

BODY BELTS INSPECTION

1. INSPECTION ROUTINE

1.01 Each employee, when receiving a body belt and at least once a week thereafter, should inspect his belt in accordance with Part 2 so that he may detect any fault which might have developed.

1.02 Each employee should at all times assume the responsibility for determining that his body belt is in good condition and that its appearance indicates neither deterioration nor injury sufficient to affect its strength.

1.03 The supervisor should inspect body belts periodically.

2. INSPECTION OF BODY BELT

2.01 The belt should be examined to determine the condition of all parts as suggested below. If any of the following conditions are found to exist or if the condition of the belt or holster is such that there is any doubt as to its safety, it should be exchanged at once for one in good condition, in accordance with the Company's established routine.

2.02 **Visual Inspection of Body Belts:** The important conditions to look for are:

- (a) Broken steel reinforcement plates holding Dee rings.
- (b) Leather of loop over reinforcing plates worn or crushed by the Dee ring at the edges sufficiently to affect its strength or to cause the leather to tear.
- (c) Loose or broken rivets (particularly those in the loops holding the Dee rings).
- (d) Broken or rotted threads in the stitching of the loops holding the Dee rings.
- (e) Cracks, cuts, etc., that would tend to cause the leather to tear or would be likely to affect the strength of the belt.
- (f) Leather hard and dry. (If the leather requires only oil, it should be treated as outlined in Section 081-720-305.)
- (g) Broken wrench keeper.
- (h) Broken or defective buckle.
- (i) Burnt leather (see Paragraph 2.03).

2.03 Leather with hard spots, a curved set or indistinct portion of the ironed crease along the edge, as well as leather having a burnt streak across the face may have become burned or cooked by being subjected to excessive heat. This may have happened to a belt in any of the following ways:

- (a) Placing the belt against or near hot steam-pipes, radiators, or heaters.
- (b) Placing belt near a pot of hot solder, hot soldering copper, or a splicer's furnace.

2.04 Leather which has been heated excessively becomes hard and brittle when it dries. If partially cooked, a crystalline substance forms in the inside of the leather. These spots have sometimes been mistaken for defects in the leather such as blood clots, chemicals deposited in the hide while being tanned, or glue used in connection with piecing out leather.

2.05 **Visual Inspection of Leather Tool Holster:** The important conditions to look for are:

- (a) Loose or broken rivets.
- (b) Broken or rotted threads in stitching.

2.06 **Bending Test for Leather:** This test should be made on body belts only when the leather is clean and well oiled. The leather should show no cracks other than slight surface cracks when the test is applied. If well defined cracks appear, the belt must not be used, but should be taken out of service and disposed of in accordance with the Company's established routine. The test should not be made if the temperature of the leather is below 32° F., since at low temperatures the leather may be damaged by bending it around the test mandrel.

- (a) Leather shall be bent with the grain (smooth) side out, over a mandrel that is not less than 3/4-inch in diameter (a 3/4-inch guy rod may be used). In making this test, pull the leather taut, and wrap it half-way around the mandrel, keeping the leather under tension while the bend is being made. This procedure brings the leather into firm contact with the mandrel while the bend is being made, and thus avoids bending the leather too sharply. **Do not loop the leather first and then pull it over the mandrel. Do not make the bend test at a buckle hole.**

- (b) Body belts shall be subjected to the bend test at points where it is possible to bend them, such as under the leather tool loops and at the tongue strap.

2.07 If leather of the thickness used in Bell System standard body belts is subjected to an excessively severe test, such as bending it too sharply (without a mandrel or over too small a mandrel) with the grain side out, good leather may crack because of the excessive strain placed on the grain layer.