



BSI Standards Publication

## Process management for avionics - Atmospheric radiation effects

---

Part 6: Extreme space weather and potential impact on  
the avionics environment and electronics

## National foreword

This Published Document is the UK implementation of IEC/TR 62396-6:2017. It supersedes PD IEC/PAS 62396-6:2014 which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee GEL/107, Process management for avionics.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

© The British Standards Institution 2017  
Published by BSI Standards Limited 2017

ISBN 978 0 580 98040 4

ICS 49.060; 31.020; 03.100.50

**Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.**

This Published Document was published under the authority of the Standards Policy and Strategy Committee on 30 September 2017.

### Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

Date	Text affected
------	---------------

---



# IEC TR 62396-6

Edition 1.0 2017-07

## TECHNICAL REPORT



---

**Process management for avionics – Atmospheric radiation effects –  
Part 6: Extreme space weather – Potential impact on the avionics environment  
and electronics**

INTERNATIONAL  
ELECTROTECHNICAL  
COMMISSION

ICS 03.100.50; 31.020; 49.060

ISBN 978-2-8322-4512-5

**Warning! Make sure that you obtained this publication from an authorized distributor.**

CONTENTS

FOREWORD..... 3

INTRODUCTION..... 5

1 Scope..... 6

2 Normative references ..... 6

3 Terms and definitions ..... 6

4 Abbreviated terms and acronyms..... 7

5 Extreme space weather (ESW)..... 8

    5.1 General..... 8

    5.2 Space weather relevant to avionics..... 9

    5.3 Examples of proton spectra for GLEs..... 9

    5.4 GLEs in recent history..... 10

    5.5 GLEs inferred from historical data..... 11

        5.5.1 General ..... 11

        5.5.2 The Carrington event..... 11

        5.5.3 The AD774-775 event..... 11

    5.6 Defining an extreme space weather environment ..... 12

        5.6.1 General ..... 12

        5.6.2 ESW level 1: February 1956 GLE ..... 13

        5.6.3 ESW level 2: An event much larger than the February 1956 GLE, approximately representative of a 1-in-1000-year event..... 15

    5.7 Forecasting the occurrence of an extreme space weather event ..... 15

    5.8 Acceleration factors in ground testing ..... 16

    5.9 Real-time atmospheric radiation monitoring and aircraft in-flight radiation monitoring..... 16

6 Considerations of ESW impact on infrastructure related to flight operations..... 17

Bibliography..... 18

Figure 1 – 23 February 1956 GLE – Integral and differential proton spectra fitted with band and exponential functions..... 10

Figure 2 – 19 October 1989 GLE – Integral and differential proton spectra fitted with band and exponential functions..... 10

Figure 3 – Proton spectra for galactic cosmic ray background (solid red line) and February 1956 GLE (dashed blue line), and ratio between the two (green dotted line) ..... 13

Figure 4 – Integral neutron spectra at ground level (top) and 12 km altitude (bottom) for GCR and GLE conditions at two cut-off rigidities..... 14

## INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

---

**PROCESS MANAGEMENT FOR AVIONICS –  
ATMOSPHERIC RADIATION EFFECTS –**
**Part 6: Extreme space weather –  
Potential impact on the avionics environment and electronics**

