

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD



Optical fibre cables –  
Part 1-22: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures –  
Environmental test methods

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Environmental test methods**

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ELECTROTECHNICAL  
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## OPTICAL FIBRE CABLES –

**Part 1-22: Generic specification –  
Basic optical cable test procedures –  
Environmental test methods**

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International Standard IEC 60794-1-22 has been prepared by subcommittee 86A: Fibres and cables, of IEC technical committee 86: Fibre optics.

This edition of IEC 60794-1-22 cancels and replaces the environmental tests part of the second edition of IEC 60794-1-2 published in 2003. It constitutes a technical revision.

It has been decided to split the second edition of IEC 60794-1-2 into six new documents:

- IEC 60794-1-2, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-2: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures*
- IEC 60794-1-20, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-20: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures – General and definitions*
- IEC 60794-1-21, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-21: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures – Mechanical tests methods*

- IEC 60794-1-22, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-22: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures – Environmental tests methods*
- IEC 60794-1-23, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-23: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures – Cable elements tests methods*
- IEC 60794-1-24, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-24: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures – Electrical tests methods*

The text of this standard is based on the following documents:

CDV	Report on voting
86A/1424/CDV	86A/1445/RVC

Full information on the voting for the approval of this standard can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above table.

This publication has been drafted in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

A list of all the parts in the IEC 60794 series, published under the general title *Optical fibre cables*, can be found on the IEC website.

The committee has decided that the contents of this publication will remain unchanged until the stability date indicated on the IEC web site under "<http://webstore.iec.ch>" in the data related to the specific publication. At this date, the publication will be

- reconfirmed,
- withdrawn,
- replaced by a revised edition, or
- amended.

A bilingual version of this publication may be issued at a later date.

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## OPTICAL FIBRE CABLES –

### Part 1-22: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures – Environmental test methods

#### 1 Scope

This part of IEC 60794 applies to optical fibre cables for use with telecommunication equipment and devices employing similar techniques, and to cables having a combination of both optical fibres and electrical conductors.

The object of this standard is to define test procedures to be used in establishing uniform requirements for the environmental performance.

Throughout the standard the wording “optical cable” may also include optical fibre units, microduct fibre units, etc.

See IEC 60794-1-2 for general requirements and definitions and reference guide to test methods of all types.

#### 2 Normative references

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

IEC 60068-2-14:2009, *Environmental testing – Part 2-14: Tests – Test N: Change of temperature*

IEC 60304, *Standard colours for insulation for low-frequency cables and wires*

IEC 60544-1, *Electrical insulating materials – Determination of the effects of ionizing radiation – Part 1: Radiation interaction and dosimetry*

IEC 60793-1-40, *Optical fibres – Part 1-40: Measurement methods and test procedures – Attenuation*

IEC 60793-1-46, *Optical fibres – Part 1-46: Measurement methods and test procedures – Monitoring of changes in optical transmittance*

IEC 60793-1-54, *Optical fibres – Part 1-54: Measurement methods and test procedures – Gamma irradiation*

IEC 60794-1-1, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-1: Generic specification – General*

IEC 60794-1-2, *Optical fibre cables – Part 1-2: Generic specification – Basic optical cable test procedures*

IEC 60811-502, *Electric and optical fibre cables – Test methods for non-metallic materials – Part 502: Mechanical tests – Shrinkage test for insulations*

IEC 60811-503, *Electric and optical fibre cables – Test methods for non-metallic materials – Part 503: Mechanical tests – Shrinkage test for sheaths*

ISO 4892-2, *Plastics – Methods of exposure to laboratory light sources – Part 2: Xenon-arc lamps*

ISO 4892-3, *Plastics – Methods of exposure to laboratory light sources – Part 3: Fluorescent UV lamps*

### 3 Method F1 – Temperature cycling

#### 3.1 Object

This measuring method applies to optical fibre cables which are tested by temperature cycling in order to determine the stability behaviour of the attenuation of cables submitted to temperature changes.

Changes in the attenuation of optical fibre cables which may occur with changing temperatures are generally the result of buckling or tensioning of the fibres resulting from differences between their thermal expansion coefficient and the coefficients of the cable strength and sheath members. Test conditions for temperature-dependent measurements shall simulate the worst conditions.

This test can be used either for monitoring cable behaviour in the temperature range which may occur during storage, transportation and usage or to check, in a selected temperature range (usually wider than that required for the above-mentioned case), the stability behaviour of the attenuation connected to a substantially microbend-free situation of the fibre within the cable structure.

NOTE 1 Method F12 is a specialized subset of this method, specifically addressing cables for use in patchcords.

NOTE 2 The ageing test, F9, uses Method F1 as its pre- and post-test temperature cycle. Often these tests are done together.

#### 3.2 Sample

The sample shall be a factory length or a sample of sufficient length as indicated in the detail specification but, nevertheless, of length appropriate to achieve the desired accuracy of attenuation measurements.

In order to gain reproducible values, the cable sample shall be brought into the climatic chamber in a manner such that the deployment does not affect the measurement. Such methods could be a loose coil or on a reel with large diameter coils, cushioned reels with a soft layer or a zero tension facility device.

The ability of the fibre(s) to accommodate differential expansion and contraction (e.g. by slipping within the cable) could be influenced by the bending radius of the cable. Sample conditioning should, therefore, be realized as close as possible to normal usage conditions. The bend diameter of the cable sample shall not violate the minimum bend diameter of the cable, tube or other unit as specified by the detail specification.

