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# CHAPTER 15

## STEEL STRUCTURES<sup>1</sup>

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### FOREWORD

Part 1 through Part 4, Part 6, and Part 7 formulate specific and detailed recommendations for the design, fabrication, erection, maintenance, inspection, and rating of steel railway bridges for:

- Spans up to 400 feet,
- Standard gage track,
- Normal North American passenger and freight equipment, and
- Speeds of freight trains up to 80 mph and passenger trains up to 90 mph.

The requirements, however, apply to spans of any length, but special provisions for spans longer than 400 feet should be added by the company as may be required. Part 5, *Bearing Design and Construction*, formulates specific and detailed recommendations for the design and construction of bearings for nonmovable railway bridges of all bridge and span types, including timber, concrete and steel structures. Part 6, *Movable Bridges* provides recommendations for the design and construction of movable bridges, including requirements for special movable bridge bearings not covered within Part 5. Part 8 covers miscellaneous items. Part 9 is a commentary, including references, for explanation of various articles in the other parts.

This chapter is presented as a consensus document by a committee composed of railroad engineers, engineers in private practice, engineers involved in research and teaching, and other industry professionals having substantial and broad-based experience designing, evaluating, and investigating steel structures used by railroads. The recommendations contained herein are based upon past successful usage, advances in the state of knowledge, and changes in design and maintenance practices. These recommendations have been developed and are intended for routine use and may not provide sufficient criteria for infrequently encountered conditions. Therefore, professional judgment must be exercised when applying the recommendations of this chapter as part of an overall solution to any particular issue.

In general, this chapter is revised and published anew on an annual basis. The latest published edition of the chapter should be used, regardless of the age of an existing structure. For purposes of determining historical

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<sup>1</sup> The material in this and other chapters in the AREMA *Manual for Railway Engineering* is published as recommended practice to railroads and others concerned with the engineering, design and construction of railroad fixed properties (except signals and communications), and allied services and facilities (Reference 24). For the purpose of this Manual, RECOMMENDED PRACTICE is defined as a material, device, design, plan, specification, principle or practice recommended to the railways for use as required, either exactly as presented or with such modifications as may be necessary or desirable to meet the needs of individual railways, but in either event, with a view to promoting efficiency and economy in the location, construction, operation or maintenance of railways. It is not intended to imply that other practices may not be equally acceptable.

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recommendations under which an existing structure may have been built and maintained, it can prove useful to examine previously published editions of the chapter. However, when historical recommendations differ from the recommendations contained in the latest published edition of the chapter, the recommendations of the latest published edition of the chapter shall govern.

Grateful acknowledgment is hereby made to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the American Welding Society for having made available their Bridge Welding Code (AWS D1.5) for use by reference in these recommended practices. In applying AWS D1.5, the term “allowable stresses” is to be construed as those allowed herein. Certain other modifications and exceptions to the Code are also recommended.

Grateful acknowledgement is also made to the Society of Protective Coating (SSPC) for use of their publications by reference in the recommendations cited in [Part 8, Section 8.7](#), regarding the cleaning and painting of existing steel railway bridges.

Part 2, Design – High Strength Steels was combined with [Part 1, Design](#) in 1993.

Part 5, Special Types of Construction was combined with [Part 1, Design](#) in 2008.

