The Complete Cybenetics Test Protocol, Including Energy Efficiency, Output Noise, And Overall Performance Calculation of AC-DC Power Supplies

Revision 5.2

Authors: *Aristeidis Bitziopoulos*

Nicosia, Cyprus

November 2026

Revision History

Version	Release Date	Notes
1.0	February 2020	First draft
1.1	March 2020	Overall Performance Algorithm Update
1.2	June 2020	Noise Measurements Procedure Update
1.3	July 2020	Added Background noise calculation
1.4	August 2020	Added Leakage Current Equipment & Updated EMI equipment
1.5	January 2021	Changes in some definitions
1.6	May 2021	Changes in load regulation calculation and other minor fixes
1.7	September 2021	Minor changes
1.8	September 2021	Fix an error in Eq10 description, PSU timings updated description, Change in Eq12
1.9	November 2021	Added efficiency and PF calculation for redundant PSUs and some more changes to introduce ATX12VO PSUs
2.0	May 2022	Added new transient response tests for ATX v3.0 compatible PSUs
2.1	June 2022	Fixed a typo in Eq 8
2.2	January 2023	Made changes to the performance calculation algorithm and the examples
2.3	February 2023	Changes to the performance calculation algorithm (ATX v3.0 Transient Response Bonus)
2.4	February 2023	Fixed some typos in the performance calculation examples
2.5	March 2023	ATX v3.0 Testing Procedure Updates
2.6	May 2023	5VSB CL test load changed to 3 W
2.7	January 2024	Change in OCP bonus
2.8	June 2024	Minor changes
2.9	September 2024	Added fan failure bonus points and ATX v3.1 reference. Hold-up time clarifications.
3.0	September 2024	Added background noise screenshot. Minor other changes.
3.1	April 2025	Added AC Input Protection Features Evaluation Tests.
3.2	June 2025	Added PSU Cable Gauge Requirements
3.3	August 2025	Added PSU Cable Types
3.4	August 2025	Added EMC-Precompliance and Uncertainty Calculations
3.5	January 2026	Equation reference normalization, EMI/EMC terminology clarification, Figure and table caption consistency
3.6	February 2026	Added noise measurements explanations, and Faganas software validation. Uncertainty fixes. Equipment used upgrades. Peak Power Excursion Testing Methodology added.
3.7	June 2026	Added Burst Activity Index (BAI) Methodology.
3.8	June 2026	Added the Transient-Response Measurement Methodology subsection (AC-coupled dip capture and Vmin = Vbefore − Drop_V reconstruction) to the Peak Power Excursions section
3.9	August 2026	Measurement uncertainties updated to the current controlled budgets (P19).

Version	Release Date	Notes
4.0	August 2026	Document control: the cover date now matches the revision it carries. Test Conditions clarified - the 30 °C (±2 °C) ambient is the starting setpoint and the hotbox reaches 32-34 °C by the end of the test, as the Efficiency Measurements Procedure already stated.
4.1	August 2026	Timing clarified: the more than 1450 load combinations are the CL measurements at 28-32 °C, about five seconds per load level, while the four-to-ten-minute dwell belongs to the normal load tests carried out at high ambient temperatures and reported for reference only. Protection bonus corrected: the OCP bonus is awarded per rail, so full compliance is worth 2.25 points rather than 1.75. No measured value, test or published rating changes.
4.2	August 2026	PSU Protections: a statement was added recording that the protection results are scored and are not a safety assessment, and that the Cybenetics SAFE program is a separate and independent certification which is not covered by, implied by or substituted for by ETA, LAMBDA or the Overall Performance Rating. Reference [16] added. No measured value, test or published rating changes.
4.3	August 2026	Reference [16] made undated. It cited the Cybenetics SAFE Standard as Revision 1.6, which SAFE's own revisions later the same day made stale. Because that document cites this one in return, dated references on both sides cannot converge - whichever is published second makes the other wrong. [16] now names the SAFE Standard without a revision, which always denotes the current one. No measured value, test or published rating changes.
4.4	September 2026	Ambient during certification testing stated precisely. The previous wording described the hotbox as starting at 30 °C (±2 °C) and reaching 32-34 °C by the end of the run, presenting an exception as though it were the rule. The controlled condition under which certification results are produced is 30 °C (±2 °C); with high-capacity units, whose dissipation can exceed the enclosure's cooling capacity, the ambient may rise to 32-34 °C towards the end of the run. Both are now stated. No measured value, test or published rating changes; the 35-45 °C high-ambient runs and the 23-28 °C Peak Power Excursion condition are unaffected.

Version	Release Date	Notes
4.5	September 2026	Measurement uncertainties updated to the current controlled budgets (P19). The efficiency measurement uncertainty is now ±0.43%, re-derived from a 48-run intralaboratory reproducibility base spanning four benches and three sessions with a complete teardown and rebuild between runs. The Type A term is the reproducibility standard deviation itself, since a reported result is a single measurement. Noise and conducted EMI are unchanged.
4.6	September 2026	Two overstatements about other methodologies corrected. The protocol described existing standards as taking “three to four” measurements; the current published 80 PLUS method lists seven load conditions for a desktop unit, six of them under load, so the count is now described as a handful of fixed load points. It also stated that a wide load sweep makes it “impossible” for a manufacturer to tune to specified load levels; a sweep of this size makes selective tuning far harder, not impossible. No measured value, test or published rating changes. In the German and Chinese editions, four further paragraphs were retranslated because they had previously been rendered outside the translation memory; their meaning is unchanged.
4.7	September 2026	Document layout corrected: the title page is reserved for the title block and logo, revision history begins on page 2, duplicate or untranslated contents headings are removed, and table pagination is improved. No measured value, test or published rating changes.
4.8	September 2026	Burst Activity Index (BAI) equation revised. The score is now driven by the robust dispersion of the input power samples above a fixed deadband, with the previous gap term retained additively; definitions added for IQR and CVrobust; measurement conditions now require a qualified acquisition profile, completed-window thresholds and explicit reporting of an unavailable measurement. BAI results published under earlier revisions are not comparable with results under this revision. No other measured value, test or published rating changes.
4.9	October 2026	The test-report example replaced with a current report (#3425). References re-checked on 03-10-2026: a link to a site that no longer belongs to the SSI Forum removed, a moved IEEE link updated, access dates updated.

Version	Release Date	Notes
5.0	October 2026	IEC 62301:2026 adopted for unloaded standby input power, with laboratory implementation and qualification limits stated; loaded 5VSB efficiency distinguished. Output-noise setup drawings replaced and PSU side orientation specified. Noise energy-averaging wording and ECMA-74/ISO 11201 edition citations corrected. No measured value, test result, uncertainty or published rating changes.
5.1	October 2026	Microphone angle in the noise set-up description corrected to 30° to 45°, matching the set-up drawings. No measured value, test, uncertainty or published rating changes.
5.2	November 2026	Informational load-range efficiency, power factor and noise results and the High-Load Index added. No measured value, test, uncertainty or published rating changes.

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Definitions

AC Signal

A time-varying signal whose polarity varies with a period of time T and whose average value is zero. [1]

Ambient Temperature

The temperature of the ambient air immediately surrounding the unit under test (UUT). [1]

Apparent Power

The product of RMS voltage and current (VA). It is also known as total power.

AWG

AWG (American Wire Gauge) is a standardized system used in the United States to measure the diameter of electrically conducting wires. The gauge number inversely indicates the wire's thickness: the higher the AWG number, the thinner the wire. It's commonly used for electrical wiring in homes, electronics, and industrial applications.

Dc Signal

A signal of which the polarity and amplitude do not vary with time. [1]

Efficiency

It is defined as the ratio of total DC output power (sum of V×I across all active output rails) to measured AC input real power at the PSU input terminals, expressed as a percentage. Measurements are performed under defined steady-state operating conditions using calibrated instrumentation traceable to SI units. Expanded uncertainty is calculated per JCGM 100:2008 and reported at k=2 (≈95% confidence).

$$\eta = \frac{P_{out}}{P_{in}} \, x \, 100$$

The input power (Pin) includes the power that the cooling fans of the UUT require.

PSU

Power Supply Unit converting one voltage to DC voltage output or outputs, depending on its type. For example, PSUs with multiple DC voltage outputs (rails) are mainly used in desktop PCs.

IEEE Std 1515-2000

The IEEE Std 1515 [1] is a primary specification language, providing parameter definitions, test conditions, and test methods. It does not attempt to standardize the specification itself. Instead, it provides the basis that allows everyone to speak the same language on a level playing field. This standard was withdrawn on 2019-11-07 [https://standards.ieee.org/ieee/1515/2255/], but we decided to use several of its definitions since they still apply.

ATX Spec

ATX (Advanced Technology eXtended) is a motherboard and power supply configuration specification developed by Intel in 1995 to improve on previous de facto standards like the AT design. [6]

Output Voltage Ripple

The maximum AC voltage present on a DC or low-frequency AC voltage stated in peak-to-peak voltage. The intent is to characterize the residual component associated with the switching action at the output switching frequency (or twice the output switching frequency).

True Power Factor

True power factor is the ratio of the active, or real, power (P) in Watts to the apparent power (S) in Volt-Amperes

$$PF = \frac{P}{S}$$

Crest Factor

The crest factor is the ratio of peak current to RMS current (or peak voltage to RMS voltage). For example, for a pure sinusoidal wave shape, the crest factor is 1.414, while for a pure constant DC load, the crest factor is 1.0.

Rail or DC Bus

Any of the DC outputs of the PSU which delivers power to the connected system. The standard rails for multi-rail PSUs are +12V, +5V, +3.3V, +5VSB, with -12V being optional by the latest ATX specs.

Rated AC Input Voltage Range

The input voltage range (minimum/maximum) is provided by the UUT manufacturer. It is shown on the power label of the UUT.

Rated DC Output Voltage(s)

Description

Rated DC Output Power and Current

The rated DC output power and current is the maximum load that a PSU can provide at a specified ambient temperature on its rails. The manufacturer provides the DC output power and current output for each of the PSU's rails, and it is depicted on its power label and the packaging. Therefore, if there is any difference, we always consider the power label on the PSU.

RMS (Root Mean Square)

The square root of the average of the square of the value of the function taken throughout the period. For instance, the RMS voltage value for a sine wave may be computed as:

$$Vrms = \sqrt{\frac{1}{T}\int_0^T V^2(t)dt}$$

Where T is the period of the waveform,

V(t) is the instantaneous voltage at time t

VRMS is the RMS voltage value.[1]

Steady State

The operating condition of a system wherein the observed variable has reached an equilibrium condition in response to an input or other stimulus per the definition of the system transfer function. In the case of a power supply, this may involve the system output being at some constant voltage or current value. [1]

Total Harmonic Distortion (THD)

The total harmonic distortion (THD or THDi) [7] is a measurement of the harmonic distortion present in a signal and is defined as the ratio of the sum of the powers of all harmonic components to the power of the fundamental frequency.

UUT

UUT is an acronym for "Unit Under Test," which refers to the PSU sample under test.

Prologue

The purpose of this article is to explain our methodologies and testing procedures clearly, not only for efficiency and noise output results but for all significant performance aspects of a PSU, including ripple suppression, transient response, hold-up time, inrush current, etc.

This article will be a great source of information for all brands and manufacturers that want to check the compatibility of their products with our efficiency and noise standards (ETA and LAMBDA). Moreover, it will allow every laboratory with the proper equipment to verify our results, as the ISO17025:2017 [8] dictates. To elaborate more on this, two labs with calibrated equipment that have the same capabilities and can offer similar levels of accuracy in results should come up with identical results, given that they follow the same methodology. Cybenetics is a certification body. It will accept all results coming from ISO17025-certified labs that follow the provided methodology for obtaining the necessary data, from which the ETA and LAMBDA certifications derive. But first these labs have to be evaluated by Cybenetics.

So far, the existing efficiency standards have had many flaws, which include, among others, the limited number of measurements (typically a handful of fixed load points), the very low ambient temperature at which the tests are conducted, the lack of any standby rail measurements, and the absence of mention to the equipment used to perform measurements. Especially the latter is of immense importance since every proper testing report should include the equipment used to conduct all measurements.

Some may argue that testing only one or two samples per model is not sufficient, especially considering the possibility of changes during mass production. However, for brands participating in the CybenPass program, this concern is effectively addressed.

CybenPass enables multi-sample evaluation at a reduced cost, allowing Cybenetics to test multiple units across different production stages—from early engineering samples to final retail versions. This ensures a far more representative assessment of each model.

In parallel, Cybenetics actively monitors real-world user feedback. If any discrepancy is reported between retail units and the originally tested samples, immediate action is taken, including requesting re-submission of the specific model for re-evaluation.

Additionally, one of the most important recent enhancements is the detailed part analysis included in all reports. This level of transparency allows any component-level modification—whether related to platform, capacitors, controllers, or cooling—to be quickly identified. As a result, even subtle production changes cannot go unnoticed over time.

Test Setup & Measurement Conditions

Testing Equipment Requirements

The requirement equipment is calibrated and its minimum requirements are the following:

1) AC source (programmable)

- **Voltage / frequency:** 90–264 Vac (or wider), 45–65 Hz (or wider), sine output, low distortion (specify THD limit)
- **Power capability:** ≥ 4 kVA continuous (covers high-power PSUs + margin)
- **Regulation:** ≤ ±0.5% (V) line/load regulation (or better)
- **Measurement/monitoring:** output V/I/P readback with documented accuracy

2) DC electronic loads (multi-channel)

- **Mode coverage:** CC (mandatory), plus CR/CP and dynamic/pulse (recommended for ATX transients)
- **Accuracy (each channel):**
    - Current setting/measure: **≤ ±0.2% rdg** (or better)
    - Voltage measure: **≤ ±0.1% rdg** (or better)
- **Resolution:** current resolution fine enough to support low-load points (e.g., 0.01 A class on low-current rails)
- **Dynamic performance:** programmable step loads with documented rise/fall time / slew-rate adequate for your transient method

3) Power analyzer (efficiency + power quality)

- **Power/energy accuracy: ≤ ±0.1% of reading** (preferred) over the operating range used for efficiency points
- **Sampling / bandwidth:** sufficient to measure modern PSU waveforms (PFC, harmonics); specify minimum measurement bandwidth
- **Functions:** true power (W), VA, VAR, PF, Vrms/Arms, harmonics/THD (as applicable to your method)

4) Oscilloscope / waveform acquisition (ripple, transients, hold-up, timing)

- **Analog bandwidth:** ≥ 100 MHz (typical minimum for PSU ripple/transient visibility; set per your method)
- **Sample rate:** ≥ 1 GS/s (or justified lower with documented bandwidth/alias control)
- **Vertical resolution:** ≥ 8-bit (higher preferred) + low-noise front-end
- **Probes:** differential / low-noise probing suitable for mV ripple; specify probe bandwidth and CMRR

- **Timebase accuracy:** specified and verified

5) Acoustics chain (Lambda / noise testing)

- **Sound level meter / analyzer: IEC 61672-1 Class 1** (or equivalent) with LAeq/logging capability
- **Microphone:** Class 1 compatible, documented self-noise low enough for your floor, with calibration data
- **Acoustic calibrator: IEC 60942 Class 1** (recommended) for pre/post checks

6) Temperature measurement (PSU + ambient)

- **Accuracy:** ≤ ±0.5 °C (or justified by uncertainty budget)
- **Resolution:** 0.1 °C class
- **Sensors:** type/placement defined; response time appropriate for stabilization criteria

7) Tachometer (fan RPM)

- **Range:** covers 0–10,000+ rpm
- **Accuracy:** ≤ ±1% rdg (or better)

8) DMM (auxiliary voltage/current checks)

- **DCV accuracy:** ≤ ±0.01% rdg class (bench DMM)
- **Use-case:** spot checks, cross-verification of rails / sensors

9) Power continuity (UPS) + isolation transformer

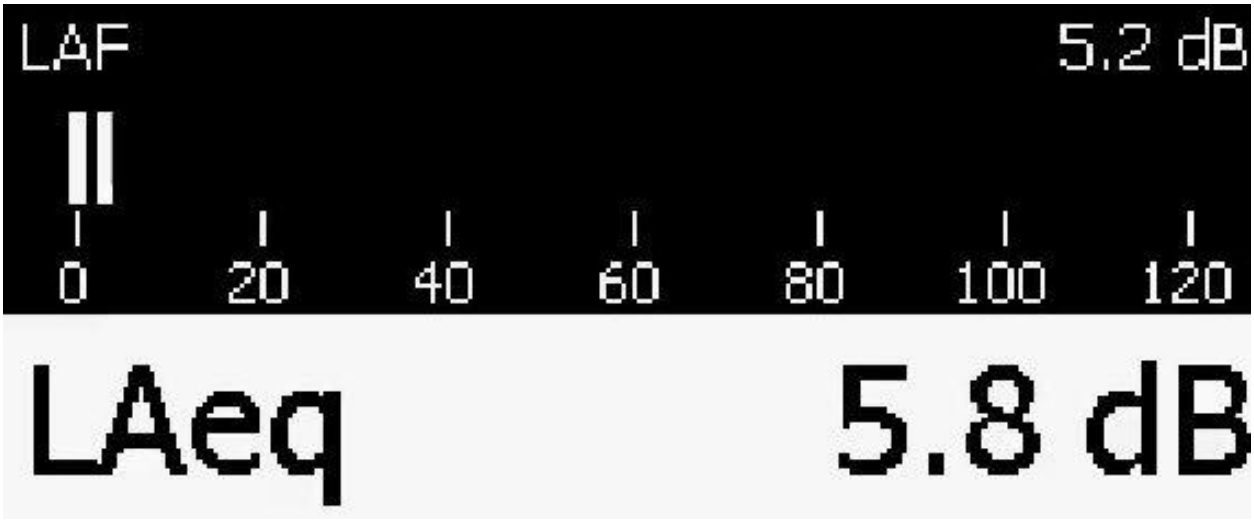
- **UPS capacity:** sized to avoid transfer events during tests (≥ peak lab load; include runtime spec)
- **Isolation transformer:** ≥ 4 kVA

Test Equipment

All measurements are performed using several fully-equipped Chroma 63600 stations. Each can deliver more than 4 kW of load and includes two 63601-5 and one 63600-2 mainframes. In addition, each of the mainframes mentioned above hosts ten 63640-80-80 [400 W] electronic loads along with two 63610-80-20 [100 W x2] modules.

