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Standard Specification for Arc Protective Blankets¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F2676/F2676M; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reappraisal. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

1. Scope

1.1 This product specification is used to determine the ability of the arc protective blankets to withstand the effects of arc flash and arc blast in a configuration in which the blanket is hung or anchored near energized equipment. Specifically, the imbedded test method is used to determine and specify the arc protective blanket's (1) resistance to breakopen, (2) mechanical strength, and (3) ability to self-extinguish flames following a controlled arc exposure.

1.2 The products covered by this specification are labeled with a performance level for arc protective blankets in terms of: maximum arc current level expressed in kA and Breakopen Threshold Performance (BTP) expressed as the product of arc current in kA and arc duration in number of cycles to cause breakopen (kA*cycles). Cycles are on the basis of 60 Hz.

1.3 Blanket test specimens used in this specification are test size blankets of 152 ± 5 cm [60 ± 2 in.] by 122 ± 5 cm [48 ± 2 in.]. The test specimen size is for testing purposes only. Commercially available arc protective blankets either larger or smaller than the test specimen size are covered by this specification.

1.4 The arc protective blankets described in this specification are made of flame-resistant materials and are available in varying sizes and configurations based on the application.

1.5 The specification is used to measure and describe the properties of materials, products, or assemblies in response to incident thermal (convective and radiant) and pressure energies generated by an electric arc under controlled laboratory conditions.

1.6 The values stated in SI units shall be regarded as standard except as noted. The values stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, alternate systems must be used independently of the other. Combining values from the systems described in the text may result in nonconformance with the method.

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F18 on Electrical Protective Equipment for Workers and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F18.65 on Wearing Apparel.

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1.7 This standard shall not be used to describe or appraise the fire hazard or fire risk of materials, products, or assemblies under actual fire conditions. However, results of this test may be used as elements of a fire assessment, which takes into account all of the factors, which are pertinent to an assessment of the fire hazard of a particular end use.

1.8 *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, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.* For specific precautions, see Section 9.

1.9 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D123 Terminology Relating to Textiles

D1682 Test Method for Breaking Load and Elongation of Textile Fabric (Withdrawn 1992)³

D4391 Terminology Relating to The Burning Behavior of Textiles

D6413 Test Method for Flame Resistance of Textiles (Vertical Test)

F819 Terminology Relating to Electrical Protective Equipment for Workers

F1506 Performance Specification for Flame Resistant and Electric Arc Rated Protective Clothing Worn by Workers Exposed to Flames and Electric Arcs

F1959 Test Method for Determining the Arc Rating of Materials for Clothing

F2302 Performance Specification for Labeling Protective Clothing Which Provides Resistance to Incidental Exposures to Heat or Open Flame

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

F3272 Guide for Selection, Care, and Use of Arc Protective Blankets

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *arc*, *n*—conductive path in air for the electric current caused by ionization of air between two electrodes.

3.1.2 *arc induced fragmentation*, *n*—molten metal fragments or other fragments emitted from an electric arc.

3.1.3 *arc protective blanket*, *n*—a flat assembly of fabric(s) with locations for attachment used to protect workers from the effects of arc flash and arc blast.

3.1.4 *arc protective blanket maximum arc current* I_{max} *n*—maximum value of RMS arc current that blanket can withstand without breakopen for no less than ten cycles of 60 Hz.

3.1.4.1 *Discussion*—Standard values of the maximum arc current for specification are 15 kA, 25 kA, or 40 kA.

3.1.5 *arc protective blanket breakopen threshold performance (BTP)*, *n*—the product of the arc current I , kA and arc duration in cycles required for breakopen to occur at this same arc current level.

3.1.6 *breakopen*, *n*—in *electrical arc testing*, a material response evidenced by the formation of one or more holes in the material which may allow thermal energy to pass through the material.

3.1.6.1 *Discussion*—The instant of breakopen will only be visible with a high-speed (HS) camera. The size of the breakopen will quickly expand as the arc blows through the blanket and burns back the edges of the materials. The final size of the breakopen hole is not significant, as it will depend to a great extent on the duration of the arc once the breakopen point is reached. The important measure using the HS camera is the time from arc initiation to the first evidence of arc plasma through the blanket.

