

## TCI HSD HarmonicShield Passive Harmonic Filters

TCI's **HSD HarmonicShield** series is a line of passive harmonic filters designed to reduce distortion in electrical power systems to extremely low levels ( $\approx 5\%$  THID). These filters are applied at the line input of nonlinear loads – typically variable frequency drives (VFDs), UPS systems, and other rectifier-based equipment – to mitigate the harmonics those devices produce. By filtering out harmonic currents, the HSD series helps facilities meet stringent power quality standards like IEEE 519 and protect their equipment from power distortion issues. **In essence, an HSD filter acts as a trap for unwanted harmonics, ensuring that nearly sinusoidal current is drawn from the source.** It offers a cost-effective alternative to more complex solutions (such as multi-pulse or active front-end drives) while still achieving  $<5\%$  total harmonic current distortion in practice. TCI (Trans-Coil, Inc.) is well-known in the industry for such power quality solutions – for example, Rockwell Automation highlights TCI's harmonic filters as a recommended method to keep drive systems within IEEE 519 limits <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>. With the HSD series, TCI has combined robust passive filter design with modern intelligence (remote monitoring and control features) to deliver reliable harmonic mitigation for a wide range of industrial applications.

*Example of a TCI HarmonicShield HSD passive harmonic filter (floor-mounted enclosure). These filters connect in series with the line feeding a VFD or other nonlinear load to limit current distortion. The HSD series offers advanced options like PQconnect for monitoring and control.*

### Understanding Harmonic Distortion and its Impact

Non-linear loads such as VFDs, soft starters, UPS units, and even high-efficiency lighting or computing loads draw current in abrupt, non-sinusoidal waveforms. This creates **harmonic distortion** in the electrical system – essentially, additional frequency components (integer multiples of the fundamental 50/60 Hz) appearing in the current and voltage. When present on an AC network, **harmonics are an undesirable form of distortion** that can cause a range of problems. Common issues include: overheating of transformers and distribution equipment, nuisance tripping of circuit breakers, degradation or failure of sensitive electronics, and poor power factor due to the reactive currents involved <sup>3</sup>. Over time, excessive harmonics lead to higher losses and reduced equipment lifespan. To safeguard power systems, standards such as **IEEE Std 519-2022** set guidelines on the maximum allowable harmonic distortion (both voltage and current) at a facility's point of common coupling with the utility. In most cases, IEEE 519 limits the total harmonic current distortion (THID/TDD) to around 5% (with specific limits for each harmonic order depending on system characteristics) <sup>4</sup> <sup>2</sup>. Meeting these limits usually requires some form of harmonic mitigation whenever sizable VFDs or other converters are in use.

**Passive harmonic filters** like the TCI HSD series are a proven solution to this problem. They are typically L-C networks (inductors and capacitors) tuned to the predominant harmonic frequencies (e.g. 5th, 7th, etc. for six-pulse drives), which divert or “trap” harmonic currents before they propagate upstream. By installing an HSD filter on the line side of a drive or group of drives, the nonlinear current drawn is smoothened significantly – the filter forces the source current to be much closer to a pure sine wave. This **dramatically lowers the THD** seen by the source. In effect, the drive system with a filter behaves comparably to a multi-pulse or active rectifier but with a simpler and more cost-effective device added externally. The result is

compliance with IEEE 519 limits and elimination of most harmonic-related problems in the facility's power system. For instance, TCI's passive filters (including the HSD) are guaranteed to reduce current distortion to below 5% THD at full load, and even at lighter loads they maintain distortion well under typical unmanaged levels <sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup>. Overall, implementing such filters can **improve power quality, increase equipment reliability, and even yield energy savings** by reducing wasteful reactive currents and losses.

