TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

IEC TS 62462

First edition
2007-05

Ultrasonics – Output test – Guide for the maintenance of ultrasound physiotherapy systems

Reference number
IEC/TS 62462:2007(E)

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Commission Electrotechnique Internationale
International Electrotechnical Commission
Международная Электротехническая Комиссия

PRICE CODE U

For price, see current catalogue

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INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

ULTRASONICS – OUTPUT TEST – GUIDE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF ULTRASOUND PHYSIOTHERAPY SYSTEMS

FOREWORD

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Technical specifications are subject to review within three years of publication to decide whether they can be transformed into International Standards.

IEC 62462, which is a technical specification, has been prepared by IEC technical committee 87: Ultrasonics.

The text of this technical specification is based on the following documents:

Enquiry draft	Report on voting
87/350/DTS	87/362/RVC

Full information on the voting for the approval of this technical specification 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.

NOTE The following print types are used:

- requirements: roman type;
- notes: in small roman type;
- words in **bold** in the text are defined in Clause 3.
- numbers in square brackets refer to the Bibliography.

The committee has decided that the contents of this publication will remain unchanged until the maintenance result 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

- transformed into an International standard,
- reconfirmed,
- withdrawn,
- replaced by a revised edition, or
- amended.

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

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this technical specification is to establish standard methods for a qualitative check of the performance of ultrasound physiotherapy devices during their lifetime, and to provide guidance on calibration requirements and techniques.

To ensure that the ultrasound physiotherapy equipment is in an appropriate condition for use, a regular quality check is necessary. This technical specification defines acceptance, weekly and annual checks. The acceptance test checks the delivery of the device and its performance at the start of its lifetime. The weekly check is a simple qualitative check of device operation. In the annual check, in addition to a qualitative check, a quantitative check is defined. Examples are provided of weekly and annual test reports.

This report also gives guidance to the testers concerning the measurement of acoustic output.

Annual testing is to be performed by a skilled tester, e.g. biomedical engineer, medical physicist, medical device service agent, commercial tester, test house, national measurement institute or manufacturer.

ULTRASONICS – OUTPUT TEST – GUIDE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF ULTRASOUND PHYSIOTHERAPY SYSTEMS

1 Scope

This technical specification describes methods meant to assist users of ultrasound therapy machines in checking the performance of such machines. It is applicable primarily to physiotherapists, general medical practitioners, chiropractors, osteopaths, beauty therapists, sports professionals, biomedical engineers, medical physicists, medical device service agents, commercial testers, test houses or manufacturers.

NOTE The titles of all publications referred to informatively in this technical specification are listed in the Bibliography.

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.

IEC 61689:2007, *Ultrasonics – Physiotherapy systems – Performance requirements and methods of measurement in the frequency range 0,5 MHz to 5 MHz*

IEC 61161:2006, *Ultrasonics – Power measurement – Radiation force balances and performance requirements*

IEC 60601-2-5, *Medical electrical equipment – Part 2-5: Particular requirements for the safety of ultrasonic physiotherapy equipment*

BIPM, IEC, IFCC, ISO, IUPAC, IUPAP and OIML, *Guide to the expression of uncertainty in measurement*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

NOTE Most of the definitions described are taken from existing IEC standards. For use in the present guide such definitions are simplified.

3.1
acoustic working frequency
rate at which the treatment head's contact face is vibrating

[IEC 61689:2007, definition 3.3, simplified]

NOTE Typical ultrasound physio-therapy machines operate in the range from 0,7 MHz to 3,3 MHz. Long-wave ultrasound therapy machines operating in the frequency range 30 kHz to less than 1 MHz are not covered by the present document. Usually the boundary between sound and ultrasound is 20 kHz.

3.2
beam non-uniformity ratio
R_{BN}
a measure of the range of non-uniformity in the ultrasound beam produced by the treatment head, calculated from the ratio of the acoustic intensity measured at the most intense part of the ultrasound beam to the spatial average acoustic intensity measured for that treatment head

[IEC 61689:2007, definition 3.9, simplified]

3.3
degassed water
water with a low dissolved gas content (see IEC 61161 and Clause B.3)

NOTE For ultrasound physiotherapy fields it is sufficient to decrease the oxygen content below 4 ppm.

3.4
effective radiating area
A_{ER}
area of the front of the treatment face from which ultrasound is being emitted/radiated

[IEC 61689:2007, definition 3.19, simplified]

3.5
hot spot
a localized peaking of the pressure distribution above values that normally can be expected when the ultrasonic beam has been emitted from a piston source. It is called a **hot spot** when the **beam non-uniformity ratio (R_{BN})** > 4

3.6
effective intensity
amount of ultrasonic energy flowing per second through an area and divided by that area

[IEC 61689:2007, definition 3.17, simplified]

3.7
output power
a measure of how much ultrasonic energy is flowing out of the treatment head per second

[IEC 61161:2006, definition 3.3, simplified]

3.8
tester
person who does performance testing on, or calibration of, therapy machines

3.9
treatment head
assembly comprising one **ultrasonic transducer** and associated parts for local application of **ultrasound** to the patient

(see IEC 60601-2-5)

4 Testing regimes

4.1 Acceptance testing

After the device has been delivered to the user a first test should be performed to record the performance at the start of the device's lifetime.

4.2 Weekly testing

Weekly qualitative testing is performed by the therapy machine user, e.g. physiotherapist, general medical practitioner, chiropractor, osteopath, beauty therapist, sports professional.

