



Designation: E280 – 21 (Reapproved 2026)

Standard Reference Radiographs for Heavy-Walled ($4\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 in. (114 to 305 mm)) Steel Castings¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E280; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the U.S. Department of Defense.

1. Scope

1.1 These reference radiographs² illustrate various categories, types, and severity levels of discontinuities occurring in steel castings that have section thicknesses of $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. to 12 in. (114 mm to 305 mm). The reference radiograph films are an adjunct to this document and must be purchased separately from ASTM International, if needed (see 2.2). Categories and severity levels for each discontinuity type represented by these reference radiographs are described in 1.2.

NOTE 1—The basis of application for these reference radiographs requires a prior purchaser supplier agreement of radiographic examination attributes and classification criterion as described in Sections 4, 6, and 7 of this standard. Reference radiographs for other steel casting thicknesses may be found in Reference Radiographs E446 and E186. Reference Radiographs E186 provides some overlap of severity levels for similar discontinuity categories within the same energy level range (see 4.3, 5.1, and 6.3).

1.2 These reference radiographs consist of two separate volumes as follows

1.2.1 *Volume I: 2-MV X-rays and Cobalt-60*—This includes cobalt-60 or equivalent isotope radiation and from 2 MV up to 4 MV X rays. Set of 28 plates in $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 11 in. (216 mm by 279 mm) ring binders.

1.2.2 *Volume II: 4-MV to 30-MV X-rays*—Set of 28 plates in $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 11 in. (216 mm by 279 mm) ring binders.

1.2.3 Unless otherwise specified in a purchaser supplier agreement (see 1.1), each volume is for comparison only with production radiographs produced with radiation energy levels within the thickness range covered by this standard. Each volume consists of three categories of graded discontinuities in increasing severity levels, and three categories of ungraded discontinuities. Reference radiographs containing ungraded discontinuities are provided as a guide for recognition of a specific casting discontinuity type where severity levels are not

needed. Following is a list of discontinuity categories, types, and severity levels for the adjunct reference radiographs of this standard:

1.2.3.1 *Category A*—Gas porosity; severity levels 1 through 5.

1.2.3.2 *Category B*—Sand and slag inclusions; severity levels 1 through 5.

1.2.3.3 *Category C*—Shrinkage; three types:

(1) *Ca Linear Shrinkage*—Severity levels 1 through 5 (called Type 1 in previous revisions).

(2) *Cb Feathery Shrinkage*—Severity levels 1 through 5 (called Type 2 in previous revisions).

(3) *Cc Sponge Shrinkage*—Severity levels 1 through 5 (called Type 3 in previous revisions).

1.2.3.4 *Category D*—Crack; one illustration D5 in pre-1972 documents.

1.2.3.5 *Category E*—Hot tear; one illustration D3 in pre-1972 documents.

1.2.3.6 *Category F*—Insert; one illustration EB2 in pre-1972 documents.

1.3 From time to time, there may be minor changes to the process for manufacturing of the reference radiograph adjunct materials. These changes could include changes in the films or processing chemicals used, changes in the dies or printing for the cardboard mats, etc.; however, in all cases, these changes are reviewed by the Illustration Monitoring Subcommittee and all reference radiographs are reviewed against a fixed prototype image to ensure that there are no changes to the acceptance level represented by the reference radiographs. Therefore, the adjunct reference radiographs remain valid for use with this standard regardless of the date of production or the revision level of the text standard.

1.4 *Units*—The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

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

¹ These reference radiographs are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E07 on Nondestructive Testing and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittees E07.02 on Reference Radiological Images and E07.93 on Illustration Monitoring.

Current edition approved July 1, 2026. Published July 2026. Originally approved in 1965. Last previous edition approved in 2021 as E280 – 21. DOI: 10.1520/E0280-21R26.

² For ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code applications, see related Reference Radiographs SE 280 in Section V of that Code.



