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Causes of Some Steel Structure Failures

Origine de la ruine de quelques constructions métalliques

Ursachen des Versagens einiger Stahlkonstruktionen

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SUMMARY

This paper contains some short reports about several steel structure failures that happened on the territory of Croatia in Yugoslavia between 1967 and 1982. These failures are considered from the quality assurance's standpoint. Also, some personal opinions about the role of quality assurance within the building process are given.

RESUME

L'article traite de quelques cas de ruine de constructions métalliques qui ont eu lieu entre 1967 et 1982 sur le territoire de la Croatie, en Yougoslavie. Ces'écroulements ont été analysés au point de vue de l'assurance de la qualité. L'exposé est suivi de quelques considérations de l'auteur sur le rôle de l'assurance de la qualité dans le processus de la construction.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Artikel enthält knappe Berichte über das Versagen einiger Stahlkonstruktionen, die in Kroatien (Jugoslawien) von 1967 bis 1982 vorgekommen sind. Diese Versagensfälle werden hier vom Standpunkt der Qualitätssicherung analysiert. Einige Überlegungen über die Bedeutung der Qualitätssicherung im Bauwesen werden angefügt.

1. CAUSES OF SOME STEEL STRUCTURE FAILURES

Series No.	Structure discription	Failure	Place	Year	Load in moment of failure
1. Su D-	gar Silo 45 m, H-30 m	Collapse during erection, H-22 m	Vrbas	1979	Wind cca 30 m/sec.

Insufficent stability of the cylindrical shell without wind girder and any erection assurance, with a big unstiffened opening on mantle (6x18 m) on the windside.

2.	Corn Silo D-8,28 m, H-32m (6 cells)	Collapse of one cell in use during lateral unloading (after 3 years of	Daruvar	1980	Cell filled with wheat
		limited use)			

The cause of the failure was not officially determined, but there were three obvious defects of structure: insufficent stability of cylindrical shell, increased initial geometrical imperfections, shortage of loadbearing capacity of longitudinal bolted connections (The hole diameter greater than bolt diameter by 2 mm, thread length equal to bolt length).

3. Cement Silo	Collapse in use	Split	1981	Silo filled
(Capacity 10 MN)	(after 2 years of			(70%)
	use)			

The official report says that there were several different design defects and also possibility of a "shake down" effect in the place where the shell is supported.

4.	Water tank, 2200 m ³ (on a water-tower above a restaurant). The tank was design- ed as two ventricle inside two concentric cylindrical shells, with free upper edge.	Collapse of inner empty cylinder in use	Vukovar	1970	The inner ventricle was empty, and the outer was full of water
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Insufficent stability of cylindrical shell under outside pressure because of: increased initial geometrical imperfections, residual welding stresses and poor design (inadequate edge conditions).

5.	Corn Silo	Collapse of one	Podravska	-	Cell was
	(capacity 100 MN)	cell in use	Slatina		filled

Insufficent stability of cylindrical shell because of: inadequate appreciation of loading conditions, inadequate appreciation of edge conditions of vertical stiffeners, poor design of stiffener splices without continuity on the level of horizontal shell splices.

6.	Tanks D-32 m	Collapse of 5 tanks Obrov	rac 1974 Strong wind
	H- 8 m	during erection	

Insufficent assurance during erection.

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7. Single story industri-Collapse in use 1972 Gerovo Snow 2-3 kN/m² al building with steel roof trusses. Area 840 m², Span 20 m. Poor workmanship of butt welds in a lower chord tension member. 8. Single story industrial building with steel roof trusses. Area 2000 m², Span 24 m. Poor workmanskip of butt welds in lower chord tension member. Snow cca2 9. Single story indus-Collapse in use Virovitica trial building with 1.8 kN/m⁴ steel roof trusses Area 2000 m². Span 20 m. Load above the standard (0.75 kN/m^2). Also inadequate treatment of supposed statical system. Snow cca2 10. Single story wareho-Collapse in use 1976 Skradin use with steel roof 1.0 kN/m trusses. Area 600 m^2 . Span 10 m. Serious mistake in erection. The tie rods of main roof girders were connected with bolts M12 instead of M14, as it was designed. The bolt holes were made by burning. 11. Roadway bridge with Collapse in use Karlovac 1981 Special trantrusses above floor sport Special cargo hitched on a truss member. Precaution measures were not strict enough. 1980 12. Roadway bridge with Ličko Collapse in use Special Lešće trusses above floor after a special transport and lateral bracing cargo hitched on between upper chords a member of bracing. Precaution measures were not strict enough. 13. Lamp posts Collapse in use Zagreb Wind Underestimation of wind effects. Neglected influence of the dynamics. Difference between workshop drawings and original drawings. 14. Steam generator for Overturned in tran-Between nuclear power plant sport Zagreb and (NPP) Rijeka Transportation procedure was not prepared professionally enough. 15. Stator of turbine Krško Overturned during for NPP transport Underestimation of influence. Precaution measures were not strict enough.



