

***Voluntary Industry Performance Standards
Criteria for Evaluation of New
Firearms Designs Under Conditions
of Abusive Mishandling
for the Use of Commercial Manufacturers***

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SPORTING ARMS AND AMMUNITION MANUFACTURERS' INSTITUTE, INC.
SINCE 1926

***Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute, Inc.
11 Mile Hill Road, Newtown, Connecticut 06470-2359***

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Criteria for Evaluation of New
Firearms Designs Under Conditions
of Abusive Mishandling
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Approved March 14, 2016

Abstract

This Standard provides procedures for evaluating new firearms designs and applies to rifle, shotguns, pistols and revolvers. In the interest of safety these tests are structured to demonstrate to the designer of new firearms that the product will resist abusive mishandling. These procedures are specifically understood not to apply to muzzle loading and black powder firearms of any type.

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Published by

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11 Mile Hill Road, Newtown, CT 06470-2359***

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Printed in the United States of America

(This foreword is not part of American National Standard Z299.5-2016)

Foreword

This Voluntary Industry Performance Standard provides the firearm designer and manufacturer with recommendations for test procedures to evaluate new designs of centerfire and rimfire rifles, shotguns and handguns as defined under the Federal Gun Control Act of 1968. Test parameters simulate conditions where abusive mishandling could possibly result in accidental discharge.

These test procedures specifically do not apply to muzzle loading and black powder firearms of any type.

Suggestions for improvement of this standard will be welcome. They should be sent to: The Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute, Inc., Flintlock Ridge Office Center, 11 Mile Hill Road, Newtown, Connecticut 06470-2359.

Consensus for this standard was achieved by use of the Canvass Method.

The following individuals and organizations recognized as having an interest in the standardization of safety requirements for factory-loaded sporting ammunition were contacted prior to the approval of this standard. Inclusion in this list does not necessarily imply that the individual or organization concurred with the submittal of the standard to ANSI:

Association of Firearm and Toolmark Examiners – L. Haag
Aberdeen Proving Grounds – P. Donahue
Association of Firearm and Toolmark Examiners – J. Hamby, M.A.
Boone Ballistics, LLC – B. Boone
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Natural Resources – Canada – R. Bowes
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Western Powders – D. Luhr

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1. Scope

This Voluntary Industry Performance Standard provides the firearm designer and manufacturer with recommendations for test procedures to evaluate new designs of rifles, shotguns and handguns as they are defined by the Federal Gun Control Act of 1968. The test parameters simulate conditions where the firearm is subjected to abusive mishandling to demonstrate the ability of the firearm to withstand this abuse without discharging.

2. Purpose

In the interest of safety, the purpose of this Standard is to provide test procedures that will aid the designer and manufacturer in evaluating the performance of new designs of firearms under certain conditions of abusive mishandling.

3. Exceptions

- a) This Standard does not apply to muzzle loading and black powder firearms of any type.
- b) The requirements of this Standard are not appropriate for firearms primarily intended for formal target shooting, and therefore this Standard does not apply to firearms whose trigger pull is designed to be less than three pounds (1.36 kg).

4. Definitions

Hammer - A component part of the firing mechanism which strikes the firing pin or primer sometimes through one or more transfer members. A firearm may have a concealed hammer or an exposed hammer.

Handgun - A firearm designed to be held and fired with one hand.

Pistol - A handgun in which the chamber is part of the barrel.

Revolver - A firearm, usually a handgun, with a cylinder having several chambers so arranged as to rotate around an axis and be discharged successively by the same firing mechanism.

Rifle - A firearm having spiral grooves in the bore and designed to be fired from the shoulder.

Rubber Mat – A sheet of natural rubber of the thickness specified herein and overall dimensions sufficient to contain the firearm(s) being tested. Contact the SAAMI Technical Office for possible sources of supply.

***NOTE:** The hardness of the Rubber Mat should be checked on a regular basis as the hardness may change over time.*

"Safe Carrying" condition - The condition in which it is contemplated that a particular design of firearm is to be carried.

Safety - A device on a firearm intended to provide protection against accidental discharge under normal usage when properly engaged.

1. "On" - A term describing the position of a component of the safety device when set in a manner to provide protection against accidental discharge under normal usage.
2. "Off" - To allow the firearm to be discharged.

Shotgun - A smooth bore shoulder firearm designed to fire shells containing numerous pellets or a single slug.