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

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:³

E94/E94M Guide for Radiographic Examination Using Industrial Radiographic Film

E186 Reference Radiographs for Heavy-Walled (2 to 4½ in. (50.8 to 114 mm)) Steel Castings

E242 Reference Radiographs for Appearances of Radiographic Images as Certain Parameters are Changed

E446 Reference Radiographs for Steel Castings Up to 2 in. (50.8 mm) in Thickness

E1316 Terminology for Nondestructive Examinations

2.2 ASTM Adjuncts:⁴

Reference Radiographs for Heavy-Walled (4 ½ to 12 in. (114 to 305 mm)) Steel Castings:

Volume I, 2-MV X-rays and Cobalt-60⁵

Volume II, 4-MV to 30-MV X-rays⁶

2.3 ASNT Documents:⁷

ANSI/ASNT-CP-189 Standard for Qualification and Certification of Nondestructive Testing Personnel

SNT-TC-1A Personnel Qualification and Certification in Nondestructive Testing

2.4 AIA Document:⁸

NAS 410 Nondestructive Test Personnel Certification

2.5 ISO Standard:⁹

ISO 9712 Non-destructive Testing — Qualification and Certification of NDT Personnel

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms relating to radiographic examination, see Terminology **E1316**.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *classification specification, n*—a set of user-defined acceptance criterion that prescribes the radiographic workmanship discontinuity class requirements for a specified user casting service application (see Sections 6 and 7).

3.2.2 *discontinuity category, n*—a nomenclature system used for grouping discontinuity types.

³ For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at www.astm.org/contact. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

⁴ Available from ASTM Headquarters.

⁵ Order **RRE028001**.

⁶ Order **RRE028002**.

⁷ Available from American Society for Nondestructive Testing (ASNT), P.O. Box 28518, 1711 Arlinggate Ln., Columbus, OH 43228-0518, <http://www.asnt.org>.

⁸ Available from Aerospace Industries Association (AIA), 1000 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1700, Arlington, VA 22209, <http://www.aia-aerospace.org>.

⁹ Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ISO Central Secretariat, Chemin de Blandonnet 8, CP 401, 1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland, <https://www.iso.org>.

3.2.2.1 *Discussion*—For example: linear shrinkage is assigned category “Ca” where “C” represents the general shrinkage category and “a” represents the specific linear shrinkage discontinuity type.

3.2.3 *discontinuity class, n*—an assigned workmanship fabrication quality rating characterized by a discontinuity type, category, and severity level.

3.2.3.1 *Discussion*—For example: “Ca 2” is a discontinuity class comprised of linear shrinkage with a severity level of “2.”

3.2.4 *discontinuity severity level, n*—a relative rank in terms of “quantity, size, and distribution” of a collection of discontinuities where “1” is the least and “5” is the greatest “quantity, size, and distribution” present on the reference radiograph.

3.2.4.1 *Discussion*—For example: a severity level of “1” is more restrictive (requires a higher level of workmanship fabrication quality) than a severity level of “2.”

3.2.5 *discontinuity type, n*—a specific discontinuity characterized by its cause and appearance.

3.2.5.1 *Discussion*—For example: linear shrinkage is a specific discontinuity type.

3.2.6 *graded illustration, n*—a category of discontinuity that is assigned a severity level.

3.2.7 *production radiograph, n*—a radiograph under review for compliance with this standard.

3.2.8 *prorating, n*—assignment of quantity, size, and distribution on a production radiograph in proportion to a similar size area of a reference radiograph.

3.2.8.1 *Discussion*—For example: a production radiograph covers an area that is smaller than the unit area of a reference radiograph and the extent of discontinuity on the applicable reference radiograph is reduced proportionately.

3.2.9 *ungraded illustration, n*—a category of discontinuity without an assigned severity level.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Personnel utilizing reference radiographs to this standard shall be qualified to perform radiographic interpretation in accordance with a nationally or internationally recognized NDT personnel qualification practice or standard such as ANSI/ASNT-CP-189, SNT-TC-1A, NAS 410, ISO 9712, or a similar document and certified by the employer or certifying agency, as applicable. The practice or standard used and its applicable revision shall be identified in the contractual agreement between the using parties. Personnel shall be authorized to perform radiographic interpretation by the employer. A certified Level III shall be available to assist with interpreting specifications and product requirements as applied to the reference radiographs (if the Level III is the radiographic interpreter, this may be the same person).

4.2 Graded reference radiographs are intended to provide a guide enabling recognition of specific casting discontinuity types and relative severity levels that may be encountered during typical fabrication processes. Reference radiographs containing ungraded discontinuities are provided as a guide for recognition of a specific casting discontinuity type where severity levels may not be needed. These reference radiographs