

TECHNICAL REPORT



Guidance on colour coding of optical fibre cables



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Guidance on colour coding of optical fibre cables

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
FOREWORD	5
INTRODUCTION	7
0.1 General	7
0.2 Background in other documents	7
1 Scope	8
2 Normative references	8
3 Terms and definitions	8
4 Rationale	8
5 Fibre colour coding	9
5.1 Intent	9
5.2 Historic IEC 60794-2 colour code (for guidance)	9
5.3 Colour coding for fibres 13 through 16	10
5.4 Other coding schemes	10
6 Unit and group coding	10
6.1 Unit coding	10
6.2 Group coding	11
6.3 Coding of tubes in composite cables, IEC 60794-2	11
6.4 Other coding schemes	11
7 Jacket colour coding	11
7.1 General	11
7.2 IEC 60794-2 jacket colour code	12
7.2.1 Historic IEC jacket colour code	12
7.2.2 Current IEC jacket colour code	12
7.3 Jacket coding by striping	13
7.4 Other jacket colour code	13
8 Guidance on the measurement of colour	13
8.1 General	13
8.2 Preparation of specimens for colour measurement	13
8.3 Specification of colour	13
Annex A (informative) German colour code	14
A.1 Fibre colour coding	14
A.2 German counting code for tubes stranded in a layer	14
A.3 Jacket colour coding	15
Annex B (informative) North-American colour code	16
B.1 Fibre colour coding	16
B.2 Unit coding	19
B.3 Jacket colour coding	19
Annex C (informative) Swedish colour code S12	21
C.1 Fibre colour coding S12	21
C.2 Unit coding scheme S12	21
C.2.1 General	21
C.2.2 Sequence for individual fibres within a tube/fibre-unit/bundle and for individual tubes/fibre-units/yarns, etc.	21
C.2.3 Sequence for tubes stranded around a central part	21
C.3 Jacket colour coding	22

Annex D (informative) Swiss colour code	23
D.1 Fibre colour coding	23
D.2 Unit coding	24
D.3 Jacket colour coding	24
Annex E (informative) Chinese colour code.....	26
E.1 Fibre colour coding	26
E.2 Unit coding	27
E.3 Jacket colour coding	29
Annex F (informative) Japanese colour code.....	30
F.1 Fibre colour coding	30
F.2 Unit coding by identification strip	31
F.3 Jacket colour coding of multi-fibre indoor cable.....	32
Annex G (informative) Brazilian colour code	33
G.1 Fibre colour coding	33
G.2 Unit colour coding of buffer tubes	33
G.3 Jacket colour coding	33
Bibliography.....	34
Figure C.1 – Sequence of tubes by position	22
Figure D.1 – Example of an 18-way stranded loose tube cable	24
Figure D.2 – Example of an outdoor cable, black with orange stripes.....	25
Figure E.1 – Sequence of tubes by position	27
Figure E.2 – Example of a 24-tube stranded loose tube cable	28
Figure E.3 – Example of T Mark Colour Code	29
Figure F.1 – Colour coding scheme based on optical fibre ribbon.....	30
Figure F.2 – Identification strip to bundle several optical fibre ribbons	31
Figure F.3 – Overview of high-count indoor cable	32
Table 1 – Colour coding sequence for individual fibres or buffers.....	10
Table 2 – Colours for individual fibres, buffers, or other elements 13 through 16.....	10
Table 3 – Colour coding scheme for tubes in hybrid or composite cables.....	11
Table 4 – Colour coding of cable outer sheaths	12
Table 5 – Colour coding of cable outer sheaths by fibre type	12
Table 6 – Example of centroid values for base colours in Munsell and R*a*L systems	13
Table A.1 – Colour coding sequence for individual fibres	14
Table A.2 – Counting code and colours from the German specification	15
Table B.1 – Individual fibre, unit, and group identification for up to 12 elements in a set.....	16
Table B.2 - Individual fiber, unit, and group identification for up to 16 elements in a set.....	18
Table B.3 – Sample identification markings.....	19
Table B.4 – North American preferred coding scheme for indoor cable jackets	20
Table C.1 – Sequence for individual fibres within a tube/fibre-unit/bundle and for individual tubes/fibre-units/yarns, etc.....	21
Table D.1 – Colour coding sequence for individual fibres or buffers in mini-breakout cables.....	23
Table D.2 – Colour coding for buffered fibres in simplex, duplex or breakout cables	24

