

**METRIC/SI**



**NASA TECHNICAL STANDARD**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**NASA-STD-4003A  
w/CHANGE 1:  
REVALIDATED: 03/13/2026**

**Approved: 2013-02-05  
Superseding NASA-STD-4003  
(Baseline)**

**ELECTRICAL BONDING FOR  
NASA LAUNCH VEHICLES, SPACECRAFT,  
PAYLOADS, AND FLIGHT EQUIPMENT**

# NASA-STD-4003A w/CHANGE 1

## DOCUMENT HISTORY LOG

| Status   | Document Revision | Change Number | Approval Date | Description   |
|----------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| Baseline |                   |               | 2003-09-08    | Initial Release   |
| Revision | A                 |               | 2013-02-05    | <p>Reformatted document to meet current NASA Standard Template</p> <p>Deleted the following document references:<br/>MIL-C-5541, MIL-STD-889, NSTS 37330,<br/>SAE-AMS-M-3171, SAE-ARP-1481<br/>SAE-ARP-ILO1870, SSP 30245</p> <p>Added the following Applicable Documents:<br/>NASA-STD-6012, NASA-STD-6016,<br/>SAE-ARP-5414</p> <p>Section 3.1: Added “CFRP carbon fiber reinforced plastic”</p> <p>Section 3.1: Added “EMI Electromagnetic Interference”</p> <p>Section 3.1: Added “EUT Equipment under test”</p> <p>Section 3.1: Changed GFRP acronym.<br/>From: graphite filament reinforced plastic<br/>To: glass or graphite fiber reinforced plastic</p> <p>Section 3.2: In Electrical Bonding definition changed<br/>From: “...mechanical interfaces...”<br/>To: “...faying surface mechanical interfaces..”</p> <p>Section 3.2: Deleted redundant word “Provides” in third and fourth bullet.</p> <p>Section 3.2: Added “faying surface” definition</p> <p>Table 1: Purpose of Class C Bond</p> |

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| Status   | Document Revision | Change Number | Approval Date | Description  |
|----------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| Revision | A<br>(Continued)  |               | 2013-02-05    | <p>From: “Reduces power and voltage losses.”<br/>           To: “Reduces power and voltage losses at the bonding interfaces.”</p> <p>Table 1:<br/>           Column: CLASS L, Row: BOND REQ.<br/>           From: “Bonding components shall withstand high current.”<br/>           To: “Bonding components are required to withstand high current without arcing.”</p> <p>Section 4.1.2.2<br/>           From: “...ignition point...”<br/>           To: “...ignition temperature...”</p> <p>Added section: 4.1.2.4 Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses</p> <p>Section 4.1.3.d:<br/>           From: “...ignition point...”<br/>           To: “...ignition temperature...”</p> <p>Section 4.1.3.1<br/>           From: “...due to heating or arcing.”<br/>           To: “due to conditions including heating, sparking, or arcing.”</p> <p>Figure 1: Changed curve title.<br/>           From: “Maximum Resistance”<br/>           To: “Maximum Allowable Resistance”</p> <p>Section 4.1.4.1: Changed paragraph title.<br/>           From: “Electrical Connectors”<br/>           To: “Electrical Connectors and Shield Termination”</p> <p>Section 4.1.5.a: Rearranged sentence to add clarity.</p> <p>Section 4.1.6: Converted inches to centimeters</p> |

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|----------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| Revision | A<br>(Continued)  |               | 2013-02-05    | <p>Section 4.1.6.b (1): Added requirement for conductive coatings.</p> <p>Section 4.1.6.b (2): Added information for surface conductivity.</p> <p>Section 4.1.6.2<br/>From: "...20 decibels (dB) less than applicable minimum ignition energy (MIE) threshold level..."<br/>To: "1/10 of applicable minimum ignition energy (MIE) (or 20 decibels (dB) below) threshold level..."</p> <p>Section 5.1.2: Moved the information from the following sections to 5.1.2 Bond Straps:<br/>4.3.3 Bond Straps<br/>4.4.2 Conductivity of Bond Joint<br/>4.4.3 Bond Straps</p> <p>Added section "5.1.3 Fasteners"</p> <p>Removed detailed information on surface cleaning and finishing and pointed to NASA-STD-6012 and NASA-STD-6016 instead.</p> <p>Deleted the following sections:<br/>5.2.1 Aluminum<br/>5.2.2 Magnesium<br/>5.2.3 Steel</p> <p>Deleted Table II, Galvanic Series.</p> <p>Deleted Section 5.4, Special Considerations, and changed to: 5.4 Graphite Filament Reinforced Plastic (GFRP).</p> <p>Section 5.4: Replaced "Graphite Filament Reinforced Plastic (GFRP)" with "Carbon Fiber Reinforced Plastic (CFRP)."</p> |

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|----------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| Revision | A<br>(Continued)  |               | 2013-02-05    | <p>Deleted Section 5.4.3 Multilayer Insulation</p> <p>Section 5.5.b: Added verbiage for end-to-end measurement option.</p> <p>Section 5.5.f: Added verification for conductive coatings.</p> <p>Section 5.5.g: Added verification for surface conductivity.</p> <p>Deleted Section 6.7 Surface Cleaning and Finishing</p> <p>Moved Section 6.9 Special Considerations to the appendix and divided into the following sections:<br/> A.3.8 Pipe, Tubing and Hoses (Class S)<br/> A.3.9 Composite Materials<br/> A.3.10 Multilayer Insulation</p> <p>Section A.2: Added the following reference documents:<br/> NASA-HDBK-4002<br/> NASA-HDBK-4006<br/> NASA-STD-4005<br/> NASA-STD-464C</p> <p>Section A.3.3<br/> From: "...GFPR..."<br/> To: "...glass or graphite fiber reinforced plastic (GFRP)..."</p> <p>Section A.3.6: Added information on triboelectrification.</p> <p>Section A.3.11: Added information on verification processes.</p> <p>Section A.3.11: Added information on clamping pressure.</p> |

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| Revision | A<br>(Continued)  |               | 2013-02-05    | Section A.3.11: Added Figure 2, Electrical Bonding Path Diagram Example  |
|          |                   | 1             | 2016-01-19    | Revalidated w/Administrative/Editorial Changes—This NASA Technical Standard was reviewed and no technical changes resulted. However, requirements EBR 33, 34, 43, 92, and 93 were clarified based on information contained in related notes; and requirement 5.2.f was re-lettered to 5.2.e. Administrative changes to number requirements, add a Requirements Compliance Matrix as Appendix A, and conform to the current template were made, along with editorial corrections. |
|          |                   | 1             | 2026-03-13    | Revalidated “as it is” with no changes   |

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## FOREWORD

This NASA Technical Standard is published by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to provide uniform engineering and technical requirements for processes, procedures, practices, and methods that have been endorsed as standard for NASA programs and projects, including requirements for selection, application, and design criteria of an item.

This NASA Technical Standard is approved for use by NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers and Facilities and may be cited in contract, program, and other Agency documents as a technical requirement. It may also apply to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and other contractors only to the extent specified or referenced in applicable contracts.

This NASA Technical Standard establishes a common framework for consistent electrical bonding practices across NASA programs. The intent is to provide stand-alone requirements and to provide enough data to help modify requirements or to allow waivers if needed.

Requests for information should be submitted via “Feedback” at <https://standards.nasa.gov>. Requests for changes to this NASA Technical Standard should be submitted via MSFC Form 4657, Change Request for a NASA Engineering Standard.

**Original Signed By**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ralph R. Roe, Jr.  
NASA Chief Engineer

**02/05/2013**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approval Date

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**ELECTRICAL BONDING FOR NASA LAUNCH VEHICLES,  
SPACECRAFT, PAYLOADS, AND FLIGHT EQUIPMENT**

**1. SCOPE**

**1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this NASA Technical Standard is to define the basic electrical bonding requirements for NASA launch vehicles, spacecraft, payloads, and equipment. Its intent is to provide fundamental aerospace electrical bonding requirements, as well as to classify electrical bonds according to their purpose. This NASA Technical Standard also states the requirements for the various classes. The rationale for specific requirements is stated where possible. Additional data is provided to support tailoring for new applications, if necessary.

**1.2 Applicability**

This NASA Technical Standard is applicable to engineering practices for NASA programs and projects.

This NASA Technical Standard is approved for use by NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers and Facilities and may be cited in contract, program, and other Agency documents as a technical requirement. It may also apply to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and other contractors only to the extent specified or referenced in applicable contracts.

Verifiable requirement statements are numbered and indicated by the word “shall”; this NASA Technical Standard contains 97 requirements. Explanatory or guidance text is indicated in italics beginning in section 4. To facilitate requirements selection and verification by NASA programs and projects, a Requirements Compliance Matrix is provided in Appendix A.

**1.3 Tailoring**

[EBR 1] Tailoring of this NASA Technical Standard for application to a specific program or project shall be formally documented as part of program or project requirements and approved by the responsible Technical Authority in accordance with NPR 7120.5, NASA Space Flight Program and Project Management Requirements.

**2. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS**

**2.1 General**

The documents listed in this section contain provisions that constitute requirements of this NASA Technical Standard as cited in the text.

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**2.1.1** [EBR 2] The latest issuances of cited documents shall apply unless specific versions are designated.

**2.1.2** [EBR 3] Non-use of specifically designated versions shall be approved by the responsible Technical Authority.

The applicable documents are accessible at <https://standards.nasa.gov>, may be obtained directly from the Standards Developing Body or other document distributors, or information for obtaining the document is provided.

## **2.2 Government Documents**

### **National Aeronautics and Space Administration**

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| NPR 7120.5    | NASA Space Flight Program and Project Management Requirements |
| NASA-STD-6012 | Corrosion Protection for Space Flight Hardware                |
| NASA-STD-6016 | Standard Materials and Processes Requirements for Spacecraft  |

## **2.3 Non-Government Documents**

### **Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) Aerospace**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| SAE-ARP-5412 | Aircraft Lightning Environment and Related Test Waveforms |
| SAE-ARP-5414 | Aircraft Lightning Zoning                                 |

## **2.4 Order of Precedence**

**2.4.1** The requirements and standard practices established in this NASA Technical Standard do not supersede or waive existing requirements and standard practices found in other Agency documentation.

**2.4.2** [EBR 4] Conflicts between this NASA Technical Standard and other requirements documents shall be resolved by the responsible Technical Authority.

