



# Standards and Certification Training

Module B – Process

B11. Standards Inquiries,  
Interpretations and Cases

# Updates

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<b>9/13/2024</b>	<b>Updated to align to Rev. 19 of Operating Procedures for ASME Codes and Standards Development Committees</b>
<b>12/7/2015</b>	<b>Revised slides 3-7, 9 and 16. Added Slides 8, 14 and 17-19</b>
<b>3/14/2014</b>	<b>First Edition</b>

# Module B Course Outline

- B1. ASME Organizational Structure
- B2. Standards Development: Staff and Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
- B3. Conformity Assessment: Staff and Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
- B4. Initiating and Terminating Standards Projects
- B5. Consensus Process for Standards Development
  - B5a. Project Management
- B6. The Basics of Parliamentary Procedure
- B7. The Appeals Process
- B8. International Standards Development
- B9. ASME Conformity Assessment Programs
- B10. Performance Based Standards
- B11. Standards Inquiries, Interpretations and Cases**



# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this module you will be able to understand:

- What is an Interpretation
- How to submit an inquiry or request for Interpretation online
- The approval process for an Interpretation
- How to search for approved Interpretations online
- What a case is and why they are used
- The approval process for a Case

# COMMITTEE RESPONSE TO AN INQUIRY

- Inquiries can be submitted by anyone.
- The avenues in which a Committee may address an inquiry:
  - Informal Responses
  - Requests for Revision
  - Interpretations
  - Cases

# INTERPRETATION REQUESTS TO ASME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

- How to Submit a Request for Interpretation:
  - Online using the Inquiry Submittal Form at...

<http://cstools.asme.org/Interpretation/InterpretationForm.cfm>

# INTERPRETATION SUBMITTAL FORM 1/3

\* Denotes required field

## 1. Inquirer Information Sample Inquiry Submittals

<b>First Name: *</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>	<b>Last Name: *</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>
<b>Company/Organization: *</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>		
<b>Address 1: *</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>		
<b>Address 2:</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>		
<b>Address 3:</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>		
<b>Country: *</b>	<input style="text-align: right; border-bottom: none; border-right: none; border-left: none; border-top: none; padding-right: 5px;" type="text" value="United States"/> ▼	<b>State: *</b>	<input style="text-align: right; border-bottom: none; border-right: none; border-left: none; border-top: none; padding-right: 5px;" type="text"/> ▼
<b>Town/City: *</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>	<b>Zip/Postal Code: *</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>
<b>Phone:*</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>	<b>Fax:*</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>
<b>Email:*</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>	<b>Confirm Email:*</b>	<input type="text" value="Start typing"/>

# INTERPRETATION SUBMITTAL FORM 2/3

## 2. Request for Interpretation

### Standard Designation:\*

NOTE: To select standard designation, highlight the standard designation and use the double arrow button on the right to move selection over to the "Standard Designation Selected" field. If your question(s) applies(y) to more than one standard, select the most appropriate standard and reference any others in your inquiry.

Start typing to filter

- A112.1.2
- A112.1.3
- A112.1002
- A112.14.1
- A112.14.3
- A112.14.4



Standard Designation Selected:

\*Interpretations are **NOT** issued for the following ASME Standards

- A112.18.6
- A112.19.8M
- A112.20.1
- A112.20.2
- A112.20.3
- A112.21.2M

### Edition/Addenda:\*

Start typing

### Paragraph/Fig./Table No:\*

Enter req. number

### Subject:

Enter brief (1 or 2 word) description

[Download Editing Formula Guide](#)

### Inquiry(ies):\*

Please provide a condensed and precise question, omitting superfluous background information and composed in such a way that a 'yes' or a 'no' reply is acceptable. Please cite the specific paragraph number in your question(s). Question may be subject to modification for clarification.

Note: When entering an equation, place the cursor where you would like to add the formulas. When typing your formulas, they will be displayed as codes but will populate and display correctly when you [click](#) on the preview box on the right. Also note, when entering hard returns, you may see the line starting with "< br >". Proceed in adding text and formulas as this is part of the coding. All coding will convert and be displayed correctly in the preview box to the right.

### Preview of Inquiry(ies)

(Click on the preview box below to display your text and formulas)



# INTERPRETATION SUBMITTAL FORM

## 2/3

### Proposed Reply(ies):

Replies should be in the form of a Yes or No answer with explanation as needed. If entering replies to more than one question, please be sure to number your questions and replies.

