

# 2021 Virginia Construction Code

## CHAPTER 16 STRUCTURAL DESIGN

### SECTION 1613 EARTHQUAKE LOADS

#### 1613.1 Scope.

Every structure, and portion thereof, including nonstructural components that are permanently attached to structures and their supports and attachments, shall be designed and constructed to resist the effects of earthquake motions in accordance with Chapters 11, 12, 13, 15, 17 and 18 of [ASCE 7](#), as applicable. The *seismic design category* for a structure is permitted to be determined in accordance with [Section 1613](#) or [ASCE 7](#).

#### Exceptions:

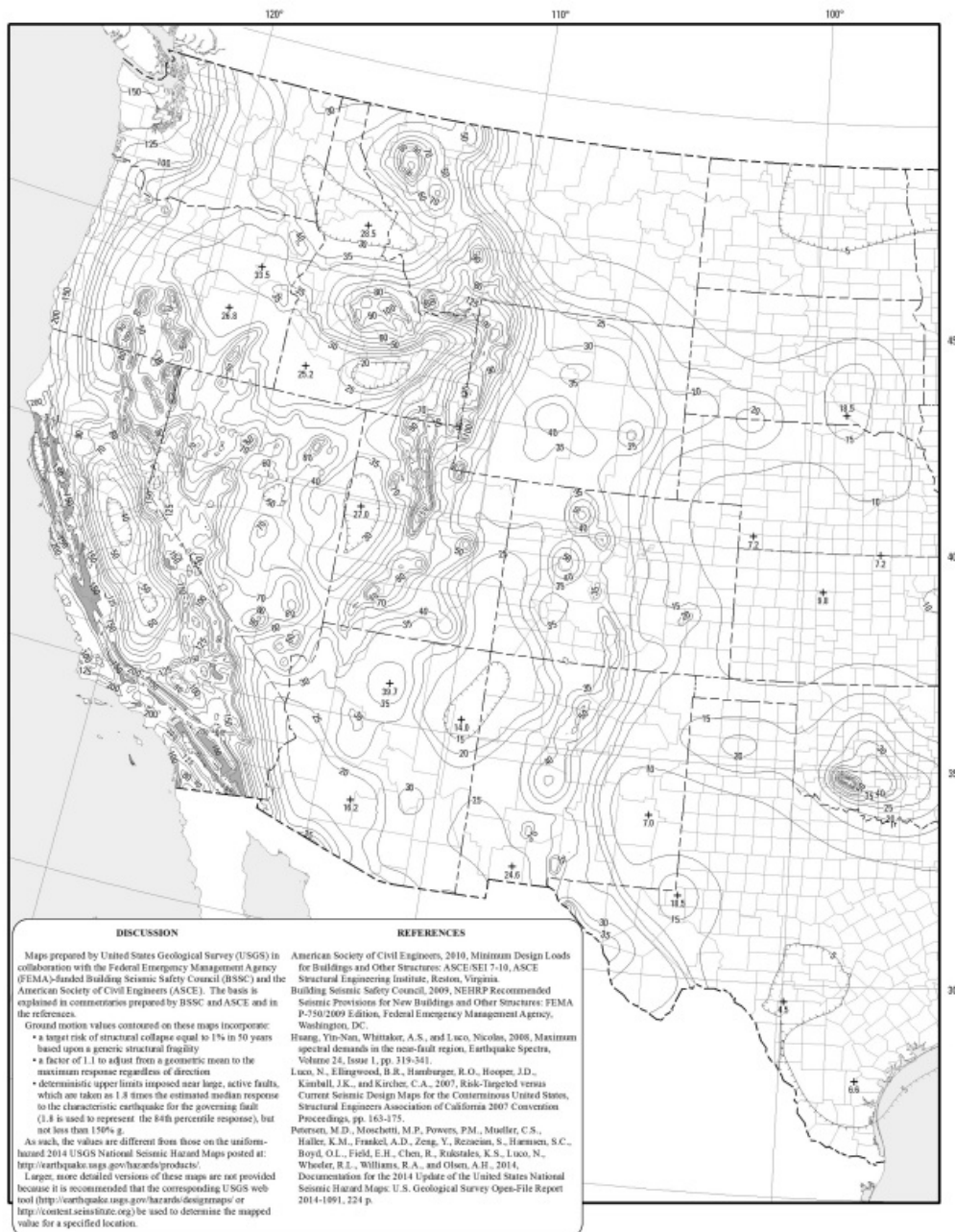
1. Detached one- and two-family dwellings, assigned to *Seismic Design Category* A, B or C, or located where the mapped short-period spectral response acceleration,  $S_S$ , is less than 0.4 g.
2. The *seismic force-resisting system* of wood-frame buildings that conform to the provisions of [Section 2308](#) are not required to be analyzed as specified in this section.
3. Agricultural storage structures intended only for incidental human occupancy.
4. Structures that require special consideration of their response characteristics and environment that are not addressed by this code or [ASCE 7](#) and for which other regulations provide seismic criteria, such as vehicular bridges, electrical transmission towers, hydraulic structures, buried utility lines and their appurtenances and nuclear reactors.
5. References within [ASCE 7](#) to Chapter 14 shall not apply, except as specifically required herein.

#### 1613.2 Seismic ground motion values.

Seismic ground motion values shall be determined in accordance with this section.

