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RTS specializes in providing weld inspections, mappings, and condition assessment services to the tower & pole industries



What is a WPS?

A welding procedure specification (WPS) is a document providing the required welding variables for a specific application to assure repeatability by trained welders. A WPS is similar to a 'recipe' on how to make a quality weld that is code compliant.

Per AWS D1.1, Structural Welding Code, developing a welding procedure requires the following:

- The weld procedure must precede the welder qualification
- The weld procedure must precede the production or field welding
- A welding procedure is performed to show the compatibility of the following:
 - Base metal(s)
 - Weld filler metal(s)
 - Weld processes
 - Welding technique(s)

There are three general approaches to procedure qualification:

- Prequalified procedures
- Actual procedure qualification testing
- Mock-up tests for special applications

There are numerous procedures which are prequalified in AWS D1.1. This means that a qualification test for the weld procedure is not required. AWS D1.1 prequalified procedures (Figures 3.2 and 3.3) cover various member joints, welding processes, welding positions, weld types, and joint penetrations. Member joints include butt, corner, and T-joints. Welding processes typical to our industry such as shielded metal arc welding (SMAW) and flux cored metal arc welding (FCAW) are addressed. For weld types, AWS D1.1 addresses eleven separate groove welds. Groove preparation such as root opening, root face, bevel radius, groove angle, and joint tolerances are covered.

If your weld procedure is prequalified, you do NOT need a qualification test for the procedure. However, a written WPS is still required to be on file. To be in compliance with AWS D1.1, the welder should have a written WPS for each welding process and joint configuration being used on a project. □



NATE Highlights Remote Tower Access

Video Shines Spotlight on Operating Snow Tracked Vehicles at Remote Tower Locations; Portrays Epic Aerial Footage of the Cascade Mountains.

The National Association of Tower Erectors (NATE) recently released a breathtaking video on the topic of operating snow tracked vehicles to access tower sites in remote locations. The video, the latest to make its debut as part of Volume 2 of the NATE Climber Connection series, is designed to emphasize the exciting opportunities available in the industry for those workers who pursue a career as a tower technician. The video series is an integral component of the Association's workforce development outreach to promote the profession and recruit new workers into the industry.

As the weather turns and snowfall is prevalent in certain regions of the country, the Remote Tower Access video provides a detailed overview on the planning practices, safety protocols and operational procedures associated with utilizing a snow tracked vehicle in difficult terrain environments and during inclement weather situations.

The video also includes real-time conversations between vehicle operators and tower technicians about the hazards that can exist when utilizing snowcat vehicles to access tower sites. Additionally, the video includes drone footage of snow tracked vehicles ascending the Cascade Mountains in Washington State on a snowy day.

"I love this video as it portrays the reality of some of the remote tower sites we work at," said Matt Uhrich, Compliance and Safety Director at Legacy Telecommunications, Inc. in Burley, Washington.

"Seeing a snowcat vehicle ascend a snowy mountaintop is an awesome part of the job and this video reinforces that fact along with providing important planning and operational safety tips," added Mat Johnson from Legacy Telecommunications, Inc. "We are fortunate

to work in such a dynamic profession."

Visit NATE'S Facebook page to watch the Remote Tower Access safety video. NATE encourages tower climbers and all wireless and broadcast industry stakeholders to actively participate in this campaign by posting the Remote Tower Access video on their respective social networking platforms using the hashtag #ClimberConnection. NATE also encourages tower climbers to share their snow tracked vehicle operation and safety tips through social interaction on their organization's Facebook and Twitter pages.

The Climber Connection Volume 2 campaign was developed by the NATE Member Services Committee in conjunction with the NATE Safety & Education Committee and



is designed to provide specific resources and communicate the Association's message directly to the industry's elevated workforce.

To view the entire Climber Connection series visit: <https://www.youtube.com/user/NATEsafety>. Topics include Broadcast Repack, UAS Operations, Riding the Line, Stadium DAS, Dig to Block and Anchor Inspection. □

FirstNet Services Now Available Nationwide

First responders across the nation now have a wireless broadband network to call their own. With all fifty states, two U.S. territories and Washington, D.C. joining FirstNet, public safety has a groundbreaking new choice for their communications that will help them save lives and protect their communities.

“This is a landmark day and monumental achievement for public safety – one that has been years in the making,” said First Responder Network Authority Board Chair Sue Swenson. “There are many who said this network would never happen, but public safety never gave up on their network. Because of their vision and hard fought efforts, I can proudly say that this life-saving network is now a reality across America; FirstNet is going to enhance the safety and security of our first responders and the people they serve.”

Origins

FirstNet is the creation of the nation’s public safety community, who spent years advocating for their own wireless broadband network following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Congress passed legislation to establish the Network in 2012, and for five years, the First Responder Network Authority worked closely with public safety to develop plans for building the network.

The statutory 90-day decision

period for Governors to “opt-in” or “opt-out” of the FirstNet proposed Radio Access Network (RAN) buildout plan concluded last month, and every state has accepted the plan. Similarly, two U.S. territories and Washington, D.C. have chosen the plan while three U.S. territories have until March 12, 2018, to make their decision.

“With every state saying ‘yes’ to the the plan, first responders now have a nationwide interoperable network...” said First Responder Network Authority Chief Executive Officer Mike Poth. “I applaud these governors for their decision and congratulate public safety for its advocacy and partnership throughout the process.”

The network’s public-private partnership with AT&T provides first responders with immediate access to mission-critical capabilities over the network. This includes priority and preemption features that give first responders their own ‘fast lane’ on the public safety network to communicate and share information during emergencies, large events or other situations when commercial networks could become congested.

“As first responders, we face an incredible amount of risk every day. To have a network focused on driving innovative capabilities to improve our safety is game changing,” said Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo.

“This is a day that the fire service have been looking forward to

for a long time,” said Chief Richard Carrizzo of the Southern Platte, MO Fire Protection District. “Not only will this network remedy current communications challenges, but it will also usher in a wave of innovation for public safety and allow us to communicate unthrottled with responders from other agencies, districts, regions, tribes and states.”

2018 and Beyond

The coming year will be a game changer for public safety as FirstNet expands across the nation and more innovative technologies come on line for public safety subscribers.

“Our FirstNet offering will forever change the way first responders communicate,” said Chris Sambar, senior vice president, AT&T – FirstNet. “Securing fifty-three opt-ins is significant for the public safety personnel that this network will serve.”

Activities planned for 2018:

First Responder Network Authority will issue work orders to deploy the RANs in all fifty states, Washington, D.C., and the two opt-in territories in early 2018. This will give AT&T the green light to expand FirstNet’s footprint and deploy Band 14 capacity and coverage throughout the nation, providing first responders with the bandwidth and mission critical connections needed to communicate, share information, and use innovative technologies.

FirstNet will also unlock a new

technology marketplace for public safety, enabling first responders to benefit from advancements in innovation. FirstNet’s first-of-its-kind core infrastructure will give first responders a dedicated, secure, non-commercial network.

“While this is a major achievement for public safety, our job is not finished,” said First Responder Network Authority CEO Poth. “We still have much work to do.”

For more information, visit <https://firstnet.gov/the-governors-decision-media-kit>. □

- FirstNet, December 29, 2017



Check out the Tower of the Month in the January issue of *AGL Magazine*. An attractive Crown Castle monopole in Lynchburg, VA. Photo courtesy of Reese Tower Services.



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