The AC sources that we use are Chroma 6530, capable of delivering up to 3 kW of power, Keysight AC6804B with 4 kW max power, APM SP300VAC4000W-P with 4 kW max power, and GW-Instek ASR-3500 with 5 kW max power. All AC sources are connected to the mains network through powerful isolation transformers. Finally, we protect the AC sources with online UPS devices.

The rest of our equipment consists of Picoscope 4444 and Siglent SDS2104X PLUS oscilloscopes, Picotech TC-08 thermocouple data loggers, Keysight U1273AX multimeter, and Rohde & Schwarz NPA701 and HMC8015 power analyzers, featuring 0.05% basic accuracy. We also use several UNI UT372 tachometers.



The noise measurements are conducted with Class 1 Bruel & Kjaer sound analyzers (2270 G4 and 2250-L G), equipped with type 4955-A low-noise and free-field microphones, which can measure down to 5 dB(A) (we also have type 4189 microphones that features a 16.6-140 dBA-weighted dynamic range). The sound analyzers are installed into a hemi-anechoic chamber, with a close to 6 dB(A) noise floor. A Bruel & Kjaer Type 4231 is used before every noise measurement to calibrate the sound analyzers.

We can conduct Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) evaluations since our lab is equipped with a TekBox TBMR-110M EMI-ANALYZER (1Hz -110MHz). We also use a Tekbox TBL5008-2C LISN to isolate the power mains from the device in this test (DUT). To identify the EMI source should the need arise, we have at our disposal a set of Tekbox EMC probes (TBPS01) and a TBWA2 wide-band amplifier.

For measuring leakage current, we use a GW Instek GLC-9000 leakage current tester.

Measuring Software – Faganas ATE

An essential part of our methodology is the control and monitoring software connected to all equipment we use, even the hotbox. This application is developed for the past ten years, and it consists of thousands of lines of code. We recently coded the application again in C# to keep it in line with the modern coding trends.

Besides gathering all data, storing it, and allowing it to extract it in any possible form, which meets our requirements, one of its most vital functions is that it also allows us to average all readings that we get. In the normal load tests, which we carry out at high ambient temperatures and report for reference only, we check each different load level for four to ten minutes, and during this period, we don't just take any random readings, but we gather all of them and take the average readings as the final result. This is the only way to have highly accurate results. Furthermore, as the heat increases at the internals of the power supply and the resistance of the

PSU's gauges changes, it is natural to have voltage, load, and load and efficiency differences due to the temperature difference. So the best way is to take all readings throughout a test into account and accept the average as the final result.

Faganas Software Functions

Faganas does not perform primary electrical measurements. All electrical quantities (AC voltage, AC current, AC input power, DC rail voltages, DC rail currents, power factor, and fan speed) are measured, digitized, and numerically processed by external calibrated instruments.

Faganas receives finalized numeric readings via digital interfaces and performs logging, time alignment, aggregation, and secondary calculations only.

Faganas functions as a data acquisition, aggregation, and reporting layer. All electrical and mechanical quantities are measured and computed by calibrated external instruments. Faganas does not modify, scale, or reinterpret instrument readings; validation therefore focuses on data integrity, time coherence, and correctness of secondary calculations derived from instrument-reported values.

Function	**Responsibility**
Voltage measurement	Instrument
Current measurement	Instrument
Power calculation	Instrument
PF calculation	Instrument
Fan speed measurement	Instrument
Sampling & ADC	Instrument
Numeric scaling	Instrument
Data transfer	Instrument + Faganas
Time alignment	Faganas
Logging	Faganas
Derived metrics (efficiency, sums)	Faganas
Reporting	Faganas

Input Voltage & Max Watt Output

Besides 115 V and 230 V, we also conduct testing at 100 V to check the PSU's performance with a lower voltage input. Since we push all PSUs hard at high ambient temperatures close to 45°C, we avoid testing with an even lower voltage input (e.g., 90V) since a PSU failure can also damage the power analyzer directly connected to it. However, by cranking up the heat inside the hotbox and dialing higher loads than the nominal ones, we already apply massive stress to the DUT, especially with 100 V input, simulating some of the worst real-life scenarios.

We use the PSU's label to check on the max Watt output. We also conduct a test with 110% load of the PSU's max-rated capacity with the operating temperature exceeding 45°C, in PSUs claiming to deliver continuous full load output at 50°C.

Test Conditions

The efficiency and noise output testing is conducted at a controlled ambient of 30 °C (±2 °C) inside the hotbox. This is the condition under which certification results are produced. With high-capacity units, whose dissipation can exceed the enclosure's cooling capacity, the ambient may rise to 32-34 °C towards the end of the run. The ambient temperature is monitored throughout. We also conduct tests at higher ambient temperatures within the 35-45°C range (±2 °C).

Efficiency Measurements Procedure

Contrary to existing methodologies, which measure at a handful of fixed load points, we apply more than 1450 different load combinations in the DUT. These are the CL (combined load) measurements, taken with the ambient inside the hotbox controlled at 30 °C (±2 °C), and each load level is held for about five seconds. The whole procedure lasts about two and a half hours in total. The overall or average efficiency is the average of all measurements, covering the PSU's entire operating range, except redundant PSUs where we take 2-100% of the PSU's operating range. This way, it is far harder for a manufacturer to tune its products to meet some specified load levels since, in essence, we take under consideration the efficiency levels under a higher number of different load combinations, evenly spread throughout the entire load range. Besides efficiency, we also take voltage, ripple, power factor, noise, and temperature measurements.

For ATX12V PSUs, we try to have at least 20 different load levels at 5V and 3.3V. At the same time, we also set an appropriate load step at +12V, which can deliver at least 1450, in total, load combinations at +12V, 5V, and 3.3V. Finally, we apply a steady load of 0.6A at 5VSB while we don't deal with the -12V, which is not required anymore by the newest ATX spec.

In redundant and ATX12VO units with a single main rail and a standby one only, we increase the load on the latter rail by 1W, so if this rail has 15W capacity, we apply 15 different load levels (1W increase each time) while setting an appropriate load step on the main rail to allow for at least 1450 different load combinations.

A description of the algorithm used to derive the load levels on the rails of an ATX12V PSU is provided below in code form. A simpler algorithm is used for units with only two rails (main and standby). The output table contains all possible load combinations, given the +12V and 5V/3.3V Watt step output that we select. We also have an entry for the minimum applied load on the rails. Some older PSUs with a group-regulation scheme on the secondary side cannot operate appropriately with zero load at +12V and full load on the minor rails (and vice versa). Finally, the load at 5VSB remains the same throughout these tests. We chose this for two reasons: this is a standby rail, so most likely, it won't be utilized while the PSU is in operation, and secondly, if we also employed this rail in the algorithm shown below, the corresponding testing would last much longer.

```
Max_12V_load =  PSU_12V_max_power - V12_min_load
Max_5V_load = (Minor_Rails_Max_Combined_Load /5) *3
Max_33V_load = (Minor_Rails_Max_Combined_Load /5) *2

Load_steps_12V := round(Max_12V_load / Watts_12V_step)
Load_steps_5V := round(Max_5V_load / Watts_5V_33V_ step)
Load_steps_33V := round(Max_33V_load / Watts_5V_33V_ step)

for i := 0 to Load_steps_12V do
      for k := 0 to Load_steps_5V do
      {

        l := k;
        if l > Load_steps_33V then l := Load_steps_33V

        total12V:= V12_min_load + Watts_12V_ step * i
        total5V = V5_V33_min_load + Watts_5V_33V_ step * k
        total33V = V5_V33_min_load + Watts_5V_33V_ step * l

        if total12V + total5V + total33V <= PSU_Max_Power then
        {
          j = j + 1;
          //Row Number
          Load_combinations_table.Cells[0, j] = j
         // 12V load
          Load_combinations_table.Cells[1, j] = total12V
          // 5V load
          Load_combinations_table.Cells[2, j] = total5V
           // 3.3V load
          Load_combinations_table.Cells[3, j] = total33V

        }
       }
```

The massive load of data that our methodology provides allows us to quickly modify our efficiency certification program, should this be required. Finally, we conduct our tests at a

controlled 30 °C (±2 °C) with the PSU inside a hotbox, simulating a case environment and remaining close to real-life conditions.

Vampire power (power consumption with no load on the 5VSB rail) is of high importance in ATX12V and ATX12VO units since all this amount of energy goes wasted, and most PC systems aren't kept in operation 24/7, meaning that for a significant part of the day, the PSUs just consume energy without doing anything useful. We adopt IEC 62301:2026 [2] as the reference for the measurement of unloaded standby input power. If the DUT doesn't meet our standards, it will be automatically downgraded to the next lower efficiency certification level. In our laboratory procedure, the DUT has AC input connected, its mains switch is on, its main outputs are disabled and no external load is applied to the standby rail. The measurement is run with the power analyzer's built-in IEC 62301 application. The retained analyzer reports identify the Sampling Method. The operator waits at least 15 minutes, repeats a failed test and saves the analyzer's HTML report to USB for transfer to local storage. During the process, if the THD readings of the AC input go out of spec, the result is rendered as not valid by the application. The reports retain the mean power, test duration, instrument configuration and mains-quality checks. Full 2026 conformity is not claimed until the analyzer/software implementation, retained sampling data, stability assessment and standby-power uncertainty have been qualified against that edition.

Besides all the above, ETA will also consider the average efficiency of the standby rail. We measure efficiency on this rail per 0.05 A steps up to its max current output, and the average of all measurements is the final efficiency result. Thus, we expect all PSUs to deliver over 70% average efficiency output on this rail, with this threshold set even higher for units that fall into the top categories of the ETA program.

This loaded standby-rail efficiency sweep is distinct from the unloaded standby input-power measurement.

Burst Activity Index (BAI) Methodology

Purpose and Scope

The Burst Activity Index (BAI) characterises how much a PSU's input power varies at light loads. Unlike efficiency, PF, ripple, or crest factor measurements, BAI evaluates whether the PSU repeatedly departs from its own average input power - the signature of discontinuous ON/OFF energy delivery - and the severity of that behaviour at the temporal resolution of the specified acquisition profile. It is an analyzer-resolved activity indicator: it cannot establish that a unit is physically burst-free, identify the converter topology responsible, or measure coil whine.

BAI Definitions

PAR (Peak-to-Average Ratio): PAR = Ppeak / Pavg, where Ppeak is the maximum measured input power and Pavg is the average input power over the same observation window.

IdleFraction: Fraction of total observation time during which input power remains below the defined idle threshold.

PF_Window: Power factor of the completed observation window, derived from the accumulated real and apparent power of every valid sample in that window. AvgAbsPfDelta is evaluated against this single completed-window value, not against a running estimate.

AvgAbsPfDelta: Average absolute deviation between instantaneous PF and PF_Window.

IQR (Interquartile Range): IQR = Q3 - Q1, where Q1 and Q3 are the 25th and 75th percentiles of the input power samples recorded over the observation window, obtained by linear interpolation between the ordered samples.

CVrobust (Robust Coefficient of Variation): CVrobust = (IQR / 1.34898) / Pavg. The divisor converts the interquartile range to a standard-deviation-equivalent scale. A robust scale is used in place of the standard deviation because the observation window is short; a single anomalous sample would otherwise dominate the result.

Measurement Conditions

BAI measurements are performed during low-load operation. Input power samples shall be continuously logged and evaluated over the complete observation period. The observation window, sampling cadence, analyzer measurement speed, filtering and ranging shall be fixed in a qualified acquisition profile and identified with each result; results obtained under different acquisition profiles shall not be treated as interchangeable without equivalence testing. Every sample in a completed window shall be classified against a single idle threshold derived from that window's own mean, and AvgAbsPfDelta shall be evaluated against the completed-window PF_Window; running or incremental references shall not be used, because they make the result depend on the order in which samples arrive. A window that does not carry the minimum number of accepted samples defined by the acquisition profile, or whose mean input power does not exceed the idle-threshold floor, shall be reported as unavailable rather than as zero.

Equations

$$BAI_{raw} = max(0, CVrobust - 0.015) + max(0, PAR - 1.0) \times IdleFraction$$

$$BAI_{withPF} = BAI_{raw} \times (1 + AvgAbsPfDelta)$$

$$BAI_{0-100} = 100 \times (1 - e^{-k \times BAI_{withPF}})$$

The recommended scaling constant is k = 5.0. The k factor shall remain fixed across all PSU evaluations to preserve comparability between reports and certification databases. The dispersion deadband is 0.015 and, like k, shall remain fixed across all PSU evaluations.

Important Note: A zero IdleFraction no longer forces a zero score: measured dispersion above the deadband produces a non-zero BAI without any sample falling below the idle threshold. The previous definition gated the entire score on the idle term, which is not observable at the sampling resolution of the specified acquisition profile, so every evaluation returned zero - including units whose input power varied substantially. A BAI of zero means no activity above this method's sensitivity under the stated acquisition conditions; it shall not be described as proof of burst-free operation. A measurement that could not be completed shall be reported as unavailable, never as zero. Results published under revisions up to and including 4.7 were produced by the superseded gap-gated equation and are not comparable with results under this revision.

Interpretation

The BAI score is interpreted according to the following scale:

BAI Score	Classification
0 – 5	Burst-free / extremely smooth
5 – 20	Mild burst activity
20 – 50	Moderate burst behavior
50 – 75	Aggressive burst mode
75 – 100	Severe burst behavior

Relationship to Other Metrics

Crest Factor evaluates instantaneous waveform sharpness, PAR evaluates temporal power variation, and BAI evaluates actual burst-mode behavior. These metrics are complementary and should not be used interchangeably.

Coil Whine Correlation

BAI does not directly measure coil whine. However, higher BAI values indicate stronger burst-mode activity, which can increase the probability of burst-induced acoustic excitation.

