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**Lasers and laser-related equipment —  
Test methods for laser beam  
widths, divergence angles and beam  
propagation ratios —**

**Part 1:  
Stigmatic and simple astigmatic  
beams**

*Lasers et équipements associés aux lasers — Méthodes d'essai des  
largeurs du faisceau, angles de divergence et facteurs de limite de  
diffraction —*

*Partie 1: Faisceaux stigmatiques et astigmatiques simples*



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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

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](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

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](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 172, *Optics and photonics*, Subcommittee SC 9, *Laser and electro-optical systems*, in collaboration with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) Technical Committee CEN/TC 123, *Lasers and photonics*, in accordance with the Agreement on technical cooperation between ISO and CEN (Vienna Agreement).

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 11146-1:2005), which has been technically revised. The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

- The terms and definitions were harmonized with the new edition of ISO 11145.
- The "principal axes" were defined more thoroughly and named as  $x'$  and  $y'$ . Quantities related to the principal axes coordinate system refer to this definition and use  $x'$  and  $y'$  in their indices.
- The requirements for the integration range for the determination of the second order moments have been relaxed.

A list of all parts in the ISO 11146 series can be found on the ISO website.

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](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

The propagation properties of every laser beam can be characterized within the method of second order moments by ten independent parameters (see ISO/TR 11146-3). However, due to their higher symmetry most laser beams of practical interest need fewer parameters for a complete description. Most lasers of practical use emit beams which are stigmatic or simple astigmatic because of their resonator design.

This document describes the measurement methods for stigmatic and simple astigmatic beams while ISO 11146-2 deals with the measurement procedures for general astigmatic beams. For beams of unknown type the methods of ISO 11146-2 are applicable. Beam characterization based on the method of second order moments as described in both parts is only valid within the paraxial approximation.

The theoretical description of beam characterization and propagation as well as the classification of laser beams is given in ISO/TR 11146-3, which is a Technical Report and describes the procedures for background subtraction and offset correction.

In this document, the second order moments of the power (energy) density distribution are used for the determination of beam widths. However, there may be problems experienced in the direct measurement of these quantities in the beams from some laser sources. In this case, other indirect methods of the measurement of the second order moments may be used as long as comparable results are achievable.

In ISO/TR 11146-3, three alternative methods for beam width measurement and their correlation with the method used in this document are described. These methods are:

- variable aperture method;
- moving knife-edge method;
- moving slit method.

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# Lasers and laser-related equipment — Test methods for laser beam widths, divergence angles and beam propagation ratios —

## Part 1: Stigmatic and simple astigmatic beams

### 1 Scope

This document specifies methods for measuring beam widths (diameter), divergence angles and beam propagation ratios of laser beams. This document is only applicable for stigmatic and simple astigmatic beams. If the type of the beam is unknown, and for general astigmatic beams, ISO 11146-2 is applicable.

### 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 11145, *Optics and photonics — Lasers and laser-related equipment — Vocabulary and symbols*

ISO 11146-2, *Lasers and laser-related equipment — Test methods for laser beam widths, divergence angles and beam propagation ratios — Part 2: General astigmatic beams*

ISO 13694, *Optics and photonics — Lasers and laser-related equipment — Test methods for laser beam power (energy) density distribution*

EN 61040:1992, *Power and energy measuring detectors, instruments and equipment for laser radiation*

### 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 11145, ISO 13694, EN 61040 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/>

**NOTE** The x-, y- and z-axes in these definitions refer to the laboratory system as described in [Clause 4](#). Here and throughout this document the term “power density distribution  $E(x,y,z)$ ” refers to continuous wave sources. It might be replaced by “energy density distribution,  $H(x,y,z)$ ” in case of pulsed sources.

**3.1 first order moments of a power density distribution**

$\bar{x}, \bar{y}$

centroid coordinates of the power density distribution of a cross section of a beam given as

$$\bar{x}(z) = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) x \, dx \, dy}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) \, dx \, dy} \tag{1}$$

and

$$\bar{y}(z) = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) y \, dx \, dy}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) \, dx \, dy} \tag{2}$$

Note 1 to entry: The first order moments are used for the definition of beam centroid in ISO 11145.

Note 2 to entry: For practical application, the infinite integration limits are reduced in a specific manner as given in [Clause 7](#). The limitation of the integration area here differs from the integration area given in ISO 11145.