##### 1613.2.1 Mapped acceleration parameters.

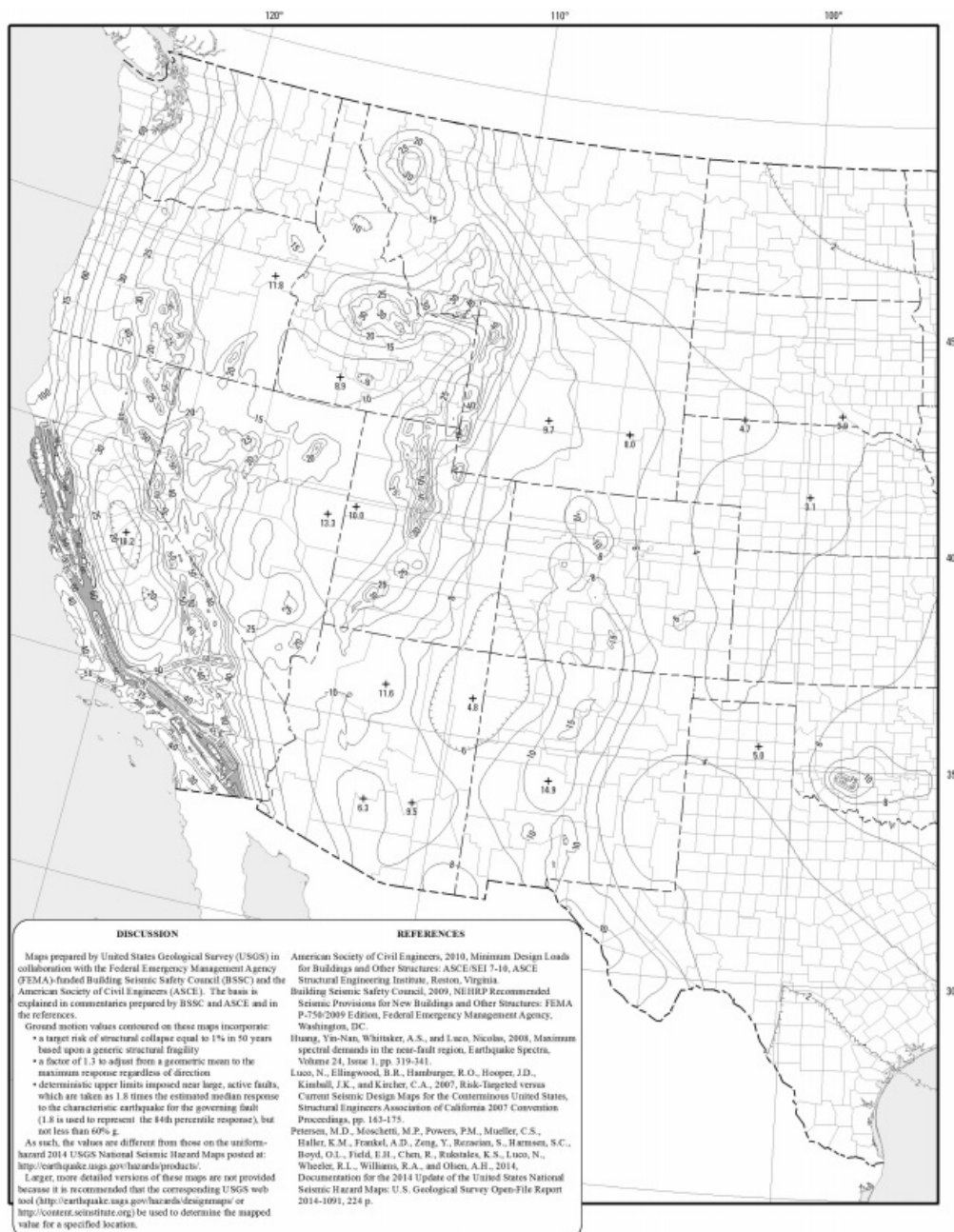
The parameters  $S_S$  and  $S_1$  shall be determined from the 0.2 and 1-second spectral response accelerations shown on [Figures 1613.2.1\(1\)](#) through [1613.2.1\(10\)](#). Where  $S_1$  is less than or equal to 0.04 and  $S_S$  is less than or equal to 0.15, the structure is permitted to be assigned *Seismic Design Category* A.



**FIGURE 1613.2.1(1)**  
**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE ( $MCE_R$ ) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS**  
**FOR THE CONTERMINOUS UNITED STATES OF 0.2-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF**  
**CRITICAL DAMPING)**