Output Noise Measurements Procedure

As we already mentioned in the efficiency measurements procedure, we apply at least 1450 different load combinations on the rails of the DUT while at the same time monitoring all vital data, including the fan speed. With the fan speed range data in hand, we take noise measurements with as small intervals as possible, have high accuracy, and cover the entire range. For example, if the fan speed range is 400-2000 RPM, we take noise measurements per 50 RPM intervals.

The noise measurements are taken in a hemi-anechoic chamber with the DUT switched off and its fan connected to an external power supply, applying the voltage required to achieve the desired fan speeds. Moreover, the fan speed is continuously monitored by a tachometer. This way, we can eliminate third-party noises, including the noise of electronic loads.

We make a table with the fan speed in RPM and the corresponding noise at that speed. Afterward, our software looks into all data gathered during the load tests and assigns a decibel value to each fan speed value using the table above.

The determination of the reported A-weighted sound pressure level is based on sound pressure level measurements performed in accordance with ISO 7779 [9] and ECMA-74 [11]. As sound pressure level expressed in decibels is a logarithmic quantity, direct arithmetic averaging of measured dBA values across different operating conditions is not physically meaningful and would not represent the true acoustic energy of the sound source.

To ensure correct energetic representation, each measured A-weighted sound pressure level obtained under the defined load combinations is converted to its corresponding squared linear sound pressure value. The squared sound pressure values are then averaged arithmetically, and the resulting mean squared sound pressure is converted back to an A-weighted sound pressure level, expressed in dBA. The energy average is calculated as 10*log10(mean(10^(L/10))), where L is each measured A-weighted sound pressure level in dBA.

This data processing approach is consistent with the physical principles of acoustics and with the measurement and data evaluation concepts defined in ISO 7779 and ECMA-74 for the combination and evaluation of sound pressure level measurements. The method therefore provides a technically valid and reproducible representation of the acoustic emission level of the equipment under test and is suitable for use within an ISO/IEC 17025 accredited measurement framework.

This procedure described above allows us to have a single number describing the DUT's average noise output with at least 1450 load combinations. According to this number, we tax the DUT into one of the LAMBDA categories.

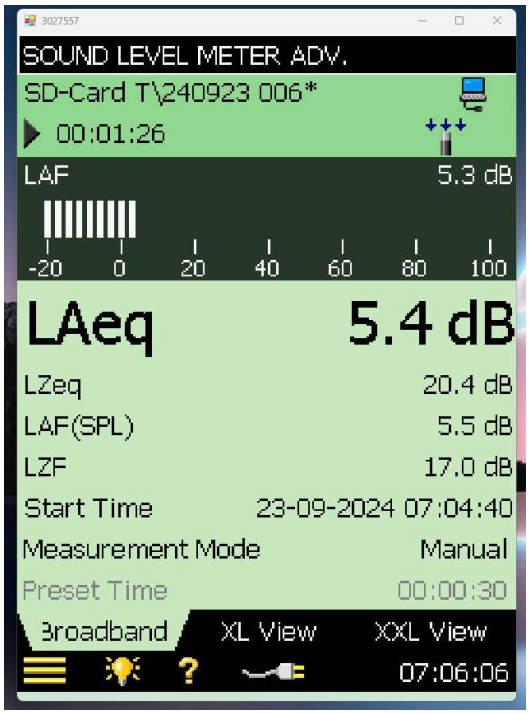
Besides the fan's noise, we also check for electronic noise (coil whine) by applying a combination of loads to the DUT while it is installed in the hemi-anechoic chamber, using a passively-cooled

load tester. If we find any electronic noise that exceeds 6-6.5 dBA, we must consider if the lowest fan noise levels are within a 10 dBA range because it affects noise measurements. The easier way to do this is by conducting the corresponding fan noise measurements with a load applied to the DUT to create the conditions that generate electronic noise.

Based on our testing results so far, it is not common, actually far from it, to find a power supply with higher than 6.5 dBA electronic noise at a one-meter distance, using a resistor-based load. Thus, in most cases, coil whine noise is due to a combination of system parts. Finally, the applied scenario, which forces the PSU to emit electronic noise, plays a notable role. Because a PSU might have electronic noise while it is switched on and without any load on its rails, this is not a real-life scenario, so we don't consider it (but still, we write down the results and notify the manufacturer about this issue). The same goes for operation with only the 3.3V rail having a load, or the 5V rail or both the minor rails (in PSUs with DC-DC converters, though, for the generation of the minor rails, this means that the +12V rail is also in use since it powers the converters as mentioned above). On the contrary, we take into account scenarios where the load is only applied at +12V or 5VSB (with the PSU in standby mode).

Background Noise Calculation

The background noise in our chamber can range from 5.5 dBA to 8 dBA, depending on the external conditions. Therefore, to obtain the best possible conditions, we prefer to take our noise measurements at night, when the ambient noise is lower than during the day.



In no case can the background noise exceed the sound of interest, and in practice, the output level of the DUT has to be at least 3 dBA higher than the background noise for the measurement

to be accurate. Still, a correction has to be applied to get the correct result. The background noise correction is defined as K1 [9] [11], and it is the amount the measured source level is reduced to obtain the background noise-corrected source level.

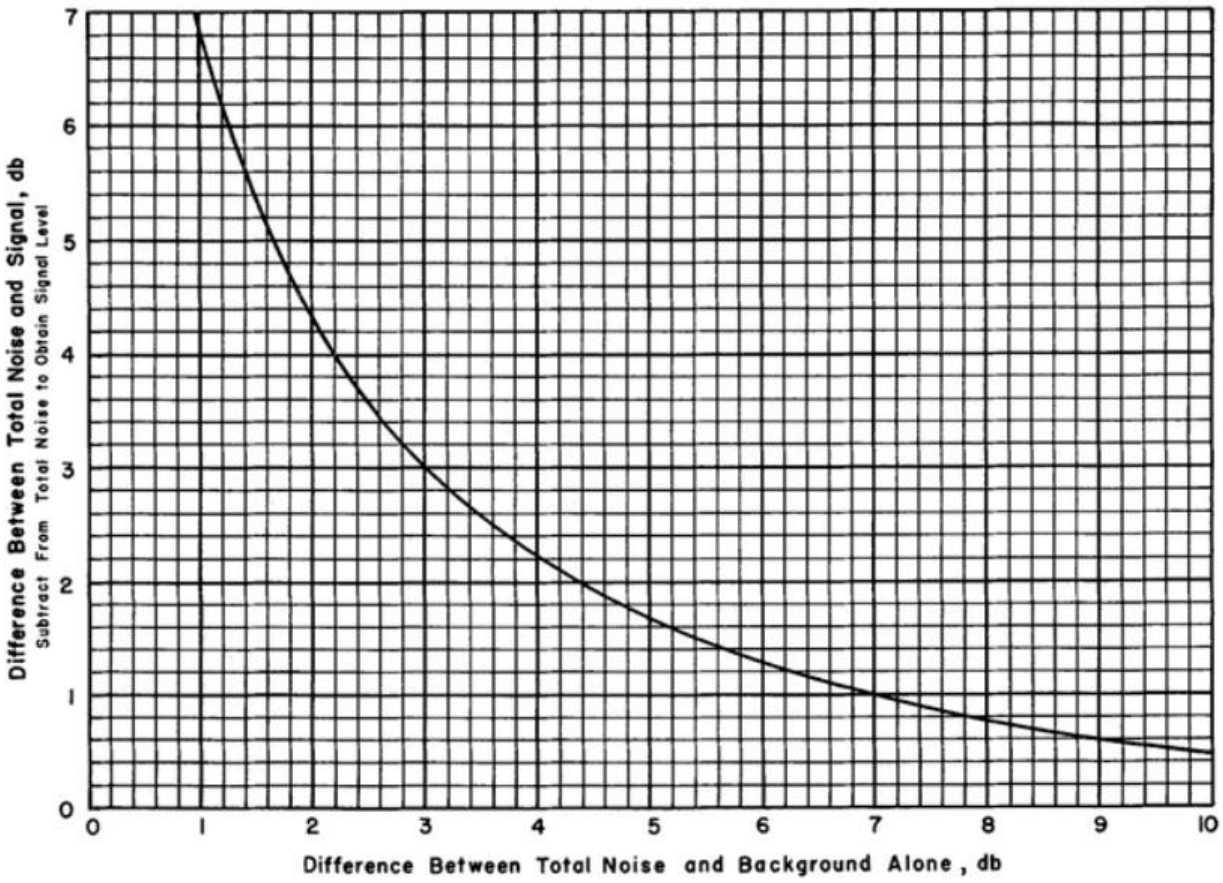
The procedure for measuring a DUT's noise output is the following:

- Measure the total noise level (L_{DUT} + L_{BG}) with the DUT in operation, paying extra attention to its lowest noise output mode.
- Measure the background noise level ($L_{BG)}$ with the DUT switched off.
- Calculate the difference between the two readings mentioned above (L_{DUT} - L_{BG}). If it is less than 3 dBA, the background noise is too high to measure accurately. If it is within a 3-10 dBA range, a correction has to be applied. There is no need for correction if the difference is greater than 10 dBA, but we still use it for up to 20 dBA differences.

The formula for calculating the noise source without the influence of the background noise is the following:

$$\boldsymbol{L_{DUT} = 10\ x\ log(\frac{10_{LDUT}}{10} - \frac{10_{LBG}}{10})}$$

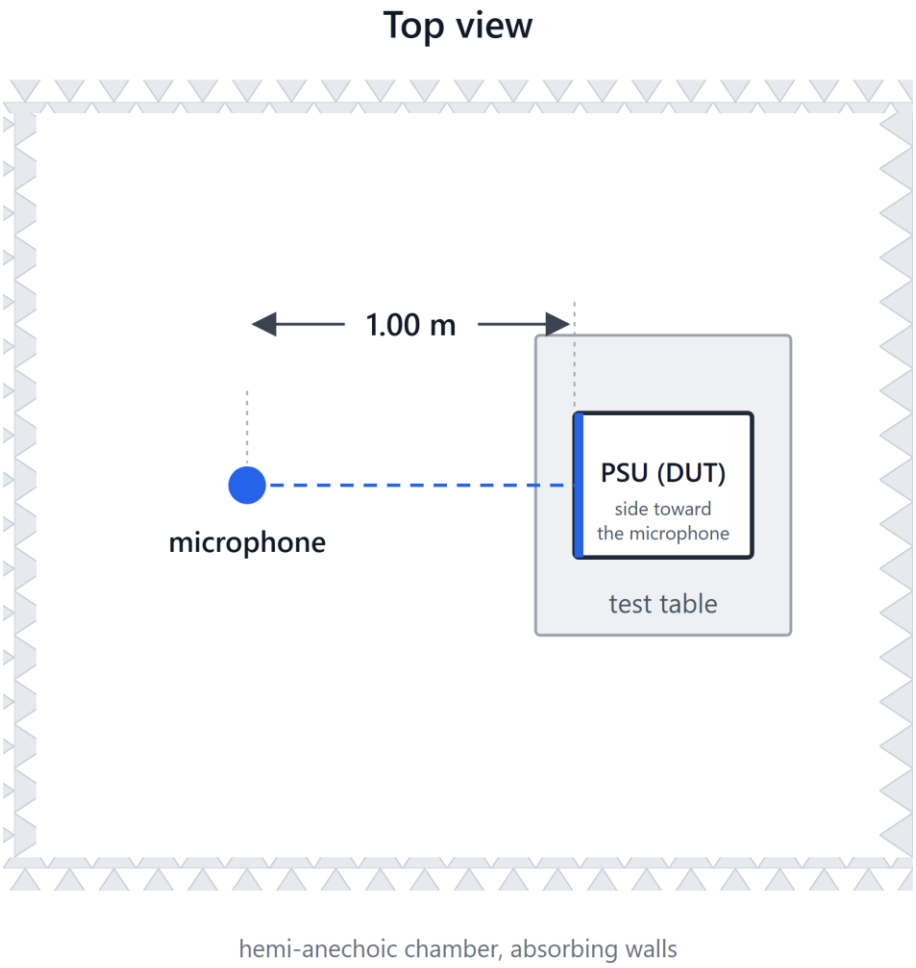
In a spreadsheet, the formula above can be given as 10*log(10^(LDUT/10)-10^(LBG/10))



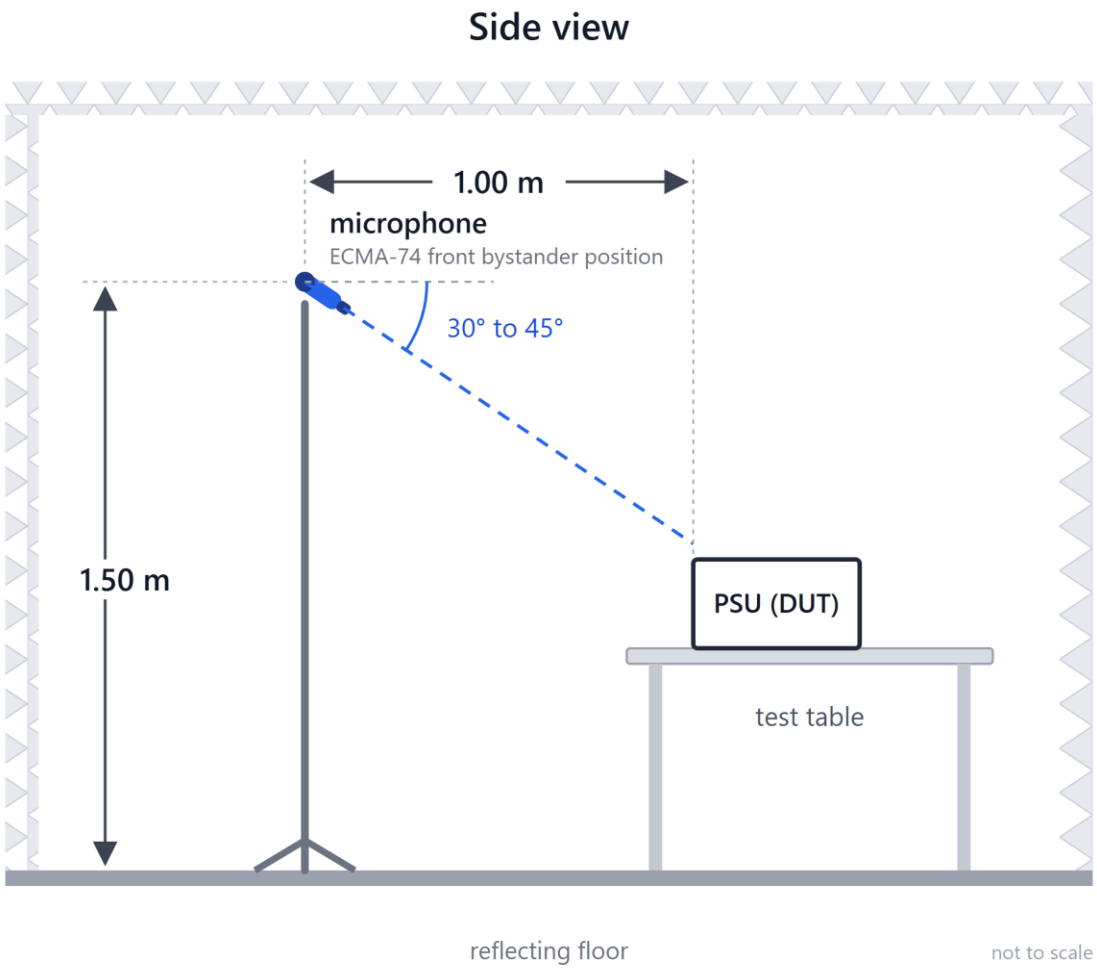
The chart above can be used to make background noise corrections to the source signal.

Output Noise Measurements Test Set-Up

In the schemes below, you will find an outline of our hemi-anechoic chamber with the exact placement of the MIC and the DUT. We strictly follow the corresponding ISO Standards [9][10]. The PSU is placed with its side toward the microphone.



Top View



Side View

ISO 7779 / ECMA-74: Bystander Microphone at 1 m, 1.5 m Height

ISO 7779:2018 (Acoustics – Measurement of airborne noise emitted by information technology and telecommunications equipment) [9] explicitly permits a microphone placement at 1.0 m distance, 1.5 m height for noise emission measurements. In fact, ISO 7779 (harmonized with ECMA-74, the ECMA standard for IT/telecom equipment noise) defines "bystander positions" at 1.00 m ± 0.03 m horizontally from the equipment (reference box) and 1.50 m ± 0.03 m above the floor. These positions simulate a person standing 1 meter away at roughly ear height.