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Note: When entering an equation, place the cursor where you would like to add the formulas. When typing your formulas, they will be displayed as codes but will populate and display correctly when you [click](#) on the preview box on the right. Also note, when entering hard returns, you may see the line starting with "< br >". Proceed in adding text and formulas as this is part of the coding. All coding will convert and be displayed correctly in the preview box to the right.

$\Sigma$	$\sqrt{\quad}$	$\infty$	<	>	$\leq$	$\geq$	$\neq$	$\sqrt[n]{\quad}$	%	$n_i$
$n^\circ$	$e$	$\int$	$\alpha$	$\beta$	$\gamma$	$\delta$	$\epsilon$	$F$	$\zeta$	$\eta$
$\theta$	$\iota$	$\kappa$	$\lambda$	$\mu$	$\nu$	$\xi$	$o$	$\pi$	$\rho$	$\sigma$
$\tau$	$v$	$\phi$	$\chi$	$\psi$	$\omega$	$\partial F_i$	$\Pi$	$\square$	[0]	$n^i$

### Preview of Proposed Reply(ies)

(Click on the preview box below to display your text and formulas)

### Background Info:

Please provide the committee with any background information that will assist the committee in understanding the inquiry.

[Download Editing Formula Guide](#)

Note: When entering an equation, place the cursor where you would like to add the formulas. When typing your formulas, they will be displayed as codes but will populate and display correctly when you [click](#) on the preview box on the right. Also note, when entering hard returns, you may see the line starting with "< br >". Proceed in adding text and formulas as this is part of the coding. All coding will convert and be displayed correctly in the preview box to the right.

### Preview of Background Info

(Click on the preview box below to display your text and formulas)

# INTERPRETATION SUBMITTAL FORM 3/3

## Before Submitting an Inquiry

1. **Search Published Interpretations** - has your question been answered before? Search the ASME Interpretation Database here by clicking on Search Interpretation or using our Quick Search:

Inquiry Subject:

I have searched if my question has already been answered. \*

2. **Consultation** - Consider contacting a subject matter expert. There are many organizations that can be contacted for advice on the topic such as Authorized Inspection Agencies, Notified Bodies and engineering consulting firms.

3. **Consulting Policy** - ASME will only issue interpretations of official ASME codes or standards. Translation, derivative works, or products not created in their entirety by ASME will not be addressed. ASME interpretations apply only to official ASME codes or standards. The scope of an inquiry must be limited to particular requirement in the Standard or Code Case. ASME does not "approve," "certify," "rate," or "endorse" any item, construction, proprietary device, or activity. Additionally, the committees cannot consider consulting type questions such as the following:

- 1) a review of calculations, design drawings, welding qualifications, or descriptions of equipment or parts to determine compliance with the Code or Standard requirements;
- 2) a request for assistance in performing any Code-prescribed functions related to, but not limited to, material selection, designs, calculations, fabrication, inspection, testing, or installation;
- 3) a request seeking the rationale for a requirement in the Standard since these are based upon consideration of technical data and the experience and expertise of the individual committee members.
- 4) a request seeking confirmation where the committee believes the existing words and intent are clear and explicit.

I have acknowledge and read the Consulting Policy. \*

4. **Inquiry Format** - Please note that ASME has a required format for inquiries. You can review sample inquiry submittals here: [Sample Inquiry Submittals](#)

I have reviewed sample inquiry submittals and understand that my inquiry can be rejected if it does not conform to the required format. \*

5. **Explanation of the process** - Inquiries are processed as follows:

- 1) Questions & replies for inquiry submittals that meet the requirements for submittal are processed by the associated committee.
- 2) Inquiries are reviewed by the committee and proceed to a series of ballots.
- 3) Once approved, the interpretation is issued.
- 4) Depending on committee workload and meeting schedule, the evaluation, approval and issuance of an interpretation may take in excess of 6 months.
- 5) Whether or not an interpretation is issued, ASME will respond to your request when the action is complete. Inquirers can check the status of their inquiry by contacting ASME Staff.

I have read the interpretation process. \*

\*\*\*If your inquiry does not meet the requirements for submittal as stated above, it may not be accepted by the committee for review.

For all matters other than requests for interpretation, please go to [www.asme.org](http://www.asme.org)

# INTERPRETATIONS SUBMITTED TO ASME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

- Staff Secretary reviews the inquiry request.
- Staff Secretary may contact inquirer if additional information is needed or the question needs to be reformatted.
- Staff Secretary notifies the standards committee officers of the inquiry, if it requires further standards committee action.
- The Chair assigns the inquiry to a group or the whole committee for further review.

