

What's in a Name?

The nomenclature for AISC Certification categories for building structures is changing to reflect the new certification standard. It's time to update your specifications!

By Roberta L. Marsteller, P.E.

If you're considering becoming AISC Certified, do you know which category you fall into? Or, if you're a designer, do you know which AISC Certification category you should specify to meet your project needs?

AISC currently offers three types of certification programs: fabricator, erector, and metal building manufacturer. (And some of you might be wondering why there's a differentiation between fabricator and metal building manufacturer—but we'll come back to that in a minute.)

At right, you'll find a comprehensive listing and description of the current AISC certification categories; however, the one that seems to raise the most questions is the *Certification Standard for Steel Building Structures* (the *Building Standard*).

Prior to issuing the *Building Standard* in 2002, the AISC building fabricator certification program relied on a checklist system to certify fabricators in the categories of Conventional or Complex Steel Building Structures. (We discussed the reason for this change in last month's Quality Corner—if you don't have a copy, you can visit www.modernsteel.com to read the article.) Fabricators cer-

tified in the Conventional and Complex building categories were given until the end of 2005 to be certified to the *Building Standard*.

Why the switch?

When switching over to the *Building Standard*, AISC eliminated the Conventional and Complex categories. AISC believes there is a basic level of quality that all fabricators need to maintain regardless of company size or shop capacity.

The *Building Standard* places equal emphasis on all aspects of the fabricator's business processes. In addition to fabrication processes, these include: Management Responsibility; Contract and Project Specification Review and Communication; Detailing; Document and Data Control; Purchasing; Material Identification; Inspection and Testing; Calibration of Inspection, Measuring and Test Equipment; Control of Non-conformances; Corrective Action; Handling, Storing, and Delivery of Product and Materials; Control of Quality Records; and Training.

By December 31, 2005 all building fabricators that are AISC Certified will have

been audited to the *Building Standard*. As a result, as of January 1, 2006 the Complex and Conventional categories will no longer be valid. Of course there's a good chance they will continue to appear in project specifications. If they do, keep in mind that in 2006 any fabricator certified to the *Certification Standard for Steel Building Structures* meets the requirements of the old Complex and Conventional categories.

What to do now?

If you are an engineer currently designing a steel building project and plan to issue your specifications before the end of the year, please specify a fabricator certified to either the Complex and Conventional categories OR the *Certification Standard for Steel Building Structures*.

If you are a fabricator whose certification status is being questioned by another member of the project team on account of the confusion of the overlap of the checklist categories and the *Building Standard*, you can contact AISC Certification for help and supporting documentation.

And for those you who are still wondering why metal buildings have their own certification category, here's why: Pre-engineered metal buildings are produced from cold-formed steel and built-up members, whereas traditional "steel" buildings use hot-rolled shapes (wide-flange) or hollow structural sections (HSS). ★

Bobbi Marsteller is Vice President of Certification for the American Institute of Steel Construction in Chicago.

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AISC Certification Categories

Fabricators

Standard for Steel Building Structures: This single category replaces Conventional and Complex building certification categories.

Conventional Steel Building Structures and Complex Steel Building Structures: As of January 2005, AISC Certified building fabricators are no longer being certified in these categories. However, these categories will remain valid for fabricators currently certified in these categories until they have completed their 2005 audit.

Simple Steel Bridge Structures: This category is appropriate for unspliced, rolled beam bridges.

Major Steel Bridges: This certification is typically specified for large span bridges. Main members are typically fabricated girders that must be spliced with a welded or bolted connection.

Erectors

Certified Steel Erector: Erection contractors providing services necessary for erection of structures, such as schools, shopping centers, light manufacturing plants, warehouses, low-rise beam and column structures, simple non-continuous bridges, and steel-framed buildings.

Advanced Certified Steel Erector: Erection contractors providing services necessary for erection of structures, such as large public and institutional buildings, heavy manufacturing plants, bunkers, bins, major bridges, continuous girder bridges, railroad bridges, powerhouses, major industrial facilities, locks and dams, high-rise structures, arenas, and repair and rehabilitation of existing steel structures.

Metal Building Manufacturers

Metal Building Systems: The certification covers pre-manufactured metal building systems including cold-formed members and panels.