

STRUCTURAL SPECIAL INSPECTOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Disciplines: Structural

History:

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this Interpretation of Regulations (IR) is to clarify special inspection requirements for projects under DSA jurisdiction.

- See [IR 17-4](#) for definition of terms and general information on the test and special inspection program and definitions of “tests” vs. “special inspections.”
- See [IR 17-5](#) for further information on test requirements.
- See [IR 17-7](#) for information regarding soil testing requirements.

INTERPRETATION: A project inspector is required to perform continuous inspection of all aspects of construction on projects under DSA jurisdiction. The project inspector may perform “special inspection” of certain aspects of construction as required by the code. However, specially qualified individuals will be required to perform special inspection on aspects of construction that either:

- are performed away from the construction site, or
- require special knowledge or expertise to inspect.

When specifically approved by DSA in writing, special inspectors may also be used for some aspects of construction that are typically performed by the project inspector at the project site (such as placement of concrete or installation of post-installed anchors).

An individual special inspector may only perform the type of special inspection that he or she has been approved to perform by DSA. An individual may perform special inspection on more than one aspect of the project only when specifically approved to do so, in writing, by DSA. Special inspectors may not be utilized as assistant inspectors unless specifically approved in writing by DSA. See [IR A-12](#) for more information on assistant inspectors.

The project inspector is still responsible for the construction inspected by a special inspector. The project inspector is required to monitor the activities of all special inspectors in accordance with [IR A-8](#).

1. EMPLOYMENT OF SPECIAL INSPECTORS: The school district shall contract with a Laboratory Evaluation and Acceptance (LEA) approved testing laboratory to provide special inspectors to perform the special inspections indicated on the DSA approved documents including the Tests and Special Inspections (T&I) list (see Form [DSA-103](#)).

Exceptions:

- a) The school district may contract directly with individual special inspectors rather than utilizing employees of the testing laboratory.
- b) The project inspector shall perform certain special inspections as indicated on the T&I List (Form DSA-103).

2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: The special inspector is personally responsible for verifying whether or not every aspect of the work that he or she is responsible to inspect is in compliance with DSA approved documents. The special inspector is subject to supervision/direction from the project inspector, architect, structural engineer, and DSA. However, the special inspector shall base all conclusions exclusively on the requirements of the

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DSA approved documents and applicable codes. In no case shall direction of the architect or engineer be construed to cause work to be done that does not conform with the DSA approved documents.

The special inspector, or project inspector performing special inspection, is always responsible for the following duties whether “periodic” or “continuous” special inspection is required:

2.1 Preparation for Inspection:

- 2.1.1 Review and understand DSA approved plans, specifications, addenda, change orders and Field Change Documents (FCDs) (see [IR A-6](#)) relevant to the tasks to be performed.
- 2.1.2 Review and understand all relevant Code requirements and referenced standards.
- 2.1.3 Review shop drawings, manufacturer’s instructions, or other related documents which do not require the approval of DSA.
- 2.1.4 Review requirements with the contractor and resolve all questions and/or differences of interpretation prior to start-up of each phase of the work.
- 2.1.5 Coordinate with the testing laboratory for any sampling and testing requirements.
- 2.1.6 Verify that all materials meet requirements of DSA approved documents.
- 2.1.7 Verify that existing conditions relevant to the work are in accordance with DSA approved documents (e.g. for masonry work verify that surfaces of foundations are level, clean and properly roughened, etc.).
- 2.1.8 Verify that tools, consumables, formwork, shoring and other items that may affect working conditions or the quality of the work are in accordance with relevant requirements.
- 2.1.9 Verify that construction workers are appropriately certified when required.
- 2.1.10 Coordinate with the project inspector on the interface of the work inspected with other aspects of the work.

