Engineering Manual Preamble

This manual provides guidance to administrative, engineering, and technical staff. Engineering practice requires that professionals use a combination of technical skills and judgment in decision making. Engineering judgment is necessary to allow decisions to account for unique site-specific conditions and considerations to provide high quality products, within budget, and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. This manual provides the general operational guidelines; however, it is understood that adaptation, adjustments, and deviations are sometimes necessary. Innovation is a key foundational element to advance the state of engineering practice and develop more effective and efficient engineering solutions and materials. As such, it is essential that our engineering manuals provide a vehicle to promote, pilot, or implement technologies or practices that provide efficiencies and quality products, while maintaining the safety, health, and welfare of the public. It is expected when making significant or impactful deviations from the technical information from these guidance materials, that reasonable consultations with experts, technical committees, and/or policy setting bodies occur prior to actions within the timeframes allowed. It is also expected that these consultations will eliminate any potential conflicts of interest, perceived or otherwise. MDOT Leadership is committed to a culture of innovation to optimize engineering solutions.

The National Society of Professional Engineers Code of Ethics for Engineering is founded on six fundamental canons. Those canons are provided below.

Engineers, in the fulfillment of their professional duties, shall:

1. Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public.
2. Perform Services only in areas of their competence.
3. Issue public statement only in an objective and truthful manner.
4. Act for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees.
5. Avoid deceptive acts.
6. Conduct themselves honorably, reasonably, ethically and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the profession.
Purpose

The Michigan Structure Inspection Manual (MiSIM) has been developed to provide bridge safety inspectors and bridge owners with guidance for meeting the requirements of the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS) and Michigan’s Bridge Inspection Program policies and procedures. This manual provides guidance for inspecting structures meeting the NBIS definition of a bridge and for non-NBI structures with span lengths less than 20 feet, pedestrian, and railroad structures.

The purpose of the MiSIM is to reinforce the policies and procedures of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), ensure statewide consistency with reference to completing and documenting the condition of structures, and to improve Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) compliance. The MiSIM is divided into multiple chapters containing applicable bridge inspection program information.

Goals/Objectives of this Manual

The most important goal of this manual is to clarify the minimum requirements, inspection procedures, and documentation for completing the safety inspections of in-service bridges and structures in the state of Michigan.

The specific objectives of this manual are outlined as follows:

- To assemble in one manual the primary instructions needed by bridge inspectors performing safety inspections of structures in Michigan that are supplementary to the various FHWA and AASHTO publications.

- To provide a document that is aimed towards improving the quality of inspections and clarifying inspection procedures. It is anticipated that this manual will help promote uniformity and consistency in inspections from inspector to inspector, from agency to agency, and from year to year.

- To provide guidance and advice for the most difficult inspection items, condition ratings and appraisals of structural components.

- To increase the overall understanding of Michigan’s Structure and Bridge Inspection Program for all those responsible or involved with the management and safety of Michigan’s structures and bridges.
References

There are a number of documents and manuals that are used as a reference throughout this manual. Several of these references provide the initial basis and background material for development of this manual.

Federal and National Manuals

- FHWA Recording and Coding Guide for SI&A of the Nations Bridges
- AASHTO Manual for Bridge Element Inspection (MBEI)

Michigan Specific Guides and Manuals

- MDOT Bridge Inspection Rating Guides
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1 – PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1.01 Purpose .................................................................................................................. 1-1
1.02 Laws and Regulations .......................................................................................... 1-1
1.03 Federal Highway Administration Oversight ......................................................... 1-2
1.04 Organization and Responsibilities ........................................................................ 1-3
   1.04.01 Bridge Inspection Program Manager ............................................................ 1-3
   1.04.02 Bridge Owner ............................................................................................... 1-7
   1.04.03 Inspection Team Leader .............................................................................. 1-8
   1.04.04 Load Rating Engineer ............................................................................... 1-9
1.05 Qualifications ....................................................................................................... 1-10
   1.05.01 Program Manager Qualifications ............................................................... 1-10
   1.05.02 Team Leader Qualifications .................................................................... 1-10
   1.05.03 Underwater Bridge Inspection Diver ............................................................ 1-12
   1.05.04 Load Rating Engineers .............................................................................. 1-13

