

In galvanic cathodic protection, sacrificial anodes of alloys of aluminium, magnesium or zinc are electrically connected to the steel needing protection (the cathode). If the steel and anode are both immersed in an electrically conductive medium such as seawater, galvanic action occurs creating an electric current that flows through the system. This causes the anode to corrode at the expense of the steel. The steel is thus protected. When the zinc anode has been consumed, it is replaced with a new anode.

In impressed current cathodic protection, a direct current from the positive terminal of an external power source is passed through an anode that is, in the case of a reinforced concrete member, a non-corroding mesh or similar embedded in the surface of the concrete. The circuit is completed by another connection from the reinforcing steel to the negative terminal of the power source. This form of corrosion protection is sometimes used in the remediation of corroding reinforcement in bridge piers, building facades and the like.

## **2 Fire protection**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In Australia, the level of fire protection for various classes of buildings is prescribed in the Building Code of Australia (BCA). The Fire Resistance Level (FRL) is defined in terms of:

- structural adequacy – the structure must not deflect excessively or collapse;
- Integrity – flames or hot gasses must not penetrate a floor or a wall required to provide fire protection; and
- Insulation – the top surface of a floor or the face of a fire wall remote from a fire must not become hot enough to ignite items in contact with the floor or wall.

Beams and columns will usually need to satisfy structural adequacy only while floors and walls will need to satisfy all three requirements.

### **2.2 Determination of fire resistance**

Fire resistance can be determined by two methods:

- deemed to satisfy, in accordance with the BCA, and
- fire engineering.

The required deemed to satisfy FRL for a particular building is dependent on:

- building classification (its proposed use);
- building height from the average ground level to the topmost occupied floor level;
- fire compartment area; and
- proximity to other buildings or fire source features.

The building classification is determined by the likelihood of a fire occurring, the likelihood that it will be allowed to develop, and the characteristics of the occupants (alert, mobile, infirm, etc) The height of a building determines the difficulty of fighting a fire and the difficulty of rescuing trapped occupants. The fire compartment area is the floor area surrounded by fire-resistant barriers. It is a measure of how large a fire can become before it is blocked by fire barriers. The proximity of other buildings and fire source features is about controlling the spread of fire beyond the property, or the proximity of other buildings or objects that may be the source of a fire.

Fire engineering uses rational methods to satisfy the FRLs required by the BCA. Aspects considered may include:

- the design of the structure;
- the provision of fire sprinklers and their controls such as valving;



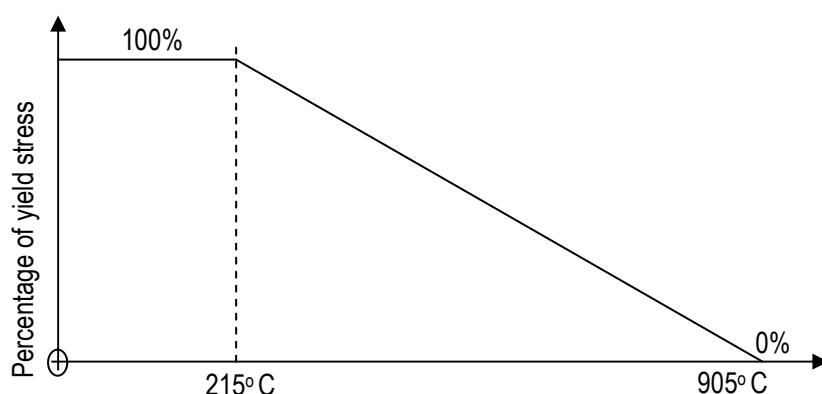
- management systems adopted to increase sprinkler reliability;
- escape routes and escape times;
- consideration of, and systems adopted to reduce the likelihood of fire starts;
- the proximity of fire stations;
- laboratory or prototype fire testing; etc.

Fire engineering is a specialised subject, usually the province of professionals with appropriate training and experience. A fire-engineered solution is subject to approval by the relevant building authorities or building surveyor and the fire brigade who need to be satisfied that the performance requirements of the BCA have been achieved by the design.

Structural building codes such as AS 3600 – Concrete Structures and AS 4100 – Steel Structures describe measures that can be used in design to meet the deemed-to-satisfy requirements of the BCA. These requirements address only life safety; they do not address protection of the owner's financial investment in the building. The owner may require that fire protection measures additional to those required by the BCA be applied. This is a cost-benefit consideration.

## 2.3 Fire resistance of structural steel

The strength of steel varies with temperature. AS 4100 Clause 12.4 suggests the following relationship:



AS 1170.0 in clause 4.2.4 defines the fire limit state load as  $G + \psi_1 Q$ . For office, retail, residential and parking floors, this load is  $G + 0.4Q$ , which is about 60% of the strength limit state load of  $1.2G + 1.5Q$ .

