

Painting the Way to a New Horizon

BY DAN KAUFMAN

As AISC and SSPC support a new, single standard, what does that mean for the industry and you?

THE SUBJECT OF THIS COLUMN should not come as a shock or surprise to those familiar with the American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) or The Society for Protective Coatings (SSPC). These two associations have a long history of working together for common causes. One example of this is the AISC Certification Programs' paint initiative.

Prior to 2005, the AISC certification program used a checklist developed by SSPC as the criteria to certify fabricators to the paint endorsements of P1, P2, and P3. In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between AISC and SSPC stated that the P1, P2, and P3 endorsements were equivalent to the SSPC QP3 Certification, for the shop application of paint to structural steel. During this time AISC also began a long-term plan of transitioning our certification category criteria from checklist-based to standard-based, and in 2005, the paint checklist was replaced by the *Sophisticated Painting Endorsement for Structural Steel Building Structures, Bridges, and Bridge and Highway Metal Components*. During that transition period, AISC and SSPC continued to work toward a joint standard that would be adopted by both associations.

While the path took a few twists and turns, the consensus development of a joint painting standard was completed in 2010, and was followed by a new MOU signed by the presidents of AISC and SSPC in July 2010. The new paint standard, the *Certification Standard for Shop Application of Complex Protective Coating Systems*, will become mandatory for both AISC and SSPC certification participants on Janu-

ary 1, 2012. The new standard can be found under "Documents" at www.aisc.org/certupdates.

The scope of the new standard covers the coating quality management system of a shop providing surface preparation and application of complex protective coating systems. The certification includes all functions and responsibilities that apply to surface preparation and coating application in a shop environment for new steel or for steel which has been previously coated, blast cleaned, and is now free of any hazardous paint when it arrives at that shop. This standard does not include any in-field applications nor does it guarantee the quality of the facility's work. The reader can review the full scope in Section 2 of the standard.

Significant changes from the previous paint standard, *Sophisticated Painting Endorsement for Structural Steel Building Structures, Bridges, and Bridge and Highway Metal Components*, that are reflected in the new joint standard are shown in Table 1. Minor editorial and grammar changes are not included.

June 1, 2011, will begin a six-month transition period during which program participants will be audited to both standards. Participants will be responsible only for the criteria of the current standard, but the auditor will inform the auditee of changes or possible non-conformances that will take effect with the new joint standard (effective on January 1, 2012).

The new joint standard becomes a benchmark for the steel fabrication and coating application industries, and it allows two well-respected associations to use the same criteria within their respective certification programs. In addition, it assists specifiers by eliminating the need to choose between two standards. As both associations continue to work toward common goals, additional advances are sure to continue for the industry's overall benefit.

If you have comments—positive or negative—about the joint paint standard, please visit www.aisc.org/cert-feedback and let us know what you think. If you have questions about AISC Certification in general, we're here to answer them. Certification Programs can be reached at certinfo@aisc.org. MSC



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Quality Corner is a monthly feature that covers topics ranging from how to specify a certified company to how long it takes to become a certified company. If you are interested in browsing our electronic archive, please visit www.aisc.org/QualityCorner.

Section Number	Description of Requirements	Change
1	Choosing not to paint during adverse environmental conditions as a control option	Prohibition removed for enclosed category
4	Definition of a complex coating system	Added to clarify the scope of usage
5.2	Management review meeting	Added to document improvements in quality management
5.3.3	Process equipment descriptions	Added to clarify the tools required
5.3.4	Inspection, measuring and test equipment descriptions	Added to help define product quality measurements
5.4.5	20 ft demonstration piece for audit	20 ft restriction removed to reduce material waste
6	Contract review—conflicts to go to the owner or owner's representative for review	Added to clarify the process
8.6	Documentation of customer's requirements	Revised to help provide a better record
10.4	Records of supplier's evaluations	Added to improve the painter's records
11.2	Coating materials storage environmental controls	Added to reduce paint degradation during storage
12.2.1	Documentation of conditions during painting	Revised to provide evidence of care
15	Use of paint with expired shelf life	Considered a non-conformance
16	Corrective action procedure	Revised to document solutions to quality problems

▲ **Table 1:** Elements of the new joint AISC-SSPC Paint standard with significant changes.