

RCDs technical details

Unwanted tripping - AP-R solution (high immunity)

Unwanted tripping

In the event of disturbance in the mains, the RCDs normally present in the system are tripped, breaking the circuit even in the absence of a true earth fault.

Disturbances of this kind are most often caused by:

- operation overvoltages caused by inserting or removing loads (opening or closing protection of control devices, starting and stopping motors, switching fluorescent lighting systems on and off, etc.)
- overvoltages of atmospheric origin, caused by direct or indirect discharges on the electrical line.

Under these circumstances, breaker tripping is unwanted, since it does not satisfy the need to avoid the risks due to direct and indirect contacts. On the contrary, the sudden and unjustified interruption of the power supply may result in very serious problems.

AP-R RCDs

The ABB range of AP-R anti-disturbance residual current circuit-breakers and blocks was designed to overcome the problem of unwanted tripping due to overvoltages of atmospheric or operation origin.

The electronic circuit in these devices can distinguish between temporary leakage caused by disturbances on the mains and permanent leakage due to actual faults, only breaking the circuit in the latter case.

AP-R residual current circuit-breakers and blocks have a slight delay into the tripping time, but this does not compromise the safety limits set by the Standards in force (release time at $2 I\Delta n=150$ ms).

Guaranteeing conventional residual current protection, their installation in the electrical circuit therefore allows any unwanted tripping to be avoided in domestic and industrial systems in which service continuity is essential.

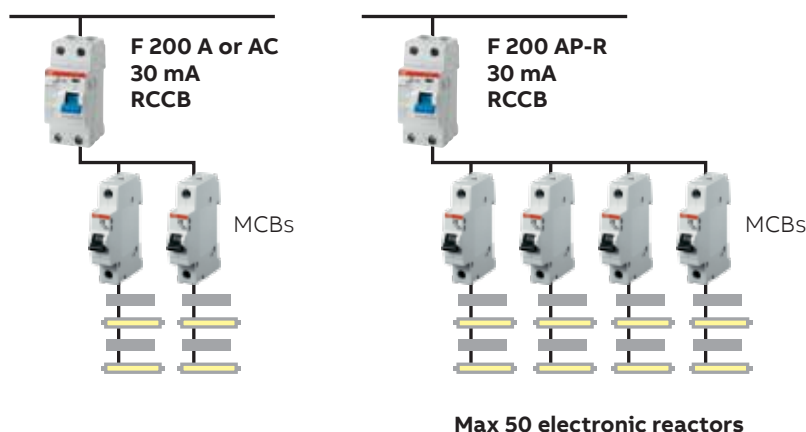
This delay makes the AP-R residual current devices especially suited for installations involving motor starters/variable speed drives, fluorescent lamps or IT/electronic equipment.

The use of multiple electronic reactors for the supply of fluorescent lamps instead generates permanent leakage currents and inrush currents that can cause nuisance tripping of a standard residual current circuit breaker. IT system loads and other electronic equipment (e.g. dimmers, computers, inverters) with capacitive input filters connected between the phases and ground can also generate permanent earth leakage currents whose sum may provoke the nuisance tripping of a standard residual current circuit breaker. For these situations, the AP-R breakers allow a greater number of devices to be connected to the installation.

Frequency converters include a rectifier section and an inverter section.

