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References:

2006 IBC Chapters 17 and 19
 WABO Standard 1701, 4th Edition
 Seattle DPD Director’s Rule 35-96
 Kansas City Special Inspection Manual

MyBuildingPermit.com
SPECIAL INSPECTIONS MANUAL

The purpose of this Special Inspection Manual is to establish the minimum inspection and testing requirements for special inspections as required by Chapter 17 of the International Building Code. Particular emphasis is given to the duties and responsibilities of the registered special inspector and the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) building inspector.

A. TYPES OF SPECIAL INSPECTIONS- CATEGORIES

1. Fabricators
2. Steel Construction
3. Concrete Construction
4. Masonry
5. Lateral Wood
6. Soils
7. Pile Foundations
8. Piers
9. Spray Applied Fire-resistant Materials
10. Mastic & Intumescent Fire-resistant Coatings
11. EIFS (exterior insulation & finish systems)
12. Special Cases
13. Smoke Control

B. DETERMINING TYPES APPLIED TO PROJECT

A Statement of Special Inspections shall be completed by the registered design professional and submitted as part of the plan submittals for projects requiring special inspection. This form shall state which special inspection types are required as determined by the designer. The AHJ plan reviewer will review this for accuracy, and then indicate the appropriate types on the front of the approved set of plans on the Special Inspection Schedule.

C. PRECONSTRUCTION MEETINGS

A preconstruction meeting is required at the beginning of the project prior to the initial placement and inspection of materials requiring inspection. The preconstruction meeting shall be coordinated through the building inspector. The building inspector shall be responsible for facilitating this meeting or make necessary arrangements for one of the other primary parties to do so. Attendance is required by the special inspector and the contractor and may also

require attendance by the engineer of record (EOR), the architect and the plans examiner. Questions regarding AHJ inspection requirements, special inspection requirements, special inspection personnel, protocol and project design requirements will be discussed at this meeting.

Separate preconstruction meetings shall also be held prior to starting shotcrete or post tension concrete construction. Contact the local AHJ building inspector for any additional precon requirements for inspection types listed in section A. For shotcrete procedures see Shotcrete Preconstruction Meeting Agenda (contact AHJ for information). For post tension slab procedures see Post-tension Preconstruction Meeting Agenda (contact AHJ for information).

D. DESIGNATING THE SPECIAL INSPECTION AGENCY

The Statement of Special Inspections required in section B will indicate the agency designated to perform special inspections and tests. In the event that there is a subsequent change to a different agency, the owner shall submit to the AHJ, another statement naming the new agency, and the reason for the change.

E. SPECIAL INSPECTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Special Inspector: IBC Section 1704 specifies “the special inspector shall be a qualified person who shall demonstrate competence, to the satisfaction of the building official, for inspection of the particular type of construction or operation requiring special inspection.” Special inspectors shall be certified by the Washington Association of Building Officials (WABO) for the particular type of inspection they are performing.

Placement Inspector (assistant): An employee of an agency, certified by WABO as a placement inspector, and is assigned to perform field concrete testing and concrete placement inspection for **non-complex structures**. This includes placement of concrete into elements such as footings, walls, slab-on-grade and slabs on metal deck, drilled piers, caissons and tilt-up walls in which the reinforcing steel (and other embedded structural elements such as anchor bolts, deck welding, welded studs and expansion anchors) has been previously inspected by a WABO Reinforced Concrete Inspector. Placement inspector tasks do not include independent monitoring of high strength concrete 6,000 psi or greater, or complex structures such as post-tension decks, reinforced concrete decks, special moment resisting concrete frames or other structures deemed to be complex by the building official unless under direct supervision of a WABO Reinforced Concrete Inspector. Placement Inspectors may also perform batch plant inspection.

Field Testing Technicians are not registered by WABO, but must possess

an unexpired ACI Concrete Field Testing Technician-Grade 1 certification. Field Technicians may perform and record the results of basic concrete field tests on projects where such work is required, if approved by the building inspector. A field testing technician shall operate at all times under the on-site supervision of a special inspector registered for Reinforced Concrete or Reinforced Concrete and Prestressed Concrete. If more than one field testing technician is to be used on a project, it must be approved by the building inspector.

