

Issued APR 1998
Noncurrent NOV 2002
Cancelled MAY 2006

Superseding AMS-S-6090A

Steel Carburizing and Nitriding, Processes for

CANCELLATION NOTICE

This specification has been declared "CANCELLED" by the Aerospace Materials Division, SAE, as of May, 2006 and has been superseded by the specifications listed below. The requirements of the latest issue of the specifications listed below shall be fulfilled whenever reference is made to the cancelled AMS-S-6090. By this action, this document will remain listed in the Numerical Section of the Index of Aerospace Material Specifications, noting that it has been superseded by the specifications listed below.

Cancelled specifications are available from SAE.

Specifications Superseding AMS-S-6090:

AMS 2759/6, Gas Nitriding and Heat Treatment of Low-Alloy Steel Parts

AMS 2759/7, Carburizing and Heat Treatment of Carburizing Grade Steel Parts

AMS 2759/8, Ion Nitriding

AMS 2759/10, Automated Gaseous Nitriding Controlled by Nitriding Potential

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1. SCOPE:

1.1 Processes:

This specification presents requirements for the carburizing and nitriding of carbon and alloy steels to produce the mechanical properties specified by drawings, detail metal specifications, or other applicable specifications (see 6.3).

1.1.1 The heat treatment of parts fabricated from the steels specified shall be in general accordance with the methods described in this specification, and in addition, shall be subject to such control and regulation by competent personnel as may be necessary to produce the properties required.

1.2 Equipment:

The equipment, methods, and processes used shall comply with this specification.

2. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS:

The following publications, of the issue in effect on date of invitation for bids or request for proposal, form a part of this specification to the extent specified herein.

2.1 U.S. Government Publications:

Available from DODSSP, Subscription Services Desk, Building 4D, 700 Robbins Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19111-5094.

MIL-S-6709 Steel, Chrome-Molybdenum Aluminum; Bars, Rods, Billets, and Forging Stock (For Nitriding) (Aircraft Quality)

MIL-H-6875 Heat Treatment of Steels (Aircraft Practice, Process For)

2.2 SAE Publications:

Available from SAE, 400 Commonwealth Drive, Warrendale, PA 15096-0001.

AMS 2755 Nitriding, Molten Salt Bath

AMS 5643 Steel, Corrosion Resistant, Bars, Wire, Forgings, Tubing and Rings, 16Cr - 4.0Ni - 0.30Cb - 4.0Cu, Solution Heat Treated, Precipitation Hardenable

AMS 5659 Steel, Corrosion Resistant, Bars, Wire, Forgings, Rings, and Extrusions, 15Cr - 4.5Ni - 0.30Cb - 3.5Cu, Consumable Electrode Melted, Solution Heat Treated, Precipitation Hardenable

AMS 6475 Steel, Nitriding Grade, Bars, Forgings, and Tubing, 1.1Cr - 3.5Ni - 0.25Mo - 1.25Al (0.21 - 0.26C)

AMS 6485 Steel, Bars and Forgings, 5.0Cr - 1.3Mo - 0.50V (0.38-0.43C)

2.3 ASTM Publications:

Available from ASTM, 100 Barr Harbor Drive, West Conshohocken, PA 19428-2959.

ASTM E18 Rockwell Hardness and Rockwell Superficial Hardness of Metallic Materials

3. EQUIPMENT:

3.1 Furnaces:

Furnace temperature control equipment, quenching and the handling equipment used in heat treatment shall comply with the requirements of Section 3 and paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 of MIL-H-6875.

- 3.1.1 Furnaces used for carburizing shall not alternately be used for nitriding and vice versa. Furnaces used for nitriding shall not be used for other heat treating processes which may contaminate the furnace lining.

4. HEAT TREATMENT PROCEDURE:

4.1 Carburizing:

Carburizing is a process of adding carbon to the surface of steel by heating the parts in contact with suitable carbonaceous solids, liquids, or gases.

- 4.1.1 Any process which will give the required depth and hardness of case may be used. Carburizing and hardening temperatures for commonly used steels are specified in table I. Most carburizing is accomplished by gas carburizing, although salt bath carburizing is particularly effective for distortion control and for case depths less than .010. Pack carburizing is not permitted for aircraft or aerospace gears. Carburizing by this method is influenced by the compound time, and temperature at which the process is carried out. A low carbon carburizing steel will require approximately one hour at a gas carburizing temperature of 1650°F for a 1/64 inch deep effective case depth and approximately 5 hours for a 1/32 inch deep effective case depth. Higher carburizing temperatures will reduce the time.
- 4.1.2 The method of heat treatment of carburized parts depends on the chemical composition of the steel, its grain size, and the requirements for the parts.
- 4.1.2.1 Parts which are gas carburized should be cooled in a controlled atmosphere furnace to a temperature of 900°F, after which they may be air cooled. This treatment leaves the parts in a relatively soft condition and the treatment shown in column C or column E (or both) of table I is necessary to condition the parts for use.