Potential problems are due to an actual difference between the expansion coefficients of the test sample and of the holder (e.g. reel, basket, plate) which can induce, during thermal cycles, a significant effect on the test result if "no effect" conditions are not completely fulfilled. The intent is to simulate the installed condition, in which the cable is generally straight for the majority of its length.

Parameters of influence are mainly the details of conditioning, the type and materials of the holder, the diameter of the sample coil or reel.

General recommendations include the following:

- a) The winding diameter shall be large enough to keep the ability of the fibre to accommodate differential expansion and contraction. A winding diameter substantially greater than the value selected for cable delivery may be necessary.
- b) Any risk of cable expansion (or contraction) limitation created by conditioning shall be suppressed. In particular, special care should be taken to avoid residual tension on the cable during the test. For example, a tight winding on a drum is not recommended as it can limit cable contraction at low temperature. On the other hand, a tight multilayer winding can limit expansion at high temperature.
- c) The use of loose winding is recommended with large diameter coils and cushioned reels with a soft layer or zero tension facility device.
- d) The number of fibres tested shall conform to IEC 60794-1-1:2011, Annex B.
- e) The fixed cable ends as well as connection to the equipment shall be outside of the temperature chamber to avoid negative influences.

When necessary, in order to limit the length of the cable under test, it is permissible to concatenate several fibres of the cable and to measure the concatenated fibres. The number of connections shall be limited and they should be located outside the climatic chamber.

### 3.3 Apparatus

The apparatus consists of:

- a) an appropriate attenuation measuring apparatus for the determination of attenuation change (see the test methods of IEC 60793-1-40),
- b) a climatic chamber of a suitable size to accommodate the sample and whose temperature shall be controllable to remain within  $\pm 3^\circ\text{C}$  of the specified testing temperature. One example of a suitable chamber is given in Clause 8 of IEC 60068-2-14:2009: Test Nb: Change of temperature with specified rate of change;
- c) a temperature sensing device to measure the temperature of the sample, when applicable. Samples with a large thermal mass may require measurement to verify temperature stability rather than utilizing a specified exposure period,  $t_1$ .

### 3.4 Procedure

#### 3.4.1 Initial measurement

The sample shall be visually inspected and a basic value for attenuation at the initial temperature shall be determined.

#### 3.4.2 Pre-conditioning

Pre-conditioning conditions shall be agreed between customer and supplier.

#### 3.4.3 Conditioning

Figures 1 and 2 show, graphically, the initial cycle(s) and the final cycle. Together, they illustrate the temperature cycle sequence to be used. If only one cycle is specified, use Figure 1.

- (1) The sample at ambient temperature shall be introduced into the climatic chamber which is also at that temperature.
- (2) The temperature in the chamber shall then be lowered to the appropriate low temperature  $T_{A2}$  at the appropriate rate of cooling.
- (3) After temperature stability in the chamber has been reached the sample shall be exposed to the low temperature conditions for the appropriate period  $t_1$ .

- (4) A minimum soak time is given in Table 1; however the soak time must be sufficient to bring the complete cable to equilibrium with the specified temperature.
- (5) The temperature in the chamber shall then be raised to the appropriate high temperature  $T_{B2}$  at the appropriate rate of heating.
- (6) After temperature stability in the chamber has been reached, the sample shall be exposed to the high temperature conditions for the appropriate period  $t_1$ .
- (7) The temperature in the chamber shall then be lowered to the value of the ambient temperature at the appropriate rate of cooling. This procedure constitutes one cycle (see Figure 1 or 2). If this is the intermediate step in a series of cycles, no soak is required, but no measurements shall be taken.
- (8) Continue to the next cycle, using steps 2) through 7). The sample shall be subjected to at least two cycles unless otherwise required by the relevant detail specification. The initial cycle(s) shall comprise one low temperature and one high temperature, per Figure 1. The last cycle shall comprise one or more low temperatures and one or more high temperatures, per Figure 2, as required by the relevant detail specification. On the last cycle, if multiple temperatures are specified, the sample shall be held at each intermediate temperature ( $T_{A1}$  or  $T_{B1}$ ) for the appropriate time  $t_1$ . At the end of the cycling sequence, hold the sample at ambient temperature for the appropriate period  $t_1$ .
- (9) The attenuation shall be measured at ambient temperature at the start of the first cycle, at the end of the soak time  $t_1$  at each of the specified temperature steps ( $T_{A1}$ ,  $T_{A2}$ ,  $T_{B1}$ ,  $T_{B2}$ ) in the last cycle, and at ambient temperature at the end of the last cycle.
- (10) Before removal from the chamber, the sample under test shall have reached temperature stability at ambient temperature.

**Table 1 – Minimum soak time  $t_1$**

Minimum soak times for a given sample mass	
Sample mass kg	Minimum soak time, $t_1$ h
Under 0,35	0,5
0,36 to 0,7	1
0,8 to 1,5	2
1,6 to 15	4
16 to 100	8
101 to 250	12
251 to 500	14
Over 501	16

NOTE It is the responsibility of the tester to assure that the soak time is long enough to bring the cable to equilibrium with the specified temperature.