## **3. ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS**

### **3.1 Acronyms and Abbreviations**

|         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| $\mu H$ | Microhenries                    |
| ac      | alternating current             |
| AWG     | American Wire Gauge             |
| CFRP    | carbon fiber reinforced plastic |

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| CLASS C | class of bond for intentional current return          |
| CLASS H | class of bond for fault current return                |
| CLASS L | class of bond for lightning current                   |
| CLASS R | class of bond for radio frequency current             |
| CLASS S | class of bond for dissipation of electrostatic charge |
| cm      | Centimeter  |
| dB      | Decibels  |
| dc      | direct current  |
| EBR     | Electrical Bonding Requirements                       |
| EED     | electro-explosive device                              |
| EMF     | electromotive force                                   |
| EMI     | electromagnetic interference                          |
| ESD     | electrostatic discharge                               |
| ETR     | Eastern Test Range                                    |
| EUT     | equipment under test                                  |
| ft      | foot/feet   |
| freq    | frequency   |
| GFRP    | glass or graphite fiber reinforced plastic            |
| MHz     | megahertz   |
| MIE     | minimum ignition energy                               |
| NASA    | National Aeronautics and Space Administration         |
| RF      | radio frequency                                       |
| rqmt    | requirement   |
| SAE     | Society of Automotive Engineers                       |
| sec     | second/seconds  |
| STD     | standard (as in document)                             |

## 3.2 Definitions

Electrical Bonding: The process of providing good electrical connection across faying surface mechanical interfaces to minimize electrical potential differences between equipment and individual parts of structure. Good electrical bonding provides the following:

- Fault current paths for protection against fire and personnel shock.
- A low impedance bond path for antenna installations to ensure no degradation of acceptable performance and to protect the antenna element from damage caused by P-static, radio frequency (RF) currents, or lightning events.
- A current path for RFs for proper operation of filters and shields.
- Protection against the effects of lightning.
- A means to prevent or safely discharge static charges.

Electrical bonds are classified according to the purpose for the bond. Table 1, Summary of

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Electrical Bonding Classes, gives a summary of the classes of bonds.

Faying Surface: The surface of metal materials in contact with each other and joined together.

Flight Vehicle: The launch vehicle and spacecraft or payload (if the payload outer surfaces are exposed to the triboelectrification process), and fairings or shrouds protecting payloads.

P-static: The precipitation static due to impact of charged particles on antennas.

Q: The ratio of reactance to resistance in a tuned circuit.

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**Table 1—Summary of Electrical Bonding Classes**

|  | <b>POWER RETURN</b>   | <b>SHOCK HAZARD</b>  | <b>RADIO FREQUENCY</b>  | <b>LIGHTNING</b>   | <b>ELECTROSTATIC CHARGE</b>  |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>BOND CLASS</b>  | <b>CLASS C</b>  | <b>CLASS H</b>   | <b>CLASS R</b>  | <b>CLASS L</b>   | <b>CLASS S</b>   |
| <b>PURPOSE OF BOND</b>   | Reduces power and voltage losses at the bonding interfaces. Applies to equipment and structure, which are required to return intentional current through structure. | Protects against fire or shock to personnel. Applies to equipment and structure that may be required to carry fault current in case of a short to case or structure. | Protects equipment from RF emissions. Applies to equipment that could generate, retransmit, or be susceptible to RF. Includes antenna mounts and cable shield connections. Covers wide frequency range. | Protects equipment from lightning effects. Applies to equipment or structure that would carry current resulting from a lightning strike.   | Protects against electrostatic discharge. Applies to any item subject to electrostatic charging. |
| <b>BOND REQMT.</b>   | Requires low impedance and low voltage across joints to assure adequate power to the user. Jumpers and straps acceptable.   | Requires low impedance and low voltage across joints to prevent shock hazard or fire due to short. Jumpers and straps acceptable.                                    | Requires low RF impedance at high frequency. Direct contact preferred. No jumpers. Short, wide strap may be used as last resort.  | Requires low impedance at moderate frequency. Bonding components are required to withstand high current without arcing. Straps and jumpers are required to withstand high magnetic forces. | Allows moderate impedance. Jumpers and straps acceptable.  |
| <b>DC BOND RESISTANCE REQMT.</b>   | Bonding resistance requirement depends on current.  | Bonding resistance requirement, 0.1 ohm or less. Special requirements when near flammable vapors.  | Bonding resistance requirement, 2.5 milliohms or less. Low inductance required.   | Bonding resistance requirement depends on current. 500 volts or less across any joint. Low inductance required.  | Typical bonding resistance requirement, 1.0 ohm or less.   |
| <b>FREQ. REQMT.</b>  | Low   | Low  | High  | High   | Low  |
| <b>CURRENT REQMT.</b>  | High  | High   | Low   | High   | Low  |
| <p>Low frequency bonds allow use of straps and jumpers.<br/>                     High frequency bonds require low inductance paths. Short straps are sometimes acceptable.<br/>                     High current bonds require large cross-sectional areas.<br/>                     Low current bonds allow use of small contact areas.</p> |   |  |   |  |  |

## 4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

This section describes the various classes of electrical bonding. Each section contains the general requirement, specific design requirements, and, in most cases, measurable resistance values for each class of bond. Guidelines in Appendix B discuss the reasons for some of the requirements and provide data for possible modifications or rationale for waivers to the requirements.

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## 4.1 Electrical Bonding

[EBR 5] There may be more than one purpose for bonding a specific interface, and the bond shall meet the requirements of each applicable class.

### 4.1.1 Assembly Drawings

[EBR 6] Notes shall be provided on assembly drawings indicating the applicable class or classes.

### 4.1.2 Power Current Return Path (Class C)

[EBR 7] All circuits and systems that use vehicle structure for a power return path shall satisfy Class C bonding requirements.

#### 4.1.2.1 Bond Joints

a. [EBR 8] The total voltage drop across all electrical bond joints between the power supply and the load shall be controlled to keep the voltage within the tolerance of the applicable power quality standard.

b. [EBR 9] If no power quality standard is applicable, a default voltage drop value of 3.5 percent of the operating bus voltage shall be used.

*Refer to Appendix B.3.2 for more information and joint resistance calculation.*

#### 4.1.2.2 Magnesium Alloy

[EBR 10] Magnesium alloy structure shall not be used as an intentional current return path.

*The temperature of a poor joint could rise to the ignition temperature of magnesium.*

#### 4.1.2.3 Hazardous Area Bonding

a. [EBR 11] Electrical bonding of equipment or vehicle structure in areas where flammable materials, gases, or vapors may be present shall be adequate to prevent ignition due to heating, sparking, or arcing.

b. [EBR 12] The resistance of bond joints in hazardous areas shall not exceed the Maximum Allowable Resistance curve shown in figure 1, Fault Current vs. Maximum Allowed Bonding Resistance in the Presence of Flammable Vapors or Liquids.

*If at all possible, the current return path should be routed around the hazardous area.*

#### 4.1.2.4 Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses

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[EBR 13] Pipes, tubing, and hoses shall not be used as an intentional return path for electrical current.

### 4.1.3 Shock and Fault Protection (Class H)

*Fault current, due to short circuits to equipment case or structure, may cause shock or fire hazards. Refer to Appendix B.3.3 for more information.*

a. [EBR 14] Exposed cases or chassis of electrical or electronic equipment shall be bonded to structure with a resistance of 0.1 ohm or less using the methods described in section 5.1.

b. [EBR 15] Metallic conduit, cable trays, and other conductive objects susceptible to short circuits shall have a resistance to structure of 0.1 ohm or less.

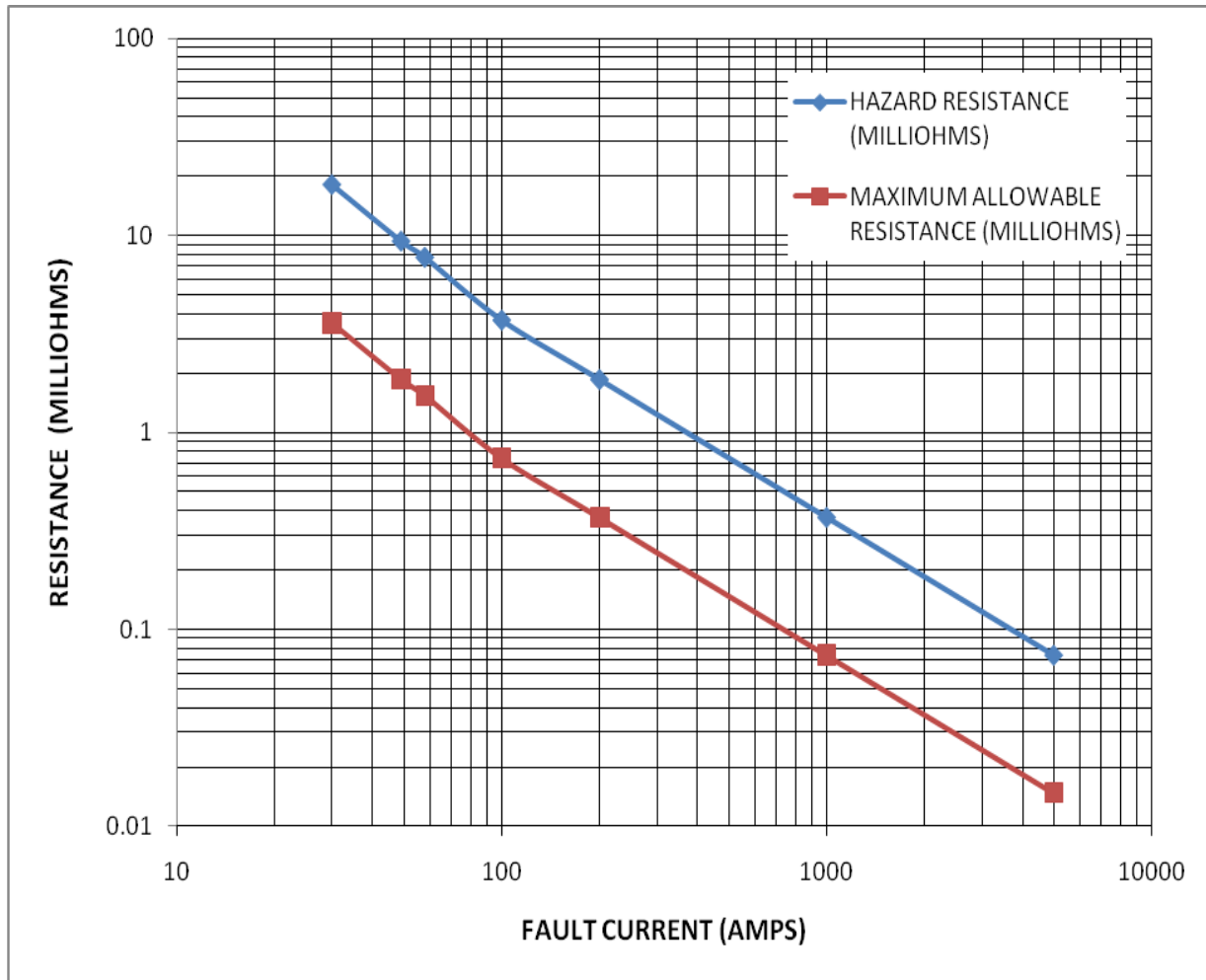
c. [EBR 16] For personnel and fire safety, the fault current return path shall be capable of conducting a minimum of 500 percent overload current for a time period of 0.5 second.