F. FIELD INSPECTIONS

AHJ building inspectors are encouraged to personally meet special inspectors on site whenever inspections take place, in order to verify credentials, exchange contact information, oversee that work is being properly inspected and recorded, and generally work together if needed to address specific issues of the project.

Note: Special inspections are in addition to AHJ required inspections and as such the contractor shall submit requests for AHJ inspections at each stage or placement of the work.

Verification of Credentials. AHJ building inspectors shall confirm the special inspector's qualifications by requesting to see their WABO certification card and photo ID. If the AHJ inspector is unable to make direct contact with the special inspector on site, the general contractor is highly encouraged to obtain a photocopy of the certification card (front and backside) and provide this to the AHJ inspector at the next site visit. For large projects, the contractor shall obtain photocopies of certification cards of all special inspectors anticipated to be on site during the duration of the project, and make these available to the AHJ inspector as needed.

Special inspections performed by non-WABO certified inspectors will not be approved.

On projects involving **welding**, the building inspector will be responsible for verifying each welder is WABO certified by requesting to see both their WABO card and photo ID. The special inspector for welding may also perform this verification if he/she has the opportunity.

Building inspector level of inspection. AHJ building inspectors are expected to perform substantial inspections on all concrete and masonry construction, including forms, reinforcement, PT and shotcrete setups, CMU, etc. The presence of special inspectors shall not preclude AHJ inspectors from evaluating the quality of the actual work. On large projects, however, where a positive track record has been established with special inspection personnel on inspections of a repetitive nature, the AHJ inspector may, at his/her own discretion, reduce the

level of scrutinization done by the AHJ. This does not alleviate the AHJ inspector from the responsibility of oversight of the special inspection process nor from doing general evaluations of the physical work being performed. In any case, the AHJ inspector shall ensure that all types and phases of work within a project are covered by appropriate inspections, whether personally or by special inspection.

In the event that the AHJ inspector becomes aware of deficiencies in the performance of the special inspector, the AHJ inspector shall address the deficiencies with the special inspector in an attempt to correct the situation. If the special inspector does not make the appropriate adjustments to the satisfaction of the AHJ inspector, the AHJ inspector will notify the contractor and the special inspection agency that the individual in question will no longer be allowed to perform inspections on any projects within that jurisdiction.

G. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL INSPECTORS

The general contractor shall ensure that up to date copies of the AHJ reviewed plans, specifications and shop drawings are provided to the special inspector prior to the start of the affected work.

It is the special inspector's responsibility to review the AHJ reviewed plans thoroughly and sufficiently in advance of construction to establish that adequate information is available to conduct the required inspections and tests. All errors and/or omissions in the reviewed plans that create any form of uncertainty or ambiguity shall be resolved through the architect or engineer of record.

The contractor is responsible for notifying the special inspection agency when the work is ready for inspection. A minimum of 24-hours notice shall be provided so that the special inspector has time to inspect the work prior to concealment. The contractor shall provide access to and means for safe and proper inspection of the work. It is the contractor's responsibility to verify that all work requiring special inspections is inspected and/or tested prior to concealment.

Special inspectors shall perform inspections and/or tests of the work for conformance with the AHJ reviewed plans, specifications, shop drawings and applicable provisions of the International Building Code. Special inspectors, like AHJ building inspectors, shall use **only AHJ approved plans** and details when performing inspections. Significant revisions to the approved plans will be required to be submitted to the Building Department for review, and must be approved prior to the work being approved on site.

Discrepancies in the work being performed shall be brought to the immediate attention of the contractor for correction. If the discrepancies are not corrected, the discrepancies shall be brought to the attention of the building inspector and to the registered design professional in responsible charge prior to the completion

of that phase of the work. In the event that the contractor continues to perform work that the special inspector knows to be non-conforming, that inspector will contact the AHJ inspector immediately to inform him/her of the situation, and to ask direction as to what course of action to take.

After each inspection, the special inspector shall give the contractor a daily inspection report. The special inspector shall also furnish these reports to the AHJ building inspector, and to the registered design professional in responsible charge. Reports shall indicate what work was inspected and whether it was in conformance to approved construction documents.

The general contractor shall maintain a designated file for the special inspector's daily reports. This file shall be located in a conspicuous place in the project trailer/office to allow review by AHJ inspectors. The file shall be kept up-to-date.

