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## ENGINEERING **JOURNAL**

#### AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF STEEL CONSTRUCTION

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## Message from the Editor

A privilege of being the editor of *Engineering Journal* is that I get to work with the best and brightest of the structural steel industry, such as Reidar Bjorhovde, Dr.-Ing., Ph.D., P.E., Research Editor of *Engineering Journal*. His "Current Steel Structures Research" column has been a feature of our journal for eight years now. However, starting in 2013 his column—a quarterly snapshot of steel research around the globe—will appear semiannually, rather than quarterly.

Dr. Bjorhovde will continue to travel around the world (no exaggeration) to participate in a wide variety of industry events. If you haven't already done so, check out his 2011 interview with AISC's Margaret Matthew (Podcast No. 11 at www.aisc.org/podcasts) for highlights from past travels. We are pleased that Dr. Bjorhovde can continue his efforts for us. Watch for his next columns in the second and fourth quarter issues in 2013.

I would also like to thank our reviewers for their contributions to the success of our journal. A list of our 2012 reviewers is posted on our web site at www.aisc.org/ej.

Sincerely,

Veith a. Grubb

Keith A. Grubb, P.E., S.E. Editor

## Axial Capacities of Eccentrically Loaded Equal-Leg Single Angles: Comparisons of Various Design Methods

YUWEN LI

#### ABSTRACT

For most structural engineers, the design of an eccentrically loaded single angle without lateral restraint along its length was considered to be a formidable task prior to the publication of the 2005 AISC *Specification for Structural Steel Buildings*. According to Section E5 of the 2005 *Specification*, the effects of eccentricity on single-angle members are permitted to be neglected by using the effective slenderness ratio as specified, provided that members are loaded at the ends in compression through the same leg; members are attached by welding or by a minimum of two-bolt connections; there are no intermediate transverse loads; the leg length ratio is less than 1.7, if angles are connected through the shorter leg; and the modified *KL/r* is less than or equal to 200.

Table 4-12 of the 13th edition AISC *Steel Construction Manual* provided the available strengths in axial compression of eccentrically loaded single angles, with the assumption that the compressive force is applied at the geometric *y-y* axis at a distance of 0.75*t* from the back of the connected leg, where *t* is the angle thickness. Table 4-12 has been revised in the 14th edition AISC *Steel Construction Manual*. The new table corrects some numerical errors in the calculations and moves the compressive force to the midpoint of the connected leg. The values of the axial compressive design strength in Table 4-12 are developed on the basis of bending about the principal axes *w-w* and *z-z*.

Keywords: eccentrically loaded single angles, design tables.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Single angles are commonly used as secondary brac-ing members for bridges and other structures, as web members for small or medium-sized truss structures, and in latticed structures, such as transmission towers. In structural analysis, single-angle members are always treated as "truss members" that can take only axial loads, either in tension or in compression. However, because single angles are connected to gusset plates through one leg using welding or bolting, the members are subjected to both axial and flexural demands resulting from the eccentric connection. Although the single angle is the most basic shape of hot-rolled steel sections, its behavior under eccentric force is complex and difficult to predict due to the fact that its geometric axes do not align with its principal axes. Therefore, the design method for predicting the axial strength of single angles evolves with the better understanding of its behavior, and it is evident in specification revisions over the years.

A design example of eccentrically loaded equal-leg single angles was presented in the 1st edition AISC *Manual of Steel Construction*, *LRFD* (AISC, 1986). However, there was not a specification specifically for single angles. The stand-alone *Specification for Allowable Stress Design of Single-Angle Members* was first introduced by the 9th edition AISC *Steel Construction Manual*, *ASD* (AISC, 1989). In 1993, AISC introduced the first stand-alone *Specification for Load and Resistance Factor Design of Single-Angle Members* (AISC, 1993)*,* and this specification was included in the 2nd edition AISC *Manual of Steel Construction, LRFD* (AISC, 1994). The same specification was updated in 2000 and was included in the 3rd edition of the AISC *Manual of Steel Construction, LRFD* (AISC, 2001). Singleangle design was finally incorporated into the 2005 AISC *Specification for Structural Steel Buildings* (AISC, 2005a) with additional improvements. For instance, the slenderness ratio of eccentrically loaded single-angle members was modified to make use of the formulas applicable to concentrically loaded members.

Design tables for equal-leg single angles in compression based on the 1989 ASD *Specification* were developed by Walker (1991). Tables for the design strength of concentrically loaded single-angle struts based on the 1986 LRFD *Specification* were presented by Zureick (1993). Tables for the design strength of eccentrically loaded single angle struts based on the 1993 LRFD *Specification* were prepared by Sakla (2001). The 13th edition AISC *Manual* (AISC, 2005b) provided a table of available strengths for eccentrically loaded single angles in axial compression (Table 4-12), with an assumption that the compressive force is applied at

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the geometric *y-y* axis at a distance of 0.75*t* from the back of the connected leg. Table 4-12 has been completely updated in the 14th edition *Manual* (AISC, 2011) with the introduction point of the compressive force moved to the mid-point of the connected leg, *b*/2.

#### **DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS OF SINGLE ANGLES IN COMPRESSION**

#### **Slenderness Ratio Requirement**

The slenderness ratio *KL/r* requirement differs among the design codes. For members designed on the basis of compression, the user note in Section E2 of the 2010 AISC *Specification* indicates that the slenderness ratio preferably should satisfy  $KL/r \le 200$ . However, the  $KL/r$  ratio requirement is more stringent for steel bridges: the slenderness ratio should satisfy *KL/r* ≤ 120 for main members and  $KL/r \leq 140$  for bracing members according to Section 6.9.3 of AASHTO (2004). It should be noted that bracing for curved girder bridges are considered main members.

#### **Effective Length Factor**

The effective length factor  $K = 1.0$  should be used to determine the unbraced length of single angles in compression based on Chapter C of the 2010 AISC *Specification*. The effective length factor  $K = 0.75$  for bolted or welded end connections at both ends has been used by AASHTO (2004). However, a change was made in AASHTO (2007) to use  $K =$ 1.0 for single angles, regardless of end connection types.

#### **Minimum Size of Single Angles**

The minimum size of angles is not stipulated AISC specifications. Although AASHTO does not specifically limit the minimum angle size, it does limit the minimum thickness of most structural steels to  $\frac{5}{16}$  in., including angles. However, the designer should check with owners about the requirements for the minimum sizes of single angles that they may have. For example, MassDOT requires a minimum size of L3×3×<sup>3</sup>%, PennDOT and NJDOT require L3<sup>1</sup>/2×3<sup>1</sup>/2×<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> as a minimum, and VDOT requires  $L5 \times 3 \times 3$  as a minimum.

#### **Connection to Gusset Plate**

Single-angle members are attached to the gusset plate by either welding or bolting. Connection type and details affect how the axial load is transferred through the connection from the gusset plate to the angle members. For welded connections where fillet welds are placed on two sides of the connected leg, conventional wisdom says to place the welds in such a way that the center of gravity of weld resistance coincides with the centroid of the member (Figure 1a vs. Figure 1b) in order to minimize the torsion induced in the



*Fig. 1. Welded connection.*



*Fig. 2. Bolted connection.*

connection. It is suggested that this is even more desirable when the member is subjected to repeated or reversed stress.

For bolted connections, a minimum of two bolts are required per connection per AISC and AASHTO. Bolt holes often follow the gage line of the angle. If ASTM A307 bolts are used (Figure 2), the axial force is applied to the angle members through the bolt line. The axial force can be considered applied through the mid-point of the bolted leg if high-strength bolted connections are designed as slip critical joints and the friction between the connected leg and gusset plate is uniformly distributed.

Placement of welds and bolts is stipulated in Chapter J of the 2010 AISC *Specification* and has evolved over the years. The provision of arranging the center of gravity of the welds or bolts group to coincide with the center of gravity of the member is not applicable to statically loaded single angles according to the 1989 AISC ASD *Specification*, the 1986, 1998 and 2001 AISC LRFD *Specifications*, and the 2005 AISC *Specification*. The wording "statically loaded" is eliminated from Section J1.7 of the 2010 AISC *Specification*. However, the requirement for balancing the welds about the neutral axis of the angle is still warranted when the members are subjected to cyclic loading. Therefore, one can assume that the static axial load is applied at the mid-point of the connected leg, as it generates larger axial compressive design strength (Example 3), and the cyclic axial load is applied at neutral axis because it generates smaller and conservative axial compressive design strength (Example 4).

#### **Eccentricity**

As previously discussed, an end connection through one leg creates the eccentricity for the applied axial load that induces the end moment and, therefore, affects the load carrying capacity of either the connection or the member, or both. The effect of connection eccentricity is a function of connection and member stiffness, the proper eccentricity should be assumed when computing the axial capacity of single angles. Blodgett (1966) concluded that if the gusset plate is very flexible and offers no restraining action at the end of the member, the moment due to connection eccentricity must be resisted by the member, not by the connection. On the other hand, if the gusset plate is rigid enough so that there is no end rotation of the member, the moment due to connection eccentricity must be resisted by the connection, not by the member. The same concept is now presented in Figure C-D3.3 of the 2010 AISC *Specification* Commentary.

The actual eccentricity in the angle is less than the distance from the gusset centerline if there is any restraint from the gusset (Lutz, 2006). Woolcock and Kitipornchai (1986) recommended reduction of the eccentricity to  $y - t/2$ , where *t* is the angle thickness. Because the eccentricity will affect the capacity of the single angle, if a larger capacity is required, the connection should be evaluated to see if the eccentricity can be minimized. Three scenarios of end connections are summarized as follows:

- *Figure 3a.* When the end connection is flexible relative to the single-angle member, the eccentricity in the angle can be assumed as  $e = y$  or  $e = y + t<sub>1</sub>/2$ , with the latter being more conservative, and used to generate Table 4-12 in the 13th and 14th editions of the AISC *Manual*.
- *Figure 3b.* When the end connection is rigid relative to the single-angle member, the eccentricity in the angle can be assumed as  $e = y$  or  $e = y - t/2$ , with the former being more conservative.
- *Figure 3c.* When the end connection is similar to that shown, eccentricity in the angle can be assumed as  $e =$ *y* − *t*<sub>1</sub>/2*,* which is measured from the mid-thickness of gusset plate to the neutral axis of the angle.

#### **DESIGN EXAMPLES**

Four methods are presented here to illustrate the design procedures involved with the eccentrically loaded single angle. Equation and section references in these examples refer to the 2010 AISC *Specification*.

**Method 1.** Axial capacities of equal-leg angle  $(L4 \times 4 \times 3)$ based on Section E5, the effects of eccentricity and end restraint are incorporated by using the effective slenderness ratio.



*Fig. 3. Eccentricity.*

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- **Method 2.** Axial capacities of equal-leg angle  $(L4 \times 4 \times 3)$ based on Sections E7, F10 and H2, assuming that bending is about the one of the geometric axes, and the eccentricity is  $e = y + t_1/2$ , where  $t_1 = 1.5t$  and t is the angle thickness.
- **Method 3.** Axial capacities of equal-leg angle (L4×4×3/8) based on Sections E7, F10 and H2, assuming that bending is about the principal axes and axial load is applied at mid-point of the connected leg, and the eccentricity is  $e = y + t_1/2$ , where  $t_1 = 1.5t$  and t is the angle thickness.
- **Method 4.** Axial capacities of equal-leg angle  $(L4 \times 4 \times 3)$ based on Sections E7, F10 and H2, assuming that bending is about the principal axes and axial load is applied at one of the geometric axis of the angle, and the eccentricity is  $e = y + t_1/2$ , where  $t_1 = 1.5t$  and t is the angle thickness.

#### **Method 1**

 $L4\times4\times3/6$ , connected one leg. See Figure 4.





 $L = 72$  in.  $K = 1.0$  $F_y$  = 36 ksi<br>*E* = 29.000 *E* = 29,000 ksi  $A_g$  = 2.86 in.<sup>2</sup><br>*b* = 4.0 in.  $= 4.0$  in.  $t = 0.375$  in.  $r_x = 1.230 \text{ in.}$  $r_z = 0.779$  in. *KL/r* ≤ 200  $\phi_c$  = 0.90<br>  $\Omega_c$  = 1.67  $= 1.67$ 

#### *Solution*

Check the required radius of gyration,  $r_{\text{min}}$ :  $r_{min}$  = *KL*/200 = 1.0(72)/200  $= 0.360$  in 0.360 in.  $\lt r_z = 0.779$  in. **OK** Determine the effective slenderness ratio, *KL/r*. For equal-leg angles or unequal-leg angles connected through the longer leg that are individual members:

$$
\frac{L}{r_x} = \frac{72}{1.23} = 58.5 \le 80
$$

Therefore, from Equation E5-1:

$$
\frac{KL}{r} = 72 + 0.75\frac{L}{r_x} = 72 + 0.75(58.5) = 116
$$

Determine if reduction factor *Q*, for unstiffened elements is applicable [Section E7.1(c)]:

$$
b/t = 4.0/0.375 = 10.7
$$

From *Specification* Table B4.1a:

$$
\lambda_r = 0.45 \sqrt{\frac{E}{F_y}} = 0.45 \sqrt{\frac{29,000}{36}} = 12.8
$$

Because  $b/t < \lambda_r$ , the member is classified as a non-slender section and  $Q_s = 1.0$  (Equation E7-10).

Therefore,  $Q = Q_s = 1.0$ .

From Equation E3-4, the elastic buckling stress*, Fe*, is:

$$
F_e = \frac{\pi^2 E}{\left(\frac{KL}{r}\right)^2} = \frac{\pi^2 (29,000)}{116^2} = 21.2 \text{ ksi}
$$

For calculating the critical stress, *Fcr*, Equation E3-2 is essentially a special case of Equation E7-2, when the member is classified as a non-slender section*.*

$$
KL/r \le 4.71 \sqrt{\frac{E}{QF_y}} = 4.71 \sqrt{\frac{29,000}{1.0(36)}} = 134
$$

Therefore, using Equation E3-2 or E7-2:

$$
F_{cr} = Q \left[ 0.658 \frac{QF_y}{F_e} \right] F_y
$$
  
= 1.0 \left[ 0.658 \frac{1.0(36)}{21.31} \right] (36) = 17.8 ksi

The nominal compressive strength may be calculated from Equations E3-1 or E7-1:

$$
P_n = F_{cr} A_g = 17.8(2.86) = 50.8 \text{ kips}
$$

Calculate the design compressive strength,  $\phi_c P_n$ , and the allowable compressive strength,  $P_n/\Omega_c$ , using Section E1:

$$
\phi_c P_n = 0.90(50.8) = 45.7 \text{ kips (LRFD)}
$$
  

$$
P_n / \Omega_c = 50.8 / 1.67 = 30.4 \text{ kips (ASD)}
$$

#### **Method 2**

L4 $\times$ 4 $\times$ <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>, connected to one leg, axial load is applied at the middle thickness of the gusset plate. The angle is designed on the basis of geometric axis (*x-x*) bending. See Figure 5.



