



Standard Practice for Evaluation of Performance Characteristics of Air Quality Measurement Methods with Linear Calibration Functions¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This practice² covers procedures for evaluating the following performance characteristics of air quality measurement methods: bias (in part only), calibration function and linearity, instability, lower detection limit, period of unattended operation, selectivity, sensitivity, and upper limit of measurement.

1.2 The procedures presented in this practice are applicable only to air quality measurement methods with linear continuous calibration functions, and the output variable of which is a defined time average. The linearity may be due to postprocessing of the primary output variable. Additionally, replicate values belonging to the same input state are assumed to be normally distributed. Components required to transform the primary measurement method output into the time averages desired are regarded as an integral part of this measurement method.

1.3 For surveillance of measurement method stability under routine measurement conditions, it may suffice to check the essential performance characteristics using simplified tests, the degree of simplification acceptable being dependent on the knowledge on the invariance properties of the performance characteristics previously gained by the procedures presented here.

1.4 There is no fundamental difference between the instrumental (automatic) and the manual (for example, wet-chemical) procedures, as long as the measured value is an average representative for a predefined time interval. Therefore, the procedures presented are applicable to both. Furthermore, they are applicable to measurement methods for ambient, workplace, and indoor atmospheres, as well as emissions.

1.5 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 1356 Terminology Relating to Sampling and Analysis of Atmospheres³

E 177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods⁴

E 456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics⁴

2.2 ISO Standard:

ISO 6879: 1983, Air Quality—Performance Characteristics and Related Concepts for Air Quality Measuring Methods⁵

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 For definitions of terms used in this practice, refer to Terminology D 1356.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

NOTE 1—The statistical performance characteristics used throughout this practice are estimated, by convention, at the confidence level $1 - \alpha = 0.95$.

3.2.1 *averaging time*—predefined time interval length for which the air quality characteristic is made representative and $\Delta\theta$ the averaging time.

3.2.1.1 *Discussion*—Every measured value obtained is representative for a defined interval of time, τ , the value of which always lies above a certain minimum due to the intrinsic properties of the measuring procedure applied. In order to attain mutual comparability of data pertaining to comparable objects, a normalization to a common, predefined interval of time is necessary.

3.2.1.2 *Discussion*—By convention, this normalization is achieved by transformation by means of a simple, linear, and unweighted averaging process.

(a) Series of Discrete Samples:

$$\hat{c}(\theta|\Delta\theta) = \frac{1}{K} \sum_{k=1}^K \hat{c}(\theta_0 + (k-1)\tau | \tau) \quad (1)$$

where:

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 11.03.

⁴ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 14.02.

⁵ Available from International Organization for Standardization, Case Postale 56, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland.

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D-22 on Sampling and Analysis of Atmospheres and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D22.03 on Ambient Atmospheres and Source Emissions.

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² This practice was adapted from International Standard ISO/DP 9169, prepared by ISO/TC 146/SC 4/WG 4, by the kind permission of the Chairman of ISO/TC 146 and the Secretariat of ISO/TC 146/SC 4.

$$\begin{aligned}\theta_o &= \theta - \Delta\theta, \text{ and} \\ K\tau &= \Delta\theta, \tau \ll \Delta\theta\end{aligned}$$

(b) *Continuous Time Series*:

$$\hat{c}(\theta|\Delta\theta) = \frac{1}{\Delta\theta} \int_{\theta_0}^{\theta} d\theta \hat{c}(\theta|\tau) \quad (2)$$

In both cases (a and b), the original sample, described by $\hat{c}(t)$, is linked to a representative interval of time of length τ whereas $\hat{c}(\Delta\theta)$, the result after application of the averaging process, is made representative for the interval of time $\Delta\theta$ (just preceding θ), the averaging time.

3.2.1.3 *Discussion*—The averaging time, $\Delta\theta$, is therefore the predefined and, by convention, common time interval length for which the measured variable $\hat{c}$ is made representative in a sense that the square deviation of the original values, attributed to time interval lengths $\tau \ll \Delta\theta$ from $\hat{c}$ over $\Delta\theta$ is a minimum.

