

Impact of Grounding Modeling on Lightning-induced Voltages Evaluation in Distribution Lines

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Abstract: Lightning-induced voltages are one of the main causes of shutdown in distribution lines. In this work, attention is focused on the effects of wideband modeling of electric grounding in the overvoltage calculation along insulator strings due to indirect lightning strikes. This study is done directly in the time-domain with the grounding being represented with an equivalent circuit accounting for its dynamics. Results show that the adoption of commonly adopted simplified grounding models, such as low-frequency resistance, may lead to an underestimation of the overvoltage. According to results, differences in the order of 30% can be found in some studied cases.

Keywords: Distribution Lines; lightning-induced overvoltages; grounding modeling; soil resistivity

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1. Introduction

Transmission and Distribution Lines are highly affected and damaged by direct and indirect lightning events. Direct events occur when the lightning directly strikes the line; such events are hazardous but rare and are typically studied and analyzed in the framework of Transmission Lines (TL). On the other side, indirect events occur when lightning strikes the ground in the proximity of a power system; these events are much more frequent with respect to direct ones, but the overall voltage induced in the power system is usually much lower. For this reason, indirect events are not of interest for TL since the induced voltages are generally lower than the line Critical-Flash-Over (CFO) voltage, but they are vital when dealing with Distribution Lines (DL), which are characterized by a low CFO.

Most works address lightning-induced voltages in DL model electric grounding as a constant value resistance R_{LF} [1–16]. This parameter is associated with a low-frequency behavior, i.e., disregarding its electromagnetic dynamic. Therefore, this low-frequency grounding resistance cannot reproduce the reactive (inductive and capacitive) and electromagnetic wave propagation effects (attenuation and distortion), prominent in the high-frequency range related to the voltage and current wavefronts. Additionally, the determination of overvoltage on TL, due to direct lightning, is highly sensible on the electromagnetic modeling of the electrical grounding [17].

In view of the above, this work presents an evaluation of the impact of grounding modeling on lightning-induced voltage. Thus, the main original contribution of this paper is to include, in the time domain type simulations, an equivalent electric circuit that reproduces the complete frequency response of grounding, with full inclusion of the

34 aforementioned effects. The Hybrid Electromagnetic Model (HEM) is used to determine
 35 the wideband grounding frequency response $Z(\omega)$ [18,19]. To implement the $Z(\omega)$ *in*
 36 *silico*, the Vector Fitting (VF) technique is applied to generate an equivalent electric circuit
 37 that is easily inserted in EMT-type software [20,21]. In the following, the grounding
 38 circuit will be implemented in the software developed in [22].

39 The results illustrate that the induced voltages, considering the grounding modeled
 40 via R_{LF} are quite different from those results using $Z(\omega)$, with perceptual differences
 41 reaching values of around 30%. It is noticeable that the differences increase with the soil
 42 resistivity and with the point of occurrence of the lightning (lightning striking closer to
 43 the DL increase the perceptual differences) for both first and subsequent return strokes.
 44 The paper is organized as follows: Sections 2, 3 and 4 show the lightning field-to-line
 45 coupling problem equations, the tower and the grounding modeling, respectively; while
 46 Sections 5 and 6 present the test cases and the results. Section 7 is dedicated to the
 47 conclusions.

48 2. Induced-lightning modeling

49 The lightning-induced voltages occurring in a DL are here evaluated, recalling the
 50 procedure presented in [22] and [23]. This procedure is usually divided into two steps: i)
 51 the ElectroMagnetic (EM) fields computation and ii) the field-to-line coupling.

52 2.1. EM fields computation

53 The EM fields are computed analytically thanks to the approach proposed in [24]
 54 and validated in [25]. The method requires as input the knowledge of the channel-base
 55 current, the return stroke height and the return stroke velocity. It can be applied both to
 56 perfect electric conductor ground and soil characterized by a finite conductivity. The
 57 only assumption required is the TL model for the attenuation of the current along the
 58 channel. The main advantage of this approach consists of the possibility of dealing with
 59 analytical formulas, which guarantee a fast solution and a low computational effort.

60 2.2. Field-to-line coupling

61 The field-to-line coupling computation is obtained thanks to the well-known
 62 Agrawal model [26], which is here presented in its extended version taking into ac-
 63 count the presence of a finite-conducting ground and a multi-conductor line.

$$\begin{cases} \frac{\partial V_i^s}{\partial x}(x, t) + \sum_{j=1}^M L_{ij} \frac{\partial I_j}{\partial t}(x, t) + V_i^g(x, t) = E_{inc, x, i}(x, t) \\ \frac{\partial I_i}{\partial x}(x, t) + \sum_{j=1}^M C_{ij} \frac{\partial V_j^s}{\partial t}(x, t) = 0 \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

with

$$V_i^g(x, t) = \int_0^t \zeta_g^i(t-s) \frac{\partial I_i}{\partial s}(x, s) ds \quad (2)$$

64 where $V_i^s(x, t)$, $I_i(x, t)$ and $E_{inc, x, i}(x, t)$ are the scattered voltage, the current and the
 65 tangential component of the exciting electric field (computed in the previous subsection)
 66 on the i th conductor at distance x from the beginning of the line. As expressed in
 67 equation (1), the knowledge of the inductance and capacitance matrices (L and C) is
 68 required. Please note that ζ_g^i is the time-domain expression for the ground impedance
 69 [27].

70 The total voltage occurring on the i -th conductor at the point x can be then expressed
 71 as the sum of the scattered voltage and the incident voltage, whose value depends on
 72 the vertical electric field (computed in the previous subsection).