**3.2 second order moments of a power density distribution**

$\sigma_x^2, \sigma_y^2, \sigma_{xy}^2$

normalized weighted integrals over the power density distribution, given as:

$$\sigma_x^2(z) = \langle x^2 \rangle = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) [x - \bar{x}(z)]^2 \, dx \, dy}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) \, dx \, dy} \tag{3}$$

and

$$\sigma_y^2(z) = \langle y^2 \rangle = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) [y - \bar{y}(z)]^2 \, dx \, dy}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) \, dx \, dy} \tag{4}$$

and

$$\sigma_{xy}^2(z) = \langle xy \rangle = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) [x - \bar{x}(z)] [y - \bar{y}(z)] \, dx \, dy}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} E(x, y, z) \, dx \, dy} \tag{5}$$

Note 1 to entry: For practical application, the infinite integration limits are reduced in a specific manner as given in [Clause 7](#).

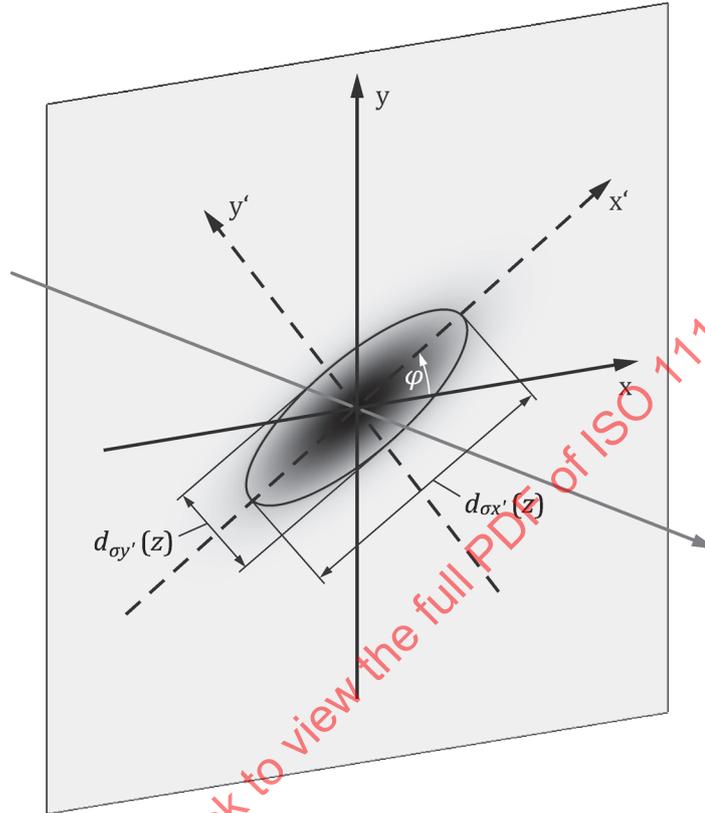
Note 2 to entry:  $\sigma_{xy}^2(z)$  is a symbolic notation, and not a true square. This quantity can take positive, negative or zero value.

Note 3 to entry: The angular brackets are the operator notations as used in ISO 11146-2 and ISO/TR 11146-3.

### 3.3 principal axes

$x', y'$

<power density distribution> axes of the maximum and minimum beam extent based on the second order moments of the power density distribution in a cross section of the beam



**Figure 1 — Beam profile with the laboratory and principle axes coordinate systems**

Note 1 to entry: The axes of maximum and minimum extent are always perpendicular to each other.

Note 2 to entry: Unless otherwise stated, in this document  $x'$  is the principal axis which is closer to the  $x$ -axis of the laboratory coordinate system, and  $y'$  is the principal axis which is closer to the  $y$ -axis of the laboratory coordinate system.

Note 3 to entry: If the principal axes make the angle  $\pi/4$  with the  $x$ - and  $y$ -axes of the laboratory coordinate system, then the  $x'$ -axis is by convention the direction of maximum extent.

Note 4 to entry: See [Figure 1](#).

### 3.4 azimuthal orientation

$\varphi$

<power density distribution> azimuthal angle between the  $x$ -axis of the laboratory system and the principal axis  $x'$

**3.5  
beam widths**

$d_{\sigma x'}(z_{0x'}), d_{\sigma y'}(z_{0y'})$

extent of a power density distribution in a cross-section of the beam at an axial location  $z$  along the principal axes  $x'$  and  $y'$ , respectively, based on the second order moments of the power density distribution

Note 1 to entry: This definition differs from that given in ISO 11145:2018, 3.5.2, where the beam widths are defined only in the laboratory system, whereas for the purposes of this document the beam widths are defined in the *principal axes* (3.3) system of the beam.

Note 2 to entry: Formulae for calculation of the beam widths from the three second order moments are given in 7.2.

