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**Diagnostic
Acronyms, Terms,
and Definitions For
Electrical/Electronic
Systems**

SAE Recommended Practice
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DIAGNOSTIC ACRONYMS, TERMS,
AND DEFINITIONS FOR ELECTRICAL/ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS

1. INTRODUCTION:

As the number of sophisticated electrical and electronic (E/E) systems has increased on motor vehicles, the number of terms and acronyms to describe various components of these systems has increased enormously. To bring some order to the proliferation of such terms and acronyms, the Vehicle E/E Systems Diagnostic Committee has prepared this Glossary.

The Index provides an outline of three proposed parts to this document (Parts A, B, and D) and one existing Part C. Each part covers a specific major system on the vehicle. Body system terms and acronyms are covered in Part A (in process), chassis systems in Part B (in process), and powertrain in Part C. Terms relating to electronic communication are listed in Part D (in process). Each part will list a preferred acronym, a number of existing acronyms, the term, and a definition of the term (Format of Part D may be different). This information is organized in these documents by the preferred acronym listed in alphabetical order under each subsystem.

As a further aid, a cross reference table is provided in Section 4 of this document. The table lists all acronyms (existing and recommended) from the major system (Body, Chassis, and Powertrain). The acronyms are in alphabetical order, and the appropriate part and paragraph is provided for reference.

The structure of this SAE document is open ended by design. As the need arises, additional acronyms and terms could be added. Because of this flexibility, particular attention should be paid to the month and year publishing code contained in the full "J" number designation. It is possible that this document could be updated on a yearly basis which would be reflected in the complete "J" number designation.

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Because of the urgent need for this document, the Committee has elected to proceed with the Part for the powertrain systems first (Part C). For this reason, the other Parts (Parts A, B and D) are listed as proposed at the present time.

2. SCOPE:

This document is applicable to all light duty gasoline and diesel vehicles (LDV), light duty gasoline and diesel trucks (LDT), and heavy duty gasoline vehicles (HDGV). Specific applications of this document include service and repair manuals, training manuals, repair data bases, under-hood emission labels, and emission certification applications.

Even though the use and appropriate updating of this document and its companion documents is strongly encouraged, nothing in these documents should be construed as prohibiting the introduction of a term or acronym not covered by these documents.

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Part A Recommended Electrical/Electronic BODY System(s)
acronyms, terms, and definitions

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Part B Recommended Electrical/Electronic CHASSIS System(s)
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Part C Recommended Electrical/Electronic POWERTRAIN System(s)
acronyms, terms, and definitions

1. INTRODUCTION:

This part is one of several parts on standard terms for vehicle diagnosis. Background, and the relationship of these parts can be found in the main body of this document. A cross reference table of acronyms can also be found in the main body (Section 4).

The focus of this part is POWERTRAIN systems. Engine and transmission related systems are the major systems covered in this report. Rear or front drive axle systems may be added in the future. Each major system contains a list of typical subsystems, a list of computers used in the major system, and a list of sensors, switches, solenoids, and valves for the major system. The recommended acronyms are listed alphabetically within these categories. Each recommended acronym is followed by a list of existing acronyms, the term, and a definition of the term.

The philosophy used to determine the recommended acronyms included four principles. First, the term name should describe the subsystem or component adequately, or that common usage had become sufficiently prevalent within the manufacturing and service industry as to describe the subsystem or component. Second, any proposed acronym should not duplicate acronyms used in either Body or Chassis Systems. Obviously, duplication should not occur within the Powertrain system either as is the case for some existing terms (for example, Thermac meaning secondary air for one manufacturer and meaning air cleaner for another). Third, the recommended acronym should flow from or be easily associated with the term, and, where possible, recommended acronyms and terms for components within a given subsystem should be given similar acronyms and names. Fourth, the acronym should be as short as practical, preferably no longer than three or four characters for the more commonly used acronyms.