4.3 Annual testing

Annual testing is performed by an accredited tester, e.g. biomedical engineer, medical physicist, medical device service agent, commercial tester, test house, national measurement institute, manufacturer.

5 Performance testing

5.1 Acceptance testing

The purpose of the test is to record the performance of a device before clinical use, or of a device that has been repaired. The test involves a manufacturer's statement, a visual inspection and a quantitative relative ultrasonic output test.

5.1.1 Visual inspection

The first visual inspection should concentrate on the delivered items. All items should have been delivered in accordance with the purchase specification, and they should look undamaged.

5.1.2 Manufacturer's statement

On delivery of either a new device or after repair of an existing device check the written system manufacturer's statement that the device performs in accordance with the manufacturer's device specifications. From this statement it shall follow that the device is traceably calibrated in accordance with IEC 61689 and IEC 60601-2-5.

5.1.3 Quantitative relative ultrasonic output test

a) To prepare a starting point for future simple quantitative output testing, either the effective intensity or the ultrasonic output power of the device should be recorded for at least one output setting, e.g. continuous wave, effective intensity: 1 W/cm^2.

b) In cases where the manufacturer has stated the traceability of the calibration there is no need for an absolute output measurement. In all other cases the ultrasonic output should be calibrated in accordance with IEC 60601-2-5 and IEC 61161.

c) Once confidence is established in the calibration of the device, a prescribed method should be used to relate the device output setting as recorded in 5.1.3 a) to a reading of a related performance. This method could be a determination of temperature rise following Annex C or Annex D, or using a wattmeter. The method used should be described in the record and should be used in the weekly test, see 5.2.2.

5.1.4 Beam uniformity and output test

5.1.4.1 General

The test is a quick check of whether the machine is outputting any ultrasound power, and of any '**hot spot**s' or asymmetry present in the beam produced by the treatment head. It is not a power calibration. The technique uses the ultrasound emitted by the treatment head to disturb the surface of water in a container. The equipment needed is as follows:

a) a small container of sufficient depth to be filled with water to a maximum of 25 mm. This container should have a bottom thickness of <0,3 mm. See Figure 1 for a number of examples;

b) coupling gel.

NOTE Common, undesirable techniques which have been used in the past to check ultrasound output are as follows:

(a) placing a few drops of water on the upturned treatment head, then timing how long it takes for the water to boil off.

(b) making a small well of water about the treatment head using some tape, and observing the disturbance of the water surface by the ultrasound.

Modern physiotherapy units have automatic cut-offs (power down) when the treatment head has insufficient contact with the patient or is not immersed. Techniques such as those described in Items (a) and (b) above will often trigger the automatic shutdown of the head and thus give a false indication that the ultrasound therapy machine is faulty.

Subjecting a treatment head to poor patient contact or poor water immersion will shorten the lifetime of the device. For these reasons, using a container of water to see the effect of the ultrasound on a surface of water is highly advisable.

Further valuable reading can be found in [1],[2],[3],[4] [1)].

5.1.4.2 Procedure

The procedure is as follows.

a) Hold the treatment head so that the face is pointing upwards. Apply coupling gel to the face of the treatment head. Place the container on the face of the treatment head and make sure that all coupling gel is properly distributed without air bubbles. See Figure 1.

b) Fill the container with water to a depth of 5 mm to 20 mm. (Tap water is adequate for this qualitative and quick test.)

c) A slight angle of the treatment head to the vertical may improve the image. See Figure 2.

d) Turn on the ultrasound to full power, or less if this is sufficient to observe a disturbance of the water. (A disturbance of the water will be observed when looking from the side, and it may be necessary to move the treatment head around a little and to also change the angle to the surface to see the disturbance. The effect which can be seen is shown in Figure 1.) If the treatment head is <5 mm below the surface and/or exactly parallel to it, then the ultrasound may turn off due to an automatic safety sensor, as damage to the ultrasound therapy machine may otherwise occur.

   The features of the water disturbance to note are as follows:

   1) the circular symmetry of the pattern;

   NOTE Changes in the circular symmetry can be an indication of changes in the effective radiating area.

   2) whether there are any sharp peaks (hot spots) showing (see Figure 1(c));

   3) whether the appearance of the disturbance changed in height or symmetry since the last time it was checked;

   4) whether the pattern remained the same but decreased in height with reduction in ultrasound power.

5.1.5 Recording of results of acceptance test

The results of the acceptance test shall be recorded. Annex E gives an example where the results of the acceptance test can be recorded as a start of the weekly test report.

5.1.6 Requirements / Recommendation

Patterns obtained by performing 5.1.4, which are not circularly symmetric and/or have sharp peaks, indicate that the treatment head may not be performing appropriately and could be unsafe.

In case of non-conformance with one of the events listed in 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.4, the manufacturer should be consulted to check the device.

5.2 Weekly testing

Weekly testing involves a simple and quick procedure for testing the ultrasonic output relatively and visual inspection of aspects such as cable damage.

5.2.1 Visual inspection

The ultrasound therapy machine should be inspected visually on aspects that could affect proper safe functioning, such as a damaged mains or treatment head cable or connector.

[1)] Figures in square brackets refer to the Bibliography.

5.2.2 Relative ultrasonic output test

The ultrasonic output should be measured using the same method described in 5.1.3 c) and at the same settings as used during the acceptance test.

The result should not deviate by more than 25 % of the value determined during the acceptance test

5.2.3 Beam uniformity and output test

The beam uniformity can be tested using the same method described in 5.1.4.

5.2.4 Recording of results of weekly testing

The results of the weekly test should be recorded. Annex E gives an example of a weekly test report.