# TYPES OF INTERPRETATIONS

## 1) Interpretation

- Clarifies existing requirements where there is ambiguous wording in the standard.

## 2) Intent Interpretation

- To resolve conflicting or incorrect wording in the standard.
- Revision to the standard supporting the interpretation approved before the interpretation may be issued.
- Shall not revise existing requirements or establish new requirements

# INTERPRETATION APPROVAL

- Approval Options:
  - Consensus Committee
  - Cognizant Subcommittee
  - A Special Committee
- Balance Requirement

# INTERPRETATION APPROVAL PROCESS CONSENSUS COMMITTEE or SUBCOMMITTEE

- Vote Options:
  - Objection, No Objection, Not Voting
- Meeting Vote
  - No objection by two thirds of those present needed for approval, if quorum is present provided greater than 50% of the total consensus body has voted no objection.
- Ballot Vote
  - First Consideration Ballot - no objections, no additional revisions. No objection by 2/3 of the voting members, provided greater than 50% of the total consensus body has voted no objection
  - Recirculation Ballot – no objection by 2/3 of the voting members, provided greater than 50% of the total consensus body has voted no objection.

# INTERPRETATION APPROVAL PROCESS SPECIAL COMMITTEE

- Minimum 5 members, including Staff Secretary
- Must be members of the Consensus Committee and/or a subordinate group, with no member interest category having a majority.
- Appointed by Chair of Standards Committee or Cognizant Subcommittee
- Voting Options: Objection, No Objection, and Not Voting.
- All members including Staff Secretary must vote no objection for interpretation to be approved.
- Unresolvable objections should be referred to the consensus committee or Cognizant Subcommittee.

# INTERPRETATION GUIDANCE

## Interpretations should...

- Be written in such a way that a 'yes' or a 'no' reply is acceptable.
- If the initial request is not written in this format, the Staff Secretary can go back to the inquirer and ask for them to revise their questions.
- The committee can rewrite the inquirer's question if it helps to clarify the question and aids in the committee's ability to provide a 'yes' or 'no' response.



# INTERPRETATION GUIDANCE

## Interpretations shall NOT...

- Include explanations describing why the standard is written the way it is, except they may include rationale, if it was approved through the consensus process as part of the standards action.
- Approve, certify, rate or endorse any item, construction, proprietary device or activity.
- Restate requirements in such a way that opens the door to further confusion.
- State or imply something that cannot be supported by the published standard requirements. Exception: intent interpretations with an approved revision.
- Provide consulting advice.
- ASME shall not issue interpretations of translations, derivative works, or other products not created in their entirety by ASME.

# ISSUED INTERPRETATIONS

- Interpretations are issued on ASME letterhead and signed by ASME Staff. The interpretation letter:
  - Provides the question, committee reply, and the Code/Standard applicability.
  - Informs the reader of their right to appeal if they are not satisfied with the committee's response.
- Issued interpretations are accessible via database on C&S Connect at:
  - <http://cstools.asme.org/Interpretation/SearchInterpretation.cfm>
- Existing interpretations may be revised if there is an identified need, such as correction or clarification.
- All future interpretations will only be published online.

# INTERPRETATION SEARCH FORM 1/3

### Search for Issued Interpretations

Standard Designation:

Record #:

Interpretation #:

Edition/Addenda:

Subject:

Date of Issuance:  to:

Keyword:

OR

### Check the status of your Pending Interpretation

Record #:\*

#### APPLICABILITY OF INTERPRETATIONS

Each interpretation applies to the edition and addenda or supplement listed for that inquiry. When an Edition date is not stated, each interpretation applies either to the latest Edition or Addenda at the time of issuance of the interpretation. Many of the requirements on which the interpretations have been made are revised in later editions, addenda or supplements. Where such revisions have been made, the interpretations may no longer be applicable to the revised requirement. ASME procedures provide for reconsideration of these interpretations when or if additional information is available which might affect any interpretation. Further, persons aggrieved by any interpretation may appeal to the cognizant ASME committee or subcommittee. ASME does not "approve", "certify", "rate" or "endorse" any item, construction, proprietary device, or activity

#### NOTE:

1. The database contains interpretations to ASME codes and standards issued after December 19, 2013, as well as most historical interpretations to the A17, Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, B30, B31, B16, etc. The database is a work in progress and will be updated to include historical interpretations for all ASME codes and Standards, where applicable.
2. Due to display limitations, published historical interpretations do not in all cases reflect the actual approved interpretation. Wherein interpretations contain equations, formulas and/or sketches, consult the printed version of the interpretation. If you have any questions or comments, please email them to [cstools@asme.org](mailto:cstools@asme.org).