**3.6  
beam ellipticity**

$\varepsilon(z)$

parameter for quantifying the circularity or squareness of a power (energy) density distribution at an axial location  $z$

$$\varepsilon(z) = \frac{\min[d_{\sigma x'}(z), d_{\sigma y'}(z)]}{\max[d_{\sigma x'}(z), d_{\sigma y'}(z)]}$$

Note 1 to entry: It follows that  $0 < \varepsilon(z) \leq 1$ .

Note 2 to entry: If  $\varepsilon(z) \geq 0,87$ , elliptical distributions can be regarded as circular.

Note 3 to entry: In case of a rectangular distribution, ellipticity is often referred to as “aspect ratio”.

Note 4 to entry: In contrast to the definition given here, in literature the term “ellipticity” is sometimes related to  $1 - \frac{d_{\sigma y'}(z)}{d_{\sigma x'}(z)}$ . The definition given here has been chosen to be in concordance with the same definition of ellipticity in ISO 11145 and ISO 13694.

**3.7  
circular power density distribution**

power density distribution having an ellipticity greater than or equal to 0,87

[SOURCE: ISO 11145:2018, 3.6.4]

**3.8  
beam diameter**

$d_{\sigma}(z)$

extent of a circular power density distribution in a cross section of the beam at an axial location  $z$ , based on the second order moments

Note 1 to entry: Formulae for calculation of the beam diameter from the second order moments are given in 7.2.

**3.9  
stigmatism**

property of a beam having circular power density distributions in any plane under free propagation and showing power density distributions after propagation through a cylindrical lens all having the same *azimuthal orientation* (3.4) as that lens

### 3.10 simple astigmatism

property of a non-stigmatic beam whose *azimuthal orientation* (3.4) is constant under free propagation, and which retains its original *azimuthal orientation* (3.4) after passing through a cylindrical optical element whose cylindrical axis is parallel to one of the *principal axes* (3.3) of the beam

Note 1 to entry: The *principal axes* (3.3) of a power density distribution corresponding to a beam with *simple astigmatism* (3.10) are called the *principal axes* (3.3) of that beam.

### 3.11 general astigmatism

property of a beam which is neither stigmatic nor simple astigmatic

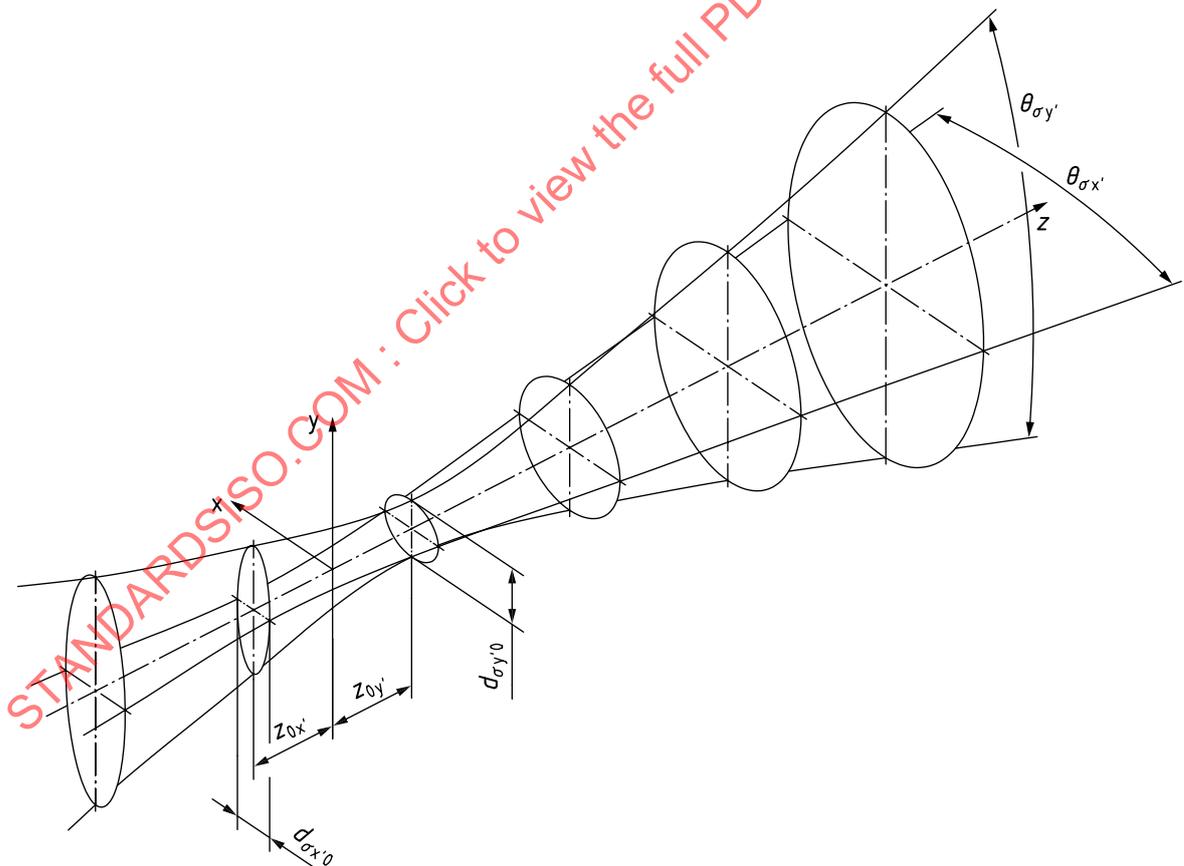
Note 1 to entry: This document deals only with stigmatic and simple astigmatic beams. See ISO 11146-2 for general astigmatic beams.

