



Designation: A531/A531M – 24

Standard Practice for Ultrasonic Examination of Turbine-Generator Steel Retaining Rings¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation A531/A531M; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope*

1.1 This practice covers ultrasonic examination of turbine-generator retaining rings produced in accordance with Specifications **A288** and **A289/A289M** with an inside diameter to wall thickness ratio equal to or greater than 5:1 and with wall thicknesses from 1 in. to 4 in. [25 mm to 102 mm].

1.2 Forgings may be inspected by either the contact or the immersion methods, or combinations thereof, as agreed upon between the manufacturer and the purchaser.

1.3 Supplementary requirements of an optional nature are provided for use at the option of the purchaser. The supplementary requirements shall apply only when specified individually by the purchaser in the purchase order or contract.

1.4 This practice is expressed in inch-pound and SI units; however, unless the purchase order or contract specifies the applicable “M” specification designation (SI units), the inch-pound units shall apply. The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. Within the practice, the SI units are shown in brackets. The values stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in nonconformance with the standard.

1.5 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.6 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee **A01** on Steel, Stainless Steel and Related Alloys and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee **A01.06** on Steel Forgings and Billets.

Current edition approved May 1, 2024. Published May 2024. Originally approved in 1965. Last previous edition approved in 2023 as A531/A531M – 18 (2023). DOI: 10.1520/A0531_A0531M-24.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

A288 Specification for Carbon and Alloy Steel Forgings for Magnetic Retaining Rings for Turbine Generators

A289/A289M Specification for Alloy Steel Forgings for Nonmagnetic Retaining Rings for Generators (Withdrawn 2023)³

A788/A788M Specification for Steel Forgings, General Requirements

E127 Practice for Fabrication and Control of Flat Bottomed Hole Ultrasonic Standard Reference Blocks

E317 Practice for Evaluating Performance Characteristics of Ultrasonic Pulse-Echo Testing Instruments and Systems without the Use of Electronic Measurement Instruments

E1316 Terminology for Nondestructive Examinations

2.2 *Other Documents:*

ANSI/ASME B46.1 Surface Texture (Surface Roughness, Waviness and Lay)⁴

Recommended Practice No. SNT-TC-1A Personnel Qualification and Certification in Nondestructive Testing⁵

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 For definitions of terms used in this standard, refer to Specification **A788/A788M** and Terminology **E1316**.

4. Personnel Requirements

4.1 Personnel performing ultrasonic examinations to this practice shall be qualified and certified in accordance with a written procedure conforming to Recommended Practice No. SNT-TC-1A or other national standard acceptable to both the purchaser and the supplier.

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

⁵ Available from American Society for Nondestructive Testing (ASNT), P.O. Box 28518, 1711 Arlingate Ln., Columbus, OH 43228-0518, <http://www.asnt.org>.

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard



5. Ordering Information

5.1 When this practice is to be applied to an inquiry, contract, or order, the purchaser shall so state and shall also furnish the following information:

5.1.1 The method or combination of methods to be used for inspection.

5.1.2 The frequency to be used for conducting each inspection.

5.1.3 Report requirements including C-scan plot, if applicable.

5.1.4 Supplementary requirements, if any.

6. General Requirements

6.1 As far as possible the entire volume of the retaining rings shall be subject to ultrasonic inspection. Circumferential and axial faces shall be machined flat and parallel to one another.

6.2 The ultrasonic inspection shall be performed after final processing and heat treatment for properties, unless otherwise specified in the order or contract.

6.3 Rings may be tested either stationary (contact) or while rotating (immersion). If not specified by the purchaser, a combination of methods may be used at the manufacturer's option. Scanning speed shall not exceed 6 in./s [15 cm/s], unless automatic recording (C-scan) equipment is employed.

6.4 To ensure complete coverage (during contact testing), the search unit shall be indexed no more than 75 % of the transducer width with each pass of the search unit. During immersion testing establish a transducer index adjustment which will ensure complete coverage with sufficient overlap.