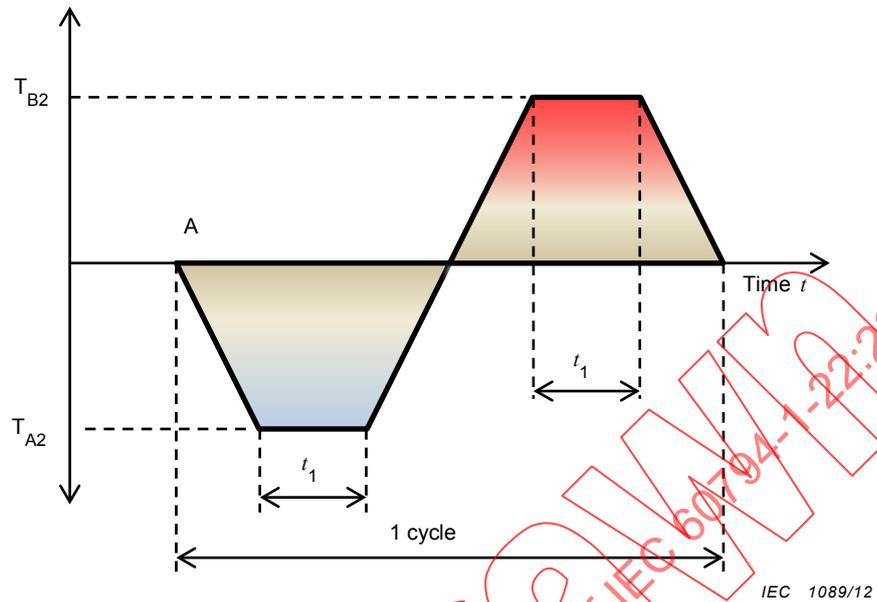


Figure 1 – First cycle(s) procedure

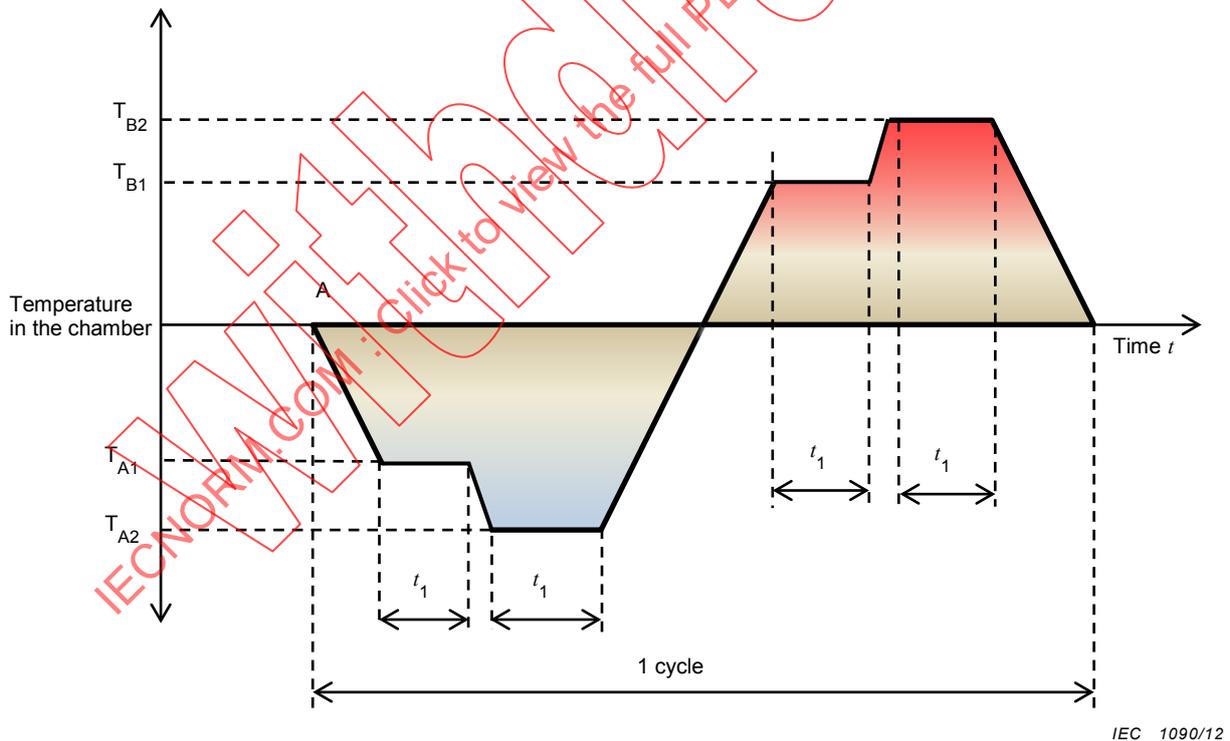


Figure 2 – Last cycle procedure

**3.4.4 Recovery**

If the ambient temperature is not the standard atmospheric condition to be used for testing after removal from the chamber, the sample shall be allowed to attain temperature stability at this latter condition.

The relevant detail specification may call for a specific recovery period for a given type of sample.

### 3.5 Requirements

The acceptance criteria for the test shall be as stated in the detail specification. Typical failure modes include loss of optical continuity, degradation of optical transmittance or physical damage to the cable.