For equipment without an operator (unattended), ISO 7779 requires using four such microphone positions (front, rear, left, right at 1 m) and averaging them to get the mean A-weighted sound pressure level (LpAm). If the equipment is operator-attended, then a single operator position microphone measurement (defined by the standard for that category of equipment) may be used instead.

In all cases, the 1 m/1.5 m geometry is part of the standard method in ISO 7779 for obtaining emission sound pressure levels. This means a single fixed microphone placed at those coordinates (each required

position) is an accepted setup for certified noise measurements of IT/telecom equipment, as long as the test is conducted per the standard (in an essentially free-field environment over a reflecting plane).

The standard's latest edition (ISO 7779:2018) [9] is aligned with ECMA-74:2025 on these requirements. For example, ECMA-74 (22nd Ed., December 2025) [12] clause 8.6.3 states the 1.0 m horizontal distance and 1.5 m height for bystander microphones. This geometry is not just for internal tests – it is the basis for declared noise emission values (per ISO 7779 / ISO 9296) used in product datasheets and compliance reports.

Microphone Incidence Angle (30° to 45°) in the Standard

ISO 7779 and ECMA-74 also address how the microphone is oriented at this position. The microphone should be aimed such that the sound arrives at the angle for which the microphone's frequency response is calibrated to be most uniform.

In practice, since a floor-standing machine's noise sources are often below the microphone height, the primary sound incidence is assumed about 30° to 45° below horizontal. The standards explicitly mention this: "The microphones shall be oriented in such a way that the angle of sound incidence is the same as the angle for which the microphone has the most uniform frequency response. For most practical cases, the primary sound source is assumed to be either 30° or 45° below horizontal." For our set-up, the primary sound source is assumed to be 30° to 45° below horizontal.

In other words, a free-field microphone (calibrated for 0° incidence) would be pointed directly at the source, whereas a random-incidence microphone might be angled typically around 30° to 45° to capture sound coming from below. This ensures the 30° to 45° incidence angle condition is met as per the standard's guidance. Such details are part of the standard's procedure so that the single-microphone measurement at 1 m distance is accurate and standardized.

ISO 11201:2010 – Free-Field Sound Pressure Method Supports This Setup

The above microphone arrangement is grounded in ISO 11201 [10] (Acoustics – Noise emitted by machinery and equipment – Determination of emission sound pressure levels at a work station and at other specified positions in an essentially free field over a reflecting plane). ISO 7779 actually invokes ISO 11201 as the basic measurement method for the operator/bystander positions.

ISO 11201 (an internationally recognized ISO standard) explicitly describes measuring noise at a specified position (such as 1 m from the product) under free-field conditions, using an engineering-grade method (accuracy grade 2). Crucially, no corrections for room reflections are applied (environmental correction K_2 = 0 in a semi-anechoic room) – only a background noise correction if needed. This is exactly the scenario of a single fixed microphone at 1 m distance, 1.5 m height in front of the equipment on a reflective floor.

In ISO 7779's procedure (which conforms to ISO 11201), one measures the A-weighted sound pressure level at that microphone position and uses it for the noise emission report. Therefore, ISO 11201:2010 supports using a single microphone at the specified geometry as a valid standard method (engineering grade) for noise emission sound pressure measurements. When ISO 7779 is followed (for IT/telecom gear), it effectively applies ISO 11201 with the 1 m/1.5 m/30° to 45° geometry predefined for bystander or

operator positions. The result (e.g. LpA at 1 m) is accepted in official noise declarations (often alongside sound power level)

Conclusion – Recognized Standards and Alternatives

In summary, yes – internationally recognized standards do support a single fixed microphone at 1 m (horizontal), 1.5 m height, 30° to 45° incidence for airborne noise measurements of IT/telecom equipment. The primary reference is ISO 7779:2018 (and its equivalent, ECMA-74), which in Clause 8 defines the bystander measurement geometry (1 m distance, 1.5 m height) and microphone orientation. This setup is used for obtaining the A-weighted emission sound pressure level LpA of the equipment in a standard-compliant way. The exact requirement is documented (for example, ECMA-74 Clause 8.6.3 and 8.6.4, which correspond to ISO 7779) and allows such measurements to be certified (included in declared noise emission values).

If the equipment is operator-attended, the standard permits one fixed microphone at the operator position; if not, it requires four fixed microphones (one at each side, 1 m/1.5 m) with the results averaged. But in our scope, IT equipment and more specifically PC systems, the equipment is considered as attended.

For the purpose of emission sound pressure at a specified distance, the ISO 7779/11201 method is the accepted practice. For telecommunications equipment specifically, standards like ETSI EN 300 753 simply defer to ISO 7779/ISO 3744 methods for acoustic noise compliance – meaning the 1 m/1.5 m microphone geometry (per ISO 7779) is indeed recognized in the telecom industry for noise emission measurements. All these references confirm that a single fixed microphone at 1 m (and 1.5 m height, 30° to 45° incidence) is an officially supported configuration for measuring and certifying the airborne noise of IT and telecom equipment.

EMI Emissions – Explanation & Equipment

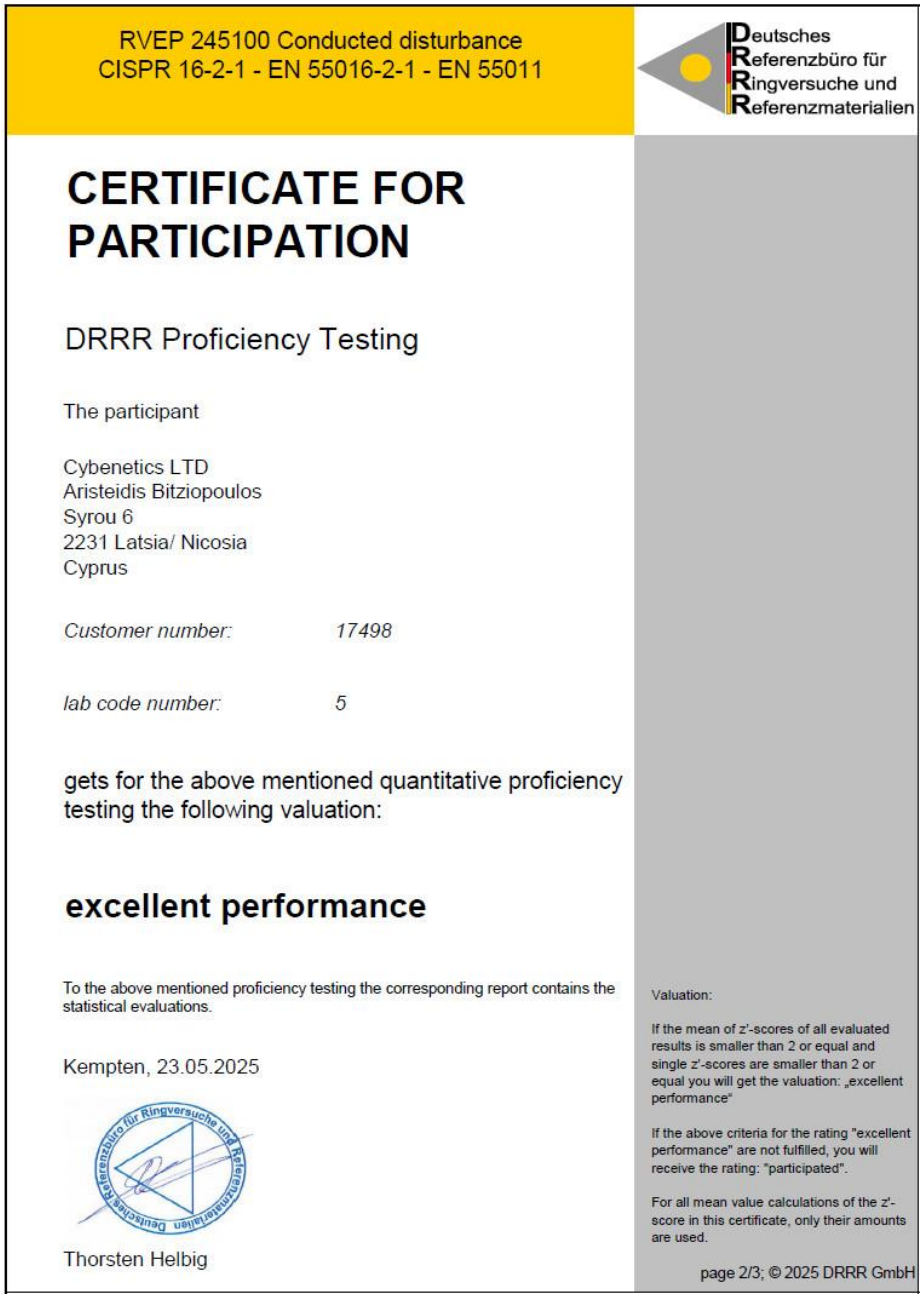
Every electronic device, including PSUs, can be an EMI source, which, depending on the amount of EMI emitted, can affect the proper operation of nearby devices. EMI can, in some extreme cases, even render them unusable. Some standards have been established to minimize electromagnetic interference (EMI) noise. The corresponding standards for IT (Information Technology) products are CISPR 32 and its derivative, EN 55032, which applies to products sold in the EU. In the EU, every product bearing the “CE” marking must comply with the EN 55032 standard. CISPR 32 and EN 55032 standards categorize devices into two classes: A and B. Class B equipment is intended for domestic environments. Hence, its permitted EMI emissions are significantly lower than those of A-class devices.

The equipment we use to obtain EMI readings:

- TBMR-110M EMI-Analyzer DC-110 MHz
- Tekbox TBLC08 LISN
- Tekbox TBFL1 transient limiter
- Tekbox TBHPF3 filter
- Tekbox EMCview software

EMI Emissions – Proficiency Testing & Cybenetics Certificate

A proficiency test (PT) in ISO 17025 is an external evaluation where a laboratory's test or calibration results are compared with those of other labs on the same sample. It is essential because it verifies the accuracy and reliability of a lab's results, demonstrates technical competence, and provides evidence of compliance with ISO 17025 requirements, which is critical for maintaining accreditation and customer trust. Below you will find the results in the EMI PT test that we conducted.



RVEP 245100 Conducted disturbance
CISPR 16-2-1 - EN 55016-2-1 - EN 55011

Deutsches Referenzbüro für Ringversuche und Referenzmaterialien

CERTIFICATE FOR PARTICIPATION

DRRR Proficiency Testing

The participant

Cybenetics LTD
Aristeidis Bitziopoulos
Syrou 6
2231 Latsia/ Nicosia
Cyprus

Customer number: *17498*

lab code number: *5*

gets for the above mentioned quantitative proficiency testing the following valuation:

excellent performance

To the above mentioned proficiency testing the corresponding report contains the statistical evaluations.

Kempten, 23.05.2025

Thorsten Helbig

Valuation:

If the mean of z'-scores of all evaluated results is smaller than 2 or equal and single z'-scores are smaller than 2 or equal you will get the valuation: „excellent performance"

If the above criteria for the rating "excellent performance" are not fulfilled, you will receive the rating: "participated".

For all mean value calculations of the z'-score in this certificate, only their amounts are used.

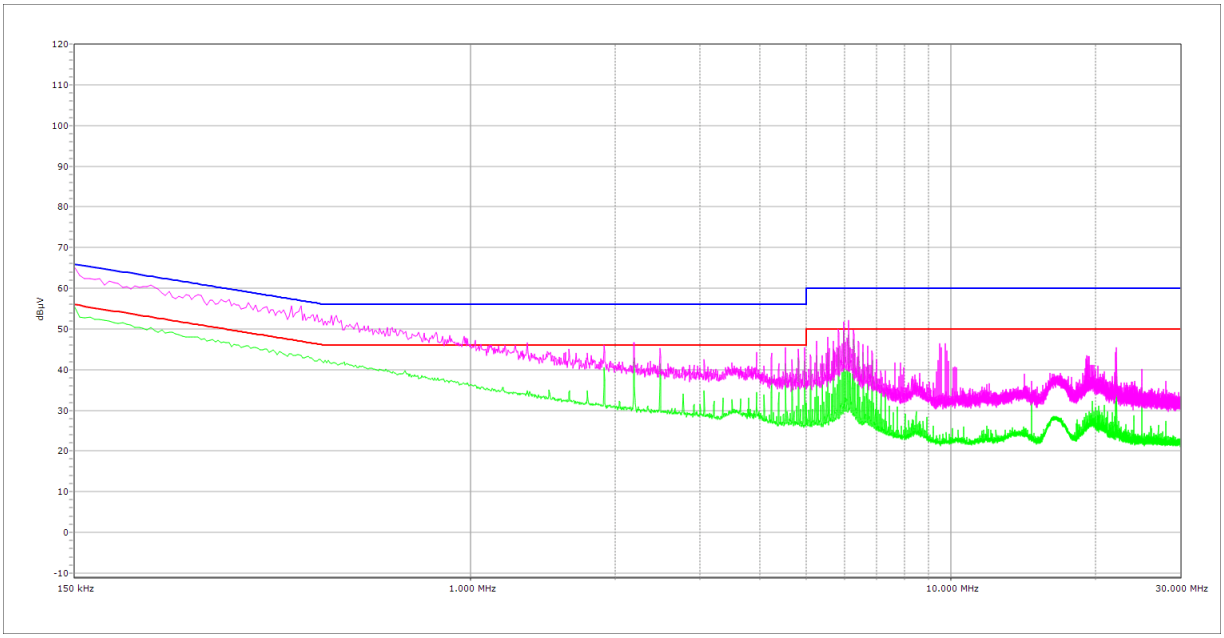
page 2/3; © 2025 DRRR GmbH

EMI Emissions – CISPR 32 / EN55032 Limits

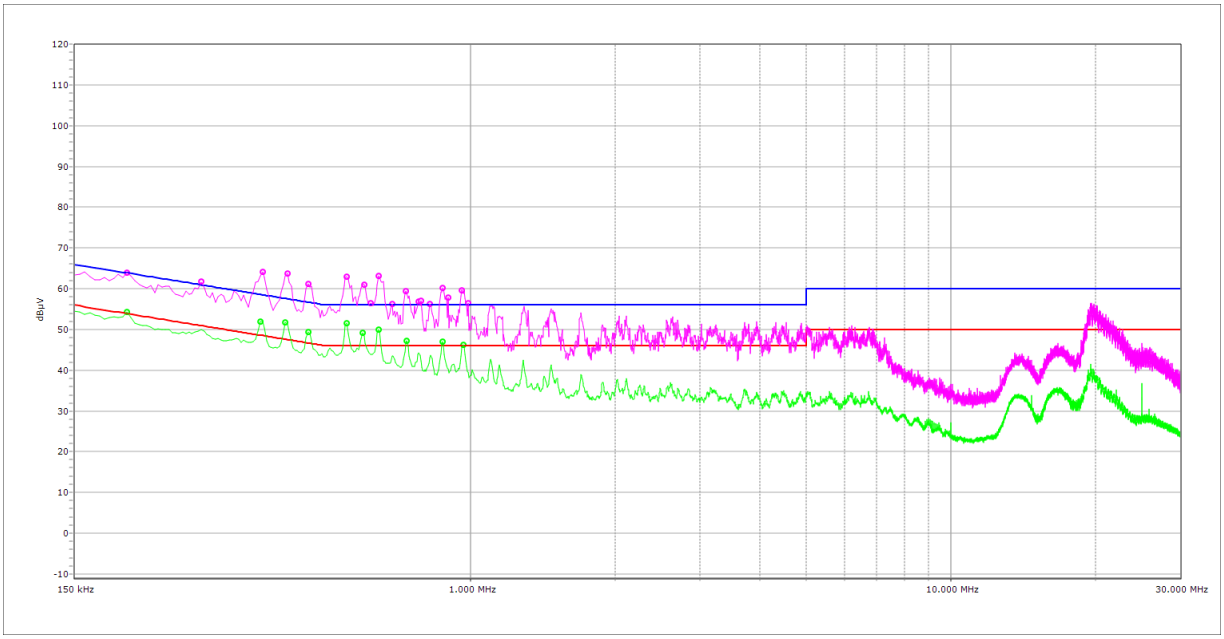
CISRP 32 / EN 55032 Class A Conducted EMI Limit		
Frequency of Emission (MHz)	Conducted Limit (dBuV)	
	Quasi-peak	Average
0.15 - 0.50	79	66
0.50 - 30.0	73	60
CISPR 32 / EN 55032 Class B Conducted EMI Limit		
Frequency of Emission (MHz)	Conducted Limit (dBuV)	
	Quasi-peak	Average
0.15 - 0.50	66 - 56	56 - 46
0.50 - 5.00	56	46
5.00 - 30.00	60	50
CISRP 32 / EN 55032 Class A 10-Meter Radiated EMI Limit		
Frequency of Emission (MHz)	Field Strength Limit (dBuV/m)	
30 - 88	39	
88 - 216	43.5	
216 - 960	46.5	
> 960	49.5	
CISRP 32 / EN 55032 Class B 3-Meter Radiated EMI Limit		
Frequency of Emission (MHz)	Field Strength Limit (dBuV/m)	
30 - 88	40	
88 - 216	43.5	
216 - 960	46.0	
> 960	54.0	

Please note that the ATX spec allows a 4 dB margin for conducted and radiated emissions. This means that if a PSU exceeds the limits but stays within the 4 dB margin, it meets the corresponding ATX spec requirement (8.1 Emissions). The CISPR 32 / EN55032 limits don't provide this margin, though.