# INTERPRETATION SEARCH FORM 2/3

Search Results: 503 Record(s) Found

Reset Selection Select All

Show 10 entries

Search:

STANDARD	RECORD#	INTERPRETATION#	EDITION	PARA FIG TABLE#	SUBJECT	DATE OF ISSUANCE	SELECT INTERPRETATION TO BE DISPLAYED
B31.1		1-17			Size Limitations for Couplings in paragraph 104.3.1.	08/18/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-16			Paragraph 136.4.2; Visual Examination	07/28/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-15			Paragraph 123.2.8; Nonmetallic Pipe	07/28/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-14			Paragraph 104.3.1 (D.2.2); Reinforcement Area in Branch Connections	07/22/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-13			Welds Connecting Systems Covered by Different Codes	07/08/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-12			Rules for Soldered and Brazed Joints	06/17/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-11			Table 132; Postweld Heat Treatment	06/17/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-10			Paragraph 127.6; Qualification Records	05/19/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-9			Materials for Use in Compression Type Fittings of Proprietary Design	05/19/80	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31.1		1-8			Table 136.4; Mandatory Minimum Nondestructive Examinations	05/06/80	<input type="checkbox"/>

Showing 1 to 10 of 503 entries

Previous 1 2 3 4 5 ... 51 Next

Display Selected Interpretations

# INTERPRETATION SEARCH FORM 3/3

## Interpretation Detail

Print to PDF

**Standard Designation:** B31.1

**Edition/Addenda:**

**Para./Fig./Table No:**

**Subject Description:** Size Limitations for Couplings in paragraph 104.3.1.

**Date Issued:** 08/18/1980

**Record Number:**

**Interpretation Number :** 1-17

**Question(s) and Reply(ies):** Question (a) Does paragraph 104.3.1(C.2) of B31.1 prohibit the use of 2 1/2 in. and 3 in. couplings? (b) Does paragraph 104.3.1(C.2) prohibit constructions not in accordance with the 1/4 diameter rule (such as NPS 3/4 and NPS 1 couplings installed on a 2 in. header pipe) when supporting calculations in accordance with paragraph 104.3.1(D) or 104.3.1(E) indicate that sufficient (reinforcement) material has been provided?

Reply: It is the opinion of the Committee that the size limitation for couplings used as branch connections is adequately stated in paragraph 104.3.1(B.2), which limits their size to NPS 3. Constructions using couplings or half couplings as branch connections which are larger than NPS 2 (not to exceed NPS 3 per above), and not within the 1/4 diameter rule, are required to meet the reinforcement requirements of paragraph 104.3.1(D) or 104.3.2(E).

# CASES

- To permit early implementation of a revision based on an urgent need.
- Providing alternative requirements.
- To gain experience with alternative or potential additional requirements prior to incorporation directly into the standard.
- To permit the use of a new material or process.
- Are intended to be incorporated into the standard at a later date.

# CASES

## Characteristics

- “Inquiry and reply” format
- Conditions of use clearly stated
- Approval by
  - Consensus Committee
  - Supervisory Board
  - Not ANSI Approved
- Effective after Supervisory Board approval and completion of ASME public review
- Not automatically included in standards requirements
- Conformity Assessment Department must be notified

# CASES

## Caution

Should not be used by standard users unless accepted by purchasers and/or authorities in jurisdiction where component will be installed.



# MODULE SUMMARY

- The method of submitting an inquiry is online at...  
<http://cstools.asme.org/Interpretation/InterpretationForm.cfm>
- Interpretations clarify or correct ambiguous wording in the standard.
- Intent Interpretations clarify or correct conflicting and incorrect wording in the standard but results in a revision to the standard.

# MODULE SUMMARY

- Interpretations are approved by the Consensus Committee, Cognizant Subcommittee or Special Committee.
- Cases are used to provide alternatives to existing requirements, or to allow early and urgent implementation of a revised requirement.
- Cases require Consensus Committee and Supervisory Board approval, but do not require ANSI approval.

# REFERENCES

- Standards and Certification Operations Guide  
<http://cstools.asme.org/csconnect/pdf/CommitteeFiles/23216.pdf>
- Standards Committee Procedures, Supervisory Board Procedures and Committee Handbooks  
<http://cstools.asme.org/csconnect/CommitteePages.cfm?Committee=A01000000&Action=7609>
- Codes and Standards Policy 33 (Interpretations)  
<http://cstools.asme.org/csconnect/CommitteePages.cfm?Committee=A01000000&Action=7609>