3.1.7 *charring*, *n*—the formation of carbonaceous residue as the result of pyrolysis or incomplete combustion.

3.1.8 *directional arc*, *n*—in *arc protective blanket testing*, an arc expanding in direction of the blanket perpendicular to and centered to the blanket plane.

3.1.9 *dripping*, *n*—in *arc testing*, a material response evidenced by flowing of a specimen's material of composition and droplets separation from the material.

3.1.10 *embrittlement*, *n*—the formation of a brittle residue as the result of pyrolysis or incomplete combustion.

3.1.11 *ignition*, *n*—the initiation of combustion.

3.1.12 *ignitability*, *n* (*ignitable*, *adj*)—in *electric arc exposure*, the property of a material involving ignition accompanied by heat and light, and continued burning resulting in consumption of at least 25 % of the exposed area of the test specimen.

3.1.13 *mechanical strength*, *n*—for an *arc protective blanket*, the ability to remain attached to its support(s) in essentially its original configuration.

3.1.14 *peak arc current*, *n*—maximum value of the AC arc current, A.

3.1.15 *pressure wave*, *n*—a certain force over an area created by air movement caused by an electric arc.

3.1.16 *RMS arc current*, *n*—root mean square of the AC arc current, A.

3.1.17 *shrinkage*, *n*—a decrease in one or more dimensions of an object or material.

3.2 For definitions of other terms see Terminologies [D4391](#) or [F819](#).

4. Summary of Specification

4.1 This specification determines resistance to breakopen and mechanical strength under directional arc exposure, ability to self-extinguish flames and the afterflame time of the exposed arc protective blankets. This specification simulates a condition in a vault or substation or energy center where arc protective blanket may be attached to provide protection from the thermal effects and the pressure wave experienced during an electrical arc fault. This specification replicates most severe conditions when the arc is directed and focused on the blanket.

4.2 This specification determines two ratings for arc protective blanket: Maximum Arc Current, I_{max} , and BTP.

4.3 Three nominal values of I_{max} are established in this specification: 15 kA, 25 kA and 40 kA. In this specification, each arc protective blanket test specimen is intentionally forced to break open. To be considered arc rated, blanket shall withstand three times at least one of the nominal values of I_{max} without breakopen during at least 10 cycles.

NOTE 1—Additional testing at a higher I_{max} than 40 kA is permitted but the arc protective blanket shall be rated at one of the three nominal values of I_{max} which shall be the official rating.

4.4 BTP is determined as the product of arc current and arc duration causing breakopen. Arc duration is the number of 60 Hz cycles between arc initiation and breakopen of the blanket.

4.5 BTP is determined for at least three different arc current levels. A minimum value of BTP is assigned as arc rating to an arc protective blanket.

4.6 In this specification, the arc electrodes configuration is designed so that the arc blast projects directionally towards the test specimen.

4.7 This specification involves observing HS video recordings to determine test specimen breakopen and afterflame time. Each trial is recorded with a HS video camera.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This specification determines the effectiveness of arc protective blankets in suppressing the combined effects of an arc flash and arc blast.

5.2 The arc exposure energy is produced from controlled phase-to-ground arc fault. The resulting arc flash and blast energy are intentionally directed onto the test specimen to simulate worst case conditions.

5.3 Test results will describe the maximum arc current and product of arc current and cycles at which the specimen break

the energy without breakopen, ability to self-extinguish afterflaming, afterflame time and the detection of mechanical attachment failures during testing. Mechanical attachment failure and afterflame time are obtained from visual observations and video recording after each arc exposure.

5.4 This specification maintains the arc protective blanket in a vertical position and does not involve movement except that resulting from the arc exposure.

5.5 In this specification, test specimens are exposed at three arc current levels to determine the test specimen's performance.

NOTE 2—In experimental testing, some blankets increase in protection (in value of kA*cycles to cause breakopen) as the arc current increases and some decrease as shown in Fig. 1. This specification is designed to recognize this behavior and to specify testing over the range of arc current levels including lower levels of 5 kA or 10 kA, or both.

