

# Cyclic Load Behavior of Self-Centering Hammer-Head Bridge Piers

*Dina, Hesham Arafat Mahdy Ahmed, Hussein O. Okail, Hesham A. Mahdi, Amr A. Abdelrahman*

## Abstract

This paper presents an experimental investigation in the cyclic load response of hammer-head bridge piers. The paper investigates the response of piers made of precast elements assembled with unbonded prestressing to provide self-centering capabilities under extreme lateral loading. This technique is beneficial in terms of limiting the expected residual deformations after major seismic events. Five one-fifth scale pier prototypes were designed, fabricated and tested under both gravity and lateral cyclic loading in displacement control. The test matrix was designed to investigate the effect of the construction method (monolithic versus precast), level of initial prestressing in the unbonded tendons and the use of energy dissipation rebar to result in fatter hysteresis loops. Experimental results showed that the proposed construction method is indeed capable of enhancing the cyclic load response characteristics in terms of increased ultimate lateral load capacity, reduced residual displacements, delayed damage states and reasonable energy dissipation capacity. The paper serves as a foundation for the next phase of the research program in which a detailed numerical simulation study will be developed to examine various design considerations related to the seismic behavior of such construction method.

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