## CHAPTER 2 - QUALITY ASSURANCE & QUALITY CONTROL

2.01 Purpose .................................................................................................................. 2-1
2.02 Responsibilities .................................................................................................... 2-1
2.03 Comparison of QC & QA .................................................................................... 2-1
2.04 Quality Control Requirements ............................................................................ 2-2
2.05 Quality Assurance Requirements ........................................................................ 2-3

## CHAPTER 3 – INSPECTION FREQUENCY

3.01 Purpose .................................................................................................................. 3-1
3.02 Inspection Frequency – Reporting Field Data ....................................................... 3-1
3.03 Inspection Frequency – Inspection Team Leader Responsibilities ....................... 3-1
3.04 Inspection Frequency – Bridge Owner Responsibilities ......................................... 3-2
3.05 Verification of Inspection Timeliness and Non-Compliance Process ...................... 3-2
3.06 Inspection Frequency – Bridge Inspection Program Manager Responsibilities .... 3-3

## CHAPTER 4 – BRIDGE FILES

4.01 Purpose .................................................................................................................. 4-1
4.02 Responsibilities .................................................................................................... 4-1
4.03 Inspection Reports ............................................................................................... 4-2
4.04 Construction and Maintenance Documents .......................................................... 4-2
4.05 Significant Correspondence ................................................................................ 4-3
4.06 Photographs ........................................................................................................ 4-4
4.07 Accident Records ............................................................................................... 4-4
4.08 Rating Records, Posting, and Permit Loads .......................................................... 4-4
MICHIGAN STRUCTURE INSPECTION MANUAL
BRIDGE INSPECTION – TABLE OF CONTENTS

4.09 Waterway Data .................................................................................................................. 4-5
4.10 Traffic Data .......................................................................................................................... 4-5

CHAPTER 5 – ROUTINE and CONDITION BASED IN-DEPTH INSPECTION

5.01 Purpose ................................................................................................................................. 5-1
5.02 Routine Inspection Types .................................................................................................... 5-1
  5.02.01 Initial Inspections .......................................................................................................... 5-2
  5.02.02 Routine NBI and Element Level Inspections ............................................................... 5-4
5.03 Routine Inspection Procedures - Bridge Owner Responsibilities ............................................. 5-5
5.04 Routine Inspection Procedures – Inspection Team Leader Responsibilities ............................. 5-6
5.05 Surface (BSIR #1, SI&A Item 58A) ....................................................................................... 5-6
  5.05.01 Concrete Deck Surface Routine NBI Inspection Procedures ........................................ 5-7
  5.05.02 Concrete Deck Surface Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ................................... 5-8
  5.05.03 Thin Overlay Wearing Surface Routine NBI Inspection ............................................. 5-9
  5.05.04 Thin Overlay Wearing Surface Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ...................... 5-11
  5.05.05 Bituminous Wearing Surface Routine NBI Inspection ............................................... 5-12
  5.05.06 Bituminous Wearing Surface Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ....................... 5-14
  5.05.07 Timber Wearing Surface Routine NBI Inspection .................................................... 5-15
  5.05.08 Timber Wearing Surface Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................. 5-16
  5.05.09 Deck Top Surface Work Recommendations ............................................................ 5-17
  5.05.10 Deck Surface Request for Action ............................................................................... 5-18
  5.05.11 Deck Surface In-Depth Inspection ............................................................................. 5-18
5.06 Expansion Joint (BSIR #2) .................................................................................................. 5-21
  5.06.01 Expansion Joint Routine NBI Inspection .................................................................. 5-21
  5.06.02 Expansion Joint Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................................ 5-23
  5.06.03 Expansion Joint Work Recommendations .................................................................. 5-29
  5.06.04 Expansion Joint Request for Action ........................................................................... 5-29
  5.06.05 Expansion Joint In-Depth Inspection ......................................................................... 5-30
5.07 Other Joints (BSIR #3) ....................................................................................................... 5-33
  5.07.01 Other Joint Routine NBI Inspection ........................................................................... 5-33
  5.07.02 Other Joint Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ...................................................... 5-34
  5.07.03 Other Joint Work Recommendations ......................................................................... 5-36
  5.07.04 Other Joint Request for Action ................................................................................... 5-37
  5.07.05 Other Joint In-Depth Inspection ................................................................................ 5-37
5.08 Railings (BSIR #4) .............................................................................................................. 5-38
  5.08.01 Concrete Railing Routine NBI Inspection ................................................................... 5-42
  5.08.02 Concrete Railing Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .............................................. 5-43
  5.08.03 Steel Railing Routine NBI Inspection .......................................................................... 5-45
  5.08.04 Steel Railing Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .................................................... 5-46
  5.08.05 Timber Railing Routine NBI Inspection ...................................................................... 5-48
  5.08.06 Timber Railing Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ................................................. 5-50