## Key Features of the HSD HarmonicShield Filter

The **HSD HarmonicShield** filter is distinguished by a combination of high performance, robust build, and intelligent features. Below are the key features and capabilities that define this product line:

- **Industry-Leading 5% THD Performance:** Each HSD filter is designed to limit total harmonic current distortion to  $\leq 5\%$  under rated load conditions, and to keep distortion low across a wide load range. This level of filtering meets the most stringent IEEE 519-2022 requirements for harmonic mitigation <sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup>. In fact, TCI guarantees that when properly applied in a standard VFD system, the HSD will achieve  $\leq 5\%$  THD at full load and around **8% THD at 30% load** (far better performance at light load than typical passive filters) <sup>6</sup>. By comparison, an uncontrolled 6-pulse VFD might exhibit ~30–40% THD or more – the HSD filter cuts that down to a level usually only achieved by active or 18-pulse solutions. Maintaining  $<5\%$  distortion means cleaner waveforms, reduced interference, and compliance with utility or customer harmonic limits. The **before/after effect** is dramatic: without filtering, current waveforms from VFDs are highly distorted, whereas with the HSD in place the line current becomes nearly sinusoidal <sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup>. This not only protects upstream infrastructure from overheating and resonance, but also **improves true power factor** by removing harmonic reactive currents <sup>11</sup> <sup>10</sup>.
- **Wide Load Range & Automatic Low-Load Control:** A standout feature of the HSD series is its excellent performance even at partial and light loads. Standard passive filters often lose effectiveness at very low loads and can even cause a leading power factor (because the capacitors supply reactive VARs that exceed the load's needs). The HSD mitigates this issue through an **optional tuning circuit contactor** that can disconnect the filter's capacitors at light load conditions <sup>7</sup>. Essentially, when drive loading falls to a point where leading power factor would occur, the HSD's controller opens the contactor to take the capacitor bank out of circuit (leaving only a line reactor in place). This prevents over-correction and **avoids overvoltage or generator instability problems at no-load**. As soon as load rises again, the contactor can close to re-enable full harmonic filtering. This intelligent control allows the HSD to safely maintain low THD over the widest load range in the industry <sup>12</sup>. For generator-powered systems, a special **low-capacitance version (HSL)** of the HarmonicShield is available, which inherently draws less capacitive reactive current. Using the HSD/HSL with its contactor control ensures **generator compatibility** – avoiding issues of leading VARs or resonances that can occur between filters and generator impedance <sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup>. In summary, the HSD filters deliver top performance at full load **and** remain safe and effective at lighter loads by dynamically adjusting the tuned circuit as needed.
- **High-Quality Components and Rugged Design:** TCI has engineered the HSD series to withstand harsh conditions and the electrical stresses associated with heavy harmonic mitigation. Each filter is built with a **rugged line reactor and tuning reactor**, sized to handle the drive's current and harmonic content. The capacitors used are **harmonic grade power capacitors**, featuring dielectric and thermal characteristics suited for high harmonic currents and voltages (ensuring reliable

operation and long life) <sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> . The overall assembly is housed in a **transformer-style enclosure** (with no free-swinging door in the standard design, for maximum rigidity and safety). Smaller models are typically floor-mounted enclosures; mounting tabs or brackets are provided for secure installation near the respective drive. Depending on the model and application, the HSD filters are available in **UL Type 1 (indoor)** or **Type 3R (outdoor)** enclosures, with appropriately finished, heavy-gauge steel construction <sup>17</sup> . All components are mounted and arranged for optimal cooling by natural convection – **no cooling fans are required**, meaning there are **no moving parts** in the filter’s design that would require maintenance or could fail in service <sup>7</sup> . This passive cooling approach is feasible due to the filter’s efficiency and heat dissipation design, and it further improves reliability in dusty or corrosive environments (no fan filters to clog, etc.). The HSD series is built in the USA and adheres to strict quality standards – it is **UL/cUL listed** (evaluated to UL 508 or UL 508A as applicable for industrial control equipment) and **RoHS II compliant**, indicating no hazardous substances in its construction <sup>16</sup> . TCI backs the product with a **standard 3-year warranty**, reflecting confidence in the durability and long service life of these filters <sup>18</sup> <sup>19</sup> .

