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**Space systems — Fluid characteristics,  
sampling and test methods —**

**Part 13:  
Breathing air**

*Systèmes spatiaux — Caractéristiques, échantillonnage et méthodes  
d'essai des fluides —*

*Partie 13: Air respirable*

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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.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

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.

ISO 15859-13 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 20, *Aircraft and space vehicles*, Subcommittee SC 14, *Space systems and operations*.

ISO 15859 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Space systems — Fluid characteristics, sampling and test methods*:

- *Part 1: Oxygen*
- *Part 2: Hydrogen*
- *Part 3: Nitrogen*
- *Part 4: Helium*
- *Part 5: Nitrogen tetroxide propellants*
- *Part 6: Monomethylhydrazine propellant*
- *Part 7: Hydrazine propellant*
- *Part 8: Kerosine propellant*
- *Part 9: Argon*
- *Part 10: Water*
- *Part 11: Ammonia*
- *Part 12: Carbon dioxide*
- *Part 13: Breathing air*

## Introduction

Fluid operations at a spaceport or launch site may involve a number of operators and supplier/customer interfaces, from the fluid production plant to the delivery to the launch vehicle or spacecraft. The purpose of ISO 15859 is to establish uniform requirements for the components, sampling and test methods of fluids used in the servicing of launch vehicles, spacecraft and ground support equipment. The fluid composition limits specified are intended to define the purity and impurity limits of the fluid for loading into the launch vehicle or spacecraft. The fluid sampling and test methods are intended to be applied by any operator. The fluid sampling and test methods are acceptable methods for verification of the fluid composition limits.

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# Space systems — Fluid characteristics, sampling and test methods —

## Part 13: Breathing air

### 1 Scope

This part of ISO 15859 specifies limits for the composition of breathing air and establishes the sampling and test requirements applicable for the verification of the breathing air composition.

This part of ISO 15859 is applicable to sampling and test methods for breathing air intended for purging and pressurization of space systems as well as flight hardware and ground support facilities, systems and equipment. This part of ISO 15859 may be applied to influent breathing air.

This part of ISO 15859 is applicable to any sampling operation required to ensure that, when the fluid enters the launch vehicle or spacecraft, the fluid composition complies with the limits provided hereafter or with any technical specification agreed to for a particular use.

### 2 Normative references

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

ISO 9000, *Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary*

### 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 9000 and the following apply.

#### 3.1

**total hydrocarbon content (as methane)**  
single carbon atom equivalent

#### 3.2

**verification test**

analysis performed on the fluid in the container, or a sample thereof, which is representative of the supply, permitting the verification of fluid composition limits

### 4 Chemical composition

Unless otherwise provided in an applicable technical specification, the composition of breathing air delivered to the flight vehicle interface shall be in accordance with the limits given in Table 1 when tested in accordance with the applicable test methods.

**Table 1 — Composition limits**

Component		Limits	
		Compressed source	Liquid source
Oxygen	Volume fraction, %	19,5 to 23,8	20 to 23,8
Nitrogen	Volume fraction, %	75,2 to 79,5	75,2 to 80
Rare gases (argon, krypton, hydrogen, xenon, helium, neon)	Volume fraction, %, max.	1	1
Carbon monoxide	µl/l, max.	10	5
Carbon dioxide	µl/l, max.	500	50
Water	µl/l, max.	400	400
Odour		None	None
Total hydrocarbons, as methane equivalent	µl/l, max.	25	50
Acetylene	µl/l, max.	N/A	0,5
Halogenated hydrocarbons	µl/l, max.	2,0	2,0
Chlorinated hydrocarbons	µl/l, max.	0,2	0,2
Nitrous oxide	µl/l, max.	2,0	2,0
Aromatic hydrocarbons, as benzene equivalent	µl/l, max.	0,5	0,5
N/A = not applicable			

## 5 Procurement

The breathing air specified in Clause 1 should be procured in accordance with an applicable national standard.

## 6 Fluid sampling

### 6.1 Plan

In order to ensure that the fluid composition complies with the limits specified in this part of ISO 15859, a fluid sampling plan should be established by all the involved operators, from the production to the space vehicle interface, and approved by the final user. Sampling activities and test methods shall comply with all safety regulations and rules applicable to that task. Such a plan shall specify:

- the sampling points;
- the sampling procedures;
- the sampling frequency;
- the sample size;
- the number of samples;
- the test methods;
- the responsibilities of any involved operator.

## 6.2 Responsibility for sampling

Unless otherwise provided in an applicable technical specification, the breathing air delivered to the flight vehicle interface shall be sampled and verified by the supplier responsible for providing the breathing air to the flight vehicle. The supplier may use his/her or any other resources suitable for the performance of the verification tests specified herein unless otherwise directed by the customer.

## 6.3 Sampling points

Unless otherwise specified, sampling shall be conducted at the fluid storage site or the flight vehicle interface.

## 6.4 Sampling frequency

Sampling shall be performed annually or in accordance with a time agreed upon by the supplier and the customer.

## 6.5 Sample size

The quantity in a single sample container shall be sufficient to perform the analysis for the limiting characteristics. If a single sample does not contain a sufficient quantity to perform all of the analyses for the required quality verification test, additional samples shall be taken under similar conditions.

## 6.6 Number of samples

The number of samples shall be in accordance with one of the following:

- a) one sample per storage container;
- b) any number of samples agreed upon by the supplier and the customer.

## 6.7 Storage container

Unless otherwise provided by the applicable sampling plan, the fluid storage container shall not be refilled after the sample is taken.

