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# AMPP-BCI-L2

*Bridge Coatings Inspector (BCI-L2)*

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### Question: 1278

Under SSPC-PA 17 (Procedure for Determining Conformance to Steel Profile Requirements), what is the default minimum frequency for measuring surface profile on a project if the specification does not state a specific frequency?

- A. A minimum of three locations per individual structural element regardless of size.
- B. A minimum of three locations for the first 100 square meters, and one location for each additional 100 square meters.
- C. A minimum of five locations for the first 100 square meters, followed by one location for each additional 100 square meters.
- D. A minimum of one location per entire bridge span per daily shift.

**Answer: B**

Explanation: SSPC-PA 17 defines the minimum frequency for surface profile measurement. The standard explicitly requires testing three separate locations for the first 100 square meters (1,000 square feet) of prepared surface, and one additional location for every subsequent 100 square meters.

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### Question: 1279

Which statement best describes the purpose of calibration records?

- A. They demonstrate that inspection instruments were checked and within acceptable accuracy
- B. They record the contractor's daily labor productivity and overhead
- C. They document the number of coating defects discovered after final acceptance
- D. They list all spare parts kept in the inspector's vehicle

**Answer: A**

Explanation: Calibration records show that gauges and other measuring instruments were verified as accurate before use, which is necessary for trustworthy readings. Without current calibration records, thickness, environmental, or surface condition measurements may not be defensible. Defect counts, productivity, and spare parts inventories are unrelated to instrument accuracy.

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### Question: 1280

During the final visual inspection of a bridge coating rehabilitation project, the inspector notices blister-like formations originating solely from an uncoated edge and propagating inward beneath the newly applied film. Which specific defect does this visual evidence indicate?

- A. Checking
- B. Saponification
- C. Chalking
- D. Undercutting

**Answer: D**

Explanation: Undercutting, also known as underfilm corrosion, is a defect where

corrosion initiates at a break in the coating system, a holiday, or an unprotected edge, and sequentially progresses underneath the intact coating film. This electrochemical activity generates corrosion by-products that cause the intact coating to lift, blister, or peel outward from the initial point of structural vulnerability.

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### **Question: 1281**

During the final visual inspection of a bridge superstructure, the inspector observes widespread microscopic wrinkling and deep cracks resembling dried mud on the surface of the inorganic zinc (IOZ) primer applied in the field. What is the most probable cause of this specific coating defect?

- A. Application of the IOZ primer over a substrate that was contaminated with microscopic chloride salts
- B. Application of the IOZ primer using an improper reduction ratio resulting in an over-thinned mixture
- C. Application of the IOZ primer in an environment with excessively low ambient relative humidity
- D. Application of the IOZ primer to a dry film thickness significantly exceeding the manufacturer specifications

**Answer: D**

Explanation: Inorganic zinc (IOZ) coatings are highly susceptible to "mud cracking" when applied too thickly. Because the coating is heavily loaded with zinc pigment and relies on a silicate binder, excessive film build prevents the coating from relieving internal stresses during the curing and solvent evaporation process, resulting in deep, characteristic structural cracks.

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### Question: 1282

During final inspection of shop-coated beams ready for shipment, the inspector finds several locations where the DFT of the complete system is 18 mils on a specification of 12–16 mils. The over-thickness areas are isolated and total less than 3 % of the surface. What is the required action?

- A. Require abrasive removal of the excess coating and re-application to the specified range
- B. Apply an additional thin topcoat to blend the thickness transition
- C. Accept the beams if adhesion testing in the thick areas exceeds 2000 psi
- D. Accept the beams because the over-thickness is localized

**Answer:** A

Explanation: Exceeding the maximum specified DFT can produce solvent entrapment, mud-cracking, or reduced flexibility. SSPC-PA 2 and most bridge specifications require that over-thickness be corrected by removal and re-application within the specified range before the members leave the shop.

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### Question: 1283

During a pre-application meeting, the contractor submits a product data sheet for an alternate primer. The data sheet indicates acceptable compatibility with the proposed intermediate coat, but the approved coating schedule names a different primer by manufacturer and product line. What is the proper QA/QC response?

- A. Require formal approval of the substitution before use on the structure
- B. Accept the alternate primer if its nominal dry film thickness is equivalent

- C. Accept the alternate primer because compatibility is indicated on the data sheet
- D. Require use of the alternate primer only on inaccessible steel members

**Answer:** A

Explanation: Product compatibility alone does not authorize a change to the specified coating system. A substitution may affect system qualification, warranty, VOC compliance, anticipated service life, surface-preparation requirements, recoat windows, and owner acceptance. The contractor must submit the proposed alternate through the contract's established approval process, and the owner or authorized design authority must formally approve the change before application.