### 3.12 beam waist locations

$z_{0x'}$ ,  $z_{0y'}$ ,  $z_0$

<simple astigmatic beams, stigmatic beams> location where the *beam widths* (3.5) or the *beam diameters* (3.8) reach their minimum values along the beam axis

Note 1 to entry: See [Figure 2](#).



**Figure 2 — Beam propagation parameters of a simple astigmatic beam**

Note 2 to entry: In the case of general astigmatic beams, which are outside the scope of this document, this definition does not apply, see ISO 11146-2.

Note 3 to entry: For simple astigmatic beams the waist locations  $z_{0x'}$  and  $z_{0y'}$  corresponding to the *principal axes* (3.3), may or may not coincide.

Note 4 to entry: For simple astigmatic beams, the beam widths are used; for stigmatic beams the beam diameters are used.

**3.13  
beam waist widths**

$d_{\sigma_{x'}0}, d_{\sigma_{y'}0}$   
<simple astigmatic beams> beam width  $d_{\sigma_{x'}}(z_{0x'})$  and  $d_{\sigma_{y'}}(z_{0y'})$ , respectively, at the corresponding beam waist locations  $z_{0x'}$  or  $z_{0y'}$ , respectively

**3.14  
beam waist diameter**

$d_{\sigma 0}$   
<stigmatic beams> diameter  $d_{\sigma}(z_0)$  of the beam at the location of the beam waist  $z_0$

**3.15  
beam divergence angles**

$\Theta_{\sigma_{x'}}, \Theta_{\sigma_{y'}}, \Theta_{\sigma}$   
measure for the increase of the *beam widths* (3.5) or *beam diameter* (3.8) with increasing distance from the *beam waist locations* (3.12), given by

$$\Theta_{\sigma_{x'}} = \lim_{(z-z_{0x'}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{d_{\sigma_{x'}}(z)}{z - z_{0x'}} \tag{6}$$

and

$$\Theta_{\sigma_{y'}} = \lim_{(z-z_{0y'}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{d_{\sigma_{y'}}(z)}{z - z_{0y'}} \tag{7}$$

for simple astigmatic beams and

$$\Theta_{\sigma} = \lim_{(z-z_0) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{d_{\sigma}(z)}{z - z_0} \tag{8}$$

for stigmatic beams

Note 1 to entry: The beam divergence is expressed as a full angle.

Note 2 to entry: This definition differs from that given in ISO 11145:2018, 3.8.2, where the beam divergence angles are defined only in the laboratory system, whereas for the purposes of this document the beam divergence angles are defined in the *principal axes* (3.3) system.

**3.16  
Rayleigh length**

$Z_R, Z_{Rx'}, Z_{Ry'}$   
<simple astigmatic beams, stigmatic beams> distance in the direction of propagation from the respective beam waist for which the *beam diameter* (3.8) or the *beam width* (3.5) are equal to  $\sqrt{2}$  times their respective values at the beam waist

Note 1 to entry: For the Gaussian fundamental mode:

$$Z_R = \left( \frac{\pi}{4} \right) \frac{d_{\sigma 0}^2}{\lambda}$$

Note 2 to entry: Generally, the formula  $Z_R = \frac{d_{\sigma 0}}{\Theta_{\sigma}}$  is valid.

[SOURCE: ISO 11145: 2018, 3.9.1]

### 3.17

#### beam propagation ratios

Note 1 to entry: The term “beam propagation ratio” replaces “times-diffraction-limit factor” which was used in ISO 11146:1999.

Note 2 to entry: Beam propagation ratios, as defined in 3.17.1 and 3.17.2, are propagation invariants for stigmatic and simple astigmatic beams, only as long as the optics involved do not change the stigmatic or the simple astigmatic character of the beam.