EMI Emissions –EMI Results (Pass/Fail Examples)



In this graph, with green are the average EMI detector's result and with purple the peak EMI detector's results. The average detector has to remain below the red line and the peak detector below the blue one. To save time we run the peak EMI detector, which provides the worst-case scenario, and if the PSU fails, we run the quasi-peak EMI detector which takes much longer, but it smoothens out the peaks so the PSU might pass the tests without failing. In this graph the PSU clearly pass both detectors with success.



These are the results of a PSU failing both the average and quasi-peak detectors. Both have to be a “pass” for the PSU to meet the CISPR 32 / EN55032 requirements.

Another note, we run two sets of EMI tests, one checking the Phase and one checking the Neutral. The phase wire is at a varying voltage (positive and negative), whereas the neutral wire is designed to be at zero potential relative to the ground. Think of the phase as the "supply" and the neutral as the "return path" for the current.

Peak Power Excursions (ATX v3.x and PCIe 5.x specs)

Purpose and scope

Verify that the PSU **tolerates defined short-duration output power excursions** above its rated continuous power **without shutdown, latch-off, or out-of-spec output behavior**, per ATX v3.x peak excursion requirements (applied to ATX v3.x PSUs).

Applies to:

- **Total PSU output power excursion** (aggregate across all rails)
- PSUs **>450 W with 12VHPWR/12V-2x6 present** and PSUs **≤450 W or without 12VHPWR/12V-2x6** (different excursion percentages)

References

- Intel “ATX Version 3 Multi Rail Desktop Platform Power Supply Design Guide” (PSU power excursion / Table 3-3). [13][14]

Definitions

- **Time Constant (Tc):**
  Baseline (constant) operating interval during which a steady load is applied *(time domain)*.
- **Time for Power Excursion (Te):**
  Duration at the excursion power level *(pulse width, time domain)*.
- **P@Tc:**
  Constant baseline output power applied during **Tc** *(typically equal to PSU rated continuous power for the specific excursion test, Prated)*.
- **P@Te:**
  Output power level applied during the power excursion event (**transient load**) for duration **Te**.
- **Excursion level:**
  $P_{exc} = k \times P@Tc$

  where **k** is the excursion multiplier (excursion percentage / 100).

- **Duty cycle limit:**
  Maximum permitted ratio of **Te** to pulse period for each excursion level, as defined in the applicable ATX v3.x power-excursion table.

Equipment (minimum)

- Programmable DC electronic load(s) with **fast transient mode** capable of:
    - Step timing down to **100 µs** and repeatable pulse trains.
    - Sufficient power for **up to 200% of Prated** (or the maximum required by the table).
- Oscilloscope with adequate bandwidth + suitable probes.
- Power measurement (DC power per rail or total) with adequate sample rate to confirm pulse magnitude and timing.
- PSU stimulus/control: PS_ON#, PWR_OK monitoring (optional but recommended).
- Temperature monitoring (ambient + PSU intake).

Test conditions

- **Input**: Nominal AC input (state in report, e.g., 230 V / 50 Hz).
- **Ambient**: 23–28 °C (mandatory).
- **Warm-up**: Operate PSU at **100% load** for ≥10 minutes (or until thermal stabilization criteria is met).
- **Cabling**: Production-intent harness.

Load distribution

ATX excursion requirements are **total PSU power**; however, to avoid unrealistic rail stress:

- Set a **baseline constant load according to the test scenario (120%, 160%, 180%, 200%)** distributed across rails in a **realistic budget**:
    - Majority on **+12 V** (CPU/GPU), plus representative +5 V / +3.3 V (or as applicable to the DUT class).
- Apply the excursion by stepping **+12 V load** (this matches the real-world source of spikes—CPU/GPU). The load on the other rails remains the same!
  Document the exact rail allocation (baseline and pulse increment).

Required excursion profiles

Select the correct load scenario according to the existence of 12+4 pin PCIe connector:

A) PSU > 450 W and 12VHPWR/12V-2x6 present

Apply these **power levels vs time** (relative to Prated):

- **200%** for **100 µs**, duty cycle **≤ 5%**
- **180%** for **1 ms**, duty cycle **≤ 8%**
- **160%** for **10 ms**, duty cycle **≤ 12.5%**

- **120%** for **100 ms**, duty cycle **≤ 25%**
- **100%** continuous (baseline)

B) PSU ≤ 450 W or no 12VHPWR/12V-2x6

Use the reduced excursion percentages:

- **150%** for **100 µs**, duty cycle **≤ 5%**
- **145%** for **1 ms**, duty cycle **≤ 8%**
- **135%** for **10 ms**, duty cycle **≤ 12.5%**
- **110%** for **100 ms**, duty cycle **≤ 25%**
- **100%** continuous (baseline)

Pulse repetition: Choose a pulse period that respects the duty cycle limit.

Step-by-step procedure

1. **Instrument setup**
    - Measure +12 V at PSU output connector (or at the load end—state method consistently).
    - Monitor PS_ON# and PWR_OK (recommended).
    - Configure capture to include **pre-trigger baseline** and full recovery.
2. **Baseline**
    - Apply 100% Prated (aggregate), stabilized.
    - Record steady-state voltages and total power.
3. **Excursion test sequence** (run each level separately)
   For each excursion level (highest to lowest is typical, but any order is acceptable if documented):
    - Set baseline at P@Tc according to the testing scenario.
    - Program electronic load to add ΔP such that Power Excursion (P@Te) **reaches the excursion percentage**.
    - Apply a pulse train:
        - Minimum: **10 pulses** (or your in-house repeatability requirement).
        - Period chosen to remain within duty cycle limit for that TE.
    - Record:
        - Minimum/maximum rail voltages during pulse.
        - Any protection events (OPP/OCP/UVP/OTP), shutdown, latch-off.

- Recovery behavior after pulse (return to regulation, PWR_OK behavior).

4. **Post-test**
    - Return to 100% load for 1–2 minutes, verify normal operation.
    - Power cycle if needed and note any abnormal restart behavior.

Transient-Response Measurement Methodology

This subsection documents how the transient voltage dip is captured and how the absolute worst-case minimum rail voltage used for the pass/fail evaluation above is reconstructed. Rather than placing the oscilloscope channel directly on the rail (DC-coupled, on a range wide enough to hold the full 12 V / 5 V / 3.3 V level) and reading the minimum off that trace, we measure the dip itself. A wide DC-coupled range throws away almost all of the scope's resolution; the method below preserves it.

Core idea: measure the dip, not the whole signal

For each rail the PicoScope channel is configured as follows:

1. AC coupling. The channel is AC-coupled, so the rail's steady DC component (the ~12 V, 5 V, 3.3 V, or 5 VSB level) is blocked. Only the deviation — the transient dip and its recovery — reaches the ADC.

2. Small vertical range. Because the large DC level is gone, a very small vertical range centred on zero is used (auto-selected, typically ±100 mV up to ±5 V). The 8-bit ADC then spreads its entire code range across that small excursion window. A ~200 mV dip captured on a ±200 mV range resolves to roughly millivolt-class accuracy, whereas the same dip on a full ±12 V range would occupy only a handful of ADC codes — coarse and noisy. This is the accuracy argument: by isolating the dip we put 100% of the instrument's resolution on the only thing we are trying to measure.

3. Every sample is examined — no averaging or decimation. Capture is performed with no downsampling (DownSamplingMode.None) and every sample is scanned to find the worst excursion. This is not a hardware-averaged or smoothed "min" — it is the true worst-case instantaneous deviation. The fastest 100 µs step uses a triggered block capture; longer steps use high-rate streaming.

4. Baseline-relative drop. Just before each load step a local baseline is computed from the pre-event region of the same capture (the pre-trigger average, excluding the last ~10% so the rising edge cannot drag it down). The reported drop is measured relative to that local baseline, so it is immune to slow drift or any residual offset.

The scope therefore produces one number per rail: Drop_V, the magnitude of the most-negative excursion during the transient step.

The base: the initial (Tc) voltage

An AC-coupled scope cannot report the absolute voltage — it only sees deviations — so the scope is never used for the absolute level. Instead the measurement is anchored to the initial steady-state voltage at the Tc (starting) load condition, measured by the precision DC path (power analyzer / electronic load), which is calibrated and accurate in absolute terms. This value is called Vbefore (a.k.a. Vinitial): the rail's settled voltage at the initial Tc condition, captured immediately before the transient step, from the DC/load instruments — never from the scope.

Putting it together

The absolute minimum voltage during the transient is reconstructed as:

Vmin = Vbefore – Drop_V

Vbefore is the accurate absolute reference, from the calibrated DC/load path at the initial Tc load. Drop_V is the accurate delta, from the AC-coupled, small-range, full-resolution scope capture. Pass/fail is evaluated on Vmin against each rail's minimum allowed limit.

Why this is more accurate than a scope-only absolute capture

Each instrument is used only for what it does best. The DC/load path gives the most accurate absolute reference (the initial voltage); the AC-coupled small-range scope gives the most accurate delta (the dip). Neither instrument on its own could give an accurate absolute worst-case minimum — a wide-range DC-coupled scope wastes its resolution on the static level, and a DC meter is far too slow to catch a microsecond dip. Combining the accurate base with the accurate delta yields an absolute worst-case minimum tighter than either instrument could produce alone, which is exactly what a tight transient-regulation limit requires.

Pass/fail criteria

A test run is **PASS** if, for all required excursion levels:

- PSU **does not shut down** or latch off (no OPP/UVP/OCP trip) during the excursion pulses.
- Output rails remain within the **ATX regulation limits** defined in the applicable ATX v3.x tables. (Table 3-5 defining +5%/-8% for 12V on the 12V-2x6 connector and Table 4.2 defining +5%/-7% for the 12V rail on the rest connectors, and ±5% for the rest rails (5V, 3.3V and 5VSB).
- After each pulse, outputs **recover to steady regulation.**

A test run is **FAIL** if any required level:

- Triggers protection/shutdown/latch-off.
- Produces out-of-spec voltage behavior beyond the referenced limits.
- Shows abnormal recovery (sustained droop, oscillation, repeated resets).

Data to record (minimum report fields)

- DUT identification (model, rated power, rails, connectors, 12VHPWR/12V-2x6 presence).
- Input conditions (Vac, Hz), ambient, stabilization criteria used.
- Baseline load distribution per rail.
- For each excursion level:
    - Target % and TE, duty cycle used, pulse count, pulse period.
    - Actual measured Ptotal peak and TE (as-achieved).
    - Minimum rail voltages during pulse, recovery time.

    - Any protection events / resets.
- Oscilloscope captures.

PSU Cabling Requirements

The thicker the wires on the PSU's cables, the lower the voltage drops at high loads, hence the higher the efficiency and the better the load regulation, but thicker gauges are also more expensive, than thinner gauges with the same material. This is why the ATX specification sets some minimums regarding gauge thickness which as Cybenetics not only we follow, but in some cases, we become even stricter.

In general, our minimum requirements for gauge thickness for all wires transferring the power lines are as below:

- Main Power Connector: 18AWG (for the power gauges; 22AWG for sense)
- EPS: 18AWG
- PCIe 6+2 pin: 18AWG (for the power gauges; 20AWG for sense)
- PCIe 12+4 pin: 16AWG (for the power gauges; 28AWG for sense)
- SATA: 18AWG
- Molex 4-pin: 18AWG

About the 12+4 pin 12V-2x6 (or 12VHPWR) cable there are some arguments, that from the moment some PSUs have the respective connector set at lower levels than 600W (450W or 300W), why the use of 16AWG is required, from the moment 18AWG gauges could handle the lower power settings. This is because this specific cable is the only one compatible for all PSUs, regardless of brand and maker, from the moment they use a native 12+4 pin header on their modular boards. So users can use any of these cables to any ATX v3.1 PSU with a native header, meaning that if the power transfer gauges are thinner than 16AWG, there can be issues at the full power setting of this connector (600W).

The requirement of 16AWG gauges for the power transfer wires ensures the compatibility and safety under all usage scenarios and cases. Given that this is a safety issue, both Intel and Cybenetics suggest the use of 16AWG gauges on 12V-2x6 or 12VHPWR cables (they are the same, only the name changes) regardless of the PSU and the setting of its corresponding header.

Besides gauge thickness other factors affect the resistance and power handling of cables, including of course the material used for the conductor. Copper is preferred instead of aluminum which has notably lower conductivity. The only issue here is that aluminum costs less and this is why it is frequently used in the cables of affordable PSUs.

Cybenetics will evaluate from now (August 2025) the type of conductors that the PSU under test use and classify them into the following categories:

- Pure Copper
- CCA (Copper-Clad Aluminum)
- CCS (Copper-Clad Steel)

There is another category, called CCC (Copper-Clad Copper) but it is not easy to identify such cables.

In any case Pure Copper cables are preferred, since copper has lower resistance than aluminum and steel. On top of that, CCA cables are prone to fatigue because of mechanical weaknesses. Aluminum is more prone to breakage and corrosion than copper. CCS cables are stronger than CCA ones, but they are less flexible so cable routing will be tougher. Moreover, steel cores are susceptible to corrosion, leading in notable performance degradation over time.

Cable insulation is also critical and can play a vital role in the protection features section. A heat resistant, flexible and resistant to abuse external shell protecting effectively the conductors.

Another thing that should be avoided is to have two high-power connectors on the same cable. For example, using two EPS connectors on the same cable can lead to problems if both of these connectors are heavily utilized and at high operating temperatures. In general EPS connectors should be installed on dedicated cables (one on each cable) and ideally this should also be the case for 6+2 pin connectors. When you need to power a graphics card equipped with two or more 6+2 PCIe sockets, it is preferred to use dedicated PCIe cables.

Overall Performance Calculation

It is challenging to characterize the overall performance of a complex product like a power supply with a single number since we conduct a vast number of tests, and far too many factors must be considered. Nonetheless, we have completed thousands of power supplies so far, and our database includes enormous amounts of data, which allowed us to find the best, up so far, algorithm for this job. We strive to improve our methodology continually, so it is highly probable in the future to proceed with changes in this algorithm to make it even more accurate. Given that we already have all the data in hand, it is easy to calculate all the PSUs' overall performance scores in our database in every change we make in the performance algorithm.

Our overall performance algorithm takes into account all major performance factors:

- Load regulation
- Ripple suppression
- Transient Tests Response Deviation
- Voltage overshoots during Turn-On Transient tests
- Average efficiency
- The efficiency with 2% load
- Average efficiency of the standby rail
- Standby Power consumption
- Average Power Factor
- Hold-up time
- Power-ok signal
- Max Power
- PSU Timings
- PSU Protection Features

Load Regulation

A PSU would maintain a constant voltage level regardless of load in an ideal world, but there is always a voltage drop on each rail as the load increases in real-life scenarios. In our tests, voltage regulation shows the difference between the initial voltage readings with 20W of load (and not with no load at all since many PSUs don't work well with no load on their rails and some others feature no-load protection) and the voltage readings on all rails with a full load.