Striker - A rod-like firing pin, or a separate component which impinges on the firing pin.

Trigger - That part of a firearm mechanism which is moved manually to cause the firearm to discharge.

Trigger pull - The average force which must be applied to the trigger of a firearm to cause sear or hammer release with the force applied approximately parallel to the bore line.

5. Drop Test

5.1. **Applies to:** Rifles, Shotguns and Handguns

5.1.1. This test simulates the abusive dropping of the firearm.

5.1.2. With the firearm in the "Safe Carrying" condition, the firearm shall be capable of passing the below test criteria for drop testing from a height of four (4) feet (1.22 m) onto a 85±5 Durometer (Shore A) rubber mat, one (1) inch thick (2.54 cm), backed by concrete. The mat and concrete shall be large enough so that when the gun is dropped it will fall and come to rest without interference within the perimeter of the mat. The drop height shall be measured from the surface of the rubber mat to the center of gravity of the firearm. The center of gravity shall be determined to an accuracy of ± one (1) inch (2.54 cm) by any recognized method for finding the center of gravity of an irregular shaped object. The firearm shall be re-cocked and reset in the "Safe Carrying" condition after each drop or a separate firearm may be used for each drop. As an alternative to free dropping, other methods may be substituted if they provide equivalent impact characteristics.

5.2. **Criterion** - The firearm shall not fire a chambered empty primed case of its designated cartridge when tested in accordance with this procedure. In a multi-chambered gun the primed case(s) shall be inserted in the chamber(s) directly in front of the firing pin(s). Parts breakage or other damage resulting from drop testing does not constitute failure as long as the empty primed case does not fire and the firearm can be unloaded safely after each drop.

5.3. **Test Procedure** - The firearm or firearms shall be dropped in such a way as to cause them to strike the rubber mat surface in each of the following attitudes:

- a) Barrel vertical, muzzle down.

- b) Barrel vertical, muzzle up.
- c) Barrel horizontal, bottom up.
- d) Barrel horizontal, bottom down.
- e) Barrel horizontal, left side up.
- f) Barrel horizontal, right side up.

- 5.3.1. The test shall be conducted with the trigger pull force set at the minimum force specified by the manufacturer.
- 5.3.2. The test shall be conducted with the magazine, clip or remaining revolver cylinder chambers fully loaded with SAAMI-compliant gun functioning dummy cartridges and locked in place.
- 5.3.3. The test shall be conducted with firearms of minimum and maximum weight configurations of a given model, including weight variations introduced by accessories cataloged by the manufacturer.

6. Exposed Hammer Test

6.1. **Applies to:** Handguns with exposed hammers or strikers

- 6.1.1. This test simulates the dropping of the handgun on its exposed hammer or striker.
- 6.1.2. Handguns with exposed hammers or strikers shall be capable of passing the following test criteria with the firearm in the “Safe Carrying” condition. The firearm shall be dropped the distance specified in the Test Procedure section below, striking the rear of the hammer spur or exposed striker upon a mild steel block of at least fifty (50) pounds (22.7 kg) weight with the barrel vertical, muzzle up, a total of six (6) times. The same firearm shall be used throughout the test.
- 6.1.3. Exposed Hammer Test (Alternate Procedure) - Instead of dropping the firearm, as above, a mild steel weight equal to the weight of a fully loaded firearm and accessories as cataloged by the manufacturer may be dropped the distance specified in the Test Procedure section below, striking the exposed hammer or striker with the firearm held with barrel vertical and muzzle down, its muzzle resting on a mild steel block of at least fifty (50) pounds (22.7 kg) weight, a total of six (6) times. The same firearm shall be used throughout the test.

- 6.2. **Criterion** - The firearm shall not fire a chambered empty primed case of its designated cartridge when tested according to this procedure. In the case of a multi-chambered gun, the primed case(s) shall be in the chamber(s) directly in front of the firing pin(s). If at any time during the test there is any observable damage to a part of the firearm without the firing of the primed case, said part may be replaced and the test continued, unless the damaged part bears the serial number of the firearm. Damage to the serial-numbered part without discharge of the primed case after all six drops shall not constitute failure of this test, as long as the firearm can be unloaded safely after each drop.

6.3. **Test Procedure** - The drop height for this test shall be:

Handguns 36 inches (0.914 m)

The height shall be measured from the impact surface to the contact point on the exposed hammer of the firearm.