#### 3.17.1

##### beam propagation ratios

$$M_{x'}^2 \text{ and } M_{y'}^2$$

(simple astigmatic beams) ratios of the beam parameter product along the *principal axes* (3.3) of the beam of interest to the beam parameter product of a diffraction-limited, perfect Gaussian beam of the same wavelength  $\lambda$

$$M_{x'}^2 = \frac{\pi}{\lambda} \frac{d_{\sigma x'0} \Theta_{\sigma x'}}{4} \quad (9)$$

$$M_{y'}^2 = \frac{\pi}{\lambda} \frac{d_{\sigma y'0} \Theta_{\sigma y'}}{4} \quad (10)$$

#### 3.17.2

##### beam propagation ratio

$$M^2$$

(stigmatic beams) ratio of the beam parameter product of the beam of interest to the beam parameter product of a diffraction-limited, perfect Gaussian beam (TEM<sub>00</sub>) of the same wavelength,  $\lambda$

$$M^2 = \frac{\pi}{\lambda} \frac{d_{\sigma 0} \Theta_{\sigma}}{4} \quad (11)$$

## 4 Coordinate systems

The x-, y- and z-axes define the orthogonal space directions in the laboratory axes system and shall be specified by the user. The z-axis shall coincide approximately with the direction of the beam. The x- and y-axes are transverse axes, usually horizontal and vertical, respectively. The origin of the z-axis is in a reference x-y plane defined by the manufacturer, e.g. the front of the laser enclosure.

## 5 Test principles

### 5.1 Applicability

The following test principles are only valid for stigmatic and simple astigmatic beams. For general astigmatic beams ISO 11146-2 shall be applied.

### 5.2 Beam widths and beam diameter

For the determination of beam widths or diameter at location  $z$ , the power density distribution of the laser beam shall be measured in the x-y plane at this location  $z$ . Suitable background correction shall be applied to the measured data if necessary (see ISO/TR 11146-3). From the measured power density distribution the first order moments and second order moments are calculated. From the second order moments the beam widths,  $d_{\sigma x'}(z)$ ,  $d_{\sigma y'}(z)$ , the beam ellipticity,  $\varepsilon(z)$ , and, if appropriate, the beam diameter,  $d_{\sigma}(z)$ , shall be determined.

### 5.3 Beam divergence angles

The determination of the divergence angles of the freely propagating beam follows from measurements of the beam widths or the beam diameter in the focal plane of a focusing element.

First, the laser beam shall be transformed by an aberration-free focusing element. For a simple astigmatic beam, the beam widths  $d_{\sigma x'f}$  and  $d_{\sigma y'f}$  are measured one focal length,  $f$ , away from the rear principal plane of the focusing element. The corresponding divergence angles  $\theta_{\sigma x'}$  and  $\theta_{\sigma y'}$  are determined using the relationships given in [Formulae \(12\)](#) and [\(13\)](#):

$$\theta_{\sigma x'} = \frac{d_{\sigma x'f}}{f} \quad (12)$$

and

$$\theta_{\sigma y'} = \frac{d_{\sigma y'f}}{f} \quad (13)$$

For stigmatic beams, the beam diameter  $d_{\sigma f}$  is measured and the divergence angle  $\theta_{\sigma}$  is determined by using [Formula \(14\)](#):

$$\theta_{\sigma} = \frac{d_{\sigma f}}{f} \quad (14)$$

NOTE This procedure provides the divergence angle of the freely propagating beam. The focusing element is introduced to allow the measurement of the divergence angle that the beam has before passing this element.

### 5.4 Beam propagation ratios

For the determination of the beam propagation ratios  $M_x^2$ ,  $M_y^2$ , or  $M^2$ , it is necessary to determine the beam waist widths  $d_{\sigma x'0}$ ,  $d_{\sigma y'0}$  or the waist diameter  $d_{\sigma 0}$  and the related beam divergence angles  $\theta_{\sigma x'}$ ,  $\theta_{\sigma y'}$  or  $\theta_{\sigma}$ .

### 5.5 Combined measurement of beam waist locations, beam widths, beam divergence angles and beam propagation ratios

The beam widths data along the propagation axis shall be fitted to a hyperbola as discussed in [Clause 9](#). The beam waist locations, beam waist widths, beam divergence angles and beam propagation ratios are derived from the fit parameters.

## 6 Measurement arrangement and test equipment

### 6.1 General

The test is based on the measurement of the cross-sectional power density distribution at a number of axial locations along the beam propagation axis.

### 6.2 Preparation

The optical axis of the measuring system should be coaxial with the laser beam to be measured. Suitable optical alignment devices are available for this purpose (e.g. aligning lasers or steering mirrors).