We calculate the voltage regulation rating of all ratings using the following equation:

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_1 = 1.2\ x\ V.Reg_{+12V} + 0.6\ x\ (V.Reg_{+5V} + V.Reg_{+3.3V}) + 0.3\ x\ V.Reg_{5VSB}}$$

The formula above shows that 5V and 3.3V have a lower weighting factor and 5VSB the lowest. This is because the +12V rail is by far the most important in a system, and its stability is crucial. We use the same approach in the other formulas below, too.

Ripple Suppression

Ripple represents the AC fluctuations (periodic) and noise (random) found in the DC rails of a PSU. We take the ripple readings of all rails from the 100% load test and combine them in the equation below.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_2 = 0.08\ x\ Ripple_{+12V} + 0.04\ x\ (Ripple_{+5V} + Ripple_{+3.3V}) + 0.02\ x\ Ripple_{5VSB}}$$

Transient Response

How well a power supply reacts to sudden changes in load is an excellent indication of the unit's power quality. Therefore, we take the maximum deviation that each rail registered in all Transient Response tests we conduct to calculate the performance.

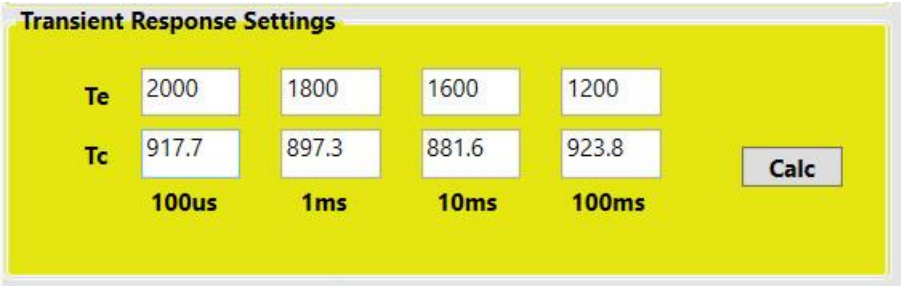
We conduct a variety of transient tests. Below you will find the standard ones, which we use in PSUs that are not compliant with the ATX v3.x spec and its future revisions:

- While the PSU operates at a 20 percent load state, a transient load is applied to the PSU for 20ms (15A at +12V, 6A at 5V and 3.3V, and 0.5 A at 5VSB).
- While working at 50 percent load, the PSU is hit by the same transient load.
- Again, we use the same starting points, 20 and 50 percent load states, in the following tests. In addition, however, we increase the load-changing repetition rate from 50 Hz (20ms) to 1 kHz (1ms). This way, we push even harder the PSU.
- In all tests, we measure the voltage drops that the sudden load change causes. The voltages should remain within the ATX specification's regulation limits.

In PSUs that meet the ATX v3.x spec's requirements [13][14] we conduct an additional and more stressful set of transient response tests, which are depicted in the aforementioned specification.

Power Excursion % of PSU Rated Size PSU ≤ 450 Watts & PSUs without 12VHPWR Connector	Power Excursion % of PSU Rated Size PSU > 450 Watts & 12VHPWR Conn	Time for Power Excursion (TE)	Testing Duty Cycle
100%	100%	Infinite	--
110%	120%	100ms	25
135%	160%	10ms	12.5
145%	180%	1ms	8
150%	200%	100us	5

To calculate the power levels for the constant levels (Power @ T_C) and the power levels during the power excursions (power @ T_E) we use a special application that we developed, based on the most recent Intel Test Plan.



We should also note that the ATX v3.x spec allows for up to -8% voltage drops on the PCIe connectors, and up to -7% on the other connectors, at 12V, because of the new power excursion requirements. Manufacturers are also able to increase the nominal voltage on this rail to 12.1V or 12.2V, to avoid low voltage levels.

To retain compatibility with previous tested PSUs, we will use the following equation with data from both standard and ATX v3.x transient response tests. Nonetheless, for PSUs that meet the stricter ATX v3.x transient response requirements, there will be a bonus of 0.5 points.

$$\begin{aligned} \boldsymbol{Eq_3} = {} & \boldsymbol{2\ x\ Max.Tran.Response_{+12V}} \\ & \boldsymbol{+ 0.2\ x\ (Max.Response_{+5V} + Max.Tran.Response_{+3.3V})} \\ & \boldsymbol{+ 0.1\ x\ Max.Tran.Response_{5VSB} + ATX\ v3.0\ Bonus\ (0.5)} \end{aligned}$$

Turn On Transient Voltage Overshoots

Performance calculation in these tests is relatively simple since we use only the rough value of the registered spike compared to the nominal value of +12V and 5VSB rails. At +12V, we use only the higher voltage overshoot and ignore the other one (if there is any, of course). To give an example: if the higher registered voltage overshoot at +12V is +12.5V, then the spike is 0.5V (12.5V – 12.0V), so we use this value in our equation.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_4} = \boldsymbol{1.25\ x\ (Turn_On_Spike_{+12V} + Turn_On_Spike_{5VSB})}$$

Average Efficiency

We applied the average of all load combinations (>1450) to obtain the PSU's average efficiency for the ETA certification.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_5 = 0.8\ x\ (100 -\ AVG_Efficiency_Score)}$$

Efficiency at 2% of the max-rated-capacity load *or* 10W (for <500W PSUs)

According to the ATX spec [reference], the lowest DC load at Idle Mode is determined to be 10 Watts for mainstream computers. Computers with PSU larger than 500 Watts are also expected to have more components, and therefore the Idle Mode will be at a higher DC Load. The PSU above 500 Watts will use the Low Load Efficiency set at the 2% level.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_6 = 0.03\ x\ (100 -\ Efficiency_with_2\%_or_10W_load)}$$

Average 5VSB Efficiency

The average of all load combinations that we applied to obtain the 5VSB rail's average efficiency for the ETA certification.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_7 = 0.1\ x\ (100 -\ 5VSB_AVG_Efficiency_Score)}$$

Standby Power Consumption

The power a PSU needs in standby is called vampire or phantom power, since it's consumed without the power supply doing anything. This power is mostly lost on the PSU's standby circuit.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_8 = 6\ x\ Vampire_Power}$$

Average PF

The average of all load combinations (>1450) that we applied is used to obtain the PSU's average PF score for the ETA certification.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_9 = 50\ x\ (1 - Average_PF_Score)}$$

Hold-up Time

Hold-up time represents the amount of time, usually measured in milliseconds, that a PSU can maintain output regulations defined by the ATX specification without input power. Put simply, hold-up time is the amount of time that the system can continue to run without shutting down or rebooting during a power interruption. The ATX specification till v3.0 sets the minimum hold-up time to 17ms with the maximum continuous output load. The ATX v3.1 changed the minimum hold-up time to 12ms, but we will keep for our performance algorithm the increased period of 17ms.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_{10} = 0.15\ x\ (17 -\ Hold_up_time)}$$

Power-ok Signal

According to the ATX spec, the PWR_OK is a "power good" signal. Therefore, this signal should be asserted high, at 5V, by the power supply to indicate that the +12V, 5V, and 3.3V outputs are within the regulation thresholds and that the APFC converter stores sufficient mains energy to guarantee continuous power operation within specification for at least 17ms. Conversely, PWR_OK should be de-asserted to a low state, 0V, when any of the +12V, 5V, or 3.3V output voltages falls below its under-voltage threshold, or when mains power has been removed for a time sufficiently long such that power supply operation cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the AC loss to PWR_OK minimum hold-up time is set at 16ms, a lower period than the hold-up time, and ATX spec also sets a PWR_OK inactive to DC loss delay, which should be more than 1ms. This means that in any case, the AC loss to PWR_OK hold-up should be lower than the overall hold-up time of the PSU, and this ensures that in no case the power supply will continue sending a power good signal, while any of the +12V, 5V, and 3.3V rails is out of spec.

Given all the above, when the PWR_OK signal is higher than the hold-up time, we have a fake report by the PSU's power ok signal, and our overall performance calculation algorithm deducts performance points. The PWR_OK signal's hold-up time also has to be at least 1ms lower than the actual hold-up time to provide enough time for the system to shut down before the voltage rails go out of spec.

If the PWR_OK signal is accurate, we use the following equation:

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_{11} = 0.15\,x\,(PWR_OK_Hold_up_time - (Hold_up_time - 1))}$$

There are three scenarios here:

- The PWR_OK_Hold_up_time is exactly 1ms lower than the Hold_up_time, so the outcome is zero, meaning no difference to the overall score.
- The PWR_OK_Hold_up_time has a larger than 1ms difference from the Hold_up_time, so the outcome is beneficial for the overall score.
- The PWR_OK_Hold_up_time is higher than the (Hold_up_time – 1ms) period, so points are deducted from the overall score.

We should note that we don't deduct points in this equation for lower than 16ms PWR_OK hold-up time because, in $Eq_{10,}$ we already remove points for lower than 17ms hold-up periods, and in $Eq_{11,}$ the hold-up time is also involved. And the hold-up time is closely related to the PWR_OK hold-up time.

Capacity

The comparison is anything but fair when you directly compare the load regulation, efficiency, or ripple readings of a 400W unit to those of a 1500W model.

For example, when looking at voltage regulation at a 40W load, the regulation range for a 400W PSU is 360W (= 400W - 40W). However, it is much more significant when testing a 1500W model:

1460W (= 1500W - 40W). Naturally, the smaller capacity unit will most likely register much better voltage regulation or ripple with such a huge difference. So, we added a normalization that would set things right. This factor is directly derived from the rated power of each unit.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_{12} = 0.4\,x\,\left(\frac{Capacity}{100}\right)}$$

PSU Timings

To meet the Alternative Sleep Mode, the Power-on time (T1) needs to be lower than 150ms, while the PWR_OK delay (T3) must be within the 100-150ms range. Moreover, the T3 minimum time must not be faster than 100ms. There is a bonus for all units that meet the above requirements and have higher than 16ms AC loss to PWR_OK hold-up time and higher than 1ms PWR_OK inactive to DC loss delay. We conduct the T1 and T3 measurements with two different load levels, 20%, and 100%. Each PSU needs to meet the requirements above in both cases.

$$\boldsymbol{If\ T1 < 150ms\ \&\ (T3 > 100ms\ \&\ T3 < 150ms)}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\&\ PWR_OK \geq 16ms}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\&\ PWR_OK\ inactive\ to\ DC\ loss\ delay \geq 1ms}$$

$$\boldsymbol{then\ PSU_Timings_Result = 1}$$

PSU Protections

Every power supply should be equipped with a proper protection scheme, allowing it to operate safely, even under harsh conditions, without breaking or causing any trouble to the system that it feeds with power.

The Over Current Protection (OCP) in all significant rails (+12V, 5V & 3.3V) along with the Over Power Protection (OPP) needs to be set within an acceptable range and not too high. When those protections are set high, the PSU might survive at normal temperatures, but there is a good chance that it will break at higher operating temperatures. Moreover, lots of stress is applied to its circuits at high temperatures, so the OCP and OPP triggering points should be appropriately set. Indeed, a PSU has to withstand high power spikes, usually deriving from GPUs and highly clocked CPUs, but at the same time, its protection features should ensure that its components are up to the task and not overloaded. According to our experience so far, the OCP for single +12V rail PSUs and OPP triggering points should be set within 130% of the respective nominal values. For PSUs with multiple +12V rails, we increase the allowed range to 135%.

Over Temperature Protection (OTP) is among the most crucial protection features for each power supply. Most PSU failures are due to high operating temperatures, so there has to be a properly working OTP, which should be set according to the platform's characteristics. Usually, in PSUs with a semi-passive operation, OTP is set slightly higher than PSUs lacking passive function.

The PWR_OK signal is of enormous importance to PSU protection features. Nonetheless, we already consider it in $Eq_{10,}$ so there is no need to provide a bonus again.

Short Circuit Protection (SCP): If there is an output short circuit, which, according to the ATX spec, is defined as any output impedance of less than 0.1 ohms, the PSU should shut down. The only exception is the 5VSB rail, where the PSU is already in standby mode. Once the short circuit at 5VSB is removed, the PSU should return to operation without any problems.

Surge and inrush protections (SIP) are highly important, and the PSU should be equipped with the right parts to include those two protections. Usually, surge protection is offered through a MOV (Metal Oxide Varistor). In contrast, inrush protection involves an NTC thermistor, usually supported by a bypass relay, to enhance protection levels.

The fan failure protection is crucial since if the PSU's fan stops operating, its internal temperatures can reach critical levels. Until the over-temperature protection is engaged, if there is one, of course, the PSU's parts will be highly stressed, so their lifetime will be notably affected. The fan failure protection should be present in any PSU, and this is why we decided to provide a bonus for it, to push all manufacturers to implement it.

AC Input: According to the ATX spec v3.1 (section 4.1) a PSU must be able to start up under full loading at 90 VAC. We push this a bit further by applying a full load for five minutes at 90 VAC. For PSUs with 200-240 VAC range, we dial 180 VAC. Moreover, a PSU should not break if the input voltage drops below 90 VAC (for wide voltage input range PSUs) and below 180 VAC (for 200-240 VAC input range PSUs). To check that, we dial either 80 VAC or 170 VAC and we expect the PSUs to survive (meaning to operate normally once the nominal AC input is applied).

We provide bonus points for each one of the following cases.

- 0.25 bonus: OCP at +12V, 5V, and 3.3V within 130% of the respective max-rated capacity of the rail either from the factory or through software (if the PSU allows for software control). For PSUs with multiple +12V rails, we allow for up to 135% OCP triggering points. This bonus applies to any of the aforementioned rails and it is independent, meaning that a PSU might have over the limit 12V OCP, but within limits OCP on the minor rails. In this case it will get the OCP bonus for both minor rails. The OCP bonus is therefore awarded per rail and is worth up to 0.75 points in total, 0.25 for each of the three rails.
- 0.25 bonus: OPP within 130% either from the factory or through software.
- 0.25 bonus: OTP that is shutting down the PSU at <190 degrees Celsius on the secondary heat sink or the secondary side in general
- 0.25 bonus: SCP on all rails. The PSU should work adequately after prolonged and repetitive SCP evaluation tests.
- 0.25 bonus: The PSU should be equipped with a MOV or a TVS diode (or a combination of both)
- 0.25 bonus: The PSU should be equipped with an NTC thermistor **and** a bypass relay
- 0.25 bonus: The PSU should have fan failure protection

If a PSU fails during the protection features evaluation testing within the conditions described above (e.g., with a load within 130% of its max-rated capacity or with less than 190 degrees Celsius heat on the secondary side), no point will be awarded for the respective category that led

to the PSU's failure. On the other hand, a PSU that meets all the above requirements gets 2.25 bonus points, which is 0.75 for OCP across the three rails plus 0.25 for each of the six remaining items.

These protection results are scored, not gated: they contribute bonus points to the Overall Performance Rating and nothing more, and they are not a safety assessment. The Cybenetics SAFE program [16] is a separate and independent certification with its own scope, its own criteria and its own award, and it applies criteria that this protocol does not – among them dielectric strength (hipot), insulation resistance, protective-earth continuity, touch-current limits and agency-marking verification. Nothing awarded under this protocol, including ETA, LAMBDA and the Overall Performance Rating, covers, implies or substitutes for SAFE certification, and SAFE certification neither requires nor follows from any of them.

Overall Performance Rating Calculation

Now that we have calculated all the above factors, it's time to combine them to calculate the final performance rating (13). Again, we take 100 as the perfect score, subtract results (1-11), and finally consider the capacity (12) and the PSU Timing and Protection Features bonus points.

$$\boldsymbol{Eq_{13}} = \mathbf{100} - \sum_{\boldsymbol{k=1}}^{\mathbf{11}} \boldsymbol{Eq_k} + \boldsymbol{Eq_{12}} + \boldsymbol{ATX\ v3.0\ Compatibility\ Bonus} + \boldsymbol{PSU\ Timing\ Bonus} + \boldsymbol{PSU\ Protection\ Bonus}$$

The result of (13) is the unit's overall Performance Rating.