*Typical personnel protection breakers will trip within 0.2 second after a hard short to case. Resultant voltage on the enclosure of the affected component should not exceed 4.5 volts, and no fire or damage to the bond is allowed.*

d. [EBR 17] Magnesium alloy structure shall not be used as a primary fault current return path.

*The temperature of a poor joint could rise to the ignition temperature of magnesium.*

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| FAULT CURRENT (AMPS) | MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE RESISTANCE (MILLIOHMS) | HAZARD RESISTANCE (MILLIOHMS) |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 30                   | 3.6                                      | 18                            |
| 49                   | 1.86                                     | 9.3                           |
| 58                   | 1.54                                     | 7.7                           |
| 100                  | 0.74                                     | 3.7                           |
| 200                  | 0.37                                     | 1.85                          |
| 1000                 | 0.074                                    | 0.37                          |
| 5000                 | 0.0148                                   | 0.074                         |

Figure 1—Fault Current vs. Maximum Allowed Bonding Resistance in the Presence of Flammable Vapors or Liquids

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#### 4.1.3.1 Hazardous Area Bonding

[EBR 18] Electrical bonding of equipment or vehicle structure in areas where flammable materials, gases, or vapors may be present shall be adequate to prevent ignition due to conditions including heating, sparking, or arcing.

a. [EBR 19] The resistance of bond joints in such areas shall not exceed the Maximum Allowable Resistance curve shown in figure 1.

#### 4.1.4 Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R)

*The intent of Class R bonding is to provide a uniform low impedance path for all electrical equipment at radio frequencies. Refer to Appendix B.3.4 for more information.*

a. [EBR 20] All electrical and electronic equipment shall be bonded using the methods described in section 5.1 to provide a low impedance path from the equipment enclosure to structure.

b. [EBR 21] All Class R bond paths to structure, and the joints in that path, shall be designed such that the inductance and overall impedance, including resonances, are low enough to prevent interference at the frequencies of interest.

(1) [EBR 22] The direct current (dc) resistance across each joint in the path shall not exceed 2.5 milliohms.

c. [EBR 23] The design and construction of the outer mold line of the vehicle shall implement Class R electrical bonding between all outer mold line components so as to inherently provide a uniform low impedance enclosure surrounding the vehicle.

d. [EBR 24] Hatches, access panels, doors, and other apertures in outer mold line components shall have at minimum a Class R electrical bond to the outer mold line material.

e. [EBR 25] Vehicle structural elements shall have a Class R electrical bond between elements, as well as between structural elements and outer mold line components, so that the entire structure of the vehicle is interconnected with uniform low impedance.

##### 4.1.4.1 Electrical Connectors and Shield Termination

a. [EBR 26] Electrical connectors and their backshells that may be used to terminate cable shields shall be installed to provide a low impedance path from the backshell to the equipment case.

b. [EBR 27] The dc resistance for each joint in the backshell-to-case path shall not exceed 2.5 milliohms.

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*Examples of such joints include between shield and backshell, backshell and connector, harness connector and enclosure connector, and enclosure connector and equipment enclosure.*

### 4.1.4.2 Antennas

[EBR 28] Antennas that require low impedance to the ground plane for proper operation shall meet Class R requirements.

### 4.1.5 Lightning Protection (Class L)

*Protection against lightning strikes should be provided for launch vehicles and their payloads during transportation, storage, prelaunch, launch, and landing. Propellant, pyrotechnics, and electronic equipment are particularly susceptible to direct and indirect effects of lightning. Refer to Appendix B.3.5 for more information.*

a. [EBR 29] To distribute the current around the vehicle and minimize the currents near possible entry points into the vehicle and near critical areas and systems (including pyrotechnic systems, rocket motors, fuel handling and storage areas, antennas, electronic equipment, and signal and power cables), multiple low impedance paths shall be incorporated across and through vehicle outer mold line and structural components.

- (1) [EBR 30] The dc resistance of all such joints shall be no greater than 2.5 milliohms.

*All joints in vehicle outer mold line components should be designed to present the minimal impedance achievable to the lightning currents that may pass across the joint.*

b. [EBR 31] Each electrical bond shall be bonded using the methods described in section 5.1, have low resistance and adequate contact area to carry its share of lightning current without sustaining a burning, melting, distorting, or other heating effect due to the long duration, high-current portion of the lightning strike.

- (1) [EBR 32] The bonds shall have low impedance to prevent arcing and coupling of voltage spikes into electronic circuits due to the fast rise time portion of the lightning strike.

c. [EBR 33] The dc resistance of all joints and connections from hatches, access panels, doors, and other apertures in outer mold line components (expected to carry high amplitude lightning currents) shall be no greater than 2.5 milliohms.

*Hatches, access panels, doors, and other apertures in outer mold line components expected to carry high amplitude lightning currents should be bonded with multiple low impedance connections to minimize aperture size and slot length.*

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d. [EBR 34] Shield terminations, connectors, or connector backshells of electrical cables that are in the lightning current path, shall be capable of carrying expected lightning currents without damage.

*Electrical cables that are outside the vehicle mold line or that could carry the lightning current should be completely enclosed in gross overshields with a circumferential 360 degree termination into bulkhead penetrations, connectors, or connector backshells.*

(1) [EBR 35] The dc resistance of each such shield termination shall not exceed 2.5 milliohms.

e. [EBR 36] All paths shall be designed using zoning information developed in accordance with SAE-ARP-5414, Aircraft Lightning Zoning, supplemented by analysis employing lightning current waveforms defined in SAE-ARP-5412, Aircraft Lightning Environment and Related Test Waveforms.

*All paths should exhibit the minimal impedance achievable in each path.*

f. [EBR 37] The voltage developed across any joint in the lightning current path shall not exceed 500 volts.

g. [EBR 38] Each bond in the lightning current path shall be capable of carrying expected lightning current.

### 4.1.5.1 Hazardous Area Bonding

a. [EBR 39] Fuel and pyrotechnics shall be completely enclosed by a Faraday cage of conductive material bonded to structure.

b. [EBR 40] Pyrotechnics cables and device connector shields shall have 360-degree bonded termination to the metal enclosure/backshell.

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## 4.1.6 Electrostatic Discharge (Class S)

[EBR 41] All conducting items, except active antenna elements, having any linear dimension greater than 7.6 centimeters (cm), which are subject to precipitation static effects, triboelectric effects, fluid flow, air flow, space and launch vehicle charging, separation of elements, and other charge generating mechanisms, shall have a mechanically secure electrical bond path to vehicle structure using the methods described in section 5.1.

*See Appendix B.3.6 for more information.*

- a. [EBR 42] The resistance across the connection shall be 1.0 ohm or less.

*A mechanically secure electrical bond path is a continuous bond path that maintains the default dc resistance (or lower) after exposure to shock, vibration, launch loads, and other expected mechanical movement.*

*A limit of 1.0 ohm is used as a requirement because it is easily obtained with good contact between conductive surfaces. Static charges can usually be dissipated through less conductive connections.*

- b. [EBR 43] When performing an analysis to determine acceptable values for Class S electrical bonds, the stored energy determined by the analysis shall be less than applicable hazard threshold levels for personnel shock, equipment upset, flammable materials, gases, or vapors, or electro-explosive device (EED) ignition for approval of the proposed electrical bond resistance.

*Higher dc resistance values acceptable for Class S electrical bonds may be determined through performance of a detailed analysis to determine the amount of stored energy on the item to be bonded as a function of the proposed electrical bond resistance.*

- (1) [EBR 44] All conductive coatings, including those used to treat dielectric surfaces, shall be electrically bonded to the vehicle structure with a dc resistance of less than  $10^5$  ohms.

*Launch services providers may levy flight vehicle surface conductivity requirements. See Appendix B.3.6 for more information.*

### 4.1.6.1 Multilayer Insulation

- a. [EBR 45] All conductive layers of multilayer insulation with an area greater than 100 square cm shall be electrically bonded together.

- (1) [EBR 46] Provisions shall be made for attachment to the vehicle structure.

- A. [EBR 47] The conductive attach points shall be bonded directly to the structure using the methods described in section 5.1.

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- B. [EBR 48] Two attach points to the structure per blanket shall be used for redundancy.
- C. [EBR 49] Resistance from attach points to the structure shall be 1.0 ohm or less.
  - b. [EBR 50] Multilayer insulation with an area greater than 100 square cm shall have a minimum of one bond connection to the vehicle structure.
  - c. [EBR 51] Multilayer insulation with an area greater than 1,000 square cm shall have a minimum of two bond connections to the vehicle structure.
  - d. [EBR 52] A minimum of one additional bond connection to the vehicle structure shall be made for each increase of 40,000 square cm.
  - e. [EBR 53] Multilayer insulation consisting of two or more sections shall have all sections electrically bonded to each other.
    - (1) [EBR 54] The contiguous insulation thus formed shall be considered as one section of insulation for determination of the number of bond tabs.

### 4.1.6.2 Hazardous Area Bonding

- a. [EBR 55] All conductive items in areas where flammable materials, gases, or vapors may be present shall have a Class S electrical bond not to exceed 1.0 ohm.
  - (1) [EBR 56] In no case shall any such electrical bond be inadequate to prevent ignition due to heating or arcing.
- b. [EBR 57] Specific Class S electrical bond values in hazardous areas shall be determined through performance of a detailed analysis to determine the amount of stored energy on the item to be bonded as a function of the proposed electrical bond resistance.
  - (1) [EBR 58] The stored energy determined by the analysis shall be 1/10 of applicable minimum ignition energy (MIE) (or 20 decibels (dB) below) threshold level for the flammable materials, gases, or vapors that may be present.

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## 4.1.6.3 Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses

- a. [EBR 59] All metallic pipes, tubes, and hoses that carry fluids shall have a mechanically secure connection to the structure that will measure 1.0 ohm or less.
- b. [EBR 60] Nonmetallic plumbing installations shall be designed so that the static voltage, generated by fluid flow, will not exceed 350 volts at any point outside the pipes, tubes, or hoses.
- c. [EBR 61] The resistance of nonmetallic hoses shall not exceed 1.0 megohm per meter of length to dissipate charges developing within the fluid or between fluid and the hose.

