A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINING CAPABILITY OF THE CURTAIN WALL SYSTEM FOR THE ATTACHED CLEANING ROBOT

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ABSTRACT: Recently, the curtain wall systems are widely used for the exterior walls of the buildings. In this regard, many studies on their cleaning and maintenance methods are being carried out. Now in order to review on the possibility of the attachment of the cleaning robot to the existing buildings, it is unavoidable for us to check the structural stability of the major members of the existing curtain walls.

From the preliminary reviews on the design documents and the shop drawings of the buildings, the constructed curtain wall is mainly made of aluminum and steel, which are categorized in to continuous beam, two-span continuous beam and simple beam according to the connected type of the curtain wall mullion members.

In conclusion, on the mullion of simple beam, the stress increasing ratio is proportionate to that of the robot load being attached. However, on the mullion of continuous beam, it is insignificant even with the robot load up to 20kN.

That is, the robot load within the limit of 20kN on the existing curtain walls shall be acceptable without further reinforcement being added.

Keywords: Cleaning Robot, Building, Wind Load, Curtain Wall, Mullion, Anchor

1. INTRODUCTION
1.1 THE PURPOSE
Recently, the curtain wall systems are widely adopted for the exterior walls of most of mid-tier office buildings and the multi-purpose buildings thanks to their light weight and convenience in the construction.

So the studies have been carried out on the cleaning and maintenance of the walls by installing the manual, the semi-manual and the automatic robot systems.

Therefore, the study aims to review on the affordable weight to be borne by the curtain walls of the existing buildings in order to estimate the possibility of the application of the cleaning robots to them. That is, it aims to predict the maximum robot load to be attached to the wall by analyzing stress and displacement being caused on mullion and fastening anchors among the curtain members.

1.2 SCOPES AND METHODS
Among other exterior walls, this study focuses on the review of the bearing strength of structure of the exterior curtain wall which is considered as a weak structure and should be cleaned frequently.

The research methods employed are collection and analysis on a number of structural calculations and shop drawings of the curtain walls applied to the buildings. In succession, we zero in on structural system, standards of application, design loads, stress condition of the major members and deflection limits as the critical analysis items. Finally we cut out the weakest member of the curtain walls, based on which we predict the maximum cleaning robot load to be attached.

2. PRELIMINARY RESEARCH ON THE CURTAIN WALLS
2.1 TYPES OF CURTAIN WALL
The curtain walls are classified into Fig.1 according to materials, structural systems and construction methods.
Fig. 1 Classification of the curtain wall
Among other curtain walls, we select out mullion systems as the research objects. Because they are predominant in the markets.

### 2.2 CURTAIN WALL LOAD ANALYSIS

![Fig.2 Curtain wall detail](image)

The load on the curtain walls is as per the Fig.2, showing that it is flowing from dead load, wind load to glass, mullion, fastener anchor and slab or beam.

However, we consider mullion and anchor as main objects of the load analysis and exclude size and thickness (too diverse), brittleness material (too weak in terms of load resistance).

Table 1: Case studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Design standards</th>
<th>Structural analysis program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Multi-purpose building</td>
<td>161m</td>
<td>Aluminum</td>
<td>AAMA</td>
<td>Midas gen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>96m</td>
<td>Aluminum</td>
<td>AAMA</td>
<td>Midas gen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>77m</td>
<td>(Steel Plate)*</td>
<td>AAMA ASD89</td>
<td>Midas gen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>46m</td>
<td>Aluminum</td>
<td>AAMA ASD89</td>
<td>Midas gen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>19m</td>
<td>Steel</td>
<td>ASD89</td>
<td>Midas gen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*:Further reinforcing material, Fig. 5 Reference)

### 2.3 CURTAIN WALL DESIGN CRITERIA

We studied on the curtain walls base on the allowable stress design as per AAMA(American Aluminum Manufacturers Associations) and AISC(American Institute of Steel Construction).

The design load is composed of dead load and wind load which are specified in Korean Building Code.

### 3. THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS ON THE CURTAIN WALL OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS

#### 3.1 CASE STUDIES

The cases which are selected by our study are as follows. Purpose, height, material, design standards, structural analyzing programs are considered as criteria in the selection process.

### Table 2: Design loads and members research results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Wind load (kN/㎡)</th>
<th>Mullion</th>
<th>Anchor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Typical 0.3</td>
<td>Positive: 3.6, Negative: 2.5</td>
<td>Connection Type: Simple Beam</td>
<td>Mullion Type: Beam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Typical 0.3</td>
<td>Positive: 2.1, Negative: 2.2</td>
<td>Connection Type: Continuous Beam</td>
<td>Mullion Type: Beam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Typical 0.4</td>
<td>Positive: 0.4, Negative: 1.3</td>
<td>Connection Type: Continuous Beam</td>
<td>Mullion Type: Beam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Typical 0.45</td>
<td>Positive: 0.9, Negative: 1.1</td>
<td>Connection Type: Two-span continuous Beam</td>
<td>Mullion Type: Beam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the research on design load, mullion member connection type and section and anchor are as follows.

Design zone is divided into typical zone and corner zone by referring to wind pressure coefficients for the design of exterior wall materials of Korean Building Code.

![Fig. 3 Design zone](image)

Though, wind load is variable according to Table 2, but the weakest data is applied to all curtain wall design zone and we assume that the same members are used for typical zone or corner zone in case of mullion and anchor.

