



Designation: F3615 – 23

Standard Practice for Additive Manufacturing — Powder Bed Fusion — Condition- Defined Maintenance for Optical Systems¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F3615; 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 reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This practice provides:

1.1.1 Recommendations for the design and integration of an area scan camera system (referred to as “camera system”) into a laser powder bed fusion (PBF-LB/M) machine to assess the health condition of the scanner protective window (SPW),

1.1.2 Recommendations for data acquisition with the aforementioned system,

1.1.3 Description of a methodology for processing the aforementioned data, and

1.1.4 Recommendation on ex-situ measurements of laser beam parameters and part properties suitable for labeling of the processed condition data.

1.2 Many of the operational descriptions included in this practice are intended as general overviews. They may not present the detailed information required.

1.3 *Units*—The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.4 *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.*

1.5 *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 The following standards are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this practice. For dated references, only the

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F42 on Additive Manufacturing Technologies and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F42.01 on Test Methods.

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edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced standard (including any amendments) applies.

2.2 *ISO Standards:*²

ISO 13372 Condition monitoring and diagnostics of machines — Vocabulary

ISO 17850 Photography — Digital cameras — Geometric distortion (GD) measurements

2.3 *ISO/ASTM Standards:*³

ISO/ASTM 52900 Terminology for Additive Manufacturing — General Principles — Terminology

ISO/ASTM 52930 Additive Manufacturing — Qualification principles — Installation, operation and performance (IQ/OQ/PQ) of PBF-LB equipment

2.4 *Federal Standard:*

U.S. Air Force MIL-STD-150A Photographic Lenses⁴

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:*

3.1.1 Terminology for additive manufacturing (AM) can be found in ISO/ASTM 52900. Terms related to condition monitoring and machine maintenance can be found in ISO 13372.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *laser-affected area, n*—maximum area of an optical element that can be affected by the laser beam because of dynamic deflection of the laser beam (that is, by a moving mirror before said optical element).

3.2.1.1 *Discussion*—In a laser powder bed fusion (PBF-LB/M) machine, the laser-affected area corresponds to the maximum build area of the machine projected into the scanner protective window (SPW) plane.

3.2.2 *scanner protective window, SPW, n*—highly transmissive laser window installed in PBF-LB/M machines at the interface between the process chamber and the optical system

² Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ISO Central Secretariat, Chemin de Blandonnet 8, CP 401, 1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland, <https://www.iso.org>.

³ For referenced ASTM and ISO/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.

⁴ Available from <https://www.dsp.dla.mil/Specs-Standards>

to encapsulate sensitive optical elements (for example, focusing lenses, scanner mirrors) in a dust-tight manner and protect them from contamination.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 The overall objective of this practice is to provide recommendations for the systematic acquisition of image data that indicate the health condition of the wear-sensitive SPW in PBF-LB/M machines. These data may allow a user to determine calibration and maintenance cycles based on the actual health condition of the SPW.

4.2 The recommendations are intended for original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) of PBF-LB/M machines to provide guidance for the implementation of sensor systems to acquire spatially resolved data about the health condition of the SPW.

4.3 The recommendations are intended for users of PBF-LB/M machines to provide guidance for the assessment of the actual health condition of the SPW to:

4.3.1 Flag when a calibration or maintenance of the optical system is needed and alert the user or OEM to perform the calibration or maintenance and

4.3.2 Generate statistical estimates for the useful life, or critical health state, of the SPW based on data recorded over the long term. The statistics may be used to derive maintenance cycles that allow a better utilization of the useful life of the SPW than current predetermined maintenance cycles.

5. Camera System

5.1 This practice covers a camera system for monitoring the health condition of the SPW (contaminants or defects on SPW surface) consisting of:

5.1.1 Area scan camera,

5.1.2 Objective lens, and

5.1.3 Lighting.

5.2 The user of this standard should select the components of the camera system such that the laser-affected area of the SPW is imaged with a resolution of at least 30 $\mu\text{m}/\text{px}$ (Fig. X1.1).

5.3 In some PBF-LB/M machines, the size of the SPW is designed to fit the laser-affected area, requiring monitoring of the entire SPW surface. For machines where the previous does not apply, the following can be considered to select the components:

5.3.1 The short sensor edge of the camera is required to image the largest dimension of the laser-affected area, $D_{LA,SPW}$, in sufficient resolution. The largest dimension of the laser-affected area may be estimated as follows:

$$D_{LA,SPW} = D \left(1 - \frac{e'}{e} \right) + d_{L,SPW} \quad [mm] \quad (1)$$

where:

D = maximum dimension of the build area,

$d_{L,SPW}$ = laser spot diameter in SPW plane,

e = working distance of the machine, and

e' = distance between SPW and the working plane (Fig. 1).