5.2.5 Requirements / Recommendation

Patterns obtained by performing 5.2.3, which are not circularly symmetric and/or have sharp peaks, indicate that the treatment head may not be performing appropriately and could be unsafe. Unexpected patterns may identify future failure.

If the case of non-conformance of any of the tests listed in 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3 the manufacturer should be consulted to check the device.

5.3 Annual testing

The purpose of the test for evaluating beam uniformity is that it gives the healthcare professional some guidance as to whether the treatment heads are beginning to deviate significantly from the desired norm.

The equipment used to perform the annual testing shall be calibrated traceably to a higher standard. (See Annex F).

5.3.1 Output power test

For each treatment head and at the intended frequencies of operation the actual ultrasound output power shall be measured in accordance with IEC 61161.

The ultrasound power should be measured at the indicated values (or as close as possible for machine settings) which are 10 %, 25 %, 50 % and 100 % of the maximum. This is done at least twice with the treatment head being removed from the power meter and then reattached for the second series of readings. Annex F gives an example of the annual ultrasound power calibration test report. The results obtained are directly plotted onto the appropriate graph of the report.

The power measured shall be within ±20 % of that indicated on the device.

Check that a power setting of 0 W does not deliver any ultrasound.

5.3.2 Effective radiating area

Most therapeutic treatments are based on the effective intensity. This intensity is equal to the ratio of the ultrasonic power over the effective radiating area. So apart from calibrating the ultrasonic power, the size of the effective radiating area is also of importance. Eventual changes of this area can be observed using the beam uniformity test in 5.1.4.

5.3.3 Beam uniformity test

The annual beam uniformity test is performed in the same manner as the weekly test for beam uniformity, see 5.1.4.

5.3.4 Pulse regime accuracy test

The performance of the pulse regime is not expected to change significantly from year to year. The test can be with an ultrasound power meter or an oscilloscope using a non-invasive current probe. For all measurements it is necessary for the treatment head to be immersed in water. For a given machine, it is sufficient to test a single treatment head and only at full power.

NOTE The test is optional as it is not expected that this parameter will change over time.

5.3.4.1 Using an ultrasound power meter

The power at continuous wave mode operation (100 % duty) should be measured and then compared with the power obtained for the range of pulsing regimes available on the machine.

The power measured under the pulsing regime should be within ±5 % of that calculated using the pulse regime factor with the continuous power value.

5.3.4.2 Using an oscilloscope

Confirmation is needed that the amplitude is the same as for continuous wave mode (to within ±5 %) and that the pulse duty cycle is as indicated on the machine, to within ±5 %.

NOTE A way of performing the measurement is to clamp a current probe around the cable to the treatment head and then observing the pulse regime on the oscilloscope.

5.3.5 Timer accuracy test

The performance of the timer accuracy is not expected to change significantly from year to year.

The test can be performed using a stopwatch. The ultrasound machine's timer should be accurate to within ±10 %.

NOTE The test is optional as it is not expected that this parameter will change over time. For this reason the test is also simplified from the test described in IEC 60601-2-5.

5.3.6 Recording of results of annual testing

The results of the annual test should be recorded. Annex F gives an example of an annual test report.

The measurement of uncertainty shall be estimated using the ISO/IEC *Guide to the measurement.*

The test report should record the following:

a) identification of the treatment head and machine tested. Serial numbers (S/N) are important;
b) date of the maintenance test;
c) name of the accredited tester;
d) calibration date of the power meter;
e) beam uniformity test result;

f) power calibration shown as a graph with the ± 20 % limits for a pass. There are separate graphs for large (to 15 W) and small (to 3 W) treatment heads. Although the total power radiated for large and small heads is quite different, the intensity is often similar. The intensity is the physical quantity which most strongly relates to dose and the therapeutic benefit of the treatment. It is therefore important to maintain the accuracy of calibration by using graphs of different scales for large and small heads.

NOTE Examples of such graphs are given in Figures F.1 and F.2.

5.4 Service requirement

If any of the parameters listed in the subclauses of 5.3 do not function within the listed uncertainty the device should not be used for treating patients until the non-conformity is resolved.

A.
A clear plastic pipe closed at the bottom using a piece of a sheet used for an overhead projector transparency

B.
A small container made from polyethylene

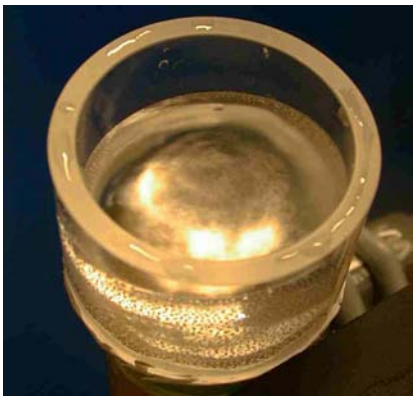
C.
The bottom of a plastic coffee cup is used as container, the black material is used to produce better camera image.

D.
The container is made from a sheet used for an overhead projector.

IEC 647/07

Figure 1 – Several examples of how to prepare a set-up to check the distortion on the water surface due to ultrasound

A



B

IEC 648/07

Especially in image B the circular distortion can well be observed.

Figure 2 – Set-up where the slight angle of the treatment head to the vertical may improve the image

Annex A
(informative)

Rationale for testing

A.1 Acceptance testing

The acceptance test is important because it records the performance of the device that has not been used before or the device that has returned from a repair. The test will encourage manufacturers to perform traceable calibrations of the device before delivery. For the user it will form an important first step in the quality assurance program

A.2 Weekly testing

Treatment heads can suddenly fail entirely, or can partially fail, giving either reduced output or 'hot spots' of more intense ultrasound across the face of the head. For these reasons, it is highly desirable to perform a weekly qualitative check of ultrasound output.

