

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR



Scott L. Melnick

Most of the steel fabricators I typically talk with tend to be involved with AISC activities, so it came as a bit of a shock to me last week when I traveled to Michigan with AISC's Director of Membership to listen to some non-member fabricators. Over and over again I heard people assume that all AISC did was fabricator and erector certification.

True, certification is an important part of the industry—it helps fabricators and erectors improve their processes and it helps designers and GCs/CMs pre-qualify their subcontractors. But certification is only the barest tip of the AISC iceberg.

Aside from the obvious (AISC is responsible for the development and maintenance of the *Specification for Structural Steel Buildings* and also develops the *Manual of Steel Construction*), AISC is deeply involved in an amazing array of activities—running the gamut from university education to technical research. Some of the Institute's key activities include:

- The Steel Solutions Center. AISC has a staff of engineers available to answer technical questions (call 312.670.2400 or email solutions@aisc.org). In addition, the Solutions Center provides preliminary design studies and cost/time estimates.
- Design Guides. These adjuncts to the *Manual* help designers, fabricators, and detailers to better understand a specific subject. The three most recent Guides are: "Modification of Existing Steel Welded Moment Frame Connections for Seismic Resistance," "Wide-Flange Column Stiffening at Moment Connections," and "Staggered Truss Framing Systems." Future design guides will cover parking structures and the rehabilitation of old steel structures.
- Continuing Education. AISC holds more than 70 continuing education programs around the country each year on a variety of steel design subjects—ranging from HSS Connections to seismic design. And, of

course, there's the North American Steel Construction Conference. For information on all of these, visit www.aisc.org.

- University Education. It sounds trite, but it's true: students are the future of our industry. AISC sponsors the Student Steel Bridge Competition and an architectural competition for students, promotes the placement of steel teaching sculptures on campuses throughout the country (nearly 100 to date!), coordinates the Adopt-A-School program to encourage fabricator involvement and interaction with university students, and offers steep discounts on the *Manual* to students. (And there's more, but space is a little limited.)
- Research. While AISC doesn't usually perform research internally, it does coordinate research activities and administers some funding. For example, be on the lookout for some interesting work in the near future on shear tabs and also on extended end-plate moment connections.
- EDI. Electronic data interchange has the potential to substantially reduce project time—while increasing the accuracy of drawings. One fabricator working with it shaved nearly four weeks off an 85,000-sq.-ft. project. To learn more about EDI and CIMsteel, visit www.aisc.org/edi.html.
- Design-Build. AISC is actively educating our member fabricators on how to get involved with design-build work—while at the same time discussing with designers, developers and contractors the cost and time advantages of bringing a fabricator onto the team earlier.

I could go on (just ask my wife), but instead I'll just direct you to AISC's website (www.aisc.org) if you want more information. See you in Seattle at the NASCC in April!

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