*Fig. 5. Method 2.*

*t*1 = 1.5*t* = b in. *Ix* = 4.32 in.4 *Sx* = 1.50 in.3 *y* = 1.13 in. *Sx(A,B)* = *Ix / y* = 3.82 in.3 *ex* = 0.75*t* + *y* = 1.41 in. ϕ*b* = 0.90

See Method 1 for additional information.

#### *Solution*

**1.** Calculate the design axial stress, *Fca*.

Determine the maximum slenderness ratio*, KL/r*:

$$
\frac{KL}{r} = \frac{KL}{r_z} = \frac{72}{0.779} = 92.4 \le 200, \text{ OK}
$$

Determine the reduction factor *Q*, for unstiffened element from Section E7.1(c):

Same as Method 1,  $Q = Q_s = 1.0$ 

Determine the elastic buckling stress, *Fe* from Equation E3-4:

$$
F_e = \frac{\pi^2 E}{\left(\frac{KL}{r}\right)^2} = \frac{\pi^2 (29,000)}{92.4^2} = 33.5 \text{ ksi}
$$

Determine the critical stress, *Fcr*:

$$
KL/r \le 4.71 \sqrt{\frac{E}{QF_y}} = 4.71 \sqrt{\frac{29,000}{1.0(36)}} = 134
$$

Therefore, using Equation E3-2 or E7-2:

$$
F_{cr} = Q \left[ 0.658 \frac{QF_y}{F_e} \right] F_y
$$
  
= 1.0 
$$
\left[ 0.658 \frac{1.0(36)}{33.5} \right] (36) = 23.0 \text{ ksi}
$$

Determine the design axial stress,  $F_{ca}$ , using Section H2:

$$
F_{ca} = \phi_c F_{cr} = 0.90(22.7) = 20.7
$$
ksi

Determine the required axial stress*, fra*:

$$
f_{ra} = P_r/A_g = P_r/2.86
$$
ksi

**2.** Calculate the design flexural stress,  $F_{\text{cbx}}$  (Section F10). Check angle leg compactness for flexure (Table B4.1b):

$$
\lambda_p = 0.54\sqrt{E/F_y} = 0.54\sqrt{29,000/36} = 15.3
$$
  
 $\lambda_r = 0.91\sqrt{E/F_y} = 0.91\sqrt{29,000/36} = 25.8$ 

Because  $b/t < \lambda_p$ , member is classified as a compact section.

Determine flexural strength based on leg local buckling (Section F10.3):

Because the member is a compact section, the limit state of local buckling does not apply.

Determine flexural strength based on yielding (Section F10-1):

$$
M_y = F_y S_x = 36(1.50) = 54.0
$$
 kip-in.

$$
M_n = 1.5M_y = 1.5(54.0) = 81.0
$$
kip-in

Determine flexural strength based on lateral-torsional buckling for bending about one of the geometric axes (Section F10.2):

Calculate the elastic lateral-torsional buckling moment, *Me* (Equation F10-6b):

$$
M_e = \frac{0.66Eb^4tC_b}{L_b^2} \left( \sqrt{1 + 0.78\left(\frac{L_b t}{b^2}\right)^2} + 1 \right)
$$

$$
= \frac{0.66(29,000)(4)^4(0.375)(1.0)}{72^2}
$$

$$
\times \left( \sqrt{1 + 0.78\left(\frac{72(0.375)}{4^2}\right)^2} + 1 \right)
$$

 $= 991$  kip-in

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Because  $M_e > M_v = 0.8F_vS_x = 0.8(36)(1.50) = 43.2$ kip-in, use Equation F10-3:

$$
M_n = \left(1.92 - 1.17\sqrt{\frac{M_y}{M_e}}\right) M_y \le 1.5 M_y
$$
  
=  $\left(1.92 - 1.17\sqrt{\frac{43.2}{991}}\right) (43.2)$   
= 72.39  $\le 1.5(43.20) = 64.8$  kip-in

Determine the controlling nominal flexure strength*, Mn*:

 $M_n$  = min [81.0,64.8] = 64.8 kip-in.

Determine the design flexure strength, ϕb*M*n:

 $\phi_b M_n = 0.90(64.8) = 58.3$  kip-in.

Determine the design flexure stresses, *Fcbx(C)* and *Fcbx(A,B)*:

 $F_{cbx(C)} = \phi_b M_n / S_x = 58.3/1.50 = 38.9$  ksi

$$
F_{cbx(A,B)} = \phi_b M_n / S_{x(A,B)} = 58.3/3.82 = 15.3
$$
ksi

**3.** Calculate the interaction of flexure and axial stresses.

Because the angle is a non-symmetric section subject to compression and single-axis bending about one of the geometric axes, Equation H2-1 should be used and can be written as:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbx}}{F_{cbx}} \right| \le 1.0
$$

This can be rewritten based on signs of bending stress at the points of consideration as follows:

Points A and B:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbx(A,B)}}{F_{cbx(A,B)}} \right| \le 1.0
$$

Point C:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} - \frac{f_{rbx(C)}}{F_{cbx(C)}} \right| \le 1.0
$$

where

 $f<sub>ra</sub>$  = required axial stress

 $f_{rbx(A,B)}$ ,  $f_{rbx(C)}$  = required flexure stresses

Determine moment due to axial load,  $M_{rx} = B_{1x}(e_xP_r)$ from Equation A-8-1, where:

 $B_{1x}$  = multiplier to account for *P*- $\delta$  effect based on Section 8.2 of Appendix 8.

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$$
B_{1x} = \frac{C_m}{1 - \alpha P_r / P_{e1x}} \ge 1.0
$$
 (Equation A-8-3)  
\n
$$
\alpha = 1.0
$$
 (LRFD) or 1.6 (ASD)  
\n
$$
C_m = 1.0
$$
 (conservative)  
\n
$$
P_{e1x} = \frac{\pi^2 EI^*}{(K_1 L)^2}
$$
 (Equation A-8-5)  
\n
$$
EI^* = 0.8\tau_b EI_x
$$
  
\n
$$
\tau_b = 1.0
$$
, when  $\alpha P_r / P_y \le 0.5$   
\n
$$
= 4(\alpha P_r / P_y)[1-(\alpha P_r / P_y)]
$$
 otherwise  
\n
$$
\alpha P_r / P_y = 1.0(P_r)/[(36)(2.86)] = P_r / 103
$$
  
\n
$$
P_{e1x} = \frac{\pi^2 EI^*}{(K_1 L)^2} = \frac{\pi^2 (0.8)\tau_b (29,000)(4.32)}{[1.0(72)]^2} = 191\tau_b
$$
  
\n
$$
B_{1x} = \frac{C_m}{1 - \alpha P_r / P_{e1x}} = \frac{1.0}{1 - 1.0(P_r) / 191\tau_b} = \frac{191\tau_b}{191\tau_b - P_r}
$$

Determine the required second-order flexural strength*, Mrx*, as follows:

$$
M_{rx} = B_{1x} \left( e_x P_r \right) = \left[ \frac{191\tau_b}{191\tau_b - P_r} \right] \left( e_x P_r \right)
$$

Apply Equation H2-1 at points A and B:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbx(A,B)}}{F_{cbx(A,B)}} \right| = \left| \frac{P_r/2.86}{20.7} + \frac{\left[ \frac{191\tau_b (e_x P_r)}{191\tau_b - P_r} \right] \frac{1}{3.82}}{15.3} \right| \le 1.0
$$

Solving the previous equation,  $P_r = 22.5$  kips. Apply Equation H2-1 at point C:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} - \frac{f_{rbx(C)}}{F_{cbx(C)}} \right| = \left| \frac{P_r/2.86}{20.7} - \frac{\left(\frac{191\tau_b(e_x P_r)}{191\tau_b - P_r}\right) \frac{1}{1.50}}{38.9} \right| \le 1.0
$$

 $\sim$ 

Solving the previous equation,  $P_r = 56.7$  kips.

Determine the design compressive strength,  $\phi_c P_n$ , and the allowable compressive strength*, Pn* /Ω*c*:

$$
\phi_c P_n = P_r = \min(22.5, 56.7) = 22.5 \text{ kips (LRFD)}
$$
  

$$
P_n / \Omega_c = (P_r / \phi_c) / \Omega_c = (22.5/0.9) / 1.67 = 15.0 \text{ kips (ASD)}
$$

#### **Method 3**

 $L4\times4\times3/$ , connected to one leg, axial load is applied at midpoint of angle leg and mid-thickness of gusset plate. The angle is designed on the basis of principal axes (*w-w, z-z*) bending. See Figure 6.





t<sub>1</sub> = 1.5t = %<sub>16</sub> in.  
\n
$$
I_x
$$
 = 4.32 in.<sup>4</sup>  
\n $I_y$  = 4.32 in.<sup>4</sup>  
\n $e_w$  = 1.613 in.  
\n $e_z$  = 0.382 in.  
\n $I_z$  =  $A_g(r_z)^2$ =1.74 in.<sup>4</sup>  
\n $I_w$  =  $I_x + I_y - I_z$  = 6.90 in.<sup>4</sup>  
\n $r_w$  =  $\sqrt{I_w/A_g}$  = 1.55 in.<sup>4</sup>

See Methods 1 and 2 for additional information.

#### *Solution*

**1.** Calculate the angle concentric design axial stress,  $F_{ca}$ : Same as Method 2.

 $F_{ca} = 20.7$  ksi

Determine the required axial stress, *fra*:

 $f_{ra} = P_r / A_g = P_r / 2.86$  ksi

**2.** Calculate the angle flexural strength about major principal axis, ϕ*bMnw*.

Angle leg compactness for flexure is same as Method 2. Because  $b/t < \lambda_p$ , the limit state of local buckling does not apply.

Determine the flexural strength based on yielding (Section F10-1):

Points A and C:

$$
C_z = \sin 45^\circ (b - t/2) = (0.707)(4 - 0.375/2) = 2.70 \text{ in.}
$$

$$
S_w = I_w/C_z = 6.90/2.70 = 2.56
$$
 in.<sup>3</sup> (compare to  
2.56 in.<sup>3</sup> from AISC shapes Database V14.0)

$$
M_{yw} = F_y S_w = 36(2.56) = 92.2 \text{ kip-in.}
$$
  

$$
M_{nw} = 1.5 M_{yw} = 1.5(92.2) = 138 \text{ kip-in.}
$$

Determine the flexural strength based on lateral-torsional buckling for bending about the major principal axis (Section F10.2):

The elastic lateral-torsional buckling moment, *Me*, from Equation F10-4, is:

$$
M_e = \frac{0.46Eb^2t^2C_b}{L}
$$
  
=  $\frac{0.46(29,000)(4)^2(0.375)^2(1.0)}{72}$   
= 417 kip-in

Because  $M_e > M_{yw}$ , use Equation F10-3 to calculate *Mnw*:

$$
M_{nw} = \left(1.92 - 1.17\sqrt{\frac{M_{yw}}{M_e}}\right) M_{yw} \le 1.5 M_{yw}
$$
  
=  $\left(1.92 - 1.17\sqrt{\frac{92.2}{417}}\right) 92.2 \le 138$   
= 126 \le 138  
= 126 kip-in.

Determine the controlling nominal flexure strength, *Mnw*:

 $M_{nw}$  = min [138, 126] = 126 kip-in.

Determine the design flexure strength, ϕ*bMnw*:

 $\phi_b M_{nw} = 0.90(126) = 113$  kip-in.

Determine the design flexure stresses, *Fcbw(A)* and *Fcbw(C)*:

 $F_{cbw(A)} = F_{cbw(C)} = \phi_b M_{nw} / S_w = 113/2.56 = 44.1$  ksi

**3.** Calculate the angle flexural strength about minor principal axis,  $\phi_b M_{nz}$ .

Determine flexural strength based on yielding (Section F10-1):

Point B

$$
C_{w(B)} = y/\sin 45^\circ = 1.13/0.707 = 1.60
$$
 in.

$$
S_{z(B)} = I_z / C_{w(B)} = 1.74 / 1.60 = 1.09
$$
 in.<sup>3</sup> (compare to  
1.08 in.<sup>3</sup> from AISC Shape Database V14.0)

Points A and C

$$
C_{w(A,C)} = \sin 45^{\circ} (b + t/2) - C_{w(B)}
$$
  
= 0.707(4+0.375/2) - 1.60 = 1.36 in.

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 $S_{z(A,C)} = I_z/C_{w(A,C)} = 1.74/1.36 = 1.27$  in.<sup>3</sup> (compare to 1.27 in.<sup>3</sup> from AISC Shape Database V14.0)

Thus,

$$
M_{yz} = F_y S_{z(B)} = 36(1.080) = 38.9
$$
 kip-in.

Determine the nominal flexure strength, *Mnz*:

$$
M_{nz} = 1.5 M_{yz} = 1.5(38.9) = 58.3
$$
 kip-in.

Determine the design flexure strength,  $\phi_b M_{nz}$ .

 $\phi_b M_{nz} = 0.90(58.3) = 52.5$  kip-in.