By testing the performance of a device the user can demonstrate good practice.

A.3 Annual testing

A quantitative test of the power calibration of the transducer is performed to ensure reliability of the transducer.

Beam uniformity testing is performed to assess any 'hot spots' on the transducer head and whether the machine is outputting any ultrasound power.

Pulse regime and machine timer are tested for their accuracy. Accuracy of dosage can otherwise be affected due to inaccuracy of the pulse regime.

Annual testing will also record the conformance with the standard which was originally used to state the specifications.

Annex B
(informative)

Guidance for testers

B.1 Purchase of power meter

An introduction into the physical principles of ultrasound power measurement and the mechanisms of the most common types of meter can be found in IEC 61161. It is valuable to read the literature which describes the way in which the measurement set-up itself affects the measurement result [1],[5],[6],[7]. The important features of a power meter, which should be considered before purchasing, are as follows:

– conformance to the principles in IEC 61161;

– a resolution of at least 0,1 W and a measurement range of up to 15 W;

– a calibration of the force measurement mechanism that can be checked by the tester, without sending the power meter to a service agent;

– ease of use when in the laboratory and when travelling to physiotherapy practices.

The most common power meter style has a target consisting of a convex, 45°, metal skinned air backed cone. The target sits in a water bath, the walls of which are lined with an ultrasound absorbing rubber. The force on the cone is measured by a digital mass balance, which can be calibrated with masses which are of the same order as the ultrasound force ($F=mg$).

Especially in the case of diverging ultrasonic beams it is advisable to use an absorbing target instead of a reflecting target. See [6].

IEC 61161 gives guidance on the use of different power meters.

Power meters can be found using a web search engine with appropriate use of keywords.

Power meter styles that can often give irregular performance are as follows.

a) The target has a rounded tip at the apex of the cone. The tip of the cone should be sharp so that the target geometry is constant over the full extent of the ultrasound beam; otherwise there will be a dependence on the radiating area of the treatment head. The cone should have an apex with an area <0,1 mm^2

b) Conical reflector targets or targets that consist of a 45° plate/s may have difficulty dealing with less than ideal beam cylindrical symmetry due to the radiation force measurement mechanism.

c) A power meter equipped with a reflecting target always needs lateral absorbers, see IEC 61161.

d) Concave geometry targets that can reflect ultrasound energy back into the treatment head. Most modern ultrasound therapy machines will cut off (power down) if the treatment head is subjected to high levels of reflected ultrasound. A bad acoustic load, such as removing the treatment head from the water or the patient, will also give the same response,.

e) Absorber targets that do not conform to IEC 61161. Absorbers are theoretically very attractive but can be highly variable in performance. It is important to ensure that the acoustic properties conform to IEC 61161.

f) The use of membranes in front of the target or coupled to the front face of the treatment head. Membranes often have frequency-dependent transmission properties in the range of interest. Their properties also tend to vary with time and wetting. The nature and quality of the coupling between the treatment head and the membrane may also affect the generated power.

g) Poor electromagnetic screening within the power meter. Some dual frequency (1 MHz and 3,3 MHz) treatment heads have slightly higher electromagnetic radiation levels which can interact with the electronics in some power meters.

B.2 Room and water temperature

This should generally be in the range 19 °C to 25 °C. Working beyond this range may require attention to the specifications of the power meter and the use of correction factors to the measurements it makes.

B.3 Water

Tap water is *not* advisable since it will have a high dissolved gas content from being cold and under pressure in the water supply. High dissolved gas content will cause problems due to the formation of bubbles when ultrasound at higher powers is applied to the water. Tap water may also have fine particles, which can act as nucleation points for cavitation. For measurements of ultrasonic power > 5 W it is necessary to degas the water.

Detailed methods for the preparation of degassed water can be found in IEC 61161 and [8]. Any method can be used that ensures that the oxygen content stays below the basic required value listed in IEC 61161.

Some techniques, in order of ease of use, that are suitable in a simple testing environment are as follows:

a) *Chemical additive.* Sodium sulfite (Na_2SO_3) at $4gl^{-1}$ will efficiently scavenge the dissolved oxygen, and it has been found that this is sufficient to ensure a significant suppression in the cavitation activity. A sodium sulfite solution of approximately 1 litre will remain usable for at least one day. A sealed vessel with no air bubbles present will remain satisfactory for two to three days. The solution should be prepared using distilled water which has been left to stand at room temperature and at atmospheric pressure overnight.

b) *Boiling.* Boil the water for 15 min at atmospheric pressure, and then cool the boiling vessel in a water bath to laboratory temperature for storage (22 ± 3 °C).

c) *Vacuum.* Use a vacuum vessel at <4 kPa for at least 3 h. The use of a magnetic bar stirrer can considerably reduce the time under vacuum. After the degassed water has been prepared, it should be stored in containers that are gastight and with no bubbles. Plastic bottles that are used for carbonated beverages are ideal. Once the degassed water is open to the air, it will remain satisfactory for 1 h to 2 h, depending on the open surface to volume ratio. The use of sodium sulfite (see a) above) will prolong that period and is thus the most convenient technique.

NOTE 1 Clean tap water can be used for degassing. It is however preferred to use distilled water to prevent oxidation of metals used.