Overall Performance Rating Calculation Examples

Example A

For this example, we will use the **Wentai Aidan T1616** with 115V input:

$\boldsymbol{Eq_1} = 1.2\ x\ 0.3 + 0.6\ x\ (1.48 + 2.4) + 0.3\ x\ 2.44 = 0.36 + 2.328 + 0.732$
$= 3.42\ \ (Load\ Regulation)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_2} = 0.08\ x\ 27.46 + 0.04\ x\ (10.28 + 12.88) + 0.02\ x\ 14.44 = 2.1968 + 0.9264 + 0.2888$
$= 3.412\ (Ripple\ Supression)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_3} = 2\ x\ 0.49 + 0.2\ x\ (1.63 + 3.05) + 0.1\ x\ 1.54 + 0 = \ \ 0.98 + 0.936 + 0.154$
$= 2.07\ (Transient\ Response)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_4} = 1.25\ x\ (0.12 + 0) = 0.15\ (Turn - on\ Transient\ Response)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_5} = 0.8\ x\ (100 - 92.713) = 5.8296\ (Average\ Efficiency)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_6} = 0.03\ x\ (100 - \ 77.432) = 0.67704\ (Efficiency\ with\ 2\%\ load)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_7} = 0.1\ x\ (100 - \ 82.381) = 1.7619\ (Average\ 5VSB\ Efficiency)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_8} = 6\ x\ 0.0404641 = 0.242785\ (Standby\ Power\ Consumption)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_9} = 50\ x\ (1 - \ 0.99) = \ 0.5\ (Average\ PF\ score)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_{10}} = 0.15\ x\ (17 - \ 26.2) = \ -1.38\ (Hold - up\ time)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_{11}} = 0.15\ x\ (25.2 - (26.2 - 1)) = 0\ (Power\ Ok\ signal\ hold - up\ time)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_{12}} = 0.4\ x\ \left(\frac{1616}{100}\right) = 6.464\ (Capacity)$

ATX v3.x Compatibility Bonus: 0

PSU Timings Bonus: 0 (since T1 > 150ms in the 20% load test and T3>150ms in both tests)

PSU Protections Bonus: OCP: 0.25 (since 12V4 OCP > 135% and 5V OCP > 130%. Only 3.3V OCP < 130%), **OPP:** 0.25 (within 130%), **OTP:** 0.25 (<190°C), **SCP:** 0.25, **MOV:** 0.25, **NTC Thermistor & Relay:** 0.25

Performance Rating = 100 – 3.42 – 3.412 – 2.07 – 0.15 – 5.8296 – 0.67704 – 1.7619 – 0.242785 – 0.5 – (–1.38) – 0+ 6.464 + 0 + 0 + 1.5 = 91.280675

Example B

For this example, we will use the **Corsair AX1600i** with 115V input:

$\boldsymbol{Eq_1} = 1.2\ x\ 0.24 + 0.6\ x\ (0.9 + 0.3) + 0.3\ x\ 1.32 = 0.288 + 0.72 + 0.396$
$= 1.404\ \ (Load\ Regulation)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_2} = 0.08\ x\ 10.33 + 0.04\ x\ (6.24 + 14.98) + 0.02\ x\ 6.62 = 0.8264 + 0.8488 + 0.1324$
$= 1.8076\ (Ripple\ Supression)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_3} = 2\ x\ 0.64 + 0.2\ x\ (1.4 + 2.87) + 0.1\ x\ 1.28 + 0 = \ \ 1.28 + 0.854 + 0.128$
$= 2.262\ (Transient\ Response)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_4} = 1.25\ x\ (0 + 0.024) = 0.03\ (Turn - on\ Transient\ Response)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_5} = 0.8\ x\ (100 - 92.221) = 6.2232\ (Average\ Efficiency)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_6} = 0.03\ x\ (100 - \ 78.233) = 0.65301\ (Efficiency\ with\ 2\%\ load)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_7} = 0.1\ x\ (100 - \ 81.807) = 1.8193\ (Average\ 5VSB\ Efficiency)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_8} = 6\ x\ 0.0457394 = 0.274436\ (Standby\ Power\ Consumption)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_9} = 50\ x\ (1 - \ 0.992) = \ 0.4\ (Average\ PF\ score)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_{10}} = 0.15\ x\ (17 - \ 26.7) = \ -1.455\ (Hold - up\ time)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_{11}} = 0.15\ x\ (24.5 - (26.7 - 1)) = -0.18\ (Power\ Ok\ signal\ hold - up\ time)$

$\boldsymbol{Eq_{12}} = 0.4\ x\ \left(\frac{1600}{100}\right) = 6.4\ (Capacity)$

ATX v3.x Compatibility Bonus: 0

PSU Timings Bonus: 0 (since T1 > 150ms in the 20% load test and T3>150ms in both tests)

PSU Protections Bonus: OCP: 0.50 (since 12V does not exceed 135% and 3.3V is below 130%, zero points for 5V), **OPP:** 0.25 (within 130%), **OTP:** 0.25 (<190°C), **SCP:** 0.25, **MOV:** 0.25, **NTC Thermistor & Relay:** 0.25

Performance Rating $= 100 - 1.404 - 1.8076 - 2.262 - 0.03 - 6.2232 - 0.65301 - 1.8193 - 0.274436 - 0.4 - (-1.455) - (-0.18) + 6.4 + 0 + 0 + 1.75 = 94.911454$

Neither worked example includes the fan failure protection bonus, which was introduced in Revision 2.9. Both examples remain as originally computed.

Load-range results (informational)

The ETA and LAMBDA ratings condense the more than 1450 load combinations of the certification sweep into one average efficiency and one average noise level. That is what a rating needs, but a single average cannot tell a reader how the unit behaves at the load that a particular system draws. For this reason we also calculate results that divide the same measurements by load. They are informational: they are not part of the ETA or LAMBDA rating, they do not change any grade, and they are not used for certification. They describe behavior that a single average hides.

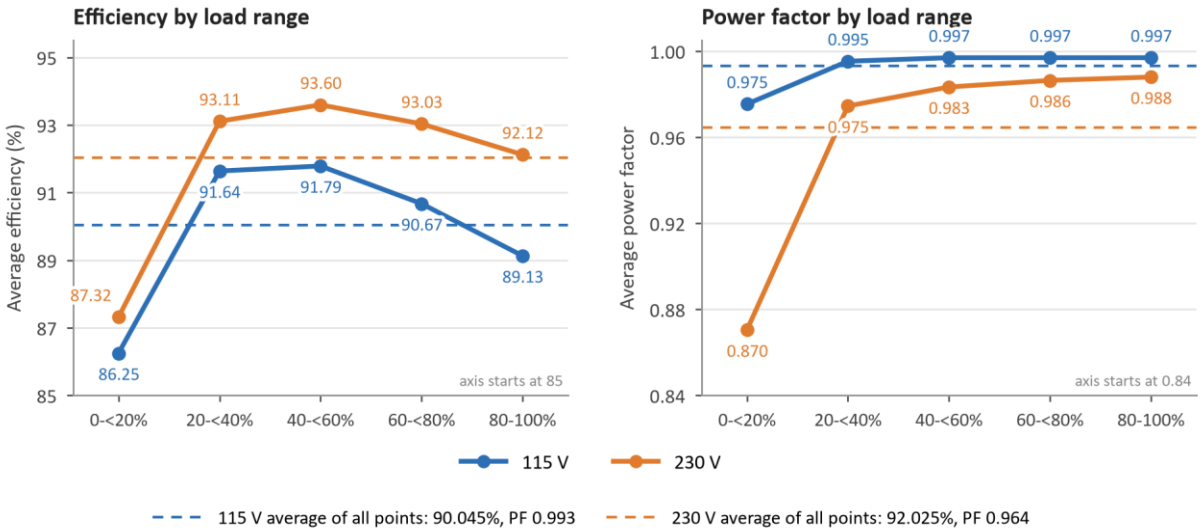
What the results are

We divide the rated DC output of the unit into five load ranges of 20% each: 0-<20%, 20-<40%, 40-<60%, 60-<80% and 80-100%. Every point at 80% or more belongs to the last range, which includes the few points whose measured output is slightly above the rated output (the highest point of the example unit below is at 100.25%). The load of a measurement point is its total DC output power as a share of the rated DC output power, and the results are calculated separately for each input voltage that was tested (115 V and 230 V). For every range we report:

- the number of measurement points in the range;
- the average efficiency;
- the average power factor;
- the average noise;
- the loudest point, which is the highest single noise level in the range; and
- the share of points at which the fan is stopped, which is how semi-passive operation shows up in the results.

The High-Load Index gives the same figures for all points at 70% or more of the rated DC output power, the part of the range in which a unit works hardest. It is not a sixth range: it overlaps the two highest ranges. Finally, we compare the stabilized fan speed, noise and intake temperature

of the unit at 10, 20, 50 and 100% load at normal and at high ambient temperature (Table 3). Picture 1 and Table 1 show the results of a real unit of 1200 W, which we call the example unit, at 115 V and 230 V.



Picture 1 – Efficiency and power factor by load range of the example unit (1200 W), at 115 V and 230 V.

Table 1. Load-range results of the example unit (1200 W)

Load range	Points	Noise, average (dB(A))	Noise, loudest point (dB(A))	Fan stopped	Efficiency	Power factor
115 V						
0-<20%	248	5.0	5.0	100%	86.25%	0.975
20-<40%	310	8.0	19.0	95%	91.64%	0.995
40-<60%	310	17.3	20.9	17%	91.79%	0.997
60-<80%	310	23.0	26.7	0%	90.67%	0.997
80-100%	316	29.9	33.1	0%	89.13%	0.997
70-100% (High-Load Index)	471	28.7	33.1	0%	89.54%	0.997
All points (published averages)	1494	24.19	33.1	40%	90.045%	0.993

Load range	Points	Noise, average (dB(A))	Noise, loudest point (dB(A))	Fan stopped	Efficiency	Power factor
230 V						
0-<20%	248	5.0	5.0	100%	87.32%	0.870
20-<40%	310	6.6	19.0	98%	93.11%	0.975
40-<60%	310	16.2	19.0	29%	93.60%	0.983
60-<80%	310	22.1	26.7	0%	93.03%	0.986
80-100%	316	29.5	32.8	0%	92.12%	0.988
70-100% (High-Load Index)	471	28.3	32.8	0%	92.37%	0.988
All points (published averages)	1494	23.67	32.8	43%	92.025%	0.964

All points: the published averages, with the precision of the published values. 5.0 dB(A): the fan is stopped.

How we calculate them

The ranges use the data that the ETA and LAMBDA averages are made of: the more than 1450 measured load combinations of the certification sweep, which are the CL measurements described in the Efficiency Measurements Procedure, with test 0, the zero-load row, excluded. The interpolated data that we use only to draw the charts is never used. Every measurement point of a desktop unit belongs to exactly one of the five ranges, so the ranges divide the same sweep instead of adding a new test.

The efficiency and the power factor of a range are the plain arithmetic mean of its points, exactly as for the ETA averages. The noise of a range is the energy average, exactly as for the LAMBDA average: each A-weighted level is converted to a squared sound pressure, these values are averaged, and the result is converted back to dB(A), which is 10*log10(mean(10^(L/10))), where L is the level of each point. We never average dB(A) values arithmetically. A point at which the fan is stopped, a fan speed of zero, counts as a point with the fan stopped, and in the noise average it carries the level of 5.0 dB(A), which is below the noise floor of our chamber. The tables of the fixed-load tests show the same condition as <6.0 dB(A), the floor of the sound meter.

Because the five ranges of a desktop unit contain every point of the sweep once, they give the published averages back when they are combined in proportion to their numbers of points, with the noise combined on the energy scale. A calculation for a desktop unit is accepted only if the combined noise agrees with the published average noise within 0.1 dB(A), the combined efficiency with the published average efficiency within 0.01 percentage points, and the combined power factor with the published average power factor within 0.001.

The comparison of normal and high ambient temperature does not come from the CL sweep. It uses the stabilized readings of the load regulation tests that we carry out at fixed loads, once at normal ambient temperature, with the intake air at about 30-32 °C when the fan runs, and once at high ambient temperature, with the intake air at about 40-47 °C when the fan runs (see Test Setup & Measurement Conditions). For each load it lists the fan speed, the noise and the intake

temperature that we measured. A noise value of <6.0 dB(A) is the floor of the sound meter and means that the fan was stopped; with the fan stopped, the intake sensor can read higher than the air in the chamber.

Each load combination of the sweep is held for about five seconds, so at high load the fan may not yet have reached its stabilized speed. This is why the effect of temperature is taken from the stabilized readings of the fixed-load tests and not from the sweep.

Redundant units

For redundant PSUs, whose average efficiency covers 2-100% of the operating range, the lowest range starts at 2% of the rated DC output power: 2-<20%, 20-<40%, 40-<60%, 60-<80% and 80-100%. Points below 2% belong to no range, so for these units the five ranges together can differ slightly from the published averages; the Redundant Server PSU Test Protocol shows both for an example. We calculate the efficiency and power factor ranges of these units now. The noise ranges and the High-Load noise index follow when the fan speed of redundant units is recorded at every point of the sweep; until then their noise is shown as not measured yet.

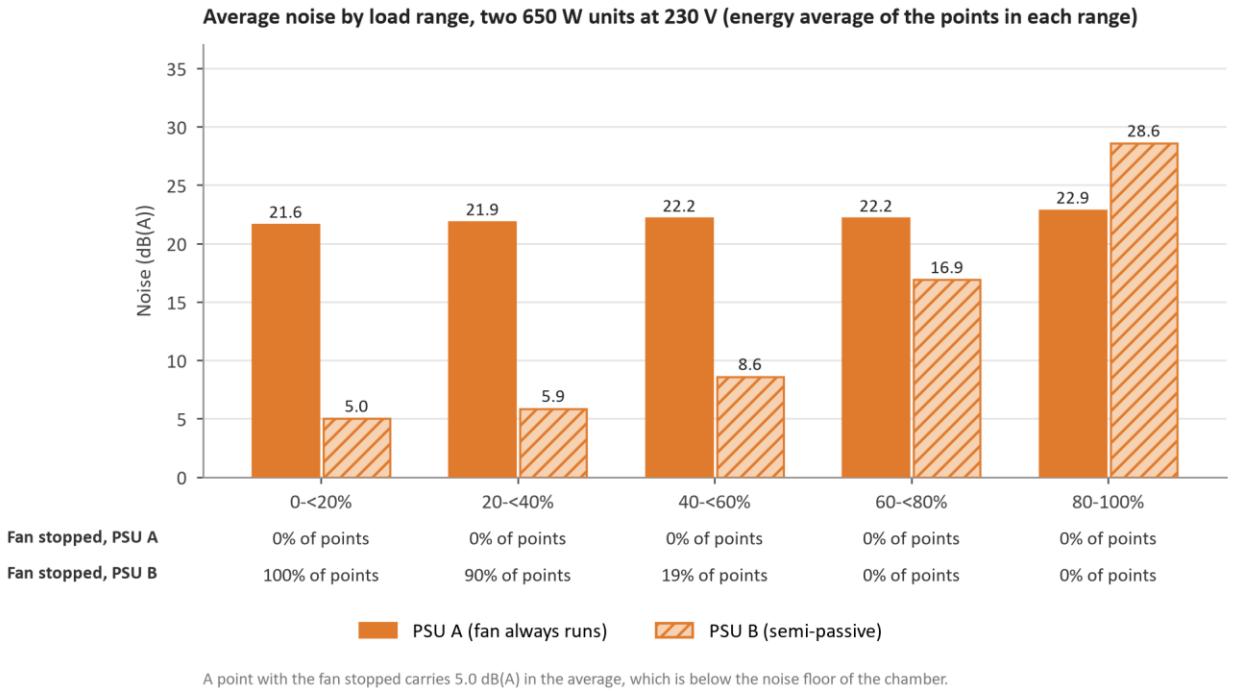
Why they matter

The average does not say where in the range a result comes from. Table 2 compares two real units of 650 W that we call PSU A and PSU B, both measured at 230 V. Their average noise is practically the same, 22.2 and 22.4 dB(A), and a reader who looked only at the average would take them for equal. PSU A runs its fan at every load point. PSU B is semi-passive: its fan is stopped at 36% of all points (Picture 2), at 100% of the points of the lowest range, 90% of the second and 19% of the third. These quiet points lower the average of PSU B. Above 70% of the rated output, in the High-Load Index, PSU B is 4.5 dB(A) louder than PSU A, 27.1 against 22.6 dB(A) (Picture 3), and in its highest range its average noise is 28.6 against 22.9 dB(A).