3.2.1.4 *Discussion*—The averaging process can alternatively be realized by means of a special sampling technique (averaging by sampling).

3.2.2 *continuously measuring system*—a system returning a continuous output signal upon continuous interaction with the air quality characteristic.

3.2.3 *influence variable*—a variable affecting the interrelationship between the (true) values of the air quality characteristic observed and the corresponding measured values; for example, variable affecting the slope or the intercept of or the scatter around the calibration function.

3.2.4 *noncontinuously measuring system*—a system returning a series of discrete output signals.

3.2.4.1 *Discussion*—The discretization of the output variable can be due to sampling in discrete portions or to inner function characteristics of the system components.

3.2.5 *period of unattended operation*—the maximum admissible interval of time for which the performance characteristics will remain within a predefined range without external servicing, for example, refill, calibration, adjustment.

3.2.6 *random variable*—a variable that may take any of the values of a specified set of values and with which is associated a probability distribution.

3.2.7 *randomization*—if, from a population consisting of the natural numbers 1 to n , these are drawn at random one by one successively without replacement until the population is exhausted, the numbers are said to be drawn in random order.

3.2.7.1 *Discussion*—If these numbers have been associated in advance with n distinct objects or n distinct operations that are then rearranged in the order in which the numbers are drawn, the order of the objects or operations is said to be randomized.

3.2.8 *reference conditions*—a specified set of values (including tolerances) of influence variables delivering representative values of performance characteristics.

3.2.9 *variance function*—a variance of the output variable as a function of the air quality characteristic observed.

3.2.10 *warm-up time*—the minimum waiting time for an instrument to meet predefined values of its performance characteristics after activating an instrument stabilized in a nonoperating condition.

3.2.10.1 *Discussion*—In practice, the warm-up time can be

determined by using the performance characteristic that is expected to require the longest interval of time.

3.2.10.2 *Discussion*—In the case of the manual procedures, run-up time is used correspondingly.

3.3 *Symbols and Abbreviations*:

3.3.1 a_0, a_1, a_2 —coefficients of the variance function model.

3.3.2 b_0, b_1 —parameters of the estimate function for the calibration function.

3.3.3 C —air quality characteristic.

3.3.4 c —value of C .

3.3.5 $\hat{c}$ —measured value at c .

3.3.6 c_i —value of C in the i -th sample; this sample may be generated from reference material.

3.3.7 c_0 —normalization factor for air quality characteristics; in this case $|c_0| = 1$.

3.3.8 Δc_1 —inaccuracy of C at c_i .

3.3.9 $\bar{c}_w$ —weighted mean, with set of weights ω_k .

3.3.10 $D(b_0)$ —drift (see ISO 6879) of the intercept of the linear calibration function.

3.3.11 $D(b_1)$ —drift of the slope of the linear calibration function.

3.3.12 $D(\hat{c})$ —drift of the measured value, $\hat{c}$, at c .

3.3.13 $DEP(b_0)_{IV}$ —first order measure of dependence of the intercept on the influence variable labeled by i .

3.3.14 $DEP(b_1)_{IV}$ —first order measure of dependence of the slope on the influence variable labeled by i .

3.3.15 $DEP(\hat{c})_{IV}$ —first order measure of dependence of the measured value on the influence variable labeled by i at c .

3.3.16 $DEP(x)_{IV}$ —first order measure of dependence of the output signal on the influence variable labeled by i .

3.3.17 F —statistic (cf F -test).

3.3.18 F_x — x -quantile of the F -distribution.

3.3.19 I_{IV} —selectivity with respect to the influence variable labeled by i .

3.3.20 IV_i —influence variable labeled by i .

3.3.21 iv_i —value of IV_i .

3.3.22 Δiv_i —difference of values of IV_i .

3.3.23 L —total number of time intervals of the instability test.

3.3.24 LDL —lower detection limit.

3.3.25 M —total number of samples generated by reference material within one calibration experiment.

3.3.26 N_i —number of values of the output variable at c_i .

3.3.27 $P_{||}, p_u$ —estimate of the slope of the regression function of the output variable on time at $c = c_{||}, c = c_u$, respectively.

