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Low-voltage switchgear and controlgear – Guidance for the development of embedded software

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LOW-VOLTAGE SWITCHGEAR AND CONTROLGEAR – GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMBEDDED SOFTWARE

FOREWORD

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IEC TR 63201, which is a technical report, has been prepared by subcommittee 121A: Low-voltage switchgear and controlgear, of IEC technical committee 121: Switchgear and controlgear and their assemblies for low voltage.

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

Enquiry draft	Report on voting
121A/256/DTR	121A/287A/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.

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- withdrawn,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

Programmable electronics are now being integrated within switchgear and controlgear. For example, soft-starters, electronic overload relays, circuit-breakers with electronic trip units, proximity switches with built in micro-controllers and some accessories such as extension modules and control panels are using programmable electronics with embedded software called firmware. This embedded software often supports the main functions (see 3.3) provided by the equipment such as overcurrent protection and other important functions, e.g. alarm detection from monitoring devices.

The integration of embedded software within switchgear and controlgear should not degrade the integrity of their main functions compared to purely electromechanical equipment. Therefore, a minimum set of standard requirements for embedded software is provided by this document.

This document takes into account the existing best practices for developing embedded software within safety functions for automation given by IEC 61508-3. Functional safety approach is mainly used in machinery, automotive, automation and process automation where safety functions are implemented with multiple components which should match a consistent level of integrity when combined. In other sectors, such as electric distribution and power control systems, key functions such as over-current release, residual current release, load monitoring, etc. should follow installation rules and coordination rules which are systematically safety and reliability related. Therefore, this document can be seen as providing the principles of the good practice given by IEC 61508-3.

This document is also intended to provide an up-to-date method with regards to the supplement SE of UL 489.

The intention of this document is to provide guidance about:

– risk assessment aspects in relation to embedded software;
– embedded software evaluation method;
– software architecture;
– basic coding rules;
– measures to control software errors;
– software verification and its relationship with the validation of the equipment or system.

In this document, the term “software” is used as a generalized term for embedded software.

LOW-VOLTAGE SWITCHGEAR AND CONTROLGEAR – GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMBEDDED SOFTWARE

1 Scope

This document provides information, and recommended minimum requirements related to embedded software supporting the main functions of switchgear and controlgear during the whole lifecycle of the equipment. It includes also the parameterization aspects and basics about secure coding standards.

This document can be used in addition to product standard requirements when not already covered.

This document is appropriate for new development or major changes in existing equipment.

This document is not intended to cover the functional safety of control systems for machinery or for automation which are covered by IEC 62061, ISO 13849-1 and IEC 61508 (all parts), neither the cybersecurity risk which are covered by ISO 27005, and IEC 62443 (all parts). It gives only some example of secure coding rules.

NOTE Future new publication IEC TS 63208[1] is under development for implementing embedded cybersecurity measures within switchgear and controlgear based on ISO 27005 and IEC 62443 (all parts).

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.

ISO/IEC 2382-1:1993, *Information technology – Vocabulary – Part 1: Fundamental terms*

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1 Future publication IEC TS 63208 is currently at CD stage.