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Space systems — Probabilistic risk assessment (PRA)

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National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of ISO 11231:2019. It supersedes BS ISO 11231:2010, which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee ACE/68, Space systems and operations.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 20, *Aircraft and space vehicles*, Subcommittee SC 14, *Space systems and operations*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 11231:2010), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

— updated definitions of terms;

— simplification of Clause 4;

— updated figures and tables;

— addition of capability-based safety, reliability and quality assurance.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

Structured risk management processes use qualitative and quantitative risk assessment techniques to support optimal decisions regarding safety and the probability of mission success, as provided in ISO 17666. The most systematic and comprehensive methodology for conducting these evaluations is probabilistic risk assessment (PRA).

PRA has, over the past three decades, become the principal analytic method for identifying and analysing risk from projects and complex systems. Its utility for risk management (RM) has been proven in many industries, including aerospace, electricity generation, petrochemical and defence. PRA is a methodology used to identify and evaluate risk, in order to facilitate RM activities by identifying dominant contributors to risk, so that resources can be effectively allocated to address significant risk drivers and are not wasted on items that contribute insignificantly to the risk. In addition to analysing risk, PRA provides a framework to quantify uncertainties in events and event sequences that are important to system safety. By enabling the quantification of uncertainty, PRA informs decision makers on the sources of uncertainty and provides information on the worth of investment resources in reducing uncertainty. In this way, PRA supplements traditional safety analyses that support safety-related decisions. Through the use of PRA, safety analyses are capable of focusing on both the probability and severity of events and consequences that adversely impact safety.

PRA differs from reliability analysis in two important respects:

a) PRA allows a more precise quantification of uncertainty both for individual events and for the overall system;

b) PRA applies more informative evaluations that quantify metrics related to the occurrence of highly adverse consequences (e.g. fatalities, loss of mission), as opposed to narrowly defined system performance metrics (e.g. mean-time-to-failure).

PRA also differs from hazard analyses, which identifies and evaluates metrics related to the effects of high-consequence and low-probability events, treating them as if they had happened, i.e. without regard to their probability of occurrence. In addition, the completeness of the set of accident scenarios cannot be assured in the conduct of a hazard analysis. PRA results are more diverse and directly applicable to resource allocation and other RM decision-making based on a broader spectrum of consequence metrics.

Through the PRA process, weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the system that can adversely impact safety, performance and mission success are identified. These results in turn provide insights into viable RM strategies to reduce risk and direct the decision maker to areas where expenditure of resources to improve design and operation might be more effective.

The most useful applications of PRA have been in the risk evaluation of complex systems that can result in low-probability and high-consequence scenarios, or the evaluation of complex scenarios consisting of chains of events that collectively may adversely impact system safety more than individually.

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Space systems — Probabilistic risk assessment (PRA)

1 Scope

This document supports and complements the implementation of the risk management process defined in ISO 17666 in situations when the application of a quantitative risk assessment is deemed necessary.

This document defines the principles, process, implementation and requirements for conducting a quantitative risk assessment and explains the details of probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) as applied to safety. While PRA can be applied to project risk management involving cost and schedule, this application is outside the scope of this document.

This document provides the basic requirements and procedures for the use of PRA techniques to assess safety or mission risk and success in space programmes and projects. This document is applicable to all international space projects involving:

— the design of space vehicles for the transportation of personnel in space;

— the design of space and non-terrestrial planetary stations inhabited by human beings;

— the design of space and launch vehicles powered by, or carrying, nuclear materials;

— other projects as directed by the authorities or clients.

These types of projects generally involve scenarios, chains of events or activities that could result in the death of, or serious injury to, members of the public, astronauts or pilots, or the workforce, or the loss of critical or high-value equipment and property. For other types of projects, it is intended that PRA be performed at the discretion of the project management.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements 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.

ISO 17666, *Space systems — Risk management*

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms

3.1 Terms and definitions

For the purpose of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 17666 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

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3.1.1
acceptable risk
safety risk, the severity, and the *probability* (3.1.3) of which, may be reasonably accepted by humanity, without durable or irreversible foreseeable consequences on health, Earth, and the environment, at the present time and in the future

[SOURCE: ISO 14620-2:2011, 3.1, modified — The EXAMPLE has been removed]

3.1.2
expert judgment
systematic and structured elicitation of probability data through the estimation and assessment by specialists

Note 1 to entry: "Structured" implies the use of a method; "systematic" means regularly.

Note 2 to entry: Mathematical aggregation of individual judgments is generally preferred over behavioural or consensus aggregation.

3.1.3
probability
probability of occurrence or measure for the occurrence rate or frequency of an event, a hazard scenario or consequence

3.1.4
probability reference frame
relative indicator against which the *probability* (3.1.3) is expressed

Note 1 to entry: The probability reference frame is linked to the structure of the analysis. A typical reference frame in use in space projects is "per mission".

3.1.5
risk
undesirable situation or circumstance that has both a likelihood of occurring and a potentially negative consequence on a project

Note 1 to entry: Risks arise from uncertainty due to a lack of predictability or control of events. Risks are inherent to any project and can arise at any time during the project life cycle; reducing these uncertainties reduces the risk.

[SOURCE: ISO 17666:2016, 3.1.12]

3.1.6
risk contribution
measure of the decrease of the *probability* (3.1.3) of a top consequence, when the events associated with the corresponding risk contributor are assumed not to occur

Note 1 to entry: Risk contribution indicates (and is directly proportional to) the "risk reduction potential" of the risk contributor. Important risk contributors are events, which have a high-risk contribution and risk reduction potential.

Note 2 to entry: Risk contribution provides a systematic measure that makes it possible to rank design and operation constituents of a system from a safety risk point of view. It allows the identification of high risk or vulnerable areas in the system, which can then serve as drivers for safety improvements.

3.1.7
risk contributor
single event or particular set of events upon which the risk depends

Note 1 to entry: Risk contributors can be ranked relative to each other by their *risk contribution* (3.1.7).

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