NOTE 2 No other gas should be used to lower the dissolved oxygen content in the water.

NOTE 3 Equipment should be rinsed with distilled water after use with sodium sulfite solution.

NOTE 4 Dissolved oxygen in water produces the most significant contribution to measurement errors when compared to other dissolved gases.

B.4 Environmental considerations

Drafts of air can affect the performance of some ultrasound power meters. Common sources of drafts are overhead fans, open windows, doors, people walking past and/or the close proximity of an air-conditioning outlet. A large cardboard box over the power meter and the treatment head will eliminate the effect of drafts. A plastic window in the cardboard box is necessary so that the display of the power meter can be read.

Ultrasound power meters are also susceptible to variabilities related to environmental vibration, due to the small forces being measured. The surface on which the power meter is placed should therefore be level, and situated away from sources of vibration.

B.5 Power meter checks

Having read the manufacturer's instructions, the following should be checked

a) The validity of the calibration, e.g. has it been done in the past year? Does the power meter have a standard set of masses to check for? Does the calibration depend on the frequency and radiating area of the treatment head?

b) The water level reservoir, if present, is topped up, if necessary.

c) Those power meters with membranes in front of the target to ensure that the membrane is flat and in good condition. A weak membrane can form a lens and can result in incorrect measurement.

d) Whether the power meter can be levelled, if recommended by the manufacturer.

e) Whether an independent solid bench for mounting the treatment head has been used to reduce the effect of vibration from equipment with fans, etc.

B.6 Power meter testing technique

The technique is as follows:

a) Obtain a small paint brush and bend the end to a right angle. The brush can be used to brush the face of the immersed treatment head. A small inspection mirror (like a dental mirror or mechanic's inspection mirror) with a small torch light is useful for checking for bubbles on the face of the treatment head.

b) If the power meter's target is open to access, it should also be brushed down lightly once it has been immersed. Brush the upper and lower surfaces to ensure all bubbles are removed.

c) If the power meter is a sealed system with a membrane in front of the target, ensure that the membrane is lightly brushed down after immersing it in water.

d) It is desirable to have the treatment head face close to the power meter target. In the case of reflecting targets 5 mm to 10 mm will be appropriate; in the case of absorbing targets a larger distance should be chosen to avoid heating of the treatment surface by the absorption of ultrasound in the target. This may not be possible for power meters that supply positioning rings for the treatment head or have a membrane in front of the target. If this is the case, then endeavour to have a reproducible distance, within 2 mm from the target.

e) Tape or clamp the cable of the treatment head to the bench.

f) In the case of a convex conical target the transducer faceplate should be centralized over the target apex to within ± 2 mm. This can be performed with the naked eye, and is adequate for transducers conforming to IEC 61689. When using an absorbing target balance, it is good measurement practice to similarly align the central axis of the transducer faceplate with the centre of the balance target.

g) The reproducibility of a measurement and the accuracy of the final (averaged) result can be affected by the distance between the treatment head and the target in the power meter. Probably, the most time efficient technique is as follows:

   1) set up a treatment head in the power meter;

   2) run through all the desired power levels once;

   3) remove the treatment head from the power meter and place it back again, readjusting the treatment head clamping mechanism to the power meter; and

   4) repeat steps 1) to 3) three to five times, for a treatment head. For a high quality power meter, the typical repeatability from repositioning will lie in the range 3% to 5%. If there are much larger differences, then it is likely that reflections impinging on the treatment head face are affecting its output power. This might come, for example, from the use of absorber materials whose acoustic properties are inadequate. The most accurate result is then obtained from the average of a number of measurements, e.g. 3 to 5.

h) The technique of raising the treatment head out of the water whilst it is running, to ‘clear the head’ of an adverse reading, should be avoided. Such a practice can reduce the lifetime and change the calibration of the treatment head. Modern ultrasound therapy machines have automatic cut offs (power down) when the treatment head has insufficient contact with the patient or is not immersed.

Annex C
(informative)

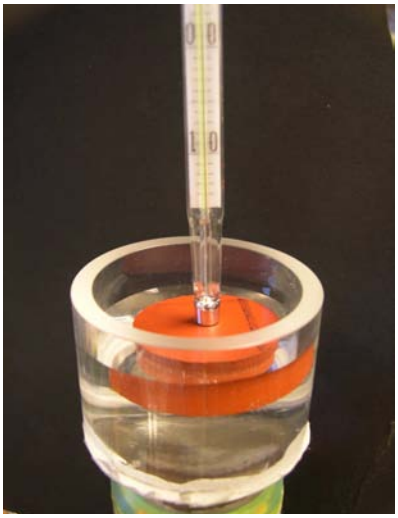
Quantitative relative ultrasonic output test using temperature rise

When ultrasound is radiated into absorbing material its energy will be transferred into heat. The temperature rise due to this heat can easily be measured. To be able to use this method for quality assurance purposes the measurement has to be reproducible. This will be the case with the following guidance.