2. SCOPE:

This part (part C) is applicable to POWERTRAIN systems and components used in light duty gasoline and diesel vehicles (LDV), light duty gasoline and diesel trucks (LDT), and heavy duty gasoline vehicles (HDGV). Specific applications of this document include service and repair manuals, training manuals, repair data bases, under-hood emission labels, and emission certification applications.

Even though the use and appropriate updating of this document and its companion documents is strongly encouraged, nothing in these documents should be construed as prohibiting the introduction of a term or acronym not covered by these documents.

3. POWERTRAIN SYSTEMS:3.1 Engine System:3.1.1 Subsystems:3.1.1.1 Air Induction:

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.1.1.1	ACH	Thermac Air Cleaner	Air Cleaner Housing	An enclosure containing the intake air filter. The enclosure may or may not control the air temperature.
3.1.1.1.2	CAC	Inter Cooler, After Cooler	Charge Air Cooler	A heat exchanger that reduces the temperature of the intake air charge after a turbocharger or supercharger. The heat exchanger can be air to air, air to oil, or air to water.
3.1.1.1.3	SC	SC	Supercharger	A mechanically driven device that pressurizes the intake system.
3.1.1.1.4	TC	TC, Turbo	Turbocharger	An exhaust driven device that pressurizes the intake system.
3.1.1.2 <u>Auxiliary Emissions Control:</u>				
3.1.1.2.1	AIR	AIP, AI, Thermac	Secondary Air Injection	A pump driven system for providing secondary air to the exhaust system.
3.1.1.2.2	EFE	EFE	Early Fuel Evaporation	A system used to aid air fuel vaporization during engine warm-up. Sometimes achieved by diverting exhaust gases to heat the intake manifold or by using an electrically heated grid under a carburetor or throttle body.

3.1.1.2.3	EGR	EGR	Exhaust Gas Recirculation	A system designed to reduce NOx emission levels by adding exhaust gas to the incoming air/fuel mixture.
3.1.1.2.4	EM	EM	Engine Modification	A method of lowering engine emissions through changes in basic engine construction or in fuel and spark calibration.
3.1.1.2.5	EVAP	EVAP, EECS	Fuel Evaporative System	A system used to prevent fuel vapors from escaping the fuel delivery system into the atmosphere. Typically includes a charcoal canister to store fuel vapors.
3.1.1.2.6	OC	OC	Oxidation Catalyst	A catalyst that reduces levels of primary constituents of HC and CO.
3.1.1.2.7	PAIR	AIV, AP, AIR, PAIR	Pulsed Secondary Air	A pulse driven system for providing secondary air without an air pump by using the engine exhaust system pressure fluctuations or pulses.
3.1.1.2.8	SPL	SPL	Smoke Puff Limiter	A system to reduce diesel exhaust smoke during vehicle acceleration or gear changes.
3.1.1.2.9	TOC	TOC	Trap Oxidizer-Continuous	A device for lowering diesel engine particulate emissions by collecting exhaust particulates and continuously burning them through oxidation.
3.1.1.2.10	TOP	TOP	Trap Oxidizer-Periodic	A device for lowering diesel engine particulate emissions by collecting exhaust particulates and periodically burning them through oxidation.

3.1.1.2.11	TWC	TWC	Three Way Catalyst	A catalyst that reduces levels of primary constituents of HC, CO and NOx.
3.1.1.2.12	TWC+OC	Dual Bed, TWC+OC	Three Way Catalyst + Oxidation Catalyst	A three way catalyst with the addition of a downstream oxidation catalyst. Usually secondary air is introduced between the two catalysts.
3.1.1.2.13	WUOC	Light Off Catalyst	Warm Up Oxidation Catalyst	A catalyst designed to lower HC and CO emissions during engine warm-up. Usually located in or near the exhaust manifold.
3.1.1.2.14	WUTWC	Light Off Catalyst	Warm Up Three Way Catalyst	A three way catalyst closely coupled to the engine.