Part 10, Bearing Design, and Part 11, Bearing Construction, were combined into a new [Part 5, Bearing Design and Construction](#) in 2013.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part/Section	Description	Page
<b>Special Index</b> .....		<b>15-vi</b>
<b>1 Design</b> .....		<b>15-1-1</b>
1.1	Proposals and Drawings .....	15-1-5
1.2	General Requirements .....	15-1-7
1.3	Loads, Forces and Stresses .....	15-1-14
1.4	Basic Allowable Stresses .....	15-1-41
1.5	General Rules .....	15-1-47
1.6	Members Stressed Primarily in Axial Tension or Compression .....	15-1-52
1.7	Members Stressed Primarily in Bending .....	15-1-58
1.8	Floor Members and Floorbeam Hangers .....	15-1-70
1.9	Construction with Fasteners .....	15-1-70
1.10	Welded Construction .....	15-1-72
1.11	Bracing .....	15-1-74
1.12	Pins and Pin-Connected Members .....	15-1-75
1.13	Continuous and Cantilever Steel Structures .....	15-1-76
1.14	Fracture-Critical Members .....	15-1-79
1.15	Live Load Moments, Shears and Reactions .....	15-1-81
<b>3 Fabrication</b> .....		<b>15-3-1</b>
3.1	General .....	15-3-3
3.2	Bolted Construction .....	15-3-9
3.3	Welded Construction .....	15-3-19
3.4	Shop Painting .....	15-3-19
3.5	Inspection .....	15-3-21
3.6	Shipment and Pay Weight .....	15-3-21
<b>4 Erection</b> .....		<b>15-4-1</b>
4.1	General (1992) R(2015) .....	15-4-2
4.2	Definitions of Terms (2015) R(2021) .....	15-4-2
4.3	Work to be Done (2002) R(2021) .....	15-4-2
4.4	Drawings or Special Provisions to Govern (1992) R(2021) .....	15-4-3
4.5	Plant (1992) R(2021) .....	15-4-3
4.6	Plans (2017) .....	15-4-3
4.7	Delivery of Materials (1992) R(2015) .....	15-4-3
4.8	Handling and Storing Materials (1992) R(2015) .....	15-4-4
4.9	Establishment of Lines and Elevations .....	15-4-4
4.10	Bearings and Anchorage (2002) R(2021) .....	15-4-4
4.11	Erection Procedure, Shoring and Falsework (2018) .....	15-4-4
4.12	Alteration of Members (2016) .....	15-4-5
4.13	Allowable Stresses During Erection (1991) R(2021) .....	15-4-6
4.14	Drift or Traffic Pins (1991) R(2021) .....	15-4-6
4.15	Field Assembly of Members (2017) .....	15-4-6
4.16	Fit-up of Field Connections (2017) .....	15-4-7
4.17	High-Strength Bolted Field Connections (1991) R(2021) .....	15-4-7
4.18	Field Welding (1991) R(2021) .....	15-4-7
4.19	Field Connections Using Pins (1991) R(2015) .....	15-4-7
4.20	Field Inspection (1991) R(2021) .....	15-4-7

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT)

Part/Section	Description	Page
4.21	Misfits (1991) R(2015) . . . . .	15-4-8
4.22	Field Cleaning and Coating (2016) . . . . .	15-4-8
4.23	Deck (1991) R(2015) . . . . .	15-4-8
4.24	Removal of Old Structure and Falsework, and Cleanup (2018) . . . . .	15-4-9
4.25	Contract Requirements (2022) . . . . .	15-4-9
<b>5</b>	<b>Bearing Design and Construction . . . . .</b>	<b>15-5-1</b>
5.1	Bearing Design . . . . .	15-5-4
5.2	Basic Allowable Stresses . . . . .	15-5-12
5.3	Steel Bearing Component Design . . . . .	15-5-14
5.4	Bronze or Copper-Alloy Sliding Expansion Bearing Design . . . . .	15-5-20
5.5	PTFE Sliding Bearing Surface Design . . . . .	15-5-21
5.6	Elastomeric Bearing Design . . . . .	15-5-25
5.7	Multi-Rotational Bearing Design . . . . .	15-5-36
5.8	Bearing Construction . . . . .	15-5-41
5.9	Steel Bearing Component Construction . . . . .	15-5-43
5.10	Bronze or Copper-Alloy Sliding Expansion Bearing Construction . . . . .	15-5-47
5.11	PTFE Sliding Bearing Surface Construction . . . . .	15-5-48
5.12	Elastomeric Bearing Construction . . . . .	15-5-51
5.13	Multi-Rotational Bearing Construction . . . . .	15-5-56
<b>6</b>	<b>Movable Bridges . . . . .</b>	<b>15-6-1</b>
6.1	Proposals and General Requirements . . . . .	15-6-5
6.2	General Features of Design . . . . .	15-6-13
6.3	Loads, Forces and Stresses . . . . .	15-6-18
6.4	Basic Allowable Stresses and Hydraulic Pressures . . . . .	15-6-29
6.5	General Details . . . . .	15-6-35
6.6	Wire Ropes and Sockets . . . . .	15-6-73
6.7	Power Equipment . . . . .	15-6-76
6.8	Workmanship . . . . .	15-6-101
6.9	Erection . . . . .	15-6-106
<b>7</b>	<b>Existing Bridges . . . . .</b>	<b>15-7-1</b>
7.1	General . . . . .	15-7-2
7.2	Inspection . . . . .	15-7-4
7.3	Rating . . . . .	15-7-13
7.4	Repair, Strengthening and Retrofitting . . . . .	15-7-26
7.5	Maintenance . . . . .	15-7-34
<b>8</b>	<b>Miscellaneous . . . . .</b>	<b>15-8-1</b>
8.1	Turntables . . . . .	15-8-3
8.2	Methods of Shortening Eyebars to Equalize the Stress . . . . .	15-8-11
8.3	Anchorage of Decks and Rails on Steel Bridges . . . . .	15-8-17
8.4	Unloading Pits . . . . .	15-8-21
8.5	Walkways, Handrails, and Fixed Ladders on Bridges . . . . .	15-8-29
8.6	Guidelines for Evaluating Fire Damaged Steel Railway Bridges . . . . .	15-8-32
8.7	Cleaning and Coating of Existing Steel Railway Bridges . . . . .	15-8-35
<b>9</b>	<b>Commentary . . . . .</b>	<b>15-9-1</b>
	Part 1 Design . . . . .	15-9-7
	Part 3 Fabrication . . . . .	15-9-56

