Standard Specification for
Hot-Formed Welded and Seamless Carbon Steel Structural Tubing

This standard is issued under the fixed designation A 501; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ε) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the Department of Defense.

1. Scope

1.1 This specification covers black and hot-dipped galvanized hot-formed welded and seamless carbon steel square, round, rectangular, or special shape structural tubing for welded, riveted, or bolted construction of bridges and buildings, and for general structural purposes.

1.2 Square and rectangular tubing is furnished in sizes 1 to 10 in. (25.4 to 254 mm) across flat sides with wall thicknesses 0.095 to 1.000 in. (2.41 to 25.40 mm), dependent upon size; round tubing is furnished in NPS ½ to NPS 24 (see Note 1) inclusive, with nominal (average) wall thicknesses 0.109 to 1.000 in. (2.77 to 25.40 mm), dependent upon size. Special shape tubing and tubing with other dimensions is permitted to be furnished, provided that such tubing complies with all other requirements of this specification.

Note 1—The dimensionless designator NPS (nominal pipe size) has been substituted in this standard for such traditional terms as “nominal diameter,” “size,” and “nominal size.”

1.3 The following precautionary statement pertains only to the test method portion of this specification: This standard does not purport to address all the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.

1.4 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.5 The text of this specification contains notes and footnotes that provide explanatory material. Such notes and footnotes, excluding those in tables and figures, do not contain any mandatory requirements.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards: ²
A 53/A 53M Specification for Pipe, Steel, Black and Hot-Dipped, Zinc-Coated, Welded and Seamless
A 370 Test Methods and Definitions for Mechanical Testing of Steel Products
A 700 Practices for Packaging, Marking, and Loading Methods for Steel Products for Domestic Shipment
A 751 Test Methods, Practices, and Terminology for Chemical Analysis of Steel Products
A 941 Terminology Relating to Steel, Stainless Steel, Related Alloys, and Ferroalloys

2.2 AIAG Standard: ³
B-1 Bar Code Symbology Standard

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions—For definitions of terms used in this specification, refer to Terminology A 941.

4. Ordering Information

4.1 Orders for material under this specification shall contain information concerning as many of the following items as are required to describe the desired material adequately:
4.1.1 Quantity (feet or number of lengths),
4.1.2 Name of material (hot-formed tubing),
4.1.3 Method of manufacture (seamless or welded) (see Section 6),
4.1.4 Finish (black or galvanized),
4.1.5 Size (outside diameter and calculated nominal wall thickness for round tubing and the outside dimensions and calculated nominal wall thickness for square and rectangular tubing (Section 11),
4.1.6 Length (random, multiple, or specific; see 12.3),
5. Process

5.1 The steel shall be made by one or more of the following processes: open-hearth, basic-oxygen, or electric-furnace.

5.2 When steels of different grades are sequentially strand cast, the steel producer shall identify the resultant transition material and remove it using an established procedure that positively separates the grades.

6. Manufacture

6.1 The tubing shall be made by one of the following processes: seamless; furnace-butt welding (continuous welding); or electric-resistance welding followed by reheating throughout the cross section and hot forming by a reducing or shaping process, or both.

7. Heat Analysis

7.1 Each heat analysis shall conform to the requirements specified in Table 1 for heat analysis.

8. Product Analysis

8.1 The tubing shall be capable of conforming to the requirements specified in Table 1 for product analysis.

8.2 If product analyses are made, they shall be made using test specimens taken from two lengths of tubing from each lot of 500 lengths, or fraction thereof, or two pieces of flat-rolled stock from each lot of a corresponding quantity of flat-rolled stock. Methods and practices relating to chemical analysis shall be in accordance with Test Methods, Practices, and Terminology A 751. Such product analyses shall conform to the requirements specified in Table 1 for product analysis.

8.3 If both product analyses representing a lot fail to conform to the specified requirements, the lot shall be rejected.

8.4 If only one product analysis representing a lot fails to conform to the specified requirements, product analyses shall be made using two additional test specimens taken from the lot. Both additional product analyses shall conform to the specified requirements or the lot shall be rejected.

9. Tensile Requirements

9.1 The material, as represented by the test specimen, shall conform to the requirements as to tensile properties prescribed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Heat analysis</th>
<th>Product analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbon, max</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorus, max</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulfur, max</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper, when copper steel is specified, min</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2 The yield strength corresponding to a permanent offset of 0.2 % of the gauge length of the specimen or to a total extension of 0.5 % of the gauge length under load shall be determined.