6.5 During the testing, a combination of methods and frequencies of 1 MHz, 2 MHz, 2¼ MHz, and 5 MHz may be used for accurately locating, determining orientation, and defining specific discontinuities detected during overall scanning.

6.6 For reporting purpose, location of indications shall be circumferentially defined by clock position. The test notch or a similar locator, such as a reference line bisecting the serial number, shall be used to define and identify the 12 o'clock position.

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Electronic Apparatus*—A pulse-echo instrument permitting inspection frequencies of at least 1 MHz to 5 MHz is required. The accuracy of discontinuity amplitude analysis using this practice involves a knowledge of the true operating frequency of the complete inspection system. One of the best ways to obtain the desired accuracy is by use of a tuned pulser and narrow band amplifier of known frequency response, with either a broadband transducer or a narrow-band tuned transducer of known and matching frequency.

7.1.1 *Apparatus Qualification and Calibration*—Basic qualification of the ultrasonic test instrument shall be performed at intervals not to exceed twelve months or whenever maintenance is performed that affects the equipment function. The date of the last calibration and the date of the next required calibration shall be displayed on the test equipment.

7.1.2 The horizontal linearity shall be checked on a distance calibration bar using the multiple order technique (see Practice E317). The horizontal linearity shall be ± 2 % of the metal path.

7.1.3 The accuracy of the linearity shall be checked by ultrasonically verifying the thickness of the component in at least one location beyond the near field of the transducer. If necessary, minor adjustments for differences in the ultrasonic velocities between the calibration bar and the forging shall then be made.

7.1.4 When the immersion method of inspection is employed, suitable equipment must be available so that the retaining rings can be immersed in a liquid coupling agent or can be subject to inspection by the use of a column or stream of the couplant through an appropriate container attached to the part or transducer. Equipment must also include fixturing for smooth mechanical rotation of the part or the transducer during scanning.

7.2 *Amplifier*—The amplifier and display shall provide linear response within ± 2 %, up to 100 % of full screen height.

7.2.1 *Amplifier Calibration*—An amplifier vertical linearity check shall be made prior to performing the test by observing a multiple order pattern from a calibration block using a 2 MHz or 2.25 MHz transducer (see Practice E317). The first back reflection shall be set at 100 % of full screen height. The higher order back reflections, 10 % and higher in amplitude, shall also be positioned on the screen and their amplitudes noted. The first back reflection shall be reduced to 50 % and then 25 % of full screen height. The amplitudes of the higher order back reflections shall be noted at each step. The vertical linearity will be considered acceptable if the signal heights of the higher order reflections decrease in proportion to the decrease set for the first back reflection. The maximum acceptable error for the decrease of the higher order reflections is the greater of ± 5 % of the expected back reflection height or ± 2 % of full screen height.

7.3 *Signal Attenuator*—The instrument shall contain a calibrated gain control or signal attenuator that meets the requirements of Practice E317 (in each case, accurate within ± 5 %) that will allow indications beyond the linear range of the instrument to be measured. It is recommended that these controls permit signal adjustments up to 25 to 1 (28 dB).

7.4 *Search Units:*

7.4.1 *Contact Method:*

7.4.1.1 A 2.25 MHz, 2.0 MHz, or 1.0 MHz, 45° angle beam shear wave search unit shall be employed for shear wave testing (2.0 MHz or 2.25 MHz shall be used unless acoustic attenuation of the material is such that 1 MHz must be employed to obtain adequate penetration of the ring section). Adequate penetration is the ability to clearly resolve the calibration notch above resultant noise level.

7.4.1.2 A 5 MHz, 2.25 MHz, 2.0 MHz, or 1 MHz, ¾ in. to 1½ in. [20 mm to 30 mm] diameter, longitudinal wave transducer shall be used for performing the longitudinal wave test.

7.4.1.3 Acrylic resin shoes ground to the curvature of the retaining ring may be used to maintain the optimum contact angle between the transducer and outside diameter of the ring.