

**PRECAST SEGMENTAL POST-TENSIONED  
CONCRETE BRIDGE COLUMNS FOR SEISMIC  
REGIONS**

**by**

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**June 2007**

**A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of State  
University of New York at Buffalo in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Department of Civil, Structural, and Environmental Engineering**

## **ABSTRACT**

Precast concrete bridge construction has been proved to be an efficient solution in accelerating bridge construction and minimizing traffic disruption. However, due to concerns with the seismic performance of such type of construction, its application in seismic regions is limited. This research presents results of the development of precast segmental post-tensioned concrete bridge columns for use in seismic regions. The developed bridge columns adopted unbonded post-tensioning systems to decrease prestress loss due to strong seismic events. In addition, to increase hysteretic energy dissipation, mild steel energy dissipation bars (ED bars) which are continuous across the segment joints are added to the columns. Moreover, the ED bars are additionally unbonded at the critical joint to avoid premature fracture.

A simplified analytical model for static pushover analysis and a three-dimensional detailed finite element model for cyclic analysis of the proposed bridge columns are developed in this research. In addition, a stiffness degrading hysteretic model is proposed for response-history analysis. With the analytical models, a parametric study is conducted to examine the seismic performance of the proposed columns with different design parameters.

A two-phase experimental program is designed to verify the findings of the analytical study and to address constructability issues of the proposed segmental columns. The first phase focuses on testing of the ED bars at the critical joint. A methodology is proposed to design the additional unbonded length for the bars, taking into account low cycle fatigue of steel and progressive damage of bond. The second phase is testing of seven large scale segmental column specimens. Each specimen has a foundation, four precast column segments with hollow cross sections and a precast cap beam with a total height of 5.7 m (18.7 ft). Four specimens are tested with cyclic loading and three with pseudo-dynamic loading. The test results show that three types of ductile precast segmental columns are successfully developed with different hysteretic characteristics in terms of energy dissipation, lateral strength and residual displacement.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank to my advisor, Professor George C. Lee for his guidance to this research and financial support over the past four years. I learned a great deal from him not only from his knowledge and experiences in civil engineering but also from the wisdom that he gained from his more than four decades of academic career. I also would like to thank to Professor Amjad Aref, Professor Stuart S. Chen and Professor Andre Filiatrault, my Ph.D. committee members, for their advice to this research. The advice from Dr. Methee Chiewanichakorn on developing the analytical models for this research is greatly acknowledged. In addition, I would like to thank to Dr. Il-Sang Ahn for his advice to this research.

I would like to thank to Kuo-Chun Chang, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Civil Engineering of the National Taiwan University, for his advice throughout this research. His support is the key to the success of the experimental study conducted in this research. I also would like to thank to Dr. Jui-Chen Wang for providing valuable information and guidance on developing the new concepts for precast segmental bridge columns for seismic regions. Mr. Ping-Hsiung Wang worked relentlessly throughout the experimental study. Without his effort, the experiment could not have been completed in only one year. Mr. Mu-Sen Tsai also played a significantly role in assisting the experimental study. Thank for their effort.

I must thank to the Federal Highway Administration for financially supporting this research under grant No. DTSH61-98-C-00094. In addition, I would like to thank to the Taiwan's National Center for Research on Earthquake Engineering (NCREE) for funding the experimental study conducted in this research.

At last, I would like to express my deep thank to my parents for their continuous support for all of these years. In addition, I would like to thank to my girlfriend, Ms. Huei-An Chuang for her patience and love over the past years from my Master research to Ph.D. research.

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