### 3.6 Details to be specified

The detail specification shall include the following:

- a) cable sample length;
- b) number of fibres tested if different from 3.2;
- c) length of the fibre under test typically 1 km minimum, unless otherwise specified;
- d) type of connection between concatenated fibres (if any);
- e) Temperature limits:
  - i)  $T_{A2}$  and  $T_{B2}$  (Figure 1), or
  - ii)  $T_{A1}$ ,  $T_{A2}$ ,  $T_{B1}$  and  $T_{B2}$  (Figure 2);
- f) number of cycles;
- g) humidity levels at each temperature extreme (if any);
- h) change of attenuation at a specified wavelength as a function of temperature cycling.

### 3.7 Details to be reported

Type of winding:

- a) coil, reel, other (to be stated, in case of a cushioned reel, the type of cushioning and material used);
- b) winding diameter;
- c) single or multilayer;
- d) winding tension and zero tension facility device (if any).

## 4 Method F2 – Contamination (test deleted)

## 5 Method F3 – Sheath integrity (test deleted)

## 6 Method F4 – External static pressure (test deleted)

## 7 Method F5 – Water penetration

### 7.1 Object

This test applies to continuously water-blocked cables. The purpose is to determine the ability of a cable to block water migration along a specified length.

- F5A evaluates radial ingress of water due to sheath damage;
- F5B evaluates longitudinal ingress of water down the entire cable cross-section designed to be water-blocked, from an undefined water exposure at a cable end;
- F5C also evaluates longitudinal ingress of water from cable end and is applicable for cables with swellable water blocking material.

Compliance shall be checked on samples of cable using one of the three following methods (F5A, F5B or F5C), as stated in the detail specification. Method F5A tests for water migration between the outer interstices of the optical core and the outer sheath, whereas methods F5B

and F5C test for water migration over the entire cross-section designed to be water-blocked. Method F5C includes a precondition step, a restricted-flow apparatus, or longer sample to simulate gradual water exposure at a location along the length of a cable or at a cable end.

NOTE Multiple sheath designs, e.g. armoured cables, are not necessarily designed to be water blocked. If so, then remove the outer layers before application of the seals.

## 7.2 Sample

### 7.2.1 Method F5A

A circumferential portion of sheath and wrapping 25 mm wide shall be removed 3 m from one end of a sample length of cable and a watertight sleeve shall be applied over the exposed core so as to bridge the gap in the sheath and allow a 1 m height of water to be applied.

The opposite end of the sample shall be capped to block any water leakage in that direction.

The sample shall be long enough to include the test end length, the length of removed sheath, and length sufficient to cap the opposite end. Generally 3,1 m should be sufficient.

### 7.2.2 Method F5B

A cable sample that shall not exceed 3 m is used.

A watertight seal shall be applied to one end of the sample to allow a 1 m height of water to be applied.

NOTE 1 If the armour in armoured cables is not designed to be water-blocked, the armour may be removed at the end before the application of the seal.

NOTE 2 Water pressure may force the fibre and filling compound out of the core tubes of filled cables. Such an occurrence would be a "test void" result. Therefore, the core may require that the fibres be restrained at the exit end – as with a screen or cloth covering. Since the filled tubes exhibit robust water blocking ability, testing may focus on the water penetration characteristics of the rest of the cable. In this case, it is recommended that the core tube(s) be plugged at either end to avoid this problem.

### 7.2.3 Method F5C (for cables with swellable water blocking material)

A cable sample which shall not exceed 3 m is used for pre-soak or orifice procedure. Unless one of these procedures is selected, a longer cable sample, which shall not exceed 40 m, can be used.

A watertight seal shall be applied to one end of the sample to allow a 1 m height of water to be applied.

NOTE 1 If the armour in armoured cables is not designed to be water-blocked, the armour may be removed at the end before the application of the seal.

NOTE 2 Water pressure may force the fibre and water-blocking material out of the core tubes of filled cables. Such an occurrence would be a "test void" result. Therefore, the core may require that the fibres be restrained at the exit end – as with a screen or cloth covering.

## 7.3 Apparatus

### 7.3.1 Test fixtures and set-up

Suitable test arrangements are shown in Figures 3 to 8 for methods F5A, F5B, and F5C, respectively. Unless otherwise specified in the detail specification, the sample shall be supported horizontally.

### 7.3.2 Water

Water shall be potable water, either common tap water or deionized or distilled water, at the option of the cable manufacturer.

A water soluble fluorescent dye or other suitable colouring agent may be used to aid in the detection of water seepage at the option of the cable manufacturer. Care should be taken in choosing a fluorescent dye that does not react with any of the cable components.

NOTE Fluorescent dyes inhibit the action of many swellable water blocking materials to some degree, which may bias test results.

If required by the detail specification, water simulating sea water (or other) may be used for the test. Note that special design considerations and test limits should apply to cables designed for salt water or brackish water exposure.

### 7.3.3 Orifice

An orifice may be placed in the tube connecting the water source to the sample to limit the water flow rate.

The orifice, if used, shall be 1,50 mm  $\pm$  0,25 mm diameter, and a maximum length of 30 mm (see Figure 7).

## 7.4 Procedure

### 7.4.1 Method F5A and F5B

1 m height of water shall be applied for 24 h.

### 7.4.2 Method F5C

#### 7.4.2.1 Pre-soak

One end of the sample shall be pre-soaked in a bucket of water to a depth of 100 mm  $\pm$  10 mm for 10 min. At the same end, a watertight seal shall be applied to allow a 1 m height of water to be applied.