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**Question: 1284**

Which statement correctly describes the relationship between wet-film thickness measurement frequency and dry-film thickness acceptance under typical bridge-coating specifications?

- A. A single WFT reading per bay is adequate because DFT measurement will catch any deficiency
- B. WFT readings are optional once the applicator has demonstrated consistent technique
- C. WFT must be measured at a frequency sufficient to ensure that the subsequent DFT will meet SSPC-PA 2 criteria
- D. WFT gages need not be verified because they are only used for process control

**Answer:** C

Explanation: Wet-film thickness is a process-control tool used to guide the applicator so that the final dry-film thickness will satisfy the statistical acceptance criteria of

SSPC-PA 2. Insufficient WFT measurement frequency increases the probability that large areas will later fail DFT evaluation and require costly remediation.

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### Question: 1285

Prior to abrasive blast cleaning a weathered steel bridge structure, the inspector notes heavy oil and grease contamination on several gusset plates. According to SSPC-SP 1, what is the appropriate procedure for addressing this contamination?

- A. Remove the visible oil and grease using solvent cleaning methods before proceeding with any mechanical preparation.
- B. Use power wire brushing to physically scrub the grease away prior to conducting the abrasive blasting.
- C. Abrasive blast the areas directly, as the blasting process will completely remove the oil and grease.
- D. Apply a coat of penetrating epoxy primer directly over the contamination to lock it into the substrate.

**Answer:** A

Explanation: Solvent cleaning is a mandatory prerequisite to all other surface preparation methods. Mechanical methods like abrasive blasting or power tooling will only drive the oil and grease deeper into the microscopic valleys of the surface profile, permanently compromising the adhesion of the applied coating system.

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### Question: 1286

When performing an overcoat application on a bridge with an existing intact alkyd system, what is the primary risk associated with applying a high-build, high-stress epoxy coating?

- A. The existing alkyd coating will rapidly absorb the active solvent from the epoxy, causing the entire structural system to become permanently tacky.
- B. The epoxy coating will completely fail to cure due to the presence of reactive unreacted oxidizers slowly migrating from the aged alkyd film surface.
- C. The epoxy coating may act as a sacrificial anode, leading to accelerated and severe corrosion of the steel substrate beneath the intact alkyd layer.
- D. The epoxy solvent and curing stresses can cause the existing alkyd system to lift, curl, or entirely detach from the substrate due to high shrinkage.

**Answer:** D

Explanation: Alkyd coatings are single-component paints that cure by oxidation and generally possess relatively low cohesive and adhesive strength as they age and become brittle. High-build epoxy coatings contain strong solvents and undergo significant internal shrinkage stress as they cross-link and cure. When an epoxy is applied directly over an aged alkyd, the strong solvents can bite into the alkyd film, and the subsequent high curing stresses exert tremendous pulling force on the old coating. This dynamic frequently exceeds the residual adhesive strength of the alkyd, causing the entire coating system to lift, curl, crack, or detach catastrophically from the bridge steel.

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### Question: 1287

Which statement correctly describes the authority limitations of a third-party Level 2 Bridge Coatings Inspector engaged by the owner?

- A. The inspector may unilaterally revise acceptance criteria to accommodate

production schedules

- B.** The inspector possesses inherent contractual stop-work authority over the painting contractor
- C.** The inspector lacks direct contractual authority to stop the contractor's work and must report nonconformances to the owner or designated representative for action
- D.** The inspector may order changes to the project specification without owner approval

**Answer: C**

Explanation: A third-party inspector's contract is with the owner, not the contractor. Consequently the inspector has no direct contractual power to stop work. The proper course is to document the nonconformance and notify the owner or the owner's authorized representative, who then exercises contractual remedies.

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### **Question: 1288**

A gauge used for DFT inspection is suspected of drift because it reads 145  $\mu\text{m}$  on a verified 125  $\mu\text{m}$  shim. What is the most appropriate action before continuing measurements?

- A.** Recheck the gauge against verified shims and adjust if permitted
- B.** Ignore the error if the same operator used it previously
- C.** Accept the gauge if the coating is expected to be thick
- D.** Increase the acceptance limit to match the gauge reading

**Answer: A**

Explanation: Gauge verification against known thickness standards is necessary before use, especially when readings appear inconsistent. If the instrument does not

agree with the shim, it should be checked, cleaned, and adjusted according to the manufacturer's instructions. Continuing with an unverified gauge can invalidate all inspection results.

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### Question: 1289

Soluble-salt testing after blast cleaning shows sulfate levels of  $25 \mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$ . Project limits are  $17 \mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2$  for sulfates. Which cleaning method is most effective for reducing the contamination?

