

Fibre optic interconnecting devices and passive components — Basic test and measurement procedures —

Part 3-6: Examinations and measurements — Return loss

The European Standard EN 61300-3-6:2003 has the status of a
British Standard

ICS 33.180.20

National foreword

This British Standard is the official English language version of EN 61300-3-6:2003. It is identical with IEC 61300-3-6:2003. It supersedes BS EN 61300-3-6:1997 which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted by Technical Committee GEL/86, Fibre optics, to Subcommittee GEL/86/2, Fibre optic interconnecting devices and passive components, which has the responsibility to:

- aid enquirers to understand the text;
- present to the responsible international/European committee any enquiries on the interpretation, or proposals for change, and keep the UK interests informed;
- monitor related international and European developments and promulgate them in the UK.

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This British Standard was published under the authority of the Standards Policy and Strategy Committee on 9 May 2003

Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, the EN title page, pages 2 to 25 and a back cover.

The BSI copyright date displayed in this document indicates when the document was last issued.

Amendments issued since publication

Amd. No.	Date	Comments

© BSI 9 May 2003

ISBN 0 580 41747 6

English version

**Fibre optic interconnecting devices and passive components -
Basic test and measurement procedures
Part 3-6: Examinations and measurements -
Return loss
(IEC 61300-3-6:2003)**

Dispositifs d'interconnexion
et composants passifs à fibres optiques -
Méthodes fondamentales d'essais
et de mesures
Partie 3-6: Examens et mesures -
Puissance réfléchie
(CEI 61300-3-6:2003)

Lichtwellenleiter-Verbindungselemente
und passive Bauteile -
Grundlegende Prüf- und Messverfahren
Teil 3-6: Untersuchungen und Messungen -
Rückflusdämpfung
(IEC 61300-3-6:2003)

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Up-to-date lists and bibliographical references concerning such national standards may be obtained on application to the Central Secretariat or to any CENELEC member.

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European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization
Comité Européen de Normalisation Electrotechnique
Europäisches Komitee für Elektrotechnische Normung

Central Secretariat: rue de Stassart 35, B - 1050 Brussels

Foreword

The text of document 86B/1778/FDIS, future edition 2 of IEC 61300-3-6, prepared by SC 86B, Fibre optic interconnecting devices and passive components, of IEC TC 86, Fibre optics, was submitted to the IEC-CENELEC parallel vote and was approved by CENELEC as EN 61300-3-6 on 2003-03-01.

This European Standard supersedes EN 61300-3-6:1997 + A1:1998 + A2:1999.

The following dates were fixed:

- latest date by which the EN has to be implemented
at national level by publication of an identical
national standard or by endorsement (dop) 2003-12-01
- latest date by which the national standards conflicting
with the EN have to be withdrawn (dow) 2006-03-01

Annexes designated "normative" are part of the body of the standard.
Annexes designated "informative" are given for information only.
In this standard, annex ZA normative and annex A is informative.
Annex ZA has been added by CENELEC.

Endorsement notice

The text of the International Standard IEC 61300-3-6:2003 was approved by CENELEC as a European Standard without any modification.

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FIBRE OPTIC INTERCONNECTING DEVICES AND PASSIVE COMPONENTS – BASIC TEST AND MEASUREMENT PROCEDURES –

Part 3-6: Examinations and measurements – Return loss

1 Scope

This part of IEC 61300 presents procedures for the measurement of the return loss (RL) of a fibre optic device under test (DUT). RL, as used in this standard, is the ratio of the power (P_i) incident on, or entering, the DUT to the total power reflected (P_r) by the DUT, expressed in decibels:

$$RL = -10 \cdot \log\left(\frac{P_r}{P_i}\right) \quad (1)$$

Return loss is a positive number.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

IEC 60793-2 (all parts), *Optical fibres – Product specifications*

IEC 61300-1, *Fibre optic interconnecting devices and passive components – Basic test and measurement procedures – Part 1: General and guidance*

IEC 61300-3-1, *Fibre optic interconnecting devices and passive components – Basic test and measurement procedures – Part 3-1: Examinations and measurements – Visual examination*

IEC 61300-3-39, *Fibre optic interconnecting devices and passive components – Basic test and measurement procedures – Part 3-39: Examinations and measurements – PC optical connector reference plug selection*

3 General description

Four methods will be presented for measuring optical return loss:

- measurement with an optical continuous wave reflectometer (OCWR) (method 1);
- measurement with an optical time domain reflectometer (OTDR) (method 2);
- measurement with an optical low coherence reflectometry (OLCR) (method 3);
- measurement with an optical frequency domain reflectometry (OFDR) (method 4).