After the pre-soak procedure, 1 m height of water shall be applied for 24 h.

#### 7.4.2.2 Orifice

The orifice, if used, may be placed in any part of the tube connecting the water head source to the sample.

#### 7.4.2.3 Longer sample

1 m height of water shall be applied for 24 h (see Figure 8).

## 7.5 Requirements

For methods F5A, F5B and F5C, no water shall be detected at the unsealed end of the sample. If a fluorescent dye is used, an ultraviolet light may be used for the examination.

NOTE The test procedure mentioned above is a basic compliance requirement. For process evaluation tests samples of shorter lengths may be tested for a shorter time.

## 7.6 Details to be specified

The detail specification shall include the following:

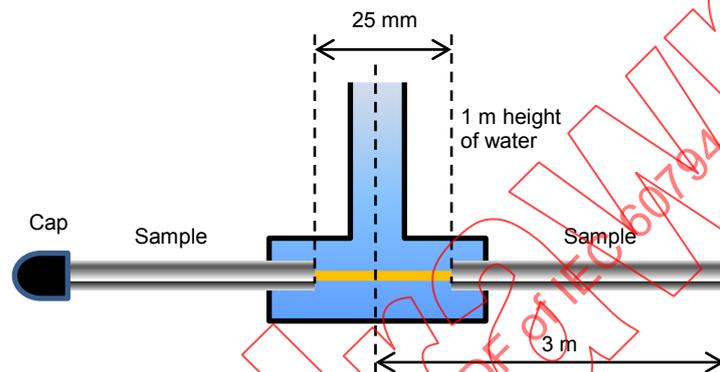
- a) method used – F5A, F5B, or F5C (see Figures 3 to 8);

- b) any alternative test length, water head, water type, or test duration;
- c) alternative test lengths, preconditioning or leakage requirements if salt water is to be used.

### 7.7 Details to be reported

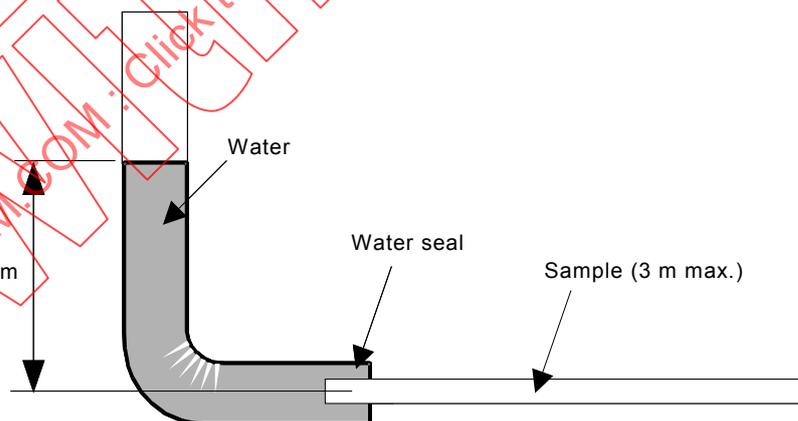
Orifice if used:

- details of dye, if used;
- test length, if different;
- duration of test, if different.