The materials needed for a typical measurement set-up are as follows.

a) The set-up given in 5.1.4 and Figure 1 can be used:
   1) a piece of high absorbing material (absorption > 40 dB/cm at the frequency of interest). Its size should be not smaller than the size of the front of the treatment head under test (use the same size for small treatment heads as for the larger heads);
   2) a thermometer. This could be an electronic one, a simple mercury thermometer or a thermocouple.

b) The measurement set-up is as follows.
   1) The thermometer shall be mounted in a hole in the absorbing material. The distance between the tip of the thermometer and the surface of the absorber should be > 3 mm. The thermometer has to fit tightly in that hole. If necessary some coupling gel will improve the heat transfer from the absorber to the thermometer. See Figure C.1.
   2) The absorber shall be placed at a distance 1 cm to 2 cm from the face of the treatment head (the distance used shall be equal for all the measurements with this treatment head in future).
   3) Wait about 5 min to allow the absorber, the water and the thermometer to reach an equilibrium temperature.
   4) Set the physiotherapy device at the preferred output (for this test an I_{eff} of 1 W/cm^2 should be sufficient).
   5) Note the temperature from the thermometer.
   6) Switch the physiotherapy device on and note the time.
   7) Usually there is a reasonable temperature rise in 5 min, but if necessary take more time.
   8) Note the temperature in the absorber and note the time ultrasound was on to raise the temperature in the absorber. The difference between this temperature and that at the start of the measurement should be noted as the temperature rise under that specific device setting in the specified time.
   9) It is important that all device settings and distances are the same for all measurements in future.



IEC 649/07

Figure C.1 – Example of a measurement set-up to measure the temperature rise due to ultrasound in absorbing material

Annex D
(informative)

Quantitative relative ultrasonic output test using calorimetry

The following test outlines a protocol for using the simple calorimeter, based on publication [4]. The test is very similar to that described in Annex C, except that an absorber is not used and the acoustic power is transferred to heat through absorption within water, and the material used in the manufacture of the cup which holds the fluid.

Equipment required to complete the test is: a plastic (drinking) cup and cone and a thermometer. The aim of the test is to return a single number (the temperature rise generated under specific operating conditions) which is representative of the power being generated by the treatment head under test. If the output changes with time, this temperature rise will also change.

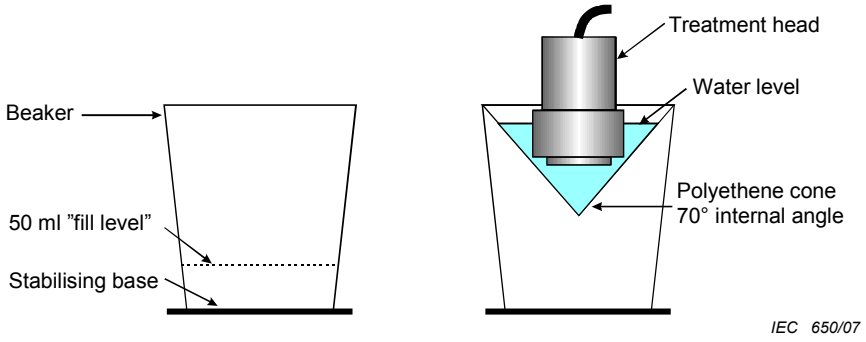


Figure D.1 – Schematic of equipment used within the calorimeter method for monitoring power output of therapy treatment heads

This simple check therefore enables the output power of therapy units to be monitored and to enable changes in acoustic power of greater than about 20 % to be detected. This test does not give an absolute measure of the output in Watts or Wcm^{-2}.

More details of the method may be found in publication [9].

Please read this instruction sheet carefully. Although the test is straightforward, it should be exactly as described, as follows, to obtain consistent results. Each frequency of ultrasound shall be tested separately, even if the two frequencies are produced by the same treatment head.

a) For large treatment heads:

1) Fill the plastic cup with tap water between 20 °C and 25 °C up to the `fill level` and place the treatment head in this cup, for at least 1 min, to allow the head and water to reach the same temperature.

2) Thoroughly stir the water in the cup with the treatment head. Using the syringe, transfer exactly 20 ml of this water to the plastic cone.

3) Remove the treatment head from the cup and immediately immerse it in the cone so that the final position of the head is vertical and resting gently on the walls of the cone. Take care to slide the face of the head underwater so as not to trap any air underneath.

4) Run the head for 60 s on continuous wave (CW) at 1,0 Wcm^{-2}. Move the treatment head gently up and down in the water.

5) Remove the head and place it in its holder on the physiotherapy machine. Stir the water in the cone with the thermometer. Make sure that the tip of the thermometer is immersed, but do not allow it to touch the bottom of the cone. Record the maximum temperature that is reached in the cone.

6) Stir the remaining water in the cup with the thermometer. Measure and record the temperature on the log sheet

7) Subtract the temperature of the water in the cup from that in the cone, and record the temperature rise on the log sheet.

8) If the measured temperature rise is not within the range specified on the log sheet for that treatment head and frequency, repeat the procedure again immediately as a double check. If the second temperature rise is still outside the specified range, it is recommended that contact should be made with the organization that calibrates the equipment, to test the calibration of the machine. (The acceptable temperature range is ±20 % to ±25 % about the mean temperature rise recorded as soon as the head has had its annual calibration.)

b) For small treatment heads:

Follow the instructions for large treatment heads, but use 5 ml of water from a 5 ml syringe instead of 20 ml and run the head for 60 s on CW at 1,5 Wcm^{-2}. Remember to move the treatment head gently up and down in the water.

Annex E
(informative)

Example of weekly test report

Acceptance Test for Device, Date: .....

Manufacturer: .....Model: .....Serial No.: .....

Treatment Head - Frequency: .....Nominal Radiating Area: .....

Serial No.: .....

Results visual inspection: .....

Device traceably calibrated? .....

Setting for relative ultrasonic output test: mode:.....Intensity or power: .....

Method used for relative ultrasonic output test:.....Relative Value .....

Beam uniformity • Circularly Symmetric? .....• Sharp Peaks? .....

• General Comments? .....