## 5. DETAILED REQUIREMENTS

### 5.1 Bonding Methods

*The following paragraphs describe the bonding methods, with the metal-to-metal method being the preferred method. The metal-to-metal method may not be feasible, and the bonding strap or fastener method may be the best bonding alternative for the application.*

#### 5.1.1 Metal-to-Metal (faying surface to faying surface)

*Equipment and structure with metal-to-metal joints that are joined by processes that transform the mated surfaces into one piece of metal, such as by welding or brazing, are considered permanent and inherently bonded.*

- a. [EBR 62] Semi-permanent joints held together by screws, rivets, clamps, etc., shall have their faying surfaces prepared prior to assembly in accordance with paragraph 5.2 to ensure a good electrical bond.
  - (1) [EBR 63] Clamping pressure across semi-permanent joints shall be in accordance with applicable mechanical engineering assembly and installation requirements.

#### 5.1.2 Bond Straps

*Where the direct joining of structural elements, assemblies, and electrical paths is impossible or impractical, bonding straps or jumpers may be used.*

*Bond straps or jumpers may be used to meet Class C, H, or S bonding requirements, and are useful for some cases in Class L.*

*The usefulness of bond straps for Class R bonds is very limited, and should be used only as a last resort and with approval by the procuring agency.*

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a. [EBR 64] Bonding straps installed across shock mounts or other suspension or support devices shall not impede the performance of the mounting device.

- (1) [EBR 65] The bond straps shall be capable of withstanding the anticipated motion and vibration requirements without suffering metal fatigue or other failure.

*Extra care should be utilized in the attachment of the ends of bonding straps to prevent arcing or other means of electrical noise generation with movements of the strap.*

b. [EBR 66] For Class R bonds, the bonding straps shall be as short as possible.

- (1) [EBR 67] The bond straps shall be flat in cross-section.
- (2) [EBR 68] The bond straps shall have a length-to-width ratio of less than 5 to 1 to minimize the inductance of the strap.

c. [EBR 69] For Class L application of bond straps, the bond straps or jumpers shall be as short as possible.

- (1) [EBR 70] The bond straps shall have adequate lug contact area and adequate wire/lug cross-sectional area to carry the lightning current.
- (2) [EBR 71] The cross-sectional area of any individual jumper shall not be less than number 12 American Wire Gauge (AWG) wire (6530 circular mils) for stranded copper, and not less than number 10 AWG wire (10,380 circular mils) for stranded aluminum.

*These wire sizes are only valid when two or more jumpers are installed to carry lightning current and when the jumpers are not subject to a direct arc.*

- (3) [EBR 72] Where the jumper is subject to arcing, a minimum of number 7 AWG (20,820 circular mils) for copper or number 5 AWG (33,100 circular mils) for aluminum for each jumper shall apply.
- (4) [EBR 73] The jumper shall be robust enough to withstand magnetic forces caused by the high current through the strap.
- (5) [EBR 74] The jumper shall not rely on soldered connections to carry lightning current.

*For multistroke protection or if arcing at the jumper is expected, the total cross-sectional area of the straps should be 40,000 circular mils or greater.*

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## 5.1.3 Fasteners

*If the bond application is approved by the procuring agency, fasteners (e.g., bolts, nuts, or studs) may be used to meet bonding requirements. Fasteners should be primarily used to maintain pressure on faying surfaces. However, in some cases fasteners may perform better than straps for Class L and R applications. The inductance of multiple bolts between otherwise isolated materials may be less than the inductance of a strap between surfaces.*

- a. [EBR 75] When bolts are used as part of the bond path, an analysis shall be performed showing that the number of bolts used in the path is sufficient to provide a low impedance path.
- b. [EBR 76] Fasteners shall be sealed against moisture and air to prevent corrosion of the threads.

*Rivets are acceptable if a minimum of three rivets is used per junction and they are match-drilled.*

- c. [EBR 77] The following are problematic and shall not be used for electrical bonding purposes:

- (1) Self-tapping screws.
- (2) Zinc-plated bolts, nuts, or screws.
- (3) Star, anodized, or zinc-plated washers.
- (4) Cadmium-plated hardware.

- d. [EBR 78] For Class L applications, multiple rivets, bolts, or other fasteners shall be used at joints in vehicle skin and structure to ensure multiple metallic contact areas capable of sharing lightning current.

## 5.2 Surface Cleaning and Finishing

- a. [EBR 79] The faying surfaces of all electrically bonded metal-to-metal joints shall be cleaned of all nonconductive materials and protected against corrosion.

- b. [EBR 80] The finishes and protection methods for faying surfaces shall be per NASA-STD-6012, Corrosion Protection for Space Flight Hardware, and NASA-STD-6016, Standard Materials and Processes Requirements for Spacecraft.

- (1) [EBR 81] The protection method or finish selected shall not negate the electrical bond between the two surfaces.
- c. [EBR 82] Treated mating surfaces shall be protected by packaging materials or protective films until just prior to mating.

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d. [EBR 83] After protective material is removed, the surfaces shall be cleaned by blowing, vacuuming, or wiping with appropriate solvent as necessary to remove dust or other foreign particles before mating.

*Non-hardening sealant or thermal grease may be applied to the faying surfaces of semi-permanent joints if tests indicate bonding requirements can be met after assembly.*

*If the bond is permanent, a hardening sealant, such as chromated epoxy primer, may be used if tests indicate bonding requirements can be met after assembly.*

e. [EBR 84] Surfaces that are expected to remain mated indefinitely shall be inspected periodically to ensure a good electrical bond is maintained.

### 5.3 Galvanic Corrosion of Dissimilar Materials

*Direct contact of dissimilar materials in the presence of moisture may result in corrosion, which impairs the effectiveness of any electrical bond and weakens the structure in which it occurs. When choosing materials for a given electrical bonding application, major factors that contribute to corrosion are the degree of separation of metals in the galvanic series and the amount of moisture present.*

a. [EBR 85] Corrosion control of galvanic couples shall be in accordance with NASA-STD-6012 and NASA-STD-6016.

*Refer to Appendix B.3.7 for more information.*

### 5.4 Carbon Fiber Reinforced Plastic

*Carbon fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP) provides some conductivity through the graphite filaments. However, the graphite is usually covered with nonconductive epoxy or phenolic material.*

a. [EBR 86] CFRP shall be bonded to control electrostatic discharge (ESD) and may be useful as an RF bond.

b. [EBR 87] CFRP shall not be used in a Class C or Class H bond path.

*The procedure for bonding CFRP requires removing enough nonconductive material from the mating surfaces to expose the graphite layer. Electrical bonds between CFRP sheets can be made by overlapping exposed graphite on both sheets. Conductive epoxy may also be placed on the exposed graphite, and bonding connections may be made to metallic surfaces through the conductive epoxy.*

*NOTE: A fire hazard exists with current flow through graphite epoxy materials.*

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## 5.5 Verification

a. [EBR 88] Verification of electrical bonding requirements shall be accomplished by a combination of tests, similarity, analysis, and inspection.

b. [EBR 89] The extent of verification and the methods used shall be defined for each program.

*Some requirements should be verified at the equipment level, such as bonding of equipment assembly interfaces and connector backshell contacts.*

*The resistance of bonds may be measured on flight vehicles, but it is usually impractical to measure inductance or current carrying capability.*

*Verifying each joint in a bond path is not always feasible and therefore an end-to-end measurement may be an option. Controls need to be implemented in shield termination paths through connector assemblies. A realistic value would be on the order of 10 milliohms from the shield to the electronics enclosure for a cadmium-plated aluminum assembly, with 2.5 milliohms maximum for any particular joint.*

c. [EBR 90] The resistance requirement of all classes of bonds shall be verified by testing sample bonds.

*Other bonds of the same type, using the same procedures, may be verified by similarity.*

d. [EBR 91] Spot checks shall be made to verify the process is still good and is being followed.

e. [EBR 92] The current carrying capability of Class C, H, and L bonds shall be verified by analysis and inspection.

*Class C, H, and L bonds require current carrying capability, as well as low resistance contacts.*

f. [EBR 93] Low inductance paths of Class R and Class L bonds shall be verified by analysis and inspection.

*Class R and Class L bonds require low inductance paths as well as low resistance.*

g. [EBR 94] For flight vehicle surfaces that have been treated with conductive coatings (4.1.6.b.1), test or analysis shall show that the bonding requirements are met.

(1) [EBR 95] Relaxation of this requirement shall only be granted if it has been clearly verified by test or analysis that electrostatic charges deposited on the surface of the vehicle will not be hazardous to the flight vehicle or the launch mission.

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h. [EBR 96] If flight vehicle surface conductivity requirements are imposed (4.1.6.b.2), the flight vehicle surface material resistivity requirements shall be verified through test or analysis.

- (1) [EBR 97] Relaxation of this requirement shall only be granted if it has been clearly verified by test or analysis that electrostatic charges deposited on the surface of the vehicle, caused by triboelectrification from precipitation particle impact, will not be hazardous to the flight vehicle or the launch mission.