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT)

Part/Section	Description	Page
Part 4 Erection .....		15-9-61
Part 5 Bearing Design and Construction .....		15-9-62
Part 6 Movable Bridges .....		15-9-73
Part 7 Existing Bridges .....		15-9-79
Part 8 Miscellaneous .....		15-9-94
<b>Chapter 15 Glossary .....</b>		<b>15-G-1</b>
<b>References .....</b>		<b>15-R-1</b>
<b>Appendix 1 - Rivets (Legacy) .....</b>		<b>15-A1-1</b>

## INTRODUCTION

The Chapters of the AREMA Manual are divided into numbered Parts, each comprised of related documents (specifications, recommended practices, plans, etc.). Individual Parts are divided into Sections by centered headings set in capital letters and identified by a Section number. These Sections are subdivided into Articles designated by numbered side headings.

**Page Numbers** – In the page numbering of the Manual (15-3-1, for example) the first numeral designates the Chapter number, the second denotes the Part number in the Chapter, and the third numeral designates the page number in the Part. Thus, 15-3-1 means Chapter 15, Part 3, page 1.

In the Glossary and References, the Part number is replaced by either a “G” for Glossary or “R” for References.

**Document Dates** – The bold type date (Document Date) at the beginning of each document (Part) applies to the document as a whole and designates the year in which revisions were last published somewhere in the document, unless an attached footnote indicates that the document was adopted, reapproved, or rewritten in that year.

**Article Dates** – Each Article shows the date (in parenthesis) of the last publication of revisions to that Article.

**Reaffirmed Dates** - Each Article is being reviewed and reaffirmed every 6 years beginning with the year 2002. If no technical changes are made, the publication date of the last reaffirmation is shown following the title of the Article and the Article Date.

**Revision Marks** – All current year revisions (changes and additions) which have been incorporated into the document are identified by a vertical line along the outside margin of the page, directly beside the modified information.

**Proceedings Footnote** – The Proceedings footnote on the first page of each document gives references to all Association action with respect to the document.

**Annual Updates** – New manuals, as well as revision sets, will be printed and issued yearly.

## Special Index

This special index is provided for assistance in the preparation of plans and other contract papers for the construction of new bridges. It covers [Part 1, Design](#) and [Part 3, Fabrication](#), with limited references to other chapters and parts.