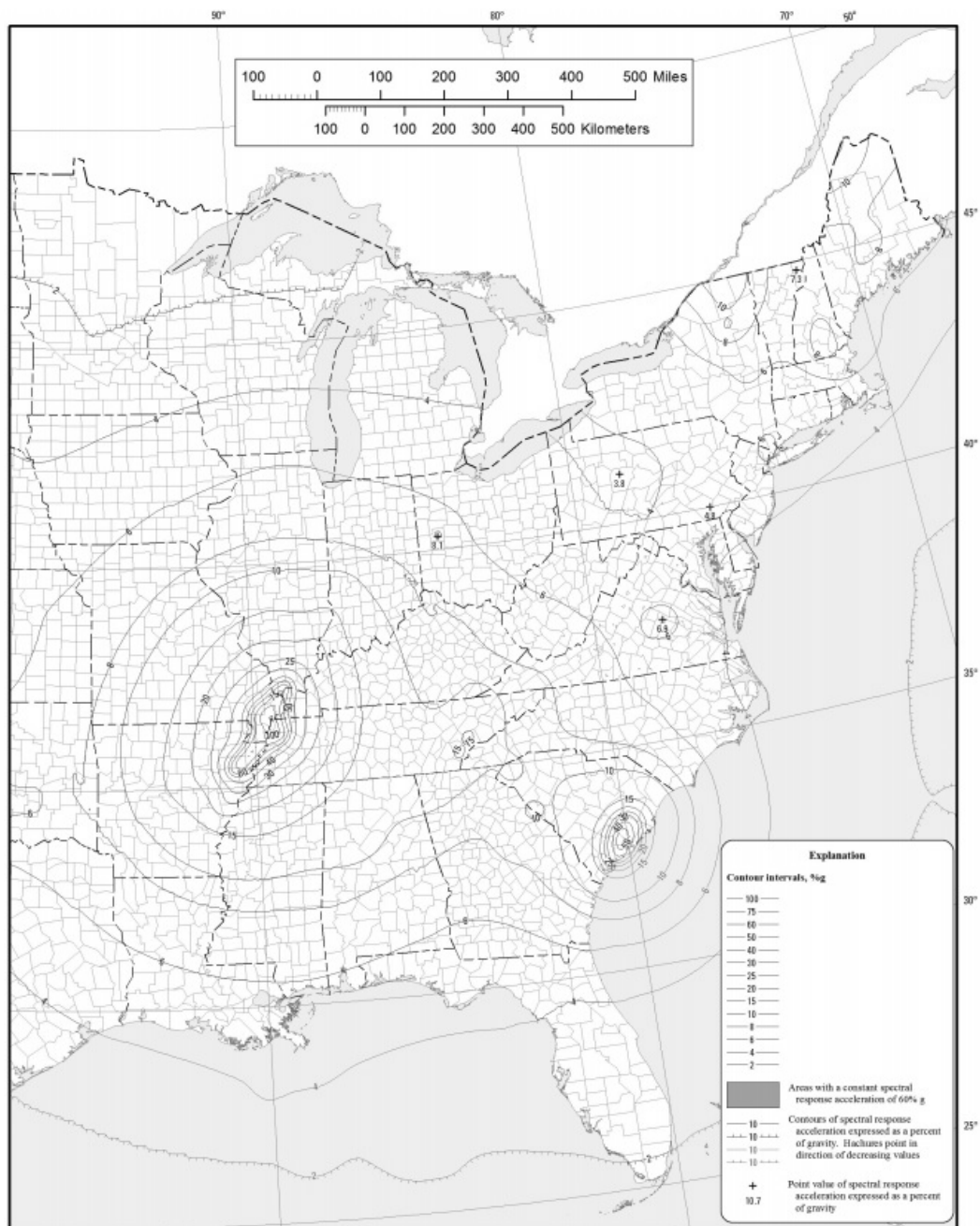


**FIGURE 1613.2.1(2)**  
**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS**  
**FOR THE CONTERMINOUS UNITED STATES OF 0.2-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF**  
**CRITICAL DAMPING)**

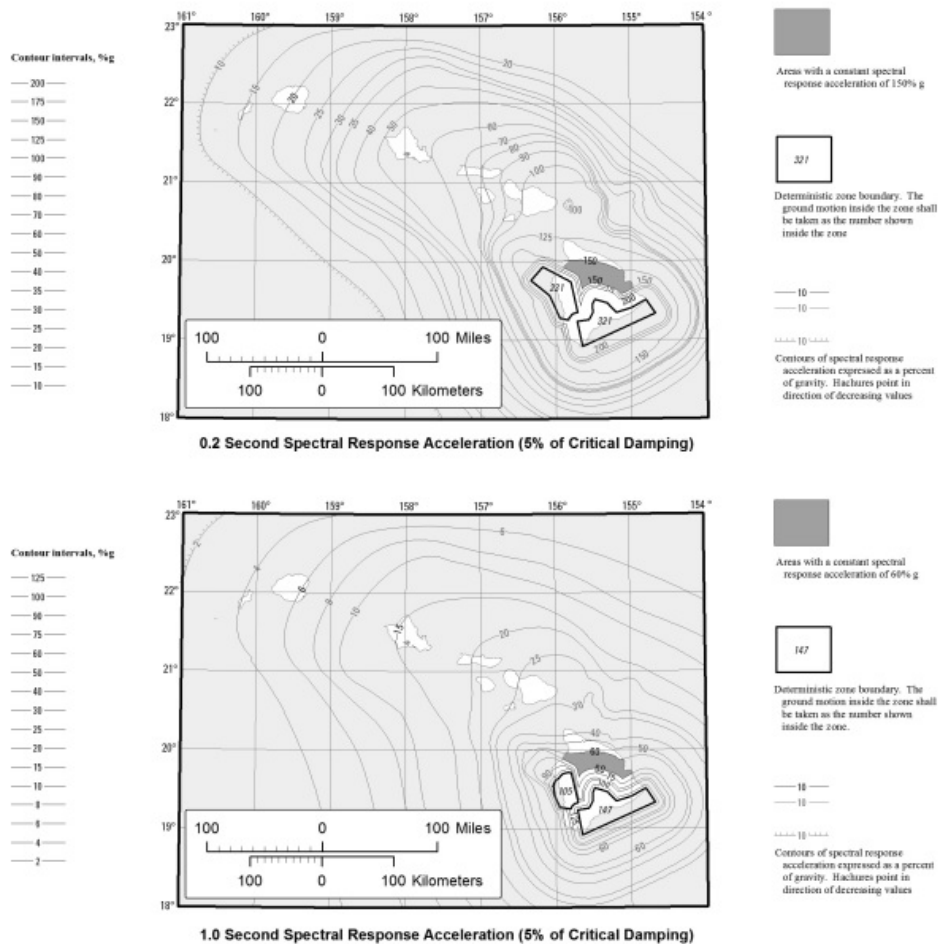


**FIGURE 1613.2.1(3)**  
**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS**  
**FOR THE CONTERMINOUS UNITED STATES OF 1-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF**  
**CRITICAL DAMPING)**





**FIGURE 1613.2.1(4)**  
**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE ( $MCE_R$ ) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS**  
**FOR THE COTERMINOUS UNITED STATES OF 1-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF**  
**CRITICAL DAMPING)**