Determine the design flexure stresses  $F_{cbx(B)}$ ,  $F_{cbx(A)}$ and  $F_{cbx(C)}$ :

$$
F_{cbz(B)} = \phi_b M_{nz}/S_{z(B)} = 52.5/1.08 = 48.6 \text{ ksi}
$$
  
\n
$$
F_{cbz(A)} = F_{cbz(C)} = \phi_b M_{nz}/S_{z(A,C)} = 52.5/1.27
$$
  
\n= 41.3 ksi

**4.** Calculate the interaction of flexure and axial stresses.

Because the angle is a non-symmetric section subject to compression and bi-axis bending about the major and minor principal axes of the angle, Equation H2-1 should be used:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbw}}{F_{cbw}} + \frac{f_{rbz}}{F_{cbz}} \right| \le 1.0
$$

which can be rewritten based on the signs of bending stress at points A, B and C, respectively, as follows:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbw(A)}}{F_{cbw(A)}} - \frac{f_{rbz(A)}}{F_{cbz(A)}} \right| \le 1.0
$$

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbz(B)}}{F_{cbz(B)}} \right| \le 1.0
$$

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} - \frac{f_{rbw(C)}}{F_{cbw(C)}} - \frac{f_{rbz(C)}}{F_{cbz(C)}} \right| \le 1.0
$$

where

 $f<sub>ra</sub>$  = required axial stress

 $f_{rbw(A, C), f_{rbz(A, B, C)}$  = required flexure stresses

Determine moments due to axial load *Mrw* and *Mrz* from Equation A-8-1:

$$
M_{rw} = B_{1w}(e_w P_r)
$$

 $M_{rz} = B_{1z}(e_{z}P_{r})$ 

where

 $B_{1w}$ ,  $B_{1z}$  = multiplier to account for *P*- $\delta$  effect based on Section 8.2 of Appendix 8

$$
B_1 = \frac{C_m}{1 - \alpha P_r / P_{e1}} \ge 1.0
$$
 (Equation A-8-3)

 $\alpha$  = 1.0 (LRFD) or 1.6 (ASD)

$$
C_m = 1.0
$$
 (conservative)

$$
P_{e1} = \frac{\pi^2 EI^*}{\left(K_1 L\right)^2}
$$
 (Equation A-8-5)

$$
EI^* = 0.8\tau_b EI
$$

$$
τb = 1.0, when αPr/Py
$$
  
≤ 0.5, otherwise

$$
\tau_b = 4(\alpha P_r/P_y)[1 - (\alpha P_r/P_y)]
$$

$$
\alpha P_r/P_y = 1.0(P_r)/[(36)(2.86)] = P_r/103
$$
  
\n
$$
P_{e1w} = \frac{\pi^2 E I_w^*}{(K_1 L)^2} = \frac{\pi^2 (0.8) \tau_b (29,000)(6.90)}{[1.0(72)]^2}
$$
  
\n= 305 $\tau_b$  kips  
\n
$$
P_{e1z} = \frac{\pi^2 E I_z^*}{(K_1 L)^2} = \frac{\pi^2 (0.8) \tau_b (29,000)(1.74)}{[1.0(72)]^2}
$$
  
\n= 76.7 $\tau_b$  kips  
\n
$$
B_{1w} = \frac{C_m}{1 - \alpha P_r / P_{e1w}} = \frac{1.0}{1 - 1.0 (P_r) / 305 \tau_b}
$$
  
\n=  $\frac{305 \tau_b}{305 \tau_b - P_r}$   
\n
$$
B_{1z} = \frac{C_m}{1 - \alpha P_r / P_{e1z}} = \frac{1.0}{1 - 1.0 (P_r) / 76.7 \tau_b}
$$
  
\n=  $\frac{76.7 \tau_b}{76.7 \tau_b - P_r}$ 

The required second-order flexural strengths *Mrw* and  $M_{rz}$  for checking stress at points A, B and C are:

$$
M_{rw} = B_{1w}(e_w P_r) = \left(\frac{305\tau_b}{305\tau_b - P_r}\right)(e_w P_r)
$$

$$
M_{rz} = B_{1z}(e_z P_r) = \left(\frac{76.7\tau_b}{76.7\tau_b - P_r}\right)(e_z P_r)
$$

Apply Equation H2-1 at point A:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbw(A)}}{F_{cbw(A)}} - \frac{f_{rbz(A)}}{F_{cbz(A)}} \right| =
$$
\n
$$
\left| \frac{P_r/2.86}{20.7} + \frac{\left( \frac{305\tau_b(e_wP_r)}{305\tau_b - P_r} \right) \middle/ 2.56}{44.4} \right| \le 1.0
$$
\n
$$
\left| \frac{\left( \frac{76.7\tau_b(e_zP_r)}{76.7\tau_b - P_r} \right) \middle/ 1.27}{41.3} \right| \le 1.0
$$

Solving the previous equation,  $P_r = 62.6$  kips.

Apply Equation H2-1 at point B:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} + \frac{f_{rbz(B)}}{F_{cbz(B)}} \right| = \left| \frac{P_r/2.86}{20.7} + \frac{\left( \frac{76.7\tau_b(e_z P_r)}{76.7\tau_b - P_r} \right) / 1.09}{48.6} \right| \le 1.0
$$

Solving the previous equation,  $P_r = 33.5$  kips.

Apply Equation H2-1 at point C:

$$
\left| \frac{f_{ra}}{F_{ca}} - \frac{f_{rbw(A)}}{F_{cbw(A)}} - \frac{f_{rbz(A)}}{F_{cbz(A)}} \right| =
$$
\n
$$
\left| \frac{P_r/2.86}{20.66} - \frac{\left(\frac{305\tau_b(e_wP_r)}{305\tau_b - P_r}\right)\right| 2.56}{44.4} \right| \le 1.0
$$
\n
$$
\left| \frac{\left(76.7\tau_b(e_zP_r)}{76.7\tau_b - P_r}\right)\right| 1.27
$$
\n41.3

Solving the previous equation,  $P_r = 56.2$  kips.

Determine the design compressive strength,  $\phi_c P_n$ , and the allowable compressive strength,  $P_n/\Omega_c$ :

$$
\phi_c P_n = P_r = \min \left[ 62.6, 33.5, 56.2 \right] = 33.5 \text{ kips (LRFD)}
$$

$$
P_n/\Omega_c = (P_r/\phi_c)/\Omega_c = (33.5/0.9)/1.67 = 22.3
$$
 kips (ASD)

#### **Method 4**

 $L4\times4\times3/6$ , connected to one leg, axial load is applied at geometric axis *y-y*, and mid-thickness of gusset plate. Angle is designed on the basis of principal axes (*w-w, z-z*) bending. See Figure 7.



*Fig. 7. Method 4.*

 $e_w = 0.998$  in.  $e_z = 0.998$  in.

See Method 3 for additional information.

#### *Solution*

All calculations are the same as Method 3, except for replacing values of  $e_z$  and  $e_w$  in Method 3 with the values provided in this method.

Apply Equation H2-1 at point A, solve for  $P_r = 46.7$  kips Apply Equation H2-1 at point B, solve for  $P_r = 22.8$  kips Apply Equation H2-1 at point C, solve for  $P_r = 39.0$  kips

Determine the design compressive strength,  $\phi_c P_n$  and the allowable compressive strength, *Pn* /Ω*c*:

$$
\phi_c P_n = P_r = \min [46.7, 22.8, 39.0] = 22.8 \text{ kips (LRFD)}
$$
  

$$
P_n / \Omega_c = (P_r / \phi_c) / \Omega_c = (22.8/0.9) / 1.67 = 15.2 \text{ kips (ASD)}
$$

#### **DISCUSSION**

Axial capacities of an  $L4 \times 4 \times 36$  from the design examples are summarized in Table 1. The axial capacities based on Methods 2 and 4 (highlighted) are similar, while Method 1 gives the largest axial capacity and Method 2 yields the smallest capacity. It is further noted that the axial capacities based on Method 3 are slightly smaller than the values from Table 4-12 in the 14th edition AISC *Manual* when the direct analysis method and the flexural rigidity  $EI^* = 0.8\tau_b EI$  were used (2010 AISC *Specification* Appendix 8). Further investigation reveals that the axial capacities based on Method 3 match the values from Table 4-12 in the 14th edition AISC *Manual* when  $EI^* = EI$  was used in the analysis (example not shown).

Because the axial compressive design strength of the same angle with the same connection and the same unbraced length varies significantly with the different design methods, it should be interesting to see the variability among the different angles with different unbraced lengths. Figures 8a through 8d graphically illustrate the differences in the axial compressive design strength of the largest equal-leg angle

Table 1. Available Compressive Strength of L4 $\times$ 4 $\times$ <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> , L = 72 in.		
	$\phi_c P_n$	$P_n/\Omega$
Method 1	45.69	30.40
Method 2	22.54	15.00
Method 3 <sup>a</sup>	33.49	22.28
Method 3 <sup>b</sup>	35.17	23.40
AISC Table 4-12	35.2	23.2
Method 4	22.76	15.14

<sup>a</sup> *EI*\* = 0.8τ*bEI*  $b$   $EI^* = EI$ 

(L8×8) and one of the smallest equal-leg angles (L3×3) with the thickest and thinnest angle legs. The available axial compressive strength from Table 4-12 of both the 13th and 14th edition AISC *Manuals* are also included for the purpose of comparison. The following can be observed:

- 1. The axial compressive design strengths of single angles are the greatest based on Method 1 and the smallest based on Method 2 or 4. The magnitude of difference varies with the thickness of angle leg, a heavier section results in a greater difference. The ratios of the design strengths based on Method 1 to the design strengths based on Method 2 or 4 are in the range of 1.5 to 2.0.
- 2. The axial compressive design strengths of single angles based on Method 2 and Method 4 are similar. For angles with smaller unbraced lengths, the design strengths based on Method 4 are slightly larger than that based on Method 2; however, for angles with larger unbraced lengths, the design strengths based on Method 2 are slightly larger than that predicted based on Method 4.
- 3. When the axial compressive force is applied at the geometric axis *y-y*, the axial compressive design strengths of single angles based on Method 4 are smaller than those from Table 4-12 of the 13th edition AISC *Manual*, but they are close and almost parallel.
- 4. When the axial compressive force is applied at mid-point of the connected leg (*b*/2), the axial compressive design strength of single angles based on Method 3 considering the flexural rigidity  $EI^* = 0.8\tau_b EI$  (0.8 $\tau_b EI$  is shown in Figure 8) is slightly smaller than that from Table 4-12 of the 14th edition AISC *Manual*. However, when *EI\** = *EI* is used instead, the design strengths based on Method 3 are identical to that from Table 4-12 of the 14th edition AISC *Manual*.
- 5. As discussed in the design consideration section, because the slight eccentricity between the neutral axis of the single angle and the center of gravity of the weld

group has negligible effect on the static strength of the member, the angle should be designed assuming the static axial compressive force is applied at the mid-point of the connected leg (Method 3). However, for angles subject to cyclic force, one could choose to design the angle assuming the axial compressive force is applied at the neutral axis of the single angle, as it is required that the center of gravity of the weld group coincides with the neutral axis of the member.

On the other hand, single angles subject to cyclic loads can be designed assuming that the axial compressive force is applied at the mid-point of the connected leg (Method 3) per 2010 AISC *Specification* Section J1.7, as long as the requirement of center of gravity of the weld group coinciding with the neutral axis of the member is satisfied.

- 6. While the larger capacities predicted by Method 1 based on Section E5 of the 2010 AISC *Specification* are welcomed by the engineering community, the design engineer may wish to choose the values from Table 4-12 in the 14th edition AISC *Manual* or Design Table 2 presented at end of this paper, as the available strengths from these tables are conservative.
- 7. The 2005 and 2010 AISC *Specifications* do not address how to determine the eccentricity of applied axial force relative to the connected leg. However, a distance of 0.75*t* (*t* is the angle thickness) from the back face of the connected leg is used by Table 4-12 of the 13th and 14th edition AISC *Manauls*. As discussed in the design consideration section, this distance can be taken as small as −0.50*t*, instead of 0.75*t*. The design strengths based on Method 4 using different eccentricities are presented in Design Tables 3 and 4.
- 8. It is beneficial to point out that the larger available axial compressive strength of the single angles determined based on the specified effective slenderness ratio, *KL*/*r*



*Fig. 8a. Axial compressive design strength (L8×8×11/<sub>8</sub>).* 



*Fig. 8b. Axial compressive design strength (L8×8×*2*).*



*Fig. 8c. Axial compressive design strength (L3×3×*2*).*



*Fig. 8d. Axial compressive design strength (* $L3 \times 3 \times 13/16$ *).* 

(Method 1) are due to the presumptions that the significant bending and rotational restraints are provided by the end connections; in other words, if another method (Method 2, 3 or 4) is used to evaluate the available compressive strength of the single angles, the reduced unbraced lengths (effective length factor*, K*) and eccentricities due to the end restraints should be considered to avoid overly conservative results, as described in Commentary section E5 of the 2010 AISC *Specification*. However, this could pose some challenges when the design is based on a particular code, where the unbraced length reduction factor is limited to 1.0, as discussed in design considerations of single angles in compression.

#### **DESIGN TABLES**

Design tables for the axial compressive design strength of eccentrically loaded equal-leg single angles (grades 36 and 50) are prepared based on previously discussed Methods 1, 3 and 4. The format of the tables follows the format of Table 4-12 of the 14th edition AISC *Manual*.

**Design Table 1:** Axial compressive design strength of equal-leg angles based on Method 1, see Method 1.

**Design Table 2:** Axial compressive design strength of equal-leg angles based on Method 3, assuming the axial load is applied at mid-point of the connected leg and mid-thickness of the gusset plate. Angles are designed on the basis of principal axes *(w-w, z-z)* bending. See Method 3.

**Design Table 3:** Axial compressive design strength of equal-leg angles based on Method 4, assuming the axial load is applied at geometric axis *y-y* and mid-thickness of the gusset plate. Angles are designed on the basis of principal axes (*w-w, z-z*) bending. See Method 4.

**Design Table 4:** Axial compressive design strength of equal-leg angles based on Method 4, assuming the axial load is applied at geometric axis *y-y*, and mid-thickness of the connected leg. Angles are designed on the basis of principal axes (*w-w, z-z*) bending.

Design Tables 3 and 4 are integrated such that identical angle sizes appear in adjacent tables for ease of comparison.

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# Bond Behavior of Concrete-Filled Steel Tube (CFT) Structures

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# ABSTRACT

To achieve internal force transfer while avoiding the use of steel stud anchors or a bearing mechanism within concrete-filled steel tubes (CFTs), an accurate assessment of the bond strength of CFTs is required. However, calculation of the bond within CFTs remains a challenging problem due to lack of a general procedure that can account for the range of connection configurations seen within composite construction. A new approach for assessing the nominal bond strength for both rectangular and circular CFTs is proposed. Based on the results of push-out experiments of CFTs, the nominal bond stress is shown to vary with tube shape and dimensions, and formulas are proposed to capture this behavior. The longitudinal bond transfer length is derived by examining the distribution of bond stress along the height of the column as well as experimental data from CFT connection tests. The circumferential bond transfer width is identified as the entire perimeter of the interface, accounting for the contribution to the bond strength from the interface on the sides that do not have girders or braces framing in. The resulting nominal bond strength is then shown to have a resistance factor of 0.45 for load and resistance factor design (LRFD) and safety factor of 3.33 for allowable strength design (ASD).

Keywords: concrete-filled steel tubes, composite action, connections, bond strength, critical bond stress, slip.

# **INTRODUCTION**

Composite braced or unbraced frame structures that use concrete-filled steel tube (CFT) columns provide superior performance when subjected to nonseismic and seismic lateral loading. This has led to a continued increase in the use of these members in the primary lateral-resistance systems of structures. Steel tubes serve as the formwork for concrete placement, potentially expediting construction and reducing cost (Bridge and Webb, 1993). In addition, the composite action of the steel tube and concrete core can effectively delay the buckling of steel tubes and significantly increase the ductility of the concrete core. To ensure these beneficial effects, it is important to have a comprehensive understanding of the composite action between the constituent materials, particularly in critical connection regions where load is transferred to the CFT column from girders or braces. If the steel tube cannot effectively transfer the axial forces to the concrete, the resulting localized stresses may

lead to premature yielding or local buckling of the steel tube. Therefore, the bond transfer mechanisms need to be accurately assessed and incorporated into the design. Transfer of stress through natural bond, without the use of steel stud anchors or a bearing mechanism, is often the most economical connection detail; however, efforts to characterize the bond strength are hindered by varying experimental results, even among like specimens (Roeder et al., 1999).

The design provisions for load transfer in CFTs through direct bond in the AISC *Specification for Structural Steel Buildings* (AISC, 2010) are based predominantly on the results of push-out and push-off tests. Using only these data, there is little quantitative evidence to support the effective transfer area because these experimental configurations do not share the same loading and boundary conditions as typical composite columns. Thus, further investigation into bond behavior is important to ascertain a more accurate prediction on the bond strength of CFTs in the design provisions. In this work, a new formula for nominal bond strength is proposed. Nominal bond strength, longitudinal bond transfer length, circumferential bond transfer width and resistance and safety factors are examined separately.