## FOREWORD

- 1) The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) is a worldwide organization for standardization, comprising all national electrotechnical committees (IEC National Committees). The object of IEC is to promote international co-operation on all questions concerning standardization in the electrical and electronic fields. To this end and in addition to other activities, IEC publishes International Standards, Technical Specifications, Technical Reports, Publicly Available Specifications (PAS) and Guides (hereafter referred to as "IEC Publication(s)"). Their preparation is entrusted to technical committees; any IEC National Committee interested in the subject dealt with may participate in this preparatory work. International, governmental and non-governmental organizations liaising with the IEC also participate in this preparation. IEC collaborates closely with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in accordance with the conditions determined by agreement between the two organizations.
- 2) The formal decisions or agreements of IEC on technical matters express, as nearly as possible, an international consensus of opinion on the relevant subjects since each technical committee has representation from all interested IEC National Committees.
- 3) IEC Publications have the form of recommendations for international use and are accepted by IEC National Committees in that sense. While all reasonable efforts are made to ensure that the technical content of IEC Publications is accurate, IEC cannot be held responsible for the way in which they are used or for any misinterpretation by any end user.
- 4) In order to promote international uniformity, IEC National Committees undertake to apply IEC Publications transparently to the maximum extent possible in their national and regional publications. Any divergence between any IEC Publication and the corresponding national or regional publication shall be clearly indicated in the latter.
- 5) IEC itself does not provide any attestation of conformity. Independent certification bodies provide conformity assessment services and, in some areas, access to IEC marks of conformity. IEC is not responsible for any services carried out by independent certification bodies.
- 6) All users should ensure that they have the latest edition of this publication.
- 7) No liability shall attach to IEC or its directors, employees, servants or agents including individual experts and members of its technical committees and IEC National Committees for any personal injury, property damage or other damage of any nature whatsoever, whether direct or indirect, or for costs (including legal fees) and expenses arising out of the publication, use of, or reliance upon, this IEC Publication or any other IEC Publications.
- 8) Attention is drawn to the normative references cited in this publication. Use of the referenced publications is indispensable for the correct application of this publication.
- 9) Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this IEC Publication may be the subject of patent rights. IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

The main task of IEC technical committees is to prepare International Standards. However, a technical committee may propose the publication of a technical report when it has collected data of a different kind from that which is normally published as an International Standard, for example "state of the art".

IEC TR 62396-6, which is a technical report, has been prepared by IEC technical committee 107: Process management for avionics.

This first edition cancels and replaces the first edition of IEC PAS 62396-6 published in 2014. This edition constitutes a technical revision. The technical changes with respect to the previous edition are the contents of the present document.

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

Enquiry draft	Report on voting
107/298/DTR	107/305/RVDTR

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

This document has been drafted in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

A list of all parts in the IEC 62396 series, published under the general title *Process management for avionics – Atmospheric radiation effects* can be found on the IEC website.

The committee has decided that the contents of this document will remain unchanged until the stability date indicated on the IEC website under "<http://webstore.iec.ch>" in the data related to the specific document. At this date, the document will be

- reconfirmed,
- withdrawn,
- replaced by a revised edition, or
- amended.

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

**IMPORTANT – The 'colour inside' logo on the cover page of this publication indicates that it contains colours which are considered to be useful for the correct understanding of its contents. Users should therefore print this document using a colour printer.**

## INTRODUCTION

This document provides information intended to improve the understanding of extreme space weather events.

Rarely occurring natural hazards can have a high impact to society and national economies. Natural events have no respect for national boundaries and the whole world can suffer. The April 2010 Icelandic (Eyjafjallajökull) volcano eruption and resulting ash cloud and the March 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami demonstrated how devastating rarely occurring natural events can be.

In 2011 the UK recognised “extreme space weather” (ESW) events (also referred to as solar super storms and sometimes simply as super storms) as one of these rare, but high impact hazards. There is evidence of the impact of ESW events in the past. During an event in February 1956, which was monitored at ground level, a rise in radiation flux of more than 2 orders of magnitude was derived for aircraft environments.

The document does not consider high altitude nuclear explosions or any other man-made modifications of space weather.

## PROCESS MANAGEMENT FOR AVIONICS – ATMOSPHERIC RADIATION EFFECTS –

### Part 6: Extreme space weather – Potential impact on the avionics environment and electronics

#### 1 Scope

This part of IEC 62396, which is a technical report, provides information intended to improve the understanding of extreme space weather events; it details the mechanisms and conditions that produce “extreme space weather” (ESW) as a result of a large increase in the activity on the surface of the sun and it discusses the potential radiation environment based on projection of previous recorded ESW.

This document does not detail the solutions with regard to the ESW events whose occurrence is extremely rare. As the stakes related to ESW environment go widely beyond the electronics issues and there are a lot of other elements in consideration (human concern for example), this document does not detail potential specific provisions or mitigations.

#### 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements 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 62396-1:2016, *Process management for avionics – Atmospheric radiation effects – Part 1: Accommodation of atmospheric radiation effects via single event effects within avionics electronic equipment*

#### 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in IEC 62396-1 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>
- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>

##### 3.1 Carrington event

largest solar storm on record, which took place from 1 to 3 September 1859, and is named after British astronomer Richard Carrington

##### 3.2

##### coronal mass ejection

##### CME

large burst of solar wind plasma ejected into space