DISCUSSION	REFERENCES
<p>Maps prepared by United States Geological Survey (USGS) in collaboration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-funded Building Seismic Safety Council (BSSC) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). The basis is explained in commentaries prepared by BSSC and ASCE and in the references.</p> <p>Ground motion values contoured on these maps incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a target risk of structural collapse equal to 1% in 50 years based upon a generic structural fragility</li> <li>deterministic upper limits imposed near large, active faults, which are taken as 1.8 times the estimated median response to the characteristic earthquake for the fault (1.8 is used to represent the 84th percentile response), but not less than 150% and 60% g for 0.2 and 1.0 sec, respectively.</li> </ul> <p>As such, the values are different from those on the uniform-hazard 1998 USGS National Seismic Hazard Maps for Hawaii posted at <a href="http://earthquake.usgs.gov/hazmaps">http://earthquake.usgs.gov/hazmaps</a>.</p> <p>Larger, more detailed versions of these maps are not provided because it is recommended that the corresponding USGS web tool (<a href="http://earthquake.usgs.gov/designmaps">http://earthquake.usgs.gov/designmaps</a> or <a href="http://content.seismotrust.org">http://content.seismotrust.org</a>) be used to determine the mapped value for a specified location.</p>	<p>Building Seismic Safety Council, 2009, NEHRP Recommended Seismic Provisions for New Buildings and Other Structures, FEMA P-750/2009 Edition, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC.</p> <p>Huang, Yin-Nan, Whitaker, A.S., and Lucio, Nicolas, 2008, Maximum spectral demands in the near-fault region, <i>Earthquake Spectra</i>, Volume 24, Issue 1, pp. 319-341.</p> <p>Klein, F., Frankel, A.D., Mueller, C.S., Wesen, R.L., and Okubo, P., 2001, Seismic hazard in Hawaii: high rate of large earthquakes and probabilistic ground-motion maps, <i>Bulletin of the Seismological Society of America</i>, Volume 91, pp. 479-494.</p> <p>Lucio, Nicolas, Ellingwood, B.R., Hamburger, R.O., Hooper, J.D., Kimball, J.K., and Kircher, C.A., 2007, Risk-Targeted versus Current Seismic Design Maps for the Conterminous United States, <i>Structural Engineers Association of California 2007 Convention Proceedings</i>, pp. 165-175.</p>

**FIGURE 1613.2.1(5)**  
**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS**  
**FOR HAWAII OF 0.2- AND 1-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF CRITICAL DAMPING)**

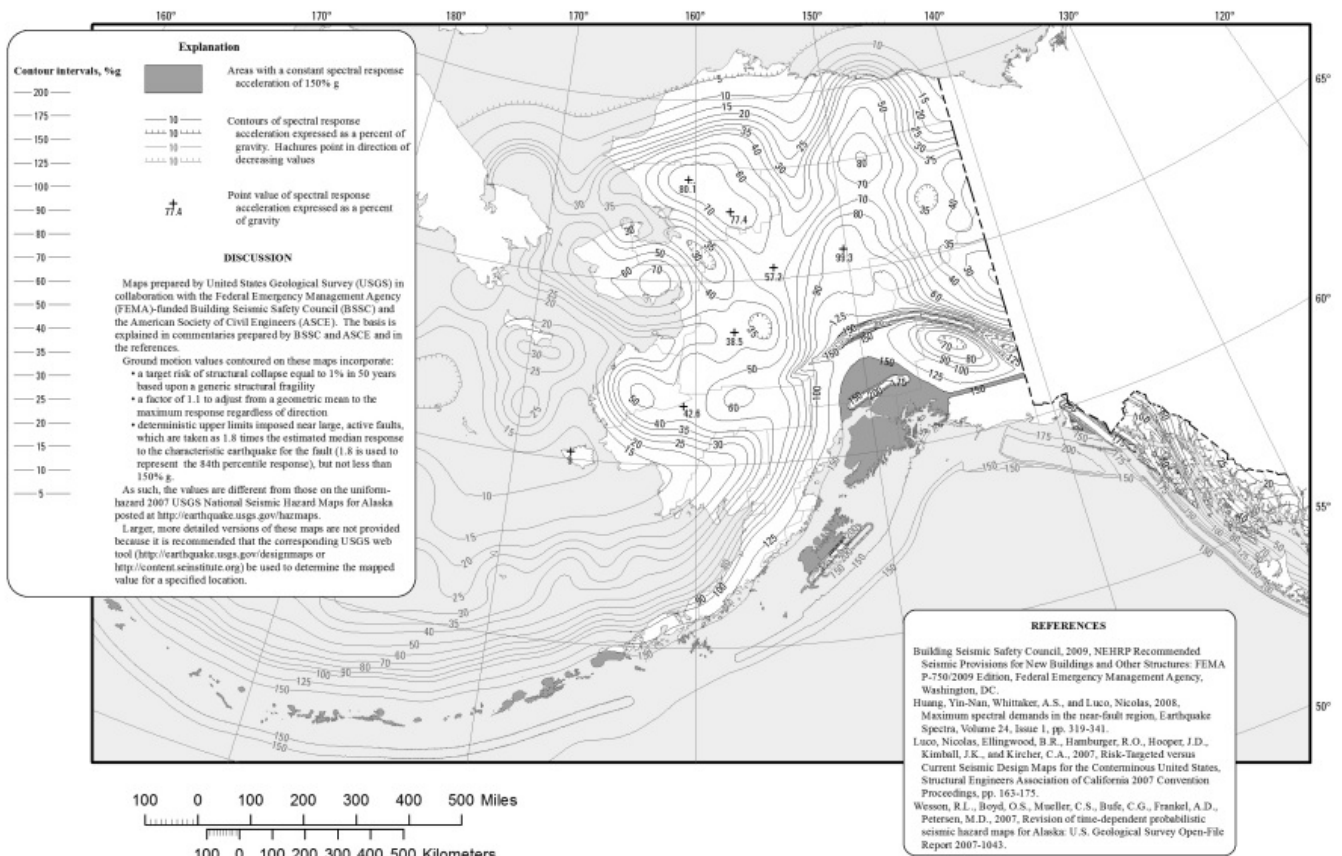


FIGURE 1613.2.1(6)

**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS FOR ALASKA OF 0.2-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF CRITICAL DAMPING)**