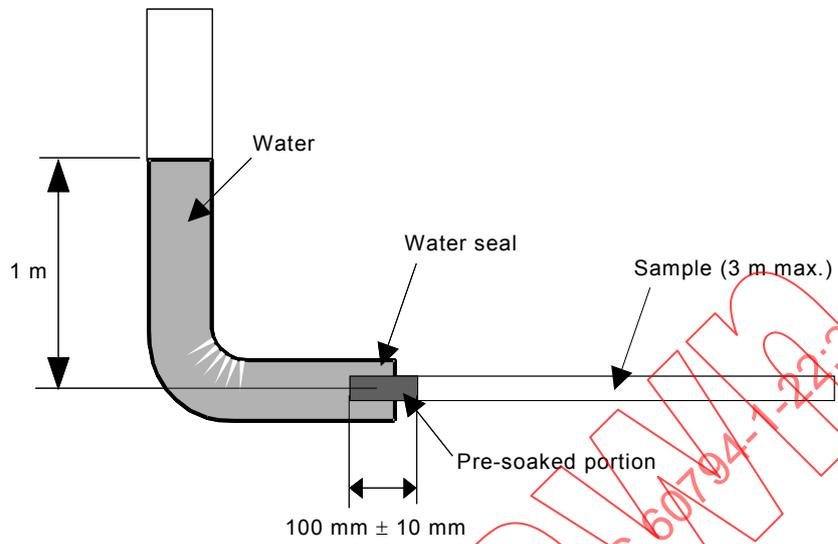
IEC 1091/12

Figure 3 – Method F5-A



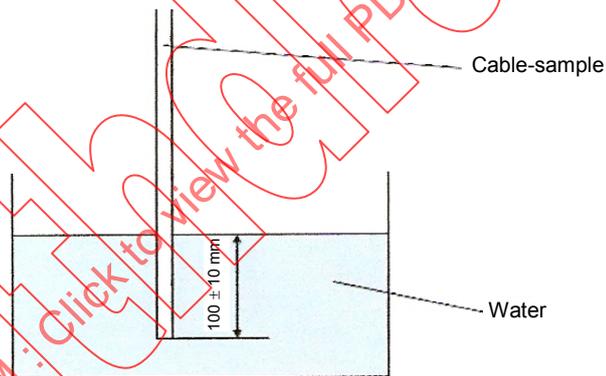
IEC 1092/12

Figure 4 – Method F5-B



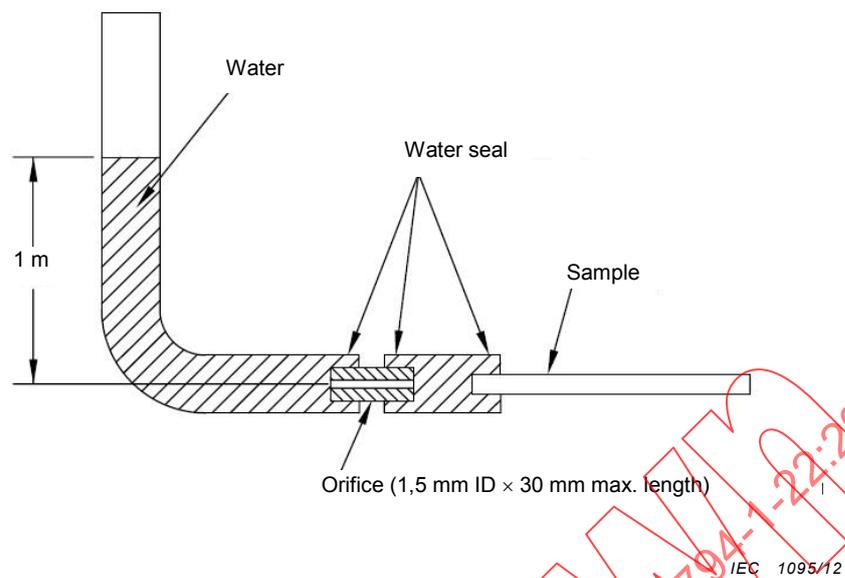
IEC 1093/12

Figure 5 – Method F5C pre-soaked sample

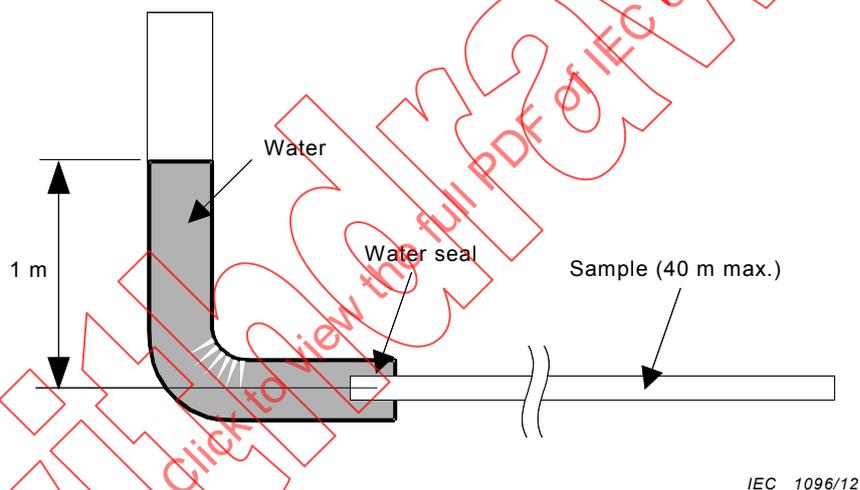


IEC 1094/12

Figure 6 – Method F5C Alternative pre-soak procedure



**Figure 7 – Method F5C orifice**



**Figure 8 – Method F5C longer sample**

## 8 Method F6 – Unknown (test deleted)

## 9 Method F7 – Nuclear radiation

### 9.1 Object

Exposure of optical fibre cables to nuclear radiation can cause a change in the attenuation of the fibres and a change in the physical characteristics of the materials used in the cable construction.

The attenuation of cabled and uncabled optical fibres generally increases when exposed to radiation, due mainly to the trapping of radiolytic electrons and holes at defect sites in the glass. Exposure of polymeric materials to radiation generally produces degradation in properties such as tensile strength, elongation at break and impact performance as the material becomes brittle (although some materials can show an initial improvement at relatively low levels of exposure due to crosslinking).

In special cases where the cable operational environment includes exposure to nuclear radiation, e.g. military applications and cables for use in certain areas in nuclear power

stations and nuclear laboratories, fibres and materials with an appropriate radiation response can be chosen, and cable constructions incorporating metal sheaths or composite screens can be considered.

## **9.2 Sample**

The sample shall be as defined in IEC 60793-1-54.

## **9.3 Apparatus**

The apparatus description is given in IEC 60793-1-54.

## **9.4 Procedure**

### **9.4.1 Fibres**

For the radiation response of fibres, including cabled fibres, use the nuclear radiation method of IEC 60793-1-54.

### **9.4.2 Materials**

For the radiation response of materials, use the methodology given in IEC 60544.

## **9.5 Requirements**

The nuclear radiation resistance shall comply with the maximum value given in the detail specification.

## **9.6 Details to be specified**

Details to be specified are given in IEC 60794-1-54.

## **10 Method F8 – Pneumatic resistance**

### **10.1 Object**

This test applies only to unfilled cables which are protected by gas pressurization. The purpose is to measure the pneumatic resistance of such cables.