16.	River dam (water suply for NPP)	Collapse of all seven gates	Krško	-	High water wave
Gros	ssly inadequate execution	n of operational proce	edure, and p	oor de	sign.
17.	Steam generator (NPP)	Excessive vibra- tions of U-tubes	Krško	-	Prestarting operations
Inac	lequate appreciation of m	real behaviour of stru	ucture.		
18.	Reactor make up water storage tank (NPP)	Rupture during filling	Krško	-	Pressure too high
Inac	lequage execution of fill	ling procedure.			
19.	Auxiliary feedwater system (NPP)	Deformation of pipes	Krško	-] c	Pre-starting operations
Poor	design.				
20.	Condensate pump (NPP)	Erosion on rotor and stator	Krško	-	Pre-starting operations
-					

Poor workmanship.

Note:

Failures described under 14 to 20 happened either durign building phase or prestarting operations, between 1977 to 1982. During all that time quality assurance was implemented against USA Model of QA for NPP.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE WITHIN THE BUILDING PROCESS

2.1. Experience gained from the failures described

Most of the described failures occured also because of gross human errors, that happened in different phases of building process. Most of them could have been discovered with a little additional checking, or in some cases without any additional checking, if there exised a more efficient QA system. Referred are only the cases of collapses or failures that have caused unforeseen costs and delays (e.g. the causes in NPP Krško), but not very many causes where gross errors have been noticed on time, either in planning phase or in construction phase, after wich corrective actions have been taken.

Phase	Design	Construction	Design constru on	and Use cti-	Design and use	Total
Descrip- tion ca- se No.	3,5,13,17,` 19	1,6,7,8,10,14 12,20	2,4	11,12,18	10,16	
Number of cases	5	8	2	3	2	20
%	25	40	10	15	10	

Table 1 Phase of building process in which gross error has occured



	Possibilities of discovery	Case	%
a)	Discovery probable with additional checking		
	in phase of: Planning: Construction Use	3,5,9,13,14,15,16,17,19 4,8,10,20 11,12	45 20 10
b)	Discovery probable without any additional checking	1,2,6,7,17	25

Table 2 Possibilities of Error Discovery

Described cases of failures refer to the structures that could be classified as "middle or low level of technology".

Gross human errors occured because jobs were entrusted to the people with insuficient knowledge or negligent attitude to the job. That was possible because of absence of effective QA.

Most countries already have some kind of a more or less effective "classical" QA system within the industry and within the building process. The question is, are there good reasons for some changes, particularly in construction? I think the answer is yes, both in technicaly developed countries as well in those which are not.

It would be a mistake if a country, through its technical regulations, implemented a QA system completely against Appendix B to 10CFR 50 /USA/ in the construction field, because this system as a whole, as a society game, is necessary and tolerable for the components of highest technology, e.g. nuclear industry, but the same system would be an unadequate and unnecessary handicap in civil engineering. Within the building process, a QA system against a new concept would be useful and necessary, in the form of regulations and guidances, but this should be an appropriate and simplified level of QA programme. However, in the internal policy, rules and organization of a construction firm, it is reasonable and useful to implement and accept all the principles and concepts of the 18 criteria, Appendix B, which has already been done by many world known firms and manufacturers outside nuclear industry, for competition and economic reasons.

However, everyone should be aware that efficiency of the QA system would essentially oscillate in different countries depending on their national system of contract and legal liability, motivation and technical level. The danger in implementation of QA lies in formalism and bureaucracy of the process. It could be expected that in some countries firms taking part in building process will accept QA principles and establish quite perfect QA manuals, procedures and organization, but only formally. Actually they will not implement it truly against known principles, and for example quality assurance will not have sufficient authority and will not be independent from production, etc.

IABSE, because of its international respectability should prepare a document on QA. This document could be a model for a national standard on QA. It shall contain only principles and aims. Good examples are standards: BS 5750 Part 1,2 and 3 CSA Z 299.1 to Z 299.4. These are standards for general industrial use, with three or four basic levels of quality programs, including guidelines for selection of appropriate level of quality program in each individual case.



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