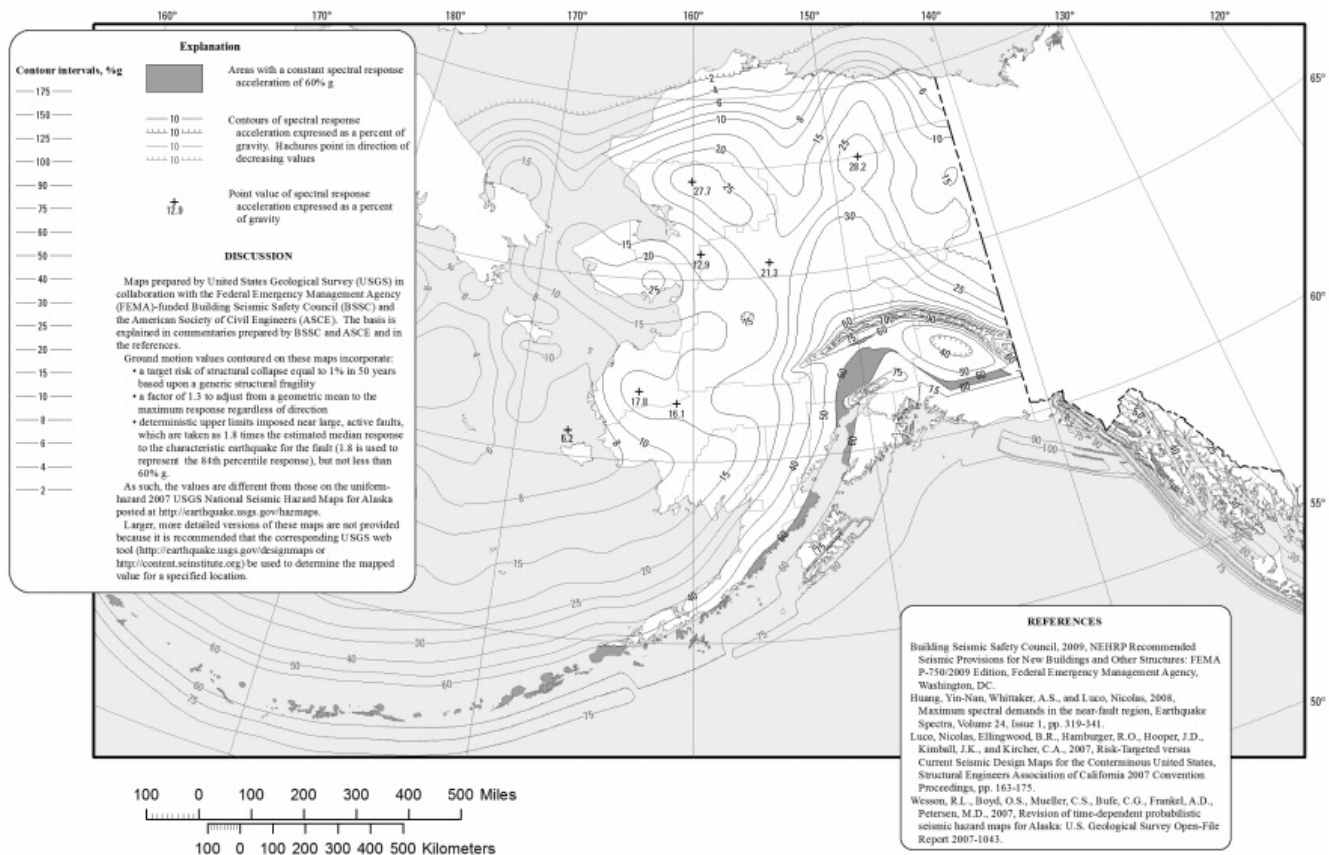
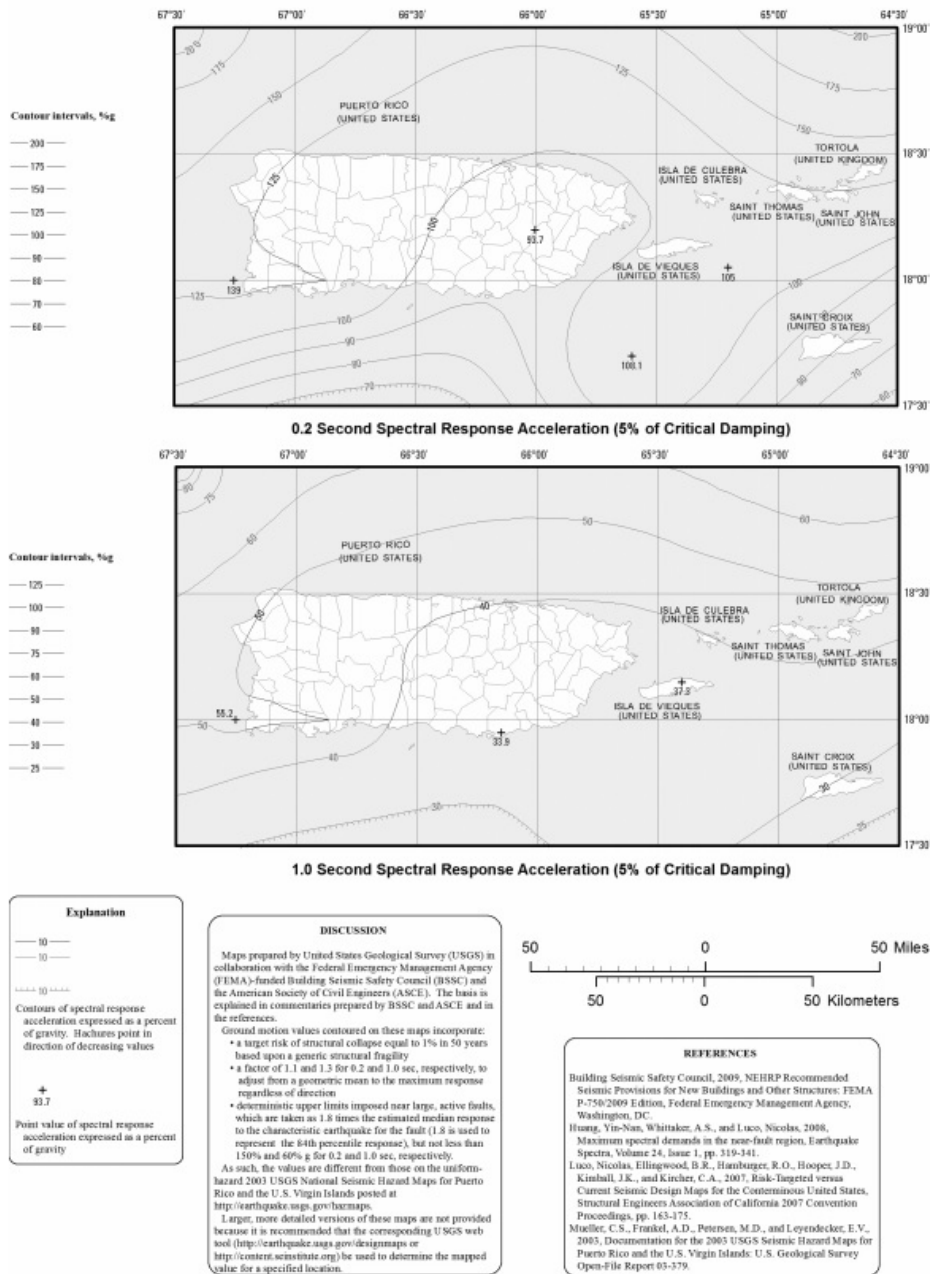