73 The proposed methodology is adapted to an EMT-type software (in this framework
 74 Simulink-Simscape is used), through the finite-difference time-domain (FDTD) technique.
 75 In this case, a second-order scheme is adopted with $dt = 10ns$ and $dx = 9m$, which

76 satisfies the well-known Courant stability condition. Further details can be found in
77 [22].

78 3. Tower modeling

The modeling of the tower is usually neglected in lightning-induced voltages studies. However, in this framework, the tower is included in the model according to [28,29] and is modeled as a lossless transmission line, whose characteristic impedance is:

$$Z_c = 60 \left[\ln \left(\sqrt{2} \frac{2h}{r} \right) - 1 + \frac{r}{4h} + \left(\frac{r}{4h} \right)^2 \right] \quad (3)$$

79 h being the tower height and r the tower radius. The insulators are modeled as open
80 circuits.

81 4. Electrical grounding modeling

82 In this paper, the grounding transient behavior is modeled by HEM [18,19]. This
83 model is an electromagnetic computational method developed for the numerical so-
84 lution of lightning problems and, according to Cigrè [30], it is classified as a hybrid
85 electromagnetic-circuit approach. The main motivations for using HEM are as follows: i)
86 it is accurate and flexible, i.e., it can be used in different types of grounding configuration;
87 ii) its results have been extensively validated experimentally, such as measurements
88 in TL [18,19], horizontal electrodes [18,31], vertical rods [31,32], and typical substation
89 grounding grids [33] and iii) it is faster than traditional full-wave methods (without los-
90 ing accuracy). It is worth mentioning that the usage of HEM has increased significantly
91 recently [30,34,35].

92 Basically, HEM consists of subdividing the actual system (in this case, electrical
93 grounding) into N small conductive cylindrical segments and, for each segment, the
94 electromagnetic theory is applied. After that, with the help of the circuit theory, it is
95 possible to obtain a matrix system that computes the wideband response of the electrical
96 grounding. For the sake of clarity, we present a brief overview of HEM below. More
97 details about HEM are described in [18,19].

98 It is worthwhile to comment that HEM corresponds to an electromagnetic model
99 developed in the frequency domain. Thus, it is necessary first to determine the frequency
100 spectrum (depending on the phenomenon of interest). After that, the electrical grounding
101 is divided into N segments, where the length of each segment is equal to 10 times its
102 radius (thin wire approximation). A discussion about segmentation length is presented
103 in [36].

104 Each segment is considered a source of two currents, one longitudinal that flows
105 along the electrode (I_L) and another transversal that flows from the electrode to the
106 surrounding soil (I_T). It is worth noting that I_L generates a non-conservative electric
107 field and I_T a conservative one. With the aid of the magnetic vector and electric scalar
108 potentials, both voltage drops (ΔV) and electric potentials (V) in each pair of segments
109 (transmitter and receiver) are determined. Additionally, double integral equations are
110 established for ΔV and V . These integrals depend on the frequency, geometry, soil
111 parameters and I_T and I_L distributions. However, the distributions of I_T and I_L are not
112 known and are integrands of the integrals. From this point on, the Method of Moments
113 (MoM) is applied to solve these integral equations [37]. The effect of the air-soil interface
114 is included using the method of images, similar to [38,39].

115 The I_T and I_L distributions considered in this paper are of the piecewise-constant
116 function type [18,19]. MoM makes it possible to transform integral equations into
117 algebraic ones, the solution of which allows determining all the quantities of interest (in
118 the frequency domain), such as I_T , I_L , ΔV and V distributions; transverse (capacitive and
119 conductive couplings) and longitudinal (resistive and inductive couplings) impedances
120 (self and mutual); electromagnetic field; harmonic grounding impedance ($Z(\omega)$); low-
121 frequency grounding resistance (R_{LF}), etc.

122 As specified before, the calculation of induced voltages is performed directly in
 123 the time domain; however $Z(\omega)$ is a frequency domain quantity. Thus, the well-known
 124 Vector Fitting (VF) approach is used for fitting the calculated frequency domain ground-
 125 ing response with rational function approximations [20]. The passivity is enforced by
 126 perturbation [21].

127 Finally, based on the obtained rational function, it is possible to get the synthesis of
 128 an electric network which can be promptly included in the time-domain simulation. It
 129 is important to note that this electric circuit generates the same frequency response as
 130 the harmonic grounding impedance provided by HEM. Thus, it includes reactive and
 131 electromagnetic wave propagation effects.

132 5. Test cases

133 This section presents the test cases related to the comparison between two differ-
 134 ent grounding modeling, i.e., the low-frequency grounding resistance (R_{LF}) and the
 135 harmonic grounding impedance ($Z(\omega)$).

136 Let us consider a 1.2 km matched three-phase DL (Figure 1). The heights of the
 137 three-phase conductors are 10, 11 and 12 m respectively, while the shield wire is 14 m
 138 above the ground. The distance between each conductor and the shield wire is 2.4 m.
 139 The conductors' diameter is 1.83 cm, while the shield wire diameter is 0.72 cm.

