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Control charts for arithmetic average with warning limits

Cartes de contrôle de la moyenne arithmétique à limites de surveillance



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Foreword

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International Standard ISO 7873 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 69, *Applications of statistical methods*, Sub-Committee SC 4, *Statistical process control*.

Annex A forms an integral part of this International Standard. Annexes B, C and D are for information only.

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Introduction

The statistical control of processes using arithmetic average control charts with warning limits is a modification of Shewhart control charts. Control charts for the arithmetic average using both warning and action limits are characterized by higher sensitivity to a process level shift.

Arithmetic average control charts with warning limits are able to reveal smaller shifts of the mean value of the controlled quality measure because of additional information obtained from the points being accumulated in the warning zone. In addition, sudden large shifts in process level are detectable if sample average values fall beyond action limits. In comparison with Shewhart control charts, they are more sensitive in the case of minor and slowly forming biases of the quality measure (that is, shifts not exceeding $2,5\sigma/\sqrt{n}$, where σ is the standard deviation of the quality measure and n is the sample size).

Control charts for arithmetic average with warning limits

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies procedures for the statistical control of processes by using control charts based on calculating the arithmetic average of a sample and using warning limits and action limits. It is assumed that for large lots and for the mass output of piece and batch production, such a measure of quality is a random variable following a normal distribution. However, when averages of four or more items are plotted, this assumption of a normal distribution is not necessary for control purposes (see 4.2).

2 Normative references

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

ISO 3534-1:1993, *Statistics — Vocabulary and symbols — Part 1: Probability and general statistical terms*.

ISO 3534-2:1993, *Statistics — Vocabulary and symbols — Part 2: Statistical quality control*.

3 Definitions

For the purposes of this International Standard, the definitions given in ISO 3534-1 and ISO 3534-2 apply.

4 Conditions of application

4.1 The implementation of the statistical methods of process control should be preceded by statistical analysis during a base period of the quality measure to be controlled in order to provide a basis for constructing relationships between a process (the operations) and product quality, as well as for producing recommendations for the adjustment of the process.

If the statistical analysis shows that the process is out of control, and the process capability does not meet specified requirements, it is necessary to determine the causes of level shifts¹⁾ and ways of adjusting the process.

4.2 In order to apply the rules of this International Standard, it is necessary first to establish the following.

- The arithmetic average $\bar{X}$ approximates a normal distribution. Except for extremely unusual circumstances, averages of samples of four or more items will, under the Central Limit Theorem, follow approximately a normal distribution even though the individual observations may not.
- For best results, the individual observations averaged to obtain $\bar{X}$ are made by scale-measuring instruments with scale divisions not exceeding $\sigma/2$.
- The underlying, but unknown, mean value μ of the sample $\bar{X}$ values defines the current process level. If the process level shifts, then so will μ . The process level should then be adjusted.
- The target level μ_0 corresponds to the value of the middle line of the tolerance zone of the quality measure specified in the documents when the two-sided criterion is used.

1) "Level shifts" means a case in which μ becomes equal to μ_1 or μ_{-1} .

- e) The standard deviation σ of the quality measure is assumed to remain constant and acceptable. This assumption must be verified by using sample standard deviation or range control charts.
- f) In the case of the one-sided criterion $\mu_1 > \mu_0$ or $\mu_{-1} < \mu_0$, the target level is assumed to be μ_0 , but only the direction of concern is of interest. When a process is considered to be out of control in the direction of interest, it requires correction. Values of μ_1 or μ_{-1} are selected to indicate process shifts $\Delta = |\mu_1 - \mu_0|$ or $|\mu_{-1} - \mu_0|$ that should be discovered quickly and are called "highly undesirable" levels. This value shall correspond to a fraction of rejection (see annex A).
- g) In the case of the two-sided criterion $\mu_1 > \mu_0$ and $\mu_{-1} < \mu_0$, interest lies on either side of μ_0 . When the process is out of control in either direction, it requires correction.

Proceeding from the values μ_0 , σ , μ_1 and/or μ_{-1} the value δ , which characterizes the standardized form of the mean value in the case where the process is out of control, is determined, i.e.

$$\delta = \frac{\mu_1 - \mu_0}{\sigma}$$

$$= \frac{\mu_0 - \mu_{-1}}{\sigma}$$

When the value σ is constant, the process may go out of control owing to the change of μ under the influence of assignable causes.

5 Description of the method

5.1 The statistical control of a process is monitored using control charts for the arithmetic average with warning limits.

The control chart is used to show graphically the level and the variability of the process; the current sample averages of the measure of quality $\bar{X}$ are plotted on the charts, as shown in figure B.1.

5.2 The control chart for arithmetic average with warning limits has a target line (central line) corresponding to the mean value of the quality measure for the adjusted process. This line corresponds to μ_0 , the warning limits to

$$\mu_0 \pm B_2 \sigma / \sqrt{n}$$

and the action limits to

$$\mu_0 \pm B_1 \sigma / \sqrt{n}$$

where n is the sample size. An underlying assumption is that the individual observations used to compute $\bar{X}$ are statistically independent.