5.3.1.1 For the purpose of this practice, Eq 1 should be used as an approximation for both machines with dynamic focusing unit and machines with F-Theta lens. However, the user of this standard should be aware that Eq 1 contains simplifications that are acceptable for the purpose of this standard but lead to errors when applied to other matters.

5.3.2 For a Gaussian beam, the laser spot diameter, $d_{L,SPW}$, in the SPW plane is approximated as follows:

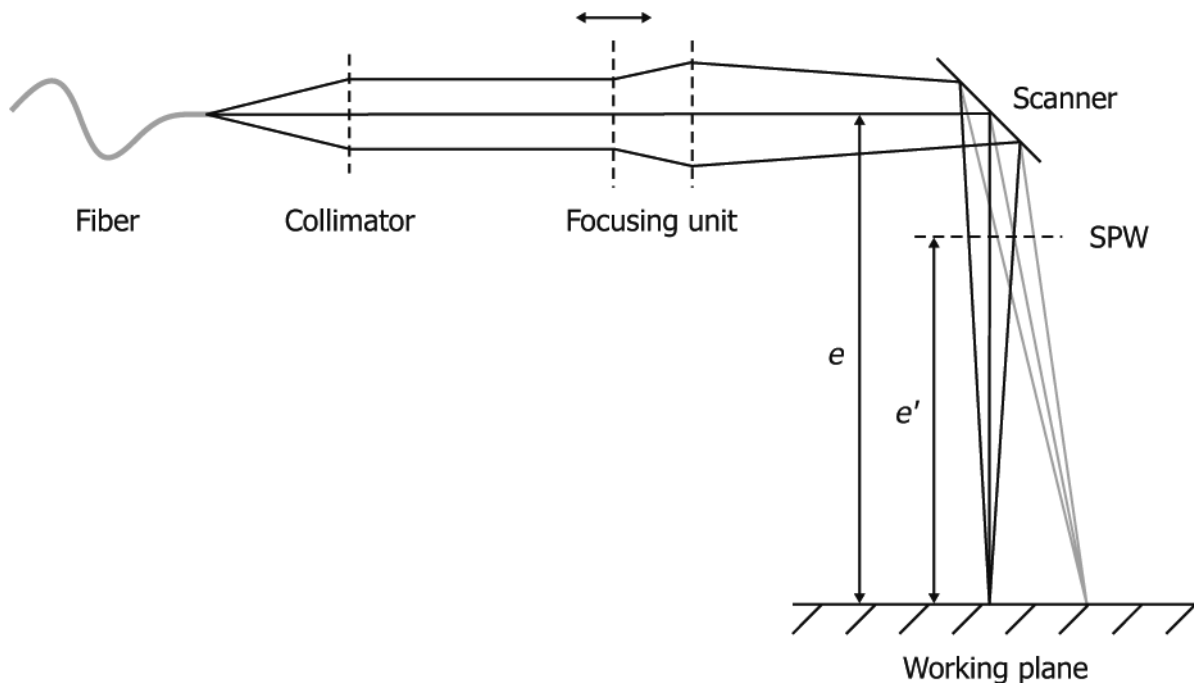


FIG. 1 Typical Layout of a PBF-LB/M Optical System and Relevant Distances

$$d_{L,SPW} = d_L(e') = d_0 \sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{4\lambda e'}{\pi d_0^2}\right)^2} \quad [mm] \quad (2)$$

where:

d_0 = laser spot diameter in focal plane, and
 λ = laser wavelength.

5.3.2.1 If the working distance e remains unknown, a conservative assumption may be:

$$e \approx e' + 50 \text{ mm} \quad [mm] \quad (3)$$

5.3.3 The required sensor resolution (short sensor edge) of the camera system Res_{cam} is determined by the smallest feature (contaminant on SPW surface) to be resolved as a result of the Nyquist criterion:

$$Res_{cam} \geq 2.3 \left(\frac{D_{LA,SPW}}{p} \right) \quad [px] \quad (4)$$

where:

p = size of the smallest feature.

5.3.4 The scales of contaminants typically appearing on the SPW are given in X1.2. Example images of contaminants on a SPW are shown at different resolutions in X1.1.

5.3.5 Particulate matter and individual particles of metal condensate are only resolved by microscope optics. The particle size distribution of the powder used (typically 0.020–0.053 mm) can thus be used as an estimate for the smallest feature to be resolved.

5.3.6 The selectable working distance, $w \in [w_{min}, w_{max}]$, of the camera system is limited depending on the individual geometric boundary conditions of the PBF-LB/M machine. The following considerations based on X1.3 may assist the user of this practice.

5.3.6.1 Maximum working distance, w_{max} , such that collision between recoater and camera system is prevented;

5.3.6.2 Working distance such that maximum angle of view, $\varepsilon \in [0,90]^\circ$, is set;

5.3.6.3 Camera attachment out of range of the laser beam; and

5.3.6.4 If possible, camera mounting should be perpendicular to shielding gas flow direction to prevent flow interference (for example, bypass flow) by the camera body.