*Flight vehicle includes the launch vehicle itself, the payload (if the payload outer surfaces are exposed to the triboelectrification process), and fairings or shrouds protecting payloads.*

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## APPENDIX A

### REQUIREMENTS COMPLIANCE MATRIX

#### A.1 Purpose

This appendix provides a listing of requirements contained in this NASA Technical Standard for selection and verification of requirements by programs and projects. (*Note: Enter “Yes” to describe the requirement’s applicability to the program or project; or enter “No” if the intent is to tailor, and enter how tailoring is to be applied in the “Rationale” column.*)

| NASA-STD-4003A w/Change 1 |                                     |  |                        |                        |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| Section                   | Description                         | Requirement in this Standard   | Applicable (Yes or No) | If No, Enter Rationale |
| 1.3                       | Tailoring                           | [EBR 1] Tailoring of this NASA Technical Standard for application to a specific program or project shall be formally documented as part of program or project requirements and approved by the responsible Technical Authority in accordance with NPR 7120.5, NASA Space Flight Program and Project Management Requirements. |                        |                        |
| 2.1.1                     | Applicable Documents                | [EBR 2] The latest issuances of cited documents shall apply unless specific versions are designated.   |                        |                        |
| 2.1.2                     | Applicable Documents                | [EBR 3] Non-use of specifically designated versions shall be approved by the responsible Technical Authority.  |                        |                        |
| 2.4.2                     | Order of Precedence                 | [EBR 4] Conflicts between this NASA Technical Standard and other requirements documents shall be resolved by the responsible Technical Authority.  |                        |                        |
| 4.1                       | Electrical Bonding                  | [EBR 5] There may be more than one purpose for bonding a specific interface, and the bond shall meet the requirements of each applicable class.  |                        |                        |
| 4.1.1                     | Assembly Drawings                   | [EBR 6] Notes shall be provided on assembly drawings indicating the applicable class or classes.   |                        |                        |
| 4.1.2                     | Power Current Return Path (Class C) | [EBR 7] All circuits and systems that use vehicle structure for a power return path shall satisfy Class C bonding requirements.  |                        |                        |
| 4.1.2.1a                  | Bond Joints                         | [EBR 8] The total voltage drop across all electrical bond joints between the power supply and the load shall be controlled to keep the voltage within the tolerance of the applicable power quality standard.  |                        |                        |
| 4.1.2.1b                  | Bond Joints                         | [EBR 9] If no power quality standard is applicable, a default voltage drop value of 3.5 percent of the operating bus voltage shall be used.  |                        |                        |

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|---------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Section                   | Description   | Requirement in this Standard  | Applicable<br>(Yes or<br>No) | If No, Enter<br>Rationale |
| 4.1.2.2                   | Magnesium Alloy   | [EBR 10] Magnesium alloy structure shall not be used as an intentional current return path.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.2.3a                  | Hazardous Area Bonding                                    | [EBR 11] Electrical bonding of equipment or vehicle structure in areas where flammable materials, gases, or vapors may be present shall be adequate to prevent ignition due to heating, sparking, or arcing.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.2.3b                  | Hazardous Area Bonding                                    | [EBR 12] The resistance of bond joints in hazardous areas shall not exceed the Maximum Allowable Resistance curve shown in figure 1, Fault Current vs. Maximum Allowed Bonding Resistance in the Presence of Flammable Vapors or Liquids.           |                              |                           |
| 4.1.2.4                   | Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses                                   | [EBR 13] Pipes, tubing, and hoses shall not be used as an intentional return path for electrical current.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.3a                    | Shock and Fault Protection (Class H)                      | [EBR 14] Exposed cases or chassis of electrical or electronic equipment shall be bonded to structure with a resistance of 0.1 ohm or less using the methods described in section 5.1.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.3b                    | Shock and Fault Protection (Class H)                      | [EBR 15] Metallic conduit, cable trays, and other conductive objects susceptible to short circuits shall have a resistance to structure of 0.1 ohm or less.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.3c                    | Shock and Fault Protection (Class H)                      | [EBR 16] For personnel and fire safety, the fault current return path shall be capable of conducting a minimum of 500 percent overload current for a time period of 0.5 second.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.3d                    | Shock and Fault Protection (Class H)                      | [EBR 17] Magnesium alloy structure shall not be used as a primary fault current return path.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.3.1                   | Hazardous Area Bonding                                    | [EBR 18] Electrical bonding of equipment or vehicle structure in areas where flammable materials, gases, or vapors may be present shall be adequate to prevent ignition due to conditions including heating, sparking, or arcing.                   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.3.1a                  | Hazardous Area Bonding                                    | [EBR 19] The resistance of bond joints in such areas shall not exceed the Maximum Allowable Resistance curve shown in figure 1.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4a                    | Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R) | [EBR 20] All electrical and electronic equipment shall be bonded using the methods described in section 5.1 to provide a low impedance path from the equipment enclosure to structure.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4b                    | Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R) | [EBR 21] All Class R bond paths to structure, and the joints in that path, shall be designed such that the inductance and overall impedance, including resonances, are low enough to prevent interference at the frequencies of interest.           |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4b(1)                 | Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R) | [EBR 22] The direct current (dc) resistance across each joint in the path shall not exceed 2.5 milliohms.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4c                    | Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R) | [EBR 23] The design and construction of the outer mold line of the vehicle shall implement Class R electrical bonding between all outer mold line components so as to inherently provide a uniform low impedance enclosure surrounding the vehicle. |                              |                           |

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| NASA-STD-4003A w/Change 1 |   |   |                              |                           |
|---------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Section                   | Description   | Requirement in this Standard  | Applicable<br>(Yes or<br>No) | If No, Enter<br>Rationale |
| 4.1.4d                    | Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R) | [EBR 24] Hatches, access panels, doors, and other apertures in outer mold line components shall have at minimum a Class R electrical bond to the outer mold line material.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4e                    | Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R) | [EBR 25] Vehicle structural elements shall have a Class R electrical bond between elements, as well as between structural elements and outer mold line components, so that the entire structure of the vehicle is interconnected with uniform low impedance.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4.1a                  | Electrical Connectors and Shield Termination              | [EBR 26] Electrical connectors and their backshells that may be used to terminate cable shields shall be installed to provide a low impedance path from the backshell to the equipment case.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4.1b                  | Electrical Connectors and Shield Termination              | [EBR 27] The dc resistance for each joint in the backshell-to-case path shall not exceed 2.5 milliohms.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.4.2                   | Antennas  | [EBR 28] Antennas that require low impedance to the ground plane for proper operation shall meet Class R requirements.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5a                    | Lightning Protection (Class L)                            | [EBR 29] To distribute the current around the vehicle and minimize the currents near possible entry points into the vehicle and near critical areas and systems (including pyrotechnic systems, rockets motors, fuel handling and storage areas, antennas, electronic equipment, and signal and power cables), multiple low impedance paths shall be incorporated across and through vehicle outer mold line and structural components. |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5a(1)                 | Lightning Protection (Class L)                            | [EBR 30] The dc resistance of all such joints shall be no greater than 2.5 milliohms.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5b                    | Lightning Protection (Class L)                            | [EBR 31] Each electrical bond shall be bonded using the methods described in section 5.1, have low resistance and adequate contact area to carry its share of lightning current without sustaining a burning, melting, distorting, or other heating effect due to the long duration, high-current portion of the lightning strike.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5b(1)                 | Lightning Protection (Class L)                            | [EBR 32] The bonds shall have low impedance to prevent arcing and coupling of voltage spikes into electronic circuits due to the fast rise time portion of the lightning strike.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5c                    | Lightning Protection (Class L)                            | [EBR 33] The dc resistance of all joints and connections from hatches, access panels, doors, and other apertures in outer mold line components (expected to carry high amplitude lightning currents) shall be no greater than 2.5 milliohms.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5d                    | Lightning Protection (Class L)                            | [EBR 34] Shield terminations, connectors, or connector backshells of electrical cables that are in the lightning current path, shall be capable of carrying expected lightning currents without damage.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5d(1)                 | Lightning Protection (Class L)                            | [EBR 35] The dc resistance of each such shield termination shall not exceed 2.5 milliohms.  |                              |                           |

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| NASA-STD-4003A w/Change 1 |                                      |   |                              |                           |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Section                   | Description                          | Requirement in this Standard  | Applicable<br>(Yes or<br>No) | If No, Enter<br>Rationale |
| 4.1.5e                    | Lightning Protection<br>(Class L)    | [EBR 36] All paths shall be designed using zoning information developed in accordance with SAE-ARP-5414, Aircraft Lightning Zoning, supplemented by analysis employing lightning current waveforms defined in SAE-ARP-5412, Aircraft Lightning Environment and Related Test Waveforms.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5f                    | Lightning Protection<br>(Class L)    | [EBR 37] The voltage developed across any joint in the lightning current path shall not exceed 500 volts.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5g                    | Lightning Protection<br>(Class L)    | [EBR 38] Each bond in the lightning current path shall be capable of carrying expected lightning current.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5.1a                  | Hazardous Area<br>Bonding            | [EBR 39] Fuel and pyrotechnics shall be completely enclosed by a Faraday cage of conductive material bonded to structure.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.5.1b                  | Hazardous Area<br>Bonding            | [EBR 40] Pyrotechnics cables and device connector shields shall have 360-degree bonded termination to the metal enclosure/backshell.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6                     | Electrostatic<br>Discharge (Class S) | [EBR 41] All conducting items, except active antenna elements, having any linear dimension greater than 7.6 centimeters (cm), which are subject to precipitation static effects, triboelectric effects, fluid flow, air flow, space and launch vehicle charging, separation of elements, and other charge generating mechanisms, shall have a mechanically secure electrical bond path to vehicle structure using the methods described in section 5.1. |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6a                    | Electrostatic<br>Discharge (Class S) | [EBR 42] The resistance across the connection shall be 1.0 ohm or less.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6b                    | Electrostatic<br>Discharge (Class S) | [EBR 43] When performing an analysis to determine acceptable values for Class S electrical bonds, the stored energy determined by the analysis shall be less than applicable hazard threshold levels for personnel shock, equipment upset, flammable materials, gases, or vapors, or electro-explosive device (EED) ignition for approval of the proposed electrical bond resistance.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6b(1)                 | Electrostatic<br>Discharge (Class S) | [EBR 44] All conductive coatings, including those used to treat dielectric surfaces, shall be electrically bonded to the vehicle structure with a dc resistance of less than $10^5$ ohms.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1a                  | Multilayer Insulation                | [EBR 45] All conductive layers of multilayer insulation with an area greater than 100 square cm shall be electrically bonded together.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1a(1)               | Multilayer Insulation                | [EBR 46] Provisions shall be made for attachment to the vehicle structure.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1a(1)A              | Multilayer Insulation                | [EBR 47] The conductive attach points shall be bonded directly to the structure using the methods described in section 5.1.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1a(1)B              | Multilayer Insulation                | [EBR 48] Two attach points to the structure per blanket shall be used for redundancy.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1a(1)C              | Multilayer Insulation                | [EBR 49] Resistance from attach points to the structure shall be 1.0 ohm or less.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1b                  | Multilayer Insulation                | [EBR 50] Multilayer insulation with an area greater than 100 square cm shall have a minimum of one bond connection to the vehicle structure.  |                              |                           |

