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**Workplace atmospheres — Determination  
of inorganic acids by ion  
chromatography —**

Part 1:  
**Non-volatile acids (sulfuric acid and  
phosphoric acid)**

*Air des lieux de travail — Détermination des acides inorganiques par  
chromatographie ionique —*

*Partie 1: Acides non volatils (acide sulfurique et acide phosphorique)*



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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 21438-1 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 146, *Air quality*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Workplace atmospheres*.

ISO 21438 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Workplace atmospheres — Determination of inorganic acids by ion chromatography*:

— *Part 1: Non-volatile acids (sulfuric acid and phosphoric acid)*

The following parts are under preparation:

— *Part 2: Volatile acids, except hydrofluoric acid (hydrochloric acid, hydrobromic acid and nitric acid)*

— *Part 3: Hydrofluoric acid and particulate fluorides*

## Introduction

The health of workers in many industries is at risk through exposure by inhalation of particulate acids like sulfuric acid or phosphoric acid compounds. Industrial hygienists and other public health professionals need to determine the effectiveness of measures taken to control workers' exposure, and this is generally achieved by making workplace air measurements. This part of ISO 21438 has been published in order to make available a method for making valid exposure measurements for particulate acids in use in industry. It will be of benefit to: agencies concerned with health and safety at work; industrial hygienists and other public health professionals; analytical laboratories; and industrial users of sulfuric and phosphoric acids, and their workers.

It has been assumed in the drafting of ISO 21438 (all parts) that the execution of its provisions and the interpretation of the results obtained are entrusted to appropriately qualified and experienced people.

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# Workplace atmospheres — Determination of inorganic acids by ion chromatography —

## Part 1: Non-volatile acids (sulfuric acid and phosphoric acid)

### 1 Scope

This part of ISO 21438 specifies a method for the determination of the time-weighted average mass concentration of sulfuric acid and phosphoric acid in workplace air by ion chromatography.

The method is applicable to the personal sampling of the inhalable fraction of airborne particles, as defined in ISO 7708 and to static (area) sampling.

The analytical method is applicable to the determination of masses of 0,005 mg to 2,0 mg of sulfuric acid and phosphoric acid per sample, without dilution.

The concentration range of sulfuric acid and phosphoric acid in air for which the measuring procedure is applicable is determined by the sampling method selected by the user. For an air sample of volume 1 m<sup>3</sup>, the working range is approximately 0,005 mg m<sup>-3</sup> to 2,0 mg m<sup>-3</sup>.

The method is not applicable to the determination of sulfur trioxide.

The procedure does not allow differentiation between the acids and their corresponding salts if both are present in the air.

The procedure does not allow differentiation between phosphoric acid and diphosphorus pentoxide (phosphoric anhydride) if both are present in the workplace.

### 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application 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 648, *Laboratory glassware — Single volume pipettes*

ISO 1042, *Laboratory glassware — One-mark volumetric flasks*

ISO 3585, *Borosilicate glass 3.3 — Properties*

ISO 7708:1995, *Air quality — Particle size fraction definitions for health-related sampling*

ISO 8655-1, *Piston-operated volumetric apparatus — Part 1: Terminology, general requirements and user recommendations*

ISO 8655-2, *Piston-operated volumetric apparatus — Part 2: Piston pipettes*

ISO 8655-6, *Piston-operated volumetric apparatus — Part 6: Gravimetric methods for the determination of measurement error*

EN 13205, *Workplace atmospheres — Assessment of performance of instruments for measurement of airborne particle concentrations*

### 3 Terms and definitions

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

#### 3.1 General definitions

##### 3.1.1

##### **chemical agent**

any chemical element or compound, on its own or admixed as it occurs in the natural state or as produced, used or released including release as waste, by any work activity, whether or not produced intentionally and whether or not placed on the market.

[EN 1540:1998<sup>[1]</sup>, definition 3.9]

##### 3.1.2

##### **breathing zone**

⟨general definition⟩ space around the worker's face from where he or she takes his or her breath

##### 3.1.3

##### **breathing zone**

⟨technical definition⟩ hemisphere (generally accepted to be 0,3 m in radius) extending in front of the human face, centred on the mid point of a line joining the ears; the base of the hemisphere is a plane through this line, the top of the head and the larynx

NOTE 1 The definition is not applicable when respiratory protective equipment is used.

NOTE 2 Adapted from EN 1540:1998<sup>[1]</sup>, definition 3.8.

##### 3.1.4

##### **exposure (by inhalation)**

situation in which a chemical agent is present in air which is inhaled by a person

##### 3.1.5

##### **measuring procedure**

procedure for sampling and analysing one or more chemical agents in the air and including storage and transportation of the sample

##### 3.1.6

##### **operating time**

period during which a sampling pump can be operated at specified flow rate and back pressure without recharging or replacing the battery

[EN 1232:1997<sup>[2]</sup>, definition 3.36]

##### 3.1.7

##### **time-weighted average concentration**

##### **TWA concentration**

concentration of a chemical agent in the atmosphere, averaged over the reference period

NOTE More detailed discussion of TWA concentrations is available in Reference [3].