Subject	Article Number
Abutting joints	<a href="#">3.1.13</a>
Accessibility of parts	<a href="#">1.5.5</a>
Advance material	<a href="#">3.6.2</a>
Alignment of finished holes	<a href="#">3.2.12</a>
Allowable bearing pressure on concrete	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Allowable bearing pressures, masonry	<a href="#">1.4.4 &amp; Part 5</a>
Allowable fatigue stress range	<a href="#">1.3.13</a>
Allowable load, HS bolts, special surface treatment	<a href="#">Table 15-9-5</a>
Allowable stresses, basic	<a href="#">Part 1, Section 1.4</a>
Allowable stresses, cast steel	<a href="#">1.4.3</a>
Allowable stresses, end floorbeams	<a href="#">1.8.1</a>
Allowable stresses, structural steel, fasteners and pins	<a href="#">1.4.1</a>
Allowable stresses, weld metal	<a href="#">1.4.2</a>
Anchor bolts	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Angles or tees, effective section	<a href="#">1.6.5</a>
Angles, size of fasteners	<a href="#">1.9.4</a>
Assembly	<a href="#">3.2.10</a>
Attachments, welded	<a href="#">1.10.4</a>
Authority of inspector	<a href="#">3.5.2</a>
AWS Structural Welding Code application	<a href="#">1.2.2</a>
Ballasted deck structures, distribution of live load	<a href="#">1.3.4.2</a>
Base and cap plates, fitting	<a href="#">3.1.16</a>
Base plates	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Bearing area effective for fasteners and pins	<a href="#">1.5.3</a>
Bearing plates and pedestals, surfaces	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Bearing stiffeners	<a href="#">1.7.7</a>
Bearings, end	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Bearings inclined	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Bent bracing	<a href="#">1.11.5</a>
Bolts, high-strength, installation	<a href="#">3.2.3</a>
Bolts, nuts and washers, high-strength	<a href="#">3.2.1</a>
Box members, drainage	<a href="#">1.5.15</a>
Bracing between compression members	<a href="#">1.3.11</a>
Bracing of top flange of through girders	<a href="#">1.11.1</a>

Subject	Article Number
Bracing of viaduct towers and bents	1.11.5
Bracing, lateral	1.11.2
Bracing, portal and sway	1.11.3
Built-up member, connection of components	1.5.14
Butt joints, width or thickness transition for welding	1.10.1
Camber	1.2.10
Cambering of girder webs	3.1.6
Cantilever spans	Part 1, Section 1.13
Cast steel, allowable stresses	1.4.3
Categories for fatigue stresses, examples	Table 15-1-8
Categories of stress for fatigue consideration	Table 15-1-8
Centrifugal force	1.3.6
Clearance diagram	Figure 15-1-1
Clearances	1.2.6
Clearances for electrified operation	1.2.6
Clearances for pins	3.1.14
Combinations of welds, fasteners	1.5.12
Combined axial compression and bending, allowable stresses	1.3.14.1
Combined axial tension and bending, allowable stresses	1.3.14.2
Composite steel and concrete spans	1.7.9
Compression members	1.6.1
Compression members, bracing between	1.3.11
Compression members, forked ends	1.12.4
Concrete deck design	1.3.4.2.2d
Concrete, allowable bearing pressures	Part 5
Conflict between drawings and specifications	1.1.6
Connections and splices	1.5.9
Connections of components of built-up members	1.5.14
Connections, field	1.5.10
Consultant use on public works projects	1.1.10
Contact surfaces not to be painted	3.4.1c
Continuous spans	Part 1, Section 1.13
Cooper E series live load	1.3.3
Cover plates on rolled beams	1.7.2.2
Cross frames for deck spans	1.11.4
Cycles of stress for fatigue considerations	Table 15-1-6
Dead load	1.3.2
Deck design, concrete	1.3.4.2.2d
Deck design, timber	1.3.4.2.2d

