

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

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**Electric cables – Calculation of the current rating –  
Part 1-3: Current rating equations (100 % load factor) and calculation of losses –  
Current sharing between parallel single-core cables and calculation of  
circulating current losses**





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INTERNATIONAL  
ELECTROTECHNICAL  
COMMISSION

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## CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	5
1 Scope.....	6
2 Normative references .....	6
3 Terms, definitions and symbols.....	6
3.1 Terms and definitions.....	6
3.2 Symbols.....	6
4 Description of method.....	7
4.1 General.....	7
4.2 Outline of method .....	8
4.3 Matrix solution .....	11
Annex A (informative) Example calculations.....	12
A.1 Overview.....	12
A.2 Example 1.....	12
A.2.1 General .....	12
A.2.2 Calculations.....	13
A.3 Example 2.....	18
A.4 Example 3.....	18
A.5 Example 4.....	19
Annex B (informative) Example of the computation of the coefficient $\alpha$ for hollow core conductors.....	20
Bibliography.....	21
Figure B.1 – Representation of a hollow core conductor.....	20
Table 1 – Values of $\alpha$ for conductors.....	10
Table A.1 – Sheath loss factor calculation according to IEC 60287-1-1.....	13
Table A.2 – Sheath current and sheath loss factor calculation per phase.....	15
Table A.3 – Calculated values of $d_{i,k}$ .....	16
Table A.4 – Calculated values of $z_z$ .....	16
Table A.5 – Array $[Z]$ including coefficients for currents.....	17
Table A.6 – Sheath current and sheath loss factor calculation per phase.....	18
Table A.7 – Sheath current and sheath loss factor calculation per phase.....	19
Table A.8 – Sheath current and sheath loss factor calculation per phase.....	19

## INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

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CALCULATION OF THE CURRENT RATING –****Part 1-3: Current rating equations (100 % load factor)  
and calculation of losses – Current sharing between parallel  
single-core cables and calculation of circulating current losses**

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This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition published in 2002. This edition constitutes a technical revision.

This edition includes the following significant technical changes with respect to the previous edition:

- a) Change and update of list of symbols.

The text of this International Standard is based on the following documents:

Draft	Report on voting
20/2098/FDIS	20/2105/RVD

Full information on the voting for its approval can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above table.

The language used for the development of this International Standard is English.

This document was drafted in accordance with ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, and developed in accordance with ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 and ISO/IEC Directives, IEC Supplement, available at [www.iec.ch/members\\_experts/refdocs](http://www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs). The main document types developed by IEC are described in greater detail at [www.iec.ch/publications](http://www.iec.ch/publications).

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- replaced by a revised edition, or
- amended.

## INTRODUCTION

When single-core cables are installed in parallel, it is possible that the load current will not share equally between the parallel cables. The circulating currents in the sheaths of the parallel cables will also differ. This is because a significant proportion of the impedance of large conductors is due to self reactance and mutual reactance. Hence the spacing and relative location of each cable will have an effect on the current sharing and the circulating currents. The currents are also affected by phase rotation. The method described in this document can be used to calculate the current sharing between conductors as well as the circulating current losses.

There is no simple rule by which the circulating current losses of parallel cables can be estimated. Calculation for each cable configuration should be applied. The principles and impedance formulae involved are straightforward but the difficulty arises in solving the large number of simultaneous equations generated. The number of equations to be solved generally precludes the use of manual calculations and solution by computer is recommended. For  $n_c$  cables per phase having metallic sheaths in a three-phase system there are  $6 \cdot n_c$  equations containing the same number of complex variables.

For simplicity the equations set out in this document assume that the parallel conductors all have the same cross-sectional area. If this is not the case, the equations should be adapted to allow for different resistances for each conductor. The effect of neutral and earth conductors can also be calculated by including these conductors in the appropriate loops. The method set out in this document does not take account of any portion of the sheath circulating currents that can flow through the earth or other extraneous paths. In this respect, the effect of earth return path has been excluded for the purposes of the methodology described in the following, as it is concluded that it can affect the magnitude of the resulting circulating currents only by a small extent on a limited number of cases, where both very low soil electrical resistivity values and low earthing conductor resistance values are simultaneously considered.

The conductor currents and sheath circulating currents in parallel single-core cables are unlikely to be equal. Because of this, the external thermal resistance for buried parallel cables should be calculated using the method set out in IEC 60287-2-1:2023, 4.2.3.2. Because the external thermal resistance and sheath temperatures are functions of the power dissipation from each cable in the group an iterative procedure to determine the circulating current losses and the external thermal resistance should be adopted.