FIGURE 1613.2.1(7)

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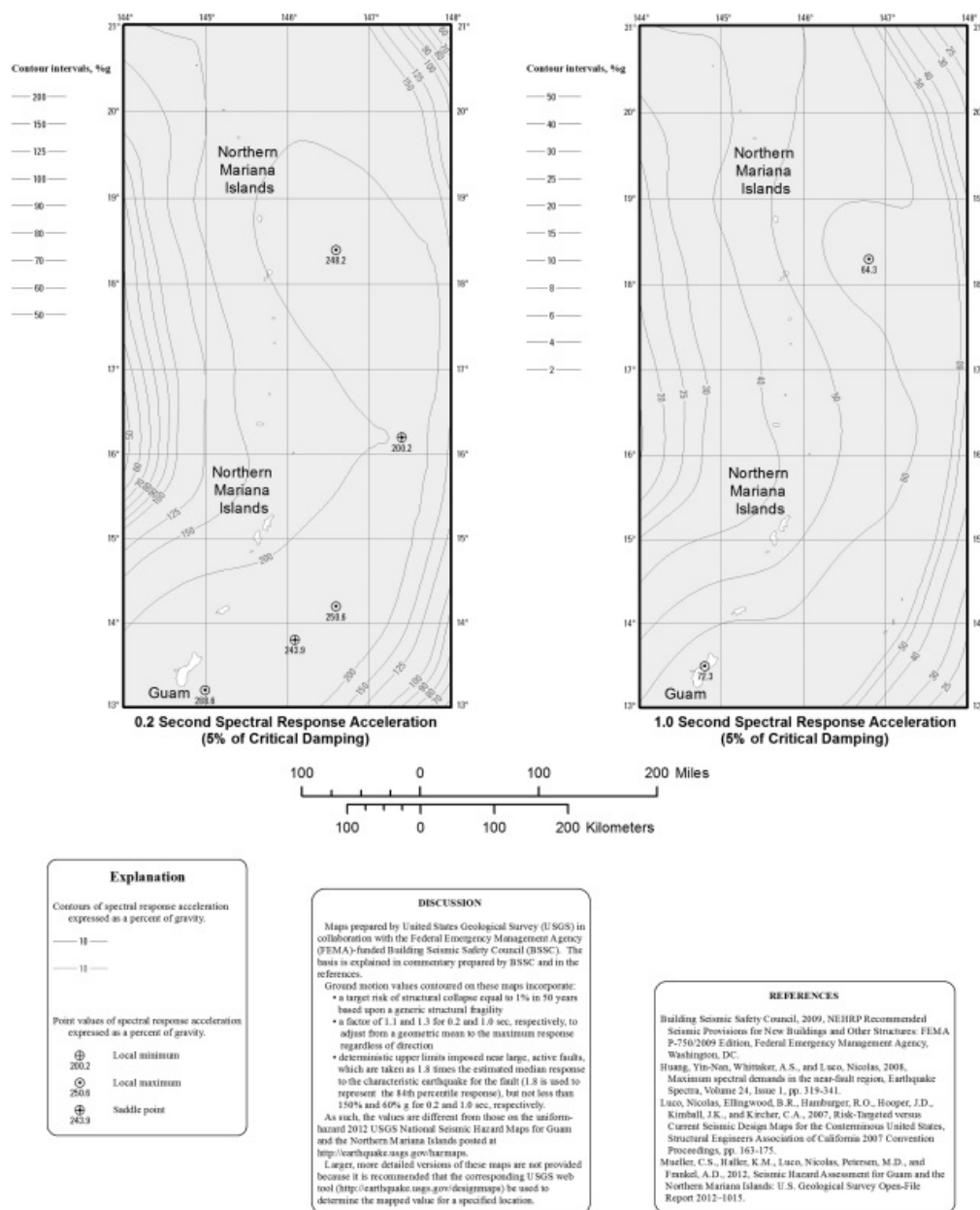


**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS FOR ALASKA OF 1.0-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF CRITICAL DAMPING)**



**FIGURE 1613.2.1(8)**  
**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS FOR PUERTO RICO AND THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS OF 0.2- AND 1-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF CRITICAL DAMPING)**





**FIGURE 1613.2.1(9)**  
**RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS**  
**FOR GUAM AND THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS OF 0.2- AND 1-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE**  
**ACCELERATION (5% OF CRITICAL DAMPING)**

