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AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TESTING AND MATERIALS
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Standard Specification for Straight-Beam Ultrasonic Examination of Plain and Clad Steel Plates for Special Applications¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation A 578/A578M; 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.

1. Scope

1.1 This specification² covers the procedure and acceptance standards for straight-beam, pulse-echo, ultrasonic examination of rolled carbon and alloy plain and clad steel plates, 3/8 in. [10 mm] in thickness and over, for special applications. The method will detect internal discontinuities parallel to the rolled surfaces. Three levels of acceptance standards are provided. Supplementary requirements are provided for examination of clad plate and for alternative procedures.

1.2 Individuals performing examinations in accordance with this specification shall be qualified and certified in accordance with the requirements of the latest edition of ASNT SNT-TC-1A or an equivalent accepted standard. An equivalent standard is one which covers the qualification and certification of ultrasonic nondestructive examination candidates and which is acceptable to the purchaser.

1.3 The values stated in either inch-pound units or SI units are to be regarded separately as standard. Within the text, the SI units are shown in brackets. The values stated in each system are not exact equivalents; therefore, each system must be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in nonconformance with the specification.

1.4 *This standard does not purport to address all of 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.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

A 263 Specification for Corrosion-Resisting Chromium Steel-Clad Plate, Sheet, and Strip³

A 264 Specification for Stainless Chromium-Nickel Steel-

Clad Plate, Sheet, and Strip³

A 265 Specification for Nickel and Nickel-Base Alloy-Clad Steel Plate³

2.2 ANSI Standard:

B 46.1 Surface Texture⁴

2.3 ASNT Standard:

SNT-TC-1A⁵

3. Ordering Information

3.1 The inquiry and order shall indicate the following:

3.1.1 Acceptance level requirements (Sections 7, 8, and 9). Acceptance Level B shall apply unless otherwise agreed to by purchaser and manufacturer.

3.1.2 Any additions to the provisions of this specification as prescribed in 5.2, 13.1, and Section 10.

3.1.3 Supplementary requirements, if any.

4. Apparatus

4.1 The amplitude linearity shall be checked by positioning the transducer over the depth resolution notch in the IIW or similar block so that the signal from the notch is approximately 30 % of the screen height, and the signal from one of the back surfaces is approximately 60 % of the screen height (two times the height of the signal from the notch). A curve is then plotted showing the deviations from the above established 2:1 ratio that occurs as the amplitude of the signal from the notch is raised in increments of one scale division until the back reflection signal reaches full scale, and then is lowered in increments of one scale division until the notch signal reaches one scale division. At each increment the ratio of the two signals is determined. The ratios are plotted on the graph at the position corresponding to the larger signal. Between the limits of 20 and 80 % of the screen height, the ratio shall be within 10 % of 2:1. Instrument settings used during inspection shall not cause variation outside the 10 % limits established above.

4.2 The transducer shall be 1 or 1 1/8 in. [25 or 30 mm] in diameter or 1 in. [25 mm] square.

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee A-1 on Steel, Stainless Steel, and Related Alloys and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee A01.11 on Steel Plates for Boilers and Pressure Vessels.

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² For ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code applications, see related Specification SA-578/SA-578M in Section II of that Code.

³ Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 01.03.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute, 11 W. 42nd St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10036.

⁵ Available from American Society for Nondestructive Testing, 1711 Arlington Plaza, Columbus, OH 43228.

4.3 Other search units may be used for evaluating and pinpointing indications.

5. Procedure

5.1 Perform the inspection in an area free of operations that interfere with proper performance of the test.

5.2 Unless otherwise specified, make the ultrasonic examination on either major surface of the plate.

5.3 The plate surface shall be sufficiently clean and smooth to maintain a first reflection from the opposite side of the plate at least 50 % of full scale during scanning. This may involve suitable means of scale removal at the manufacturer's option. Condition local rough surfaces by grinding. Restore any specified identification which is removed when grinding to achieve proper surface smoothness.

5.4 Perform the test by one of the following methods: direct contact, immersion, or liquid column coupling. Use a suitable couplant such as water, soluble oil, or glycerin. As a result of the test by this method, the surface of plates may be expected to have a residue of oil or rust or both.