Final Report. When the work requiring special inspections is completed and all nonconforming items have been resolved, the general contractor shall notify the special inspector of record to submit a Final Special Inspections' Report to the AHJ, engineer and/or architect of record, and the general contractor. It is the responsibility of the Special Inspection Agency to verify that all construction under the assigned responsibility of the Agency has been inspected and approved prior to completing the final report. A Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued until the final report has been reviewed and approved by the AHJ.

REINFORCED CONCRETE (PLACEMENT, TESTING, BOLTS, REINFORCING STEEL)

Placement of Reinforced Concrete; IBC Table 1704.4, (Item 4,6 & 7) Section 1905

A special inspector shall be on-site during the placement of reinforced concrete. The inspector shall provide a continuous inspection of the conveying, depositing, and consolidation of concrete, for conformance with the AHJ reviewed plans, specifications and Chapter 19 of the IBC. The special inspector shall observe placement procedures for evidence of segregation, possible cold joints, displacement of reinforcing or forms, and proper support of embedded items, anchor bolts, etc. When the point of deposit of concrete cannot be observed by the individual monitoring the discharge from trucks or the batch plant, additional personnel shall be provided.

Concrete delivery tickets shall be checked to verify that the class of concrete ordered is being delivered and conforms to project plans, specifications and/or code requirements.

Testing of Reinforced Concrete; IBC Table 1704.4 (Item 5), Section 1905.6.

For each class of concrete placed each day, the special inspector shall obtain a sample for strength tests at the frequency stated in Section 1905.6.2 of the IBC or AHJ reviewed specifications. A strength test shall be the average of the strengths of two cylinders, made from the same sample of concrete, laboratory cured, and tested at 28 days. Additional cylinders shall be cast if any changes in the mix consistency are noted or when directed by the architect or EOR.

Concrete test cylinders shall be cast, stored and tested in accordance with Chapter 19 of the IBC. The size of the cylinders shall be specified by the engineer of record in the construction documents. If the strength test of cylinders falls below the specified value of $f'c$ by more than 500 psi, the special inspections agency shall notify the general contractor immediately so remedial action can be taken in accordance with Section 1905.6.5 of the IBC.

Slump, air-content, and temperature tests shall be conducted when strength specimens are made, or at the option of the inspector, as often as necessary for control checks. All other concrete testing shall be conducted as stated in the project specification and per ASTM Standards.

Bolts Installed in Concrete; IBC Table 1704.4 (Item 3) and Section 1912.

An inspection is required prior to and during the placement of concrete around bolts. The special inspector shall verify that the bolt size, location and embedment length are in conformance with the AHJ reviewed plans, specifications and shop drawings.

Placement of Reinforcing Steel; IBC Table 1704.4 (Item 1), Sections 1907 & 1915.4.

Prior to the closing of forms or the delivery of concrete to the job site, the special inspector shall verify that the reinforcing steel is of correct size and grade and ensure that the proper spacing, clearances, splice lengths and embedded items have been provided. All reinforcing steel shall be in place prior to the placement of concrete and be secured against displacement.

Post-tensioned Concrete; IBC Table 1704.4 (Item 8)

Prior to the placement of concrete, the special inspector shall verify that the rebar and tendons have the proper chair heights, tendon profiles, clearances, and steel anchorage as detailed in the AHJ reviewed plans, specifications and shop drawings.

The special inspector shall be present during the entire placement and stressing operations. The special inspector shall calibrate or review current calibration data on the proposed stressing equipment and verify that the concrete meets the minimum required compressive strength prior to post-tensioning. For more detailed requirements contact AHJ for information.

Shotcrete: IBC Table 1704.4, (Item 4,6 & 7) Section 1905, 1913

A special inspector shall be on-site during the placement of shotcrete used for permanent construction elements. Contact the AHJ for requirements or placing shotcrete for temporary shoring. The inspector shall provide a continuous inspection of the placing, and consolidation of concrete, for conformance with the AHJ reviewed plans, specifications and Chapter 19 of the IBC. The special inspector shall observe placement procedures for evidence of segregation, proper joints, displacement of reinforcing or forms, and proper support of embedded items, anchor bolts, etc. The special inspector will also observe nozzle-men prequalification test panels as well as evaluating cores. When the point of deposit of concrete cannot be observed by the individual monitoring the discharge from trucks or the batch plant, additional personnel shall be provided.

