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Reconstruction Design for PC Girders Damaged by the Kobe Earthquake

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Summary

The bridge discussed in this paper has simple composite PC girders supported by six RC T-beam piers and one RC rigid frame pier. It is located in Nada Ward, Kobe and was severely damaged by the Kobe Earthquake. The damage included inclination of the eccentric piers and damage to the end cross beams. To restore the bridge, a girder connection with isolators was used to distribute and reduce inertia force. Specifically, the slab-rubber-hinge girder connection method was developed. Isolators with both lead-rubber bearings (LRB) and sliding rubber bearings (SRB) and restrainers having rubber-sheathed chains were also used. Foundations, piers and girders except the damaged end cross beams were reused with some repair.

1. Basic of Structural Framework Design

In the design, focus was placed on developing a girder connection structure and employing omnidirectional seismic isolation to decrease both longitudinal and lateral inertia forces acting on eccentric piers whose reinforcement possibilities were limited (see **Fig. 1**). The preliminary design was first drawn up by applying the seismic coefficient method and the final, comprehensive design was based on the nonlinear dynamic analysis of the seismic record of the Kobe Earthquake at the Japan Meteorological Agency Kobe station. In addition, to verify the validity of the adopted isolated structures, the cumulative strain energy was calculated by analysis of the entire bridge, obtaining the proportions of seismic energy shared by the foundations, piers and isolation bearings (see **Fig. 2**).

2. Characteristic Structure Components

2.1 LRB-SRB Combined Isolation System

Two kinds of bearings, shown in **Fig. 3**, were applied to the bridge. SRBs were placed under the main girders to support the vertical load, and LRBs were placed in the gaps left under the end cross beams by removing part of their underside to absorb inertia force during an earthquake. This system was applied to the bridge in this paper which made use of thin rubber pad bearings