Weekly Test

Date	Visual inspection	Pattern symmetry —circular	No sharp peaks	Appearance has not changed since last test	Comment	Result relative power measurement

Annex F
(informative)

Example of annual test report

CLIENT: .....

Location of Testing: .....

DEVICE FOR TEST

Manufacturer: .....

Model: .....

Serial No.: .....

Treatment Head - Frequency: .....

Serial No.: .....

Nominal Radiating Area: .....

A separate report sheet is to be used for each treatment head.

POWER METER

Manufacturer: .....

Model: .....

Serial No.: .....

Calibration Date: ..... <1 year .....

Calibration Method: .....Portable power standard (PPS) proficiency test by WA or SA?.....

BEAM UNIFORMITY

- Circularly Symmetric? .....
- Sharp Peaks? .....
- General Comments? .....

POWER REPORT GRAPH

- See this Appendix .....

POWER CALIBRATION COMMENTS

- Pass / Fail, within ±20 % .....
- General .....

Comments and action:.....

Failed and requires recalibration so that reading within ±20 %?

OPTIONAL TESTS

- Pulse Regime Accuracy: .....
- Timer Accuracy: .....

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Condition of device and treatment head? .....
- Any other? .....

Name of Testing Officer (print) .....

Signature of Testing Officer: .....

Date of Test: .....

Note: .....

The original report remains with the client. A copy is retained by the tester.

Power Calibration: Device S/N …….

LARGE Applicator Head S/N .....

