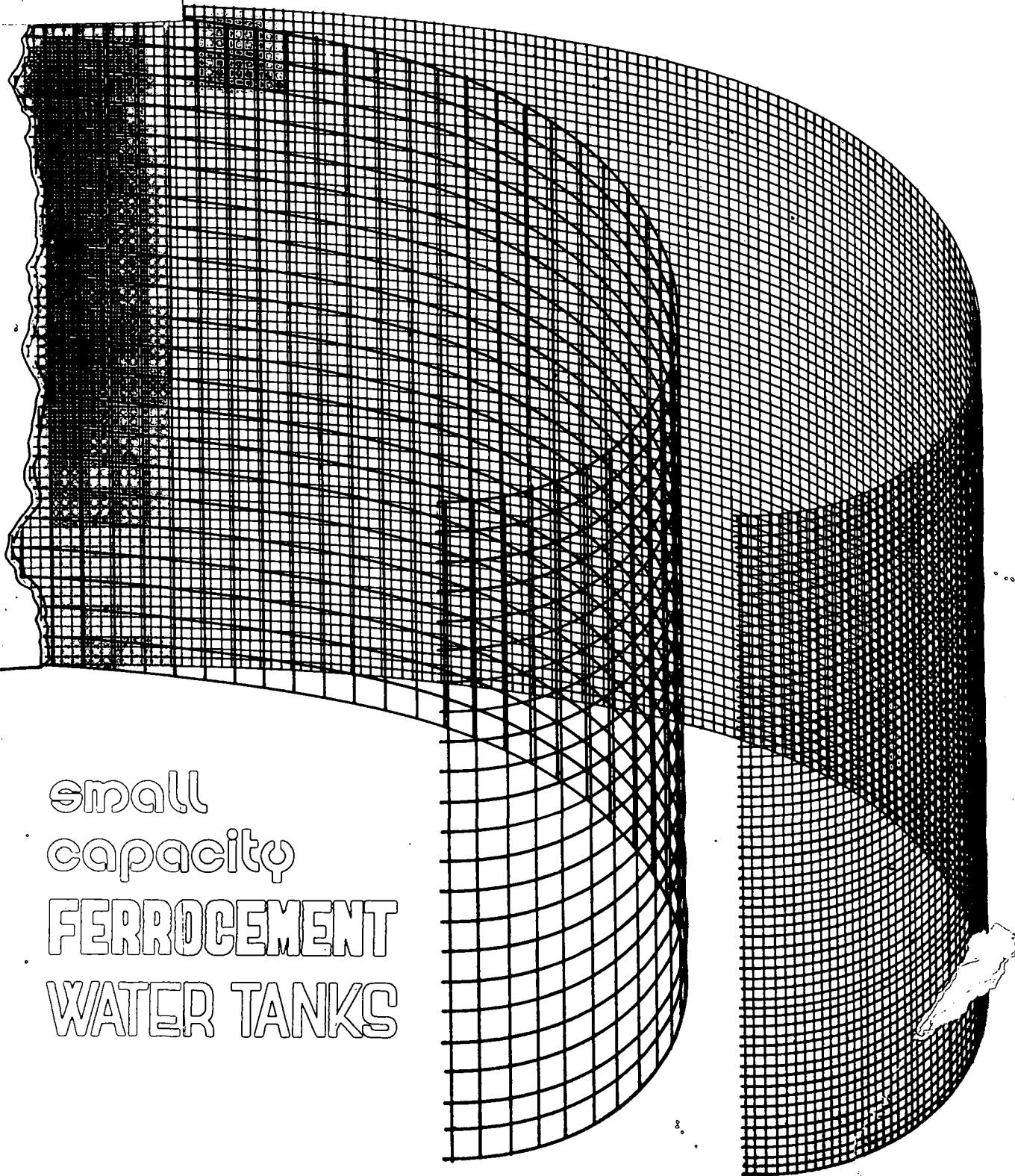


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FERROCEMENT
WATER TANKS

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**Small
Capacity
Ferrocement
Water
Tanks**