- **Advanced Monitoring and PQconnect™ Intelligence:** While passive filters have traditionally been “dumb” devices, the HSD series offers an optional **PQconnect** module that brings intelligent control and IIoT-ready monitoring capabilities. With the **PQconnect option**, an HSD filter is equipped with onboard electronics and sensors to measure key electrical parameters and the status of filter components. This module provides **real-time data** on line and load voltages, currents, harmonic distortion (THID), voltage distortion (THVD), power factor, and even the harmonic spectrum of the current <sup>20</sup> . The data can be accessed remotely via standard industrial communication protocols – **Modbus RTU** (RS-485) is built-in, and **EtherNet/IP** connectivity is available for direct integration into plant networks and PLC/HMI systems <sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup> . Using these communications, facility engineers can tie the filter into a SCADA or energy management system to continuously monitor power quality. TCI also provides a free software suite called **PQvision** (available for PC desktop and as a mobile app) which interfaces with PQconnect-enabled filters <sup>23</sup> <sup>24</sup> . **PQvision** allows users to view real-time metered values, see waveforms of current/voltage, and check harmonic spectra and THD readings in a user-friendly interface. For instance, a maintenance technician could connect via Bluetooth on a tablet or smartphone to an HSD filter and instantly see the THID level and the condition of the filter. In addition to monitoring, PQconnect adds **intelligent control** features: it can autonomously operate the tuning contactor based on sensed conditions (e.g. opening the contactor if a certain low-load threshold or an overload condition is detected) <sup>25</sup> <sup>14</sup> . It also provides **diagnostics and preventive maintenance alerts** – for example, it will notify when a filter capacitor is nearing end-of-life or if any component is experiencing stress outside normal range <sup>26</sup> . This kind of predictive alert allows maintenance to replace components at a convenient time before a failure occurs, thereby avoiding unplanned downtime. Overall, the **PQconnect-equipped HSD** filters give users deep visibility into power quality and filter health, a feature rarely available in passive filters. This bridges the gap between simple passive solutions and more costly active harmonic filters, by delivering intelligence and connectivity in a passive filter system.

*Screenshot of TCI's PQvision software monitoring an HSD filter. The interface displays real-time electrical measurements, harmonic distortion (THD), and waveform data. The PQconnect intelligent module allows*

*integration of the harmonic filter into a plant's control network (via Modbus RTU or EtherNet/IP), enabling remote monitoring and control.*

- **Broad Compatibility and Easy Integration:** The HSD HarmonicShield filters are vendor-agnostic and can be installed with virtually any standard three-phase drive or inverter system. They are designed as **stand-alone input filters** that mount adjacent to the VFD or motor control unit and simply connect in series between the supply and the drive. This means whether you are using ABB, Siemens, Rockwell/Allen-Bradley, Schneider, Yaskawa, Eaton, or any other brand of VFD, an HSD filter can be sized and added to bring that drive's harmonic emissions into compliance. In many cases, drive OEMs themselves recommend or supply passive filters for customers who need to meet IEEE 519 limits – for example, Rockwell Automation's power quality documentation notes that TCI passive filters on 6-pulse drives can achieve <5% TDD even at low loads <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>. The HSD series covers a wide range of system sizes, from about **3 HP to 1000 HP** per filter in standard 60 Hz configurations <sup>27</sup> <sup>28</sup>. (Multiple filters can of course be applied in parallel for larger installations or multiple drives.) Models are available for **480 V and 600 V AC systems** (the common voltages for industrial power in North America) <sup>29</sup>. Installation is straightforward – the filter is wired in front of the drive's input (often the filter will include terminals or bus bars for line/load connections, or cables can be landed on the reactor lugs inside the unit). Because the HSD is **UL-listed as an auxiliary device**, it does not require a separate enclosure listing or SCCR label when added to a panel, simplifying compliance with electrical codes <sup>30</sup>. Users should ensure proper upstream protection is in place (the filter itself typically does *not* include fuses; it relies on the drive's input fusing or breaker for short-circuit protection, since the HSD's design omits integral fusing to keep the design simple <sup>31</sup>). TCI provides selection and sizing tools (e.g. their online **Harmonic Sizing Tool**) and application engineering support to help specify the correct filter model for a given drive and load. In summary, integrating an HSD filter into a drive system is a relatively easy retrofit or design addition, and it is compatible with a broad spectrum of equipment in the field.