The aperture of the optical system should accommodate the entire cross-section of the laser beam. Losses by clipping shall be smaller than 1 % of the total beam power or energy. In order to test this, apertures of different widths can be introduced into the beam path in front of each optical component.

The aperture which reduces the output signal by 5 % should have a diameter less than 0,8 times the aperture of the optical component.

The attenuators or beam-forming optics should be mounted such that the optical axis runs through the geometrical centres. Care shall be taken to avoid systematic errors. Reflections, interference effects, external ambient light, thermal radiation or air draughts are all potential sources of increased uncertainty.

### 6.3 Control of environment

Suitable measures such as mechanical and acoustical isolation of the test set-up, shielding from extraneous radiation, temperature stabilization of the laboratory, choice of low-noise amplifiers shall be taken to ensure that the contribution to the total probable uncertainty of the parameters to be measured is low.

Care should be taken to ensure that the atmospheric environment in high-power laser beam paths does not contain gases or vapours that can absorb the laser radiation and cause thermal distortion in the beam to be measured.

### 6.4 Detector system

Measurement of the cross-sectional power density distribution requires the use of a detection system with high spatial resolution and high signal-to-noise ratio.

The accuracy of the measurement is directly related to the spatial resolution of the detector system and its signal-to-noise ratio. The latter is important for laser beams with low power densities at larger diameters (e.g. for diffracted parts of the laser beams).

For pixel based detector systems, the spatial resolution should be at least 1/20 of the beam width or beam diameter.

In practice, noise in the wings of the power density distribution  $E(x,y,z)$  may readily dominate the second order moment integral. Thus, it is usually necessary to apply background correction procedures. See ISO/TR 11146-3 for further details.

The radiation detector system shall be in accordance with EN 61040:1992, Clauses 3 and 4 in particular. Furthermore, the following points shall be noted.

- Care shall be taken to ascertain the damage thresholds of the detector surface so that they are not exceeded by the laser beam.
- It shall be confirmed, from manufacturers' data or by measurement, that the output quantity of the detector system (e.g. the voltage) is linearly dependent on the input quantity (laser power). Any wavelength dependency, non-linearity or non-uniformity of the detector or the electronic device shall be minimized or corrected by use of a calibration procedure.
- When using a scanning device for determining the power density distribution, care shall be taken to ensure that the laser output is spatially and temporally stable during the whole scanning period.
- When measuring pulsed laser beams, the trigger time delay of sampling as well as the measuring time interval play an important role because the beam parameters may change during the pulse. Therefore, it is necessary to specify these parameters in the test report.

### 6.5 Beam-forming optics and optical attenuators

If the beam cross-sectional area is greater than the detector area, a suitable optical system shall be used to reduce the beam cross-sectional area on the detector surface. The change in magnification shall be taken into account during the evaluation procedure.

Optics shall be selected appropriate to wavelength.

An attenuator may be required to reduce the laser power density on the surface of the detector.

Optical attenuators shall be used when the laser output-power or power density exceeds the detector's working (linear) range or the damage threshold. Any wavelength, polarization and angular dependency, non-linearity or non-uniformity, including thermal effects of the optical attenuator, shall be minimized or corrected by use of a calibration procedure.

None of the optical elements used shall significantly influence the relative power density distribution.

### 6.6 Focusing system

The focusing system shall conform to the requirements relating to the beam-forming optics given in 6.5. The total uncertainty contributed by the focusing system shall be less than 1 % of the beam width.

## 7 Beam widths and beam diameter measurement

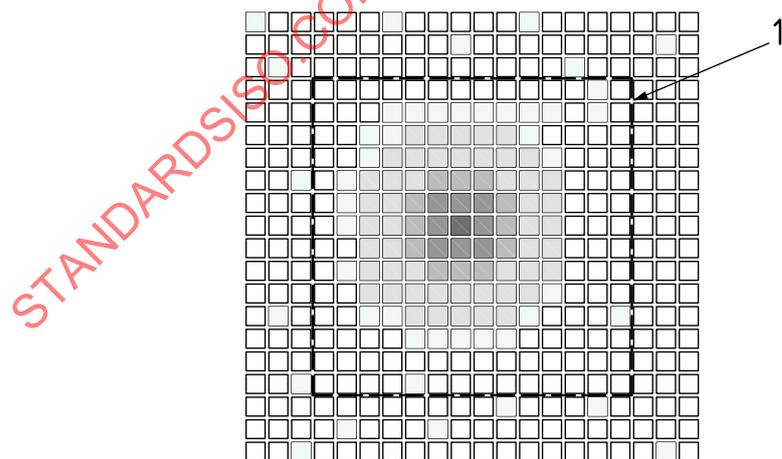
### 7.1 Test procedure

Before the measurements are started, the laser shall be warmed up to achieve thermal equilibrium. This would be the time stated by the manufacturer or otherwise for at least 1 h. The measurements shall be carried out at the operating conditions specified by the laser manufacturer for the type of laser being evaluated. Multiple measurements may be averaged in order to reduce the statistical error.