Subject	Article Number
Deck spans, cross frames and diaphragms	<a href="#">1.11.4</a>
Deck thickness, minimum for various materials	<a href="#">1.3.4.2.2c</a>
Definitions, FCM provisions	<a href="#">1.14.2</a>
Definitions, general	<a href="#">1.1.1</a>
Deflection	<a href="#">1.2.5</a>
Detail categories for fatigue consideration	<a href="#">Table 15-1-8</a>
Development of fillers	<a href="#">1.5.11</a>
Diaphragms for deck spans	<a href="#">1.11.4</a>
Dimensional tolerances	<a href="#">3.1.7</a>
Dimensional tolerances for truss and viaduct tower members	<a href="#">3.1.7.3</a>
Dimension for stress calculations	<a href="#">1.2.7</a>
Direct-tension indicators for use with high-strength bolts	<a href="#">3.2.3</a>
Dissimilar fasteners in a connection	<a href="#">1.5.12</a>
Distribution of live load	<a href="#">1.3.4</a>
Distribution of live load, ballasted deck structures	<a href="#">1.3.4</a>
Distribution of live load, open deck structures	<a href="#">1.3.4</a>
Drainage of pockets	<a href="#">1.5.6</a>
Drawings - contractor's responsibilities	<a href="#">1.1.5</a>
Drawings - engineer's responsibilities	<a href="#">1.1.3</a>
Drawings govern over specifications	<a href="#">1.1.6</a>
Drifting during assembly	<a href="#">3.2.14</a>
Earthquake forces	<a href="#">1.3.17</a>
Eccentric connections	<a href="#">1.5.7</a>
Edge distance, base and masonry plates	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Edge distance, fasteners	<a href="#">1.9.3</a>
Effective diameter of fasteners	<a href="#">1.5.2</a>
Effective dimensions of base and masonry plates	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Effective dimensions of rollers and rockers	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Effective dimensions of shoes and pedestals	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Effective dimensions, base and masonry plates	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Effective section of angles or tees	<a href="#">1.6.5</a>
End bearings	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
End floorbeams	<a href="#">1.8.1</a>
Erection	<a href="#">Part 4</a>
Existing bridges	<a href="#">Part 7</a>
Expansion	<a href="#">1.2.13</a>
Eyebars	<a href="#">Table 15-1-8, 7.2.5, 7.2.6, 7.3.3, 7.4.4, 8.2, 9.7.3.3</a>
Eyebars, shortening	<a href="#">8.2, 9.8.2</a>



Subject	Article Number
Fabricated material, marking, shipping and loading	3.6.1
Fabricator qualification	3.1.1
Fabricator qualification, fracture control plan	1.14.4
Facilities for inspection	3.5.1
Facing floorbeams, stringers and girders	3.1.12
Fastener sizes in angles	1.9.4
Fasteners and pins, effective bearing area	1.5.3
Fasteners for field use, quantity to be supplied	3.2.4
Fasteners in indirect splices	1.9.5
Fasteners, dissimilar types in a connection	1.5.12
Fasteners, edge distance	1.9.3
Fasteners, effective diameter	1.5.2
Fasteners, minimum number per connection plane	1.5.9
Fasteners, pitch and gage defined	1.9.1
Fasteners, spacing	1.9.2
Fatigue loading on high-strength bolts	1.3.13.1
Fatigue, classification of members for E-80 loading	Table 15-1-6
Fatigue, dissimilar fasteners in a connection	1.5.12
Fatigue, general	1.3.13
Fatigue, stress categories	Table 15-1-8
Fatigue, stress ranges allowed	Table 15-1-9
Field connections	1.5.10
Field welds for live load stress prohibited	1.5.10
Fillers, development	1.5.11
Fillet welds	1.10.3
Fit of stiffeners	3.1.11
Fitting for shop bolting	3.2.14
Fitting of base and cap plates	3.1.16
Flange sections of girders	1.7.2
Flanges splices, girders	1.7.5
Flange-to-web connection, girders	1.7.4
Flange-to-web welds	3.3.3
Floor members, end connections	1.8.3
Floorbeam reactions for E-80 live load	Part 9
Floorbeams and Floorbeam hangers	1.8.2
Floorbeams, end	1.8.1
Floorbeams, end connections	1.8.3
Forked ends of compression members	1.12.4
Fracture control plan	1.14.1