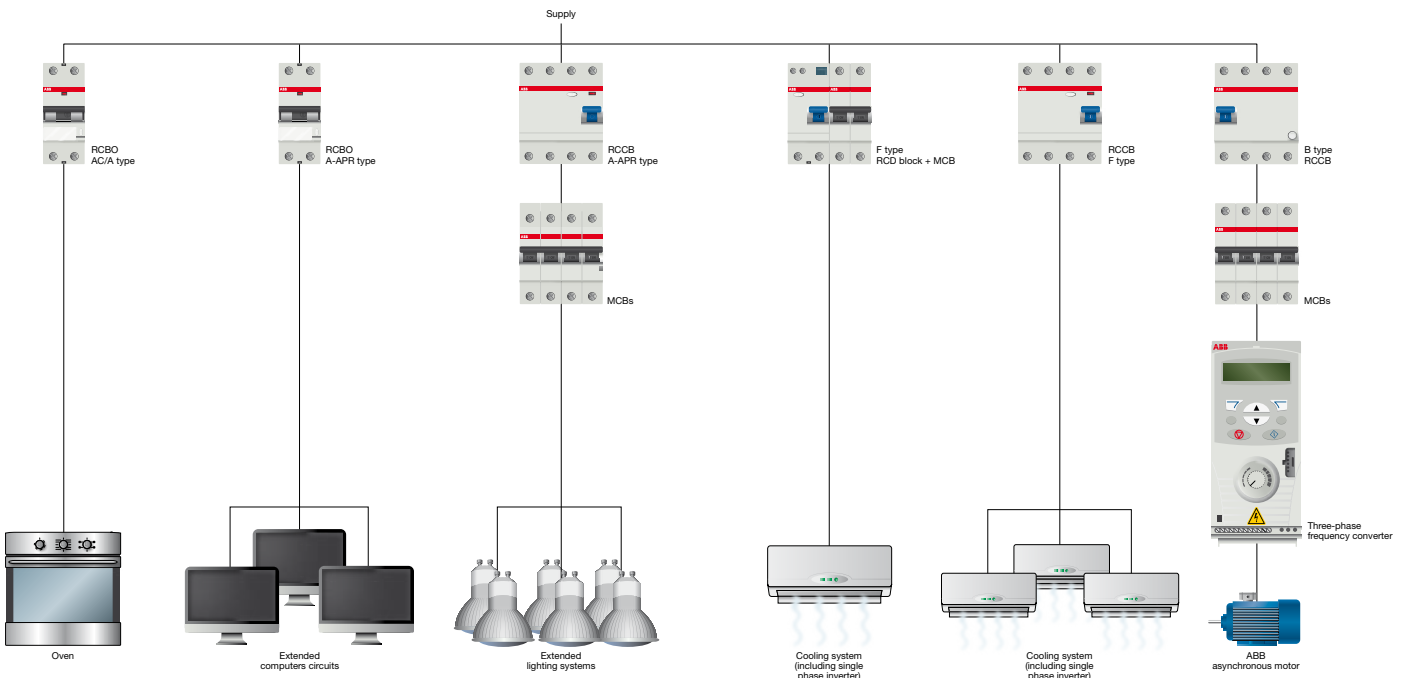
In case of fault within a single-phase frequency converter AP-R type RCDs provide complete protection, because an earth fault occurring downstream the inverter, produces an earth fault current with multi-frequency shape with high amount of harmonics.

While, in case of fault within a three-phase frequency converter, B type RCDs ensure complete protection because in case of insulation fault between the rectifier and the inverter or downstream the inverter we can have a smooth DC earth fault current.



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Compared with standard type breakers, AP-R residual current breakers are therefore characterised, for any given sensibility, by:

- Higher residual trip current
- Tripping time delay
- Better resistance to overvoltages, harmonics and impulse disturbances.

Regulations

The tests set out in the IEC 61008 and IEC 61009 standards verify the resistance of residual current breakers to unwanted tripping provoked by operation overvoltages, using a ring wave impulse shape of 0.5 μ s/100 kHz. All

residual current circuit-breakers are required to pass this test with a peak current value of 200 A.

For what concerns atmospheric overvoltages, the IEC 61008 and 61009 standards prescribe the 8/20 μ s surge test with a 3000 A peak current, but limit the requirement to residual current devices classified as selective; no test is required for other types.

The ABB range of AP-R anti- nuisance tripping breakers and blocks pass the general 0.5 μ s/100 kHz ring wave test and also withstand the 8/20 μ s impulse test with the same peak current of 3000 A prescribed for selective devices.

	A or AC	AP-R	B	Selective
Resistance to unwanted tripping caused by network disturbances with wave shape (0.5 μ s/100 kHz)	250	250	200	250
Resistance to nuisance tripping due to overvoltages (operational or atmospheric) peak (8/20 wave)	N.A.	3000	3000	5000