Oct 23rd, 12:00 AM

# Center for Cold-formed Steel Structures

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Tenth International Specialty Conference on Cold-formed Steel Structures
St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A., October 23-24, 1990

# CENTER FOR COLD-FORMED STEEL STRUCTURES

by Albert L. Johnson[1]

## Abstract

The chronology of development of the Center for Cold-Formed Steel Structures and its current status are reviewed. The Center's purpose, functions, organization, and sponsorship are summarized. Support and participation are encouraged.

## The Vision

For many years, Wei-Wen Yu, Curators' Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Missouri-Rolla (UMR), has dreamed about organizing a center which would bring together many aspects of cold-formed steel structures. Dr. Yu's many years of experience in industry, research, consulting, and teaching; his special understanding of the behavior and applications of cold-formed steel members and structures; his authorship of a unique text on cold-formed steel structures (Reference 1); the esteem awarded him by his peers; and his determination have combined to bring his vision to reality.

## Formation of CCFSS

The seeds for formation of the Center for Cold-Formed Steel Structures were planted during the summer and fall of 1988 in several conversations and meetings of interested stakeholders. The concept of the center was introduced at the Ninth International Specialty Conference on Cold-Formed Steel Structures ((Reference 2). The ensuing discussion added value to the concept, and broadened the base of support which was rapidly developing.

With the enthusiasm and additional thoughts prompted by these discussions, the University of Missouri-Rolla, with Dr. Yu and Dr. Joseph E. Minor in the lead, prepared a proposal for initial funding. This proposal was submitted to the Light Construction Subcommittee, Construction Marketing Committee of American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI).

AISI recognized the significance of the proposal, and the potential a center held for all with an interest in cold-formed steel structures -- steel producers, manufacturers of cold-formed products, structural engineering consultants, architects, researchers, building code officials, and both public and private users. Funding was therefore provided to initiate an operational center, to permit further development of the scope of functions, and to broaden the base of financial support.

The Center was formally established on May 1, 1990.

## Purpose of CCFSS

The Center is intended to provide an integrated approach for coordinating and carrying out research, teaching, technical services, and professional activities. Specifically, it unifies these activities at the University of Missouri-Rolla. More broadly, it offers all interested parties a single location for information and identification of resources on cold-formed steel structures, thus enhancing the efforts of others in their engineering, research, educational, and professional activities.

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## Functions of CCFSS

Initially, the functions of the Center are:

Coordinate UMR research on cold-formed steel structures; develop new UMR research projects; coordinate activities with other UMR centers and departments; develop and maintain close liaison with other universities and research organizations; and offer a database for information about ongoing research.

Continue UMR teaching of cold-formed steel structures in regular courses, short courses, and specialty conferences; and assist in curriculum development for other institutions.

Establish a special library on cold-formed steel structures by gathering books, journals, research reports, technical papers, and computer programs -- putting otherwise often hard-to-find and assemble resources in a single location. The nucleus of the library is UMR and Dr. Yu's already extensive collection. In addition, the Center will archive AISI's collection of research reports on AISI sponsored research which started in 1939.

Maintain an awareness of the activities of the many professional, standards writing, and trade association groups involved in some aspect of cold-formed steel structures; coordinating these activities where appropriate.

Issue a biannual newsletter to contain information about the Center and its activities, as well as announcements of specifications in development or published, and a calendar of meetings and conferences. The first issue of the newsletter was published in August 1990 (Reference 3).

## Organization of CCFSS

Initially, the Center is staffed by Dr. Yu as director, and Dr. Roger A. LaBoube, as associate director. Dr. LaBoube brings valuable experience with many years of cold-formed steel structures experience in manufacturing, research, and teaching. Mrs. Anthanett Long has recently joined the Center to provide administrative and secretarial support.

An ad hoc steering committee with representation from UMR and AISI was established for the start-up phase of the Center. An advisory committee to provide counsel to the Center will be established. It will include representation from UMR, sponsors, other universities, and members at large.

## Sponsorship of CCFSS

The first year of Center operations has been underwritten by UMR and AISI. Additional sponsors are being solicited for support for the second year. The planned growth of the Center will provide a solid basis for future years.

Use of the Center's services will grow as awareness of the benefits develops. This, in turn, will prompt expansion of the list of sponsors.

All stakeholders are encouraged to explore the many possible ways they can help the Center grow.

## Conclusions

Establishment of the Center for Cold-Formed Steel Structures at the University of Missouri-Rolla represents a major milestone at the half-century mark in the continued development and improvement of the understanding and application of cold-formed steel structures.

Support, participation, use of services offered, comments, criticism, and questions are encouraged from all who are involved in use of cold-formed steel structures as we enter the second half-century of continuing growth of knowledge.

## References

1. Wei-Wen Yu, Cold-Formed Steel Design, Wiley-Interscience, New York, 1985

2. A. L. Johnson, "Evolving AISI Design Provisions -- An Overview", Proceedings, Ninth International Specialty Conference on Cold-Formed Steel Structures, November 8-9, 1988, University of Missouri-Rolla

3. CCFSS News, Center for Cold-Formed Steel Structures at the University of Missouri-Rolla, Rolla, Missouri, v.1, n.1, August 1990