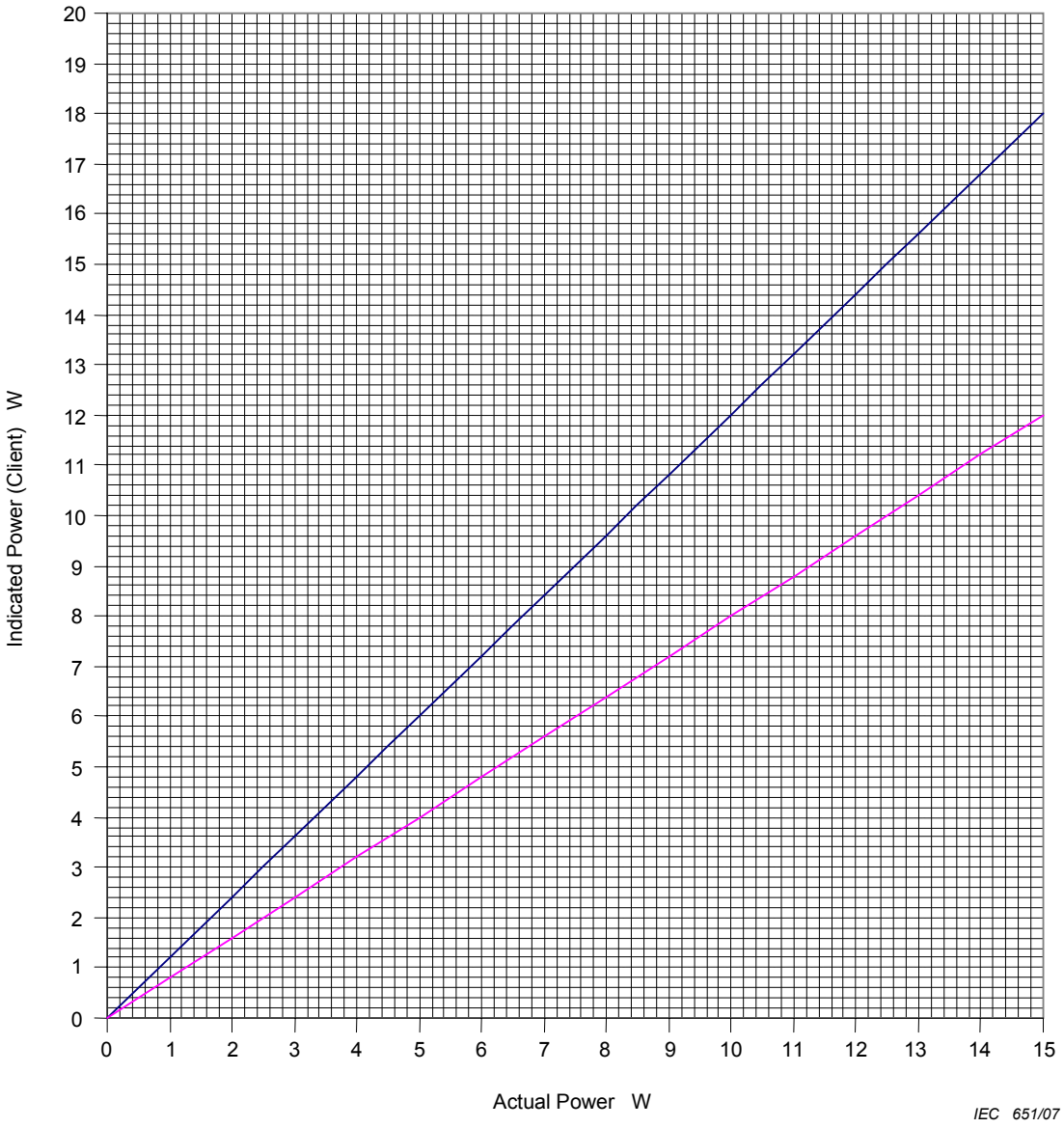


Figure F.1 – Example of a power calibration graph for a large applicator head

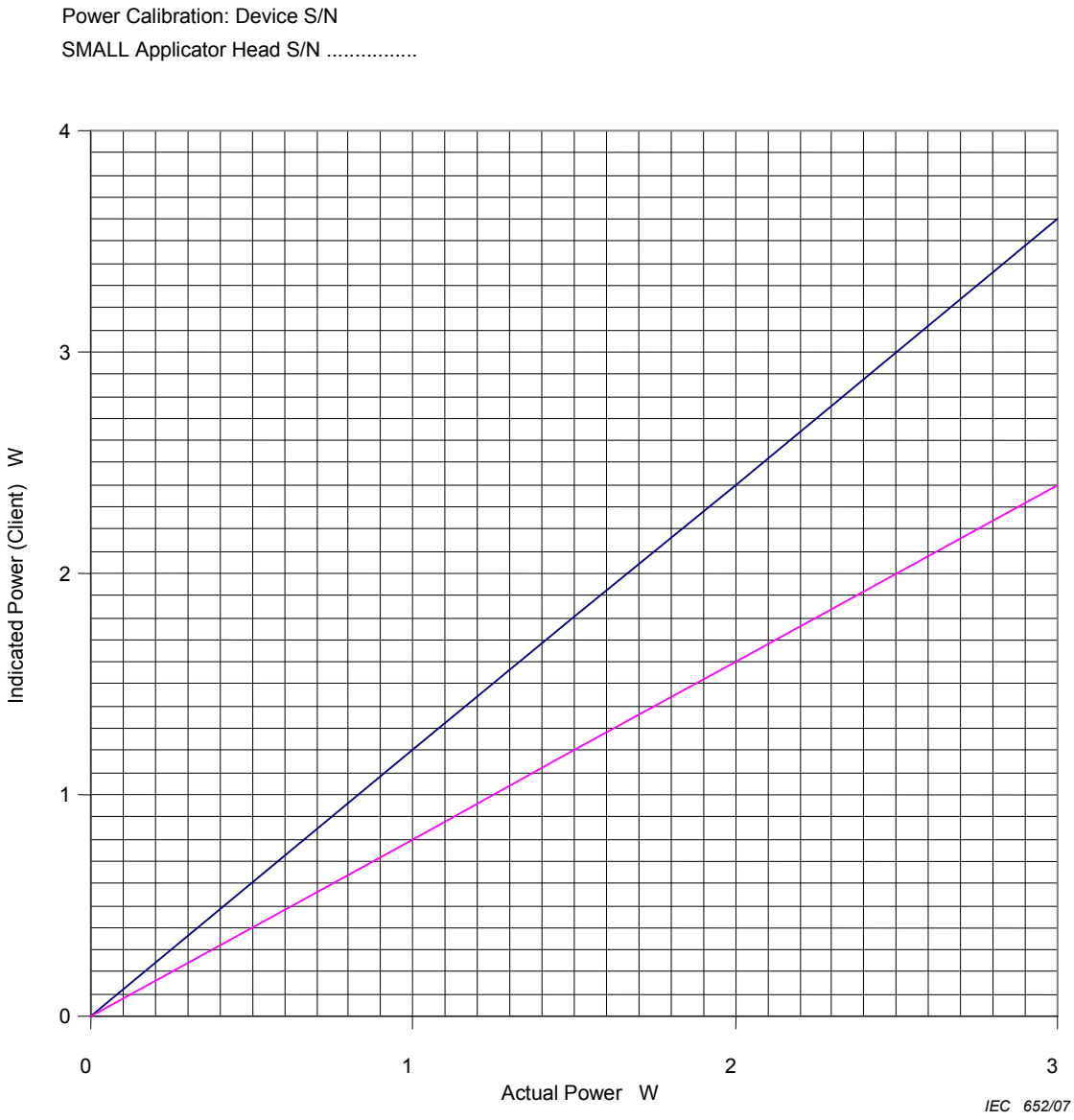


Figure F.2 – Example of a power calibration graph for a small applicator head

Annex G
(informative)

Ultrasound portable power standard

Any device that emits energy to treat a patient has to be calibrated and maintained regularly. This rule should be a part of the quality assurance program of the user of this medical device to protect patients.

There are several ways to achieve that goal.

– the output can be calibrated by a calibration service provider who maintains a calibration level at a higher traceability level;

– the output can be calibrated by a comparison with another device that has been calibrated at a higher traceability level.

Also the reference to a calibration at a higher traceability level can be organized in different ways:

– the output can be calibrated directly at the institute holding the primary standard;

– the calibration service proves their ability for ultrasonic output calibration by taking part in key-comparisons or using a device like the portable power standard.

The portable power standard (PPS) [10],[11] is a controlled standard. It provides a stable and reproducible source of ultrasound power in addition to providing the tester with a means to demonstrate his/her efficiency in using the power meter. The PPS uses calibrated ultrasound power transducers (treatment heads) which can be used to calibrate a user's power meter. There is a range of transducers available, intended to be representative of what is seen in clinical application. In addition, there is a transducer which is designed to test the immunity of the power meter to electromagnetic radiation interference and its robustness in measuring asymmetric ultrasound beams. The proficiency test function involves measuring a number of unknown powers from each transducer with the ultrasound power meter. The power meter should determine the correct power to within ±20 %. A complete calibration and proficiency test for five treatment heads should only take half a day.

Presently this portable power standard is in use in European countries. As it is a relatively simple way to organize traceability, the use of such equipment should be promoted.

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ISBN 2-8318-9141-8

ICS 11.040.60; 17.140.50

Typeset and printed by the IEC Central Office
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND