

Electric cables — Calculation of the current rating —

**Part 1: Current rating equations (100 %
load factor) and calculation of losses —**

Section 1.1 General

ICS 29.060.20

Committees responsible for this British Standard

The preparation of this British Standard was entrusted to Technical Committee GEL/20, Electric cables, upon which the following bodies were represented:

- Association of Consulting Engineers
- Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Electrical Appliances
- BEAMA Electrical Cable and Conductor Accessory Manufacturers' Association
- British Approvals Service for Cables
- British Cable Makers Confederation
- British Iron and Steel Producers' Association
- British Plastics Federation
- Department of Trade and Industry (Consumer Safety Unit, CA division)
- Electricity Association
- London Regional Transport

The following bodies were also represented in the drafting of the standard, through subcommittees and panels:

- ERA Technology Ltd.
- Institution of Incorporated Executive Engineers
- London Underground Ltd.

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National foreword

This section of BS 7769 has been prepared by Technical Committee GEL/20. It is identical with IEC 60287-1-1:1994 *Electric cables — Calculation of the current rating — Part 1: Current rating equations (100 % load factor) and calculation of losses — Section 1: General*, including amendment 1:1995 and amendment 2:2001, published by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). IEC amendment 1:1995 was incorporated into the text of standard IEC 60287-1-1:1994 when it was published as BS 7769-1.1:1997.

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Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 26, an inside back cover and a back cover.

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Introduction

IEC 60287 has been divided into three parts and sections so that revisions of, and additions to, the document can be carried out more conveniently.

Each part is divided into sections which are published as separate standards:

- *Part 1: Formulae for ratings (100 % load factor) and power losses;*
- *Part 2: Formulae for thermal resistance;*
- *Part 3: Sections on operating conditions.*

Part 1 — Section 1: General, contains formulae for the quantities R , W_d , λ_1 and λ_2 .

This section contains methods for calculating the permissible current rating of cables from details of the permissible temperature rise, conductor resistance, losses and thermal resistivities.

Formulae for the calculation of losses are also given in this section.

The formulae in this standard contain quantities which vary with cable design and materials used. The values given in the tables are either internationally agreed, for example, electrical resistivities and resistance temperature coefficients, or are those which are generally accepted in practice, for example, thermal resistivities and permittivities of materials. In this latter category, some of the values given are not characteristic of the quality of new cables but are considered to apply to cables after a long period of use. In order that uniform and comparable results may be obtained, the current ratings should be calculated with the values given in this standard. However, where it is known with certainty that other values are more appropriate to the materials and design, then these may be used, and the corresponding current rating declared in addition, provided that the different values are quoted.

Quantities related to the operating conditions of cables are liable to vary considerably from one country to another. For instance, with respect to the ambient temperature and soil thermal resistivity, the values are governed in various countries by different considerations. Superficial comparisons between the values used in the various countries may lead to erroneous conclusions if they are not based on common criteria: for example, there may be different expectations for the life of the cables, and in some countries design is based on maximum values of soil thermal resistivity, whereas in others average values are used. Particularly, in the case of soil thermal resistivity, it is well known that this quantity is very sensitive to soil moisture content and may vary significantly with time, depending on the soil type, the topographical and meteorological conditions, and the cable loading.

The following procedure for choosing the values for the various parameters should, therefore, be adopted.

Numerical values should preferably be based on results of suitable measurements. Often such results are already included in national specifications as recommended values, so that the calculation may be based on these values generally used in the country in question; a survey of such values is given in Part 3, Section 1.

A suggested list of the information required to select the appropriate type of cable is given in Part 3, Section 1.

1 General

1.1 Scope

This section of IEC 60287 is applicable to the conditions of steady-state operation of cables at all alternating voltages, and direct voltages up to 5 kV, buried directly in the ground, in ducts, troughs or in steel pipes, both with and without partial drying-out of the soil, as well as cables in air. The term “steady state” is intended to mean a continuous constant current (100 % load factor) just sufficient to produce asymptotically the maximum conductor temperature, the surrounding ambient conditions being assumed constant.

This section provides formulae for current ratings and losses.

The formulae given are essentially literal and designedly leave open the selection of certain important parameters. These may be divided into three groups:

- parameters related to construction of a cable (for example, thermal resistivity of insulating material) for which representative values have been selected based on published work;
- parameters related to the surrounding conditions, which may vary widely, the selection of which depends on the country in which the cables are used or are to be used;
- parameters which result from an agreement between manufacturer and user and which involve a margin for security of service (for example, maximum conductor temperature).