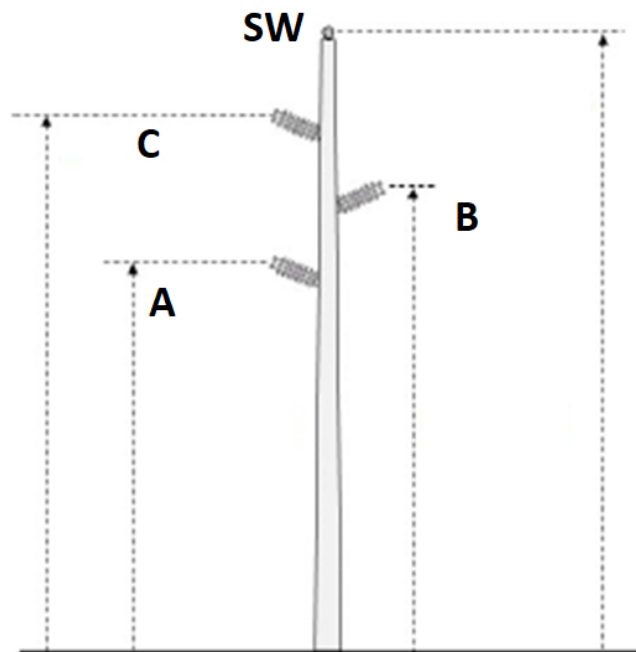


Figure 1. Line configuration

140 The span between each tower is 300 m, thus three towers placed at 300, 600 and 900
 141 m from the beginning of the line are considered. Each tower is 14 m high and with a base
 142 diameter of 0.5 m. According to equation (3), a value of $Z_c = 244.17 \Omega$ is considered.
 143 The propagation velocity along the tower is considered to be equal to the light speed.

144 Each tower is grounded with a grounding system as shown in Figure 2. This
 145 is a typical configuration for grounding distribution networks in the State of Minas
 146 Gerais, Brazil. It consists of three vertical rods 2.5 m long interconnected by a horizontal
 147 galvanized steel cable 6 m long. The vertical rods are copper-plated steel, with a diameter
 148 of 15 mm.

149 The equivalent circuit of the system composed of a three-phase distribution line,
 150 tower and grounding system is shown in figure 3.

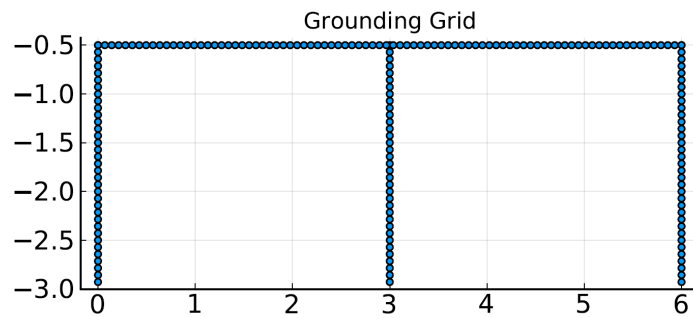


Figure 2. Grounding grid of the distribution tower

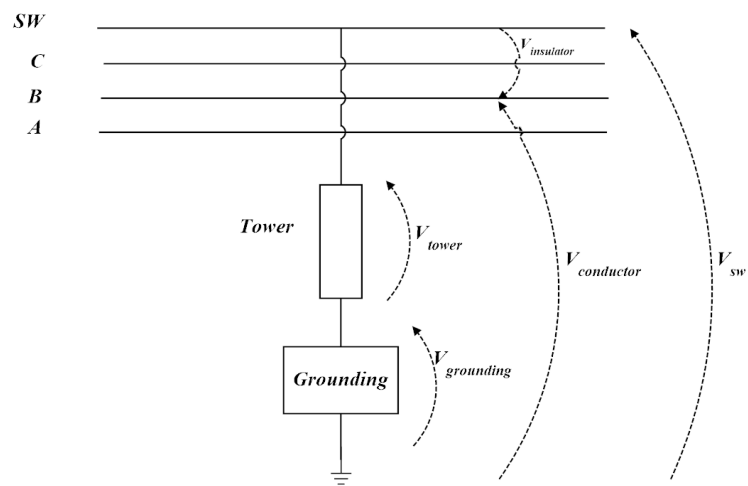


Figure 3. Equivalent circuit of the power system, tower and grounding

151 As will be discussed later, two different values of the soil conductivity will be
 152 considered (10 mS/m and 1 mS/m). This corresponds to two different grounding har-
 153 monic responses according to the grounding modeling proposed in Section 4. Figures 4-
 154 5 show $Z(\omega)$ and R_{LF} of the two considered cases. Based on the behaviors described
 155 in these figures, it is possible to verify that: i) grounding can only be represented by
 156 R_{LF} in the low-frequency range, where $Z(\omega)$ tends to R_{LF} ; ii) the limit frequency of the
 157 low-frequency range increases with a reduction in conductivity; iii) in the intermediate-
 158 frequency range there is a predominance of capacitive behavior of the grounding, ver-
 159 ified by the reduction of $Z(\omega)$ in relation to the R_{LF} ; iv) the limit frequency of the
 160 intermediate-frequency range also increases with the decrease in conductivity and v)
 161 only in the high-frequency range there is a predominance of inductive effect, mainly
 162 for higher conductivity values. Thus, the response of the system under study (DL and
 163 grounding) will be a direct function of the frequency spectrum of the electromagnetic
 164 signal that requests it. As a consequence, it is expected that the overvoltages in the
 165 insulator string are sensitive to grounding modeling.

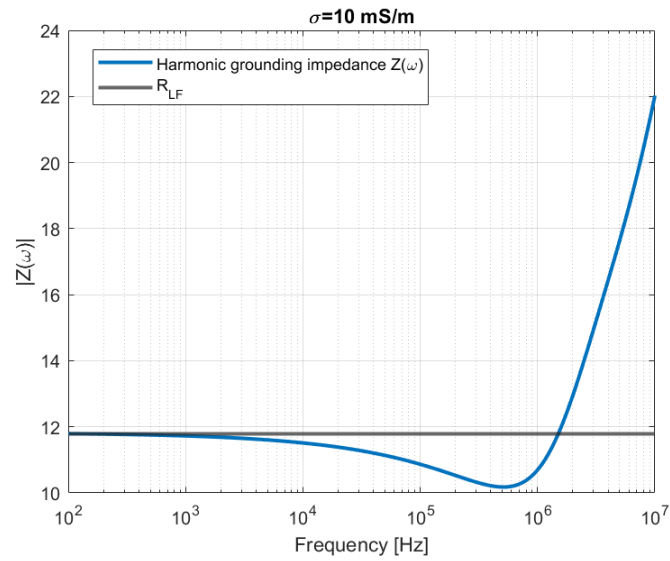


Figure 4. Grounding harmonic impedance $Z(\omega)$ with $\sigma = 10 \text{ mS/m}$

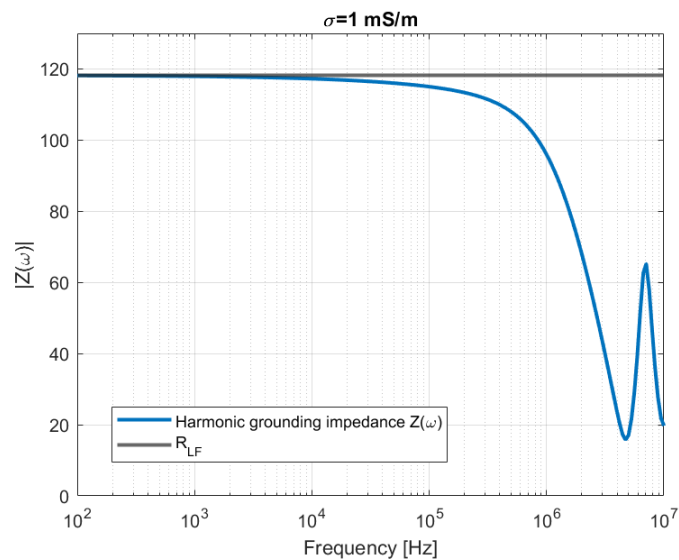


Figure 5. Grounding harmonic impedance $Z(\omega)$ with $\sigma = 1 \text{ mS/m}$

166 When we consider a grounding model described by R_{LF} , the implementation in
 167 the EMT-type software is trivial, while when we consider the harmonic grounding
 168 impedance, it is possible to obtain the synthesis of the electric circuit to be implemented
 169 in the EMT-type software thanks to the approach presented in Section 4.

170 The general layout of the circuit obtained from the Vector fitting approach is de-
 171 scribed in figure 6, while the values of the passive elements are proposed in Tables 1-2 for
 172 $\sigma = 10 \text{ mS/m}$ and $\sigma = 1 \text{ mS/m}$, respectively. It is worth mentioning that this equivalent
 173 circuits are mathematical models that have a frequency response very close to $Z(\omega)$,
 174 but their electrical parameters do not have physical consistency. Hence the existence of
 175 negative values for resistance and inductance in Tables 1-2. The i -index appearing in
 176 Tables 1-2 refers to the electrical branch.

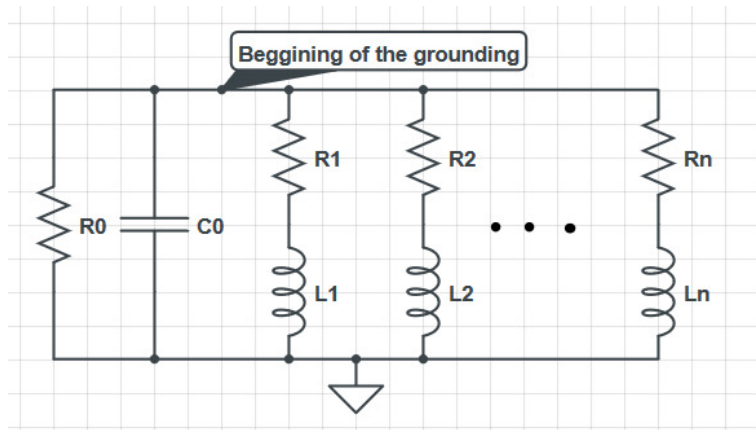


Figure 6. General layout of the grounding circuit for the harmonic grounding impedance

Table 1: Passive elements of the grounding circuit. $\sigma = 10$ mS/m

i	Resistance [Ω]	Inductance [mH]	Capacitance [μF]
0	3.33×10^{15}	-	3.00×10^{-10}
1	53.42	9.85×10^{-10}	-
2	5.24	7.20×10^{-4}	-
3	-6.97	-1.12×10^{-3}	-
4	-1.23×10^2	-7.69×10^{-2}	-
5	-2.66×10^2	-0.60	-
6	-5.14×10^2	-4.51	-
7	-9.98×10^2	-37.13	-
8	-1.99×10^3	-3.56×10^2	-
9	-3.83×10^3	-4.16×10^3	-
10	29.01	-4.07×10^{-5}	-

Table 2: Passive elements of the grounding circuit. $\sigma = 1$ mS/m

i	Resistance [Ω]	Inductance [mH]	Capacitance [μF]
0	3.33×10^{15}	-	3.00×10^{-10}
1	-2.06×10^5	-5.31×10^5	-
2	-1.55×10^5	-9.32×10^4	-
3	-9.54×10^4	-1.79×10^4	-
4	-5.80×10^4	-3.66×10^3	-
5	-3.58×10^4	-7.93×10^2	-
6	-2.26×10^4	-1.82×10^2	-
7	-1.46×10^4	-44.20	-
8	-9.89×10^3	-11.61	-
9	-7.53×10^3	-3.51	-
10	-8.34×10^3	-1.58	-
11	-5.69×10^2	-8.42×10^{-3}	-
12	-44.92	-9.42×10^{-5}	-

177 To compare the grounding modeling, 12 different tests have been implemented
 178 (Table 4), each one differing for the soil conductivity, stroke location and stroke type
 179 (first or subsequent). The stroke location is always placed in front of the middle of the
 180 line. The lightning return stroke channel is characterized by a height of 8 km and a speed
 181 equal to one-half the speed of light in vacuum. The channel-base current is modeled as a
 182 sum of two Heidler's functions as in equation 4, with parameters reported in Table 3.

$$I_0(t) = \frac{I_{01}}{\eta_1} \frac{\left(\frac{t}{\tau_{11}}\right)^{n_1}}{1 + \left(\frac{t}{\tau_{11}}\right)^{n_1}} e^{-\frac{t}{\tau_{12}}} + \frac{I_{02}}{\eta_2} \frac{\left(\frac{t}{\tau_{21}}\right)^{n_2}}{1 + \left(\frac{t}{\tau_{21}}\right)^{n_2}} e^{-\frac{t}{\tau_{22}}} \quad (4)$$

being

$$\eta_i = \exp\left(-\frac{\tau_{i1}}{\tau_{i2}} \left(n_i \frac{\tau_{i2}}{\tau_{i1}}\right)^{\frac{1}{n_i}}\right) \quad (5)$$

Table 3: Heidler's current parameters

Parameter	First	Subsequent
I_{01} [kA]	28.0	10.7
τ_{11} [μ s]	1.8	0.22
τ_{12} [μ s]	95.0	2.5
n_1	2	2
I_{02} [kA]	-	6.5
τ_{21} [μ s]	-	2.1
τ_{22} [μ s]	-	230.0
n_2	-	2

Table 4: Test details

Test	σ [S/m]	Stroke distance [m]	Stroke type
T1	0.01	60	First
T2	0.01	200	First
T3	0.01	2000	First
T4	0.001	60	First
T5	0.001	200	First
T6	0.001	2000	First
T7	0.01	60	Subsequent
T8	0.01	200	Subsequent
T9	0.01	2000	Subsequent
T10	0.001	60	Subsequent
T11	0.001	200	Subsequent
T12	0.001	2000	Subsequent

183 6. Results

184 In this section, the results for the test cases of Table 4 are presented showing
185 the voltage across the phase B insulator string ($V_{insulator}$ in Figure 3) and the voltage
186 difference occurring on the grounding system ($V_{grounding}$ in Figure 3).

187 Figures 7-12 show the results for tests T1-T6, corresponding to a typical first stroke.
188 The main differences in terms of voltage across the insulator can be observed considering
189 a low soil conductivity (figures 10-12) and for near stroke locations (60 m). This is
190 extremely important because the closer the stroke location, the higher (and the more
191 dangerous) the induced voltage. For example, let us consider Test T4 (figure 10). If we
192 use the low-frequency grounding resistance (R_{LF}) as grounding model, the maximum
193 induced voltage across the insulator string is 96.43 kV, while if we consider the harmonic
194 grounding impedance ($Z(\omega)$), which represents in a better way the reality, the voltage is
195 121.70 kV. This clearly shows how the difference in the modeling could lead to either a
196 fault or not across the insulator strings.

197 On the other side, when the harmonic grounding impedance model presents a
198 voltage across the insulator higher with respect to the R_{LF} case, the voltage on the
199 grounding system is lower. This can be explained as follows: let us consider Figure 3;
200 the voltage difference occurring on the insulator string is

$$V_{insulator} = V_{conductor} - V_{sw} \quad (6)$$

It is reasonable to assume that the voltage on the conductor does not change in a meaningful way considering the two different grounding system modeling as the only difference is a different current flowing in the shield wire conductor, causing a different coupling with the phase conductor. Even if not negligible, the coupling between conductors does not represent the dominant aspect in the lightning-induced voltages (which is the electric field illuminating the conductor). Consequently, $V_{insulator} + V_{sw}$ is almost constant. The shield wire voltage is:

$$V_{sw} = V_{tower} + V_{grounding} \quad (7)$$

201 With the same current, V_{tower} is constant in the two cases but $V_{grounding}$ varies
 202 because the impedance varies according to Figures 4 and 5 for $\sigma = 10 \text{ mS/m}$ and
 203 1 mS/m , respectively. Let us consider the most critical case, i.e., $\sigma = 1 \text{ mS/m}$: from
 204 Figure 5 it is clear that for each considered frequency $Z(\omega) < R_{LF}$, thus with the same
 205 current the voltage on the grounding system is lower if we consider the harmonic
 206 impedance $Z(\omega)$ and consequently also V_{sw} is lower. Since $V_{insulator} + V_{sw} = \text{constant}$,
 207 if V_{sw} decreases, $V_{insulator}$ increases. This aspect is confirmed in Tests T4-T5-T6, T10-T11-
 208 T12.

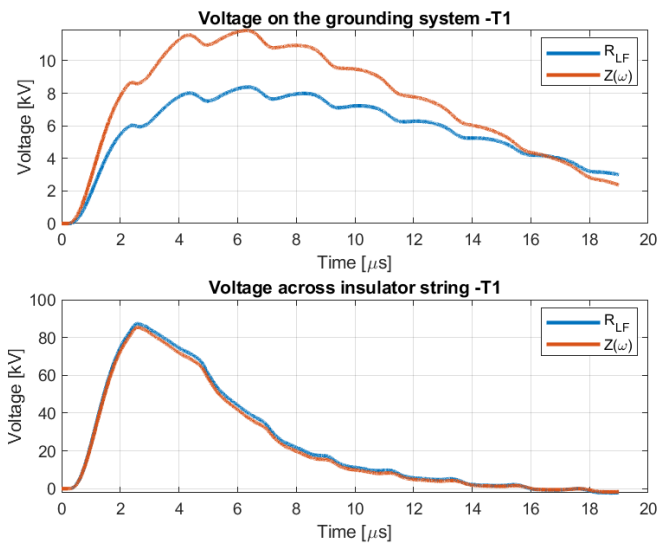


Figure 7. Test T1 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

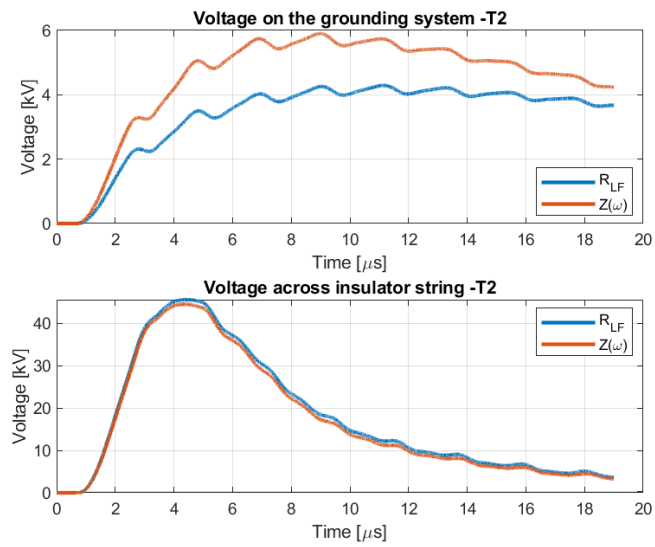


Figure 8. Test T2 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

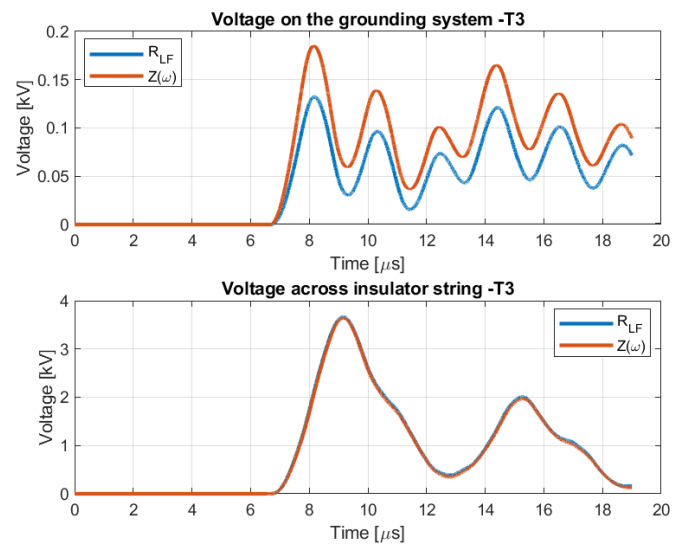


Figure 9. Test T3 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

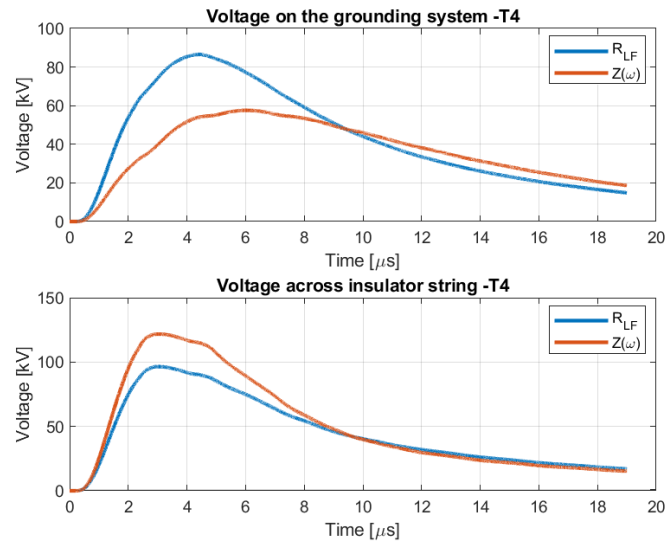


Figure 10. Test T4 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

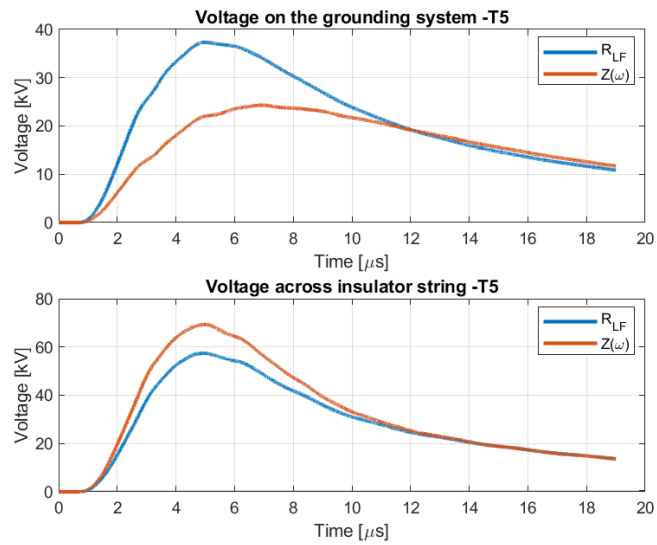


Figure 11. Test T5 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

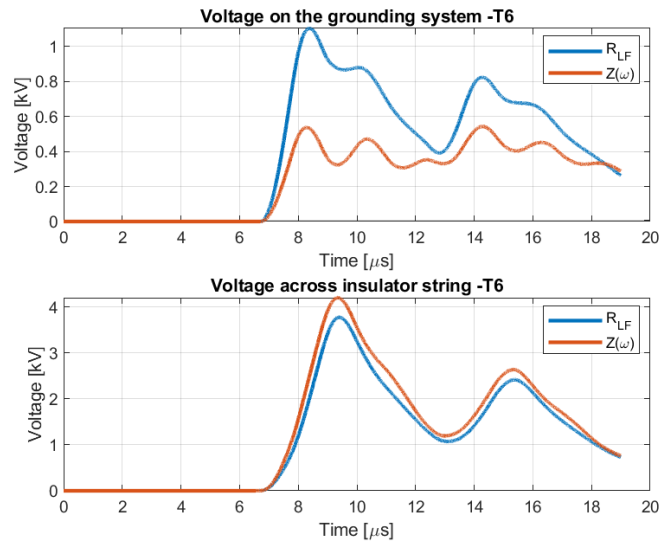


Figure 12. Test T6 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

209 The results for subsequent strokes can be observed in Figures 13-18. The results
 210 are in agreement with the previous ones, confirming a significant increase of the maxi-
 211 mum voltage if the equivalent circuit ($Z(\omega)$) is taken into account, especially if the soil
 212 conductivity is low.

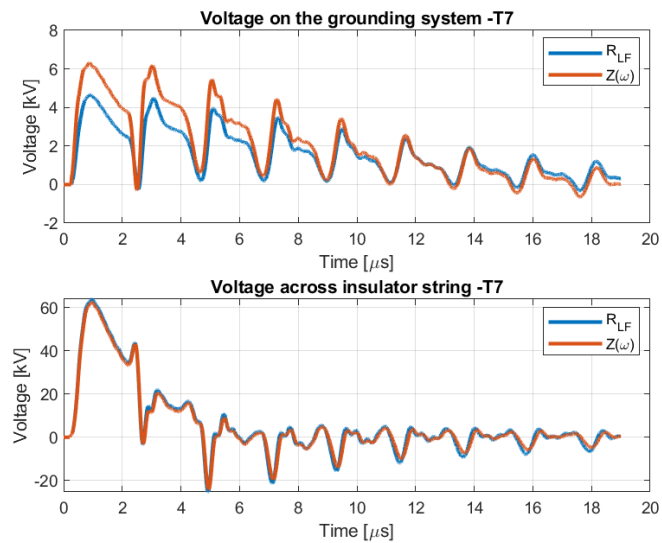


Figure 13. Test T7 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

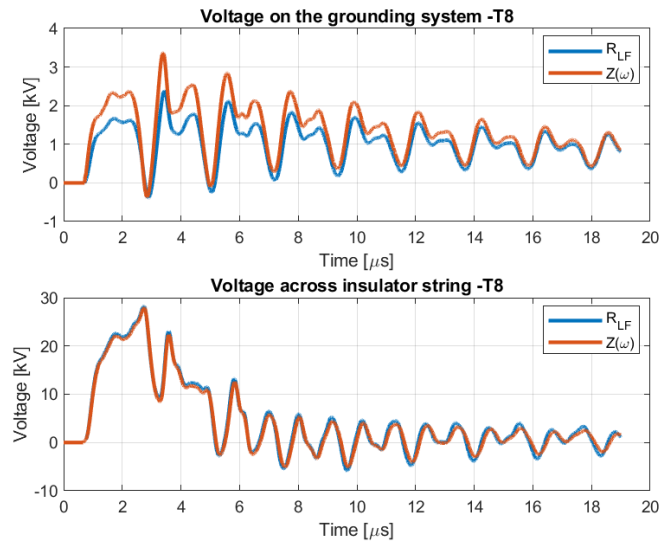


Figure 14. Test T8 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

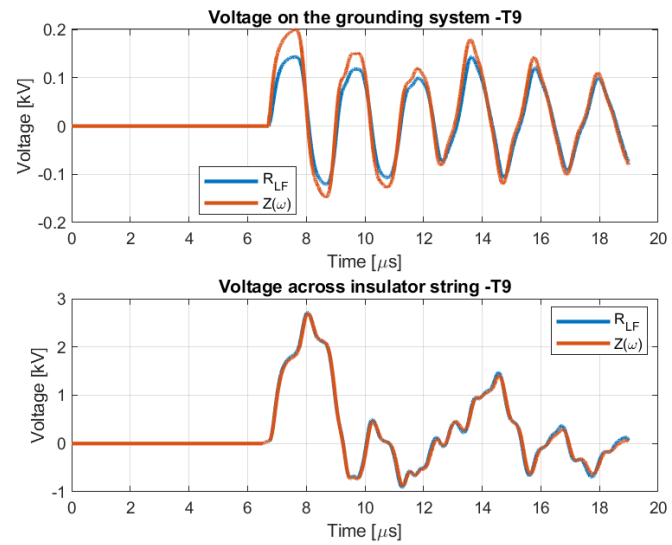


Figure 15. Test T9- Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

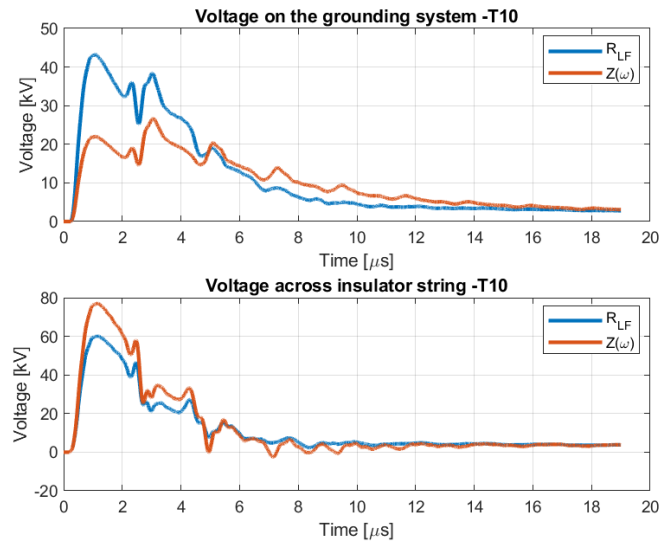


Figure 16. Test T10 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

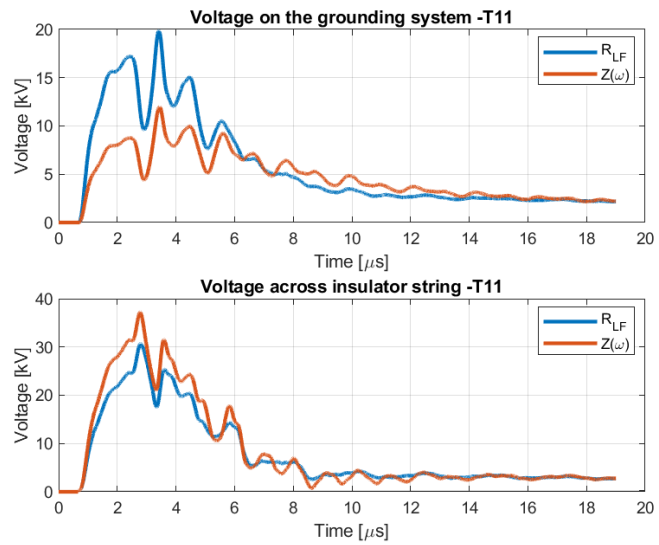


Figure 17. Test T11 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

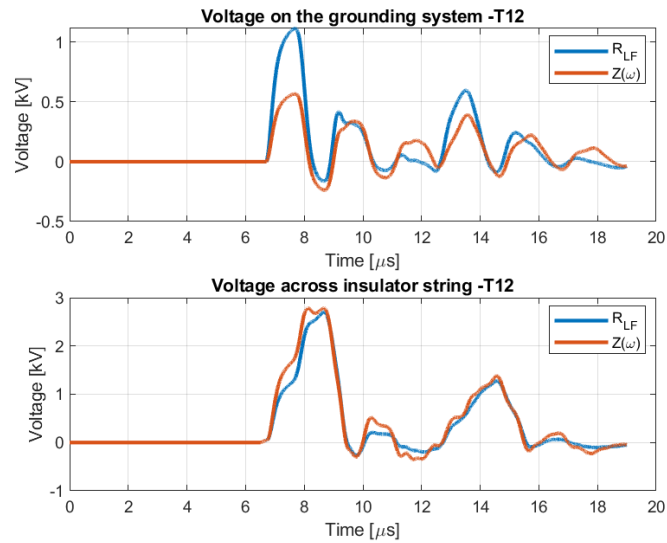


Figure 18. Test T12 - Voltage on the grounding system and on the insulator of phase B. Comparison between the two models

213 Finally, Table 5 shows the percentage increase in the maximum voltage across the
 214 phase B insulator considering the harmonic grounding impedance ($Z(\omega)$) with respect to
 215 the low-frequency grounding resistance (R_{LF}). According to the previous considerations,
 216 the differences are almost negligible if the soil conductivity is high (tests T1-T3 and
 217 T7-T9), but they become consistent when the soil conductivity decreases (tests T4-T6 and
 218 T10-T12). This behavior is more evident for close stroke location (test T4 and T10).

Table 5: Maximum voltage across the insulator. Percentage increase considering the harmonic grounding impedance ($Z(\omega)$) with respect to the low-frequency grounding resistance (R_{LF})

Test	Voltage insulator increase [%]
T1	-2.57
T2	-2.81
T3	-0.62
T4	30.56
T5	22.72
T6	12.50
T7	-2.44
T8	-1.07
T9	-0.561
T10	33.61
T11	23.52
T12	3.17

219 7. Conclusions