6.3.1. The test shall be conducted with the trigger pull force set at the minimum force specified by the manufacturer.

6.3.2. The test shall be conducted with the magazine, clip or remaining revolver cylinder chambers fully loaded with dummy cartridges and locked in place.

6.3.3. The test shall be conducted with firearms of minimum and maximum weight configurations of a given model, including weight variations introduced by accessories cataloged by the manufacturer

7. Jar-Off Test

7.1. **Applies to:** Rifles, Shotguns and Handguns

7.1.1. This test simulates the abusive impacting (bumping) of the firearm against a hard surface with the firearm in a condition of maximum readiness.

7.1.2. With the firearm cocked and in the ready-to-fire condition (Safety "Off") the firearm shall be capable of passing a jar-off shock equivalent to being dropped from a height of twelve (12) inches (0.305 m) onto a 85±5 Durometer (Shore A) rubber mat, one (1) inch (2.54 cm) thick, backed by concrete. The mat and concrete shall be large enough so that when the gun is dropped it will fall completely within the perimeter of the mat. The drop height shall be measured from the surface of the rubber mat to the lowest point on the firearm. The gun shall be caught after its first bounce from the mat so that it strikes the mat only one time. The firearm shall be re-cocked and reset in the ready-to-fire condition after each drop or a separate firearm may be used for each drop. As an alternative to free dropping, other methods may be substituted if they provide equivalent impact characteristics.

7.2. **Criterion** - The firearm shall not fire a chambered empty primed case of its designated cartridge when tested in accordance with this procedure. In the case of a multi-chambered gun, the primed case(s) shall be in the chamber(s) directly in front of the firing pin(s). Parts breakage or other damage resulting from drop testing does not constitute failure as long as the empty primed case does not fire and the firearm can be unloaded safely after each drop.

7.3. **Test Procedure** - The firearm or firearms shall be dropped in such a way as to cause them to strike the rubber mat surface one time only in each of the following attitudes:

- a) Barrel vertical, muzzle down.
- b) Barrel vertical, muzzle up.
- c) Barrel horizontal, bottom up.
- d) Barrel horizontal, bottom down.
- e) Barrel horizontal, left side up.
- f) Barrel horizontal, right side up.

- 7.3.1. The test shall be conducted with the trigger pull force set at the minimum force specified by the manufacturer.
- 7.3.2. The test shall be conducted with the magazine, clip or remaining revolver cylinder chambers fully loaded with dummy cartridges and locked in place.
- 7.3.3. The test shall be conducted with firearms of minimum and maximum weight configurations of a given model, including weight variations introduced by accessories cataloged by the manufacturer.

8. Rotation Test

8.1. **Applies to:** Rifles and Shotguns

- 8.1.1. This test simulates the abusive fall of a firearm when left leaning against a vertical surface.
- 8.1.2. With the rifle or shotgun in the "Safe Carrying" condition, the firearm shall be capable of passing the below test criteria when allowed to fall freely from an upright position with its butt resting on the surface of a 85±5 Durometer (Shore A) rubber mat, one (1) inch (2.54 cm) thick, backed by concrete. The mat and concrete shall be large enough so that when the gun is dropped it will fall and come to rest without interference within the perimeter of the mat. The firearm shall be re-cocked and reset to the "Safe Carrying" condition after each drop or a separate firearm may be used for each drop.

8.2. **Criterion** - The firearm shall not fire a chambered empty primed case of its designated cartridge when tested in accordance with this procedure. In a multi-chambered gun the primed case(s) shall be inserted in the chamber(s) directly in front of the firing pin(s). Parts breakage or other damage resulting from drop testing does not constitute failure as long as the empty primed case does not fire and the firearm can be unloaded safely after each drop.

8.3. **Test Procedure** - The firearm shall be tested so as to fall once on its right side and once on its left side.

- 8.3.1. The test shall be conducted with the trigger pull force set at the minimum force specified by the manufacturer.
- 8.3.2. The test shall be conducted with the magazine or clip fully loaded with dummy cartridges and locked in place.
- 8.3.3. The test shall be conducted with firearms of minimum and maximum weight configurations of a given model, including weight variations introduced by accessories cataloged by the manufacturer.

“RUBBER” MAT SUPPLIER CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact the SAAMI Technical Office using the information below or visit www.saami.org for a current list of supplier contact information.

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