



MIL-DTL-83513 Type Micro-D Hermetic Connectors General Information

MICRO-D HERMETIC CONNECTORS

Hermeticity is defined as "the state or condition of being airtight". Sophisticated military electronics enclosures can experience electrical failure from ingress of moisture. System engineers can design the enclosure to withstand exposure to moisture and condensation by using "moisture-hardened" components and conformal coatings, but often the most practical approach is to install hermetically sealed electrical I/O connectors. Glass-to-metal seals provide assurance that, over the life of the enclosure, the accumulated amount of water vapor inside the box will not exceed the amount necessary to form condensation. Other applications for Micro-D hermetic connectors include vacuum chambers, cryogenics, and enclosures filled with inert gas.

Kovar® Alloy

Glenair's hermetic Micro-D shells and contacts are made from a special alloy called Kovar®, an iron-nickel-cobalt alloy consisting of 54% Fe, 29% Ni, and 17% Co. This alloy is covered by SAE specification AMS-I-23011. Kovar has a relatively low coefficient of thermal expansion.

Micro-D Hermetic Plating Options

Unlike regular connectors which are plated as components prior to assembly, hermetic connectors are electroplated after the parts are fired and cleaned of oxides. Typically the contacts are gold-plated and the connector shell is nickel-plated.

Matched Glass-To-Metal Seals

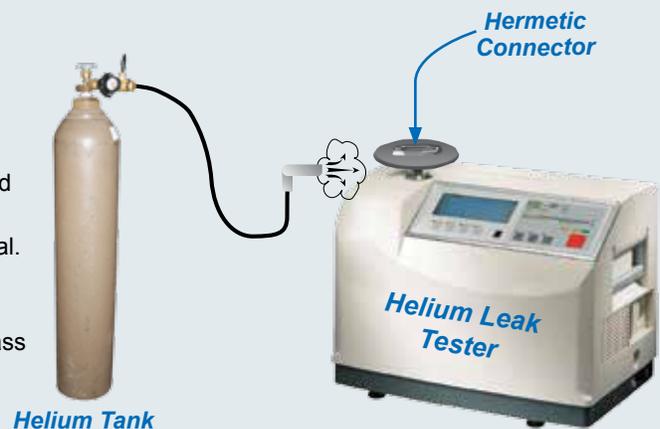
Matched seals rely on a chemical bond between the metal and the glass. Kovar® contacts and shells are first exposed to high temperatures in order to develop an oxide coating. Then, the borosilicate glass and metal components are assembled with fixtures and are fused in a firing furnace at 900° C. A strong chemical bond is created between the metal and glass. Unlike compression seals which rely on different thermal coefficients of expansion between the glass and metal, a matched seal offers better resistance to stress from thermal extremes.

Connector Installation

Hermetic connectors are typically soldered or welded into panels or bulkheads. Laser welding is a good option if the connector is mounted onto Kovar®. If the panel is aluminum alloy or stainless steel, then soldering is recommended. Micro-D's with o-ring seals offer another alternative. O-rings, when installed properly, will provide a very low permeability seal. The seating surface must be free from scratches or imperfections. A 32 finish is acceptable, but a 16 finish is preferred. The o-ring can be coated with a light coat of vacuum grease.

Hermetic Testing

All Micro-D hermetic connectors are 100% tested prior to shipment. A helium leak test is performed to certify the hermetic seal. This test is conducted by inducing a 1 ATM vacuum on one side of the connector. Helium gas is released on the other side, and a mass spectrometer "counts" the number of helium molecules that penetrate the connector seal. Helium leak testing takes advantage of the small size of a helium molecule compared to air or water vapor. Helium is inert, rare in our atmosphere, and is easy to detect with a mass spectrometer.



Dimensions in Inches (millimeters) are subject to change without notice.