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CISC Certification vs. CSA A660 – Which One Do I Specify?

The National Building Code of Canada requires that steel building systems shall be manufactured by companies certified to CSA A660 Certification of Manufacturers of Steel Building Systems. A steel building system (SBS) is defined as “an integrated assembly of manufactured steel primary structural, secondary structural components of any material, and cladding of any material, specifically designed by the manufacturer to support and transfer loads and provide a complete or partial building shell.”

The Canadian Institute of Steel Construction has a Quality Certification Program for the fabricators of steel structures. This program focuses on shop fabrication and is audited by a qualified third party. The CSA A660 certification program focuses on both the fabrication and structural design and is also audited by a qualified third party.

There can be confusion about whether a building is a steel building system or conventional steel building and which program should be specified. There are some SBS manufacturers who out-source the design to a third-party engineering firm. Someone may argue that this building should then be considered conventional construction and fall under the CISC certification program. That is not necessarily the case. Even though an SBS manufacturer may out-source some engineering, that engineering still falls under the quality control procedures of the manufacturer and is subject to independent audits.

Steel Building Systems have similarities with conventional steel construction; however, the single-source responsibility for the manufacture and structural design, extending to outsourced 3rd party design, are clear determinants that CSA-A660 certification is required.

For more information on sheet steel building products, or to obtain other CSSBI publications, contact the CSSBI at the address shown below or visit the web site at www.cssbi.ca