



Standard Guide for Statistical Procedures to Use in Developing and Applying Test Methods¹

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INTRODUCTION

This test method covers the determination of the minimum temperature at which a dust cloud will autoignite. The dust cloud is exposed to air heated to various temperatures in a furnace. Ignition of the cloud is indicated by visual observation of the flame. The chemical nature of the dust as well as its concentration, particle size, moisture, and surface area affects the results.

1. Scope

1.1 This guide identifies statistical procedures for use in developing new test methods or revising or evaluating existing test methods, or both.

1.2 This guide also cites statistical procedures especially useful in the application of test methods.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

E 29 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Test Data to Determine Conformance with Specifications²

E 105 Practice for Probability Sampling of Materials²

E 122 Practice for Choice of Sample Size to Estimate a Measure of Quality for a Lot or Process²

E 141 Practice for Acceptance of Evidence Based on the Results of Probability Sampling²

E 177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods²

E 178 Practice for Dealing with Outlying Observations²

E 456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics²

E 691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method²

E 1169 Guide for Conducting Ruggedness Tests²

E 1301 Guide for Proficiency Testing by Interlaboratory Comparisons³

E 1325 Terminology Relating to Design of Experiments³

E 1402 Terminology Relating to Sampling³

2.2 ISO Standards:

ISO 5725 Accuracy (Trueness and Precision) of Measure-

ment Methods and Results⁴

ISO Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement⁴

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *statistical procedures, n*—the organized techniques and methods used to collect, analyze, and interpret data.

3.1.1.1 *Discussion*—Statistical procedures include the sampling considerations or the experiment design for the collection of data, or both, and the numerical and graphical approaches to summarize and analyze the collected data.

3.2 For all other formal definitions of statistical terms, see Terminology E 456.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 All ASTM test methods are required to include statements on precision and bias.⁵

4.2 Since ASTM began to require all test methods to have precision and bias statements that are based on interlaboratory test methods, there has been increased concern regarding what statistical experiments and procedures to use during the development of the test methods. Although there exists a wide range of statistical procedures, there is a small group of generally accepted techniques that are very beneficial to follow. This document is designed to provide a brief overview of these procedures and to suggest an appropriate sequence of carrying out these procedures.

4.3 Statistical procedures often result in interpretations that are not absolutes. Sometimes the information obtained may be inadequate or incomplete, which may lead to additional questions and the need for further experimentation. Information

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² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 14.02.

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 14.02.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute, 11 W. 42nd St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10036.

⁵ See the Form and Style Manual for ASTM Standards that specifies, when possible, precision statements shall be estimated based on the results of an interlaboratory test program.