3.1.1.3 Cooling:

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.1.3.1	CFC	Fan Control Relay, Fan Control Module	Coolant Fan Control	A switching mechanism to control the coolant fan operation.
3.1.1.3.2	COLS	--	Coolant Level Sensor	A sensor that provides information on the coolant level.

3.1.1.4 Fuel Delivery: General engineering and design definitions for fuel delivery components and systems can be found in J1541 - Fuel Injection Nomenclature - Spark Ignition Engines. The following definitions (where indicated) have built upon and in some cases narrowed the scope of the general J1541 definitions for diagnostic purposes.

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.1.4.1	CARB	Carb, FBC	Carburetor	A fuel delivery system of one or more throats (venturies) regulated by airflow and atmospheric pressure. The fuel delivery may or may not be electronically trimmed.

3.1.1.4.2	CIS	CIS	Continuous Fuel Injection System	A moderate pressure mechanical fuel injection system with the injector flow controlled by system pressure that may or may not be trimmed by electronic controls. ¹
3.1.1.4.3	DI	DI, DID	Direct Injection (Diesel)	A high pressure diesel injection system that supplies fuel directly into the combustion chamber. ¹
3.1.1.4.4	FPR	--	Fuel Pump Relay	A relay which controls fuel pump operation based on certain control conditions such as engine oil pressure and tachometer signals.
3.1.1.4.5	IFSS	--	Inertia Fuel-Shutoff Switch	An inertia switch that shuts off the fuel delivery system when activated by predetermined force limits.
3.1.1.4.6	IDI	IDI	Indirect Diesel Injection	A high pressure diesel injection system that supplies fuel into a combustion pre-chamber. ¹
3.1.1.4.7	MPI	MFI, PFI	Multipoint Electronic Fuel Injection	A fuel delivery system in which each cylinder is fueled by at least one electronically controlled injector. The injector is normally located in the intake manifold or port close to the intake valve. ¹
3.1.1.4.8	TB	TB, Fuel Charging Station, Throttle Body	Throttle Body	A device used to vary the supply of intake air to the engine by means of one or more adjustable orifices and/or throttle plates. ¹

¹See J1541.

3.1.1.4.9	TBI	TBI, EFI, CFI, SPI, Monotronic	Throttle Body Electronic Fuel Injection	An electronically controlled fuel injection system in which one or more fuel injectors are located in a throttle body. ¹
3.1.1.4.10	SMPI	SFI, SEFI	Sequential Multipoint Electronic Fuel Injection	A multipoint fuel delivery technique in which each injector is individually energized and timed relative to its cylinder intake event. Fuel is delivered to each cylinder once per two crankshaft revolutions in four cycle engines and once per crankshaft revolutions in two cycle engines. ²

3.1.1.5 Ignition:

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.1.5.1	DLI	C3I, DIS	Distributorless Ignition	An ignition system in which a computer distributes the secondary current (spark).
3.1.1.5.2	EI	HEI, EI ESAC	Electronic Ignition	An ignition system with an electronic module controlling primary current, and a mechanical distributor for the distribution of secondary voltage (spark). The timing of the secondary voltage (spark) may or may not be computer controlled.

3.1.1.6 Starting/Charging:

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.1.6.1	ALT	ALT	Alternator	A unit that produces an AC current and changes AC current to DC current by using diodes and provides electricity for vehicle operation.

¹See J1541²Note: J1541 uses the acronym SFI to denote sequential injection.

3.1.1.6.2	B+	B+, VSS	Battery Positive Voltage	An acronym used to designate positive voltage at or near the battery level.
3.1.1.6.3	GND	Ground	Ground	Used to designate a reference with no voltage potential.
3.1.1.6.4	VR	VR	Voltage Regulator	A unit that controls alternator output voltage as needed for vehicle operation.