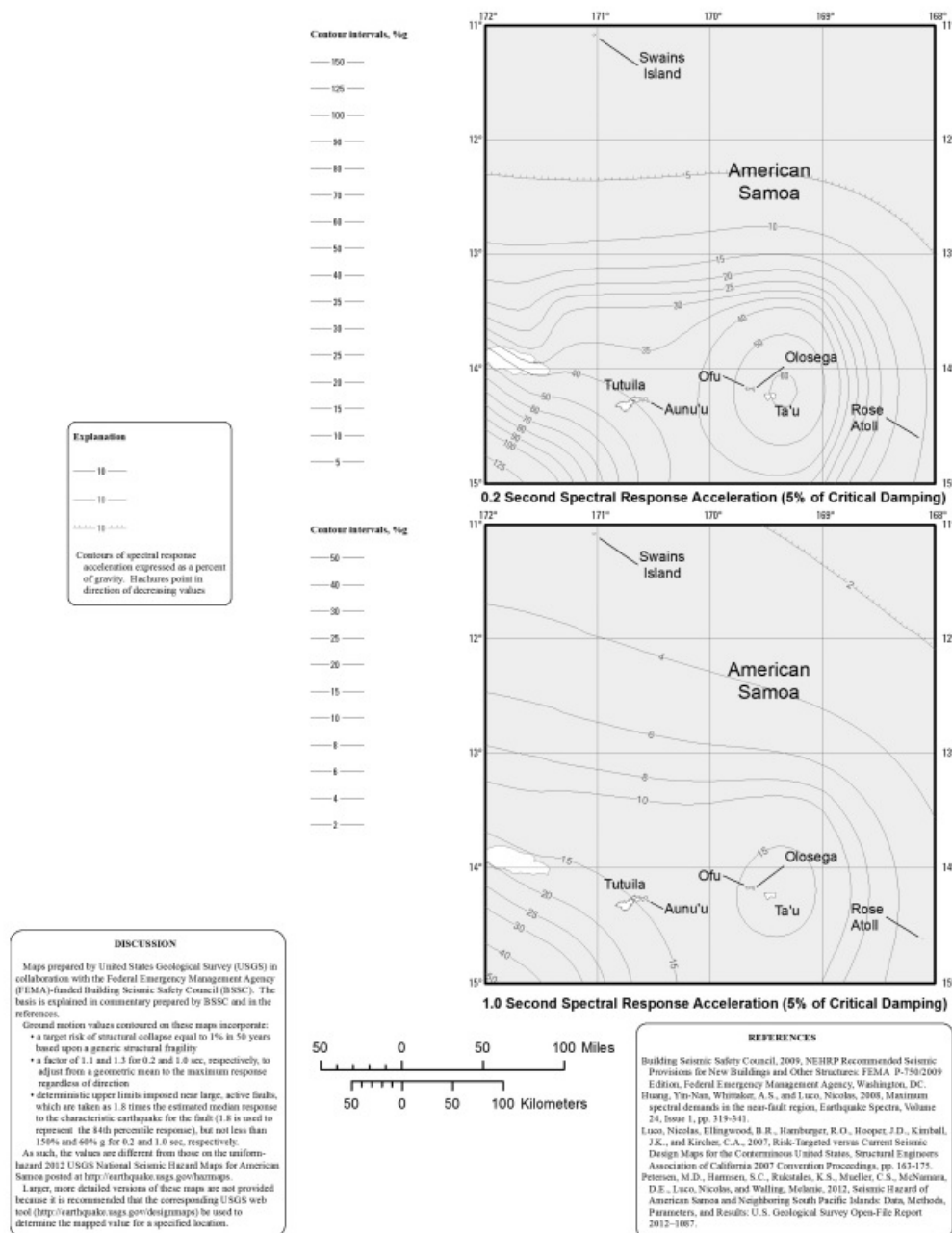


FIGURE 1613.2.1(10)

# **RISK-TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE<sub>R</sub>) GROUND MOTION RESPONSE ACCELERATIONS FOR AMERICAN SAMOA OF 0.2- AND 1-SECOND SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION (5% OF CRITICAL DAMPING)**

## **1613.2.2 Site class definitions.**

Based on the site soil properties, the site shall be classified as *Site Class* A, B, C, D, E or F in accordance with Chapter 20 of [ASCE 7](#).

Where the soil properties are not known in sufficient detail to determine the site class, *Site Class* D, subjected to the requirements of [Section 1613.2.3](#), shall be used unless the *building official* or geotechnical data determines that *Site Class* E or F soils are present at the site.

Where site investigations that are performed in accordance with Chapter 20 of [ASCE 7](#) reveal rock conditions consistent with *Site Class* B, but site-specific velocity measurements are not made, the *site coefficients*  $F_a$  and  $F_v$  shall be taken at unity (1.0).

## **1613.2.3 Site coefficients and adjusted maximum considered earthquake spectral response acceleration parameters.**

The maximum considered earthquake spectral response acceleration for short periods,  $S_{MS}$ , and at 1-second period,  $S_{M1}$ , adjusted for site class effects shall be determined by [Equations 16-20](#) and [16-21](#), respectively:

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$$S_{MS} = F_a S_s$$

$$S_{MI} = F_v S_1$$

(Equation 16-20)

but  $S_{MS}$  shall not be taken less than  $S_{MI}$  except when determining the seismic design category in (Equation 16-21) accordance with Section 1613.2.5.

where:

$F_a$  = Site coefficient defined in Table 1613.2.3(1).

$F_v$  = Site coefficient defined in Table 1613.2.3(2).

$S_s$  = The mapped spectral accelerations for short periods as determined in Section 1613.2.1.

$S_1$  = The mapped spectral accelerations for a 1-second period as determined in Section 1613.2.1.

Where Site Class D is selected as the default site class per Section 1613.2.2, the value of  $F_a$  shall be not less than 1.2. Where the simplified design procedure of ASCE 7, Section 12.14 is used, the value of  $F_a$  shall be determined in accordance with ASCE 7, Section 12.14.8.1, and the values of  $F_v$ ,  $S_{MS}$  and  $S_{MI}$  need not be determined.

**TABLE 1613.2.3(1)**  
**VALUES OF SITE COEFFICIENT  $F_a^a$**

SITE CLASS	MAPPED RISK TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE <sub>R</sub> ) SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION PARAMETER AT SHORT PERIOD					
	$S_s \leq 0.25$	$S_s = 0.50$	$S_s = 0.75$	$S_s = 1.00$	$S_s = 1.25$	$S_s \geq 1.5$
A	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
B	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
C	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
D	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0
E	2.4	1.7	1.3	Note b	Note b	Note b
F	Note b	Note b	Note b	Note b	Note b	Note b

- Use straight-line interpolation for intermediate values of mapped spectral response acceleration at short period,  $S_s$ .
- Values shall be determined in accordance with Section 11.4.8 of ASCE 7.