These four measurement methods have different characteristics and different applications in terms of spatial resolution and detectable RL (in annex A a comparison of return loss detectable by the four different methods is reported).

3.1 Method 1

This technique is the nearest to the theoretical definition of return loss given by equation (1). It measures directly the incident power and the reflected power. It is not affected by instrumental data processing and it gives absolute measurement values, which are not relative to a reference reflection (technique A). This method has some limiting factors: it cannot spatially resolve two different reflections on the line and its dynamic range is limited by the characteristics of the branching device and by the ability to suppress the reflections beyond the one from the DUT.

3.2 Method 2

This method allows measurement of RL from reflection points on an optical line, with a spatial resolution in the metre range and with a dynamic range of more than 75 dB (depending on the pulse width) using an OTDR instrument.

The OTDR measurement method is very suitable for field measurements where it is necessary to measure RLs on long optical lines.

3.3 Method 3

The purpose of this method is to measure reflection profiles of single-mode optical devices with a micrometre spatial resolution and a high dynamic range (>90 dB) by using optical low-coherence interference.

The reflection profile is defined as a distribution of reflections at individual end-faces and/or connected points in single-mode optical devices. When the reflection at a particular point is $-R$ (dB), the return loss at this point is given by R (dB). This method measures the reflection at a point by detecting the power of a beat signal produced by optical interference between the reflected light and the reference light. When a component with dispersed reflections is analysed, each reflection can be identified and located, provided their separation is greater than the spatial resolution of the measurement system.

3.4 Method 4

The purpose of this procedure is to measure the return loss of single-mode optical devices with a spatial resolution in the centimetre range and high dynamic range (>70 dB) by using optical frequency domain reflectometry

One of the prime benefits of this technique is the ability to spatially resolve the desired reflection from undesired ones, such as all of the connectors or unterminated ports on the DUT, without any dead zone. Moreover, the OFDR method is highly reliable and the apparatus can be compact.

Measurement in the frequency domain is based on the ability to convert information in the time domain by means of an inverse Fourier transform. In this way with a source modulated from some kHz to 1 GHz, it is possible to resolve two reflective points on an optical line separated by some centimetres.

3.5 Selection of reference measurement method

Due to the different characteristics of these methods, and their different application fields, the reference method depends on the type of DUT. For a component with $RL \leq 55$ dB the reference is method 1, for a component with $RL > 55$ dB the reference is method 2 using a pulse duration less than 100 ns. In cases in which it is necessary to resolve more reflection points separated by a distance of less than 5 m, the reference shall be method 3.

4 Apparatus and symbols

4.1 Device under test (DUT)

Where the DUT is the mounted connector on one end of a component, the reference mating plug shall be considered one-half of the DUT connection on the temporary joint (TJ) side and have the same end-face finish and minimum performance as the connectors to be measured.

Where the DUT is an entire component assembly terminated with pigtailed with or without connectors, reference plugs with pigtailed and, as required, reference adapters are to be added to those ports with connector terminations so as to form complete connector assemblies with pigtailed. Reference mating plugs shall then be considered one-half of the TJ and have the same end-face finish and minimum performance as the connectors to be measured. All unused ports shall be terminated as stated in 4.2.5.

Unless otherwise specified, reference plugs shall meet IEC 61300-3-39. The reference adapters shall meet the appropriate IEC connector interface dimensions and ensure a high degree of repeatability and reproducibility. It is recommended that the test adapters be tested and visually inspected after every 100 matings and replaced after 500 matings.