1.2 Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this section of IEC 60287-1. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All normative documents are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this section of IEC 60287-1 are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

IEC 60027, *Letter symbols to be used in electrical technology*.

IEC 60028:1925, *International standard of resistance for copper*.

IEC 60141, *Tests on oil-filled and gas-pressure cables and their accessories*.

IEC 60183:1984, *Guide to the selection of high-voltage cables*.

IEC 60228:1978, *Conductors of insulated cables. Amendment No. 1 (1993)*.

IEC 60228A:1982, *First supplement — Guide to the dimensional limits of circular conductors*.

IEC 60502:1983, *Extruded solid dielectric insulated power cables for rated voltages from 1 kV up to 30 kV*.

IEC 60889:1987, *Hard-drawn aluminium wire for overhead line conductors*.

1.3 Symbols

The symbols used in this standard and the quantities which they represent are given in the following list:

A	cross-sectional area of the armour	mm ²
B_1 B_2	} coefficients (see 2.4.2)	
C		
D_e^*	capacitance per core	F/m
D_e	external diameter of cable	m
D_i	diameter over insulation	mm
D_s	external diameter of metal sheath	mm
D_{oc}	the diameter of the imaginary coaxial cylinder which just touches the crests of a corrugated sheath	mm
D_{it}	the diameter of the imaginary cylinder which just touches the inside surface of the troughs of a corrugated sheath	mm
F	coefficient defined in 2.3.5	
H	intensity of solar radiation	W/m ²
H	magnetizing force (see 2.4.2)	ampere turns/m
H_s	inductance of sheath	H/m
H_1 H_2 H_3	} components of inductance due to the steel wires (see 2.4.2)	H/m
I		
M N		
	current in one conductor (r.m.s. value)	A
	} coefficients defined in 2.3.5	

P	} coefficient defined in 2.3.3	Ω/m
Q		
R	alternating current resistance of conductor at its maximum operating temperature	Ω/m
R_A	a.c. resistance of armour	Ω/m
R_e	equivalent a.c. resistance of sheath and armour in parallel	Ω/m
R_s	a.c. resistance of sheath	Ω/m
R'	d.c. resistance of conductor at maximum operating temperature	Ω/m
R_o	d.c. resistance of conductor at 20 °C	Ω/m
T_1	thermal resistance per core between conductor and sheath	$\text{K}\cdot\text{m}/\text{W}$
T_2	thermal resistance between sheath and armour	$\text{K}\cdot\text{m}/\text{W}$
T_3	thermal resistance of external serving	$\text{K}\cdot\text{m}/\text{W}$
T_4	thermal resistance of surrounding medium (ratio of cable surface temperature rise above ambient to the losses per unit length)	$\text{K}\cdot\text{m}/\text{W}$
T^*_4	external thermal resistance in free air, adjusted for solar radiation	$\text{K}\cdot\text{m}/\text{W}$
U_o	voltage between conductor and screen or sheath	V
W_A	losses in armour per unit length	W/m
W_c	losses in conductor per unit length	W/m
W_d	dielectric losses per unit length per phase	W/m
W_s	losses dissipated in sheath per unit length	W/m
$W_{(s+A)}$	total losses in sheath and armour per unit length	W/m
X	reactance of sheath (two-core cables and three-core cables in trefoil)	Ω/m
X_1	reactance of sheath (cables in flat formation)	Ω/m
X_m	mutual reactance between the sheath of one cable and the conductors of the other two when cables are in flat information	Ω/m
a	shortest minor length in a cross-bonded electrical section having unequal minor lengths	
c	distance between the axes of conductors and the axis of the cable for three-core cables ($=0,55 r_1 + 0,29 t$ for sector-shaped conductors)	mm
d	mean diameter of sheath or screen	mm
d'	mean diameter of sheath and reinforcement	mm
d_2	mean diameter of reinforcement	mm
d_A	mean diameter of armour	mm
d_c	external diameter of conductor	mm
d'_c	external diameter of equivalent round solid conductor having the same central duct as a hollow conductor	mm
d_d	internal diameter of pipe	mm
d_f	diameter of a steel wire	mm
d_i	internal diameter of hollow conductor	mm
d_M	major diameter of screen or sheath of an oval conductor	mm
d_m	minor diameter of screen or sheath of an oval conductor	mm
d_x	diameter of an equivalent circular conductor having the same cross-sectional area and degree of compactness as the shaped one	mm
f	system frequency	Hz
g_s	coefficient used in 2.3.6.1	
k	factor used in the calculation of hysteresis losses in armour or reinforcement (see 2.4.2.4)	
k_p	factor used in calculating x_p (proximity effect)	
k_s	factor used in calculating x_s (skin effect)	