Subject	Article Number
Fracture-critical members or member components definitions	<a href="#">1.14.2</a>
Fracture-critical members, design responsibilities	<a href="#">1.14.3</a>
Fracture-critical members	<a href="#">Part 1, Section 1.14</a>
General rules	<a href="#">Part 1, Section 1.5</a>
Girder flanges, construction with fasteners	<a href="#">1.7.2.1</a>
Girder flanges, welded construction	<a href="#">1.7.2.2</a>
Girders and beams, proportioning	<a href="#">1.7.1</a>
Girders, through, bracing of top flanges	<a href="#">1.11.1</a>
Guard (inner) rails, steel	<a href="#">1.2.12</a>
Guard timbers	<a href="#">1.2.12</a>
Gusset plates of trusses, minimum thickness	<a href="#">1.5.4</a>
Height of rail	<a href="#">1.2.6</a>
High-strength bolted joints, inspection	<a href="#">3.5.4</a>
High-strength bolts fatigue tension loading on	<a href="#">1.3.13.1</a>
High-strength bolts, installation	<a href="#">3.2.3</a>
High-strength bolts, installation tension required	<a href="#">Table 15-1-12</a>
High-strength bolts, nuts and washers	<a href="#">3.2.1</a>
High-strength bolts, re-use	<a href="#">3.2.3(3)</a>
High-strength bolts, special surface treatment	<a href="#">Part 9, Section 9.1.4</a>
High-strength structural steel	<a href="#">1.2.1b</a> and <a href="#">Table 15-9-1</a>
Hole Alignment	<a href="#">3.2.12</a>
Holes for field fasteners	<a href="#">3.2.7</a>
Holes for shop fasteners	<a href="#">3.2.6</a>
Holes, oversize, short slotted, long slotted	<a href="#">9.3.2.6</a>
Holes, size and workmanship	<a href="#">3.2.5</a>
Impact load	<a href="#">1.3.5</a>
Impact load, girder flange-to-web connections	<a href="#">1.7.4</a>
Impact tests, FCM material	<a href="#">1.2.1b</a> , <a href="#">1.14.5</a> and <a href="#">Table 15-9-3</a>
Impact tests, other than FCM material	<a href="#">1.2.1b</a> and <a href="#">Table 15-9-2</a>
Inclined bearings	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Indirect splices, fasteners	<a href="#">1.9.5</a>
Inspection facilities	<a href="#">3.5.1</a>
Inspection of high-strength bolted joints	<a href="#">3.5.4</a>
Inspection of welded fabrication	<a href="#">3.5.5</a>
Inspector authority	<a href="#">3.5.2</a>
Installation of high-strength bolts	<a href="#">3.2.3</a>
Interaction formula for combined compression and bending	<a href="#">1.3.14.1</a>
Intermediate stiffeners	<a href="#">1.7.8</a>

Subject	Article Number
Intermittent field welds prohibited	<a href="#">1.10.2</a>
Jacking provisions applied to end floorbeams	<a href="#">1.8.1</a>
Lacing	<a href="#">1.6.4.2</a>
Lacing bars, round ends required	<a href="#">3.1.10</a>
Lacing, shear force	<a href="#">1.6.4.1</a>
Lateral bracing	<a href="#">1.11.2</a>
Lateral forces from equipment	<a href="#">1.3.9</a>
Live load	<a href="#">1.3.3</a>
Live load distribution, ballasted deck structures	<a href="#">1.2.3</a>
Live load distribution, open deck structures	<a href="#">1.3.4</a>
Load, live	<a href="#">1.3.3</a>
Loads and forces	<a href="#">1.3.1</a>
Longitudinal beams or girders, design	<a href="#">1.3.4.2.4</a>
Longitudinal force	<a href="#">1.3.12</a>
Machined surfaces, shop painting	<a href="#">3.4.2</a>
Map for service temperature, Canada	<a href="#">Figure 15-9-2</a>
Map for service temperatures, USA	<a href="#">Figure 15-9-1</a>
Marking fabricated material	<a href="#">3.6.1</a>
Masonry plates	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Masonry allowable bearing pressures	<a href="#">1.4.4 &amp; Part 5</a>
Match marking	<a href="#">3.2.11</a>
Material orders and shipping statements	<a href="#">3.1.2</a>
Material storage	<a href="#">3.1.4</a>
Material weldability	<a href="#">1.10.6</a>
Materials	<a href="#">1.2.1</a>
Moment, shear, pier reaction table, E-80	<a href="#">Part 9</a>
Movable bridges	<a href="#">Part 6</a>
Multiple tracks, live load	<a href="#">1.3.3</a>
Nameplates	<a href="#">1.2.11</a>
Net section	<a href="#">1.5.8</a>
Nondestructive testing personnel qualification, FCM work	<a href="#">1.14.1</a>
Notch toughness for weld metal, fracture control plan	<a href="#">1.14.1</a>
Notch toughness, FCM material	<a href="#">1.2.1b, 1.14.5 and Table 15-9-3</a>
Notch toughness, other than FCM material	<a href="#">1.2.1b and Table 15-9-2</a>
Notice of beginning fabrication	<a href="#">3.1.3</a>
Notice to Engineer	<a href="#">1.1.8</a>
Open deck structures, distribution of live load	<a href="#">1.3.4.1</a>
Oversize holes	<a href="#">9.3.2.6</a>