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and
G. PAUL JOSEPH

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTRE

(COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC & INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH)

MADRAS, INDIA

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Small capacity ferrocement water tanks

1.0 Introduction

Ferrocement is a versatile structural material possessing unique properties of strength and serviceability. It is made with closely-knit wire mesh and mild steel reinforcing bars filled with rich cement mortar (Fig.1). Welded mesh may also be used in place of reinforcing bars. The materials required for making it, namely, cement, sand, wire mesh, and mild steel reinforcing bars, are easily available in most places. It is possible to fabricate in ferrocement, a variety of structural elements which are thin, light, and durable and possess a high degree of impermeability. Ferrocement combines the lightness of steel and mouldability of concrete and can be cast to any shape. The several applications of this material include boats, water troughs and tanks, storage structures, gas holders, pipes, roof and wall elements in buildings, and shuttering for concrete construction. Its application for the fabrication of small capacity water

tanks is described in this brochure. They are ideally suited for residential and community uses.

2.0 Advantages

The advantages of ferrocement water tanks over other types are listed below:

- They are thin and light and are amenable to precasting and easy transportation.
- They can be cast by labour having skills required for normal building construction.
- They do not require the use of shuttering.
- They have a high degree of impermeability and resistance to cracking.
- They are economical compared to tanks built with steel, concrete, or brick walls.

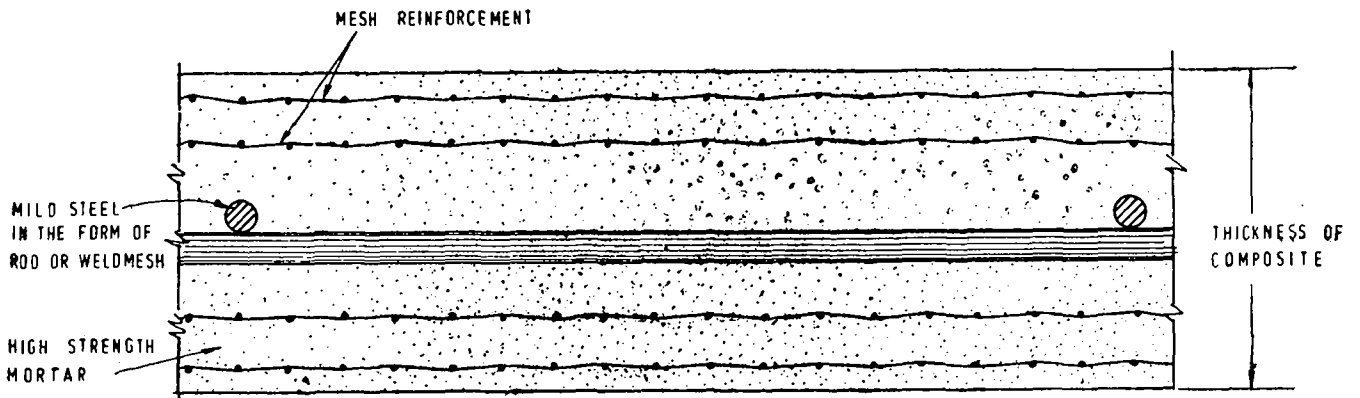


Fig. 1 Typical cross-section of ferrocement element

3.0 Suggested capacities

Tanks of the following capacities are recommended for various uses :

- (a) For individual residential houses :
 - Single tanks of about 800 litres capacity
 - 1. Rectangular (Type A)
 - 2. Cylindrical (Type B)
- (b) For blocks of flats :
 - Multiple tanks with compartments of about 800 litres capacity each
 - 1. Twin rectangular tank (Type C)
 - 2. Battery of rectangular tanks (Type D)
- (c) For community uses :
 - Single or multiple (interconnected) tanks of 5,000 or 10,000 litres capacity each
 - 1. Cylindrical (Type E)

4.0 Choice of shape

Adaptability of ferrocement, like concrete, provides unlimited choice in shape. Often, location of tank also decides the shape. Rectangular and circular being the common shapes, they are considered here for ferrocement tanks. Compared to rectangular tanks circular tanks consume lesser quantity of materials and have smaller length of sharp corners.