3.3.28 R —reproducibility.

3.3.29 r —repeatability.

3.3.30 RES_c —resolution at $C = c$.

3.3.31 $\hat{s}$ —estimate of the smoothed standard deviation of X at c .

3.3.32 $\hat{s}^2$ —smoothed estimate of the variance of X (repeated measurements) at c .

3.3.33 s_0 —normalization factor for the standard deviation; the magnitude of s_0 equals to 1.

3.3.34 s_{b_0}, s_{b_1} —estimate of the standard deviation of instability (see ISO 6879) of the intercept and the slope of the linear calibration function.

3.3.35 s_c —estimate of the standard deviation of instability at c .

3.3.36 s_r —estimate of the standard deviation of repeated x_{ij} at c_i ; j repetition index.

3.3.37 $\hat{s}_r$ —smoothed estimate of the standard deviation of “repeated” x_{ij} at c_i ; j repetition index.

3.3.38 s_r —estimate of the repeatability standard deviation.

3.3.39 $s_{\hat{c}_x}$ —estimate of the standard deviation of the experimentally determined calibration function (in units of the air quality characteristic).

3.3.40 s_{xc} —estimate of the standard deviation of the experimentally determined calibration function (in units of the output variable).

3.3.41 $t_{v,q}$ — q -quantile of the t -distribution with v degrees of freedom.

3.3.42 TC —test characteristic of Grubbs’ outlier test.

3.3.43 X —output variable.

3.3.44 x —value of X .

3.3.45 $\bar{x}$ —estimate of x .

3.3.46 x_i —estimate of output signal at c_i .

3.3.47 $\bar{x}_i$ —mean of the set of output signals at c_i .

3.3.48 $x_{i,extr}$ —output signal at c_i with the highest absolute distance from $\bar{x}_i$.

3.3.49 x_{ij} — j -th output signal at c_i .

3.3.50 $x_{l,i}$, $x_{u,i}$ —output signal after i time intervals at the lower and upper value of the air quality characteristic of reference material.

3.3.51 $\bar{x}_w$ —weighted mean of the whole set of output signals within the calibration experiment.

3.3.52 β_0 , β_1 —intercept and slope of the linear calibration function, respectively.

3.3.53 θ —time.

3.3.54 $\Delta\theta$ —averaging time.

3.3.55 ν —number of degrees of freedom in the calibration experiment.

3.3.56 ν_1 , ν_2 —number of degrees of freedom for the numerator and denominator of the F -distribution, respectively.

3.3.57 $\omega = \omega(c)$ —continuous weighing factor gained by modeling s_i .

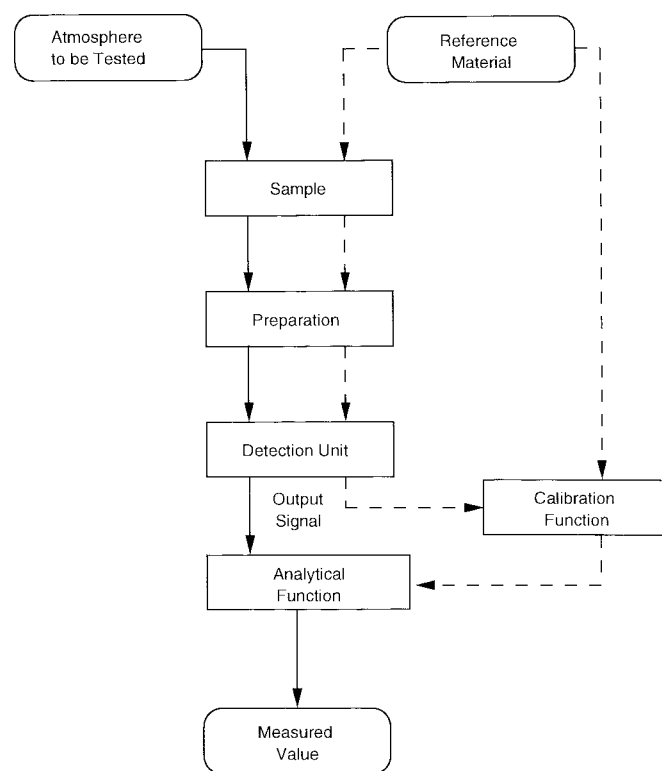
3.3.58 ω_1 —weighing factor at c_1 .