NOTE The pneumatic resistance of pressurized cables is required to assure adequate functioning of the gas pressurization process and systems. The results obtained using dry air may be used to calculate the performance using other gases.

### **10.2 Sample**

The sample of finished cable shall have a length sufficient to carry out the test specified.

### **10.3 Apparatus**

The apparatus consists of:

- a) pneumatic equipment to supply a regulated pressure of air to the sample;
- b) a flow-meter;
- c) a barometer;
- d) a thermometer.

### **10.4 Procedure**

The ambient temperature and barometric pressure shall be measured.

The length of finished cable shall have one end connected to a steady state flow of dry air to be measured by the flow-meter, supplied by a pressure regulated source providing air with a dryness of 5 % RH or lower, at +20 °C. The other end of the cable shall be open to the atmosphere.

The pressure applied across the cable should be 62 kPa with a relative tolerance of  $\pm 2$  % and the steady state air flow shall be recorded using a flow-meter calibrated to  $\pm 10$  %. Other pressures may be applied in accordance with particular user requirements and specified in the detail specification.

Only those air paths which access the interior of the sheath shall be used in the measurement.

A second measurement shall be made with the air flow direction reversed and the results shall be recorded separately.

The pneumatic resistance is derived from the following formula:

$$\text{Pneumatic resistance} = \frac{3\,720}{f \times L} \text{ kPa} \times \text{s} / (\text{m}^3 \times \text{m})$$

where

$L$  is the sample length, in metres (m);

$f$  is the flow, in cubic metres per second (m/s).

### 10.5 Requirement

The pneumatic resistance shall comply with the maximum value given in the detail specification.

### 10.6 Details to be specified

The detail specification shall include the following:

- a) maximum pneumatic resistance;
- b) sample length;
- c) pressure, if different from 62 kPa.

## 11 Method F9 – Ageing

### 11.1 Object

This test method applies to optical fibre cables which are tested by temperature cycling in order to determine the life-time behaviour of the attenuation of cables, or physical attributes specified in the detail specification.

### 11.2 Sample

The sample shall be the same as described in Method F1: Temperature cycling.

### 11.3 Apparatus

The apparatus shall be as described in Method F1.

#### 11.4 Procedure

This test shall be carried out after the temperature cycling test described in Method F1.

The cable shall be exposed to +85 °C for 168 h. Other ageing conditions are allowed if agreed between customer and supplier. Optical measurements are not required during this phase.

After the ageing steps, perform a temperature cycling test according to Method F1. Perform two cycles. At the end of the last cycle, the temperature shall be lowered to +23 °C, which shall be maintained for 24 h, and the attenuation shall be measured.

#### 11.5 Requirement

At the final +23 °C temperature, attenuation measurements shall be performed. Unless otherwise agreed between customer and supplier, the maximum allowable attenuation increase shall be:

- a) for single-mode fibre, tested at 1 550 nm, 0,25 dB/km, maximum, and 0,10 dB/km, average;
- b) for multimode fibre, tested 1 300 nm, 0,6 dB/km, maximum, and 0,4 dB/km, average.

#### 11.6 Details to be specified

The detail specification shall include the following:

- a) the exposure temperature, if other than +85 °C;
- b) the exposure time, if other than 168 h;
- c) the maximum change in attenuation allowed, if other than as in 11.5;
- d) any tests of physical attributes in addition to those of 11.5.

### 12 Method F10 – Underwater cable resistance to hydrostatic pressure

#### 12.1 Object

The purpose of this test is to determine the ability of an underwater optical fibre cable to withstand hydrostatic pressure, by measuring the attenuation or by monitoring of changes in optical transmission.

#### 12.2 Sample

The sample shall be of a sufficient length to be terminated outside each end of the pressure tube vessel.

#### 12.3 Apparatus

The test apparatus shall consist of the following:

- a) appropriate attenuation measuring apparatus for determination of attenuation change (see test procedure of IEC 60793-1-40 or IEC 60793-1-46);
- b) pressure tube vessel. The size of the pressure tube vessel shall be sufficient to accommodate the minimum length required by the detail specification.

#### 12.4 Procedure

The test is to be carried out at ambient temperature. The pressure shall be maintained for 24 h or a period agreed between the user and the manufacturer.

The cable shall be installed in the pressure vessel. The water pressure in the pressure vessel during the test shall be 1,1 times higher than the water pressure at the seabed where the cable shall be installed.

The attenuation shall be measured before, during and after the test.

Special care should be taken for the tube end seals not to affect the results.

### 12.5 Requirements

Unless otherwise specified in the detail specification, there shall be no increase in attenuation during or after the test.

Other requirements may be agreed between the manufacturer and the user.

### 12.6 Details to be specified

The detail specification shall include the following information:

- a) sample length;
- b) pressure;
- c) application period of pressure.

## 13 Method F11 – Sheath shrinkage (cables intended for patch cords)

### 13.1 Object

The purpose of this test is to measure the shrinkage behaviour of the sheath due to ageing of simplex and duplex optical fibre cables intended for use in patch cords.

### 13.2 General

This test method is based on IEC 60811-503 with modifications related to the sampling and measuring method.

### 13.3 Apparatus

A container (with typical dimensions 0,5 m × 0,5 m) into which the test sample is placed. The base of the container shall be covered with talc or paper to minimise frictional forces on the test sample and to permit free movement of the sheath.