5.0 Determination of size

The size of the tank depends on the water storage capacity required. The possible sizes for ferro-

cement water tanks may be selected from Table 1. In circular tanks D/H (diameter/height) ratio of 1.04 is preferred for any capacity.

6.0 Demand

The demand for small water tanks can be estimated to be as large as the demand for the houses themselves. There is also a large demand for community type water tanks in view of the large number of schemes proposed by the Government for providing protected water supplies to the rural areas in the country. Panchayat Raj Departments of some states and some Housing Boards have already shown interest in ferrocement water tanks for use in their water supply and housing schemes.

7.0 Design and developmental work

Designs have been developed at the Structural Engineering Research Centre for tanks of 800, 5,000 and 10,000 litres capacity (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6).

The first is suitable for individual houses and the other two for community uses. Tanks fabricated according to these designs were subjected to extensive tests to study their short-term and long-term behaviour. Stresses and deflections were found to be within permissible limits. The tanks exhibited a high degree of impermeability.

For simplicity of construction, the tanks have been designed with a flat bottom. However, for relatively large tanks (Type E, diameter exceeding 2.5 m), a shallow spherical dome has been provided for the base to minimize the deflections. In the battery type rectangular tanks (Type D), the base slab deflection is prevented by the action of vertical grid partitions.

8.0 Economy

The cost analysis made on ferrocement water tanks shows a saving to the extent of 40% in the total cost compared to the traditional, brick-walled water tanks (Appendix 1). Capacity, weight, and cost comparison of ferrocement water tanks are shown in Table 2.

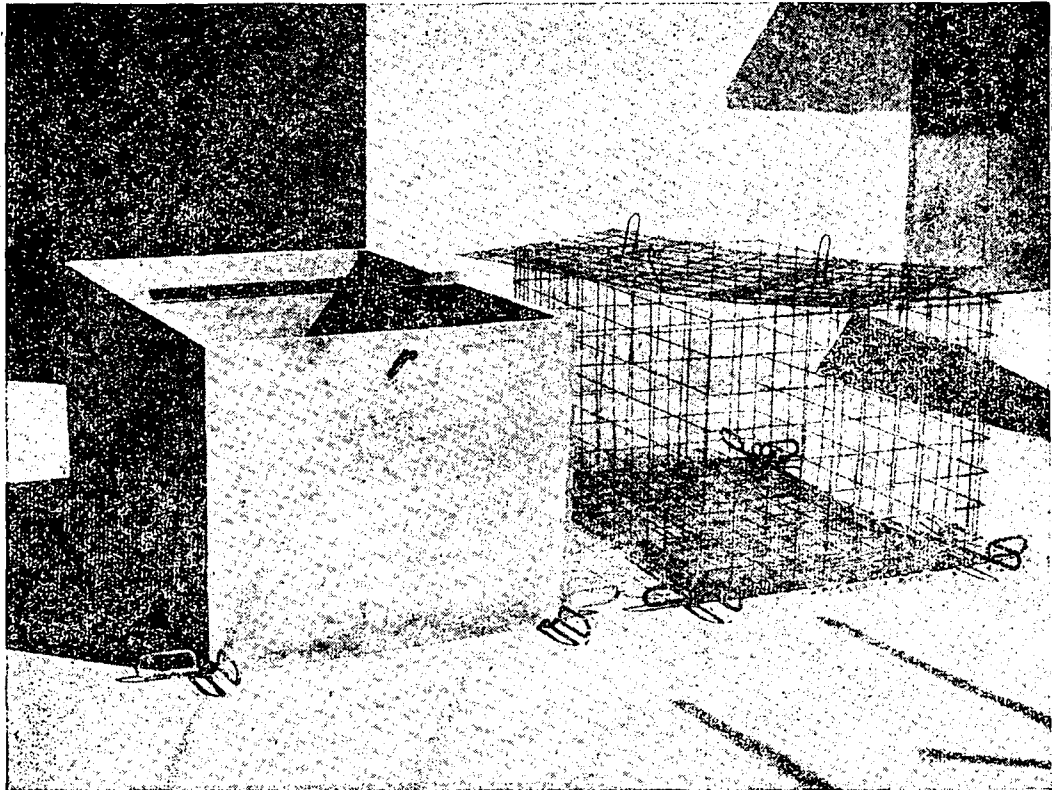


Fig. 2 Ferrocement water tank, 800 litres capacity (Type A)