10. Bend Test

10.1 The bend test shall be made on square or rectangular tubing manufactured in accordance with this specification.

10.2 The bend test specimen shall be taken longitudinally from the tubing, and shall represent the full wall thickness of material. It shall be permissible for the sides of the bend test to have their corners rounded out to a radius of 1/16 in. (1.59 mm) maximum.

10.3 The bend test specimen shall stand being bent cold through 180°, without cracking on the outside of the bent portion, to an inside diameter which shall have a relation to the thickness of the specimen as prescribed in Table 3.

11. Dimensions

11.1 Square Structural Tubing—The outside dimensions (across the flats), the weight per foot, and the calculated nominal wall thickness of common sizes of square structural tubing included in this specification are listed in Table 4.

11.2 Rectangular Structural Tubing—The outside dimensions (across the flats), the weight per foot, and the calculated nominal wall thickness of common sizes of rectangular structural tubing included in this specification are listed in Table 5.

11.3 Round Structural Tubing—The NPS and outside diameter dimensions, the weight per foot, and the calculated nominal wall thickness of common sizes of round structural tubing included in this specification are listed in Table 6.

11.4 Special Shape Structural Tubing—The dimensions and tolerances of special shape structural tubing are available by inquiry and negotiation with the manufacturer.

11.5 Other Sizes—The dimensional tolerances for hot-formed welded and seamless structural tubing manufactured in accordance with the requirements of this specification, but with ordered dimensions other than those listed in Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6, shall be consistent with those given in this specification for similar sizes and type of product.

12. Permissible Variations in Dimensions of Square, Round, Rectangular, and Special Shape Structural Tubing

12.1 Outside Dimensions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thickness of Material, in. (mm)</th>
<th>Ratio of Bend Diameter to Specimen Thickness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¾ (19.0) and under</td>
<td>⅛</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over ¾ to 1 (19.0 to 25.4), incl</td>
<td>⅛</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12.1.1 Round Structural Tubing—For round hot-formed structural tubing NPS 2 and over, the outside diameter shall not vary more than ±1% from the specified outside diameter. For NPS 1½ and under, the outside diameter shall not vary more than 1⁄32 in. (0.79 mm) under the specified outside diameter.

12.1.2 Square, Rectangular, and Special Shape Structural Tubing—The outside dimensions, measured across the flats at positions at least 2 in. (50.8 mm) from the ends of the tubing, shall not vary from the specified outside dimensions by more than the applicable amount given in Table 7, which includes an allowance for convexity or concavity.

12.2 Weight—The weight of the structural tubing shall be not more than 3.5% under its theoretical weight, as calculated using its length and the applicable weight per unit length given in Table 4, Table 5, or Table 6.

12.3 Length—Structural tubing is commonly produced in random lengths of 16 to 22 ft. (4.9 to 6.7 m) or 32 to 44 ft. (9.8 to 13.4 m), in multiple lengths, and in specific lengths. When specific lengths are ordered, the permissible variations in length shall be as given in Table 8.
TABLE 6 Dimensions of Common Sizes of Round Structural Tubing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPS Designation</th>
<th>Outside Diameter, in. (mm)</th>
<th>Weight per Unit Length, lb/ft (kg/m)</th>
<th>Calculated Nominal Wall Thickness, in. (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>½</td>
<td>0.840 (21.3)</td>
<td>0.85 (1.27)</td>
<td>0.109 (2.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¾</td>
<td>1.050 (26.7)</td>
<td>1.13 (1.69)</td>
<td>0.113 (2.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.315 (33.4)</td>
<td>1.34 (2.00)</td>
<td>0.104 (2.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1½</td>
<td>1.660 (42.2)</td>
<td>1.68 (2.50)</td>
<td>0.133 (3.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.375 (60.3)</td>
<td>2.91 (4.33)</td>
<td>0.121 (3.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2½</td>
<td>2.875 (73.0)</td>
<td>5.02 (7.66)</td>
<td>0.218 (5.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.500 (88.9)</td>
<td>5.57 (8.29)</td>
<td>0.156 (3.96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3½</td>
<td>4.000 (101.6)</td>
<td>7.65 (11.41)</td>
<td>0.188 (4.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.500 (114.3)</td>
<td>9.24 (14.19)</td>
<td>0.226 (5.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.563 (141.3)</td>
<td>14.62 (22.77)</td>
<td>0.258 (6.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.625 (168.3)</td>
<td>18.27 (28.96)</td>
<td>0.280 (7.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.687 (195.7)</td>
<td>22.85 (36.65)</td>
<td>0.300 (7.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.625 (219.1)</td>
<td>27.55 (43.45)</td>
<td>0.322 (8.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.750 (273.0)</td>
<td>40.48 (63.01)</td>
<td>0.365 (9.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.750 (323.8)</td>
<td>54.78 (87.39)</td>
<td>0.400 (10.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.000 (355.6)</td>
<td>54.57 (87.15)</td>
<td>0.475 (12.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.000 (406.4)</td>
<td>62.68 (93.27)</td>
<td>0.500 (12.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.000 (457.2)</td>
<td>70.59 (109.15)</td>
<td>0.500 (12.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.000 (508.0)</td>
<td>78.50 (120.15)</td>
<td>0.500 (12.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.000 (609.6)</td>
<td>94.62 (141.12)</td>
<td>0.500 (12.70)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.6 Radius of Corners—For square and rectangular structural tubing, the radius of each outside corner of the section shall not exceed three times the calculated nominal wall thickness.