The exterior of curtain wall is presumed as glass and we calculated the dead load by adding the self weight of glass and metal fitting.

In general, wind load is working as positive pressure to the front side of the buildings and negative pressure, to the rear. Therefore, the positive internal pressure increase causes the rear side pressure rise and the negative internal pressure increase, the front side pressure rise.

![Fig. 4 Wind load according to internal pressure](image)

Mullion members are structurally analyzed into continuous beam, two-span continuous beam and simple beam according to the connected type of the curtain wall mullion members.

In addition, most of curtain walls are made of aluminum material and according to Fig. 5 (b), the member stress shortage of aluminum section is reinforced by the steel plate.

![Fig. 5 Mullion cross section](image)

The anchors, supporting curtain walls and frames, are classified into T Head Bolt and Set Anchor which are mostly burial types as Fig. 6.

![Fig. 6 Anchor system](image)

### 3.2 STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS ON CURTAIN WALL MEMBERS

The structural analysis of dead load and wind load on curtain walls is as per Table 3.
Table 3 Structural analysis result of the members (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Mullion stress ratio (actual stress/allowable stress)</th>
<th>Mullion deflection ratio (actual deflection/allowable deflection)</th>
<th>Anchor stress ratio (actual stress/allowable stress)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Typical</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Typical</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Typical</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Typical</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Typical</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The stress ratio of mullion members are construed to be ranged between 32~89% and the typical zone has the extra stress over corner zone because the same kinds of members are applied for the sections and the mullion members’ interval to typical zone and corner zone are same regardless of design zone.

The mullion members deflection ratios are ranged between 30~60% and mullion member of the existing building are designed in consideration of stress rather than deflection as deflection ratio has more allowable of stress compared to the stress ratio of the mullion members.

Anchor is analyzed to have the stress ratio of 25~89%.

The stress of T Head Bolt is analyzed to have more allowance over Set Anchor because various anchor sizes such as M10, M12, M16, M20 are designed for set anchor according to reaction to loads. However, for T Head Bolt the minimum size, M16 only which has higher stress against reaction.

4. THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS WITH ROBOT LOAD

4.1 THE MOMENT AND REACTION CHANGES OF CURTAIN WALL LOADED WITH THE ROBOT

(1) Moment changes of the members caused by the robot
As Fig. 7 shows, the self weight of cleaning robot causes torsion moment because cleaning robot is detached from the mullion members. So it causes bending moment, reaction and displacement on mullion members.
We are able to predict the stress changes after cleaning robot being installed by comparing Table. 4 and Table.5 of the position causing the maximum stress in the curtain wall design of the existing building.

4.2 THE SURUCTURAL ANALYSIS ON THE CURTAIN WALL MEMBERS WITH ROBOT LOAD

(1) Mullion’s stress ratio review

The below Fig.10 is showing the result of mullion member stress ratio caused by the cleaning robot self weight of 0~20kN and in the distance of 1.0m between the cleaning robot and the mullion member.

It shows that like A, D type, the members’ central stresses increase with the robot load on the curtain wall, because the maximum stress occurs in the center. However, the stress increases in B, C, E type remain rather small because the maximum stress occurs in the edge part of continuous beam and two-span continuous beam, not in the center part where the additional robot load is borne and there is allowable stress.

![Fig.10 The correlation between robot self weight increase and mullion stress ratio](image-url)

(2) Anchor’s stress ratio review

The below Fig.11 is showing the result of anchor member stress ratio caused by cleaning robot self weight of 0~20kN and in the distance of 1.0m between the cleaning robot and the mullion member.

![Fig.11 Anchor's stress ratio](image-url)
With cleaning robot load on, if wind load is positive pressure, the maximum stress occurs on the lower part anchor, if it being negative pressure, on the upper part of it. Fig.11 is showing that the stress ratio of anchor is increasing in A type, decreasing in B, C, D, E type corner and increasing slightly in B, C, D, E type typical. Meanwhile, anchor stress ratio remains stable at 15% against robot load up to 20kN.

![Image of Fig.11](image.png)

**Fig.11** The correlation between robot self weight increase and anchor stress ratio

### 5. CONCLUSION

We have estimated the additional load (robot system) to be borne by the exterior curtain wall of the existing building by reviewing the designing documents and the construction status judging from the point of the structural stability.

1. The constructed curtain wall is mainly made of aluminum and steel, which are categorized in to continuous beam, two-span continuous beam and simple beam according to the connected type of the curtain wall mullion members.
2. The mullion allowance is 10% and anchor allowance, 15% with cleaning robot self weight of 20kN, distance of 1.0m between curtain wall mullion center and cleaning robot center.
3. The mullion stress increase is insignificant with cleaning robot being loaded to the curtain wall of continuous beam and two-span continuous beam.
4. With cleaning robot load under 20kN, the anchor stress increases but it remains within the allowable stress.

Therefore, robot load is expected not to cause problems. The cleaning robot attachment will be possibly borne by the existing curtain wall but the additional research on the attachment methods of the cleaning robot to the members and various exterior walls should follow shortly.

The work presented in this paper was funded by BMRC(Building-Façade Maintenance Robot Research Center), supported by Korea Institute of Construction and Transportation Technology Evaluation and Planning(KICTEP) under the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs(MLTM).

### REFERENCES