5.6 This specification specifies a standard set of exposure conditions. Different exposure conditions may produce different results.

NOTE 3—In addition to the standard set of exposure conditions, it is permitted to test using other conditions representative of the expected hazard, reported all non-standard test conditions that are used.

5.7 The user is encouraged to use Guide F3272 when applying blankets from this specification.

6. Ordering Information

6.1 The following items should be considered by the purchaser when buying arc protective blankets under this specification and included, as necessary, in purchasing documents:

6.1.1 BTP of the arc protective blanket,

6.1.2 Type of material in the blanket (for instance some materials cannot be folded, others must be stored out of sunlight),

6.1.3 Weight of the blanket,

6.1.4 Straps or other structural supports to hold the blanket in place,

6.1.5 Style and design or catalog number,

6.1.6 Special identification markings (optional), and

6.1.7 Notation of conformance to this specification.

7. Physical Requirements

7.1 The blankets shall include an attachment means as used in testing unless otherwise specified by the buyer.

7.2 The blanket shall be proportional to the originally tested blanket in number and spacing of attachment points.

7.3 The blanket shall be constructed in a similar manner to the blanket tested. Quilting shall be accomplished in the same pattern and size as tested since this has been found to affect afterflame time in some blankets.

7.4 Attachment means, straps, carbineers, ropes, etc. shall be of the same material and construction as those tested unless otherwise specified and agreed to by the purchaser and supplier.

7.5 Attachment reinforcement points may be metal, if allowed by the purchaser, but shall be as tested or stronger to prevent breakaway of attachment points.

7.6 Preference shall be given to non-metallic reinforcement and attachment means in the design process.

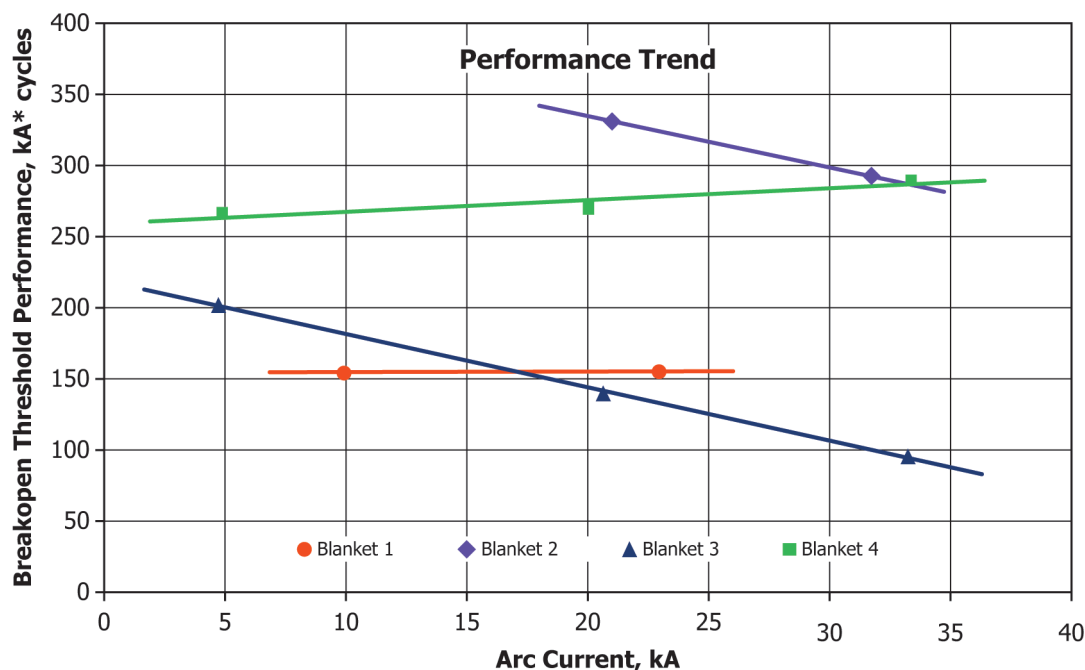


FIG. 1 Example of Performance Trend for Different Blankets