## Technical Specifications and Ratings

To understand the capabilities of the HSD HarmonicShield series, it's useful to review its key technical specifications and available configurations:

- **Voltage and Frequency:** HSD filters are designed for **3-phase, 60 Hz** systems at **480 V or 600 V AC** nominal line voltage <sup>32</sup>. (These cover the majority of 480 V class and 600 V class drive applications. For lower voltages like 208–240 V or 380–415 V 50 Hz systems, TCI's HarmonicGuard Passive series (HGP) covers those ranges, whereas HSD targets the medium voltage/higher power segment.) All standard HSD units are tuned for 60 Hz operation; use on 50 Hz systems would require consulting TCI for a proper model or derating.
- **Horsepower (Power) Range:** Standard HSD models cover drive sizes from approximately **3 HP up to 1000 HP** (or roughly 2.2 kW to 750 kW). At 480 V, the smallest HSD is around 3 HP and the largest around 1000 HP; at 600 V, models typically start slightly higher (e.g. ~5 HP) and also go up to ~1000 HP <sup>33</sup>. This wide range means the HSD family can support everything from a small 5 HP fan VFD up to a 1000 HP compressor or pump drive. Filters are selected based on the drive's full-load current (FLA) and the desired harmonic performance – TCI publishes tables of HSD part numbers corresponding to various HP and voltage ratings.

- Harmonic Reduction Performance:** As noted, the HSD guarantees **≤5% THID** at full load for standard drives. More specifically, TCI's performance guarantee (for variable torque VFD applications) states **≤5%** input current distortion at full load *and* **≤8%** at 30% load when using an appropriately sized HSD filter <sup>6</sup>. In practice, many real-world installations see THID levels around 3–5% under normal operation, which is a drastic improvement from the 20–30% (or higher) that the same drive would produce with only a line reactor. The filter also typically yields a true power factor >0.95 by removing the harmonic reactive components, whereas an unfiltered drive might have a true power factor in the 0.80–0.90 range despite a near-unity displacement PF <sup>11</sup> <sup>10</sup>. It's worth noting that HSD filters are primarily optimized for standard six-pulse VFDs with **variable torque loads** (like fans and pumps); they can also be applied on **constant torque drives, DC drives, or other rectifiers**, but in those cases the harmonic profile might differ slightly and distortion levels can vary by load/speed (so the 5% value might not be guaranteed in every scenario) <sup>34</sup> <sup>35</sup>. Even so, they will significantly reduce harmonics in any such application – often to single-digit THD percentages – improving overall power quality.
- Thermal and Environmental Ratings:** The HSD filters are built for industrial environments. The **ambient operating temperature** for enclosed units is **-40 °C to 40 °C** (-40 °F to 104 °F) without derating of performance <sup>36</sup>. (Open-frame versions, if ever used, can tolerate up to 50 °C ambient in some cases <sup>37</sup>.) The filters can be stored in temperatures up to 60 °C (140 °F) safely. **Cooling** is by natural convection – the enclosures are vented or designed to allow air flow by rising heat – and no forced air or fans are required <sup>38</sup>. This means the filter should be installed in an area where free air movement is possible (not buried in insulation or packed tightly with no space). The typical heat dissipation of the filter is on the order of 1–3% of the drive's power; for example, one 15 HP, 480 V HSD filter has about 250 W of loss as heat <sup>39</sup>. Larger units will have higher absolute losses but generally still a small fraction of the drive load. **Altitude:** HSD units are rated for altitudes **up to 2000 meters** (~6560 ft) above sea level without derating <sup>40</sup>. Above 2000 m, air density declines which affects cooling and electrical insulation, so one should consult TCI for possible derating factors if installing at high elevations.
- Enclosures and Form Factor:** All standard HSD filters come in a **floor-mount enclosure** (sometimes referred to as “transformer style” because it resembles a dry-type distribution transformer enclosure). Unlike the HGP series which has a hinged door, the HSD's enclosure typically does **not have a door** – instead, access is via removable panels or by lifting the enclosure hood, which contributes to its higher integrity in the field <sup>41</sup>. Enclosure types available are **UL Type 1** (general purpose, indoor) and **UL Type 3R** (rainproof/weatherproof for outdoor installation) <sup>17</sup>. The enclosure type is indicated in the model number (e.g., HSDXXXXX**W1**1000 for NEMA 1, vs **W3**1000 for NEMA 3R). Physical dimensions and weight depend on the model (larger HP filters can be quite heavy and tall – approaching the size of a small cabinet). All enclosures are painted and built to industrial standards. **Mounting** is floor-standing; users should bolt the enclosure to the floor or a baseplate. (In contrast, the smaller HGP filters can be wall-mounted, but HSD units are generally intended to sit on the floor or a housekeeping pad due to their size/weight <sup>42</sup>.)
- Compliance and Certifications:** The HSD HarmonicShield filters are **UL Listed** and cUL Listed (Canadian) as industrial control equipment. Specifically, HSD is listed to **UL 508** (as an Auxiliary Device) <sup>30</sup>. This means the filter assembly has been tested for safety and can be used in industrial installations in accordance with the National Electrical Code (NEC) and Canadian Electrical Code. Notably, because it's not a full industrial control panel by itself, the HSD does *not* require a Short-