B_1 and B_2 are the values determining the position of action and warning limits on the control charts. The

principle of the selection of B_1 and B_2 is described in clause 6.

5.3 The control chart may be located on a printed form, on an illuminated indicator board, in computer memory in coded form, or displayed in other appropriate ways.

5.4 Control charts should be located as close to the working areas as practical and data entry and chart plotting should be clear and explicit.

5.5 A standard operating procedure for the definition, preparation, application, maintenance and use of a control chart as a method of measuring the variation of the process should be prepared and data as collected should be promptly entered on the chart.

5.6 Control charts for arithmetic average with warning limits may be used both for one-sided and for two-sided criteria of statistical process control. However, it is usual to use two-sided criteria.

5.6.1 When a process is statistically controlled by means of a two-sided criterion, five quality zones are used (see figure 1), as follows.

- a) Zone T (target): the sample average value is located between the upper warning and lower warning limits.
- b) Zones W_+ and W_- (warning): the sample average value is located between the upper warning and upper action limits, or between the lower warning and lower action limits, respectively.
- c) Zones A_+ and A_- (action): the sample average value is located beyond the upper action limit, or the lower action limit, respectively.

A_+	$\mu_0 + B_1 \sigma / \sqrt{n}$	Upper action limit
W_+	$\mu_0 + B_2 \sigma / \sqrt{n}$	Upper warning limit
T	μ_0	Central line
W_-	$\mu_0 - B_2 \sigma / \sqrt{n}$	Lower warning limit
A_-	$\mu_0 - B_1 \sigma / \sqrt{n}$	Lower action limit

Figure 1 — Quality zones for statistical control with a two-sided criterion

5.6.2 When the process is statistically controlled by means of a one-sided criterion, three quality zones are used (see figures 2 and 3), as follows.

- a) Zone T (target): the sample average value is located below the upper or above the lower warning limits as the case may be.
- b) Zone W (warning): the sample average value is located between the warning and action limits.
- c) Zone A (action): the sample average value is located beyond the action limit.

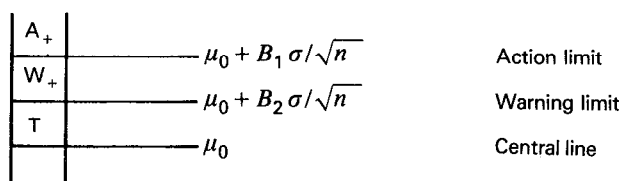


Figure 2 — Quality zones for statistical control with a one-sided criterion — Upper limits

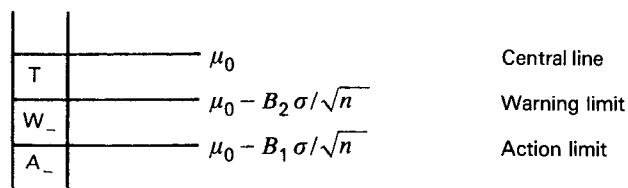


Figure 3 — Quality zones for statistical control with a one-sided criterion — Lower limits

Figure 2 shows the case when concern for a level shift is connected with an increase of the mean value of the measure of quality.

Figure 3 shows the case when concern for a level shift is connected with a decrease of the mean value of the measure of quality.

5.7 The sample average value of the measure of quality is plotted on control charts with warning limits in the following way.

A point is plotted on the chart for each sample with an identification number (numerical order, time order, etc.) as abscissa and the corresponding sample average as ordinate (see figure B.1).

2) Values for t and n are specified beforehand.

6 Statistical control of a process

6.1 A single point falling in the upper action zone A_+ or the lower action zone A_- is an out-of-control signal. When an out-of-control signal occurs, the cause of the out-of-control condition should be determined and corrected so as to obtain control of the process at the appropriate level.

6.2 When the selected number of successive points, K , fall into one of the warning zones, upper W_+ or lower W_- , this is an out-of-control signal and the process needs to be adjusted.

The value of the various parameters are chosen in accordance with the procedures shown in clause 7.

7 Choice of values of parameters for a statistical control plan of a process

7.1 When choosing a plan for statistical process control it is necessary to establish the following values:

- a) sample size²⁾, n (see 7.3);
- b) sampling period²⁾, t (see 7.3);
- c) number of successive points, K (see 6.2);
- d) values determining the positions of action and warning limits on control charts, B_1 and B_2 (see 7.2.2 and 7.4.1);
- e) decision-making rules for process correction.

Initial values for choosing a plan for statistical process control are as follows:

μ_0 , σ , μ_1 and/or μ_{-1} (see clause 4);

L_0 and L_1 [the average run lengths (ARL) of a process in and out of control, respectively (see 7.2 and annex C)].

7.2 The efficiency of a statistical process control plan can be described in terms of average run lengths.

7.2.1 The average run length (ARL) of a process is the average number of sample averages that will be plotted before an out-of-control signal is obtained, with the process average constant. The ARL is a maximum when the process level is at the target level (μ_0), and decreases progressively as the process deviates from target. The design of the control chart should provide a large ARL, L_0 , when the process average is on target; this provides a low rate of false alarms. The design of the control chart should also provide a small ARL, L_1 , when the process average is