220 Lightning induced-voltages are usually computed considering only the low-frequency
 221 grounding resistance when one considers the grounding system of the distribution tower.
 222 This work presented the impact of two different models for the grounding system of
 223 distribution line towers on the lightning-induced voltage on the phase insulators com-
 224 putation. The comparison between the low-frequency grounding resistance (R_{LF}) and
 225 the equivalent circuit corresponding to the wideband grounding frequency response
 226 ($Z(\omega)$) shows that considering only R_{LF} may lead to not-negligible underestimation
 227 of the maximum induced voltage. This aspect is more evident for both first and sub-
 228 sequent strokes in the case of close stroke locations and low soil conductivities, which
 229 represents, by the way, one of the configurations when the lightning-induced voltages
 230 on a distribution line are high and potentially dangerous. On the other hand, for high

- 231 soil conductivity the differences between the two models are negligible. Future work
 232 will extend this analysis to the evaluation of a distribution line lightning performance
 233 to check whether this trend is also confirmed when dealing with statistical calculations.
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 235 Daniele Mestriner; software, Renato Procopio and Rodolfo Moura; validation, Daniele Mestriner
 236 and Marco Schroeder; formal analysis, Daniele Mestriner and Marco Schroeder; writing—original
 237 draft preparation, Daniele Mestriner and Rodolfo Moura; writing—review and editing, Renato
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