Updated 06/27/2016
## MICHIGAN STRUCTURE INSPECTION MANUAL
### BRIDGE INSPECTION – TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.08.07</td>
<td>Railing Work Recommendations</td>
<td>5-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.08.08</td>
<td>Railing Request for Action</td>
<td>5-51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.08.09</td>
<td>Railing In-Depth Inspection</td>
<td>5-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>Sidewalks or Curbs (BSIR #5)</td>
<td>5-55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.01</td>
<td>Concrete Sidewalk or Curb Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.02</td>
<td>Concrete Sidewalk or Curb Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.03</td>
<td>Steel Sidewalk or Curb Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.04</td>
<td>Steel Sidewalk or Curb Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.05</td>
<td>Timber Sidewalk or Curb Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.06</td>
<td>Timber Sidewalk or Curb Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.07</td>
<td>Sidewalk or Curb Work Recommendations</td>
<td>5-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.08</td>
<td>Sidewalk or Curb Request for Action</td>
<td>5-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.09.09</td>
<td>Sidewalk or Curb In-Depth Inspection</td>
<td>5-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>Deck Bottom Surface (BSIR #6)</td>
<td>5-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.01</td>
<td>Concrete Deck Bottom Surface Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.02</td>
<td>Concrete Deck Bottom Surface Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.03</td>
<td>Steel Deck Bottom Surface Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.04</td>
<td>Steel Deck Bottom Surface Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.05</td>
<td>Timber Deck Bottom Surface Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.06</td>
<td>Timber Deck Bottom Surface Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.07</td>
<td>Deck Bottom Surface Work Recommendations</td>
<td>5-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.08</td>
<td>Deck Bottom Surface Request for Action</td>
<td>5-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.09</td>
<td>Deck Bottom Surface In-Depth Inspection</td>
<td>5-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>Deck (BSIR #7, SI&amp;A Item 58)</td>
<td>5-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.01</td>
<td>Concrete Deck or Slab Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.02</td>
<td>Concrete Deck or Slab Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.03</td>
<td>Steel Deck Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.04</td>
<td>Steel Deck Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.05</td>
<td>Timber Deck Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.06</td>
<td>Timber Deck Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.07</td>
<td>Deck Work Recommendations</td>
<td>5-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.08</td>
<td>Deck Request for Action</td>
<td>5-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11.09</td>
<td>Deck In-Depth Inspection</td>
<td>5-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>Drainage (BSIR #8)</td>
<td>5-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>Stringer (BSIR #9, SI&amp;A Item 59 - Superstructure)</td>
<td>5-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13.01</td>
<td>Reinforced Concrete Tee Beam Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13.02</td>
<td>Concrete Tee Beam Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13.03</td>
<td>Cast-In-Place Slab Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13.04</td>
<td>Cast-In-Place Slab Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13.05</td>
<td>Precast Slab Routine NBI Inspection</td>
<td>5-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13.06</td>
<td>Precast Slab Michigan Bridge Element Inspection</td>
<td>5-97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated 06/27/2016
# Table of Contents