2.2 Inspection:

- 2.2.1 Verify that all materials sampling and testing are performed as required.
- 2.2.2 Inspect all aspects of the work including dimensions, connections, embeds, finishes, etc.
- 2.2.3 Inspect the work at start-up until satisfied that all workers understand the requirements and are adequately performing the work.
- 2.2.4 Inspect work when conditions change, a new phase of work starts, new workers, equipment or procedures are implemented, or any other change to work or job conditions takes place.
- 2.2.5 Inspect work during its progress from time to time (see Section 3 for frequency).
- 2.2.6 Inspect all work upon completion and/or prior to covering with other work.
- 2.2.7 Personally verify that all work is in accordance with DSA approved documents.
- 2.2.8 Mark, or tag, all inspected work when required.

2.3 Reporting:

- 2.3.1 Verbally report all deviations from DSA approved documents to the contractor and the project inspector immediately.

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- 2.3.2 Provide written daily reports (see Section 5 below for report requirements).
- 2.3.3 When deviations are not immediately corrected, report the deviations in writing to the contractor, project inspector, DSA, project architect and structural engineer.
- 2.3.4 If work that deviates from DSA approved documents is not reported in a timely manner, it will be considered evidence of incompetence and/or negligence of the inspector. When inspector incompetence or negligence is evident, DSA may withdraw approval of the inspector for the project and/or withdraw certification of the inspector to work on future projects under DSA jurisdiction.
- 2.3.5 Keep a log of deviations including status and resolution.
- 2.3.6 Report the resolution of deviations to all parties in writing when deviations are corrected.
- 2.3.7 Special inspectors employed directly by the school district are to submit a Special Inspection Verified Report ([DSA-292](#)). See Section 6 below for verified report requirements.

Exception: Project inspectors performing special inspections may include some special inspections on their form [DSA-6](#) rather than submitting Form DSA-292; see Sections 5 and 6 below.

3. FREQUENCY OF “PERIODIC” AND “CONTINUOUS” SPECIAL INSPECTION: The 2007 CBC, Title 24, Part 2, Section 1702A includes the following definitions:

- **Special Inspection, Periodic.** The part-time or intermittent observation of work requiring special inspection by an approved special inspector who is present in the area where the work has been or is being performed and at the completion of the work.
- **Special Inspection, Continuous.** The full-time observation of work requiring special inspection by an approved special inspector who is present in the area where the work is being performed.

Note: These definitions are only applicable to special inspectors. See Title 24, Part 1, Section 4-342 and [IR A-8](#) for the definition of “continuous inspection” for the project inspector.

The definitions of “periodic” and “continuous” special inspection are identical except for two things:

- Periodic inspection may be performed on a part-time or intermittent basis while continuous inspection is done on a full-time basis,
- Periodic inspection may be performed by an inspector who is in the area where the work “has been” performed while continuous inspection must be performed where the work “is being” performed.

Note: Work subject to periodic special inspection requires the presence of the special inspector prior to start of work, from time to time during the work, and upon completion of the work.

3.1 Periodic special Inspection: When “periodic” special inspection is required, “part-time or intermittent” means that inspection of the task needs to be performed from time to time during the progress of the task. The period of time between inspections varies greatly for different types of work depending on the type of inspection performed. For example, the laying of masonry block must be inspected almost constantly; the special inspector shall not leave while work is proceeding for more than a few minutes;

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conversely the protection of masonry during cold weather generally may only need to be inspected once at the end of the day and once at the beginning.

The period of time between inspections also depends on the pace of the construction, the number of workers, the quality of the workmanship, and other factors.

It is the responsibility of the special inspector to provide inspections at an appropriate frequency and at appropriate times during construction. The inspector must have adequate experience and exhibit good judgment in determining the frequency and timing of inspections.

3.2 Continuous special inspection: When continuous inspection is required, the special inspector must always be present where the work is being performed.