Table D.3 – Colour coding and sequence for loose tubes stranded around a central part	24
Table D.4 – Colour coding for sub-cables and outer sheaths of indoor cables	25
Table D.5 – Colour for outer sheaths of outdoor cables	25
Table E.1 – Colour coding for individual fibres	26
Table E.2 – Colour coding for fibre counts up to 24	26
Table E.3 – Colour coding for loose tubes up to 12	27
Table E.4 – Colour coding for loose tubes up to 24	28
Table E.5 – Chinese colour coding scheme for indoor cable jackets	29
Table F.1 – Japanese colour coding for underground optical cable	30
Table F.2 – Japanese colour coding for aerial optical cable	31
Table F.3 – Colour coding of identification strip	31
Table F.4 – Jacket colour coding in high-count indoor cable	32
Table G.1 – Brazilian colour coding for fibre identification	33

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INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

GUIDANCE ON COLOUR CODING OF OPTICAL FIBRE CABLES**FOREWORD**

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IEC TR 63194, which is a Technical Report, has been prepared by subcommittee 86A: Fibres and cables, of IEC technical committee 86: Fibre optics.

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

Draft TR	Report on voting
86A/1870/DTR	86A/1891A/RVDTR

Full information on the voting for the approval of this Technical Report 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.

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

- reconfirmed,
- withdrawn,
- replaced by a revised edition, or
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INTRODUCTION

0.1 General

Colour coding of fibres is a useful method to uniquely identify fibres within a cable. For most fibre system architectures, such identification is considered essential.

A number of schemes for fibre identification have evolved in various regions. Attempts to unify the schemes have not yet been successful, as they are embedded in the system architecture.

Jacket colour coding is frequently used for a variety of reasons – most commonly in indoor cables.

Colour coding of both fibres and jackets has been addressed in IEC 60794-2 [5] [6]¹ and in IEC 60794-3-11. The intent of this document is to collect that and other relevant information for application to all cable types defined by IEC 60794 (all parts).

0.2 Background in other documents

IEC 60304 [1] defines the 12 colours currently identified for fibre identification, but does not specify which colour is for which fibre number. IEC 60794-2:2002 [5] does define a colour code, but this has been determined to have been construed as not representing any existing major colour code; furthermore, it was never adopted by any region. Further discussion of both documents is included in the text that follows.

IEC 60794-1-1 [4] contains specific language on the intent of colour coding, and notes that it is "as agreed". This document expands on that intent, offering several specific examples that exist in the various regions. Where the information is available, this document notes the regional specifications from which these examples are taken.

¹ Numbers in square brackets refer to the Bibliography.

GUIDANCE ON COLOUR CODING OF OPTICAL FIBRE CABLES

1 Scope

This document examines the need for and intent of colour coding of optical fibre cables. Further, this document lists the major colour codes in various regions throughout the world. Noting that decades of discussion of a universal recommended colour coding scheme has failed to bring about an agreement, this document does not intend to promote any listed colour code above any other.

This document includes regional information on the colour coding of units when different from the fibre code, and of jackets to convey information about the types of fibres within, or the types of performance expected. It also includes information on colours beyond the basic 12 set out in IEC 60304.

This document is not a normative document, but, rather, a guide to the subject of colour coding of cables.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

No terms and definitions are listed in this document.

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

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

4 Rationale

The need to uniquely identify a particular fibre within a cable is a common and rational requirement for cable standards. The determination of which fibre is which – without having to resort to "ringing it out" – is a key criteria in cable system management. A definition of an agreed cable colour coding scheme has been discussed in past years. But it has not been possible to reach agreement within the IEC because several embedded regional coding schemes exist that are part and parcel of the fibre system architecture.

The regional coding schemes are presented in Annexes A to G, as follows:

- Annex A: Germany;
- Annex B: North America;
- Annex C: Sweden;
- Annex D: Switzerland;
- Annex E: China;
- Annex F: Japan;
- Annex G: Brazil.