## 6.8 Gaseous samples

Gaseous samples shall be typical specimens from the breathing air supply. Samples shall be obtained in accordance with one of the following.

- a) By filling the sample container and storage containers at the same time, on the same manifold, and under the same conditions and with the same procedure.
- b) By withdrawing a sample from the supply container through a suitable connection into the sample container. No pressure regulator shall be used between the supply and the sample containers. (Suitable valves are permissible.) For safety reasons, the sample container and sampling system shall have a rated service pressure at least equal to the pressure in the supply container.
- c) By connecting the container being sampled directly to the analytical equipment using suitable pressure regulation to prevent over-pressurizing this equipment.

## 6.9 Rejection

When any sample of the fluid tested in accordance with Clause 7 fails to conform to the requirements specified herein, the fluid represented by the sample shall be rejected. Disposal of the rejected fluid shall be specified by the customer.

## 7 Test methods

### 7.1 General

The supplier will ensure, by standard practice, the quality level of breathing air. If required, alternate test methods are described in 7.3 to 7.13. Other test methods not listed in this part of ISO 15859 are acceptable if agreed upon between the supplier and the customer.

These tests are a single analysis or a series of analyses performed on the fluid to ensure the reliability of the storage facility to supply the required quality level. This can be verified by analysis of representative samples of the fluid from the facility at appropriate intervals as agreed upon between supplier and the customer. Tests may be performed by the supplier or by a laboratory agreed upon between the supplier and the customer.

The analytical requirements for the tests shall include the determination of all limiting characteristics of breathing air.

### 7.2 Parameters of analysis

The parameters for analytical techniques contained in 7.3 to 7.13 are the following:

- a) purity shall be expressed as a percentage by volume (volume fraction, %) unless otherwise noted;
- b) calibration gas standards containing the applicable gaseous components may be required to calibrate the analytical instruments used to determine the limiting characteristic levels of fluid;
- c) if required by the customer, the accuracy of the measuring equipment used in preparing these standards shall be traceable to an established institute for standards;
- d) analytical equipment shall be operated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

### 7.3 Oxygen content

The oxygen content shall be determined by one of the following procedures.

- a) By an electrochemical-type oxygen analyser containing a solid or an aqueous electrolyte. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by use of calibration gas standards or integrally in accordance with Faraday's Law. The range used should be no greater than 10 times the specified maximum oxygen content.
- b) By a heat-of-reaction-type analyser. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by the use of calibration gas standards or integrally in accordance with Faraday's Law. The range used should be no greater than 10 times the specified maximum oxygen content.
- c) By an analyser in which oxygen reacts to form a compound which is subsequently measured. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by the use of calibration standards. The range used shall be no greater than 10 times the specified maximum oxygen content.
- d) By a gas chromatograph. This method may be used not only for oxygen determination but also for the determination of any other limiting characteristic gaseous component. The analyser must be capable of separating and detecting the component with a sensitivity of 10 % of the specified maximum amount of the component. Appropriate impurity concentrating techniques may be used to attain the sensitivity. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by the use of calibration gas standards.
- e) By a mass spectrometer. The mass spectrometer shall be operated so that its sensitivity is at least 10 % of the specified oxygen content.
- f) By a volumetric or manometer gas adsorption analyser.

- g) By a paramagnetic-type analyser.
- h) By a thermal conductivity analyser.

#### 7.4 Nitrogen content

The nitrogen content shall be determined by one of the following procedures.

- a) By a spectrophotometric analyser in which a high-voltage gas discharge spectrum is optically filtered and measured photoelectrically to yield a signal proportional to the nitrogen. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by the use of calibration gas standards. The range used shall be no greater than 10 times the specified maximum nitrogen content.
- b) By an ion-current-measuring technique in which the mobility of nitrogen ions is compared to the mobility of argon ions. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by use of calibration gas standards. The range used shall be no greater than 10 times the specified maximum nitrogen content.
- c) By a gas chromatography method such as that described under 7.3 d).
- d) By determining the amount of aggregate impurities using the methods in 7.5 to 7.13. The percent nitrogen is the value obtained when this amount, expressed as percent, is subtracted from 100.

#### 7.5 Rare gases content (argon, helium, hydrogen, krypton, neon and xenon)

The argon, helium, hydrogen, krypton, neon and xenon contents shall be determined by one of the following procedures.

- a) By a gas chromatography method such as that described under 7.3 d).
- b) By a mass spectrometer, which shall be operated so that its sensitivity is at least 10 % of the specified maximum amount of the component.

#### 7.6 Carbon monoxide content

The carbon monoxide content shall be determined by one of the following procedures.

- a) By an apparatus employing a detector tube filled with a colour-reactive chemical. The degree of accuracy is dependent on the precision of the measurements and analytical bias of the tube.
- b) By a gas-cell-equipped infrared analyser. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by the use of calibration gas standards at approximately 4,6  $\mu\text{m}$ . The analyser shall be operated so that its sensitivity for carbon monoxide is at least 10 % of the specified maximum carbon monoxide content.
- c) By an analyser in which carbon monoxide reacts to form a compound which is subsequently measured. The analyser shall be calibrated at appropriate intervals by the use of calibration standards. The range used shall be no greater than 10 times the specified maximum carbon monoxide content.
- d) By a gas chromatography method such as that described under 7.3 d). The technique utilized shall be specific for separation and analysis of carbon monoxide.

#### 7.7 Carbon dioxide content

The carbon dioxide content shall be determined by one of the following procedures.

- a) By an apparatus employing a detector tube filled with a colour-reactive chemical. The degree of accuracy is dependent on the precision of the measurements and the analytical bias of the tube.