12.7 Twist—For square, rectangular, and special shape structural tubing, the permissible variations in twist shall be as given in Table 9. Twist shall be determined by holding one end of the tubing down on a flat surface plate, measuring the height that each corner on the bottom side of the tubing extends above the surface plate near the opposite end of the tubing, and calculating the twist (the difference in the measured heights of such corners), except that for heavier sections it shall be permissible to use a suitable measuring device to determine twist. Twist measurements shall not be taken within 2 in. (50.8 mm) of the ends of the tubing.

13. Number of Tests

13.1 One tension test as specified in 15.2 shall be made from a length of tubing representing each lot.

13.2 The bend test as specified in Section 10 shall be made on one length of square or rectangular tubing representing each lot.

TABLE 7 Permissible Variations in Outside Flat Dimensions for Square, Rectangular, and Special Shape Structural Tubing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specified Outside Large Flat Dimension, in. (mm)</th>
<th>Permissible Variations Over and Under Specified Outside Flat Dimensions, in. (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 in. (50.8)</td>
<td>0.020 (0.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 2 to 3 in. (50.8 to 76.2) incl.</td>
<td>0.025 (0.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 3 in. to 5 in. (76.2 to 127.0) incl.</td>
<td>0.030 (0.76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 5 in. (127.0)</td>
<td>over 5 in. (127.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^The permissible variations include allowances for convexity and concavity.

TABLE 8 Permissible Variations in Length for Specific Lengths of Structural Tubing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permissible variations in length, in. (mm)</th>
<th>Specified Length, in. (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/8 in. (3.2 mm)</td>
<td>0.005 (0.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1/8 in. to 1/4 in. (3.2 to 6.4 mm)</td>
<td>0.012 (0.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1/4 in. to 1/2 in. (6.4 to 12.7 mm)</td>
<td>0.018 (0.45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.4 Straightness—The permissible variation for straightness of structural tubing shall be 1/8 in. times the number of feet (10.4 mm times the number of metres) of total length divided by five.

12.5 Squareness of Sides—For perpendicular and rectangular tubing, adjacent sides shall be square (90°), with a permissible variation of ±2°.
13.3 The term “lot” shall apply to all tubes of the same specified size that are produced from the same heat of steel.

14. Retests

14.1 If the results of the mechanical tests representing any lot fail to conform to the applicable requirements specified in Sections 9 and 10, the lot shall be rejected or retested using additional tubing of double the original number from the lot. The lot shall be acceptable if the results of all such retests representing the lot conform to the specified requirements.

14.2 If one or both of the retests specified in 14.1 fail to conform to the applicable requirements specified in Sections 9 and 10, the lot shall be rejected or, subsequent to the manufacturer heat treating, reworking, or otherwise eliminating the condition responsible for the failure, the lot shall be treated as a new lot and tested accordingly.

15. Test Method

15.1 Tension test specimens shall conform to the applicable requirements of Test Methods and Definitions A 370, Annex A2.

15.2 Tension test specimens shall be full-size longitudinal test specimens or longitudinal strip test specimens. For welded tubing, any longitudinal strip test specimens shall be taken from a location at least 90° from the weld and shall be prepared without flattening in the gauge length. Longitudinal strip test specimens shall have all burrs removed. Tension test specimens shall not contain surface imperfections that would interfere with proper determination of the tensile properties.