- **5.13.07** Prestressed Concrete Box Beams Routine NBI Inspection .................................................... 5-98
- **5.13.08** Prestressed Concrete Box Beams Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ....................... 5-99
- **5.13.09** Prestressed Concrete I-Beam Routine NBI Inspection ......................................................... 5-102
- **5.13.10** Prestressed Concrete I-Beam Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................. 5-103
- **5.13.11** Concrete Arch Routine NBI Inspection ................................................................. 5-105
- **5.13.12** Concrete Arch Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................ 5-107
- **5.13.13** Load Path Redundant Rolled Beam and Girder Routine NBI Inspection ...................... 5-110
- **5.13.14** Load Path Redundant Rolled Beam and Girder Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .... 5-112
- **5.13.15** Two Girder Steel Routine NBI Inspection ............................................................... 5-114
- **5.13.16** Two Girder Steel Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .................................................. 5-116
- **5.13.17** Steel Box Girder Routine NBI Inspection ........................................................................ 5-118
- **5.13.18** Steel Box Girder Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ...................................................... 5-120
- **5.13.19** Steel Truss Routine NBI Inspection .............................................................................. 5-121
- **5.13.20** Steel Truss Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................................................. 5-123
- **5.13.21** Steel Arch Routine NBI Inspection .................................................................................. 5-125
- **5.13.22** Steel Arch Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................................................. 5-127
- **5.13.23** Stringer (Superstructure) Work Recommendations .............................................................. 5-129
- **5.13.24** Stringer (Superstructure) Request for Action ................................................................. 5-130
- **5.13.25** Stringer (Superstructure) In-Depth Inspection .............................................................. 5-130
- **5.14** Paint (BSIR #10, SI&A Item 59A) ......................................................................................... 5-133
  - **5.14.01** Paint Routine NBI Inspection ....................................................................................... 5-133
  - **5.14.02** Paint Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ................................................................. 5-136
  - **5.14.03** Paint Work Recommendations .................................................................................. 5-136
  - **5.14.04** Paint Request for Action .......................................................................................... 5-137
  - **5.14.05** In-Depth Inspection ................................................................................................. 5-137
- **5.15** Section Loss Under Joints (BSIR #11) .................................................................................... 5-137
  - **5.15.01** Section Loss Under Joints Routine NBI Inspection .......................................................... 5-138
  - **5.15.02** Section Loss Under Joints Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................. 5-139
  - **5.15.03** Section Loss Under Joint Work Recommendations .................................................... 5-141
  - **5.15.04** Section Loss Under Joints Request for Action .............................................................. 5-141
  - **5.15.05** Section Loss Under Joints In-Depth Inspection .......................................................... 5-142
- **5.16** Bearings (BSIR #12) ........................................................................................................ 5-143
  - **5.16.01** Bearings Routine NBI Inspection .................................................................................. 5-143
  - **5.16.02** Bearing Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................................................ 5-145
  - **5.16.03** Bearing Work Recommendations .............................................................................. 5-147
  - **5.16.04** Bearing Request for Action ....................................................................................... 5-148
  - **5.16.05** Bearing In-Depth Inspection ...................................................................................... 5-149
- **5.17** Abutments (BSIR #13, SI&A Item 60 Substructure) ................................................................. 5-151
  - **5.17.01** Concrete Abutment Routine NBI Inspection ............................................................... 5-151
  - **5.17.02** Concrete Abutment Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ........................................ 5-153
  - **5.17.03** Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) Walls Routine NBI Inspection ...................... 5-155

Updated 06/27/2016
5.17.04 Mechanically Stabilized Earth Walls Element Inspection .............................................. 5-157
5.17.05 Timber Abutment Routine NBI Inspection .................................................................. 5-158
5.17.06 Timber Abutment Element Inspection ...................................................................... 5-159
5.17.07 Abutment Work Recommendations ......................................................................... 5-160
5.17.08 Abutment Request for Action .................................................................................. 5-161
5.17.09 In-Depth Inspection ................................................................................................. 5-161

5.18 Piers (BSIR #14, SI&A Item 60 Substructure) ................................................................ 5-164
5.18.01 Concrete Pier Routine NBI Inspection ...................................................................... 5-164
5.18.02 Concrete Pier Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .............................................. 6-166
5.18.03 Steel Pier Routine NBI Inspection ........................................................................... 5-168
5.18.04 Steel Pier Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .................................................... 5-169
5.18.05 Timber Pier Routine NBI Inspection ....................................................................... 5-171
5.18.06 Pier Work Recommendations .................................................................................. 5-173
5.18.07 Pier Request for Action ........................................................................................... 5-173
5.18.08 Pier In-Depth Inspection .......................................................................................... 5-174

5.19 Slope Protection (BSIR #15) ........................................................................................ 5-176
5.19.01 Slope Protection Routine NBI Inspection .................................................................. 5-176
5.19.02 Slope Protection Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ......................................... 5-177
5.19.03 Slope Protection Work Recommendations ............................................................ 5-177
5.19.04 Slope Protection Request for Action ..................................................................... 5-177
5.19.05 Slope Protection In-Depth Inspection .................................................................... 5-177

