

Diving inspection procedures

For bridges with low water levels of 6 feet or greater, the underwater inspection shall be performed by diving. SCUBA or surface supplied air may be used at the inspector's discretion. The inspection shall be performed using visual/tactile methods (Level 1) of all underwater portions of the substructure to identify scour and structural degradation. Any accumulated marine growth or deposits shall be removed (Level 2) from a minimum of 10% of the surface to evaluate the surface of the substructure. Based on the conditions identified, additional cleaning (Level 2), non-destructive testing or destructive testing (Level 3) may be performed as necessary to assess the structural condition.

All appropriate inspection forms shall be completed. Sounding shall be taken to identify the streambed profile. A sketch of the streambed profile shall be included in the report. Any scour countermeasures shall be identified and evaluated as part of the inspection. When specified, a hydrologic survey of the streambed shall be completed as part of the inspection.

Prior to the inspection, the inspector shall review plans and past inspection reports to familiarize themselves with the site conditions. Any site-specific risk factors that could increase scour or adversely affect the inspection shall be noted on the inspection form.

The inspector(s) shall meet the appropriate qualifications of the National Bridge Inspection Standards. The bridge owner must provide documentation of the inspector qualifications upon request. The inspector(s), inspection date and frequency of inspection shall be noted on the appropriate inspection forms. The inspector shall make the necessary preparations to assure all applicable governmental regulations and safety procedures are followed.