#### **EXISTING DESIGN PROVISIONS**

The nominal bond strength of rectangular (RCFT) and circular concrete filled-steel tubes (CCFT) prescribed in the AISC *Specification* (AISC, 2010) is given as:

(a) For RCFT:

$$
R_n = B^2 C_{in} F_{in} \tag{1}
$$

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(b) For CCFT:

$$
R_n = 0.25 \pi D^2 C_{in} F_{in}
$$
 (2)

where

- $C_{in}$  = 2 if the CFT extends to one side of the point of force transfer
	- $= 4$  if the CFT extends to both sides of the point of force transfer
- $R_n$  = nominal bond strength, kips
- $F_{in}$  = nominal bond stress = 60 psi
- $B$  = overall width of rectangular steel section along face transferring load, in.
- $D =$  outside diameter of the round steel section, in.

This formula can be seen as the product of three values: the nominal bond stress, *Fin*; the circumferential bond transfer width, *B* for RCFT and 0.25π*D* for CCFT; and the longitudinal bond transfer length, *BCin* for RCFT and *DCin* for CCFT. The nominal bond stress, *Fin*, is taken as 60 psi (0.4 MPa). This value is seen as a reasonable lower bound of bond stresses observed in experimental results, mostly consisting of push-out tests (AISC, 2010). The bond length is dependent on the value of *Cin*, which is equal to 2 if CFT extends to only one side of the point of force transfer (e.g., the top or bottom story) and 4 if the CFT extends both sides. The bond width is computed assuming only the face to which load is applied for RCFT, or one-quarter of the perimeter for CCFT is active in transferring stress. The resistance factor,  $\phi$ , is given as 0.45 and safety factor,  $\Omega$ , is given as 3.33 based on an examination of push-off test results from Morishita et al. (1979a, 1979b).

The European model building code (CEN, 2004) also provides provisions relating to transfer strength by direct bond. A differentiation is made in the bond stress based on the shape of the steel tube: 60 psi (0.40 MPa) for RCFT and 80 psi (0.55 MPa) for CCFT. The bond transfer length is limited to the lesser of twice the minimum transverse dimension of the column, or one-third the column length. No mention is given to the bond transfer width, so it may be assumed that the full perimeter is engaged in the load transfer. It is noted that for a RCFT column with two girders framing in, the nominal bond strength, as calculated by the AISC *Specification* and Eurocode, is the same.

Tomii (1985) highlights a design procedure from the Japanese code in which a lower bond strength and larger bond transfer area are used. For long-term loading, the bond strength is 14 psi (0.10 MPa) for RCFT and 21 psi (0.15 MPa) for CCFT. The bond length is taken as the distance from the mid-height of the upper column to the mid-height of the lower column, and the bond width is taken as the full perimeter of the steel–concrete interface.

Other procedures have been proposed to characterize bond strength for design. Roeder et al., (1999) examined results from push-out tests on CCFTs and found a correlation between bond strength and the cross-sectional dimensions of the tube. A linear equation was proposed to describe the bond stress as a function of the *D*/*t* ratio. The linear equation implied that no reliable bond stress could be obtained for CCFTs with a *D*/*t* ratio greater than 80. Two checks are proposed using this bond stress. First, at the ultimate load level, the bond stress is applied around the entire perimeter and along a length equal to the lesser of length of the column, or 3.5 times the diameter of the steel tube. Second,



*Fig. 1. Typical CFT test configurations to assess bond behavior.*

noting evidence of cyclic deterioration of bond strength, at the serviceability level, the bond strength is computed using a triangular stress distribution over a length of one-half the tube diameter.

Variation in the bond stress based on tube dimensions was also observed for RCFTs by Parsley et al. (2000). A formula for bond strength was proposed as a linear function of the slenderness parameter *t*/*H*2.

# **EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES**

Experimental studies on bond behavior of CFT members have most frequently been conducted through the use of push-out tests (Virdi and Dowling, 1980; Shakir-Khalil, 1991, 1993b, 1993c; Roeder et al., 1999; Parsley et al., 2000; Xu et al., 2009; Aly et al., 2010; Yin and Lu, 2010), pushoff tests (Morishita et al., 1979a, 1979b; Tomii et al., 1980a, 1980b), or connection tests (Dunberry et al., 1987; Shakir-Khalil, 1993a, 1993d, 1994a, 1994b; Shakir-Khalil and Al-Rawdan, 1995). Each of these types of tests (see Figure 1) has advantages and disadvantages in the assessment of the natural bond strength of CFTs. The boundary conditions of push-out tests (Figures 1b and 1c) induce constant bond stress at the ultimate limit state and thus provide little information as to the distribution of bond stress over the length along the column. However, in push-off and connection tests, where the bond stress is not constant, it is difficult to accurately estimate the magnitude of stress. In typical push-out and push-off tests, the specimen bears directly on a rigid support at the base (Figure 1b), excluding the beneficial effects that a shear connection provides. Push-out tests where force is applied to the concrete core and resisted by shear tabs attached to the steel tube (Figure 1c) and connection tests (Figure 2) include these beneficial effects and thus provide the closest analogs to typical shear connections (or other connection types that feature eccentric introduction of force into the CFT) used in practice.



*Fig. 2. CFT connection test schematic.*

# **CFT Push-Out Tests without Shear Tabs**

Critical bond stresses from push-out test results are computed by dividing the peak load attained during the test by the entire area of the steel–concrete interface. The resistance observed in these tests has been generally attributed to three primary mechanisms: adhesion, friction and wedging (Parsley et al., 2000; Johansson 2003). Adhesion, provided by the chemical bond between the concrete and steel, is a brittle mechanism and is only active at most during the early stages of load. It may not be active at all depending on the relative amplitudes of radial enlargement of the steel tube caused by the wet concrete, shrinkage of the concrete and the roughness of the steel tube (Roeder et al., 1999). Friction is the product of the roughness of the steel–concrete interface and the contact pressure existing at the interface. Wedging occurs as the motion of the concrete core is resisted by geometric irregularities in the steel tube.

Bond stresses obtained from push-out tests are highly variable and found to range over two orders of magnitude. However, some noticeable trends have been identified (Roeder et al., 1999; Parsley et al., 2000). The bond stress for CCFTs is larger than for RCFTs. Tube dimensions have an effect on the results, with lower bond stress obtained for larger and more slender tubes. The surface preparation of the interior of the steel tube and the shrinkage/expansive potential of the concrete have also been shown to have an influence on the bond stress. Concrete and steel material strengths, however, appear to have no consistent effect on the bond stress. Eccentric loading of the column has also been shown to have a beneficial effect on the bond stress. This increase is so significant that it has been suggested that a bond need not be checked in the presence of significant bending moments in the column (Roeder et al., 2009). This paper does not specifically address the effect of eccentrically loaded columns, rather concentrating on the worstcase concentric loading.

Details of push-out tests without shear tabs reported in the literature are presented in Table 1 for RCFTs and Table 2 for CCFTs. All specimens from each reference were included, with the exception of those with shear tabs, those with mechanical shear connecters, those where the steel-concrete interface was manipulated by machining or applying a lubricant, those where the load was applied eccentrically or those with expansive concrete. Specimens that were loaded cyclically were included in the table because they represent loading conditions that typical connections may experience, and they did not significantly skew the results of the analysis.

### **CFT Push-Out Tests with Shear Tabs**

Assessing bond stress based on the results of typical pushout and push-off tests neglects beneficial effects that occur in typical beam-to-column connections due to the rotation





of the shear tabs (or similar eccentricities that may occur for introduction of force between a girder and the steel tube in the connection topology) (Johansson, 2003). The rotation of the shear tab during loading results in pinching of the concrete core where the shear tab rotates inward and constriction of the steel tube where the shear tab rotates outward (Figure 3). Both cases result in increased contact pressure



*Fig. 3. Increased contact force with shear tab rotation (adapted from Johansson, 2003).*

between the steel and concrete and thus greater frictional resistance to slip.

Push-out tests where load was applied to the steel tube through shear tabs have been reported in the literature (Shakir-Khalil, 1993c; Parsley et al., 2000). Details of these experiments are presented in Table 3 for RCFTs and Table 4 for CCFTs.

The failure mode of the all of the RCFT specimens was slip. A typical load-slip relationship shows a high initial stiffness up to the peak load. Many specimens showed a sharp decrease in strength following the peak load, while others maintained a load near the peak load. Two specimens (G2 and G3) displayed a steadily increasing load following a reduction in stiffness near the peak load of other similar specimens. In all cases, *Papplied* was taken as the peak load attained during the test. The average bond stress,  $F_{in}$ , for the full set of RCFT tests is 93 psi. The average bond stress for specimens where the shear tabs were located near midheight of the column is 118 psi, while it is 53 psi for specimens with shear tabs near the column ends.

Only some of the CCFT specimens failed due to slip. Specimens D1a, D1b, F1a and F1b (Shakir-Khalil, 1993c)





achieved higher-than-expected strengths, and the shear tabs failed prior to slip. In an analysis of one of these specimens, Johansson (2003) identified the rotation of the shear tabs and the increased contact forces to be the cause of the unexpectedly high bond strength. The failure mode of specimens H2 and H3 was slip; however, no peak load was observed because the load was seen to steadily increase. One specimen, H4, failed through slip and displayed a peak load. Again, in all cases, *Papplied* was taken as the peak load attained during the test. The bond stress for CCFTs is much larger than for RCFTs, with an average applied bond stress,  $F_{in}$ , of 556 psi. However, this value is unreasonably high for design purposes, because it was achieved only for a few similarly proportioned tests and may not be indicative of expected behavior for the variety of configurations expected in practice.

# **Nominal Bond Stress**

Push-out tests, whether with or without shear tabs, provide a direct means of assessing the bond stress. Trends in the push-out test results that have been identified include the dependence of the bond stress on factors not typically known at the time of design (e.g., the condition of the steel–concrete surface and the shrinkage/expansive potential of the concrete). For a bond stress formula intended for design, these factors should thus be included in an average sense rather than explicitly. Among the strongest trends identified is the dependence of the bond stress on tube dimensions. Roeder et al., (1999) proposed a formula for bond stress of CCFTs based on the *D*/*t* ratio. Parsley et al., (2000) proposed a formula for bond stress of RCFTs based on *t*/*H*2. The ratio  $t/H<sup>2</sup>$  was selected based on a mechanistic analysis; it is proportional to the radial stiffness of cylindrical, thin-walled pressure vessels.

It is noted that there is insufficient experimental evidence

to determine which of the two transverse dimensions of an RCFT cross-sections—i.e., the width or the height—should be used for determining bond stress because most of the RCFT push-out tests (Tables 1 and 3) had square sections. The height, defined here as the longer transverse dimension, was selected as the conservative choice, but further investigation is appropriate for sections with a high aspect ratio (*H*/*B*).

The results of push-out tests are plotted in Figure 4 against both of these parameters. All push-out tests from Tables 1 through 4 were included. The bond stress is typically higher for push-out tests with shear tabs, showing the



*Fig. 4. Bond stress for CFT as a function of tube slenderness.*

beneficial effects rotation of the shear tab has on bond stress. As seen in Figure 4, there is significant variation in the bond stress, indicating that the constant values used in current design methodologies are insufficient, especially for thin tubes and large cross-sections where the bond stress may be overestimated.

To obtain a design formula, a least squares curve fit can be made to these data. The forms of the equations chosen were selected to provide a good fit to the available data, have reasonable bounds, and produce non-negative bond stress values. The results of the regression analysis are as follows:

RCFT push-out tests without shear tabs:

$$
F_{in} = 6.23 \times 10^6 \left( H/t \right)^{-3.44} \quad R^2 = 0.68 \tag{3}
$$

$$
F_{in} = 12,100 \left( t/H^2 \right) \quad R^2 = 0.56 \tag{4}
$$

RCFT push-out tests with shear tabs:

$$
F_{in} = 3.23 \times 10^7 \left( H/t \right)^{-3.70} \quad R^2 = 0.61 \tag{5}
$$

$$
F_{in} = 21,100 \left( t/H^2 \right) \quad R^2 = 0.66 \tag{6}
$$

CCFT push-out tests without shear tabs:

$$
F_{in} = 28,500(D/t)^{-1.59} \quad R^2 = 0.33 \tag{7}
$$

$$
F_{in} = 30,700 \left( t/D^2 \right) R^2 = 0.50 \tag{8}
$$

where  $F_{in}$  is in psi and  $t$ ,  $H$ , and  $D$  are in inches.

A curve fit was not performed for CCFT push-out tests with shear tabs because all the available tests had nearly the same size tube. The two different functions for each case represent the two different parameters (e.g.,  $H/t$  and  $t/H^2$ ) chosen to represent the tube dimensions. In addition to accuracy, quantified by the  $R^2$  value associated with each formula, the formulas can be judged by their usability. Based on these criteria, the formulas based on *t*/*D*2 and *t*/*H*2 are recommended for design. Furthermore, the formulas computed with the data from the push-out tests without shear tabs are recommended for design because they provide a lower bound for the behavior expected in typical shear connections and allow for the greatest consistency between tube shapes. Thus Equation 4 is recommended for the nominal

bond stress of RCFTs, and Equation 8 is recommended for CCFTs. Both of these formulas have no upper bound on the bond stress, though one could be implemented based on the results of the stockiest tubes for each shape (i.e., 100 to 200 psi for RCFTs and 200 to 400 psi for CCFTs).

### **CFT Connection Tests**

Push-out tests have explicit boundary conditions and paths for load transfer and thus are well suited for an assessment of bond stress; however, they provide little evidence of the bond length or bond width of typical connections. Column connection tests that are instrumented to measure load transfer such as those conducted by Dunberry et al. (1987), Shakir-Khalil (1993a and d, 1994a and b) and Shakir-Khalil and Al-Rawdan (1995) provide a means to quantify the area over which a nominal bond stress acts in typical connections. A schematic of the test specimens and loading is presented in Figure 2. Shear tabs are welded to the outside of the steel tubes to transfer the eccentric shears through the interfaces. Load is applied at both column ends and at the shear connections, in a ratio described by β.

The experimental strength of all of these specimens was near the squash load, indicating that limit states other than cross-sectional strength, including slip, either did not have a significant effect on the strength or did not occur. In the tests performed by Dunberry et al. (1987), local buckling was a typical failure mode. The local buckling occurred near the connection for some specimens, indicating that the loading conditions possibly had an influence on the strength—and away from the connection for other specimens. A strain incompatibility was observed in the connection region, which extended approximately three tube widths below the connection and one to two tube widths above the connection. The concrete load steadily rose in this region, indicating a load was transferred along its length, although the rise was steepest in the bottom half of the connection, indicating that pinching due to rotation of the shear tabs played a significant role in transferring the load. The tests performed by Shakir-Khalil (1993a and d, 1994a and b) and Shakir-Khalil and Al-Rawdan (1995) displayed somewhat similar behavior. The typical failure mode was overall collapse of the column without indication of a detrimental effect on the strength from slip. The observed transfer length was shorter than that observed by Dunberry et al. (1987), as strains equalized within a tube width above and below the connection.