4.2 Method 1: measurements with OCWR

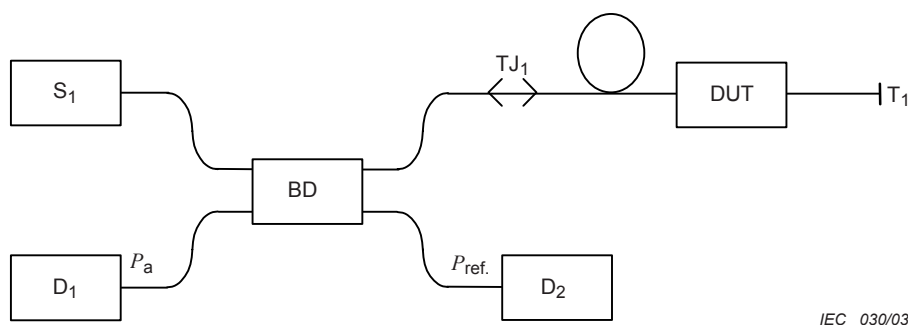


Figure 1 – Measurement set-up of return loss OCWR method

The circuit in Figure 1 is representative of, but is not the only, circuit that may be used for OCWR return loss measurement. The requirements are that the values measured satisfy the following two conditions:

- P_a (power measured by the detector D_1) shall be proportional to the power reflected from the DUT, P_r , plus the reflected power originating in the measurement circuit outside of the DUT, P_0 :

$$P_a = C_1 P_r + P_0 \quad (\text{mW}) \quad (2)$$

- P_{ref} (power measured by the detector D_2) shall be proportional to the power incident on the DUT, P_i :

$$P_{\text{ref}} = C_2 P_i \quad (\text{mW}) \quad (3)$$

where

P_r is the power reflected from the DUT (equation (1));

P_i is the power incident on the DUT (equation (1));

P_0 is the system reflected power originating in the measurement circuit;

C_1 is the branching device transfer coefficient;

C_2 is the splitting ratio of the branching device;

The following is a list of the apparatus and components used in the measurement of return loss using an OCWR (see Figure 1).

4.2.1 Branching device (BD)

The splitting ratio of the BD shall be stable and be insensitive to polarization ($<0,1$ dB). The directivity shall be at least 10 dB higher than the maximum return loss to be measured (see 5.4.4).

4.2.2 Detector (D1, D2 and D3)

The detector used consists of an optical detector, the associated electronics, and a means of connecting to an optic fibre. The optical connection may be a receptacle for an optical connector, a fibre pigtail or a bare fibre adapter.

The detectors are linear. Since all of the measurements are differential, however, it is not necessary that the calibration be absolute. Care shall be taken to suppress the reflected power from the detector D_2 during the measurement.

Where, during the sequence of measurements, a detector is disconnected and reconnected, the coupling efficiency for the two measurements shall be maintained.

4.2.3 Source (S_1 and S_2)

The source consists of an optical emitter, associated drive electronics, an excitation unit, and a fibre connector or fibre pigtail. A second source S_2 may be used for calibration, as illustrated in Figure 6. Where a second source is used, the central wavelength and spectral width of S_2 shall be the same as S_1 .

4.2.4 Temporary joint (TJ)

A temporary joint is a joint that is made to connect the DUT into the measurement circuit. Examples of temporary joints are a connector, splice, vacuum chuck or micro-manipulator. The loss of the TJ shall be stable and the TJ shall have a return loss of at least 10 dB greater than the maximum return loss to be measured (see 5.4.4).

Where a return loss greater than 50 dB is to be measured, a fusion splice is advised in order to guarantee the prescribed measurement precision.

4.2.5 Termination (T)

Fibre terminations marked T shall have a high return loss. Three types of terminations are suggested:

- angled fibre ends: the value of the angle depends on the fibre type; however, it shall be higher than 12° ;
- the application of an index match material to the fibre end;
- attenuation in the fibre, for example, with a mandrel wrap (not applicable to multimode fibre).

Where attenuation is used as a termination, it may be applied between components. For example, the measurement of P_0 in Figure 5 may be made by applying attenuation between TJ_1 and the DUT in Figure 8.

The fibre termination shall have a return loss of at least 20 dB greater than the maximum return loss to be measured.

Where a return loss greater than 50 dB is to be measured, the “attenuation in the fibre” termination technique is advised in order to guarantee the prescribed measurement precision.