



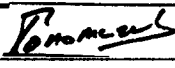
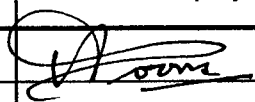
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Pages 1 to 8

**TERMS, DEFINITIONS, ABBREVIATIONS,  
SYMBOLS AND UNITS  
FOR  
CAPACITORS  
ESA/SCC Basic Specification No. 2133000**



**space components  
coordination group**

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**DOCUMENTATION CHANGE NOTICE**

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**1. SCOPE**

This specifications forms part of ESA/SCC Basic Specification No. 21300, Terms, Definitions, Abbreviations, Symbols and Units, and covers capacitors.

**2. TERMS, DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS****2.1 TYPES OF CAPACITOR****D.C. Capacitors**

- D.C. capacitors are capacitors designed essentially for application with a direct voltage.

**N.B.**

A d.c. capacitor may not be suitable for use on a.c. supplies. For other applications, e.g. pulse or a.c., the operating voltage will have to be agreed between Customer and Manufacturer.

**Polar Capacitors  
(for electrolytic capacitors)**

- Polar capacitors are capacitors designed essentially for application with the positive polarity of a direct voltage on the identified terminal.

**Bipolar Capacitors  
(for electrolytic capacitors)**

- Bipolar capacitors are capacitors designed to withstand reversal of the applied direct voltage.

**A.C. Capacitors**

- A.C. capacitors are capacitors designed essentially for application with alternating voltages of stated frequency.

**Pulse Capacitors**

- Pulse capacitors are capacitors designed essentially for application with intermittent charges or discharges at high values of the charge or discharge current.

**Rated Capacitance**

- The rated capacitance of a capacitor is the value which is indicated on it.

**2.2 CHARACTERISTICS****Capacitance**

- Capacitance is defined as  $C = Q/V$ , where  $C$  is the capacitance in farads,  $Q$  is the charge in Coulombs and  $V$  is the potential difference in volts.

**Rated Capacitance ( $C_n$ )**

- The rated capacitance of a capacitor is the value which is indicated on it.

**Dielectric**

- The insulating material between the plates of a capacitor, whether it consists of a gas, liquid or solid, is known as the dielectric (an example is air or glass).

**Dielectric Constant**



- The dielectric constant 'K' of an insulating material is the ratio of the capacitance of a given capacitor using the stated material as the dielectric compared to the capacitance using air as the dielectric; the 'K' of air is 1.

**Category Temperature Range**

- The category temperature range is the range of ambient temperatures for which the component has been designed to operate continuously; this is defined by the temperature limits of the appropriate category.




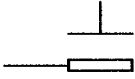
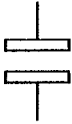

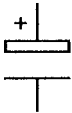



- Upper Category Temperature - The upper category temperature is the maximum ambient temperature for which a capacitor has been designed to operate continuously.
- Lower Category Temperature - The lower category temperature is the minimum ambient temperature for which a capacitor has been designed to operate continuously.
- Minimum Storage Temperature - The minimum storage temperature is the minimum permissible ambient temperature which the capacitor shall withstand in the non-operating condition without damage.
- Maximum Temperature of a Capacitor - The maximum temperature of a capacitor is the temperature at the hottest point of its external surface.
- N.B.**  
The terminals are considered to be part of the external surface.
- Minimum Temperature of a Capacitor - The minimum temperature of a capacitor is the temperature at the coldest point of its external surface.
- N.B.**  
The terminals are considered to be part of the external surface.
- Rated Temperature - The rated temperature is the maximum ambient temperature at which the rated voltage is continuously applicable.
- Category Voltage ( $U_c$ ) - The category voltage ( $U_c$ ) is the voltage which may be applied to a capacitor in use at its upper category temperature.
- Rated Voltage ( $U_r$ ) - The rated voltage ( $U_r$ ) is the maximum direct voltage or the maximum r.m.s. alternating voltage which may be applied continuously to the terminals of a capacitor at any temperature between the lower category temperature and the rated temperature (see Para. 2.2, Items 7 and 10).
- Temperature Derated Voltage - For any temperature between the rated temperature and the upper category temperature, the temperature derated voltage is the maximum voltage that may be applied continuously to the terminals of a capacitor.
- N.B.**  
The information for the voltage at temperatures between the temperature specified for rated voltage and the maximum category temperature shall be given by the Manufacturer.

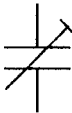
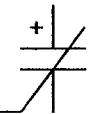
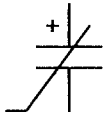
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- Rated Ripple Voltage - The rated ripple voltage is the r.m.s. value of the maximum allowable alternating voltage of a specified frequency superposed on the d.c. voltage at which the capacitor may be operated continuously at a specified temperature.
- Surge Voltage Ratio - The surge voltage ratio of a capacitor is the quotient of the maximum instantaneous voltage which may be applied to the terminals of a capacitor for a specified time at any temperature within the category temperature range and the rated voltage or the temperature derated voltage, as appropriate. The number of times per hour that this voltage may be applied must be specified.
- D.C. Leakage ( $I_l$ ) - The d.c. leakage varies with the dielectric material, the value of capacitance, the applied d.c. voltage and the temperature. Leakage current is usually given for electrolytic capacitors.
- Insulation Resistance ( $R_i$ ) - Insulation resistance governs the leakage of current through a capacitor. Leakage is generally of concern for d.c. or low-frequency circuits and, for that reason, insulation resistance measurements are generally made with d.c. applied.  $R_i$  is often given in megohms  $\times$  microfarads.
- Tangent of Loss Angle ( $\text{tg}\delta$ ) or Dissipation Factor -  $\text{tg}\delta$  is the power loss of a capacitor divided by the reactive power of a capacitor at a sinusoidal voltage of specified frequency. It may be calculated as the ratio of a capacitor's equivalent series resistance ( $R_s$ ) to its capacitor resistance  $(\frac{1}{\omega C})$ .
- Voltage Proof or Dielectric Strength - The dielectric strength of an insulating material is a measure of its ability to withstand the application of voltage across its surfaces without breakdown.
- Self-healing - Self-healing is a process by which the electrical properties of a capacitor, after a local breakdown of its dielectric, are instantaneously and essentially restored to their values before the breakdown.
- Time Constant - The time constant is the product of the insulation resistance and the capacitance.

**3. GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION**

SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
	Capacitor - general symbol
	Lead-through capacitor Feed-through capacitor
	Chassis capacitor
	Capacitor with inherent series resistor
	Non-polarised electrolytic capacitor
	Polarised capacitor - general symbol
	Polarised electrolytic capacitor
	Variable capacitor - general symbol



SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
	Capacitor with adjustment
	Temperature-dependent, polarised capacitor when deliberate use is made of the temperature coefficient (e.g. ceramic capacitor)
	Voltage-dependent capacitor where deliberate use is made of the voltage-dependent characteristic (e.g. semi-conductor capacitor)