### 7.2 Evaluation

Before evaluating beam widths or beam diameters, background correction procedures shall be applied to the measured distribution (see ISO/TR 11146-3).

The first-order moments and second-order moments are calculated from the measured and corrected distributions. The corresponding integrations are carried out on a subset of the measured data, called the integration area (see Figure 3), because otherwise noise in the data may dominate the integrals. In many cases a proper choice of the integration area is crucial for reliable results. The following procedure relates the size and position of the integration area to the size and position of the measured power density distribution, which are initially unknown. Hence, an iterative procedure follows.



**Key**

- 1 outline of integration area

**Figure 3 — Detection array with schematic representation of the laser beam and the integration area**

All integrations in [Formulae \(1\) to \(5\)](#) are performed on an integration area which is centered to the beam centroid, defined as the first-order moments, and sized three times the beam widths in the  $x$  and  $y$  directions. Since the beam centroid coordinates and beam widths are as yet unknown, the procedure starts with an initial guess of the integration area. This initial integration area should approximate the beam extent and position. Using this integration area, initial values for the beam position and size are obtained which are used to recalculate the integration area. From the new integration area new values for the beam position and size are calculated. This procedure shall be repeated until the convergence of the result is obtained.

In particular situations the ideal integration area may differ. In any case, the amplitude of the beam should have fallen below the detection limit within the integration range.

For a simple astigmatic beam the azimuthal orientation of its principal axes  $\varphi$ , can be obtained from the second-order moments of the power density distribution by [Formula \(15\)](#):

$$\varphi(z) = \frac{1}{2} \arctan \left( \frac{2\sigma_{xy}^2}{\sigma_x^2 - \sigma_y^2} \right) \quad (15)$$

for  $\sigma_x^2 \neq \sigma_y^2$ . Otherwise, the azimuthal orientation  $\varphi$  is obtained by [Formula \(16\)](#):

$$\varphi = \text{sgn}(\sigma_{xy}^2) \frac{\pi}{4} \quad (16)$$

where

$$\text{sgn}(\sigma_{xy}^2) = \frac{\sigma_{xy}^2}{|\sigma_{xy}^2|} \quad (17)$$

The beam widths in the direction of its principal axes are given by [Formulae \(18\) and \(19\)](#):

$$d_{\sigma_{x'}}(z) = 2\sqrt{2} \left\{ \left( \sigma_x^2 + \sigma_y^2 \right) + \gamma \left[ \left( \sigma_x^2 - \sigma_y^2 \right)^2 + 4 \left( \sigma_{xy}^2 \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad (18)$$

$$d_{\sigma_{y'}}(z) = 2\sqrt{2} \left\{ \left( \sigma_x^2 + \sigma_y^2 \right) - \gamma \left[ \left( \sigma_x^2 - \sigma_y^2 \right)^2 + 4 \left( \sigma_{xy}^2 \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad (19)$$

where

$$\gamma = \text{sgn}(\sigma_x^2 - \sigma_y^2) = \frac{\sigma_x^2 - \sigma_y^2}{|\sigma_x^2 - \sigma_y^2|} \quad (20)$$

for  $\sigma_x^2 \neq \sigma_y^2$ . Otherwise the beam widths are given by [Formulae \(21\) and \(22\)](#):

$$d_{\sigma_{x'}}(z) = 2\sqrt{2} (\sigma_x^2 + \sigma_y^2 + 2|\sigma_{xy}^2|)^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad (21)$$

$$d_{\sigma_{y'}}(z) = 2\sqrt{2} (\sigma_x^2 + \sigma_y^2 - 2|\sigma_{xy}^2|)^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad (22)$$

Perform these calculations for each measurement and calculate the mean values and the standard deviations for the beam widths and the azimuthal orientation.

If the beam ellipticity,  $\varepsilon(z)$ , is larger than 0,87, the beam profile may be considered to be of circular symmetry at that measuring location and the beam diameter can be obtained from [Formula \(23\)](#):

$$d_{\sigma}(z) = 2\sqrt{2}(\sigma_x^2 + \sigma_y^2)^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad (23)$$

## 8 Measurement of divergence angles

### 8.1 Test procedure

Locate the focusing element in the beam path in such a way that its optical axis is coaxial with the laser beam to be measured.