Subject	Article Number
Painting of interiors of closed box members not required	<a href="#">1.5.15</a>
Patented devices	<a href="#">1.1.7</a>
Pay weight	<a href="#">3.6.3</a>
Pedestals	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Perforated cover plates	<a href="#">1.6.4.3</a>
Perforated cover plates, shear force	<a href="#">1.6.4.1</a>
Permits	<a href="#">1.1.9</a>
Pier reactions for E-80 live load	<a href="#">Part 9</a>
Pin clearance	<a href="#">3.1.14</a>
Pin holes, reinforcing plates	<a href="#">1.12.3</a>
Pin holes, section	<a href="#">1.12.2</a>
Pins	<a href="#">1.12.1</a>
Pins and rollers	<a href="#">3.1.15 &amp; Part 5</a>
Planing sheared edges	<a href="#">3.1.9</a>
Plug and slot welds prohibited	<a href="#">1.10.2</a>
Portal bracing	<a href="#">1.11.3</a>
Preferred types of bridges	<a href="#">1.2.3</a>
Preparation of material for welding	<a href="#">3.3.2</a>
Prohibited types of joints and welds	<a href="#">1.10.2</a>
Prohibited weld, tack welding on tension flanges	<a href="#">3.3.3</a>
Proportioning girders and beams	<a href="#">1.7.1</a>
Proportioning truss web members	<a href="#">1.3.16</a>
Proposals	<a href="#">1.1.2</a>
Prying action on high-strength bolts	<a href="#">1.3.13.1</a>
Public works projects	<a href="#">1.1.10</a>
Qualification of fabricator, fracture-critical members	<a href="#">1.14.1 &amp; 3.1.1</a>
Qualification of fabricators	<a href="#">3.1.1</a>
Qualification of welders, fracture-critical members	<a href="#">1.14.1</a>
Quality control and assurance, fracture-critical members	<a href="#">1.14.1</a>
Quantity of field fasteners	<a href="#">3.2.4</a>
Radial force from welded rail	<a href="#">Part 8, Section 8.3</a>
Rail height	<a href="#">1.2.6</a>
Re-entrant corners, thermal cutting	<a href="#">3.1.6</a>
Reaming and drilling after assembly	<a href="#">3.2.10</a>
Reaming and drilling templates	<a href="#">3.2.8</a>
Reaming and drilling through templates	<a href="#">3.2.9</a>
Reinforcing plates at pin holes	<a href="#">1.12.3</a>
Rejection of shop fabrication	<a href="#">3.5.3</a>
Reuse of high-strength bolts	<a href="#">3.2.3(3)</a>

Subject	Article Number
Rigid frame structures	<a href="#">1.7.10</a>
Rivet grip, taper and extra rivet requirements	<a href="#">A1.1.9.2</a>
Riveting requirements and riveting	<a href="#">A1.3.2.1</a>
Rockers	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Rocking effect	<a href="#">1.3.5</a>
Sealing	<a href="#">1.5.13</a>
Secondary stress	<a href="#">1.3.15</a>
Secondary stress floorbeam hangers, subverticals	<a href="#">9.1.3.15</a>
Service temperature map, Canada	<a href="#">Figure 15-9-2</a>
Service temperature map, USA	<a href="#">Figure 15-9-1</a>
Shear force in lacing or perforated cover plates	<a href="#">1.6.4.1</a>
Sheared edges, planing	<a href="#">3.1.9</a>
Shears for E-80 live load	<a href="#">Part 9</a>
Shipping fabricated material	<a href="#">3.6.1</a>
Shoes	<a href="#">Part 5</a>
Shop drawings - contractor's responsibilities	<a href="#">1.1.5</a>
Shop drawings - engineer's responsibilities	<a href="#">1.1.3</a>
Shop painting	<a href="#">3.4.1</a>
Shop painting of machined surfaces	<a href="#">3.4.2</a>
Shortening eyebars	<a href="#">8.2, 9.8.2</a>
Size and workmanship of holes	<a href="#">3.2.5</a>
Skew bridges	<a href="#">1.2.8</a>
Slenderness ratio	<a href="#">1.5.1</a>
Slotted holes	<a href="#">9.3.2.6</a>
Spacing of fasteners	<a href="#">1.9.2</a>
Spacing of trusses, girders, and stringers	<a href="#">1.2.4</a>
Specifications governed by drawings	<a href="#">1.1.6</a>
Splices, abutting joints	<a href="#">3.1.13</a>
Splices, girder flanges	<a href="#">1.7.5</a>
Splices, girder webs	<a href="#">1.7.6</a>
Splicing compression members	<a href="#">1.5.9</a>
Squaring-up bridge ends	<a href="#">1.2.8</a>
Stability of spans and towers	<a href="#">1.3.10</a>
Stay plates	<a href="#">1.6.3</a>
Steel, structural	<a href="#">1.2.1b</a> and <a href="#">Table 15-9-1</a>
Stiffener fit	<a href="#">3.1.11</a>
Stiffeners, bearing	<a href="#">1.7.7</a>
Stiffeners, intermediate	<a href="#">1.7.8</a>
Stiffeners, intermediate, welded to girder webs	<a href="#">1.10.4</a>