l	length of a cable section (general symbol, see clause 2.3 and 2.3.4)	m
$\ln$	natural logarithm (logarithm to base e)	
m	$\frac{\omega}{R_s} 10^{-7}$	
n	number of conductors in a cable	
n_1	number of steel wires in a cable (see 2.4.2)	
p	length of lay of a steel wire along a cable (see 2.4.2)	
p q	} coefficients used in 2.3.6.2	
r_1	circumscribing radius of two- or three-sector shaped conductors	mm
s	axial separation of conductors	mm
s_1	axial separation of two adjacent cables in a horizontal group of three, not touching	mm
s_2	axial separation of cables (see 2.4.2)	mm
t	insulation thickness between conductors	mm
t_3	thickness of the serving	mm
t_s	thickness of the sheath	mm
v	ratio of the thermal resistivities of dry and moist soils ($v = \rho_d/\rho_w$)	
x_p	argument of a Bessel function used to calculate proximity effect	
x_s	argument of a Bessel function used to calculate skin effect	
y_p y_s	} (see 2.1) proximity effect factor skin effect factor	
α_{20}	temperature coefficient of electrical resistivity at 20 °C, per kelvin	I/K
β	angle between axis of armour wires and axis of cable (see 2.4.2)	
β_1	coefficient used in 2.3.6.1	
γ	angular time delay (see 2.4.2)	
Δ_1 Δ_2	} coefficients used in 2.3.6.1	
δ	equivalent thickness of armour or reinforcement	mm
$\tan \delta$	loss factor of insulation	
ε	relative permittivity of insulation	
θ	maximum operating temperature of conductor	°C
θ_a	ambient temperature	°C
θ_x	critical temperature of soil; this is the temperature of the boundary between dry and moist zones	°C
$\Delta \theta$	permissible temperature rise of conductor above ambient temperature	K
$\Delta \theta_x$	critical temperature rise of soil; this is the temperature rise of the boundary between dry and moist zones above the ambient temperature of the soil	K
λ_o	coefficient used in 2.3.6.1	
λ_1, λ_2	ratio of the total losses in metallic sheaths and armour respectively to the total conductor losses (or losses in one sheath or armour to the losses in one conductor)	
λ'_1	ratio of the losses in one sheath caused by circulating currents in the sheath to the losses in one conductor	
λ''_1	ratio of the losses in one sheath caused by eddy currents to the losses in one conductor	

λ'_{1m}	loss factor for the middle cable	} Three cables in flat formation without transposition, with sheaths bonded at both ends
λ'_{11}	loss factor for the outer cable with the greater losses	
λ'_{12}	loss factor for the outer cable with the least losses	
μ	relative magnetic permeability of armour material	
μ_e	longitudinal relative permeability	
μ_t	transverse relative permeability	
ρ	conductor resistivity at 20 °C	$\Omega \cdot m$
ρ_d	thermal resistivity of dry soil	$K \cdot m/W$
ρ_w	thermal resistivity of moist soil	$K \cdot m/W$
ρ_s	sheath resistivity at 20 °C	$\Omega \cdot m$
σ	absorption coefficient of solar radiation for the cable surface	
ω	angular frequency of system ($2\pi f$)	

1.4 Permissible current rating of cables

When the permissible current rating is being calculated under conditions of partial drying out of the soil, it is also necessary to calculate a rating for conditions where drying out of the soil does not occur. The lower of the two ratings shall be used.

1.4.1 Buried cables where drying out of the soil does not occur or cables in air

1.4.1.1 AC cables

The permissible current rating of an a.c. cable can be derived from the expression for the temperature rise above ambient temperature:

$$\Delta\theta = (I^2 R + \frac{1}{2} W_d) T_1 + [I^2 R (1 + \lambda_1) + W_d] n T_2 + [I^2 R (1 + \lambda_1 + \lambda_2) + W_d] n (T_3 + T_4)$$

where

I is the current flowing in one conductor (A);

$\Delta\theta$ is the conductor temperature rise above the ambient temperature (K);

NOTE The ambient temperature is the temperature of the surrounding medium under normal conditions, at a situation in which cables are installed, or are to be installed, including the effect of any local source of heat, but not the increase of temperature in the immediate neighbourhood of the cables due to heat arising therefrom.