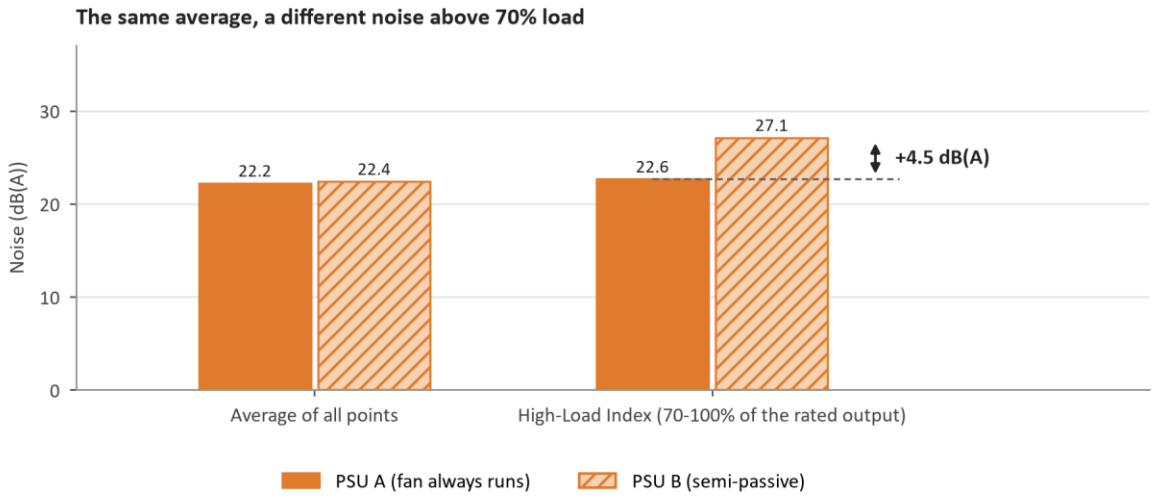
Efficiency shows the same. The average efficiencies of the two units, 90.60% and 90.43%, differ by 0.17 percentage points, while their High-Load efficiencies, 91.34% and 90.24%, differ by 1.10 percentage points.

Table 2. Two units of 650 W with the same average noise (230 V)

Result (both units: 650 W, 230 V)	PSU A (fan always runs)	PSU B (semi-passive)
Average noise, all points (dB(A))	22.2	22.4
Average noise, High-Load Index, 70-100% (dB(A))	22.6	27.1
Loudest point, High-Load Index (dB(A))	29.0	32.4
Points with the fan stopped, all points	0%	36%
Average efficiency, all points	90.60%	90.43%
Average efficiency, High-Load Index	91.34%	90.24%
Average power factor, all points	0.955	0.842
Average power factor, High-Load Index	0.983	0.951



Picture 2 – Average noise by load range of PSU A and PSU B (230 V), with the share of points at which the fan is stopped.



Picture 3 – The same average noise, a different noise in the High-Load Index.

Efficiency is not flat. Picture 1 and Table 1 show that at 230 V the average efficiency of the example unit is 87.32% in the lowest range, peaks at 93.60% in the range 40-<60% and falls to 92.12% in the highest range, while its power factor rises from 0.870 to 0.988. The published average efficiency, 92.025%, is the plain mean of all points: it gives every point the same weight, so every range contributes in proportion to the number of points it contains, between 248 and 316 in this unit. It represents all the measured load combinations, weighted by their numbers of points, and therefore it does not describe any single load. A system that draws most of the time

60-100% of the rated output reads the last two ranges, 93.03% and 92.12% at 230 V; a system that draws most of the time less than 20% of the rated output reads the first, 87.32%. The same shape appears at 115 V, at lower values.

The CL sweep is carried out at a controlled ambient temperature of 30 °C (±2 °C), the condition under which certification results are produced. A unit whose intake air is warmer than that does not run in the same way, and Table 3 shows how much. At 100% load and 230 V, the fan of the example unit runs at 978 rpm and its noise is 24.6 dB(A) at normal ambient temperature, against 1496 rpm and 35.0 dB(A) at high ambient temperature, which is 10.4 dB(A) more. At 50% load, the fan is stopped at normal ambient temperature (<6.0 dB(A)) and runs at 726 rpm, 20.0 dB(A), at high ambient temperature. At 115 V the noise at 100% load rises by 9.7 dB(A).

Table 3. Fan speed, noise and intake temperature of the example unit at normal and at high ambient temperature

Load	Normal ambient temperature			High ambient temperature			Noise change (dB(A))
	Fan (rpm)	Noise (dB(A))	Intake (°C)	Fan (rpm)	Noise (dB(A))	Intake (°C)	
115 V							
10%	0	<6.0	32.3	0	<6.0	48.3	fan stopped in both
20%	0	<6.0	34.7	0	<6.0	50.2	fan stopped in both
50%	0	<6.0	38.7	729	20.1	42.5	fan starts
100%	898	25.3	30.2	1496	35.0	45.5	+9.7
230 V							
10%	0	<6.0	34.4	0	<6.0	52.8	fan stopped in both
20%	0	<6.0	32.5	0	<6.0	57.3	fan stopped in both
50%	0	<6.0	35.9	726	20.0	42.1	fan starts
100%	978	24.6	30.2	1496	35.0	45.7	+10.4

<6.0 dB(A): the fan is stopped (floor of the sound meter). With the fan stopped, the intake sensor can read higher than the air in the chamber.

How to read the results

Read the row that matches the load at which the unit will be used, and not the average. In Table 1, the example unit at 230 V reads in the range 60-<80%: 93.03% efficiency, a power factor of 0.986, an average noise of 22.1 dB(A) with the loudest point at 26.7 dB(A), and the fan is never stopped. In the range 80-100% it reads 92.12%, 0.988, 29.5 dB(A) and 32.8 dB(A).

A range in which the fan is stopped at every point shows 5.0 dB(A) as its noise: this is the level that we assign to a stopped fan, not a measurement, and it means that the fan does not contribute noise there. A range in which the fan is stopped at only some of its points mixes silent and audible points. This is why we give the share of stopped points, 29% in the range 40-<60% of

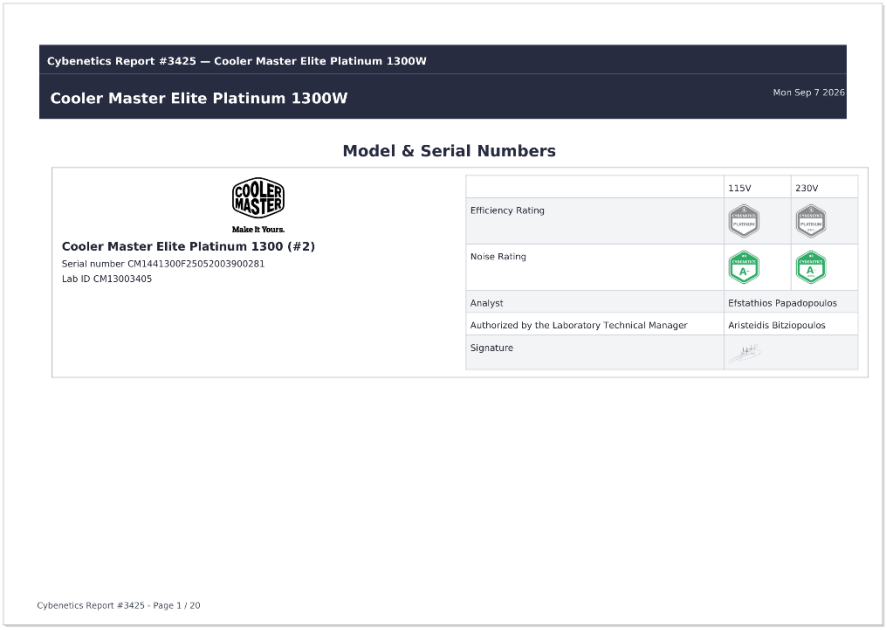
the example unit at 230 V, and the loudest point, 19.0 dB(A) there, which shows how loud the audible points are.

The High-Load Index is the row to read when the upper part of the range is what matters. For the example unit at 230 V it covers 471 points, with an average noise of 28.3 dB(A), a loudest point of 32.8 dB(A), an efficiency of 92.37% and a power factor of 0.988. When two units are compared, compare the same row at the same input voltage; the average of all points remains the figure on which the ratings are based.

Limits

These results describe the sample that we tested, at the input voltage and the ambient temperatures stated. They are informational: they are not part of the ETA or LAMBDA rating, the Overall Performance Rating or any other grade, and no certification decision is based on them. The noise of a range is that of the fan speeds reached during the five seconds of each point, while the stabilized fan speeds and noise levels are those of the fixed-load tests (Table 3). The noise ranges need the fan speed at every point of the sweep; where it was not logged, as for redundant units today, the noise is shown as not measured yet.

Test Report Example



Cybenetics Report #3425 — Cooler Master Elite Platinum 1300W

Cooler Master Elite Platinum 1300W

Mon Sep 7 2026

Model & Serial Numbers

Cooler Master Elite Platinum 1300 (#2)
Serial number CM1441300F25052003900281
Lab ID CM13003405

	115V	230V
Efficiency Rating		
Noise Rating		
Analyst	Efstathios Papadopoulos	
Authorized by the Laboratory Technical Manager	Aristeidis Bitziopoulos	
Signature		

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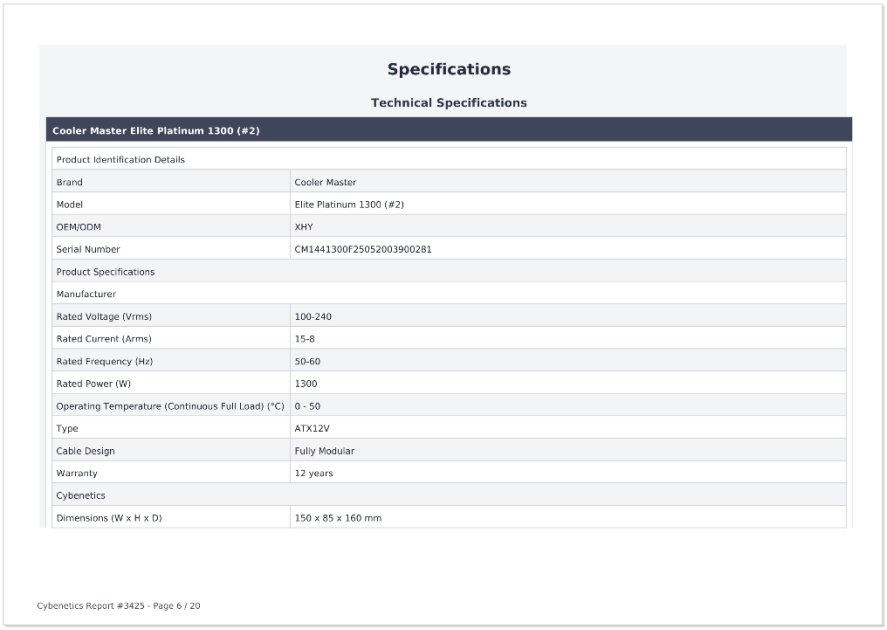

Specifications

Technical Specifications

Cooler Master Elite Platinum 1300 (#2)	
Product Identification Details	
Brand	Cooler Master
Model	Elite Platinum 1300 (#2)
OEM/ODM	XHY
Serial Number	CM1441300F25052003900281
Product Specifications	
Manufacturer	
Rated Voltage (Vrms)	100-240
Rated Current (Arms)	15-8
Rated Frequency (Hz)	50-60
Rated Power (W)	1300
Operating Temperature (Continuous Full Load) (°C)	0 - 50
Type	ATX12V
Cable Design	Fully Modular
Warranty	12 years
Cybenetics	
Dimensions (W x H x D)	150 x 85 x 160 mm

Cybenetics Report #3425 - Page 6 / 20

Uncertainty Estimations – Efficiency/Noise/EMI

Measurement uncertainty is the quantified doubt about a measurement result. It shows the range within which the true value is expected to lie, considering possible errors and variations. It is important because it reflects the reliability of measurements and allows fair comparison between results.

<u>The Efficiency Measurement's Uncertainty is ±0.43%</u>

The reported expanded uncertainty (U) was derived as the product of the combined standard uncertainty (u) and the coverage factor k = 2, corresponding to a confidence interval of approximately 95%.

Measurement uncertainty was determined in accordance with GUM [15]. The estimate of the reported uncertainty pertains to values obtained during the measurements and does not account for possible long-term changes.

Efficiency Measurement Uncertainty Budget

Source of Uncertainty	**Standard Uncertainty, $u(x_i)$**	**Relative Standard Uncertainty, $u(x_i)/x_i$**
Intralab Reproducibility	0.16564	0.00203
Electronic loads Calibration	0.0500	0.00050
Power Analyzer Calibration	0.0250	0.00025
Operator and Test Fixture	0.0350	0.00035
Relative Combined Standard Uncertainty (RSS):	0.00213	
% Expanded Uncertainty U (*k*=2, norm):	0.43	

The Noise Measurement's Uncertainty is ±1.23 dB

The reported expanded uncertainty (U) was derived as the product of the combined standard uncertainty (u) and the coverage factor k = 2, corresponding to a confidence interval of approximately 95%. Measurement uncertainty was determined in accordance with GUM [15]. The estimate of the reported uncertainty pertains to values obtained during the measurements and does not account for possible long-term changes.

Noise Output Measurement Uncertainty Budget

Source of Uncertainty	**Standard Uncertainty, u(xi) (dB)**
Intralab Reproducibility	0.031
Mic Calibrator 4231 calibration	0.200
Microphone frequency response	0.577
Temperature	0.012
Position error	0.058
Relative Combined Standard Uncertainty (RSS):	0.61
Expanded Uncertainty U (*k*=2, norm):	1.23

The Conducted EMI Emissions Measurement's Uncertainty is ±2.35 dB

The reported expanded uncertainty (U) was derived as the product of the combined standard uncertainty (u) and the coverage factor k = 2, corresponding to a confidence interval of approximately 95%. Measurement uncertainty was determined in accordance with GUM [15]. The estimate of the reported uncertainty pertains to values obtained during the measurements and does not account for possible long-term changes.

Conducted EMI Measurement Uncertainty Budget

Source of Uncertainty	**Standard Uncertainty, $u(x_i)/x_i$ (dB)**
Repeatability (Type A) – setup + EUT	0.953
EMI equipment accuracy (from calibration certificates)	0.185
Noise and Signal Quality	0.577
Bandwidth and Resolution Bandwidth (RBW)	0.289
Measurement time and Averaging	0.115
Environmental Factors	0.115
Relative Combined Standard Uncertainty (RSS):	1.18
Expanded Uncertainty U (*k*=2, norm):	2.35

Epilogue

The purpose of this article was to explain the methodology that we follow for our efficiency and noise measurements, from which the ETA and LAMBDA certifications derive. Furthermore, we want to share the knowledge we acquired after numerous PSU evaluations and help other laboratories with the proper equipment and the corresponding ISO certification (17025), proving that all procedures will be followed in detail and tested against our standards.

Besides providing a complete insight into our efficiency and noise methodology, we decided to take one more (big) step and update and present our overall performance algorithm. Through this algorithm, someone can make highly detailed comparisons between any number of power supplies, considering all crucial factors, including protection features, besides pure performance. The development of this algorithm, which we will continue to update based on new data and experiences that we gather through time, is a challenging task. Nevertheless, we plan to use this algorithm in our beta evaluations. We will also share it with some media/review sites, including Hardware Busters to help them provide more accurate comparison results.

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