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On-rail solution for autonomous inspections in electrical substations

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Abstract

This work presents an alternative solution for autonomous inspections in electrical substations. The autonomous system is a robot that moves on rails, collects infrared and visible images of selected targets, also processes the data and predicts the components lifetime. The robot moves on rails to overcome difficulties found in not paved substations commonly encountered in Brazil. We take advantage of using rails to convey the data by them, minimizing the electromagnetic interference, and at the same time transmitting electrical energy to feed the autonomous system. As part of the quality control process, we compared thermographic inspections made by the robot with inspections made by a trained thermographer using a scientific camera Flir® SC660. The results have shown that the robot achieved satisfactory results, identifying components and measuring temperature accurately. The embodied routine considers the weather changes along the day, providing a standard result of the components thermal response, also gives the uncertainty of temperature measurement, contributing to the quality in the decision making process.

Keywords: Thermography, autonomous inspections, monitoring robot, electrical components, electrical substation.

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