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| Section                   | Description                                       | Requirement in this Standard   | Applicable<br>(Yes or<br>No) | If No, Enter<br>Rationale |
| 4.1.6.1c                  | Multilayer Insulation                             | [EBR 51] Multilayer insulation with an area greater than 1,000 square cm shall have a minimum of two bond connections to the vehicle structure.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1d                  | Multilayer Insulation                             | [EBR 52] A minimum of one additional bond connection to the vehicle structure shall be made for each increase of 40,000 square cm.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1e                  | Multilayer Insulation                             | [EBR 53] Multilayer insulation consisting of two or more sections shall have all sections electrically bonded to each other.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.1e(1)               | Multilayer Insulation                             | [EBR 54] The contiguous insulation thus formed shall be considered as one section of insulation for determination of the number of bond tabs.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.2a                  | Hazardous Area Bonding                            | [EBR 55] All conductive items in areas where flammable materials, gases, or vapors may be present shall have a Class S electrical bond not to exceed 1.0 ohm.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.2a(1)               | Hazardous Area Bonding                            | [EBR 56] In no case shall any such electrical bond be inadequate to prevent ignition due to heating or arcing.   |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.2b                  | Hazardous Area Bonding                            | [EBR 57] Specific Class S electrical bond values in hazardous areas shall be determined through performance of a detailed analysis to determine the amount of stored energy on the item to be bonded as a function of the proposed electrical bond resistance. |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.2b(1)               | Hazardous Area Bonding                            | [EBR 58] The stored energy determined by the analysis shall be 1/10 of applicable minimum ignition energy (MIE) (or 20 decibels (dB) below) threshold level for the flammable materials, gases, or vapors that may be present.                                 |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.3a                  | Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses                           | [EBR 59] All metallic pipes, tubes, and hoses that carry fluids shall have a mechanically secure connection to the structure that will measure 1.0 ohm or less.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.3b                  | Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses                           | [EBR 60] Nonmetallic plumbing installations shall be designed so that the static voltage, generated by fluid flow, will not exceed 350 volts at any point outside the pipes, tubes, or hoses.  |                              |                           |
| 4.1.6.3c                  | Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses                           | [EBR 61] The resistance of nonmetallic hoses shall not exceed 1.0 megohm per meter of length to dissipate charges developing within the fluid or between fluid and the hose.   |                              |                           |
| 5.1.1a                    | Metal-to-Metal (faying surface to faying surface) | [EBR 62] Semi-permanent joints held together by screws, rivets, clamps, etc., shall have their faying surfaces prepared prior to assembly in accordance with paragraph 5.2 to ensure a good electrical bond.   |                              |                           |
| 5.1.1a(1)                 | Metal-to-Metal (faying surface to faying surface) | [EBR 63] Clamping pressure across semi-permanent joints shall be in accordance with applicable mechanical engineering assembly and installation requirements.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2a                    | Bond Straps                                       | [EBR 64] Bonding straps installed across shock mounts or other suspension or support devices shall not impede the performance of the mounting device.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2a(1)                 | Bond Straps                                       | [EBR 65] The bond straps shall be capable of withstanding the anticipated motion and vibration requirements without suffering metal fatigue or other failure.  |                              |                           |

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| Section                   | Description                    | Requirement in this Standard  | Applicable<br>(Yes or<br>No) | If No, Enter<br>Rationale |
| 5.1.2b                    | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 66] For Class R bonds, the bonding straps shall be as short as possible.   |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2b(1)                 | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 67] The bond straps shall be flat in cross-section.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2b(2)                 | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 68] The bond straps shall have a length-to-width ratio of less than 5 to 1 to minimize the inductance of the strap.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2c                    | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 69] For Class L application of bond straps, the bond straps or jumpers shall be as short as possible.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2c(1)                 | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 70] The bond straps shall have adequate lug contact area and adequate wire/lug cross-sectional area to carry the lightning current.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2c(2)                 | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 71] The cross-sectional area of any individual jumper shall not be less than number 12 American Wire Gauge (AWG) wire (6530 circular mils) for stranded copper, and not less than number 10 AWG wire (10,380 circular mils) for stranded aluminum. |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2c(3)                 | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 72] Where the jumper is subject to arcing, a minimum of number 7 AWG (20,820 circular mils) for copper or number 5 AWG (33,100 circular mils) for aluminum for each jumper shall apply.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2c(4)                 | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 73] The jumper shall be robust enough to withstand magnetic forces caused by the high current through the strap.   |                              |                           |
| 5.1.2c(5)                 | Bond Straps                    | [EBR 74] The jumper shall not rely on soldered connections to carry lightning current.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.3a                    | Fasteners                      | [EBR 75] When bolts are used as part of the bond path, an analysis shall be performed showing that the number of bolts used in the path is sufficient to provide a low impedance path.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.3b                    | Fasteners                      | [EBR 76] Fasteners shall be sealed against moisture and air to prevent corrosion of the threads.  |                              |                           |
| 5.1.3c                    | Fasteners                      | [EBR 77] The following are problematic and shall not be used for electrical bonding purposes:<br><br>(1) Self-tapping screws.<br>(2) Zinc-plated bolts, nuts, or screws.<br>(3) Star, anodized, or zinc-plated washers.<br>(4) Cadmium-plated hardware. |                              |                           |
| 5.1.3d                    | Fasteners                      | [EBR 78] For Class L applications, multiple rivets, bolts, or other fasteners shall be used at joints in vehicle skin and structure to ensure multiple metallic contact areas capable of sharing lightning current.                                     |                              |                           |
| 5.2a                      | Surface Cleaning and Finishing | [EBR 79] The faying surfaces of all electrically bonded metal-to-metal joints shall be cleaned of all nonconductive materials and protected against corrosion.  |                              |                           |
| 5.2b                      | Surface Cleaning and Finishing | [EBR 80] The finishes and protection methods for faying surfaces shall be per NASA-STD-6012, Corrosion Protection for Space Flight Hardware, and NASA-STD-6016, Standard Materials and Processes Requirements for Spacecraft.                           |                              |                           |

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| Section                   | Description                                | Requirement in this Standard  | Applicable<br>(Yes or<br>No) | If No, Enter<br>Rationale |
| 5.2b(1)                   | Surface Cleaning and Finishing             | [EBR 81] The protection method or finish selected shall not negate the electrical bond between the two surfaces.  |                              |                           |
| 5.2c                      | Surface Cleaning and Finishing             | [EBR 82] Treated mating surfaces shall be protected by packaging materials or protective films until just prior to mating.  |                              |                           |
| 5.2d                      | Surface Cleaning and Finishing             | [EBR 83] After protective material is removed, the surfaces shall be cleaned by blowing, vacuuming, or wiping with appropriate solvent as necessary to remove dust or other foreign particles before mating.  |                              |                           |
| 5.2e                      | Surface Cleaning and Finishing             | [EBR 84] Surfaces that are expected to remain mated indefinitely shall be inspected periodically to ensure a good electrical bond is maintained.  |                              |                           |
| 5.3a                      | Galvanic Corrosion of Dissimilar Materials | [EBR 85] Corrosion control of galvanic couples shall be in accordance with NASA-STD-6012 and NASA-STD-6016.   |                              |                           |
| 5.4a                      | Carbon Fiber Reinforced Plastic            | [EBR 86] CFRP shall be bonded to control electrostatic discharge (ESD) and may be useful as an RF bond.   |                              |                           |
| 5.4b                      | Carbon Fiber Reinforced Plastic            | [EBR 87] CFRP shall not be used in a Class C or Class H bond path.  |                              |                           |
| 5.5a                      | Verification                               | [EBR 88] Verification of electrical bonding requirements shall be accomplished by a combination of tests, similarity, analysis, and inspection.   |                              |                           |
| 5.5b                      | Verification                               | [EBR 89] The extent of verification and the methods used shall be defined for each program.   |                              |                           |
| 5.5c                      | Verification                               | [EBR 90] The resistance requirement of all classes of bonds shall be verified by testing sample bonds.  |                              |                           |
| 5.5d                      | Verification                               | [EBR 91] Spot checks shall be made to verify the process is still good and is being followed.   |                              |                           |
| 5.5e                      | Verification                               | [EBR 92] The current carrying capability of Class C, H, and L bonds shall be verified by analysis and inspection.   |                              |                           |
| 5.5f                      | Verification                               | [EBR 93] Low inductance paths of Class R and Class L bonds shall be verified by analysis and inspection.  |                              |                           |
| 5.5g                      | Verification                               | [EBR 94] For flight vehicle surfaces that have been treated with conductive coatings (4.1.6.b.1), test or analysis shall show that the bonding requirements are met.  |                              |                           |
| 5.5g(1)                   | Verification                               | [EBR 95] Relaxation of this requirement shall only be granted if it has been clearly verified by test or analysis that electrostatic charges deposited on the surface of the vehicle will not be hazardous to the flight vehicle or the launch mission. |                              |                           |
| 5.5h                      | Verification                               | [EBR 96] If flight vehicle surface conductivity requirements are imposed (4.1.6.b.2), the flight vehicle surface material resistivity requirements shall be verified through test or analysis.  |                              |                           |
| 5.5h(1)                   | Verification                               | [EBR 97] Relaxation of this requirement shall only be granted if it has been clearly verified by test or analysis that electrostatic charges deposited on the surface of the vehicle, caused by   |                              |                           |

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|---------------------------|-------------|---|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Section                   | Description | Requirement in this Standard  | Applicable<br>(Yes or<br>No) | If No, Enter<br>Rationale |
|                           |             | triboelectrification from precipitation particle impact, will not be hazardous to the flight vehicle or the launch mission. |                              |                           |

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## APPENDIX B

### GUIDANCE

#### B.1 Purpose

The purpose of this appendix is to provide information on the reasons for some of the requirements and to provide data for possible modifications or rationale for waivers to the requirements.

#### B.2 Reference Documents

Fisher, Franklin A.; Plumer, Anderson J.; and Perala, Rodney A. (1990). *Lightning Protection of Aircraft*. Pittsfield, MA: Lightning Technologies, Inc. (LTI).

Terman, F. E. (1943). *Radio Engineers' Handbook*. New York and London: McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc.

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| AFSPCMAN 91-710<br>Volume 6 | Range Safety User Requirements Manual Volume 6 – Ground and Launch Personnel, Equipment, Systems, and Material Operations Safety Requirements |
| NASA-HDBK-4002A             | Mitigating In-Space Charging Effects – A Guideline  |
| NASA-HDBK-4006              | Low Earth Orbit Spacecraft Charging Design Handbook   |
| NASA-STD-4005               | Low Earth Orbit Spacecraft Charging Design Standard   |
| MIL-HDBK-274                | Military Handbook: Electrical Grounding for Aircraft Safety   |
| MIL-STD-464C                | Electromagnetic Environmental Effects, Requirements for Systems   |
| SAE-ARP-1870                | Aerospace Systems Electrical Bonding and Grounding for Electromagnetic Compatibility and Safety   |

## **B.3 GUIDELINES**

### **B.3.1 Design Parameters**

Since a single bond may serve multiple purposes, electrical bonding is performed in accordance with the requirements of the strictest applicable class or in some cases the strictest requirements from more than one class. An example of electrical bonding for more than one purpose would be a piece of electronic equipment powered from the system power supply. It would require Class R bonding for RF and Class H bonding for fault current protection. Since both classes are applicable, the bond should be low inductance with no more than 2.5 milliohms dc resistance for Class R, and the contact area should be adequate to carry the maximum fault current that could occur for Class H.