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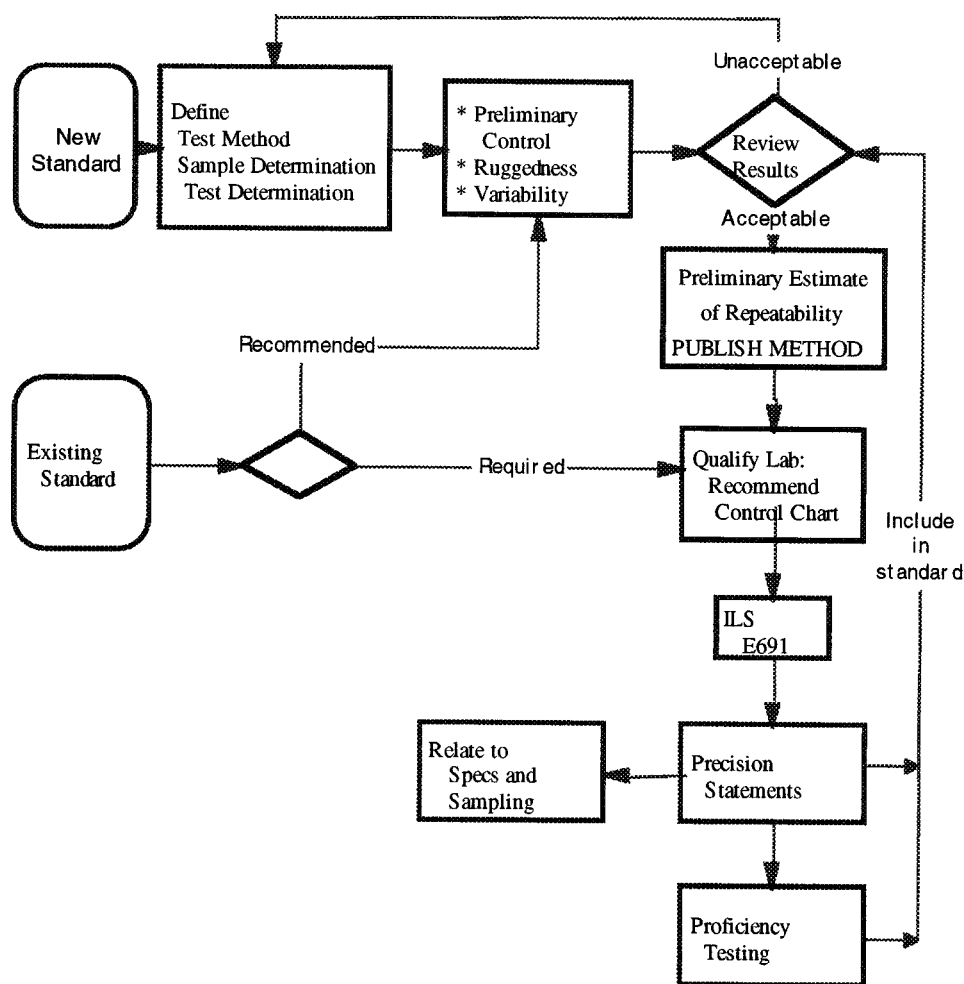


FIG. 1 Sequence of Steps

outside the data is also important in establishing standards and in the interpretation of numerical results.

5. Summary of Guide

5.1 Outlined below is a suggested sequence of statistical procedures useful in the development of a test method. A flowchart is provided in Fig. 1. Such a sequence of analyses may need to be modified in specific situations. The assistance of a qualified statistician is recommended at each review phase.

5.2 Sequence of Test Method Development:

5.2.1 *Test Method Protocol*—It is assumed that a draft of a test method has been prepared and generally agreed upon.

5.2.2 A flow chart is extremely valuable to identify the sequence of operations involved in a test method, for example, the sampling steps required to obtain the test specimens, definition of the test determination, how a test result is to be computed, and running the tests on the specimens.

5.3 *Evaluation of Short Term Control of Test Method*—A test method must exhibit an ability to provide consistent results at least over short time periods. Preliminary studies or a pilot test should be conducted to evaluate the short term stability of the test method. A small series of repeated tests should be conducted.

5.4 *Analysis of Variability*—Statistically designed experiments conducted in one or two laboratories can be used to

assess the relative magnitudes of different sources or potential contributors to variability of the test results. Such studies can provide estimates of intermediate measures of precision.

5.5 *Ruggedness Test*—A ruggedness test (see Guide E 1169) is a statistically designed experiment that helps identify problems in running the test method, clarifies errors, and points out possible environmental conditions, which may adversely affect the test method or point out need for tightening requirements. The ruggedness test can assist in locating ways of reducing variability in the test method.

5.6 *Preliminary Estimates of Precision*—From the various studies conducted in accordance with 5.3-5.5, preliminary estimates of repeatability standard deviations should be developed and published in this test method. Until an interlaboratory study is performed, these estimates generally are considered to be provisional.

5.7 *Statistical Control*—A test method must show capability of performing in a consistent way over time. The use of control charts (see Manual 7)⁵ to monitor a proposed, or existing, test method over time is one recommended way to examine the controllability or stability of a test method. This statistical control should be demonstrated in one or two laboratories using homogeneous material (test specimens).

5.8 *Interlaboratory Study (ILS)*: