

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

NORME INTERNATIONALE



**Superconductivity –
Part 23: Residual resistance ratio measurement – Residual resistance ratio of
cavity-grade Nb superconductors**

**Supraconductivité –
Partie 23: Mesurage du rapport de résistance résiduelle – Rapport de résistance
résiduelle des supraconducteurs de Nb à cavités**



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SUPERCONDUCTIVITY –

**Part 23: Residual resistance ratio measurement –
Residual resistance ratio of cavity-grade Nb superconductors**

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This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition published in 2021. This edition constitutes a technical revision.

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

- a) The principle is changed to represent the present test method.

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

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| Draft | Report on voting |
| 90/515/FDIS | 90/519/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.

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INTRODUCTION

High-purity niobium is the chief material used to make superconducting radio-frequency cavities. Similar grades of niobium can be used in the manufacture of superconducting wire. Procurement of raw materials and quality assurance of delivered products often use the residual resistance ratio (RRR) to specify or assess the purity of a metal. RRR is defined for non-superconducting metals as the ratio of electrical resistance measured at room temperature (293 K) to the resistance measured for the same specimen at low temperature (~4,2 K). The low-temperature value is often called the residual resistance. Higher purity is associated with higher values of RRR.

Niobium presents special problems due to its transformation to a superconducting state at ~9 K, so DC electrical resistance is effectively zero below this temperature. The definition above would then yield an infinite value for RRR. This document describes a test method to determine the residual resistance value by using a plot of the resistance to temperature as the test specimen is gradually warmed through the superconducting transition in the absence of an applied magnetic field. This results in a determination of the residual resistance at just above superconducting transition, ~10 K, from which RRR is subsequently determined.

International Standards also exist to determine the RRR of superconducting wires. In contrast to superconducting wires, which are usually a composite of a superconducting material and a non-superconducting material and the RRR value is representative of only the non-superconducting component, here the entire specimen is composed of superconducting niobium. Frequently, niobium is procured as a sheet, bar or rod, and not as a wire. For such forms, test specimens will likely be a few millimetres in the dimensions transverse to electric current flow. This difference is significant when making electrical resistance measurements, since niobium samples will likely be much longer than that for the same length-to-diameter ratio as a wire, and higher electrical current can be required to produce sufficient voltage signals. Guidance for sample dimensions and electrical connections is provided in Annex A. Test apparatus should also take into consideration aspects such as the orientation of a test specimen relative to the liquid helium surface, accessibility through ports on common liquid helium dewars, design of current contacts, and minimization of thermal gradients over long specimen lengths. These aspects distinguish this document from similar wire standards.

Other test methods have been used to determine RRR. Some methods use a measurement at a temperature other than 293 K for the high resistance value. Some methods use extrapolations at 4,2 K in the absence of an applied magnetic field for the low resistance value. Other methods use an applied magnetic field to suppress superconductivity at 4,2 K. A comparison between this document and some other test methods is presented in Annex A. Note that systematic differences of up to 10 % are produced by these other methods, which is larger than the target uncertainty of this document. It is therefore important to apply this document or the appropriate corrections listed in Annex A according to the test method used.

Whenever possible, this test method should be transferred to vendors and collaborators who also perform RRR measurements. To promote consistency, the results of inter-laboratory comparisons are described in Clause C.2.