A nose cone should meet the lightning and static charge requirements. The Class L requirement calls for low inductance, low resistance, and adequate area to carry lightning current. Since the bond requirement for static charge is only moderately low resistance, the lightning bond will be sufficient for both.

The only requirement for conductive tubing carrying fluid will be to meet the Class S requirement. An electrical bond to basic structure of 1.0 ohm or less will be adequate.

### **B.3.2 Power Current Return Path (Class C)**

See paragraph 4.1.2 for applicable requirements. A dedicated power return is preferred over the use of structure for power current return and will be stated as a requirement for most programs. However, structure return is occasionally used for some systems such as small satellites.

In those cases where structure current is used, the voltage drop allowed divided by the maximum current that may be delivered by the power supply will give the total resistance allowed in the circuit. This total resistance includes the wire, its connectors, and all Class C electrical bond joints in the structure return path. The resistance limit for each Class C electrical bond joint can then be determined by subtracting the resistance of the wire and interconnections from the total resistance, and dividing the remaining value by the number of Class C electrical bond joints in the path.

### **B.3.3 Shock and Fault Protection (Class H)**

See paragraph 4.1.3 for applicable requirements. The fault current, resulting from a short between a power wire and a metallic equipment case or other conductive structure, should return through structure and the joints in the structure to its source. Circuit protection devices are intended to limit the duration of fault current events to prevent a significant temperature increase in the circuit wiring. Typically, the fault current is considerably higher than the fuse or breaker value, and it trips the device quickly. However, a circuit breaker can sometimes take several seconds to trip with a current twice its rating. Resistance across all the joints in the return path should be low enough to allow enough current to trip circuit protection devices in a timely manner.

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SAE-ARP-1870, Aerospace Systems Electrical Bonding and Grounding for Electromagnetic Compatibility and Safety, restricts voltages on electronic equipment cases to less than 4.5 volts and requires no fire or damage to the bond in the event of a short to case.

For shock protection from voltages exceeding 30 volts, MIL-HDBK-274, Military Handbook: Electrical Grounding for Aircraft Safety, recommends a circuit breaker break time of 0.2 second.

Structural material that is not highly conductive, such as glass or graphite fiber reinforced plastic (GFRP), may increase the path resistance enough to delay or prevent tripping the circuit breaker. In addition to being a shock hazard, fault current can cause ignition of graphite epoxy material.

Straps or jumpers may be adequate for fault current returns, but low resistances are required. The inductance of the strap is not a concern for fault current since the high current will be from a dc or low frequency alternating current (ac) power source. Inductance will be a concern if the strap conducts RF or lightning current.

### **B.3.4 Electromagnetic Interference or Radio Frequency (Class R)**

See paragraph 4.1.4 for applicable requirements. The Class R bond is not required on all equipment, but it is difficult to determine in advance which equipment really needs to be well bonded. The low impedance to structure is necessary for certain power line to equipment chassis filters and for proper operation of cable shields terminated to equipment chassis. Isolated structural elements with linear dimensions approaching 1/4 wavelength, can pick up and re-radiate RF from high power transmitters or develop enough voltage to produce a glow discharge or arcing to other elements. This should be taken into account when sizing the length of straps or jumpers used for Class R bonds, as such elements themselves can become a significant source of interference under conditions described above.

There is no RF design basis for the historical 2.5-milliohm requirement except to ensure a good metal-to-metal contact that can be expected to be consistent. The basic requirement is to have low impedance at the frequency or frequencies of interest. The value of this impedance depends upon the quality of the surface preparation (e.g., the chemical formulation used for the conversion coating, and the thickness thereof), the area of the faying surfaces in contact, and the amount of pressure holding the surfaces together. The impedance of an acceptable bond may be in the ohms range for RF even though the dc resistance is less than 2.5 milliohms. The resistance is overshadowed by the inductive reactance of the configuration.

Any electronic equipment with conductive mounting feet will probably have an inductive reactance greater than 2.5 milliohms at frequencies above 10 megahertz (MHz). RF bonds may be satisfactory with several ohms of impedance; but, when straps are used, even these levels will be quickly exceeded as frequency increases. If the use of bond straps for RF bonds is unavoidable, strap length should always be limited to a length to width ratio of 5 to 1.

Monopole or half-loop antennas mounted on composite outer mold line surfaces should be provided with circular or elliptical groundplanes or counterpoises 1/4 wavelength in radii over the operating frequency range of the antenna, and should be installed with a low impedance

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return path to vehicle structure that exhibits a dc resistance no greater than 2.5 milliohms, so that antenna fields are not attenuated by poorly conductive composite material. Antennas mounted on composite outer mold line surfaces that do not require local groundplanes or counterpoises but that otherwise require a low impedance path to the vehicle structure for proper operation, should be installed with a low impedance return path to the vehicle structure that exhibits a dc resistance no greater than 2.5 milliohms. Antennas of all types, mounted on metallic outer mold line surfaces, that require a low impedance path to the mounting surface for proper operation, should provide a return path to vehicle structure that exhibits a dc resistance no greater than 2.5 milliohms.

The 2.5-milliohm dc resistance requirement is good for a standard, but one should not assume a good RF bond exists just because the dc resistance is less than 2.5 milliohms. Also, extra effort need not be made just to satisfy the dc requirement if the RF impedance is much higher due to the inductance of the configuration. Look at the whole configuration to get the lowest impedance possible at the frequencies of interest to produce a good RF bond.

The electrical bond path between an electronic box and the structure has a complex equivalent circuit that may be simplified to a resistance in series with an inductance all in parallel with a capacitance. The equivalent resistance includes the resistance of any bond strap present plus the resistance of the joints in the path. At higher frequencies, where the diameter or thickness of the strap significantly exceeds the skin depth, the ac resistance becomes larger than the dc resistance. The ac resistance increases with the square root of frequency.

The inductance is directly proportional to the length of the bond path, but is also a function of width and thickness. Multiple paths can reduce the inductance value by introducing additional parallel current paths. The magnitude of inductive reactance increases 20 dB with every decade of frequency increase.

The capacitance between the box and the structure is proportional to the area of the interface and inversely proportional to the distance between the box and the structure. The magnitude of capacitive reactance decreases 20 dB per decade of frequency increase.

The total impedance across the joint is equal to the resistance at frequencies from dc to the point where the inductive reactance approaches the resistance. The impedance due to inductance then increases at 20 dB per decade of frequency to a frequency where the inductive reactance and the capacitive reactance are equal. At this parallel resonant frequency, the impedance may rise to thousands of ohms depending on the ratio of reactance to resistance (Q) in the circuit. The Q is high when the resistance is low, which is usually the case for a bonding joint. At frequencies above this point, the capacitive reactance is less than the inductive reactance; and the total impedance begins to come back down. Often there are more complex series and parallel resonances; and, at the higher frequencies, the impedance may vary considerably.

Handbooks such as Terman's Radio Engineer's Handbook (1943) should be consulted for calculations of RF impedance of various bonding configurations.

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For electromagnetic interference (EMI) testing, the equipment under test (EUT) bonding method to the copper-top test table will be as close as practicable to the flight configuration (i.e., bond strap, surface mating, etc.). Only the provisions included in the design of the equipment and specified in the installation instructions will be used to bond units, such as equipment case and mount, together or to the ground plane. If the EUT is secured to mounting bases, incorporating shock or vibration isolators, such mounting bases will be used in the test configuration. Bonding straps furnished with the mounting base will be connected to the ground plane. Where mounting bases do not incorporate bonding straps, bonding straps will not be used in the test setup. If installation conditions for the EUT are unknown, the EUT will not be grounded. Portable equipment should be tested while bonded to the ground plane and also while not bonded to the ground plane.

### **B.3.5 Lightning Protection (Class L)**

See paragraph 4.1.5 for applicable requirements. Electrical bonding in itself does not ensure lightning protection, but it is a major part of the overall plan. Lightning current usually enters one extremity of the vehicle and exits at another extremity. Lightning current is high and voltages developed across joints are high enough to arc and provide a path to some exit point. A good current path should be provided around the outside of the vehicle to help protect internal equipment. Electrical bonding helps provide the proper continuity for the path.

*Even when a large current path is provided to carry the current, attach points across joints still may present a problem. Arcing at joints can be expected even with good electrical bonds. Lightning current waveforms, as defined in SAE-ARP-5412, have rates of rise of  $1 \times 10^{11}$  amps/second. Considering a bond connection with inductance of  $0.1 \mu\text{H}$  would result in a voltage spike across the joint of 10,000 volts. The arc produces an ionized path that helps carry the current. The majority of the current can be kept external to the vehicle through good electrical bonding of the vehicle skin.*

*When bonding straps are used, they should be kept short to ensure that inductance and resistance are kept as low as possible. The strap and connections should be robust enough to survive the high lightning current and the magnetic forces resulting from high lightning current. Straps should not have loops or bends greater than 45 degrees to avoid damage from magnetic forces. Information concerning lightning bonds may be found in "Lightning Protection of Aircraft" by Lightning Technologies, Inc.*

*Apertures should be kept as small as possible. Joints should be bonded in many places to prevent long slots between bonds. Joints and apertures in the skin allow some voltage to be induced into underlying cables. This voltage should be kept low enough to prevent disrupting electronic equipment.*

*Special care should be taken to route current around fuel or pyrotechnics to prevent arcs that can ignite fuel or current that can fire pyrotechnics. Fuel and pyrotechnics should be completely enclosed by a Faraday cage of conductive material bonded to structure to provide an adequate margin against ignition. Wires to pyrotechnics should be shielded and the shields should have 360 degree terminations to the metal enclosure.*

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## B.3.6 Electrostatic Discharge (Class S)

See paragraph 4.1.6 for applicable requirements. The resistance to ground, structure, or another lower charged object affects the rate of discharge for an item being charged. A low resistance reduces the charge faster, but bonds with resistances that would be considered high, such as 10 kilohms to 100 kilohms, usually function adequately. The charging current, usually in microamps, returning through the resistance to ground determines the voltage developed.

Electrostatic charges should be controlled and dissipated to avoid fuel ignition and ordnance hazards, to protect personnel from shock hazards, and to prevent performance degradation or damage to electronics. A requirement for 1.0 ohm or less to ground is a good requirement for metal items because any good metal-to-metal connection will measure less than 1.0 ohm. Under some circumstances, such as when semiconductive materials or complex configurations are used, this limit may be increased. Metal straps or jumpers across joints are adequate since the current is dc.

An arc discharge can cause direct effects to the item being discharged and to the item receiving the discharge. Indirect effects may be caused by voltages induced into neighboring items. Direct or indirect effects include physical damage to an item, upset of operation, ignition, or shock to personnel.