- 4.1.3 Quenching: The parts may be quenched directly from the carburizing furnace thus producing a hard case and a core hardness within the range shown in column D, table I. This treatment produces a coarse grain in some types of steel and may cause excessive distortion of the parts. A fine grained steel usually shows less distortion than a coarse grained steel.
- 4.1.3.1 Core Treatment: The core treatment (column C, table I) refines the grain of the core and hardens both case and core. The core hardness is generally in the range given in column D.

TABLE I. Heat treatments for carburizing steels.

Steel SAE No.	Carburizing temperature °F (a)	Hardening for optimum case properties		Hardening for maximum case hardness	
		Austenitizing temperature for core refinement °F (b)	Core Hardness Rockwell	Austenitizing temperature for case °F	Core Hardness Rockwell
1020	1650-1700	1575-1625	C30-36	1375-1425 ^(c)	B67
4615	1650-1700	1475-1525	C27-43	1425-1475 ^(b)	B95
4620	1650-1700	1475-1525	C34-48	1425-1475 ^(b)	C23
8620	1650-1700	1550-1600	C34-48	1350-1400 ^(b)	C31
9310	1600-1700	1475-1525	C33-41	1350-1400 ^(b)	B95

(a) Carburize to desired depth. Cool in furnace or quench in oil.

(b) Quench in oil maintained at temperature not higher than 150°F.

(c) Quench in water or brine.

- 4.1.3.2 Case Treatment: The case treatment (column E, Table I) refines the grain of the case and hardens it. The approximate core hardness after this treatment is shown in column F, table I. This treatment should be omitted in cases when a higher core strength is desired.
- 4.1.3.3 All carburized parts shall be tempered or stress relieved at a temperature not less than 250°F.
- 4.1.4 Cyanide hardening: The cyanide hardening operation produces a file hard, shallow, and brittle case on low carbon steels. The parts are usually immersed for 30 to 60 minutes in a bath containing sodium cyanide and operating at a temperature of 1400 to 1650°F. This operation will give a case depth approximately 0.010 inch with a hardness about Rc-65 and a negligible dimensional change is caused.

4.2 Nitriding:

Nitriding is a process of surface hardening steel by the formation of nitrides. The use of nitriding is normally limited to steels of selected alloy composition. Commonly nitrided steels include those specified in MIL-S-6709, AMS 6475, AMS 5659, AMS 5643 and AMS 6485. Other alloys such as 4140, 4340 and A286 may be nitrided to provide higher strength and moderate hardness.

4.2.1 Pre-treatment: The pre-treatment of parts to be nitrided shall be in accordance with the engineering drawing. Normally this includes hardening and tempering to develop the desired core properties to improve nitriding response, and to provide dimensional stability.

4.2.2 Surface: Surfaces to be nitrided shall be clean and free of decarburization and all foreign materials.

4.2.3 Process: Nitriding is generally accomplished by subjecting the parts to the action of dissociated ammonia gas at a temperature of 925 to 1050°F. The percent dissociation of ammonia, temperature, and time shall be as necessary to develop the specified nitrided case properties and minimizing the resultant white surface layer of high concentration of nitrides. The double-stage nitriding process may be used to minimize the thickness of the white layer. Its application is limited primarily to the aluminum-containing steels.

4.2.4 Liquid (molten salt bath): The liquid (molten salt bath) nitriding employs the same temperature range as gas nitriding. The ratio of cyanide to cyanate must be controlled to insure proper nitriding. Liquid pressure nitriding may be used employing a flow of anhydrous ammonia through the molten bath which is sealed and maintained under a pressure of 1 to 30 psi.

4.2.4.1 Aerated bath: The aerated bath nitriding in accordance with AMS 2755 provides a nitrided case which is relatively soft, shallow, and ductile for specific applications. Parts nitrided by the aerated bath process are machined to final dimensions before being nitrided.

4.3 All other heat-treating operations required shall be in accordance with MIL-H-6875.

4.4 Case depth:

The case depth of the finished parts shall conform to the requirements specified on the engineering drawing.

4.5 Hardness:

The hardness of the material when tested on the designated area shall be as follows:

Case - Rockwell Superficial 15N, 90 minimum

Core - Rockwell C, 35 maximum