Concrete delivery tickets shall be checked to verify that the class of concrete ordered is being delivered and conforms to project plans, specifications and/or code requirements. For more detailed requirements contact AHJ for information.

SOILS, EXCAVATION, FILLING, DRILLED PIERS, PILINGS

Verification of Soils: IBC Section 1704.7 and Chapter 18

The sub grade supporting the footings of buildings or structures shall be inspected immediately prior to the placement of reinforced concrete. The special inspector (the geotechnical engineer) shall observe and test all footing excavations to verify conformance with AHJ reviewed plans and/or geotechnical engineer's report. The foundation shall be of proper size and depth and free of any loose, deleterious or foreign material.

Where unsuitable bearing conditions are observed, the geotechnical engineer of record and project engineer of record shall be notified immediately so that remedial procedures can be established.

Excavation and Filling; IBC Sections 1704.7, 1803, 3304.

During the placement of engineered structural fill, the geotechnical engineer shall provide sufficient observation to verify that the preparation of the natural ground and placement of compacted fill is being performed in accordance with the geotechnical engineer's recommendations. The geotechnical engineer shall

monitor the placement of each lift of engineered structural fill supporting the foundation of any structure.

The geotechnical engineer shall monitor and test all fill to determine whether the type of material, moisture content and degree of compaction are within the recommended limits set forth by the geotechnical engineer of record.

Drilled Piers and Piles; IBC Sections 1704.8-9, 1802.2.4 and 1807-11.

A geotechnical engineer shall be on-site during the construction of all piers, piles (including pin piles) and pressure-injected footings. Work shall be in accordance with the AHJ reviewed drawings and as specified by the geotechnical engineer of record. For cast in place concrete piles and piers, a special inspector certified for Reinforced Concrete shall also monitor the installation of reinforcing steel, and the placement and testing of the concrete.

Earth Retaining Structures (Retaining Walls), IBC Section 1610, 1622.4.2, 1704.13, 1802, 1803, and 2304.11.7.

A slope retention system designed to resist active earth pressure shall have special inspections. The special inspector shall perform the necessary inspections and tests to ensure the system is installed per the AHJ reviewed plans and specifications. For more detailed requirements contact AHJ for information.

Earth retaining structures (modular, stacked stone, etc.) shall be installed in accordance with plans and specifications prepared by a registered design professional in accordance with the geotechnical exploration and results of the global stability analysis.

STRUCTURAL STEEL

(WELDING, HIGH STRENGTH BOLTING, STEEL FRAME)
INSPECTION OF FABRICATOR, SPRAYED FIRE RESISTANT MATERIAL
AND INTUMESCENT PAINT

Field Welding of Structural Steel; IBC Section 1704.3, 2204.1.

Special inspections are required for the welding of structural members or connections for compliance with the AHJ reviewed plans, shop drawings, specifications and Chapter 22 of the IBC. The special inspector shall provide a continuous inspection of the structural welding unless the requirements of Table 1704.3 Item 5 and/or Section 1704.3 (Items 2.1-2.5) are satisfied, thus allowing periodic inspections. For periodic inspection, the special inspector shall check

qualifications of welders at the start of work and then make final inspection of all welds for compliance prior to completion of welding.

The special inspector shall inspect the equipment, material and technique being employed and verify that the welding is performed by certified welders qualified in the procedure being used. A visual inspection of the completed work shall be made to ensure proper type, size, length and quality of the welds.

Field Bolting of Structural Steel; IBC Section 1704.3.3, 2204.2

Structural steel joints using A325 high-strength bolts, A490 heat-treated high-strength bolts or equivalent fasteners shall have special inspections. The special inspector shall monitor the prequalification, installation and tightening of bolted connections in accordance with the AHJ reviewed plans and Table 1704.3 (Items 1 and 2).

When bolted connections require full pretension, the special inspector shall prequalify the pretensioning method and verify that the specified procedure was used to achieve the design tension. A tension calibrator shall be provided, at the job site, to verify fastener assemblies, train installation crews, and calibrate wrenches (if calibrated wrench method is used). The AHJ recommends a meeting between AHJ inspector, the special inspector and the steel erector to establish the procedures to be used as required prior to any erection especially when full pretension is specified.