5.20 Approach (BSIR #16) ................................................................................................. 5-178
5.20.01 Concrete Approach NBI Routine Inspection ............................................................. 5-178
5.20.02 Concrete Approach Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ................................... 5-179
5.20.03 HMA Approach Routine NBI Inspection ................................................................. 5-180
5.20.04 HMA Approach Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ........................................ 5-181
5.20.05 Approach Work Recommendations ...................................................................... 5-181
5.20.06 Approach Request for Action .................................................................................. 5-182
5.20.07 Approach In-Depth Inspection ............................................................................... 5-182

5.21 Approach Shoulders and Sidewalks (BSIR #17) .............................................................. 5-182
5.21.01 Approach Shoulders and Sidewalks Routine NBI Inspection .................................. 5-182
5.21.02 Approach Shoulders and Sidewalks Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............ 5-183
5.21.03 Approach Shoulders and Sidewalks Work Recommendations .............................. 5-183
5.21.04 Approach Shoulders and Sidewalks Request for Action ........................................ 5-183
5.21.05 Approach Shoulders and Sidewalks In-Depth Inspection ....................................... 5-183

5.22 Approach Slopes (BSIR #18) ........................................................................................ 5-184
5.22.01 Approach Slopes Routine NBI Inspection ................................................................. 5-184
5.22.02 Approach Slopes Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ....................................... 5-184
5.22.03 Approach Slopes Work Recommendations ............................................................ 5-184
5.22.04 Approach Slopes Request for Action ..................................................................... 5-184
5.22.05 Approach Slopes In-depth Inspection ................................................................. 5-184
5.23 Utilities (BSIR #19) ................................................................................................... 5-185
  5.23.01 Utilities Routine NBI Inspection .............................................................................. 5-185
  5.23.02 Utilities Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .......................................................... 5-185
  5.23.03 Utilities Work Recommendations ................................................................................ 5-185
  5.23.04 Utilities Request for Action ........................................................................................ 5-186
  5.23.05 Utilities In-Depth Inspection ..................................................................................... 5-186
5.24 Channel (BSIR #20) ...................................................................................................... 5-187
  5.24.01 Channel Routine NBI Inspection ................................................................................. 5-187
  5.24.02 Channel Michigan Bridge Element Inspection ............................................................ 5-188
  5.24.03 Channel Work Recommendations ............................................................................. 5-188
  5.24.04 Channel Request for Action ...................................................................................... 5-188
  5.24.05 Channel In-Depth Inspection .................................................................................... 5-189
5.25 Drainage Culverts (BSIR #21) ....................................................................................... 5-190
5.26 BSIR Other Items ............................................................................................................. 5-191
  5.26.01 Waterway Adequacy (SI&A Item 71) ....................................................................... 5-191
  5.26.02 Approach Roadway Alignment (SI&A Item 72) .......................................................... 5-192
  5.26.03 Temporary Support or Conditions (SI&A Item 103, BSIR Other Item) ......................... 5-192
  5.26.04 High Load Hit ............................................................................................................ 5-192
  5.26.05 Special Inspection Equipment ................................................................................... 5-192
  5.26.06 Underwater Inspection Method (SI&A Item 176) ......................................................... 5-192

CHAPTER 6 – SCOUR

6.01 Purpose ......................................................................................................................... 6-1
6.02 Responsibilities ............................................................................................................. 6-1
  6.02.01 FHWA Metric #18 Inspection Procedures – Scour Critical Bridges ......................... 6-1
6.03 Scour Analysis ............................................................................................................... 6-2
6.04 Examining Scour During Routine NBI Inspection ......................................................... 6-5
6.05 Scour Protection Examination during Michigan Bridge Element Inspection .................... 6-7
6.06 Scour Critical Bridge – High Flow Event ....................................................................... 6-7
6.07 Scour Critical Bridge – Scour Inspection ...................................................................... 6-8
6.08 Stream-Bed Cross Sections .......................................................................................... 6-9
6.09 Scour Plan of Action ..................................................................................................... 6-10

CHAPTER 7 – FRACTURE CRITICAL & FATIGUE SENSITIVE INSPECTION

7.01 Purpose ......................................................................................................................... 7-1
7.02 Design and Fabrication Requirements .......................................................................... 7-1
7.03 Fatigue Sensitive Details ............................................................................................. 7-2
7.04 Fatigue Sensitive Inspection Procedures ........................................................................ 7-2
  7.04.01 Fatigue Sensitive Inspection Procedures – Bridge Owner Responsibilities ............. 7-3
  7.04.02 Fatigue Sensitive Inspection Procedures – Team Leader Responsibilities .............. 7-3