A temperature chamber able to accommodate the test sample container and maintain the specified temperature within  $\pm 3$  °C, as described in IEC 60068-2-14:2009, Method Nb: Change of temperature.

A length measuring device with a minimum resolution of 0,5 mm.

### 13.4 Conditioning

The cable on the supply reel shall be conditioned for 24 h at a room temperature of  $+23$  °C  $\pm$  5 °C before cutting the test samples.

### 13.5 Sampling

A 2 m length of cable shall be removed from the supply reel and disposed of, before cutting the test sample lengths. Five test samples each with a length of  $1\ 050$  mm  $\pm$  5 mm shall be cut from the cable.

### 13.6 Procedure

Two marks separated by a distance of 1 000 mm  $\pm$  0,5 mm shall be applied to each test sample. The marks shall be located at approximately 25 mm from each end of the test sample.

The distance ( $L1$ ) between the sheath marks on each test sample shall be measured and recorded. The test samples shall be coiled with a radius of not less than 150 mm and in such a manner as to permit free movement of the sheath. A test sample coil is then placed approximately horizontally in the container. When space allows the sample also can be placed into the chamber in a straight configuration.

The temperature chamber shall be heated up to the specified temperature.

The container with horizontally positioned samples is then placed in the temperature chamber.

After the specified heating time (typically 3 h, if not otherwise specified), the container with samples shall be removed from the chamber and allowed to cool to room temperature.

A minimum of four such cycles shall be carried out.

After each cycle (preferably more than one sample has to be measured), the distance ( $L2$ ) between the sheath marks on each test sample shall be measured and recorded.

The sheath shrinkage of each test sample is calculated after each cycle as:

$$\Delta L_{x,i} = (L1 - L2_{x,i}) \text{ mm, } x = 1, 2, 3, 4, i = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5$$

where

$L1$  is the initial distance measured between the sheath marks;

$L2_{x,i}$  is the distance measured between the sheath marks of sample no.  $i$  ( $i = 1$  to  $5$ ) after the  $x$ th cycle.

The average value  $\Delta L_x = 1/5 (\Delta L_{x,1} + \Delta L_{x,2} + \Delta L_{x,3} + \Delta L_{x,4} + \Delta L_{x,5})$  should be calculated after each  $T$  cycle.

Continue the test cycles until the shrinkage exhibits a variation less than that specified in 12.7.

### 13.7 Requirements

The final sheath shrinkage  $\Delta L = 1/3 \times ((\Delta L)_{n-2} + (\Delta L)_{n-1} + (\Delta L)_n)$  ( $n = 4$ , unless more cycles have to be carried out) after the last 3  $T$  cycles should show only a variation of  $\pm 0,5$  mm.  $\Delta L$  shall not exceed the value given in the relevant specification. In case of  $\Delta L$  varies more than  $\pm 1$  mm further  $T$  cycles should be performed until a stable value is reached.

### 13.8 Details to be specified

The detail specification shall include:

- details of temperature chamber and exposure high temperature;
- duration of exposure to high temperature;
- method of sheath marking and length measurement;
- sample configuration and fixing in the container;
- number of cycles.

### 13.9 Details to be reported

- a) individual shrink values of all samples after every  $T$  cycle;
- b) average sheath shrinkage.

## 14 Method F12 – Temperature cycling of cables used for patch cords

### 14.1 Object

The purpose of this test is to examine the attenuation behaviour (change in attenuation) when optical fibre cables for use in patch cords are subjected to temperature cycling.

NOTE Method F1 is a general temperature cycling test for cables.

### 14.2 Apparatus

The apparatus consists of:

- a temperature chamber suitable to accommodate the sample and to maintain the specified temperature within  $+3\text{ °C}$ , as described in IEC 60068-2-14:2009, Method Nb;
- attenuation monitoring equipment according to IEC 60793-1-46.

### 14.3 Sample

The sample shall be taken from a finished cable length.

### 14.4 Procedure

The sample shall be placed in the test chamber, with a method of storage that shall not affect the optical fibre with respect to extension or contraction. The sample length situated in the chamber shall be 10 m. At both ends of the sample inside the chamber all components of the cable shall be fixed together to avoid any relative movement between the cable elements at the fixing point. The optical fibre ends (outside the chamber) may be temporarily jointed to connectorised pigtails. The deployment of the sample outside the chamber shall not affect the results.

Preconditioning procedures, if any, shall be agreed between the customer and the supplier.

The temperature cycling shall be performed in accordance with Method F1: Temperature cycling with first cycle procedure as follows:

- the temperature of the chamber shall be decreased to the lower temperature  $T_A$  at an appropriate cooling rate;
- as soon as the temperature in the chamber has reached stable condition the sample shall be exposed to the lower temperature during an appropriate time interval  $t_1$ ;
- the temperature in the chamber is then increased to the specified high temperature  $T_B$  at an appropriate heating rate;
- as soon as the temperature in the chamber has reached stable condition the sample shall be exposed to the high temperature during an appropriate time interval  $t_1$ ;
- the temperature in the chamber is then decreased to ambient temperature.

This procedure corresponds to 1 cycle. The cooling and heating rate should be about  $1\text{ °C/min}$ .

### 14.5 Requirements

The maximum increase in attenuation during and after the test shall be as shown in the relevant detail specification.