Bolts in connections identified as not being slip critical not subject to direct tension need not be inspected for bolt tension. The special inspector does not need to be present during the entire installation and tightening operation provided that the bolts are installed in properly aligned holes and tightened to the snug-tight condition. Bolts required to be tightened only to a snug-tight condition shall be clearly identified on the reviewed drawings.

Steel Frame Inspection; IBC Section 1704.3, Table 1704.3 (Items 3 and 6), Chapter 22.

The special inspector shall perform an inspection of the structural steel frame to verify compliance with the details shown on the AHJ reviewed plans and shop drawings, such as bracing, stiffening, member size and location, and proper application of joint details at each connection.

Inspection of Fabricator; IBC Section 1704.2, and Chapter 22.

The following organizations are locally recognized as being qualified to certify fabricators. Contact the AHJ for confirmation. See also MyBuildingPermit.com policy statement regarding approved fabricator.

- American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC),
- International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS),
- Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB),
- Steel Joist Institute (SJI).

Structural steel, bar joists and metal buildings fabricated on the premises of a facility/plant not certified by a nationally recognized organization shall have in-plant special inspections as follows:

The special inspector shall inspect the work, during fabrication, for compliance with the AHJ reviewed plans, shop drawings, specifications and Chapter 22 of the IBC. Each member shall be inspected and approved by the special inspector prior to shipment. It is the responsibility of the fabricator to notify the special inspections agency and have the reviewed plans on-site for the inspection. The general contractor shall coordinate this inspection. Daily reports indicating the members inspected shall be available on the site where the steel is being installed for review by the Building Inspector.

Spray-Applied Fire Resistant Materials; IBC Section 1704.10 & 1704.11.

When spray-applied fire resistant materials are provided for the fire-resistive protection of structural steel members, special inspections are required for conformance to the manufacturer's instructions per 1704.10. When mastic and intumescent fire-resistant coatings are applied to structural steel members, special inspections are required for conformance to the manufacturer's instructions per 1704.11.

Surface conditions shall be inspected prior to the application. Minimum substrate ambient temperature shall be verified before and after application.

The special inspector shall inspect the fireproofing in accordance with IBC 1704.10 or 1704.11 as applicable, and the AHJ reviewed plans and specifications. The thickness and density of the fireproofing shall not be less than the requirements of the listing of the fire-resistive assembly. The cohesive/adhesive bond strength shall be tested as required for the appropriate application.

Just prior to concealment, a complete visual inspection of the fireproofed members shall be conducted. The special inspector shall verify that the sprayed fire resistant material has no voids, spalls, and delamination or that no material has been scraped or knocked off during construction.

STRUCTURAL MASONRY

The special inspector shall provide the inspection and testing of structural masonry for conformance with the AHJ reviewed plans, specifications and Section 1704.5 and 1708.1 of the IBC.

The special inspector shall provide a continuous inspection of the handling, storage preparation and placement of all elements involved in structural masonry construction. During cold weather construction, the special inspector shall verify that the provisions of IBC Section 2104.3 are being observed.

Mortar and grout shall be property mixed using the specified material proportions per the mix design. The method of measuring shall be such that the material proportions are controlled.

For empirically designed masonry, glass unit masonry, and masonry veneer in essential facilities, or engineered masonry in nonessential facilities the minimum special inspection program shall comply with IBC Table 1704.5.1.

For engineered masonry in essential facilities the minimum special inspection program shall comply with IBC Table 1704.5.3.

SEISMIC RESISTANCE

The special inspections for seismic resistance are in addition to those required in Section 1704 when required in Sections 1705, 1707, 1708 and 1709. The engineer-of-record shall identify the seismic-force-resisting systems and other designated seismic systems in the structure.

Steel. Continuous inspection of welding in accordance with Section 1707.2 and AWS D1.1 is required for steel and is the same as in Table 1704.3, Item 5.

Structural wood. Special inspections in accordance with Section 1707.3 to ensure continuity of load path with the seismic-force-resisting system. Particular care should be given to the nailing of diaphragms and shear walls. Also of particular importance is the connection of drag struts or collectors to the shear walls and the proper installation and tightening of hold-down bolts in shear walls.

