



AEROSPACE MATERIAL SPECIFICATION

AMS6381™

REV. K

Issued 1942-12
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Revised 2022-11

Superseding AMS6380J

Steel, Mechanical Tubing
0.95Cr - 0.20Mo (0.38 - 0.43C) (SAE 4140)
(Composition similar to UNS G41400)

RATIONALE

AMS6381K is the result of a Five-Year Review and update of the specification. The revision includes updates in composition testing and reporting (3.1, 3.1.2), revision of test procedures (3.2), prohibition of unauthorized exceptions, adds macrostructure requirements (3.3.1, 8.8) adds information on jominy testing (3.3.3), updates decarburization test methods (3.3.4.4), addresses changes in AMS2301 (4.2.1, 4.4.3), adds a note on surface finish (8.5), and allows prior revisions (8.6).

1. SCOPE

1.1 Form

This specification covers an aircraft-quality, low-alloy steel in the form of mechanical tubing.

1.2 Application

This tubing has been used typically for parts, 0.500 inch (12.70 mm) and under in nominal wall thickness at time of heat treatment requiring a through-hardening steel capable of developing hardness as high as 50 HRC when properly hardened and tempered and also for parts of greater wall thickness but requiring proportionately lower hardness, but usage is not limited to such applications.

2. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

The issue of the following documents in effect on the date of the purchase order forms a part of this specification to the extent specified herein. The supplier may work to a subsequent revision of a document unless a specific document issue is specified. When the referenced document has been cancelled and no superseding document has been specified, the last published issue of that document shall apply.

2.1 SAE Publications

Available from SAE International, 400 Commonwealth Drive, Warrendale, PA 15096-0001, Tel: 877-606-7323 (inside USA and Canada) or +1 724-776-4970 (outside USA), www.sae.org.

AMS2253 Tolerances, Carbon and Alloy Steel Tubing

AMS2259 Chemical Check Analysis Limits, Wrought Low-Alloy and Carbon Steels

AMS2301 Steel Cleanliness, Aircraft Quality, Magnetic Particle Inspection Procedure

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<https://www.sae.org/standards/content/AMS6381K/>

AMS2370	Quality Assurance Sampling and Testing, Carbon and Low-Alloy Steel Wrought Products and Forging Stock
AMS2806	Identification, Bars, Wire, Mechanical Tubing, and Extrusions, Carbon and Alloy Steels and Corrosion- and Heat-Resistant Steels and Alloys
AS1182	Standard Stock Removal Allowance, Aircraft-Quality and Premium Aircraft-Quality Steel Bars and Mechanical Tubing
AS7766	Terms Used in Aerospace Metals Specifications

2.2 ASTM Publications

Available from ASTM International, 100 Barr Harbor Drive, P.O. Box C700, West Conshohocken, PA 19428-2959, Tel: 610-832-9585, www.astm.org.

ASTM A255	Determining Hardenability of Steel
ASTM A370	Mechanical Testing of Steel Products
ASTM A751	Chemical Analysis of Steel Products
ASTM E112	Determining Average Grain Size
ASTM E140	Hardness Conversion Tables for Metals Relationship Among Brinell Hardness, Vickers Hardness, Rockwell Hardness, Superficial Hardness, Knoop Hardness, Scleroscope Hardness, and Leeb Hardness
ASTM E381	Macroetch Testing Steel Bars, Billets, Blooms, and Forgings

2.3 Definitions

Terms used in AMS are defined in AS7766.

3. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Composition

Shall conform to the percentages by weight shown in Table 1, determined in accordance with ASTM A751 or by other analytical methods acceptable to purchaser.

Table 1 – Composition

Element	Min	Max
Carbon	0.38	0.43
Manganese	0.75	1.00
Silicon	0.15	0.35
Phosphorus	--	0.025
Sulfur	--	0.025
Chromium	0.80	1.10
Molybdenum	0.15	0.25
Nickel	--	0.25
Copper	--	0.35

3.1.1 Aluminum, vanadium, and columbium (niobium) are optional grain refining elements and need not be determined or reported unless used to satisfy the average grain size requirements of 3.3.2.2.

3.1.2 Producer may test for any element not listed in Table 1 and include this analysis in the report of 4.4. Reporting of any element not listed in the composition table is not a basis for rejection, unless limits of acceptability are specified by the purchaser.

3.1.3 Check Analysis

Composition variations shall meet the applicable requirements of AMS2259.

3.2 Condition

Cold finished, unless otherwise ordered, having hardness not higher than 25 HRC, or equivalent (see 8.2). Tubing ordered hot finished and annealed or tempered shall have hardness not higher than 99 HRB, or equivalent (see 8.2). Hardness shall be determined in accordance with ASTM A370.

3.3 Properties

Tubing shall conform to the following requirements.

3.3.1 Macrostructure

Visual examination of transverse full cross-sections from blooms or tube rounds (not hollows), etched in hot hydrochloric acid in accordance with ASTM E381, shall show no pipe or cracks. Porosity, segregation, inclusions, and other imperfections shall be no worse than macrographs of ASTM E381 shown in Table 2.

Table 2 - Macrostructure limits

Section Size Square Inches	Section Size Square Centimeters	Macrographs
Up to 36, incl	Up to 232, incl	S2 - R1 - C2
Over 36 to 133, incl	Over 232 to 858, incl	S2 - R2 - C3
Over 133	Over 858	Note 1

Note 1: Limits for larger sizes shall be agreed upon by purchaser and producer.

3.3.1.1 Macrostructure examination is not required for mechanical tubing that is produced directly from ingots or large blooms unless otherwise agreed upon by purchaser and producer (see 8.8).

3.3.1.2 If mechanical tubing is produced directly from ingots or large blooms, transverse sections may be taken from the tubing. Macrostructure standards for such tubes shall be as agreed upon by purchaser and producer (see 8.8).

3.3.2 Average Grain Size

Average grain size shall be determined by either 3.3.2.1 or 3.3.2.2.

3.3.2.1 Shall be ASTM No. 5 or finer, determined in accordance with ASTM E112.

3.3.2.2 The product of a heat shall be considered to have an ASTM No. 5 or finer austenitic grain size if one or more of the following are determined by heat analysis (see 8.4):

3.3.2.2.1 A total aluminum content of 0.020 to 0.050%.

3.3.2.2.2 An acid soluble aluminum content of 0.015 to 0.050%.

3.3.2.2.3 A vanadium content of 0.02 to 0.08%.

3.3.2.2.4 A columbium content of 0.02 to 0.05%.

3.3.3 Hardenability of Each Heat

Shall be J 6/16 inch (9.5 mm) = 50 HRC minimum, determined on the standard end-quench test specimen in accordance with ASTM A255, except that the steel shall be normalized at 1700 °F ± 10 °F (927 °C ± 6 °C) and the test specimen austenitized at 1550 °F ± 10 °F (843 °C ± 6 °C). Cast specimens do not need to be normalized.