Engineering guidelines and design practices to minimize the effects of spacecraft surface and internal charging in space environments is given in NASA-HDBK-4002A, Mitigating In-Space Charging Effects – A Guideline. It serves as a reference source that contains suggested detailed spacecraft design requirements and procedures to minimize the effects of spacecraft charging and to limit the effects of the resulting ESD. This Handbook is complementary to NASA-STD-4005, Low Earth Orbit Spacecraft Charging Design Standard, and NASA-HDBK-4006, Low Earth Orbit Spacecraft Charging Design Handbook. NASA-STD-4005 and NASA-HDBK-4006 address Low Earth Orbit spacecraft charging at the auroral zones (altitude from 200 and 1000 km and latitude between -50 and +50 degrees).

Launch service providers, such as the Eastern Test Range (ETR), may impose additional requirements on the flight vehicles that launch from their range. The ETR levies a surface conductivity requirement on flight vehicles to protect from triboelectrification effects. Air Force specification, AFSPCMAN91-710V6, Range Safety User Requirements Manual Volume 6 – Ground and Launch Personnel, Equipment, Systems, and Material Operations Safety Requirements, contains the following triboelectrification requirements:

“Section A.7.2.5.4 Natural and Triggered Lightning Launch Commit Criteria

“A7.2.5.4.10. Triboelectrification. Do not launch if a vehicle has not been treated for surface electrification and the flight path will go through any clouds above the -10 °C level up to the altitude at which the vehicle’s velocity exceeds 3,000 ft/sec. A vehicle is considered “treated” for surface electrification if:

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“A7.2.5.4.10.1. All surfaces of the vehicle susceptible to precipitation particle impact have been treated to assure

“A7.2.5.4.10.1.1. *That the surface resistivity is less than  $10^9$  ohms/square;*

*and*

“A7.2.5.4.10.1.2. *That all conductors on surface (including dielectric surfaces that have been treated with conductive coatings) are bonded to the vehicle by a resistance that is less than  $10^5$  ohms;*

or

“A7.2.5.4.10.2. It has been shown by test or analysis that electrostatic discharges (ESDs) on the surface of the vehicle caused by triboelectrification by ice particle impact will not be hazardous to the launch vehicle or the mission. In A7.2.5.4.10.1.1 above, the correct unit for surface resistivity is ohms/square. This means that any square area of any size measured in any units has the same resistance in ohms when the measurement is made from an electrode extending the length of one side of the square to an electrode extending the length of the opposite side of the square. The area-independence is literally valid only for squares; it is not true for other shapes such as rectangles and circles.”

In summary, bonding for electrostatic charge should use the 1.0-ohm requirement for ordinary metal joints to ensure a good connection. The 1.0-ohm requirement simply ensures the metal-to-metal bond is a clean, quality bond that will retain its conductivity. Good connections that measure up to 100 kilohms from equipment to ground for unusual configurations or semiconductive materials may be acceptable. Jumpers and straps may be used.

### **B.3.7 Galvanic Corrosion of Dissimilar Materials**

See paragraph 5.3 for applicable requirements. NASA-STD-6012 and NASA-STD-6016 contain considerably more information on this subject.

Two materials may be placed in direct contact if the electromotive force (EMF) difference between their groups is not more than 0.25 volts. Where other dissimilar materials are placed in contact, galvanic reaction may cause corrosion of the material that is higher (more anodic) in the galvanic series. Corrosion impedes current flow and damages materials. When two materials form a couple that is incompatible, the materials should be plated, coated, or otherwise protected with a conductive finish compatible with each; or a material compatible with each should be inserted between the two materials.

If the mating of dissimilar materials cannot be avoided, the most active of the materials should be replaceable in reusable vehicles. In all applications the electrolyte contact area of the most anodic materials, higher in series, should be larger than that of the cathodic materials. The larger

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the anodic area the lower the current density will be on more cathodic-materials. An approved sealant should be used to seal all edges from moisture.

### **B.3.8 Pipe, Tubing, and Hoses (Class S)**

See paragraph 4.1.6.3 for applicable requirements. The movement of fluid through a hose or tubing provides a charging source. If the fluid is not conductive, it can carry charges to conductive items in the fluid path. Conductive items in the fluid flow path should be bonded to structure to prevent a static charge buildup.

Conductive hose or tubing grounded to structure will help prevent charging. Conductive fluids can also prevent the charge separation. With a nonconductive fluid in nonconductive tubing, the charge may transfer to conductive items in the line or, if enough potential develops, a discharge may occur through an arc from the fluid through the tubing to a metal sheath or other conductive items outside the tubing. This arc may produce small holes in the tubing.

Tubing is available that is somewhat conductive and prevents the separation and movement of the charge if its resistivity is less than 1 megohm per meter of length. Fluids with volume resistivity less than  $10^7$  ohm-meters are conductive enough to prevent the separation of charge, but there is seldom a choice of fluids.

### **B.3.9 Composite Materials**

Some composite materials are nonconductive and should not be used where static discharge could be a problem. CFRP, or composite materials that contain metal particles, could be conductive enough to drain off static charges if given a conductive path from the material to metallic structure. See paragraph 5.4 for applicable CFRP requirements when using materials, such as honeycomb graphite panels.

Since these composite materials are relatively poor conductors, they should not be used to carry high current. The resistance would cause excessive voltage drop for intentional power return, and short circuit current may be limited to levels too low to trigger circuit protection devices.

CFRP may be used as RF ground even though its dc resistance may exceed the usual Class R limits. If the resistance through the composite structure can be kept to a few ohms, the total impedance to RF will depend upon the inductance of the configuration just as it would with metal.

Special attention should be given to bonding across joints in composite materials. The graphite layers are conductive, but epoxy, phenolic, isocyanate, polyimide, or other polymeric resin may cover the surface of the composite. This nonconductive outer layer should be removed to expose the graphite so conductive connections may be made at joints. If the bond is for RF purposes, do not depend on narrow straps. The connection should be continuous along edges that have been abraded to expose graphite. Connection may be made by overlapping panels or by adding a conductive bridge secured by metal fasteners or by conductive adhesive across the joint.

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### **B.3.10 Multilayer Insulation**

The conductive layers of multilayer insulation may be bonded together at several points using accordion-shaped metal foil fitted into the edges of the conductive layers so that each conductive layer contacts the foil. A rivet or bolt through the layers and the foil will assure contact and will provide a point for attachment to structure. Good conductivity should be verified by test.

### **B.3.11 Verification**

See paragraph 5.5 for applicable requirements. Testing of every joint in a vehicle is neither required nor desirable unless specifically noted by the procuring agency. Usually tests of certain processes can verify that the process will result in a satisfactory bond. Other bonds using the same process can be verified by similarity. Verification that the same process was used on each bond should be adequate. Testing to verify resistance limits may be required depending upon the criticality of the equipment and the purpose of the bond as determined by the specific project. For example, all antenna installations and all electronic equipment may be required to be tested for resistance to structure, but the low impedance and current carrying requirements will still be verified by inspection and analysis.

The processes chosen to implement each bond should be tested to ensure they will meet the bond resistance requirements. These processes should also be called out on fabrication drawings and verified by quality.

There are requirements in addition to dc resistance measurements that depend upon the class of bond required. For Class C, H, and L, the bond should have enough contact area to carry the intentional, fault, or lightning current. Class L bonds should also be robust enough to withstand the magnetic effects of the large current being carried, if they are to be useful for more than one strike. These requirements are typically verified by analysis and inspection of the drawings and the installation.

Class R bonds should be low impedance at the frequency of interest. Calculations should be made to determine the impedance of any RF bond other than direct metal-to-metal contact over a large surface area.

The effectiveness of a direct bond is dependent upon the clamping pressure. A maintenance program should be put in place to verify these bonds still meet the requirements throughout the life cycle of the system.

In short, bonding should be verified by analysis, some tests of actual bonds, and tests of samples of a process, inspection of physical bonds and processes, and similarity to other good bonds. An electrical bonding path diagram may aid in verification of the complete bonding path. An example of a bonding path diagram is shown in figure 2, Electrical Bonding Path Diagram Example. It is not required to use the same symbols or even the same structure.

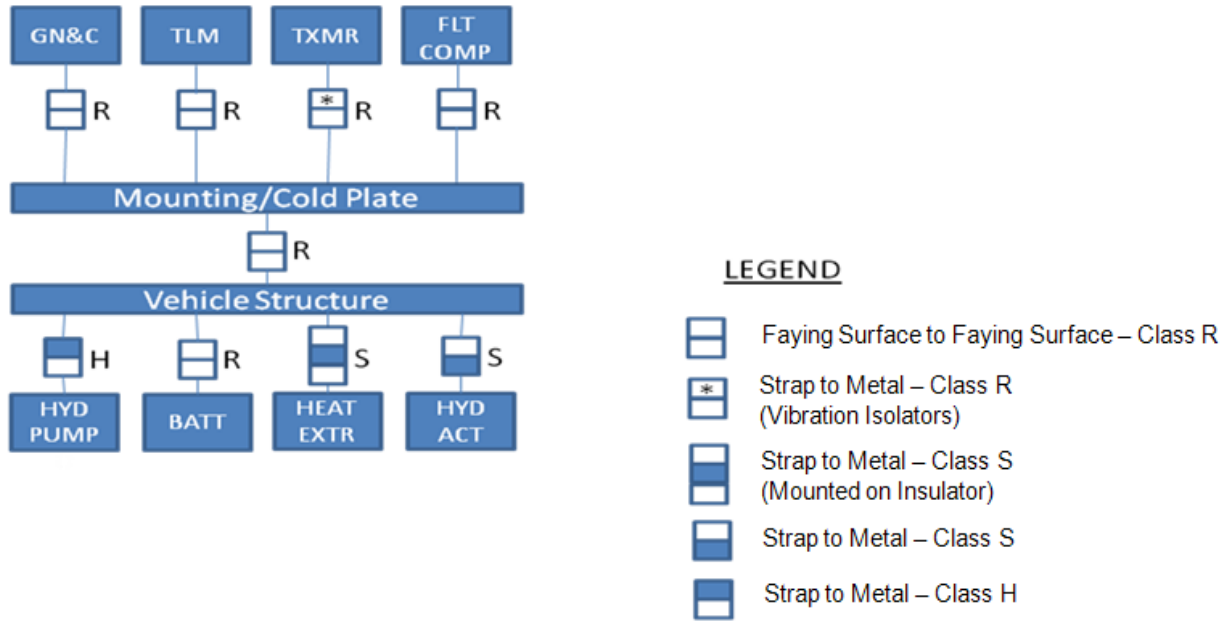


Figure 2 – Electrical Bonding Path Diagram Example