Additional details of the experiments are shown in Table 5 for RCFTs and in Table 6 for CCFTs. The tabulated applied load, *Papplied*, is the total load applied to the steel tube in the connection region. This load is not necessarily indicative of the slip strength because many of the specimens failed away from the connection region or the strength was not reached due to test rig limitations. Nonetheless, these specimens were included in the table because they provide a lower





bound on the slip strength. The portion of the applied load that is transferred to the concrete core, *V*′ *applied*, is computed using Equation 9, which assumes secant stiffnesses based on the material strengths. Equation 9 is equivalent to provisions in the AISC *Specification* (AISC, 2010) that specify how much load is transferred to the concrete when all of the specimens have compact members:

$$
V'_{applied} = P_{applied} \left( 1 - \frac{A_s F_y}{A_s F_y + C_2 A_c f_c'} \right) \tag{9}
$$

where

 $C_2$  = 0.85 for RCFT and 0.95 for CCFT

The nominal bond strength based on current design provisions (AISC, 2010) is tabulated for each of the specimens and is used and along with *V*′ *applied* to compute the test-topredicted ratio (Tables 5 and 6). The current design provisions are seen to be very conservative for these specimens, with test-to-predicted ratios ranging from 1.2 to 5.1 for RCFTs and 1.8 to 4.2 for CCFTs, especially when noting that these ratios are a lower bound because few specimens exhibited a failure mode that included slip.

#### **Effective Bond Transfer Length**

The transfer length, the length along the column where significant bond stresses occur, varies with material and geometric properties of the CFT and increases with applied load. The length used in the bond strength formula must address two types of slip limit states. The first is slip along the entire length of the column, where, depending on the boundary conditions, a push-out type failure could occur. The second is slip occurring locally, near the point of load application. This type of slip failure is enabled by the formation of a plastic mechanism in either the steel tube or concrete core, allowing the relative motion. Other, more localized failure modes that include slip (e.g., failure of one face of a CFT column where load is framing in) should be addressed in connection design and are not discussed here.

The CFT connection tests provide some insight into an appropriate bond length. The transfer length at peak load, *Ltransfer*, is computed for the CFT connections tests (Tables 5 and 6) using Equation 10, where *p* is the entire perimeter of the steel–concrete interface and *Fin* is the critical bond stress, as computed using Equation 6 for RCFTs and Equation 8 for CCFTs:

$$
L_{transfer} = \frac{V_{applied}'}{p F_{in}}
$$
 (10)

Use of the formula for bond stress from push-out tests without shear tabs for RCFT (Equation 4) would result in transfer lengths approximately twice as large and could be justified because Equation 4 is recommended for design. However, the formula for bond stress from push-out tests with shear tabs is used for RCFTs, because it is a more accurate assessment for these specimens. The tabulated transfer lengths are of approximately the same magnitude as the lengths over which slip occurred, as reported by the researchers.

In Tables 5 and 6, the transfer length is seen to have a strong correlation with the ratio of load applied at the connection to total load,  $β$  (Figure 2). This is due to the fact that the specimens failed at loads near the cross-section strength, thus the specimens with larger  $β$  values had larger transferred loads at failure because a larger portion of the load was applied at the connection. The other specimens, with lower β values, presumably could have achieved the similar transferred loads at failure had a greater portion of the load been applied at the connection. Accordingly, the transfer length in Tables 5 and 6 should be considered a lower bound. The ratio of transfer length to tube width for specimens with a large proportion of the load applied at the connection ranges from 2.3 to 4.1 ( $\beta \ge 0.4$ ; Table 5: specimens A1, A2, A3, B2, C1, D1, D2, D3 and D4 by Dunberry et al., 1987; Table 6: specimen A5 by Shakir-Khalil, 1993a). Based on these data, the current provisions for bond length for the case of load applied to the steel tube and the CFT extending to both sides of the point of force transfer (i.e.,  $C_{in} = 4$ ) (AISC, 2010) appear to be appropriate and safe for design.

While the CFT connection tests provide valuable information, they are limited by a lack of variety in geometric and material properties and loading configurations and because most specimens did not exhibit a slip related failure. A mechanistic analysis allows exploration of the effective bond transfer length for the range of properties and configurations seen in practice. A suitable bond length would account for both slip limit states: slip along the entire length and localized slip accompanied with overstressing and formation of a plastic mechanism in the steel tube or concrete core.

The normalized length (*L/H* for RCFT or *L/D* for CCFT) of the CFT push-out tests examined in this work varied from 1 to 6. The CFT connections tests exhibited normalized transfer lengths within the same range. While no definite trends were identified in the CFT push-out test results between the normalized length and bond stress, the bond stress as derived from the push-out tests may not be active along the entire length for longer columns. Thus, utilizing the entire length of the column to assess bond strength (i.e.,  $L_{bond} = L$ , extending from mid-height of the column above the connection to mid-height of the column below the connection) may be inappropriate even for the case of slip occurring along the entire length of the column.

For localized slip, the length of the column that slips is relatively small, but to enable this failure mode, a plastic

mechanism needs to develop in either the steel tube or concrete core (depending on where the load is applied). The applied force required to develop the plastic mechanism assuming strengths consistent with current provisions (AISC, 2010) is given in Equation 11a for the case of load applied to the steel tube and the CFT extending to both sides of the point of force transfer, Equation 11b for the case of load applied to the steel tube and the CFT extending to only the compressive side of the point of force transfer, and Equation 11c for the case of load applied to the concrete core regardless of which sides the CFT extends.

$$
P_{applied} = A_s F_{cr} + A_s F_y \tag{11a}
$$

$$
P_{applied} = A_s F_{cr} \tag{11b}
$$

$$
P_{applied} = C_2 A_c f'_c \tag{11c}
$$

where  $F_{cr}$  is the critical compressive stress of the steel tube  $(F_{cr} \leq F_{v})$  (AISC, 2010).

Note that when load is applied to the steel tube and the CFT extends to both sides, the compressive strength on one side and the tensile strength on the other side need to be met simultaneously to form a plastic mechanism. Thus, depending on the proportioning of the section, this limit state may be precluded by the cross-section strength of the composite column.

To determine an appropriate value for the bond length when a localized overstressing failure controls, the transfer length is computed when the applied load is equal to the limit (Equation 11). The transfer length is computed using Equation 12a for the case of load applied to the steel tube and Equation 12b for the case of load applied to the concrete core. These equations are as given in the AISC *Specification* (AISC, 2010), with the exception that  $F_{cr}$  is used instead of  $F<sub>v</sub>$  to determine the portion of the load supported by the steel tube. This change was necessary to yield realistic results for slender tubes. Note that  $F_{cr} = F_y$  in the controlling cases presented here; thus, this deviation from the AISC *Specification* has no effect on the proposed recommendations.

$$
P_{applied}\left(1 - \frac{A_s F_{cr}}{P_{no}}\right) = pF_{in}L_{transfer}
$$
\n(12a)

$$
P_{applied}\left(\frac{A_s F_{cr}}{P_{no}}\right) = pF_{in}L_{transfer}
$$
 (12b)

where  $P_{no}$  is the nominal compressive strength of zero length CFT (AISC, 2010).

The computed transfer length is normalized by the outside dimension of the steel tube (*H* for RCFT; *D* for CCFT) to be comparable with the parameter  $C_{in}$ . The minimum normalized transfer lengths for practical ranges of material parameters ( $F_y \ge 36$  ksi,  $E_s = 29,000$  ksi,  $f'_c \ge 3$  ksi) and geometric parameters ( $H \ge 4$  in.,  $H/B \le 2$ ,  $B/t \ge 10$ ,  $H/t \le$ 400 for RCFT;  $D \ge 4$  in.,  $10 \le D/t \le 400$  for CCFT) and only for cases where the plastic mechanism was not precluded by the cross-section strength are presented in Table 7 for RCFTs and Table 8 for CCFTs for the various configurations. Based on these results, an appropriate value for *Cin* in the bond strength equation is 4 for the case of load applied to the steel tube and the CFT extending to both sides of the point of force transfer and 2 otherwise. The value of 4 for the case of load applied to the steel tube and steel tube and the CFT extending to both sides of the point of force transfer is in agreement with results of the CFT connection tests described earlier; there is no experimental evidence for the other configurations. These recommendations regarding *Cin* represent a minor change from the current provisions, where  $C_{in}$  = 4 when the CFT extends to both sides of the point of force transfer regardless of whether the load is applied to the steel or to the concrete. It is further recommended that in cases where the nominal bond length (*CinH* for RCFTs; *CinD* for CCFTs) of adjacent connection regions overlaps (e.g., columns with a low length-to-depth ratio or with beams framing in a staggered pattern), the bond length should be taken as a reduced value computed such that no overlap occurs.

An alternative form of the bond length could include the height of the shear tab. This form would have the advantage of being more consistent with the definition of the load transfer region used for detailing shear connectors in composite columns (AISC, 2010). If such a form was chosen, the value of *Cin* would need to be adjusted accordingly.

#### **Effective Bond Transfer Width**

Current design provisions in the AISC *Specification* allow only a portion of the perimeter of the steel–concrete interface to be used when computing the transfer strength (AISC, 2010). This is unique among the existing and proposed design provisions examined in this paper (Tomii, 1985; Roeder et al., 1999; Parsley et al., 2000; CEN, 2004). Based on observations of friction marks on tested and disassembled push-out specimens, Shakir-Khalil (1993b) noted that for CCFTs the entire perimeter is engaged in bond transfer, whereas for RCFTs only the corner regions participate. There is limited evidence regarding the portion of the width that is active when various numbers of girders frame into either a CCFT or a RCFT column because the majority of tests have been completed with two girders. The CFT





connection tests conducted by Shakir-Khalil and Al-Rawdan (1995) with only one girder framing in had experienced lower transfer loads than the other specimens (Table 5), but it is important to note that the specimen did not suffer a bond failure and would likely have resisted higher transfer loads if the specimen were designed to mitigate non-slip-related failure. The experimental bond stress for push-out tests, including those with shear tabs, is computed assuming the full perimeter is engaged in slip. All of the push-out tests with shear tabs in Tables 3 and 4 have two girders framing on opposite sides. This implies that, for columns with at least two girders framing in on opposite sides, the bond stress can be achieved for the entire perimeter. For the cases of edge and corner columns where one girder or two girders on adjacent sides frame in, it is unclear whether or not the entire perimeter is engaged. However, these configurations will induce bending moments into the columns, thus increasing the bond strength. Therefore, using the entire perimeter for corner columns is likely justified and is proposed for use in this work.

# **PROPOSED DESIGN FORMULA**

Based on the preceding analyses of critical bond stress, longitudinal bond transfer length and circumferential bond

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transfer width, the formula for nominal bond strength is proposed as:

(a) For RCFT:

$$
R_n = 2(B+H)L_{bond}F_{in}
$$
 (13a)

$$
L_{bond} = C_{in}H
$$
 (13b)

$$
F_{in} = 12.1 \left( t \right) \left/ H^2 \right) \le 0.1 \tag{13c}
$$

(b) For CCFT:

$$
R_n = \pi DL_{bond} F_{in}
$$
 (14a)

$$
L_{bond} = C_{in}D \tag{14b}
$$



$$
F_{in} = 30.7 \left( t/D^2 \right) \le 0.2 \tag{14c}
$$

where

 $R_n$  = nominal bond strength, kips

 $F_{in}$  = nominal bond stress, ksi

- $t =$  design wall thickness of steel section, in.
- *B* = overall width of rectangular steel section  $(B \leq H)$ , in.
- *H* = overall height of rectangular steel section  $(H \ge B)$ , in.
- $D =$  outside diameter of round steel section, in.
- $L_{bond}$  = length of the bond region (the bond region of adjacent connections shall not overlap)
- $C_{in}$  = 4 if load is applied to the steel tube and the CFT extends to both sides of the point of force transfer  $= 2$  otherwise

For simplicity in design, the perimeter of the steel– concrete interface is approximated using the outside dimensions of the steel tube (i.e.,  $p = 2(B + H)$  for RCFT and  $p = \pi D$  for CCFT). The error introduced from this simplification is small in comparison to the scatter in the results.

An upper bound is placed on the bond stress based on the bond stress observed in experimental results of the stockiest tubes for each shape. For very large cross-sections and thin steel tubes, the bond stress approaches zero, essentially requiring an alternate force transfer mechanism when significant loads are applied.

The proposed formula differs from the current formula (AISC, 2010) in the bond strength, bond length, and bond width. In the proposed equation, the bond width is the entire perimeter of the interface, regardless of the number of girders framing in. The resulting strength should be compared against the force transfer demand from all girders framing in, as opposed to checking each girder individually as implied by the current design formula (AISC, 2010).

The proposed formula for bond stress is based on geometric properties of the tube only. It is noted that concrete quality (e.g., the shrinkage/expansive potential) also affects the bond stress. This was not included in the proposed formula because the concrete quality is not typically known at the time of design. However, higher and more reliable bond strengths could be obtained if there were requirements placed on the quality of the concrete (Roeder et al., 1999).

To compute a resistance factor for load and resistance factor design, the recommendations of Ravindra and Galambos (1978) are used. The proposed formula for the resistance factor (Equation 15) depends on the desired reliability index, β*o*; coefficient of variation of the resistance, *VR*; and the mean test-to-predicted ratio, *Rm*/*Rn*:

$$
\phi = \frac{R_m}{R_n} e^{(-0.55\beta_o V_R)}\tag{15}
$$

Unfortunately, no suitable set of tests exists to compute reliable statistics on the resistance or test-to-predicted ratio for the bond strength. The CFT connection tests results have unnaturally high variation because the peak applied loads do not always reflect bond failures (i.e., other failure modes govern the peak strength). An approximate result can be obtained by computing the resistance factor for the bond stress. The nominal bond stress given by Equations 13b and 14b is compared to the experimentally observed bond stress for the specimens in Tables 1 and 2. The resulting mean and coefficient of variation of the test-to-predicted ratio are presented in Table 9. In this case, only uncertainty from the bond stress will be included. Assuming a reliability index of 3.0, as is recommended for members (Ravindra and Galambos, 1978), the resistance factor is computed as 0.45 for RCFT and 0.55 for CCFT. A value of 0.45 is recommended for both shapes. The corresponding safety factor for allowable stress design is computed as 3.33 ( $\Omega = 1.5/\phi$ ). These values are consistent with those in the current AISC *Specification* (2010).

# **DISTRIBUTION OF BOND STRESS ALONG COLUMN HEIGHT**

The current (AISC, 2010) and the proposed design equations assume that the bond stress is uniform over a given height of the column. However, distribution of bond stress is known to vary both along the perimeter of the interface and along the height of the columns. This complex three-dimensional behavior is most accurately analyzed using detailed continuum finite element models (Roeder et al., 1999; Johansson, 2003). One-dimensional analysis, assuming constant behavior around the perimeter of the interface, complements the more detailed analyses and provides a valuable link between the complex three-dimensional behavior and simple design equations. The derivation presented here is essentially a simple case of the bond model developed by Hajjar et al. (1998), applicable only to concentrically loaded columns with negligible geometric nonlinearity. This section thus assesses the nonlinear distribution of bond stress using one-dimensional analysis and justifies the use of a uniform bond stress in design calculations.