- A. Power-tool abrading with non-woven abrasive pads
- B. Additional dry abrasive blasting with finer media
- C. High-pressure fresh-water washing followed by re-testing
- D. Solvent wiping with mineral spirits and clean rags

**Answer:** C

Explanation: Sulfates and other ionic salts are water-soluble. High-pressure water washing dissolves and flushes the contaminants from the surface and from within pits. Dry mechanical methods do not remove soluble salts; solvent cleaning is ineffective against inorganic ions. Re-testing after drying confirms that the specified limit has been achieved.

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### Question: 1290

A fall-arrest system used by an inspector on a bridge consists of a full-body harness, a shock-absorbing lanyard, and a fixed anchor point. The free-fall distance is 6 ft and the deceleration distance is 3.5 ft. What minimum clearance below the working surface must be confirmed before the system is used?

- A. Twice the free-fall distance to account for swing-fall
- B. The sum of free-fall distance, deceleration distance, harness stretch, and a safety margin of at least 3 ft
- C. The height of the anchor point above the working surface
- D. 6 ft plus the length of the lanyard

**Answer: B**

Explanation: Total fall clearance is calculated by adding free-fall distance, deceleration distance of the energy absorber, harness stretch or D-ring shift, and a residual safety margin (typically 3 ft) to ensure the worker does not strike a lower level or obstruction. Omitting any component of the calculation leaves the system potentially inadequate.

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### Question: 1291

A bridge contractor has removed deteriorated coating that may contain lead. Abrasive debris, paint chips, used solvent wipes, and contaminated PPE are generated within containment. What is the most appropriate waste-management principle?

- A. Dispose of debris in ordinary municipal waste after confirming that it is dry and bagged
- B. Combine all wastes to simplify disposal because bridge debris is regulated as construction waste
- C. Characterize, segregate, contain, label, and dispose of waste under applicable requirements
- D. Release spent abrasive to the ground after visual inspection confirms no visible paint chips

**Answer: C**

Explanation: Coating-removal debris may contain lead or other hazardous constituents, and its management must follow applicable environmental, occupational, transportation, and owner requirements. Proper practice includes controlling releases, collecting and segregating waste streams as necessary, conducting required characterization, using compatible containers, labeling materials, maintaining records, and sending waste to authorized disposal or treatment facilities. Dryness or lack of visible chips does not establish that the waste is nonhazardous.

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**Question: 1292**

During final acceptance of a bridge coating system the owner's QA inspector discovers that several DFT area averages fall below the specified minimum. The contractor claims the individual spot readings were within the 80 percent allowance of SSPC-PA 2. What is the correct interpretation?

- A. The area averages may be as low as 80 percent of the specified minimum
- B. Any reading within 20 percent of the specified range is acceptable
- C. Only the overall project average needs to meet the specification
- D. Individual gage readings may be low, but both the spot averages and the area averages must meet the full specified minimum; the 80 percent allowance applies only to individual spots relative to the minimum

**Answer: D**

Explanation: SSPC-PA 2 permits an individual spot measurement to be as low as 80 percent of the specified minimum thickness, but the average of the five spot

measurements that constitute an area measurement must equal or exceed the full specified minimum. Area averages below the minimum constitute nonconformance regardless of individual spot values.

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### Question: 1293

In the context of applying a multi-coat system to a steel bridge girder, what specifically dictates the boundaries of a recoat window?

- A. The precise physical dimensions of the structural area that an applicator can safely spray in one hour
- B. The allowable time span during which the mixed coating material must be sprayed before it solidifies in the pot
- C. The measured range of ambient humidity under which the solvent is permitted to evaporate from the wet film
- D. The specific timeframe spanning from the earliest point a coat can accept a topcoat to the latest point it can be overcoated without surface roughening

**Answer:** D

Explanation: A recoat window is a critical timing parameter provided by the coating manufacturer. The lower boundary (minimum recoat interval) is the point at which the initial coat has cured sufficiently, allowing solvents to escape and the film to bear the weight and solvents of the next coat without wrinkling or lifting. The upper boundary (maximum recoat interval) is the absolute time limit beyond which the coating becomes too hard and cross-linked for the subsequent coat to achieve a reliable chemical bond, requiring mechanical abrasion if exceeded.

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### Question: 1294

Dust contamination assessment after blast cleaning is performed by pressing clear adhesive tape onto the surface and examining it against a white background.

Moderate dust is visible. The specification references ISO 8502-3 Class 2. What is the inspector's determination?