15.3 The yield strength corresponding to an offset of 0.2 % of the gauge length or to a total extension under load of 0.5 % of the gauge length shall be determined.

16. Galvanized Coatings

16.1 For structural tubing required to be hot-dipped galvanized, such coating shall comply with the requirements contained in Specification A 53/A 53M, except that the manufacturer shall additionally have the option of determining the coating weight using only the values obtained for the coating on the outside surface of the tubing.

17. Inspection

17.1 All tubing shall be inspected at the place of manufacture to ensure conformance with the requirements of this specification.

17.2 The structural tubing shall be free of defects and shall have a commercially smooth finish.

17.2.1 Surface imperfections shall be classed as defects when one or more of the following conditions exist:

17.2.1.1 The depth of the imperfections exceeds 15 % of the calculated nominal wall thickness.

17.2.1.2 The imperfections materially affect the appearance of the structural tubing.

17.2.1.3 At any location, the length of the imperfections, measured in the transverse direction, in combination with their depth materially reduce the total cross sectional area of the structural tubing.

17.2.2 It shall be permissible for defects having a depth not in excess of 33 1/3 % of the calculated nominal wall thickness to be repaired by welding, subject to the following conditions:

17.2.2.1 The defect shall be completely removed by chipping or grinding to sound metal.

17.2.2.2 The repair weld shall be made using a low-hydrogen welding process, and

17.2.2.3 The projecting weld metal shall be removed to produce a workmanlike finish.

17.3 Unless otherwise specified in the purchase order, structural tubing shall be furnished with square cut ends. The burr shall be held to a minimum. When so specified in the purchase order, the burr shall be removed on the outside diameter, inside diameter, or both.

18. Rejection

18.1 It shall be permissible for the purchaser to inspect tubing received from the manufacturer and reject any tubing that does not meet the requirements of this specification, based upon the inspection and test methods outlined herein. The purchaser shall notify the manufacturer of any tubing that has been rejected, and the disposition of such tubing shall be subject to agreement between the manufacturer and the purchaser.

18.2 It shall be permissible for the purchaser to set aside any tubing that is found in fabrication or installation within the scope of this specification to be unsuitable for the intended end use, based on the requirements of this specification. The purchaser shall notify the manufacturer of any tubing that has been set aside. Such tubing shall be subject to mutual investigation as to the nature and severity of the deficiency and the forming or installation conditions, or both, involved. The disposition of such tubing shall be subject to agreement between the manufacturer and the purchaser.

19. Certification

19.1 When specified in the purchase order or contract, the manufacturer shall furnish to the purchaser a certificate of compliance stating that the product was manufactured, sampled, tested, and inspected in accordance with this specification and any other requirements designated in the purchase order or contract, and was found to meet all such requirements. Certificates of compliance shall include the specification number and year of issue.

19.2 When specified in the purchase order or contract, the manufacturer shall furnish to the purchaser test reports for the product shipped that contain the heat analyses and the results of the tension tests required by this specification and the purchase order or contract. Test reports shall include the specification number and year of issue.

19.3 A signature or notarization is not required on certificates of compliance or test reports; however, the documents shall clearly identify the organization submitting them. Notwithstanding the absence of a signature, the organization submitting the document is responsible for its content.

19.4 A certificate of compliance or test report printed from, or used in electronic form from, an electronic data interchange (EDI) shall be regarded as having the same validity as a counterpart printed in the certifying organization’s facility. The
content of the EDI transmitted document shall conform to any existing EDI agreement between the purchaser and the manufacturer.

20. Product Marking

20.1 Except as allowed by 20.2, each length of structural tubing shall be legibly marked by rolling, die-stamping, ink printing, or paint stenciling to show the following information: manufacturer’s name, brand, or trademark; size; and the specification designation (year of issue not required).

20.2 For structural tubing having a specified outside diameter or large flat dimension less than 2 in. (50.8 mm), it shall be permissible for the information listed in 20.1 to be marked on a tag securely attached to each bundle.

20.3 Bar Coding—In addition to the requirements in 20.1 and 20.2, the manufacturer shall have the option of using bar coding as a supplementary identification method. When a specific bar coding system is specified in the purchase order, that system shall be used.

NOTE 2—In the absence of another bar coding system being specified in the purchase order, it is recommended that bar coding be consistent with AIAG Standard B-1.

21. Packaging, Marking, and Loading

21.1 When specified in the purchase order, packaging, marking, and loading shall be in accordance with Practices A 700.

22. Keywords

22.1 steel tube; structural steel tubing