The distribution of bond stress along the height of the column depends on the response of the steel tube and the concrete core, as well as the interface between the two. A differential equation can be formed to describe the slip behavior by assessing equilibrium on an infinitesimal length of a CFT column. A free-body diagram of the CFT segment is shown in Figure 5. Equilibrium can be assessed for the steel and concrete components (Equation 16):

$$
\Sigma F_{concrete} = A_c \sigma_c(x) - A_c \sigma_c(x + dx) - p \, dx \tau(x) = 0
$$
 (16a)

$$
\Sigma F_{steel} = A_s \sigma_s (x) - A_s \sigma_s (x + dx) + p \, dx \tau (x) = 0 \quad (16b)
$$

where

 $A_s$  = cross-sectional area of the steel tube  $A_c$  = cross-sectional area of the concrete core  $p =$  perimeter of the steel–concrete interface  $x =$  variable defined by the length along the CFT  $dx$  = length of the segment of CFT analyzed (Figure 5)  $\sigma_s(x)$  = longitudinal stress in the steel tube  $\sigma_c(x)$  = longitudinal stress in the concrete core  $\tau(x)$  = bond stress

If elastic behavior is assumed (i.e., steel and concrete stresses are linear functions of strain and bond stress is a linear function of slip), the general solution of the resulting differential equation is Equation 17 (Denavit, 2012).

$$
\tau(x) = C_1 e^{Cx} + C_2 e^{-Cx} \tag{17}
$$



*Fig. 5. Free-body diagram of CFT section.*

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where

$$
C = \sqrt{\frac{p\,\mathrm{K}}{E_c A_c} + \frac{p\,\mathrm{K}}{E_s A_s}}
$$



The specific solution depends on the boundary conditions of the column. One representative case—one side of a shear connection where the peak bond stress is just reached and the column is of sufficient length to completely transfer the load—will be examined further. The boundary conditions for this case can be described by Equation 18:

$$
\tau(0) = F_{in} \quad \tau(\infty) = 0 \tag{18}
$$

Solving for the constants, the distribution of the bond stress is described by Equation 19. The equation indicates that the bond stress exponentially decays away from the point of load applications. The force transfer between materials persists along the full length of the column, although after a relatively short distance the bond stress is negligibly small. This behavior has been noted previously in analyses performed by Roeder et al. (1999).

$$
\tau(x) = F_{in}e^{-Cx} \tag{19}
$$



*Fig. 6. Schematic of FEM mesh.*

The load transferred can be computed by integrating along the length of the column and is found to be  $pF_{in}/C$ .

Examining the elastic behavior gives insight into the distribution of bond stress; however, nonlinearity in the steel tube, concrete core and bond behavior is expected at the ultimate limit state. A material nonlinear analysis was conducted using existing structural analysis formulations, noting that the governing differential equations can be modeled with two strands of linked truss elements. The steel tube and concrete core are modeled with truss elements, and the interface is modeled with zero length springs located at the nodes. This configuration is shown schematically in Figure 6. Typically, 200 elements along the length of the column were used in the analyses; the large number of elements provided for smooth results along the length of the column. When elastic materials are used, the analytical results (Equation 18) are captured exactly by this computational model. Suitable uniaxial material models have been developed in previous studies for RCFT (Tort and Hajjar, 2010) and CCFT (Denavit and Hajjar, 2012). An elastic–perfectly plastic model is used to describe the load-slip relationship with peak stress computed by Equation 13b for RCFT and Equation 14b for CCFT and the initial stiffness taken as 66  $kip/in<sup>3</sup>$ , based on recommendations by Hajjar et al. (1998).

Analyses were performed on column segments representing half the story height above and below a simple connection. Slip was constrained to be zero at the top and bottom of the column segment so that the introduction of load at the connection could be investigated without any influence of slip elsewhere in the column. The columns were subjected to a load applied at the top representing load in the column from upper stories and a load applied at the connection (midheight of the segment) equal to the nominal bond strength (Equation 13a for RCFTs and Equation 14a for CCFTs). Results include the distribution of slip, bond stress and axial load in the steel tube and concrete core along the height of the column. Sample results from one analysis are shown in Figure 7 for a 10-ft-long segment of a CCFT column constructed from an HSS 7.500×0.250 ( $F_v = 42$  ksi,  $t_{design} =$ 0.233 in,  $F_{in}$  = 127.2 psi) and normal-strength concrete ( $f'_{c}$  = 4 ksi). A load of 74.2 kips (0.2*Pno*) was applied at the top, and a load of 211.9 kips was applied at the connection.

The horizontal dashed lines denote the nominal bond length (*CinD*) in which the bond stress is assumed active in the design formulation. The nonlinear analysis confirms that the majority of the force transfer occurs in this region, although not all, with some slip extending both above and below this region. The distribution of slip is not symmetric about the connection, with the equilibrium achieved in a shorter length below the connection than above. This is due to the gradual decrease in stiffness of the steel tube and concrete core as loads are increased. The variation in stiffness with loading is also seen in the load sharing in the equilibrium regions. Above the connection the steel carries 52% of the axial load, while below the connection the steel carries 60% of the axial load. The percentage below the connection is in agreement with the AISC *Specification* (Equation 9), but because the percentage above is lower, the transferred



*Fig. 7. Sample results of nonlinear bond analysis.*

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load is slightly underpredicted. The magnitude of slip at the nominal bond strength is rather small (on the order of onehundredth of an inch), confirming that natural bond strength should not be superimposed with other force transfer mechanisms that may not develop their full strength at these low levels of deformation.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Current design provisions for the natural bond strength are overly simple and are found to be conservative for the cases examined. A new formula for nominal bond strength of CFT structures is proposed in this paper. The critical bond stress, given as a function of tube dimensions, is derived from results of push-out test and varies between RCFT and CCFT. The effective bond transfer area is determined based on an examination of experimental observations and results from specially instrumented connection tests. The resistance factor is computed as 0.45, and the safety factor is computed as 3.33, based on the bond stress formula. Using a one-dimensional model, the behavior of the connection region of a column was examined. The distribution of bond stress and the load deformation response at the joint both indicate that the proposed design formula is safe.

Finally, it is noted that because the proposed formula is based on experimental results that do not generally exhibit a bond slip failure, there is a degree of conservatism in the design recommendations. Thus, future experimental and analytical research is warranted to explore the behavior of CFT columns subjected large transfer forces.

### **NOTATION**





τ Shear stress at steel–concrete interface

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# Beam Deflections and Stresses During Lifting

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# ABSTRACT

The behavior of horizontally curved beams during lifting is analyzed. The beams are circularly curved, doubly symmetric, prismatic and linearly elastic, and they are suspended at two symmetric locations. The two cables lifting the beams may be vertical or inclined symmetrically. Numerical results are presented for steel I-beams. Weak-axis and strong-axis deflections, roll angle and cross-sectional twist, internal forces, bending and twisting moments, and longitudinal stresses are calculated using newly derived analytical solutions implemented as a freely available spreadsheet at http://www.moen.cee.vt.edu. Lifting locations along the beam that minimize displacements and stresses are identified.

Keywords: lifting beams, twisting, deflections.

# **INTRODUCTION**

 $\bigwedge$  hen a horizontally curved beam is lifted by two cables, it tends to roll (rotate) about an axis above the beam. If the lift points are not approximately one-fifth of the beam's length from the near end, the beam may roll significantly. This causes weak-axis bending and cross-sectional twist to occur. Excessive roll and twist may cause difficulties when the beam is put into place, e.g., on permanent or temporary bridge supports. The objectives of the present study are to obtain analytical solutions for a basic class of beams and to determine the effects of various parameters, such as the locations of the lift points. For suspended beams that are intentionally curved, or are meant to be straight but have an imperfection in shape, the displacements and stresses are of concern, but lateral buckling is typically not an issue (Petruzzi, 2010; Plaut and Moen, 2011).

In the analysis, the beams are circularly curved (horizontally), the curvature is small, and the cross-sectional dimensions are small compared to the radius of curvature. The cross-section is uniform and doubly symmetric, and its center of gravity coincides with its shear center. The analytical formulation is also accurate for singly symmetric sections when the center of twist (shear center) is close to the cross-section centroid (Cojocaru, 2012). The cross-section is rigid and does not change shape as the beam rolls and deforms. The material behavior is linearly elastic and the displacements are small. The beam is subjected to its selfweight and to the two supporting cable forces that are symmetric with respect to midspan.

Investigations on the lifting of straight or curved beams include Mast (1989), Dux and Kitipornchai (1990), and Stratford and Burgoyne (2000). Additional references are listed in Plaut and Moen (2012). A recent research project at the University of Texas at Austin studied the behavior of curved steel I-beams during lifting with vertical cables (e.g., Farris, 2008; Schuh, 2008; Petruzzi, 2010; Stith, 2010). Results of some tests were presented, and the analysis was mainly conducted using the finite element software ANSYS. A software program called UT Lift was developed along with another program called UT Bridge that relates to bridge construction.

This current investigation complements the University of Texas research. The focus is not solely on steel I-beams and the supporting cables may be inclined. Instead of applying the finite element method, the results are obtained from new analytical equations (Plaut and Moen, 2012) implemented as a freely available spreadsheet at http://www.moen.cee. vt.edu/. However, this study is more restricted in some aspects because it does not include nonprismatic beams, nonsymmetric lift points, or the effect of attached cross frames.

# **FORMULATION**

The beam is depicted in Figure 1. A perspective with inclined cables is shown in Figure 1a; a top view in Figures 1b and 1c; a side view (from the center of curvature) in Figure 1d; and another perspective in Figure 1e. The unstrained beam has radius of curvature *R*, length *L*, cross-sectional

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area *A*, modulus of elasticity *E*, shear modulus *G*, torsional constant *J*, warping constant  $C_w$  and self-weight *q* per unit length.

The subtended angle of the beam is 2a, and the cylindrical coordinate  $\theta$  is zero at midspan. The connection points *D* and *K* of the two cables are located at the lift points  $\theta$  = − γ and γ, respectively, at a distance *a* from the near end of the beam and at a height *H* above the shear center and parallel to the *y*-axis (the weak axis). The line passing through *D* and *K*, which is dashed in Figure 1e, is called the roll axis (or axis of rotation). The inclination angle of the cables from the vertical is y toward midspan, and the offset of the center of the beam from the chord through the ends is denoted δ.

Figure 1a shows the principal axes *y* and *z* of the crosssection and the longitudinal *x*-axis, which is tangential to the curved axis of the member through the shear center. The origin is at midspan, so that  $x = R\theta$ . The longitudinal deflection is *U*, the strong-axis deflection is *V*, the weak-axis deflection is *W* (positive if radially outward) and the angle of twist is ϕ. The moments of inertia for strong-axis and weakaxis bending, respectively, are *Iz* and *Iy*.

The center of gravity of the unstrained beam lies along the central ray  $\theta = 0$  and at a radial distance (eccentricity) *e* from the roll axis, as shown in Figure 1c. If the center of gravity of the entire beam does not lie in the vertical plane that includes the roll axis, then the beam exhibits a rotation about the roll axis, as shown in Figure 1e, until its center of gravity lies in that vertical plane. If the beam were rigid, the roll angle would be  $β_{rigid} = arctan(e/H)$  (Schuh, 2008). The deformation causes the actual roll angle β to be different.



*Fig. 1. Geometry of beam: (a) perspective; (b) top view; (c) top view; (d) side view; (e) rotation about roll axis.*



The total rotation of the plane of the cross-section at location θ is βcos(θ) − ϕ, and it is assumed that *V*, *W* and ϕ are zero at the lift points [so that the total rotation there is  $βcos(γ)$ ]. The equation for β, along with analytical equations that furnish the internal forces and moments, deflections, twist and stresses, are given in Plaut and Moen (2012).

The roll angle β is usually zero when *a/L* is approximately 0.21 (Schuh, 2008; Plaut and Moen, 2012). For smaller values of *a/L*, β is positive, and for larger values of *a/L*, β is negative. As  $a/L$  decreases or increases from 0.21, the magnitude of the roll angle increases.

# **EXAMPLE**

Three steel I-beams, similar to ones in Schuh (2008), are considered. The beams have  $\delta/L = 0.01$ ,  $L = 90$  ft,  $R = 1,125$ ft, web depth  $h_w = 69$  in., web thickness  $t_w = 0.75$  in., flange thickness  $t_f = 1.5$  in.,  $H = 66$  in.,  $E = 29,000$  ksi, Poisson's ratio = 0.3 and specific weight = 490 lb/ft<sup>3</sup>. The cables are vertical ( $\psi$  = 0). Three flange widths,  $b_f$  = 12 in., 18 in. and 24 in., are considered, and the corresponding values of *A*,  $q$ ,  $I_y$ ,  $I_z$ ,  $J$  and  $C_w$  are listed in Table 1. The effect of the normalized overhang length is examined for the range  $0.1 ≤ a/L ≤ 0.4.$ 

Figure 2 shows how the roll angle β varies with *a/L*. For small overhang lengths  $a$ , the roll angle  $\beta$  is positive and the cross-section tilts so that its top edge moves outward (away from the center of curvature), as shown in Figure 1e. For large overhang lengths, it tilts in the opposite direction. The magnitude of the roll angle tends to decrease slightly as the flange width increases from 12 in. to 24 in.

The twist  $\phi$  at midspan is plotted in Figure 3. It is positive for an intermediate range of the overhang length and negative otherwise. Figure 4 depicts how the overhang length affects the twist at the end of the beam  $(x = L/2)$ . For a given value of *a/L*, as the flange width increases, the magnitudes of the midspan and end twist usually decrease.

It has been recommended that the magnitude of the total rotation,  $\left|\beta\cos(\theta) - \phi\right|$ , be less than 1.5° (Farris, 2008). The overhang length is critical with regard to this criterion. For



*Fig. 2. Roll angle versus normalized overhang length a/L.*







*Fig. 4. Twist at end versus a/L.*



*Fig. 5. Weak-axis deflection at midspan versus a/L.*



*Fig. 6. Longitudinal stress at midspan tip due to weak-axis bending versus a/L.*



*Fig. 7. Longitudinal stress at midspan tip due to strong-axis bending versus a/L.*



*Fig. 8. Longitudinal stress at midspan tip due to warping versus a/L.*

the three flange widths considered, the criterion is satisfied at midspan if  $0.17 < a/L < 0.29$  and at the end of the beam if  $0.14 < a/L < 0.29$ .

In Figure 5, the weak-axis deflection *W* at midspan is plotted versus  $a/L$ . The roll angle is zero when  $a/L = 0.211$ , and this deflection *W*(0) becomes slightly negative for a small range around  $a/L = 0.22$ . As the flange width increases, the midspan deflection tends to decrease.