Locate the measuring plane of the detector system one focal length,  $f$ , away from the rear principal plane of the focusing element.

NOTE In general, this location is not identical with the waist location behind the focusing element.

Multiple measurements may be averaged in order to reduce the statistical error.

### 8.2 Evaluation

Calculate the divergence angle(s) of the unfocused beam according to the formulae given in [5.3](#) for each measurement and calculate the mean value(s) and the standard deviation(s) for the divergence angle(s).

## 9 Combined determination of beam waist locations, beam widths, divergence angles and beam propagation ratios

If the beam waist is accessible for direct measurement, the beam waist location, beam widths, divergence angles and beam propagation ratios shall be determined by a hyperbolic fit to different measurements of the beam width along the propagation axis  $z$ . Hence, measurements at at least 10 different  $z$  positions shall be taken. Approximately half of the measurements shall be distributed within one Rayleigh length on either side of the beam waist, and approximately half of them shall be distributed beyond two Rayleigh lengths from the beam waist. For simple astigmatic beams this procedure shall be applied separately for both principal directions.

A preliminary test for general astigmatism shall be applied to the measured data. For each measured profile, the beam widths  $d_{\sigma_x}$  and  $d_{\sigma_y}$  and the azimuthal orientation,  $\varphi$  shall be calculated. If the difference in the azimuthal orientation of any two non-circular profiles is greater than  $10^\circ$  the beam shall be considered as general astigmatic and ISO 11146-2 shall be applied.

NOTE 1 Failure of this test is not proof of stigmatism or simple astigmatism. The beam can suffer from hidden general astigmatism, which can be detected by the procedures given in ISO 11146-2.

The hyperbolic fit to the measured diameters,  $d_{\sigma}$  along the propagation distance,  $z$ , can be expressed in the following way, as given by [Formula \(24\)](#):

$$d_{\sigma}(z) = \sqrt{a + bz + cz^2} \quad (24)$$

The coefficients  $a, b, c$  (or  $a_x, a_y, b_x, b_y, c_x, c_y$ ) of the hyperbola(e) shall be determined by appropriate numerical or statistical curve-fitting techniques (see Notes 2 and 3). The values of the beam propagation parameters can be obtained using [Formulae \(25\) to \(29\)](#):

$$z_0 = \frac{-b}{2c} \quad (25)$$

$$d_{\sigma 0} = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{c}} \sqrt{4ac - b^2} \quad (26)$$

$$\Theta_{\sigma} = \sqrt{c} \quad (27)$$

$$z_R = \frac{1}{2c} \sqrt{4ac - b^2} \quad (28)$$

$$M^2 = \frac{\pi}{8\lambda} \sqrt{4ac - b^2} \quad (29)$$

NOTE 2 If more than one diameter measurement is performed at each  $z$  position, it is advisable to weight the data points in an inversely proportional manner to the variance of the data points.

NOTE 3 It is common to perform the fit by minimizing the sum of the squared relative deviations of the diameters.

NOTE 4 Astigmatic waist separation  $\Delta z_a$ , which is also known as astigmatic difference, is given by:

$$\Delta z_a = |z_{0x'} - z_{0y'}|$$

see ISO 15367-1:2003, 3.3.4.

If the beam waist is not accessible for direct measurement, the same procedure shall be applied to an artificial waist created by using an aberration-free focusing element as defined in 6.6. According to Figure 4, the distances  $z_{0,2}$  or  $z_{0,2x'}$  and  $z_{0,2y'}$  from the artificial waist to the rear principal plane  $H_2$  of the focusing element and the beam widths  $d_{\sigma 2}$  or  $d_{\sigma 2x'}$  and  $d_{\sigma 2y'}$  shall be determined at the artificial waist. From these data, the waist location(s)  $z_{0,1}$  or  $z_{0,1x'}$  and  $z_{0,1y'}$  of the original beam with respect to the front principal plane  $H_1$  of the focusing element, can be calculated using Formula (30):

$$z_{0,1} = V^2 x_2 + f \quad (30)$$

where  $x_2$  (or  $y_2$ ) is determined using Formula (31)

$$x_2 = z_{0,2} - f \quad (31)$$

and where

$$V = \frac{f}{\sqrt{z_{R2}^2 + x_2^2}} \quad (32)$$

and where

$f$  is the focal length of the lens;

$z_{R2}$  is the Rayleigh length of the artificial beam waist.

The Rayleigh length of the artificial waist  $z_{R2}$  can be determined by using Formulae (24) and (28) for the hyperbolic fit procedure.

The beam waist diameter or widths can be calculated in the following way:

$$d_{\sigma 1} = V \cdot d_{\sigma 2} \quad (33)$$