4. Requirements and Provisions

4.1 *Description of the Steps of the Measurement Methods Under Test*—Describe all steps of the measurement method used, such as sampling, analysis, postprocessing, and calibration. Fig. 1 illustrates schematically the steps to be followed in making a measurement or performing a series of calibration experiments in order to determine the performance characteristics.

NOTE 2—Under certain conditions it may be suitable to test only one step or a selected group of steps of the measurement method. Under other conditions it may not be possible to include all the steps of the measurement method. However, include as many steps as possible.

4.2 *Specification of Performance Characteristics to Be Tested*—Specify the performance characteristics of the measurement method in order of their relevance for the final assessment of accuracy. The descriptors of the calibration function, for example, intercept, β_0 , and slope, β_1 , as well as their qualifying performance characteristics are vital. Those



NOTE 1— — Measurement Branch.

NOTE 2— - - Calibration Branch.

FIG. 1 Schematic of the Procedures of Measurement and of Evaluation for Performance Characteristics

performance characteristics for which prior knowledge is available, and those pertaining to influence variables covered by randomization are of lesser importance and need not be determined.

4.3 *Test Conditions*—Perform the tests under explicitly stated conditions representative of the operational measurements. When testing for performance characteristics, describing functional dependencies, keep all influence variables constant except the one under consideration.

5. Test Procedures

5.1 *Averaging Time* (see 3.2.1)—The range of allowable averaging times is constrained by the requirement that the differences of subsequent output signals be mutually statistically independent. The corresponding minimum of the averaging time is determined by a specific performance (time) characteristic, that is, continuously measuring systems; the response time and noncontinuously measuring systems; the sample time (filling time, accumulation time, etc.).

5.1.1 *Continuously Measuring Systems*—In order to establish response time, lag time, and rise and fall time, input a step function of the air quality characteristic to the continuously measuring system. This may be done by abruptly changing the value of the air quality characteristic from, for example, 20 to 80 % of the upper limit of measurement (cf Fig. 2). Confirm these performance characteristics by an appropriate number of repetitions. If rise time and fall time differ, take the longer one for the computation of the response time. By convention the minimum averaging time equals four times the response time.

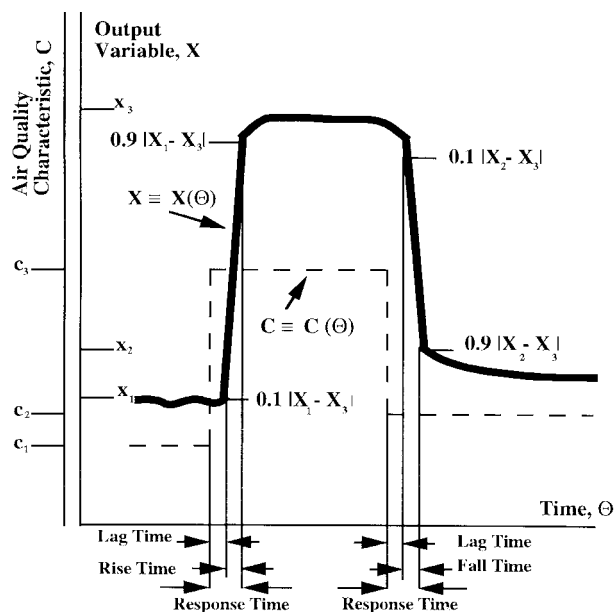


FIG. 2 Response Illustrating the Performance (Time) Characteristic of a Continuously Measuring System

5.1.2 *Noncontinuously Measuring Systems*—Determine the minimum averaging time by the maximum of the sampling time, filling time, or accumulation time, depending on the measurement method.