With regard to possible buckling of the flange due to compression, it is important to know the magnitude of the longitudinal (normal) stress acting on the cross-section. The maximum value occurs at midspan and, in general, is a combination of stresses due to axial load, weak-axis bending, strong-axis bending and warping (Seaburg and Carter, 1997; Stith, 2010). The first of these stresses is zero here because the cables are vertical, i.e.,  $\psi = 0$ . Summing the values of the maximum magnitudes of each of the other stresses at the tips of the flanges, one can write an upper bound as  $\sigma_n = |\sigma_{by}| + |\sigma_{bz}| + |\sigma_w|$ , where the stress contributions at a tip at midspan are  $\sigma_{bv}$  due to weak-axis bending,  $\sigma_{bz}$  due to strong-axis bending and  $\sigma_w$  due to warping normal stress.

The longitudinal stress  $\sigma_{bv}$  due to weak-axis bending is shown in Figure 6 for the three steel I-beams. It is highest for  $b_f$  = 12 in. and lowest for  $b_f$  = 24 in. For all three cases,  $\sigma_{by} = 0$  at  $a/L = 0.21$  and 0.25, and  $\sigma_{by}$  is very small if the lift points lie between those locations.

Figure 7 depicts the longitudinal stress  $\sigma_{bz}$  due to strongaxis bending. This stress is zero at  $a/L = 0.25$ . The highest magnitude occurs for  $b_f = 12$  in., the case with the highest ratio *A/Iz.*

In Figure 8, the midspan stress  $\sigma_w$  due to warping normal stress is plotted. It is zero at  $a/L = 0.25$  for the three cases, and again at  $a/L = 0.40, 0.37$  and 0.36, respectively, for  $b_f =$ 12, 18 and 24 in. In comparing Figures 6, 7 and 8, the magnitude of  $\sigma_w$  is larger than the magnitudes of  $\sigma_{bv}$  and  $\sigma_{bz}$  for all three cases if *a/L* is small.

Finally, the sum  $\sigma_n$  of the magnitudes of these three normal stresses is depicted in Figure 9. It is zero at *a/L* = 0.25, and elsewhere is highest for  $b_f = 12$  in. In the range shown, and for these three steel I-beams, the longitudinal stresses are not very large. Similar magnitudes were found in tests reported in Schuh (2008).

#### **CONCLUSION**

The locations of the lift points are most important. If the distance between each lift point and the near end of the beam is not approximately one-fifth of the beam's length, the beam may rotate significantly and exhibit undesirably large displacements and stresses. It is also important that the torsional constant and the weak-axis moment of inertia not be too small, so that the weak-axis deflection and crosssectional twist are not too large.

Lateral buckling is possible if the beam is perfectly straight, but even then it will not occur for reasonably designed beams and lift points (i.e., if the bending stiffness and torsional stiffness are not extremely small and the



*Fig. 9. Upper bound on magnitude of longitudinal stress at midspan versus a/L.*

beam is not lifted near its ends). The governing equations for lateral buckling are presented in Plaut and Moen (2011). For the steel I-beams considered here, the corresponding 90-ft-long straight beam would have a critical specific weight that is larger than the specific weight of steel by factors 2.2, 4.4 and 7.4, respectively, if  $b_f$  = 12, 18 and 24 in. and if the lift points are at the ends  $(a = 0)$ . The factors are larger if the lift points are not at the ends  $(a > 0)$ .

Results were presented here for steel beams with length  $L = 90$  ft, web depth  $h_w = 69$  in., offset ratio  $\delta/L = 0.01$  and vertical cables ( $\psi$  = 0). In Plaut and Moen (2011), larger steel beams are analyzed, with  $L = 124.1$  ft,  $h_w = 84$  in.,  $\delta/L =$ 0.01276 and  $\psi = 0$ . In addition, results are given for beams with rectangular cross-section and small initial curvature (i.e., an imperfection from a straight beam). The beams have  $L = 150$  ft, depth  $d = 60$  in., width  $b = 12$  in. and  $\delta / L = 0.001$ . Cable inclination angles from  $\Psi = 0$  to 45<sup>o</sup> are considered. An increase in ψ tends to induce compression in the internal portion of the beam and to increase the deformations.

A spreadsheet that implements the Plaut and Moen (2012) analytical solution is freely available at http://www.moen. cee.vt.edu.

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# Current Steel Structures Research

No. 32

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# **INTRODUCTION**

This issue of "Current Steel Structures Research" for the *Engineering Journal* focuses on a selection of research projects at three European universities. The descriptions will not discuss all of the current projects at the schools. Instead, selected studies provide a representative picture of the research work and demonstrate the importance of the schools to the home countries—and indeed to the efforts of industry and the profession worldwide.

The universities and many of their researchers are very well known in the world of steel construction: the University of Sheffield in Sheffield, England; Luleå University of Technology in Luleå, Sweden; and the University of Trento in Trento, Italy. The studies presented here reflect elements of the projects as well as other significant ongoing activities. As has been typical of European engineering research projects for many years, most of the projects are multiyear efforts and many are multipartner efforts. This calls for very careful planning, cooperation and implementation of research needs and applications, including the education of graduate students and advanced researchers. As is also the case for American research work, the outcomes of the projects focus on industry needs and implementation of the results in design standards.

The lead researchers have been active for many years, as evidenced by their prominent roles in research and development in their respective countries, but they have also been frequent participants in projects elsewhere. Many Englishlanguage technical papers and conference presentations have been published, contributing to a collection of studies that continues to offer solutions to complex problems for designers, fabricators and erectors. Many of these projects complement past and current work from around the globe.

References are provided throughout this paper, whenever such are available in the public domain. However, much of the work is still in progress, and in some cases reports or other publications have not yet been prepared for public dissemination.

# **SOME CURRENT RESEARCH WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD IN SHEFFIELD, ENGLAND**

The University of Sheffield has been active in steel structures research for many years. For the past 20 years, the university has been a worldwide leader in the complex subject of the response of steel and composite structures to fire, with Professor Ian Burgess as the lead researcher. Research that began with the behavior of individual beams and columns is now focused on the performance of building structures as a whole. Attention to the subject was significantly expanded through the full-scale fire tests conducted on a composite frame at the Building Research Establishment at Cardington, England, during the 1990s, where the Sheffield group participated. The initial studies focused on analytical solutions that continue to be the main emphasis of the Sheffield fire research. However, a number of recent projects have involved major physical tests, using unique, purpose-built facilities.

The group has been working for a number of years toward establishing a practical robustness analysis for steel and composite buildings. This is very much in line with the recommendations that were made after the World Trade Center disaster in New York. Efforts are now being directed toward the development of a general performance-based fire resistance design approach, moving away from the current prescriptive rules. Because connections are recognized as the most vulnerable parts of a structure, the state-of-the-art reflects modeling of their behavior as integral elements of the structural models. This is facilitated by progressive failure analyses of the components, incorporating limit states of local or overall building collapse. A significant advance is the development of component-based models of various types of connections that are suitable for use in fire engineering structural analysis. Some current research projects are presented in the following sections.

**Design of Beam to Composite Column Connections for Improved Fire Robustness:** This is part of the European Union funded project COMPFIRE, a joint effort of the universities of Sheffield and Manchester in England, the University of Coimbra in Portugal (lead institution), Luleå Technological University in Sweden and the Czech Technical University in Prague in the Czech Republic. Additional work is provided by the steel producer Tata Steel Research, Development and Technology. The project director in

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Sheffield is Professor Ian Burgess; additional Sheffield researchers are Drs. Buick Davison and S.-S. Huang.

The project addresses the behavior and robustness of practical connections between steel or composite beams and two types of composite columns: concrete-filled tubes and partially encased W-shapes with concrete infilled between the flanges. The Sheffield work includes physical tests of flush end-plate and so-called reverse-channel connections and includes the development of component-based analytical models for such connections. Large rotation tests of fullscale connections have been tested at constant temperatures using combinations of tensile and shear forces. The loading conditions simulate realistic cases for connections in building fires. The scope of the series of tests has provided the basis for a limited parametric study, with experimental data that validate the component-based models. The test setup is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 2 shows two typical test specimens. Figure 3 shows the failure of a reverse-channel connection. The researchers noted that the reverse-channel connection not only provides a practical construction-site solution for connecting steel beams to composite or hollow-section columns, but it also offers significant ductility and high strength when compared to other more conventional connection types, as documented in Figure 4. It is particularly important to note that the high ductility allows the extra connection forces and moments that are normally generated in a fire to be reduced to very low levels; this increases the connection fire resistance without requiring it to be extremely strong. Finally, a componentbased finite element model was created for the connection using component characteristics developed in this and previous projects (Spyrou, 2002; Block, 2006; Yu et al., 2009).

**Progressive Collapse Modeling of Steel-Framed Structure in Fire:** Going beyond the COMPFIRE project, modeling and analysis of progressive collapse has been facilitated with the development of a software package called Vulcan. The research team has the same staffing, with the addition of Professor R.J. Plank. The main objective has



*Fig. 1. Fire test setup for a beam-to-column connection (drawing courtesy of Professor Ian Burgess).*



 $(a)$ 

 $(b)$ 

*Fig. 2. (a) Flush end-plate test specimen; (b) reverse channel test specimen (drawings courtesy of Professor Ian Burgess).*



*Fig. 3. Typical failure mode of a reverse-channel connection (photograph courtesy of Professor Ian Burgess).*



*Fig. 4. Force-rotation relationships for various connections at 550 °C (1022 °F) (figure courtesy of Professor Ian Burgess).*

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been to develop a practical structural fire engineering analysis approach, allowing for the study of the mechanisms and principal phenomena of the progressive collapse process.

The numerical procedure used incorporates the complete structural behavior, including the progression from local buckling to overall collapse. The model combines alternate static and dynamic analyses as follows: Static analysis is used to trace the behavior of the structure at changing temperature until instability takes place. Beyond this point, a dynamic procedure is activated to track the motion of the system until stability is regained. This has been shown to work well in progressive collapse analyses that incorporate fire scenarios (Sun et al., 2012a). The process specifically allows for the identification of different forms of global failures and severe local failures, determining the sequence of the collapse mechanism. Several factors entering into the fire-induced progressive collapse are identified, including loading level, structural configuration and detailing, and type and location of the bracing system (Sun et al., 2012b). Figure 5 illustrates one such case of progressive collapse at increasing temperature levels.

**Dynamic Behavior of Steel Connections with High Strain Rate and Noncyclic Dynamic Loading:** Structural connections play a very important role in preventing progressive collapse in impact or explosion situations. Under such conditions, the connections must be capable of resisting high strain rates, meaning that high ductility is critical to help dissipate the energy through deformation without failure. The performance of connections under different types of loading using a wide range of strain rates was the motivation for a series of high-strain-rate tests on simple connections (Lau and Hancock, 1987). An example of a typical failure is shown in Figure 6.

In a follow-up study, numerical modeling was used to analyze the experimental results. Initially, a double-angle connection, which has a relatively complex geometry, was modeled as a base case for the development of other models. This approach has been validated by the experimental data, as illustrated in Figure 7 (p. 200). Additional models are now being developed for different types of connections. Parametric studies will be performed to evaluate the sensitivity of the models to geometric and material variations, particularly with reference to the effects of the strain rate.

**Making the Case for Design for Deconstruction:** This unique project reflects novel thinking about certain aspects of sustainability. Dr. Buick Davison is the director of the study, which explores what is required of the structural designer to take a structure down at the end of its useful life. Specifically, the study will investigate and quantify the environmental benefits of design for deconstruction. The strategy facilitates future reuse of structural and nonstructural materials by designing buildings to be systematically taken apart with no damage to their components. By reusing materials, the embodied energy and carbon of buildings can be reduced, and fewer natural resources need to be extracted from the earth. Steel is particularly suitable for reuse due to its durability as well as the fact that it is the most recycled of all materials. Steel elements do not necessarily have to be reused because contemporary steelmaking practice feeds recycled material into the steel production process.



*Fig. 5. Progressive collapse mechanisms for a braced frame at increasing temperature (figure courtesy of Professors Ian Burgess and R.J. Plank).*
Distortions, deflections and corrosion may have occurred in members during their service life. These effects can be measured, making it relatively simple to assess their suitability for reuse.

A methodology has been developed to account for designed-in future benefits (Densley Tingley and Davison, 2011a, 2011b). This involves sharing the environmental impact of a component between its predicted number of "structural lives." As an example, the benefits of designing a structural bay for deconstruction have been explored, showing that there can be a 60% increase in the embodied carbon of a structure if it has not been designed for deconstruction. Consequently, a web-based tool has been developed that facilitates calculation of the energy and carbon savings from designing for deconstruction, as well as the subsequent material reuse that will result. Named Sakura, the software allows designers to input information to explore the benefits to a specific project of designing for deconstruction. It is anticipated that the use of Sakura will promote and encourage design for deconstruction where appropriate, thus increasing future supply chains of reused materials and advancing sustainability.

# **SOME CURRENT RESEARCH WORK AT LULEÅ UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY IN LULEÅ, SWEDEN**

The steel research group at Luleå University of Technology (LTU) is one of the most active in Europe and the only program in Sweden that has chair in steel structures. Professor Milan Veljkovic has been the director since 2007. To increase the relevancy of their work, the researchers include full-time faculty as well as part-time professors from industry and visitors from other countries. Naturally, doctoral candidates are critical to the success of research efforts, and in the last five years the program has grown from 2 to 13 participants. The group's expertise ranges from computational modeling to fire heat transfer to structural analysis and design.

The principal research subjects are:

Behavior, strength and practical implementation of higher strength steel in construction; in applications for buildings, stadiums and other long span structures; and in towers for wind turbines.



*Fig. 6. Failure of connection details due to high strain rates: (a) actual connection plate; (b) connection detail model (photographs courtesy of Professor Ian Burgess).*

- Safety of structures exposed to fire, including fire development, heat transfer from the gas temperature to the structure and post-fire resistance of steel structures.
- Development of design recommendations for innovative bridges, such as composite bridges with integral abutments, where in-situ data are correlated with laboratory results and finite element analyses.

Recent work has added computational modeling of materials as well as stochastic material imperfections.

The group traditionally performs industry-oriented and applied research. Seven of the current eight projects are financed by the European Union. The majority of the projects receive funding from the Research Fund for Coal and Steel, and one is financed within the Framework Program 7, an EU-program for small and medium enterprises. As is now typical for European research efforts, multiple partners from academia and industry in several countries collaborate in each of the EU projects. The research funding to LTU of each project is approximately  $€100,000$  per year.

Some of the current projects are described in the following.

**High Steel Towers for Wind Turbines (HISTWIN):** The first wind tower project was funded for a three-year period from 2006 to 2009. Professor Bernt Johannson (now retired) was the director. The research consortium consisted of Luleå Technological University (lead institution); the Technical University of Aachen (RWTH), Germany; the University of Coimbra, Portugal; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; the steel company Rautaruukki OY, Finland; and the energy companies Martifer Energia, Portugal, and GLWind, Germany.