Now AS 4100 defines in clause 12.5, the limiting temperature  $T_l = 905 - 690r_f$ , where  $r_f$  is the ratio of the design action on the member under the design fire loading to the design member capacity,  $\phi R_u$ , at room temperature. The steel must be kept below this limiting temperature for the duration of the period specified in the BCA or determined by a fire engineering study for the FRL. If the ratio  $r_f$  is 60%,  $T_l = 905 - 0.6 \times 690 = 491^\circ \text{C}$ . This explains why  $500^\circ \text{C}$  is often quoted as the maximum allowable steel temperature, even though at this temperature the yield stress will nearly have halved.

The limiting temperature can be controlled by the application of applied insulation, with its effectiveness having been established in standard fire tests, or, for unprotected steel members, on the basis of exposed surface area to mass ratios. AS 4100 provides information to allow calculations to be undertaken for both of these approaches. For example, for an unprotected 460UB67 supporting a concrete slab, the time at which a temperature of  $500^\circ \text{C}$  is attained is calculated as:

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= -5.2 + 0.0221T + (0.433T / k_{sm}) \\
 t &= -5.2 + 0.0221 \times 500 + (0.433 \times 500 / 21.4) \\
 &= 16 \text{ minutes}
 \end{aligned}$$



## Composite Design Example for Multistorey Steel Framed Buildings

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FIRST EDITION 2007 (LIMIT STATES)

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:

Durack, J.A. (Connell Wagner)

Kilmister, M. (Connell Wagner)

Composite Design Example for Multistorey Steel Framed Buildings

1<sup>st</sup> ed.

Bibliography.

ISBN 978-1-921476-02-0

1. Steel, Structural—Standards - Australia.
2. Steel, Structural—Specifications - Australia.
3. Composite, (Engineering)—Design and construction.
  - I. Connell Wagner
  - II. Australian Steel Institute.
  - III. Title

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# Table of contents

|                                                                                 |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Table of contents .....                                                         | iii |
| Preface .....                                                                   | v   |
| Section A: INPUT INFORMATION .....                                              | 1   |
| A1. Client and Architectural Requirements .....                                 | 2   |
| A2. Site Characteristics .....                                                  | 4   |
| A3. Statutory Requirements .....                                                | 5   |
| A4. Serviceability .....                                                        | 8   |
| A5. Design Loads .....                                                          | 9   |
| A6. Materials and Systems .....                                                 | 10  |
| A7. Design Aids and Codes .....                                                 | 11  |
| Section B: CONCEPTUAL AND PRELIMINARY DESIGN .....                              | 12  |
| B1. Conceptual and Preliminary Design .....                                     | 13  |
| B1.1 Consideration of alternative floor framing systems– Scheme A .....         | 14  |
| B1.2 Consideration of alternative floor framing systems– Scheme B .....         | 15  |
| B1.3 Framing system for horizontal loading – initial distribution of load ..... | 16  |
| B1.4 Alternatives for overall distribution of horizontal load to ground .....   | 17  |
| B2. Preliminary Slab Design .....                                               | 21  |
| B3. From Alternatives to Adopted Systems .....                                  | 22  |
| B3.1 Adopted floor framing arrangement .....                                    | 22  |
| B3.2 Adopted framing arrangement for horizontal loading .....                   | 23  |
| B4. Indicative Construction Sequence and Stages .....                           | 24  |
| B4.1 The importance of construction stages in composite design .....            | 24  |
| B4.1 Indicative construction sequence and construction stages .....             | 25  |
| B4.2 Adopted construction sequence for design of erection columns .....         | 27  |
| B4.3 Core construction alternatives .....                                       | 27  |
| B4.4 Adopted construction method for the core .....                             | 27  |
| B5. Preliminary Sizing of Primary and Secondary Beams .....                     | 28  |
| B6. Plenum Requirements and Floor to Floor Height .....                         | 30  |
| B7. Preliminary Column Sizes and Core Wall Thickness .....                      | 33  |
| Section C: DETAILED DESIGN .....                                                | 35  |
| C1. Detailed Design - Introduction .....                                        | 36  |
| C2. Design Stages and Construction Loading .....                                | 37  |
| C3. Detailed Load Estimation After Completion of Construction .....             | 38  |
| C3.1 Vertical loading .....                                                     | 38  |
| C3.2 Wind loading .....                                                         | 39  |
| C3.3 Seismic loading Not considered .....                                       | 40  |
| C4. Erection Column Design .....                                                | 41  |
| C4.1 Load distribution for erection column design .....                         | 42  |
| C4.2 Side Column C5 (typical of C5 to C10) .....                                | 43  |
| C4.3 End column C2 (typical of C2, C3, C12 and C13) .....                       | 44  |
| C4.4 Corner column C1 (typical of columns C1, C4, C11 and C14) .....            | 44  |
| C5. Floor Beams – Construction Stage 1 .....                                    | 45  |
| C5.1 Secondary beams Group S1(11 050, 2800) (Beams B22 – B41, B43 – 48) .....   | 45  |
| C5.2 Primary beams Group P1(9800, 5725) (Beams B1, B7 to B12, B18, .....        | 46  |
| B19 – 21, B49 – 51 and B42) .....                                               | 46  |
| C5.3 Primary beams Group P2(9250, 6600) (B2, B6, B13 and B17) .....             | 47  |
| C6. Floor Beams – Construction Stage 3 .....                                    | 48  |
| C6.1 Secondary beams Group S1(11 050, 2800) (Beams B22 – 41, B43 – 48) .....    | 48  |
| C6.2 Primary beams Group P1(9800, 5725) (Beams B1, B7 - B12, B18 – 21, .....    | 49  |
| B49 – 51 and B42) .....                                                         | 49  |
| C6.3 Primary beams Group P2(9250, 6600) (Beams B2, B6, B13, B17) .....          | 49  |
| C7 Floor Beam Design for Occupancy Loading .....                                | 50  |
| C7.1 Secondary beams Group S1(11 050, 2800) (Beams B19, B21, B22 - B41, .....   | 51  |
| B43 – B49 and B51) .....                                                        | 51  |



