Australian Standard®

Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety-related systems

Part 7: Overview of techniques and measures

This Australian Standard® was prepared by Committee IT-006, Industrial Process Measurement, Control and Automation. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 10 March 2011.
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- Australia Safety Critical Systems Association
- Australian Computer Society
- Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association
- Consult Australia
- Consumers Federation of Australia
- Engineers Australia
- Institute of Chemical Engineers Australia
- Institute of Instrumentation, Control and Automation Australia
- Process Control Society
- The University of Queensland
- Workplace Health and Safety Queensland
- WorkSafe Victoria

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Part 7: Overview of techniques and measures

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee IT-006, Industrial Process Measurement, Control and Automation, to supersede AS 61508.7—2001.

The objective of this revision is to adopt the current edition of IEC 61508-7.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from IEC 61508-7 Ed.2.0 (2010), *Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety-related systems—Part 7: Overview of techniques and measures.*

As this Standard is reproduced from an International Standard, the following applies:

(a) Its number appears on the cover and title page while the international standard number appears only on the cover.

(b) In the source text 'this part of the IEC 61508' should read 'this Australian Standard'.

(c) A full point substitutes for a comma when referring to a decimal marker.

References to International Standards should be replaced by references to Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards, as follows:

Reference to International Standard		*Australian Standard*	
IEC		AS	
61508	Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety related systems	61508	Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety related systems
61508-4	Part 4: Definitions and abbreviations	61508.4	Part 4: Definitions and abbreviations

The term 'informative' has been used in this Standard to define the application of the annex to which it applies. An 'informative' annex is only for information and guidance.

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INTRODUCTION

Systems comprised of electrical and/or electronic elements have been used for many years to perform safety functions in most application sectors. Computer-based systems (generically referred to as programmable electronic systems) are being used in all application sectors to perform non-safety functions and, increasingly, to perform safety functions. If computer system technology is to be effectively and safely exploited, it is essential that those responsible for making decisions have sufficient guidance on the safety aspects on which to make these decisions.

This International Standard sets out a generic approach for all safety lifecycle activities for systems comprised of electrical and/or electronic and/or programmable electronic (E/E/PE) elements that are used to perform safety functions. This unified approach has been adopted in order that a rational and consistent technical policy be developed for all electrically-based safety-related systems. A major objective is to facilitate the development of product and application sector international standards based on the IEC 61508 series.

NOTE 1 Examples of product and application sector international standards based on the IEC 61508 series are given in the bibliography (see references [21], [22] and [37]).

In most situations, safety is achieved by a number of systems which rely on many technologies (for example mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, electrical, electronic, programmable electronic). Any safety strategy must therefore consider not only all the elements within an individual system (for example sensors, controlling devices and actuators) but also all the safety-related systems making up the total combination of safety-related systems. Therefore, while this International Standard is concerned with E/E/PE safety-related systems, it may also provide a framework within which safety-related systems based on other technologies may be considered.

It is recognized that there is a great variety of applications using E/E/PE safety-related systems in a variety of application sectors and covering a wide range of complexity, hazard and risk potentials. In any particular application, the required safety measures will be dependent on many factors specific to the application. This International Standard, by being generic, will enable such measures to be formulated in future product and application sector international standards and in revisions of those that already exist.

This International Standard

– considers all relevant overall, E/E/PE system and software safety lifecycle phases (for example, from initial concept, through design, implementation, operation and maintenance to decommissioning) when E/E/PE systems are used to perform safety functions;
– has been conceived with a rapidly developing technology in mind; the framework is sufficiently robust and comprehensive to cater for future developments;
– enables product and application sector international standards, dealing with E/E/PE safety-related systems, to be developed; the development of product and application sector international standards, within the framework of this standard, should lead to a high level of consistency (for example, of underlying principles, terminology etc.) both within application sectors and across application sectors; this will have both safety and economic benefits;
– provides a method for the development of the safety requirements specification necessary to achieve the required functional safety for E/E/PE safety-related systems;
– adopts a risk-based approach by which the safety integrity requirements can be determined;
– introduces safety integrity levels for specifying the target level of safety integrity for the safety functions to be implemented by the E/E/PE safety-related systems;

NOTE 2 The standard does not specify the safety integrity level requirements for any safety function, nor does it mandate how the safety integrity level is determined. Instead it provides a risk-based conceptual framework and example techniques.

- sets target failure measures for safety functions carried out by E/E/PE safety-related systems, which are linked to the safety integrity levels;
- sets a lower limit on the target failure measures for a safety function carried out by a single E/E/PE safety-related system. For E/E/PE safety-related systems operating in
  - a low demand mode of operation, the lower limit is set at an average probability of a dangerous failure on demand of 10^{-5};
  - a high demand or a continuous mode of operation, the lower limit is set at an average frequency of a dangerous failure of 10^{-9} [h^{-1}];

NOTE 3 A single E/E/PE safety-related system does not necessarily mean a single-channel architecture.

NOTE 4 It may be possible to achieve designs of safety-related systems with lower values for the target safety integrity for non-complex systems, but these limits are considered to represent what can be achieved for relatively complex systems (for example programmable electronic safety-related systems) at the present time.

- sets requirements for the avoidance and control of systematic faults, which are based on experience and judgement from practical experience gained in industry. Even though the probability of occurrence of systematic failures cannot in general be quantified the standard does, however, allow a claim to be made, for a specified safety function, that the target failure measure associated with the safety function can be considered to be achieved if all the requirements in the standard have been met;
- introduces systematic capability which applies to an element with respect to its confidence that the systematic safety integrity meets the requirements of the specified safety integrity level;
- adopts a broad range of principles, techniques and measures to achieve functional safety for E/E/PE safety-related systems, but does not explicitly use the concept of fail safe. However, the concepts of “fail safe” and “inherently safe” principles may be applicable and adoption of such concepts is acceptable providing the requirements of the relevant clauses in the standard are met.

AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety-related systems

Part 7:
Overview of techniques and measures

1 Scope

1.1 This part of IEC 61508 contains an overview of various safety techniques and measures relevant to IEC 61508-2 and IEC 61508-3.

The references should be considered as basic references to methods and tools or as examples, and may not represent the state of the art.

1.2 IEC 61508-1, IEC 61598-2, IEC 61508-3 and IEC 61508-4 are basic safety publications, although this status does not apply in the context of low complexity E/E/PE safety-related systems (see 3.4.3 of IEC 61508-4). As basic safety publications, they are intended for use by technical committees in the preparation of standards in accordance with the principles contained in IEC Guide 104 and ISO/IEC Guide 51. IEC 61508-1, IEC 61508-2, IEC 61508-3 and IEC 61508-4 are also intended for use as stand-alone publications. The horizontal safety function of this international standard does not apply to medical equipment in compliance with the IEC 60601 series.

1.3 One of the responsibilities of a technical committee is, wherever applicable, to make use of basic safety publications in the preparation of its publications. In this context, the requirements, test methods or test conditions of this basic safety publication will not apply unless specifically referred to or included in the publications prepared by those technical committees.

1.4 Figure 1 shows the overall framework for parts 1 to 7 of IEC 61508 and indicates the role that IEC 61508-7 plays in the achievement of functional safety for E/E/PE safety-related systems.