Exception: Fastening of wood sheathing used for wood shear walls, shear panels and diaphragms where the fasteners spacing are more than 4" on center.

Cold-formed steel framing. Special inspections in accordance with Section 1707.4 to ensure continuity of load path within the seismic-force-resisting system.

Storage racks and access floors. Periodic inspections in accordance with Section 1707.6 required during the anchorage of access floors and storage racks 8' or greater in height in Seismic Design Categories D, E or F.

Architectural components. Special inspection in accordance with Section 1707.7 of architectural components in Seismic Design Categories D, E or F.

Mechanical and electrical components. Special inspection in accordance with Section 1707.8 for components that must function in post earthquake conditions such as emergency electrical systems or for anchorage of mechanical equipment, piping, and ducting using or carrying flammable or hazardous material.

Designated Seismic System Verifications. Special inspection in accordance with Section 1707.9 and 1708.5 and verify that the label, anchorage or mounting conforms to the certificate of compliance.

Seismic Isolation Systems. Periodic special inspection is required during the fabrication and installation of isolator units and energy dissipation devices that are part of the seismic isolation system.

EXTERIOR INSULATION AND FINISH SYSTEMS (EIFS)

Special inspection for EIFS systems shall be based on manufacturer's installation instructions. Critical areas necessary for adequate EIFS performance are proper installation of waterproofing membrane and installation of flashings at windows, doors, joints, eaves, corners and penetrations (IBC Section 1704.12).

Exceptions:

1. Special inspections shall not be required for EIFS applications installed over a water-resistive barrier with a means of draining moisture to the exterior.
2. Special inspections shall not be required for EIFS applications installed over masonry or concrete walls.

SMOKE CONTROL SYSTEMS

Special Inspection of smoke-control systems (IBC Section 1704.14, Section 909.3).

Although this inspection is related to mechanical systems rather than structural or architectural systems, it is required because the mechanical ductwork and signaling devices are likely to be concealed during the building construction and the ductwork must be leakage tested prior to concealment. The design submission accompanying the construction documents shall clearly detail procedures and methods to be used and the items subject to such inspections and tests.

The final performance test shall be coordinated with the final occupancy inspection and also witnessed by the AHJ building and/or mechanical and/or fire inspector. Contact the AHJ for specific process and inspection requirements.

Smoke control systems installed for the following purposes are subject to the requirements of IBC Section 909 and require special inspection:

- A covered mall building (IBC 402.9).
- An atrium (IBC 404.4).
- An underground building (IBC 405.5).
- A Group I-3 windowless building (IBC 408.8).
- A smokeproof enclosure (IBC 403.13, 405.8.2, 909.20, 1019.1.8).
- A stage (IBC 410.3.7.2).
- Smoke-protected assembly seating (IBC 1025.6.2.1).

The special inspector shall verify compliance to the sections noted above and IBC 909, and to the design documents. The test scope shall be in accordance with IBC Section 1704.14.1:

- During erection of ductwork and prior to concealment for the purpose of leakage testing and recording of device location.
- Prior to occupancy and after sufficient completion for the purposes of pressure difference testing, flow measurements and detection and control verification.

The special inspection agency for smoke control shall have expertise in fire-protection engineering, mechanical engineering and certification as air balancers (IBC Section 1704.14.2).

H. SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

Special inspections for residential applications shall generally follow the same guidelines as for commercial projects. Typical categories may include

requirements for soils, site drainage, pilings, high strength concrete or epoxy bolting. The AHJ approved plans will indicate those categories requiring special inspections. As with commercial construction, residential structures will not receive a certificate of occupancy until all required inspections have been completed and the final report is furnished to the AHJ.

I. STRUCTURAL OBSERVATION when required by Section 1709, shall be “the visual observation of the structural system by a design professional for general conformance to the approved construction documents.” At the conclusion of the work included in the permit, the structural observer shall submit to the building official a written statement that the site visits have been made and identify any reported deficiencies which, to the best of the structural observer’s knowledge, have not been resolved.

J. SPECIAL CASES Special inspections may be required by the building official for work that is unusual or nontypical in nature. See IBC Section 1704.13 for examples.