**TABLE 1613.2.3(2)**  
**VALUES OF SITE COEFFICIENT  $F_v^a$**

SITE CLASS	MAPPED RISK TARGETED MAXIMUM CONSIDERED EARTHQUAKE (MCE <sub>R</sub> ) SPECTRAL RESPONSE ACCELERATION PARAMETER AT 1-SECOND PERIOD					
	$S_1 \leq 0.1$	$S_1 = 0.2$	$S_1 = 0.3$	$S_1 = 0.4$	$S_1 = 0.5$	$S_1 \geq 0.6$
A	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
B	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
C	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4
D	2.4	2.2 <sup>c</sup>	2.0 <sup>c</sup>	1.9 <sup>c</sup>	1.8 <sup>c</sup>	1.7 <sup>c</sup>
E	4.2	3.3 <sup>c</sup>	2.8 <sup>c</sup>	2.4 <sup>c</sup>	2.2 <sup>c</sup>	2.0 <sup>c</sup>
F	Note b	Note b	Note b	Note b	Note b	Note b

- Use straight-line interpolation for intermediate values of mapped spectral response acceleration at 1-second period,  $S_1$ .
- Values shall be determined in accordance with Section 11.4.8 of ASCE 7.
- See requirements for site-specific ground motions in Section 11.4.8 of ASCE 7.

#### 1613.2.4 Design spectral response acceleration parameters.

Five-percent damped design spectral response acceleration at short periods,  $S_{DS}$ , and at 1-second period,  $S_{D1}$ , shall be determined from Equations 16-22 and Equation 16-23, respectively:

$$S_{DS} = \frac{2}{3} S_{MS}$$

$$S_{D1} = \frac{2}{3} S_{MI}$$

(Equation 16-22)

where:

(Equation 16-23)

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$S_{MS}$  = The maximum considered earthquake spectral response accelerations for short period as determined in [Section 1613.2.3](#).

$S_{M1}$  = The maximum considered earthquake spectral response accelerations for 1-second period as determined in [Section 1613.2.3](#).

### 1613.2.5 Determination of seismic design category.

Structures classified as *Risk Category* I, II or III that are located where the mapped spectral response acceleration parameter at 1-second period,  $S_1$ , is greater than or equal to 0.75 shall be assigned to *Seismic Design Category* E. Structures classified as *Risk Category* IV that are located where the mapped spectral response acceleration parameter at 1-second period,  $S_1$ , is greater than or equal to 0.75 shall be assigned to *Seismic Design Category* F. Other structures shall be assigned to a *seismic design category* based on their *risk category* and the design spectral response acceleration parameters,  $S_{DS}$  and  $S_{D1}$ , determined in accordance with [Section 1613.2.4](#) or the site-specific procedures of [ASCE 7](#). Each building and structure shall be assigned to the more severe *seismic design category* in accordance with [Table 1613.2.5\(1\)](#) or [1613.2.5\(2\)](#), irrespective of the fundamental period of vibration of the structure,  $T$ .

**TABLE 1613.2.5(1)**  
**SEISMIC DESIGN CATEGORY BASED ON SHORT-PERIOD (0.2 second) RESPONSE ACCELERATION**

VALUE OF $S_{DS}$	RISK CATEGORY		
	I or II	III	IV
$S_{DS} < 0.167g$	A	A	A
$0.167g \leq S_{DS} < 0.33g$	B	B	C
$0.33g \leq S_{DS} < 0.50g$	C	C	D
$0.50g \leq S_{DS}$	D	D	D

**TABLE 1613.2.5(2)**  
**SEISMIC DESIGN CATEGORY BASED ON 1-SECOND PERIOD RESPONSE ACCELERATION**

VALUE OF $S_{D1}$	RISK CATEGORY		
	I or II	III	IV
$S_{D1} < 0.067g$	A	A	A
$0.067g \leq S_{D1} < 0.133g$	B	B	C
$0.133g \leq S_{D1} < 0.20g$	C	C	D
$0.20g \leq S_{D1}$	D	D	D

#### 1613.2.5.1 Alternative seismic design category determination.

Where  $S_1$  is less than 0.75, the *seismic design category* is permitted to be determined from [Table 1613.2.5\(1\)](#) alone where all of the following apply:

1. In each of the two *orthogonal* directions, the approximate fundamental period of the structure,  $T_a$ , in each of the two *orthogonal* directions determined in accordance with [Section 12.8.2.1](#) of [ASCE 7](#), is less than  $0.8 T_s$  determined in accordance with [Section 11.8.6](#) of [ASCE 7](#).
2. In each of the two *orthogonal* directions, the fundamental period of the structure used to calculate the *story drift* is less than  $T_s$ .
3. Equation 12.8-2 of [ASCE 7](#) is used to determine the seismic response coefficient,  $C_s$ .
4. The *diaphragms* are rigid or are permitted to be idealized as rigid in accordance with [Section 12.3.1](#) of [ASCE 7](#) or, for *diaphragms* permitted to be idealized as flexible in accordance with [Section 12.3.1](#) of [ASCE 7](#), the distances between vertical elements of the *seismic force-resisting system* do not exceed 40 feet (12 192 mm).

#### 1613.2.5.2 Simplified design procedure.

Where the alternate simplified design procedure of [ASCE 7](#) is used, the *seismic design category* shall be determined in accordance with [ASCE 7](#).

### 1613.3 Ballasted photovoltaic panel systems.

Ballasted, roof-mounted *photovoltaic panel systems* need not be rigidly attached to the roof or supporting structure. Ballasted non-penetrating systems shall be designed and installed only on roofs with slopes not more than one unit vertical in 12 units horizontal. Ballasted nonpenetrating systems shall be designed to resist sliding and uplift resulting from lateral and vertical forces as required by [Section 1605](#), using a coefficient of friction determined by acceptable engineering principles. In structures assigned to *Seismic Design Category* C, D, E or F, ballasted nonpenetrating systems shall be designed to accommodate seismic displacement determined by nonlinear response-history or other *approved* analysis or shake-table testing, using input motions consistent with [ASCE 7](#) lateral and vertical seismic forces for nonstructural components on roofs.

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