Updated 06/27/2016
CHAPTER 8 – UNDERWATER INSPECTION

8.01 Purpose ....................................................................................................................... 8-1
8.02 Underwater Inspection Methods .............................................................................. 8-1
8.03 Underwater Diving Levels of Inspection Intensity .................................................... 8-2
8.04 Types and Frequency of Underwater Inspection ....................................................... 8-2
8.05 Underwater Inspector Qualifications ...................................................................... 8-4
8.06 Underwater Inspection Procedures ........................................................................ 8-5
    8.06.01 Underwater Inspection Procedures – Bridge Owner Responsibilities .......... 8-5
    8.06.02 Underwater Inspection Procedures – Team Leader Responsibilities ............ 8-6
8.07 Bridge Safety Inspection Report ............................................................................ 8-8
8.08 Underwater Inspection Report .............................................................................. 8-9

CHAPTER 9 – DAMAGE INSPECTION

9.01 Purpose ....................................................................................................................... 9-1
9.02 Types of Damage Inspection .................................................................................. 9-1
9.03 Damage Inspection Procedures ............................................................................. 9-2
9.04 Damage Inspection Procedures – High Load Impacts ........................................... 9-3
    9.04.01 High Load Hit Impact Procedures - Steel Superstructure ......................... 9-4
    9.04.01 High Load Hit Impact Procedures - Concrete Superstructure .................. 9-5
9.05 Damage Inspection – Fire Damage Procedures ..................................................... 9-5
9.06 Damage Inspection – Movable Bridge and Vessel Impact Procedures .................. 9-6
9.07 Documenting Damage Inspections ...................................................................... 9-7
9.08 Obtaining the Traffic Crash Report ...................................................................... 9-8
9.09 Initiating the Claim Process .................................................................................. 9-8

CHAPTER 10 – CRITICAL FINDINGS

10.01 Purpose ................................................................................................................... 10-1
10.02 Documenting Critical Findings ............................................................................. 10-2
    10.02.01 Entering the RFA in MiBIDGE ...................................................................... 10-2
10.03 Critical Finding Procedures – Inspection Team Leader Responsibilities ............ 10-9
10.04 Critical Finding Procedures - Load Rating Engineer Responsibilities ................. 10-10
10.05 Critical Finding Procedures – Bridge Owner Responsibilities ............................. 10-11
Table of Contents

10.05.01 Critical Finding Procedures - Bridge Owner Responsibilities (MDOT Owned) 10-11
10.05.02 Critical Finding Procedures - Bridge Owner Responsibilities (LA Owned) 10-12
10.05.03 Critical Finding Procedures - Bridge Owner SI&A Coding Responsibilities 10-12
10.06 Bridge Program Manager Responsibilities 10-13
10.07 FHWA Notification of Critical Findings 10-14
10.08 Critical Finding Examples 10-14
10.08.01 Critical Finding Examples – Damage Inspection 10-15
10.08.02 Critical Finding Examples – Scheduled Bridge Safety Inspection 10-18
10.09 Completing the RFA Process 10-19

Chapter 11 – Inspection Equipment
11.01 Purpose 11-1
11.02 Routine Inspection Equipment 11-2
11.03 Fracture Critical, Damage, and In-Depth Inspection Equipment 11-3
11.04 Confined Space and Underwater Diving Inspection Equipment 11-4
11.05 Equipment Procedures 11-5

Chapter 12 – Non-NBI Structures
12.01 Purpose 12-1
12.02 Documenting Non-NBI Inspections 12-1
12.03 Inspector Qualifications 12-2
12.04 Culverts 12-2
12.05 Railroads over Highway (“X”) Structures 12-4
12.06 Pedestrian Bridges 12-4

Chapter 13 – Bridge Inspection Safety
13.01 Purpose 13-1
13.02 Responsibilities 13-1
13.03 Personal Protective Equipment 13-2
13.04 Working Near Traffic 13-2
13.05 Fall Protection 13-3
13.06 Power Lines 13-3
13.07 Confined Spaces 13-4
13.08 Working Over or Near Water 13-4
13.09 Extension Ladders 13-5
13.10 Asbestos 13-5
13.11 Histoplasmosis 13-5
13.12 Emergency Equipment 13-5

Updated 06/27/2016