4. SPECIAL INSPECTIONS PERFORMED BY THE PROJECT INSPECTOR: Tables 1704A.3, 1704A.4, 1704A.5.1, 1704.A.5.3, and 1704A.7 (Title 24, Part 2) list tasks that require special inspection. On projects under DSA jurisdiction some of the tasks may be, or must be, performed by the project inspector rather than the special inspector. The “T&I List” (form DSA-103) defines whether certain special inspection tasks shall be performed by a special inspector or the project inspector. Exceptions are permitted with the written approval of DSA (for example, the project inspector could be approved to inspect some minor masonry work if he or she were appropriately certified and had the time available to perform the masonry inspections in addition to all other duties).

The project inspector is responsible for providing continuous inspection of all aspects of construction for which a special inspector is not provided, including, but not limited to, items identified in the Code as requiring special inspection such as high-load wood diaphragms and non-structural components.

When the project inspector performs special inspection he or she shall provide “continuous” inspection of all work in accordance with Title 24, Part 1, Section 4-342(b)1 and IR A-8.

Note: The definition of “continuous” inspection for the project inspector is different from the definition of “continuous” for special inspectors.

5. SPECIAL INSPECTION REPORTS: Special inspectors working at the project site are required to submit reports on a daily basis to the project inspector. Special inspectors working at locations off-site are required to submit daily reports to the project inspector within 14 days of the date of the inspection. All daily reports must be copied to the project architect, structural engineer, school district, and DSA within 14 days of the date of the inspection. Reports indicating deviations in the work shall be forwarded immediately. A daily special inspection report template ([DSA-250](#)) is provided on the DSA website.

Daily special inspection reports shall include:

- Project name, DSA file number and DSA application number,
- the name of the employer of the special inspector,
- the date of the inspections; inspection start and finish time,
- a thorough and detailed description of the work inspected including reference to piece numbers, column line locations, drawing details, etc. as appropriate,
- a thorough and detailed description of the work completed in accordance with DSA approved documents as well as work that remains incomplete,
- a thorough and detailed description of all work that is not in conformance with DSA approved documents,

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- a statement that the special inspections were (or were not) performed in accordance with the requirements of the DSA approved documents,
- a statement that the work complied (or did not comply) with the requirements of the DSA approved documents,
- the signature and printed name of the special inspector,
- a list of persons to whom the report was sent.

Note: Project inspectors shall submit separate special inspection reports for masonry, welding, high-strength bolting and shotcrete work if they perform these inspections. Other types of special inspections may be included on the project inspector's semi-monthly reports unless separate special inspection reports are specifically requested.

6. SPECIAL INSPECTION VERIFIED REPORTS: All special inspectors shall submit verified reports on Form [DSA-292](#) in accordance with Title 24, Part 1, Section 4-336. When more than one special inspector shares responsibility for inspecting a specific facet of construction, each special inspector shall clearly describe the portions of the construction they inspected in detail on Form DSA-292.

Exception: Project inspectors will submit separate verified reports on Form DSA-292 for masonry, welding, high-strength bolting, and shotcrete work if they perform these special inspections. Project inspectors need not submit Form DSA-292 for most special inspections that they personally perform; instead, project inspectors shall specifically list the special inspections which they performed on Form DSA-6.

REFERENCES:

California Administrative Code, Section 4-333(c)
California Building Code Chapter 17A

This Interpretation of Regulations (IR) is intended for use by the Division of the State Architect (DSA) staff, and as a resource for design professionals, to promote more uniform statewide criteria for plan review and construction inspection of projects within the jurisdiction of DSA which includes State of California public elementary and secondary schools (grades K-12), community colleges and state-owned or state-leased essential services buildings. This IR indicates an acceptable method for achieving compliance with applicable codes and regulations, although other methods proposed by design professionals may be considered by DSA.

This IR is reviewed on a regular basis and is subject to revision at any time. Please check the DSA website for currently effective IRs. Only IRs listed on the Web page at www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/Resources/IRManual.aspx at the time of plan submittal to DSA are considered applicable.