Subject	Article Number
Storage of material	3.1.4
Straightening material	3.1.5
Stress categories for fatigue consideration	Table 15-1-8
Stresses allowed, basic	Part 1, Section 1.4
Stringers, end connections	1.8.3
Structural steel	1.2.1b and Table 15-9-1
Structural steel, high-strength	1.2.1b and Table 15-9-1
Surfaces of bearing plates and pedestals	Part 5
Sway bracing	1.11.3
Tack welding, prohibited on tension flanges	3.3.4
Templates for reaming and drilling	3.2.8
Tension required in installed high-strength bolts	Table 15-1-12
Thickness of compression members elements	1.6.1
Thickness of girder web plates	1.7.3
Thickness of metal	1.5.4
Thickness outstanding elements of compression members	1.6.2
Through girders, bracing of top flanges	1.11.1
Ties for open deck bridges	1.2.9
Timber bridge tie requirements	Chapter 7
Timber deck design	1.3.4.2.2d
Timber guards	1.2.12
Thermal cutting	3.1.6
Tolerances of dimensions	3.1.7
Tolerances of dimensions, truss and viaduct tower members	3.1.7.3
Tolerances, sweep and camber	3.1.7.1e (2)
Tower and span stability	1.3.10
Transition of thickness or width in welded butt joints	1.10.1
Transverse beams without stringers, diaphragm requirements	1.11.4h
Transverse beams, design	1.3.4.2.3
Turn-of-nut method for installing HS bolts, nut rotation	Table 15-3-2
Turn-of-nut method of installing high-strength bolts	3.2.3d
Turntables	Part 8, Section 8.1
Types of bridges preferred	1.2.3
Unloading pits	Part 8, Section 8.4
Uplift on anchor bolts	Part 5
Viaduct tower bracing	1.11.5
Walkways and handrails on bridges	Part 8, Section 8.5
Web members of trusses, proportioning	1.3.16
Web plate thickness, girders	1.7.3

Subject	Article Number
Web splices, girders	<a href="#">1.7.6</a>
Webs of bolted girders, control of edge position	<a href="#">3.1.7.2</a>
Weight of fabricated material for payment purposes	<a href="#">3.6.3</a>
Weights of material shipped	<a href="#">3.1.2</a>
Weld metal, allowable stresses	<a href="#">1.4.2</a>
Weldability of material	<a href="#">1.10.6</a>
Welded attachments	<a href="#">1.10.4</a>
Welded butt joints	<a href="#">1.10.1</a>
Welded closed box members	<a href="#">1.5.15</a>
Welded fabrication	<a href="#">Part 3, Section 3.3</a>
Welded fabrication, inspection	<a href="#">3.5.5</a>
Welded rail on bridges	<a href="#">Part 8, Section 8.3</a>
Welding index	<a href="#">Part 9</a>
Welding requirements, fracture-critical members	<a href="#">1.14.1</a>
Welding requirements, general	<a href="#">1.2.2</a>
Welding, general	<a href="#">3.3.1</a>
Welds and joints, prohibited types	<a href="#">1.10.2</a>
Welds, fillet	<a href="#">1.10.3</a>
Welds, intermediate stiffeners to girder webs	<a href="#">1.10.4</a>
Width of outstanding elements of compression members	<a href="#">1.6.2</a>
Wind combined with other loads, allowable stresses	<a href="#">1.3.14.3</a>
Wind force on loaded bridge	<a href="#">1.3.7</a>
Wind force on unloaded bridge	<a href="#">1.3.8</a>
Wind force only, allowable stresses	<a href="#">1.3.14.3</a>

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