- A. Reject the surface because Class 2 permits only very light dust; moderate dust corresponds to a higher (less clean) class and requires additional cleaning
- B. Proceed after a solvent wipe
- C. Accept the surface because any dust is permissible after vacuuming
- D. Accept the surface if the coating manufacturer approves

**Answer:** A

Explanation: ISO 8502-3 Class 2 allows only very light dust quantity and particle size. Visible moderate dust exceeds Class 2 and must be removed by vacuuming or other approved methods before coating.

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### Question: 1295

A coating shows tiny round cavities that appear during application and remain after curing, but the substrate is otherwise clean and dry. What is the most likely defect?

- A. Overspray caused by improper spray distance.
- B. Pinholes caused only by excessive DFT.
- C. Fisheyes or craters caused by surface contamination or low-surface-energy contamination.
- D. Blisters caused by trapped moisture under the coating.

**Answer: C**

Explanation: Craters and fisheyes are typically associated with surface contamination such as oil, silicone, or other low-surface-energy materials that repel the coating. These defects are usually visible as circular disruptions in the film. The inspector should investigate cleanliness, contamination sources, and compatibility before repair.

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**Question: 1296**

During inspection of a containment system, the crew has placed spent abrasive and removed coating material in an open area accessible to the public. What is the most serious compliance issue?

- A. The waste management arrangement fails to prevent environmental release and unauthorized access
- B. The waste is too dry to be handled safely
- C. The storage area is too close to the inspection forms
- D. The containment material has too much color contrast

**Answer: A**

Explanation: Hazardous and contaminated waste must be controlled so the public cannot access it and the environment is protected from release. Open storage creates risks from wind, rain, traffic, and human contact, especially when lead-containing coating debris may be present. Proper waste management requires secure, controlled storage and disposal procedures.

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### Question: 1297

Final inspection records for a bridge project state that “all test results were satisfactory” without attaching or summarizing the actual numerical data, instrument identifications, or acceptance criteria used. What is the primary deficiency?

- A. A summary statement is adequate for final records
- B. Detailed data are required only in daily reports
- C. The deficiency is cured by the inspector’s signature on the final form
- D. The permanent file lacks the objective evidence needed for independent verification of conformity

**Answer: D**

Explanation: Final inspection records serve as the definitive, stand-alone evidence that the completed work meets all specified requirements. A generic satisfactory statement provides no measurable data, no instrument traceability, and no explicit comparison against acceptance criteria. Without those elements the record cannot support future audits, warranty claims, or forensic evaluation of coating performance.

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### Question: 1298

During final-acceptance inspection, the Level 2 inspector must verify that all corrective actions have been effective. Which evidence is required?

- A. Visual appearance of the structure without reference to measurement data
- B. Closed NCRs containing root-cause statements, descriptions of corrective actions taken, and quantitative re-inspection results demonstrating that the repaired areas

now meet the original acceptance criteria

C. Payment records showing that retainage has been released

D. Contractor's assertion that all defects have been corrected

**Answer: B**

Explanation: Effectiveness of corrective action is demonstrated only by objective evidence. Closed NCRs that document the root cause, the actions implemented, and successful quantitative re-inspection against the original criteria provide the necessary assurance that the coating system as accepted fully complies with project requirements.

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**Question: 1299**

A contractor proposes to use a single set of DFT gauges for both ferrous and non-ferrous substrates without re-verification. What is the Level 2 inspector's required response?

A. Accept manufacturer's generic accuracy statement as sufficient

B. Approve the practice to save time

C. Require that accuracy be verified on standards appropriate to each substrate type before measurements are taken on that substrate

D. Allow the gauges to be used on non-ferrous substrates after zeroing on bare aluminum

**Answer: C**

Explanation: Magnetic and eddy-current instruments respond differently to ferrous and non-ferrous substrates. Verification must be performed on reference standards that match the magnetic or conductive properties of the actual substrate being

measured.

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### Question: 1300

An inspection checklist for continuous process monitoring on a bridge project requires real-time comparison of measured values against acceptance criteria. When DFT spot measurements on a critical member fall below 80 percent of the specified minimum, which immediate action must the checklist enforce?

- A. Continue application and average the low readings with higher readings from adjacent areas
- B. Stop further coating application on the affected member, mark the nonconforming area, initiate an NCR, and require corrective recoating followed by re-measurement before any subsequent coat is applied
- C. Accept the low readings if the area average still meets the minimum
- D. Increase the target DFT for the next coat to compensate for the shortfall

**Answer: B**

Explanation: Real-time comparison against acceptance criteria triggers immediate stop-work when a spot falls below the 80 percent threshold. Marking the area, issuing an NCR, performing corrective recoating, and re-measuring restore the surface to the specified thickness before subsequent coats are applied, thereby preserving the integrity of the coating system.

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