Circuit Current Rating (SCCR) label – SCCR is a requirement for assembled control panels per NEC 409, but the HSD is considered a component device, so that simplifies installation paperwork <sup>30</sup>. (If an end user does require a labeled SCCR for a filter solution, TCI's HGP series – which is UL508A and panelized – provides that, but the tradeoff is a larger enclosure with internal fusing. For most users, the HSD's approach is perfectly acceptable and safe when installed per instructions.) In addition to UL, the HSD filters are **RoHS/RoHS II compliant**, meaning they are manufactured without hazardous substances like lead, mercury, hexavalent chromium, etc. <sup>17</sup> This is important for environmental and safety considerations. Finally, as noted earlier, the filters meet **IEEE 519** guidelines for harmonic limits – effectively “certifying” their performance in terms of power quality compliance. Many consulting engineers and utilities require a guarantee of IEEE 519 compliance for drive systems, and the HSD is explicitly designed to fulfill that requirement <sup>8</sup>.

## Real-World Application Example

To illustrate the impact of the HSD HarmonicShield filter, consider a **real-world scenario** in an industrial facility. Imagine a manufacturing plant operates several large motor drives – say a mix of 100 HP and 200 HP pump and fan VFDs from various manufacturers (ABB, Eaton, and Yaskawa drives are in use on different systems). The facility initially experiences **high current distortion (~25–30% THD)** on its 480 V distribution bus due to these multiple 6-pulse drives. The effects were noticeable: the supply transformers ran hotter than expected (with periodic overheating alarms), and there were random nuisance trips of circuit breakers that protected some of the feeder circuits. Measurements showed the voltage THD at the main bus was exceeding the IEEE 519 recommended 5% limit during peak operation, indicating the harmonic currents were distorting the voltage waveform and potentially stressing other equipment. The true power factor of the facility was also lagging (around 0.85), which hinted at significant reactive and distortion power presence.