R is the alternating current resistance per unit length of the conductor at maximum operating temperature (Ω/m);

W_d is the dielectric loss per unit length for the insulation surrounding the conductor (W/m);

T_1 is the thermal resistance per unit length between one conductor and the sheath ($K \cdot m/W$);

T_2 is the thermal resistance per unit length of the bedding between sheath and armour ($K \cdot m/W$);

T_3 is the thermal resistance per unit length of the external serving of the cable ($K \cdot m/W$);

T_4 is the thermal resistance per unit length between the cable surface and the surrounding medium, as derived from 2.2 of part 2 ($K \cdot m/W$);

n is the number of load-carrying conductors in the cable (conductors of equal size and carrying the same load);

λ_1 is the ratio of losses in the metal sheath to total losses in all conductors in that cable;

λ_2 is the ratio of losses in the armouring to total losses in all conductors in that cable.

The permissible current rating is obtained from the above formula as follows:

$$I = \left[\frac{\Delta\theta - W_d [0,5 T_1 + n (T_2 + T_3 + T_4)]}{R T_1 + n R (1 + \lambda_1) T_2 + n R (1 + \lambda_1 + \lambda_2) (T_3 + T_4)} \right]^{0,5}$$

Where the cable is exposed to direct solar radiation the formula given in 2.2.1.2 of part 2 shall be used.

The current rating for a four-core low-voltage cable may be taken to be equal to the current rating of a three-core cable for the same voltage and conductor size having the same construction, provided that the cable is to be used in a three-phase system where the fourth conductor is either a neutral conductor or a protective conductor. When it is a neutral conductor, the current rating applies to a balanced load.

1.4.1.2 DC cables up to 5 kV

The permissible current rating of a d.c. cable is obtained from the following simplification of the a.c. formula:

$$I = \left[\frac{\Delta\theta}{R' T_1 + n R' T_2 + n R' (T_3 + T_4)} \right]^{0,5}$$

where

R' is the direct current resistance per unit length of the conductor at maximum operating temperature (Ω/m).

Where the cable is exposed to direct solar radiation the formulae given in 2.2.1.2 of part 2 shall be used.

1.4.2 Buried cables where partial drying-out of the soil occurs

1.4.2.1 AC cables

The following method shall be applied to a single isolated cable or circuit only, laid at conventional depths. The method is based on a simple two-zone approximate physical model of the soil where the zone adjacent to the cable is dried out whilst the other zone retains the site's thermal resistivity, the zone boundary being on isotherm¹⁾. This method is considered to be appropriate for those applications in which soil behaviour is considered in simple terms only.

NOTE Installations of more than one circuit as well as the necessary spacing between circuits are under consideration.

Changes in external thermal resistance, consequent to the formation of a dry zone around a single isolated cable or circuit, shall be obtained from the following formula (compared with the formula of 1.4.1.1):

$$I = \left[\frac{\Delta\theta - W_d [0,5 T_1 + n (T_2 + T_3 + \nu T_4)] + (\nu - 1) \Delta\theta_x}{R [T_1 + n (1 + \lambda_1) T_2 + n (1 + \lambda_1 + \lambda_2) (T_3 + \nu T_4)]} \right]^{0,5}$$

where

ν is the ratio of the thermal resistivities of the dry and moist soil zones ($\nu = \rho_d/\rho_w$);

R is the a.c. resistance of the conductor at its maximum operating temperature (Ω/m);

ρ_d is the thermal resistivity of the dry soil ($\text{K}\cdot\text{m}/\text{W}$);

ρ_w is the thermal resistivity of the moist soil ($\text{K}\cdot\text{m}/\text{W}$);

θ_x is the critical temperature of the soil and temperature of the boundary between dry and moist zones ($^{\circ}\text{C}$);

θ_a is the ambient temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$);

$\Delta\theta_x$ is the critical temperature rise of the soil. This is the temperature rise of the boundary between the dry and moist zones above the ambient temperature of the soil ($\theta_x - \theta_a$) (K);

¹⁾ "Current ratings of cables buried in partially dried-out soil, — Part 1": *Electra* No. 104, p.11, January 1966 (in particular Section 3 and Appendix 1).