|       |                                                                          |     |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| C7.2  | Primary beams Group P1(9800,5725) (Beams B1, B7 to B12, B18)             | 58  |
| C7.3  | Primary beams group P2(9050, 6600) (Beams B2, B6, B13, B17)              | 63  |
| C8.   | Assessment of Dynamic Performance of Floor System                        | 69  |
| C8.1  | Definition of the dynamic assessment process                             | 69  |
| C8.2  | Application of the dynamic assessment process                            | 73  |
| C9    | Final Slab Design                                                        | 79  |
| C9.1  | Slab design for the office areas                                         | 79  |
| C9.2  | Slab design for the compactus areas                                      | 80  |
| C10.  | Longitudinal Shear Reinforcement Design                                  | 81  |
| C10.1 | Introduction                                                             | 81  |
| C10.2 | Proprietary longitudinal shear reinforcement products                    | 83  |
| C10.3 | Secondary beams group S1, B22 typical – longitudinal shear design        | 84  |
| C10.4 | Internal primary beams group P2, ( B2 typical) longitudinal shear design | 85  |
| C10.5 | Primary beams P1, (B1 typical) – longitudinal shear design               | 87  |
| C10.6 | Perimeter beams B19 to 21 and B49 to 51                                  | 88  |
| C11.  | Floor System Design Review and Final Decisions                           | 89  |
| C11.1 | Floor design review                                                      | 89  |
| C11.2 | Final floor framing plan and deck reinforcement                          | 90  |
| C12.  | Final Design of RC Columns                                               | 91  |
| C13.  | Detailed Design of the Core                                              | 91  |
| C13.1 | Preliminary discussion and statement of limitations of this section      | 91  |
| C13.2 | Basic modelling of the core using beam elements                          | 92  |
| C13.3 | The Space Gass Analysis Model                                            | 96  |
| C13.4 | Model verification and static deflections for $W_s$                      | 97  |
| C13.5 | Dynamic analysis for natural frequency of building                       | 98  |
| C13.6 | Interpretation and application of stress resultants from Space Gass      | 100 |
| C13.7 | Further investigation of the core using a Strand7 finite element model   | 102 |
| C13.8 | Review of core investigations                                            | 105 |
| C14.  | Steel Connection Design                                                  | 106 |
| C14.1 | Can it be built?                                                         | 106 |
| C14.2 | Representative connections                                               | 108 |
| C14.3 | Web side plate connection design for $V^* = 142$ kN                      | 108 |
| C14.4 | Flexible end plate connection for $V^* = 279$ kN                         | 112 |
| C14.5 | B2 to core web side plate connection for $V^* = 308$ kN                  | 113 |
| C14.6 | Column splice for a load of $N^* = 1770$ kN                              | 114 |
| C14.7 | Column base plate for a load of $N^* = 1770$ kN                          | 115 |
| C15.  | Web Penetrations                                                         | 116 |
| C16.  | Some Final Thoughts and Disclaimers                                      | 117 |
|       | Appendix I Theory and discussion – composite slabs                       | 119 |
|       | Appendix II Theory and discussion - composite beams                      | 133 |
|       | Appendix III Dynamic assessment of the floor system                      | 149 |
|       | Appendix IV Theory and discussion steel connections                      | 163 |
|       | Appendix V Corrosion and fire protection                                 | 175 |