3.1.2 Computers:

3.1.2.1 Engine:

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.2.1.1	CL	CL	Closed Loop	A condition, after the appropriate sensors have indicated that pre-determined conditions have been met, where the computer actively controls the fuel system and other functions based on exhaust gas conditions and other parameters.
3.1.2.1.2	CLS	CL	Closed Loop System	A computer controlled system which monitors the exhaust gas with a sensor and adjusts the fuel delivery, and may or may not adjust spark timing, transmission, and other devices to meet emission and driveability criteria.
3.1.2.1.3	OL	OL	Open Loop	A predetermined operating condition not based on exhaust gas conditions.

3.1.2.1.4	PCM ³	--	Powertrain Control Module	An electronics module or a computer which receives inputs from various powertrain related sensors to determine the operating condition of the engine and/or vehicle at a particular moment. The module or computer responds to signal inputs by sending various signals to powertrain controls to meet predetermined operating instructions.
3.1.2.1.5	PCME	ECA, ECU, ⁴ EEC, SMEC, MCU, ECM	Powertrain Control Module	An electronics module or a computer which receives inputs from various engine and/or powertrain related sensors to determine the operating condition of the engine and/or other powertrain components at a particular moment. The module or computer responds to these signal inputs by sending signals to various engine controls to meet predetermined operation instructions for "basic engine management." A PCME is the only PCM that could include all other PCMs in one unit.

3.1.2.2 Memory Components:

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.2.2.1	EEPROM	EEPROM E2PROM	Electrically Erasable Programmable Read Only Memory	A type of non-volatile memory which can be used to store information permanently. This device can have all or selected parts of its memory erased electrically and reprogrammed.

³All PCM's are modules controlling powertrain functions. "x" refers to the Alpha Designator of the Powertrain Control Module. The Alpha Designator refers to the function of the PCM (for example, engine management, transmission, ignition, etc.).

⁴See J1541 for a definition of ECU relating only to fuel injection.

3.1.2.2.2	EPROM	EPROM	Electrically Programmable Read Only Memory	A type of non-volatile memory which is used to store information permanently. This device can have its contents changed if the entire contents are first "erased" through exposure to ultra-violet light (providing the device has a means of allowing light to reach the silicon level) and electronically reprogrammed.
3.1.2.2.3	NOVRAM	NVM	Non-Volatile RAM	A type of non-volatile memory which is used to store information for either short or long term usage. This type memory can be written to. If external energy is removed from the device, the contents in memory are not destroyed.
3.1.2.2.4	PROM	PROM	Programmable Read Only Memory	A type of non-volatile memory in which information is permanently stored. This type of memory can not be written to. Once programmed it cannot be altered.
3.1.2.2.5	RAM	RAM	Random Access Memory	A type of volatile memory which is used to store information for either short or long term usage. This type of memory can be written to. If energy is removed from the RAM device, the contents in memory are destroyed.
3.1.2.2.6	ROM	ROM	Read Only Memory	A type of non-volatile memory in which information is permanently stored. Information is placed into the memory at the time of manufacture and cannot be altered after the manufacturing process.

3.1.2.3 On-Board Diagnostics:

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.2.3.1	DLC	ALDL, ALCL	Data Link Connector	A connector(s) providing access and/or control of the vehicle information, operating conditions, and diagnostic information.
3.1.2.3.2	DTC	Self Test Codes	Diagnostic Trouble Codes	A numeric identifier for a fault condition identified by the On-Board Diagnostic System.
3.1.2.3.3	DTM	Modes	Diagnostic Test Modes	Various levels of diagnostic capabilities in in OBD systems. These may include different functional states to observe signals, a base level to read diagnostic trouble codes, a monitor level which includes information on signal levels, bi-directional control with on/off board aids, and the ability to interface with remote diagnosis.
3.1.2.3.4	OBD	OBD, Self-Test	On-Board Diagnostic System	A system that monitors some or all computer input and control signals. Signal(s) outside of the predetermined limits implies a fault in the system or in a related system.
3.1.2.3.5	PTCS	Output	Powertrain Control Signals	Signals sent from a PCM to actuators, relays or solenoids to control the operations of those devices.
3.1.2.3.6	PTIS	Input	Powertrain Input Signals	Signals from sensors, switches, or solenoids sent to a PCM describing the operational state or condition of those devices at a particular moment.