The main objective was to improve the competitiveness of tubular steel wind towers for hub-heights from 267 to 333 feet. The height limitation is required by transportation restrictions that limit the diameter of the bottom segment to about 15 feet. Traditional flange connections (Figure 8a) are labor intensive, expensive and require complex design models. Their fatigue resistance is low and is often the governing design criterion.

A breakthrough was achieved with an innovative solution that uses a slip-resistant connection with open-slotted holes. The idea is illustrated in Figure 8b. A series of small-scale physical tests were used to evaluate the feasibility of fabrication and to test the critical connection. The tests provided input data for finite element analysis and for design.

To facilitate assembly of the tubular sections, the lower segment has long, open-slotted holes, as indicated in Figure 8b. The bolts can be preinstalled in the standard holes in the upper section and then used for the angular alignment



*Fig. 7. (a) Deformed angles of the physical test; (b) connection model (photographs courtesy of Professor Ian Burgess).*

while the upper segment slides down. Slots weaken the lower section, giving lower sensitivity to assembly tolerances. The bending stiffness of the tubular shell is enhanced by the overlapping connection. Essentially, this connection allows for tight contact between the cylinders of the upper and lower tubular segments. Lastly, instead of using standard washers for each bolt, a common cover plate solution has been developed. Its purpose is to hold the bolt group together during assembly and to distribute the clamping force in a more uniform manner.

**High Steel Towers for Wind Turbines—Second Project (HISTWIN 2):** Due to the overall scope of the tubular wind tower project, it was decided that a follow-up project was needed. The funding period was three years, from 2010 to 2013. The academic and industry partners were the same as the first project, and Professor Milan Veljkovic was appointed project director.

The issue of local stability had been identified as critical to the success of the HISTWIN projects. To address this concern, the distances between the bolts in longitudinal connections and between modular segments have to be optimized. Numerical analysis and physical testing will be used to evaluate the effects on longitudinal bolted connections.

In the early segments of the project, it became clear that the stability issue would be more important for towers with slip-resistant connections. This subject is currently being addressed by considering alternative cross-sections. For example, using various numbers of folds to create a polygonal cross-section offers an attractive solution. Also, the foundations for the towers are critical, considering where the towers will be placed in the ocean. Traditional concrete

slab foundations currently used in most onshore wind farms are not adequate for higher towers. A new type of hybrid slab foundation anchored with steel micro-piles has been developed, and this solution appears to offer significant advantages.

**Optimization of Frames for Effective Assembly (Project FRAMEUP):** The project is funded by the European Union's Research Fund for Coal and Steel for the period from 2011 to 2014. The research consortium consists of Luleå Technological University (lead institution); the University of Liège, Belgium; the Technical University of Aachen (RWTH), Germany; the University of Coimbra, Portugal; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; and the construction companies Acciona Infrastructures S.A., Spain, PartConstruction AB, Sweden, and V&M Deutschland GmbH, Germany.

The three main objectives of the project are:

• *To develop the concept of a design process for a structural system primarily used for buildings with prefabricated steel 3D modules.* The process will be tested by computer simulations using a virtual engineering tool. Such a tool allows for the identification of all possible conflicts in the design, including the transfer of modules from delivery trucks to the structure. This is an integral part of the new design process. The procedure starts with the assembly of the roof and the top floor, providing a stiff structure that will be lifted by jacks. Each story will be assembled at the ground level and then lifted up to create space for the next story. This protects every story from precipitation and other moisture damage during the assembly. The process is based on using jacks



*Fig. 8. Wind turbine tower connections: (a) traditional flange connection; (b) slip-resistant connection (photographs courtesy of Professor Milan Veljkovic).*

instead of cranes and is expected to be safer and drier. The construction site will also be smaller, with less noise and other disturbances for its neighbors. An example is shown in Figure 9.

- *To test and establish the performance of a new type of connection that uses a number of nonstandardized components.* The connections are developed for HSS columns and beams. They must satisfy the requirements for faster assembly and disassembly as well as the requirements for moment resistance specified by local design codes.
- *To achieve an optimized building technology with 3D modules using the innovative erection technique.* This is influenced by the architectural demands, which in turn influence the structural solution.

**Design of Connections to Composite Columns for Improved Fire Robustness (COMPFIRE):** This project is in partnership with the University of Sheffield, previously discussed.

**Other Projects:** Projects on High-Strength Long-Span Structures (HILONG) and Rules On High-Strength Steel (ROUSTE) have been approved for 2012 through 2015. Studies on composite bridge construction were conducted in the project Economic and Durable Design of Composite Bridges with Integral Abutments (INTAB+) and completed in 2011. Papers and reports are currently being prepared.

Significant educational efforts will also be pursued during the 2012 through 2015 time period, addressing the broad subject of sustainable structures under natural hazards and catastrophic events. These projects are funded by the European Union under the Erasmus Mundus educational program. Six universities are partnering for this activity.

#### **SOME CURRENT RESEARCH WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO IN TRENTO, ITALY**

The structural engineering research group at the University of Trento was established in 1985 when the Faculty of Engineering was founded. Since the very beginning, the group has been active in the fields of steel and wood construction, generally associated with earthquake engineering. Most recently, the fields of smart structures and structural monitoring and control have been explored.

The research group has seven faculty members related to steel structures. Their current activities focus on three main areas of research:

- Dynamic and seismic response of steel and composite (steel-concrete) structural systems.
- Stability of complex engineering systems.
- Structural robustness.

In addition, the group is heavily involved in industrybased research projects. These projects include a nearly 20-year effort supporting Italian rack manufacturers. The



*Fig. 9. Erection phase of the FRAMEUP pilot building (figure courtesy of Professor Milan Veljkovic).*

knowledge gained from rack research related to the performance of cold-formed systems led the group to develop a new prefabricated system for residential steel housing.

Extensive experimental facilities provide great flexibility in accommodating complex tests under static and dynamic loading, including full-scale specimens. The group is also active with Italian and European code committees, as well the committees of the European Convention for Constructional Steelwork (ECCS). A discussion of several of their current research projects follows.

**Design and Integrity Assessment of High-Strength Tubular Structures for Extreme Loading Conditions (HITUBES):** Funded by the European Union's Research Fund for Coal and Steel with the University of Trento as the lead institution, Professor Oreste Bursi is the project director. The project partners are the University of Liège, Belgium; the University of Thessaloniki, Greece; the Italian Center for Materials Development; the Portuguese Institute for Welding and Quality; the ITMA Foundation of Spain; and the Corrosion and Metals Research Institute of Sweden.

The HITUBES project was recently completed. The project goal was to develop performance-based design and assessment procedures for the use of high-strength steel tubes in a variety of applications, in steel grades as high as S700MC (a yield stress of 700 MPa or 100 ksi). The use of tubes in structures subjected to extreme repeated loads was also examined. The project's ambitious goals included increasing structural performance, reducing structural weight, and reducing construction and operating costs. Specifically, the following subjects were addressed:

- Structural identification and health monitoring of cablestayed and arch footbridges.
- Simulation of welded and bolted connections under monotonic, low-cycle and high-cycle fatigue loadings.
- Reliability analysis for quantification of realistic performance scenarios.

Two types of structures were analyzed in detail for possible construction with steel tubes: slender pedestrian and bicycle bridges and the arch and hanger elements of railway bridges. Railway bridges in particular are commonly subjected to extreme repeated loads.

The Trento contribution was mainly associated with the dynamic identification and the finite element model updating. Reference was made to the Ponte del Mare, the bridge shown in Figure 10, which is a twin-deck, curved, cablestayed pedestrian bridge. The outer deck is reserved for pedestrians, while the inner deck is for bicyclists. The decks have constant radii of approximately 267 feet and 330 feet.

The pedestrian bridge was redesigned using circular hollow sections in steel grade TS 590 (a yield stress of 590 MPa or 85 ksi). In the redesign, the high-strength steel and the circular cross-sections combine to reduce the visual impact of the bridge and to reduce the structure's weight. The research included both design and in-situ testing of the bridge. A comprehensive numerical analysis showed that a passive control system made of elastic and viscous-fluid dampers was necessary to mitigate pedestrian vibrations and to satisfy wind safety requirements relative to premature aeroelastic instability.

**Performance-Based Approaches for High-Strength Tubular Columns and Connections under Earthquake and Fire Loads (ATTEL):** The project is also funded by the Research Fund for Coal and Steel, with the University of Liège as the lead institution. The international partners are the University of Trento and the University of Thessaloniki, Greece, with industry partners the Italian Center for Materials Development and Italian fabricator Pichler. The Trento group is coordinated by Professor Oreste Bursi.

A capacity design approach, in which structures are designed to meet the strong column–weak beam concept, is usually achieved by overdesigning the columns. A substantial improvement to the structural performance using this approach may be achieved by the use of high-strength steel, provided the steel and the detailing meet ductility and energy absorption criteria. The adoption of high-strength circular hollow sections for such purposes has been limited, despite excellent structural properties. Even recent Eurocode 3 modifications permitting the use of steel grades up to 700 MPa (100 ksi) maintain strict limitations at the material, structural and design levels (ECCS, 2005, 2007).

The ATTEL project aims to provide the analytical and experimental knowledge necessary to develop design criteria for the high-strength steel and composite circular hollow sections for columns and connections subjected to seismic and fire loads. The focus is on structural tubes ranging from 7 in. to 14 in. in diameter with a *D/t* ratio greater than 30. This range is of great interest for onshore structures. The following subjects are addressed:

- Steel and concrete-filled tubular (CFT) columns made of high-strength steel.
- Welded or bolted composite beam-to-CFT column connections in high-strength steel.
- CFT column base connections made of high-strength steel.

In Trento, the study has focused on the cyclic performance both of column base connections for tubular composite columns and beam-to-column connections (Zanon et al., 2011). The first series of tests on standard and innovative column base connection solutions are shown in Figures 11 and 12. Both standard and innovative seismic connections exhibited favorable hysteretic response without loss of strength and stiffness.

**Stability of Industrial Steel Pallet Racks:** Industrial racks are one of the most common structures for storing palletized goods. Examples of such structures are shown in Figure 13. A number of studies were carried out under the supervision of Professors Nadia Baldassino and Riccardo Zandonini to investigate key aspects of the performance of such systems.

Rack structures use thin-walled cold-formed steel shapes and, for this and many other reasons, exhibit very complex behavior. The main sources of complexity are the sensitivity of the columns (uprights) to buckling, the presence of perforations on the uprights that provide for the attachment of beams, the non-linear response of the connections, the frame sensitivity to the second-order effects and the influence of imperfections. The large variability in the geometry of the shapes, of the joints and of the perforations combined with the complexities of member behavior cannot be incorporated into practical design provisions at this time. Tests preferably full-scale tests—are needed.

Relevant codes recognize the concept of design by testing and provide detailed recommendations for the testing of members, subsystems and joints (AISI, 2007). A thorough analysis of Eurocode 3 (ECS, 2005) identified a number of issues that are not adequately addressed (Baldassino and Zandonini, 2011). This triggered several studies of the buckling of perforated members, of base-plate connections and of the shear stiffness of upright frames.

The most recent work relates to the upright frames that typically ensure the stability of pallet racks in the crossaisle direction (Gilbert et al., 2012). These frames are sensitive to second-order effects, and an accurate determination of their shear stiffness is essential for seismic design and



*Fig. 10. The Ponte del Mare, a pedestrian and bicycle bridge in Pescara, Italy (photograph courtesy of Professor Oreste Bursi).*



*Fig. 11. Standard solution for a column base connection (courtesy of Professor Oreste Bursi).*



*Fig. 12. Innovative solution for a column base connection (courtesy of Professor Oreste Bursi).*

to ensure the stability of the rack, especially in the case of high-bay racks and racks supporting the building enclosure. The study compared two alternative methods, one of which is specified by the Eurocode, 3 and the other by the Australian standard. Figure 14 shows the assemblies of the two tests, as performed at the University of Sydney. A total of 36 tests of different frame configurations were performed, including numerical analyses to assess the accuracy of the two methods. The preliminary results show that the shear stiffness determined by these methods may vary by as much as a factor of two. Additional work will be pursued.

**Base-Plate Connections for Rack Structures:** Column base connections of rack frames are unique, and their response is significantly different from the corresponding connections in traditional steel frames. In Italian practice, the base connections are typically built up from base-plate elements that are bolted to the uprights and connected to the floor by means of special fixing systems. Figure 15 shows some representative examples.

**Structural Robustness of Composite Frames:** This project is funded by the European Union's Research Fund for Coal and Steel, as a joint effort between the University of Stuttgart, Germany (lead institution) and the University of Trento. Professor Ulrike Kuhlmann of the University of Stuttgart is the project director; Professor Riccardo Zandonini is the Trento coordinator.

Despite studies on robustness that began in the 1960s, only general strategies to achieve effective robust structural



*Fig. 13. Typical steel storage pallet rack systems (photographs courtesy of Professors Nadia Baldassino and Riccardo Zandonini).*

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designs have been established. Recent failures have demonstrated the inadequacy of traditional design approaches when collapse has resulted from local damage caused by human accidental actions. Such issues call for design methodologies that allow verification of the safety of the structure in the statically modified condition so that local damage does not produce a chain reaction that may lead to partial or complete progressive collapse of the structure.

The tests conducted at the University of Trento were aimed at determining the performance of both the concrete slab and the steel connection, in accordance with the component method of connection design as specified by Eurocode 3 (ECS, 2005). In particular, the study focused on the response of connections subjected to combined axial, shear and moment stress resultants, as illustrated in Figure 16, and on T-stub components under combined axial and shear forces (Baldassino and Zandonini, 2009).

The testing assembly shown in Figure 17 was specifically designed to apply a wide range of axial and shear forces to the T-stub. By changing the location where the testing assembly is connected, it is possible to simulate rotation of the T-stub with respect to the load line. This rotation effectively allows for the application of different combinations of axial and shear forces, ranging from pure tension to pure shear. The tests on the full connection demonstrated the negative influence on both the ultimate load and deformation capacities of a loading history that combines shear, moment and axial force. The T-stub tests provided the data for the shear and axial force interaction domains. Both series confirmed the inherent high ductility.



*Fig. 14. Shear tests on upright frames: (a) Eurocode 3 method; (b) Australian standards method (photographs courtesy of Professor K.J.R. Rasmussen).*



*Fig. 15. Typical base connection details for Italian rack structures (figures courtesy of Professors Nadia Baldassino and Riccardo Zandonini).*

A second project, about to start with the same partners, will primarily examine 3D action and the strain rate effect. The University of Trento will perform two full-scale tests on a flooring system as shown in Figure 18 to investigate the strain-rate effect on the T-stub response.

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*Fig. 16. Test on beam-to-column connection under combined axial and shear forces (figures courtesy of Professors Nadia Baldassino and Riccardo Zandonini).*



*Fig. 17. Test set-up for T-stub tests under axial and shear force (figures courtesy of Professors Nadia Baldassino and Riccardo Zandonini).*

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*Fig. 18. Full-scale test on a floor system simulating the collapse of a column (figure courtesy of Professors Nadia Baldassino and Riccardo Zandonini).*

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