

Thoughts on Reports

We are occasionally asked what to include in a project report. While all projects are different, and their reports should always meet the particular requirements of the project in question, some general guidelines may be useful to Investigators.

Fundamental Requirements

Remember that AISC distributes interim and final reports to our various Committees as needed, and also publishes final reports to the public on our website, so formatting and style should be suitable for publication and reference by others.

Submittals should be in English, have consecutive page numbering, and contain contact information for the author(s). There is a preference for U.S. Customary units, although S.I. may be used as long as the U.S. Customary equivalent appears in parentheses.

References and citations may be given in any of the major referencing styles, and please supply captions for any figures/tables/images.

Unless there is a particular reason to do otherwise, Reports should be in PDF form and images should be formatted for clarity (color or B/W is not a concern).

Interim Reports

The core premise of the interim report is to inform AISC of your progress to date in a manner that is somewhat more formal and technically complete than a simple status update. These reports are distributed to the AISC Committee on Research. Occasionally, when necessary, they are used to identify the need for “mid-course” corrections in the project to ensure eventual success.

The document sections outlined below are suggestions; the key is to communicate what you have done thus far, where you stand in relation to your original project plan (and any changes to that plan that may be necessary), what will happen next and how you expect to proceed.

Document Sections

These sections are general in nature, and do not have to be named as shown here. Think of these as the categories of information we need to properly assess your progress.

- Summary
 - Briefly outline the nature of the project, its justification, and identify the major participants.
- Objectives
 - List and briefly justify the overall objectives for the project
 - Outline the project plan as developed to date
- Progress Report
 - This should constitute the majority of the interim report.
 - Discuss work performed to date, whether physical or analytical, along with any illustrations that may be necessary.
 - If results have been gathered, they should be discussed even if incomplete or otherwise provisional.
 - Of particular note, if the original proposal did not completely specify a method (such as the individual details of testing arrangement to be used), and that method has subsequently been defined, please take care to clearly discuss the matter so that we may assess whether this still meets the intent of the research.
 - As an example, a recent interim report discussed the results of their literature search, followed by information on the design and fabrication of their test frames, discussion of their intended test matrix and expected test timelines.
- References and Appendices (as necessary)

Final Reports

Document Sections

- Title page with bibliographic information
- Table of Contents
- Abstract
- Objectives
- Methods
 - This includes the tests performed and variables evaluated, taking care to note and explain deviations from original plan (even though you will have previously explained these deviations and sought approval from AISC, it is important that they be recorded here for posterity).
- Results
- Conclusions
 - If you believe your work should be considered by the Committee on Specifications or any Task Committee please indicate this here, along with your reasoning. Please do not, however, try to develop Specification proposals here.
- References
- Appendices as necessary
 - Background information
 - Details (see note below)

Regarding Details

The results of your research may be consulted in the course of developing Specification provisions. As such, it is necessary to provide fairly extensive details on tested configurations, materials, and the like so that Committee members may compare your results to those found elsewhere. The types of information needed to support this work include:

- Design drawings
- Fabrication shop drawings
- Material Test Reports
- If welds are critical to the research results, then complete WPSes for those welds
- If welds are not critical to the results, then basic information (eg: process used, consumables, etc.) will suffice
- Type and dimensions of all fasteners and fastener components
- Test results *prior* to any filtering or adjustments
- For finite element work, the program *and version* being used, the type of element(s) used, and example mesh and relevant boundary conditions. Please also report the nature of your calibrations (major variables and selected values)

These details may not be amenable to inclusion in the report itself for reasons for format, length, or the like, so they may be provided as separate supplementary material (electronically). Please note the existence of supplementary information (and its general substance) within the body of your report so that future readers know it exists in our records.

Broadly speaking, it should be possible for a competent Investigator in possession of suitable facilities to repeat your tests using the information provided. It is often the case that research results are reevaluated some years later in light of new information that arose elsewhere so complete details are very important in expediting such work. A “minor” shop drawing dimension, to pick one example, may turn out to be quite important to subsequent re-analysis so having it available as a consequence of your report means we will not have to ask you to urgently retrieve it from your historical files later on.

Miscellaneous

There is no specific desired length; reports should aim to be concise and complete. While we have accepted theses as reports, due to differences in style, argumentation, and level of theoretical detail it would be generally preferable to supply a report as described herein if possible. The key concern is whether the necessary information has been recorded and conveyed, not arbitrary page count.

If you are considering reducing the report to articles for publication in *Engineering Journal* you may wish to peruse their publication requirements in advance; these may be found online at:

<https://www.aisc.org/content.aspx?id=31266>

Document Change History

-v1: initial version

-v2: added remark about FEA calibration