5.2 Functional and Statistical Performance Characteristics:

5.2.1 The performance characteristics to be determined are:

5.2.1.1 Performance characteristics related to the calibration function and its stability under reference conditions, and

5.2.1.2 Performance characteristics related to the dependence of the calibration function on influence variables.

5.2.2 Determine a linear calibration function by its slope (sensitivity) and its intercept. Describe instability and the effects of influence variables by their impacts on the slope (sensitivity) and intercept.

5.2.3 Obtain all output signals evaluated throughout these tests after the measuring system has reached stabilized conditions.

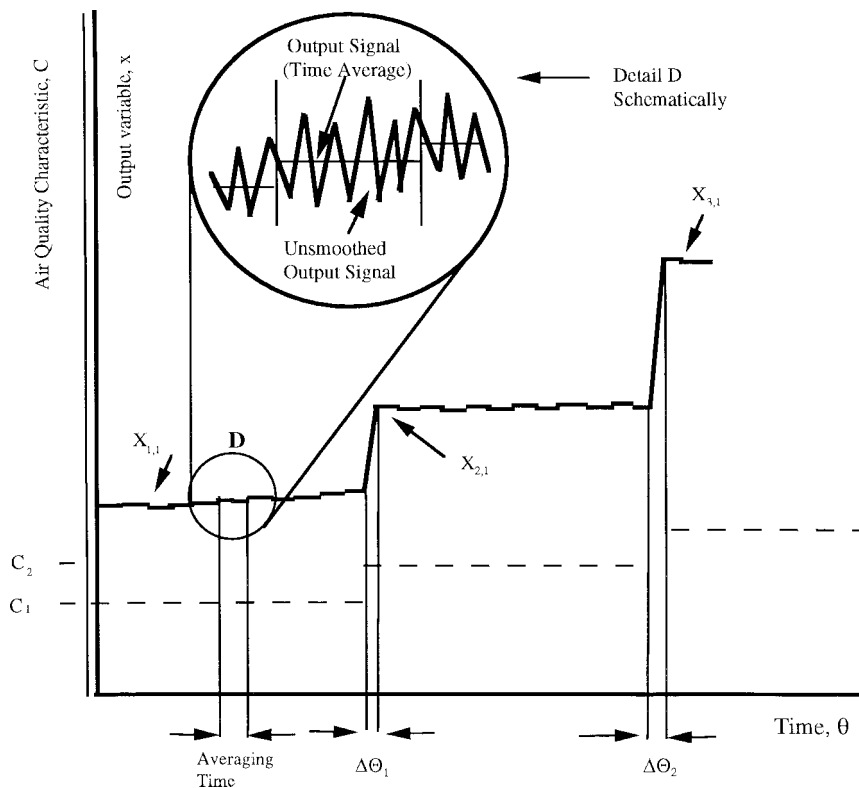
5.3 Calibration:

5.3.1 A calibration experiment for the evaluation of performance characteristics consists of at least ten repeated measurements at a minimum of five different values (two each) of the air quality characteristic.

5.3.2 In case of drift, restrain the duration of the calibration experiment to one as short as possible. This may be accomplished by consecutive instrument readings at a certain value of the air quality characteristic and after a change of that value and stabilization, again consecutive instrument readings at that value, etc. (see Fig. 3). This is only valid in the absence of hysteresis or if hysteresis is negligible.

NOTE 3—Repetitions performed under reproducibility conditions (see Practice E 177) require a random sample of the population of the influence variables to be examined (randomization).

5.3.3 *Elimination of Outliers*—Usually, experience helps to



NOTE 1— X_{ij} — j -th time average over the interval of time $\Delta\theta$ at the i -th value of the air quality characteristic generated by reference material.

$\Delta\theta_i$ —Intervals of time during which unsmoothed output signals shall not be submitted to the averaging procedure, and thus, not be evaluated.

FIG. 3 Example of a Calibration Experiment