5.3.7 The fixed focal length, f , of the objective lens is then limited by:

$$f \leq \frac{w_{max}s}{D_{LA,SPW}} \quad [mm] \quad (5)$$

where:

s = length of the shortest camera sensor edge.

5.3.8 An objective lens with the next smaller fixed focal length available may be selected. With said fixed focal length, the required working distance w can be determined by rearranging Eq 5.

5.3.9 A tilt shift lens (Scheimpflug adjustment) may be used to achieve the greatest possible depth of field DOF at the angle of view of the camera:

$$DOF = D_{LA,SPW} \cos \varepsilon \quad [mm] \quad (6)$$

5.3.9.1 The term Scheimpflug adjustment refers to the ability to tilt the objective lens so that an object plane that is tilted relative to the camera's sensor plane can be sharply imaged.

5.3.9.2 The Scheimpflug principle according to X1.4 should be observed when using a tilt shift lens.

5.3.10 A monochrome area scan camera and an objective lens can be selected based on the recommendations given in 5.3.

5.3.11 The camera should be equipped with a filter that filters scattered radiation of the laser wavelength. An optical density $OD > 3$ may be sufficient for said filter.

5.4 An illumination (for example, ring light) can be attached below the SPW to ensure reproducible boundary conditions for image acquisition. The following considerations may assist the user of this practice when selecting said illumination:

5.4.1 A ring-shaped illumination source (ring light) should be used below the SPW to achieve homogeneous illumination of the laser-affected area;

5.4.2 An illumination that creates about 15° to 45° incidence of light can be beneficial; and

5.4.3 The dominant wavelength of the illumination should deviate from the laser wavelength.

5.5 To account for contamination of the camera lens itself, said lens may be covered with a protective cap during unproductive machine times. The lens can be cleaned along with the condition-defined maintenance of the SPW using a microfiber cloth soaked with diluted isopropyl alcohol.

6. Calibration

6.1 After integration of the camera system into the PBF-LB/M machine, calibration of the system is necessary to achieve reproducible and comparable results. This calibration should be checked regularly during maintenance of the optical system of the PBF-LB/M machine and repeated if necessary. The calibration includes:

- 6.1.1 Focus adjustment,
- 6.1.2 Distortion correction (homography), and
- 6.1.3 Brightness correction.

6.2 Focus adjustment may be assisted by use of a resolving power test target (for example, USAF 1951).

6.2.1 The test target should be attached to the plane to be observed, for example, by applying a metal foil version of the test target to the surface of a scrap SPW.

6.2.1.1 If a test target plate is used, the camera position should be corrected by the thickness of this plate and reset after calibration is complete.

6.2.2 To adjust the focus, the contrast of the captured line pairs to the background along a straight (Fig. 2, red) perpendicular to these line pairs can be evaluated for different focus settings. In focus position, the highest contrast is present (pronounced local minima in the gray value distribution at the positions of the black line pairs).

6.3 The correction of perspective/distortion of the captured images can be achieved via homography. The user of this practice has access to corresponding functions in commercial software or open-source image-processing tools.

