A KID RUNS DOWN THE HALLWAY at school. Suddenly, another kid appears and declares, "Hey! You can't run here." And the retort: "Says who? The law? The school? You? Are you going to take me to jail or something? You can't tell me what to do!"

Says who? Two simple words with deeper implications. So it is too in the design world. Engineers must look at all available information and weigh it, and ultimately use their own judgment to make decisions based on this information. The provider of the information and the process it undergoes are both important. Unfortunately, the process is often misunderstood. Luckily, there are multiple AISC resources that can help provide guidance.

A Wealth of Info

When you pick up your AISC , you hold in your hand a wealth of information concerning structural steel design and construction, as within it are references to many thousands of other pages of information. But do you recognize that some of the contains requirements and some of it contains recommendations? The is a compilation of four segments: the itself (Parts 1-15 and Part 17), the AISC , the RCSC and the AISC . These four segments, though contained in a single volume, each carry different weight and meaning and are produced through different processes.

➤ **The Spec.** The AISC is the highest-level AISC design document. It is created and approved by the AISC Committee on Speci cations through an ANSI-accredited process in which: the committee membership is balanced among relevant interests, formal letter ballots must be cast, a public review is completed and all negative votes must be formally resolved by the Committee. The is held to this high standard because it is ultimately adopted into law by reference, such as in the ( ).

The , it is the best known and most widely used document published by AISC and holds a highly respected position in engineering literature. That said, the AISC is a very different document from the AISC . Like the , it too is approved by a committee: the AISC Committee on Manuals and Textbooks. Changes to it are made by vote of the Committee, but the process is simple major-

tion J3.1, which states, "Use of high-strength bolts shall conform to the provisions of the …except as otherwise provided in this ." It should be noted that the Bolt Spec is adopted except as otherwise noted in the . Though there is an attempt to keep the and the Bolt Spec in synch, discrepancies sometimes creep in. In such cases the AISC provisions govern when the applies.

It is worth noting that the also adopts AWS D1.1 in a similar fashion through the J2 statement "All provisions of AWS D1.1/D1.1M apply under this , with the exception that the provisions of the listed AISC Sections apply under this in lieu of the cited AWS provisions."

➤ **The Code.** The AISC is prepared by the AISC Committee on the Code of Standard Practice. The membership of the AISC Code Committee is balanced by interest but to date, the process has not involved ANSI accreditation. This is expected to change in the 2016 version, which is planned to be ANSI accredited.

The AISC does not address design but rather the most ef cient approach to buying and selling fabricated structural steel. As stated in its scope, "In the absence of speci c instructions to the contrary in the contract documents, the trade practices that are de ned in this shall govern the fabrication and erection of structural steel." As the AISC generally will set the contractual requirements, engineers and contractors should make themselves familiar with its provisions. It is amazing how often disputes arise over issues that are clearly anticipated and addressed by the AISC . A lot of problems can be avoided simply by adhering to its provisions and writing speci c requirements in the contract documents when an alternative approach is needed for a speci c project.

➤ **What about Seismic?** Both the and the make reference to the ANSI/AISC 341-10, the AISC and provide guidance as to its application. Like the , the is approved by the AISC Committee on Speci cations through an ANSI-accredited process. Its sister "Manual"6cu -1237 wises TheTf0.003DTJ0 S10 1 Tf(Both the) Tf0.01-1.278 Td[as to its ap