 16714-3, *Non-destructive testing – Thermographic testing of electric installations*

EN 50110-1, *Operation of electrical installations – Part 1: General requirements*

DGUV BGV/GUV-V A3 E, *Accident prevention regulations, Electrical installations and equipment*

### **3 Terms and definitions**

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in IEC TS 61836, ISO 9488, IEC 60050-131 and the following apply.

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<sup>1</sup> To be published.