3.1.3 Sensors, Switches, Solenoids and Valves:

In case more than one sensor, switch, solenoid, or valve is used requiring the same acronym, it is acceptable to add a numeric identifier after the acronym (for example, MCS1, MCS2, etc.).

	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
3.1.3.1	ACS	AC	Air Conditioning Sensor	A sensor which provides information that the air conditioning compressor is operating for idle speed control.
3.1.3.2	AFS	MAF, AFS, AFC, VAF, Hot wire anemometer Air Flow Meter	Air Flow Sensor	A sensor which provides information on the volume flow or mass flow rate of the intake air to the engine.
3.1.3.3	BARO	BARO, APS	Barometric Absolute Pressure Sensor	A sensor which provides ambient atmospheric pressure information.
3.1.3.4	CPS	CPS, PIP, CP	Crankshaft Position Sensor	A sensor which provides information on the crankshaft rotational position.
3.1.3.5	ECTS	CTS, ECT	Engine Coolant Temperature Sensor	A sensor that provides an electrical output proportional to the engine coolant temperature. ⁵
3.1.3.6	EGRC	EGRVC, EVRV, Backpressure transducer	EGR Function Control	A device that modifies or controls EGR valve position.
3.1.3.7	EGRS	EGR Diagnostic Valve	EGR Function Sensor	A device that identifies if the EGR system is functioning properly.
3.1.3.8	EGRV	EGR	Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) Valve	A valve that admits exhaust to the incoming air/fuel mixture.
3.1.3.9	H02S	HEGO, HOS	Heated Oxygen Sensor	An oxygen sensor (O2S) that is heated to improve sensor performance.

⁵Designated CTS in J1541.

3.1.3.10	IACV	IAC, Idle Air Bypass Control	Idle Air Control Valve	An electronically controlled device which controls idle speed on fuel injected vehicles by controlling bypass air. ⁶
3.1.3.11	IATS	MAT, ACT ATS, VAT TBT, IATS	Intake Air Temperature Sensor	A sensor located in the induction system that provides an electrical output proportional to the temperature of the air or air/fuel mixture. ⁷
3.1.3.12	ISC	ISC	Idle Speed Control	An electronically controlled device which maintains idle speed on vehicles by controlling throttle position at idle. ⁶
3.1.3.13	KS	KS	Knock Sensor	A sensor which provides information on engine "knock" conditions.
3.1.3.14	MAP	MAP, MAPS	Manifold Absolute Pressure Sensor	A sensor which measures absolute air pressure in the intake manifold.
3.1.3.15	MCS	M/C, FBC, MCS	Mixture Control Solenoid	An electronically controlled device which regulates bleed air, fuel, or both, on carbureted vehicles.
3.1.3.16	MSTS	MST	Manifold Surface Temperature Sensor	A sensor which provides information on the surface temperature of the intake manifold.
3.1.3.17	MVS	VAC, Vacuum Switches	Manifold Vacuum Sensor	A sensor which senses the difference between barometric pressure and intake manifold pressure.

⁶J1541 combines the definitions here for IACV and ISC into a general idle speed control definition. For diagnostic purposes, it is preferred to split the J1541 definition into IACV and ISC.

⁷J1541 has made an engineering distinction between measuring the temperature of the intake air and the temperature of a mix of fuel and air. In J1541, the former is Intake Air Temperature Sensor (IATS), the latter is Manifold Charge Temperature Sensor (MCTS). For diagnostic purposes, the definition of IATS in this document (J1930) covers both functions.