5.5 A nominal test frequency of 2¼ MHz is recommended. When testing plates less than ¾ in. [20 mm] thick a frequency of 5 MHz may be necessary. Thickness, grain size or microstructure of the material and nature of the equipment or method may require a higher or lower test frequency. Use the transducers at their rated frequency. A clean, easily interpreted trace pattern should be produced during the examination.

5.6 Scanning:

5.6.1 Scanning shall be along continuous perpendicular grid lines on nominal 9-in. [225-mm] centers, or at the option of the manufacturer, shall be along continuous parallel paths, transverse to the major plate axis, on nominal 4-in. [100-mm] centers, or shall be along continuous parallel paths parallel to the major plate axis, on 3-in. [75-mm] or smaller centers. Measure the lines from the center or one corner of the plate with an additional path within 2 in. [50 mm] of all edges of the plate on the searching surface.

5.6.2 Conduct the general scanning with an instrument adjustment that will produce a first reflection from the opposite side of a sound area of the plate from 50 to 90 % of full scale. Minor sensitivity adjustments may be made to accommodate for surface roughness.

5.6.3 When a discontinuity condition is observed during general scanning adjust the instrument to produce a first reflection from the opposite side of a sound area of the plate of 75 ± 5 % of full scale. Maintain this instrument setting during evaluation of the discontinuity condition.

6. Recording

6.1 Record all discontinuities causing complete loss of back reflection.

6.2 For plates ¾ in. [20 mm] thick and over, record all indications with amplitudes equal to or greater than 50 % of the initial back reflection and accompanied by a 50 % loss of back reflection.

NOTE 1—Indications occurring midway between the initial pulse and the first back reflection may cause a second reflection at the location of the first back reflection. When this condition is observed it shall be investigated additionally by use of multiple back reflections.

6.3 Where grid scanning is performed and recordable conditions as in 6.1 and 6.2 are detected along a given grid line, the entire surface area of the squares adjacent to this indication shall be scanned. Where parallel path scanning is performed and recordable conditions as in 6.1 and 6.2 are detected, the entire surface area of a 9 by 9-in. [225 by 225-mm] square centered on this indication shall be scanned. The true boundaries where these conditions exist shall be established in either method by the following technique: Move the transducer away from the center of the discontinuity until the height of the back reflection and discontinuity indications are equal. Mark the plate at a point equivalent to the center of the transducer. Repeat the operation to establish the boundary.

7. Acceptance Standard—Level A

7.1 Any area where one or more discontinuities produce a continuous total loss of back reflection accompanied by continuous indications on the same plane that cannot be encompassed within a circle whose diameter is 3 in. [75 mm] or ½ of the plate thickness, whichever is greater, is unacceptable.

8. Acceptance Standards—Level B

8.1 Any area where one or more discontinuities produce a continuous total loss of back reflection accompanied by continuous indications on the same plane that cannot be encompassed within a circle whose diameter is 3 in. [75 mm] or ½ of the plate thickness, whichever is greater, is unacceptable.

8.2 In addition, two or more discontinuities smaller than described in 8.1 shall be unacceptable unless separated by a minimum distance equal to the greatest diameter of the larger discontinuity or unless they may be collectively encompassed by the circle described in 8.1.

9. Acceptance Standard—Level C

9.1 Any area where one or more discontinuities produce a continuous total loss of back reflection accompanied by continuous indications on the same plane that cannot be encompassed within a 1-in. [25-mm] diameter circle is unacceptable.

10. Report

10.1 Unless otherwise agreed to by the purchaser and the manufacturer, the manufacturer shall report the following data:

10.1.1 All recordable indications listed in Section 6 on a sketch of the plate with sufficient data to relate the geometry and identity of the sketch to those of the plate.

10.1.2 Test parameters including: Make and model of instrument, test frequency, surface condition, transducer (type and frequency), and couplant.

10.1.3 Date of test.

11. Inspection

11.1 The inspector representing the purchaser shall have access at all times, while work on the contract of the purchaser is being performed, to all parts of the manufacturer's works that concern the ultrasonic testing of the material ordered. The manufacturer shall afford the inspector all reasonable facilities to satisfy him that the material is being furnished in accordance with this specification. All tests and inspections shall be made at the place of manufacture prior to shipment, unless otherwise