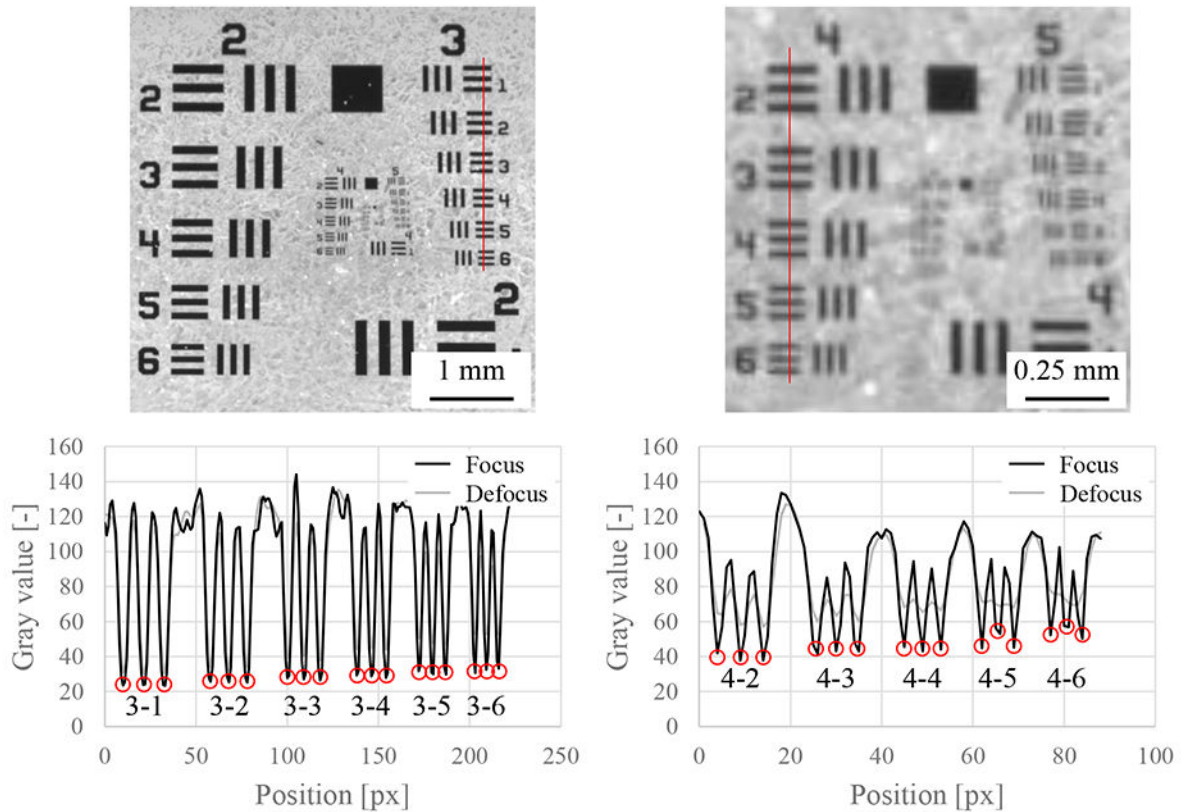


FIG. 2 Focus Adjustment Using a USAF 1951 Resolving Power Test Target

6.3.1 To calculate the homography matrix, H , a checkerboard pattern as per Fig. 3 should be recorded.

6.3.2 The homography matrix remains constant for all images unless the relative orientation between the camera system and SPW is changed.

6.4 If a single camera under angle of view, ϵ , is used to observe the SPW, a brightness gradient is to be expected in the acquired image data as a result of light that is reflected from contaminants on the surface of the SPW and incident on the camera sensor. This is illustrated in X1.5.

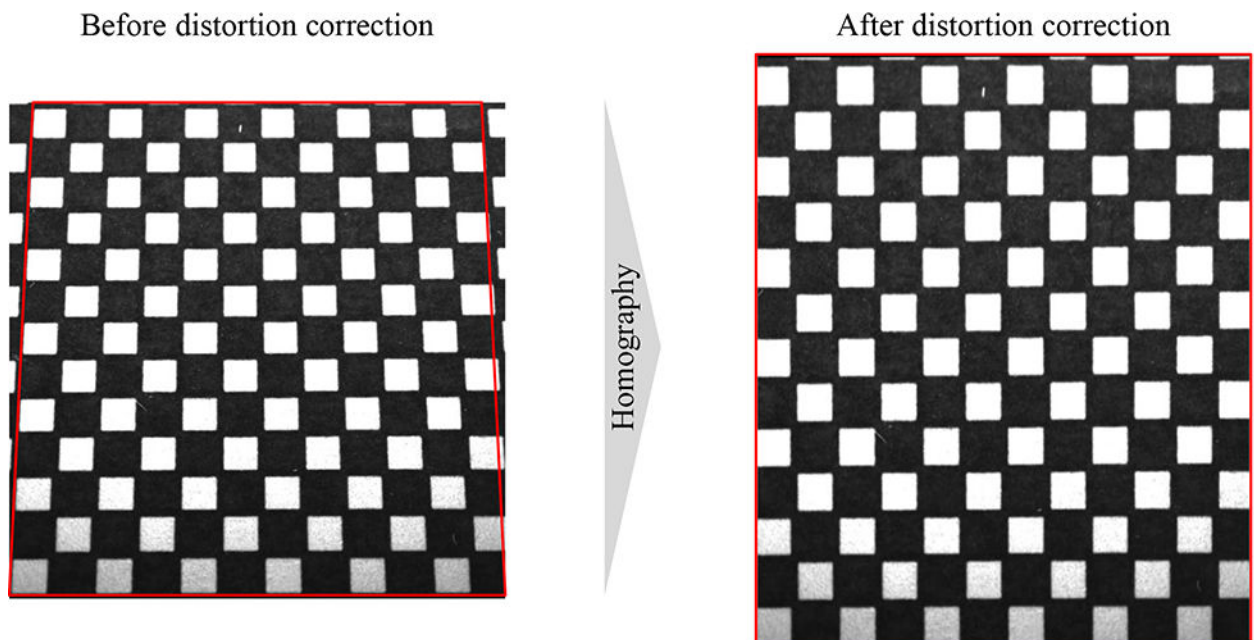


FIG. 3 Image of a Checkerboard Pattern Before and After Correction via Homography