To solve these issues, the plant retrofitted **TCI HSD filters** on the input of each VFD. Proper sizing was done for each drive (using the tool and guidance to pick the right filter for 100 HP vs 200 HP units). Once the HSD filters were installed, the improvement was immediate and dramatic. **Current THD dropped to under 5%** at each drive and at the main bus – in line with the HSD's design specs. In fact, a measurement after installation showed about 3–4% THD on the main feeder current, compared to ~28% before. The voltage distortion at the bus dropped below 2%, whereas previously it had been in the 6–8% range during heavy load periods. This brought the facility comfortably **into compliance with IEEE 519-2022** requirements (which for their system size mandated <5% TDD at the point of common coupling). The reduction in harmonics also **eliminated the nuisance breaker trips** – presumably, the cleaner current waveforms reduced heating in the breakers and prevented misoperation of electronic trip units. The transformers in the facility began operating cooler as well; one 1000 kVA distribution transformer, which had run close to its thermal limit before, saw an observable temperature drop (for example, a 10–15 °C reduction in winding temperature during peak load after harmonic filtering, as the eddy current losses due to harmonics were greatly reduced).

Another benefit was the improvement in **power factor and energy efficiency**. With the filters in place, the true power factor rose to about 0.98 (nearly unity). The plant's utility meter now registered much lower reactive power demand. In some cases, installing harmonic filters can translate to direct energy savings – for instance, by removing distortion, the RMS current draw is reduced for the same real power, which can reduce I<sup>2</sup>R losses in cables and transformers. Some facilities have reported double-digit percentage reductions in energy consumption after implementing passive filters and correcting power factor. *In one*

*documented case, an electric motor repair shop saw 12.7% lower energy usage attributed to the installation of passive harmonic filters on their power system <sup>43</sup>. Another case noted about 26% energy savings after mitigating harmonics and unbalance issues in a manufacturing facility <sup>44</sup>. While results vary, the overall trend is that cleaner power can improve system efficiency and certainly avoids wasteful heating of infrastructure. In our example plant, the operators also gained the benefit of the HSD's PQconnect monitoring. They integrated the filters' Modbus outputs into their SCADA software to trend the THD and load data. This gave the maintenance team new visibility into power quality, allowing them to proactively schedule capacitor replacements when the PQconnect alerted that a capacitor's performance was degrading (avoiding any unexpected filter failures).*

**In summary, the HSD filters transformed the facility's electrical environment:** from one plagued by harmonics and random power problems to one that runs within standards, with cooler equipment and improved stability. The drives themselves also benefited – with the line-side harmonics filtered, issues like torque pulsations or excessive DC bus ripple in the drives were reduced, potentially extending the life of the drives' DC bus capacitors and improving motor performance. This kind of real-world success story is why passive harmonic filters like the HSD are widely adopted in industries ranging from HVAC and water treatment (where large pumps and fans are used) to oil & gas, mining, and commercial buildings. Anywhere that multiple VFDs or rectifiers are present, an HSD filter can be a game-changer for power quality.

## Conclusion

The **TCI HSD HarmonicShield** passive harmonic filter stands out as a comprehensive solution for modern power quality challenges. It combines the proven fundamentals of a passive L-C filter (reliable 5% THD mitigation and power factor improvement) with innovative design enhancements like intelligent contactor control and digital connectivity. The result is a filter that not only **protects your electrical system from the damaging effects of harmonics** – overheating, failures, and downtime – but also **integrates into your operations**, providing data and control to maximize performance and uptime. By installing HSD filters, facilities can ensure compliance with IEEE 519 standards, often a requirement for avoiding utility penalties or meeting project specifications, and do so in a cost-effective manner.

From a technical standpoint, the HSD series addresses key concerns that engineers might have with passive filters: it performs exceptionally even at light loads (solving the old leading power factor problem), it is built with components rated for harmonic duty (ensuring longevity), and it's available for large horsepower ranges that previously might have required expensive active solutions. The **addition of PQconnect** means that these filters are not “black boxes” in the corner – they actively communicate their status and let you see the quality of power in real time. This capability aligns well with modern smart infrastructure and IIoT trends in industry.

In conclusion, TCI's HSD HarmonicShield filters offer an **elegant blend of simplicity and sophistication**: you get the simple, robust protection of a passive filter and the sophisticated control/monitoring of a high-tech device. For businesses running numerous drives or other nonlinear loads, the HSD is a valuable tool to ensure power is clean, equipment runs smoothly, and the electrical network remains **healthy, efficient, and compliant** for years to come.

## References

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