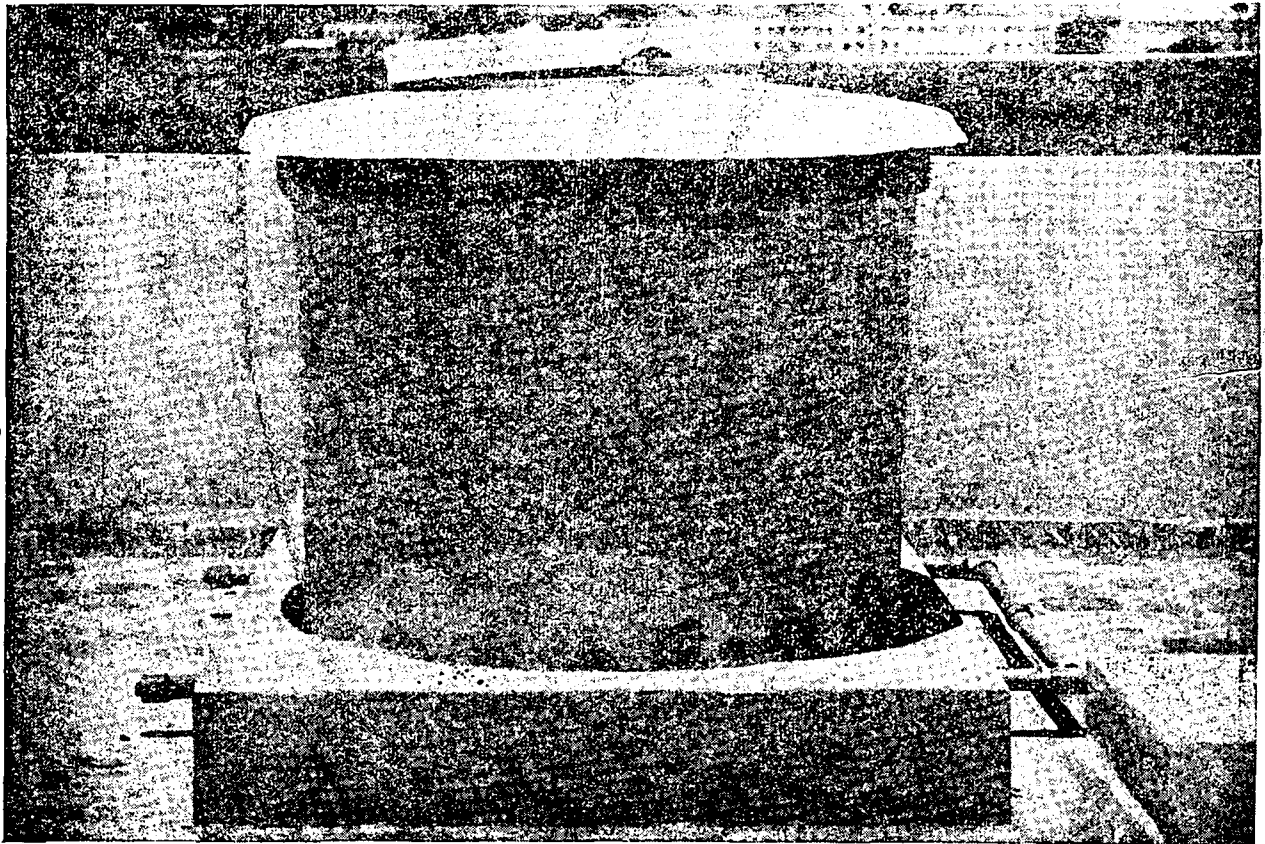


Fig. 3 Ferrocement circular water tank, 800 litres capacity (Type B)

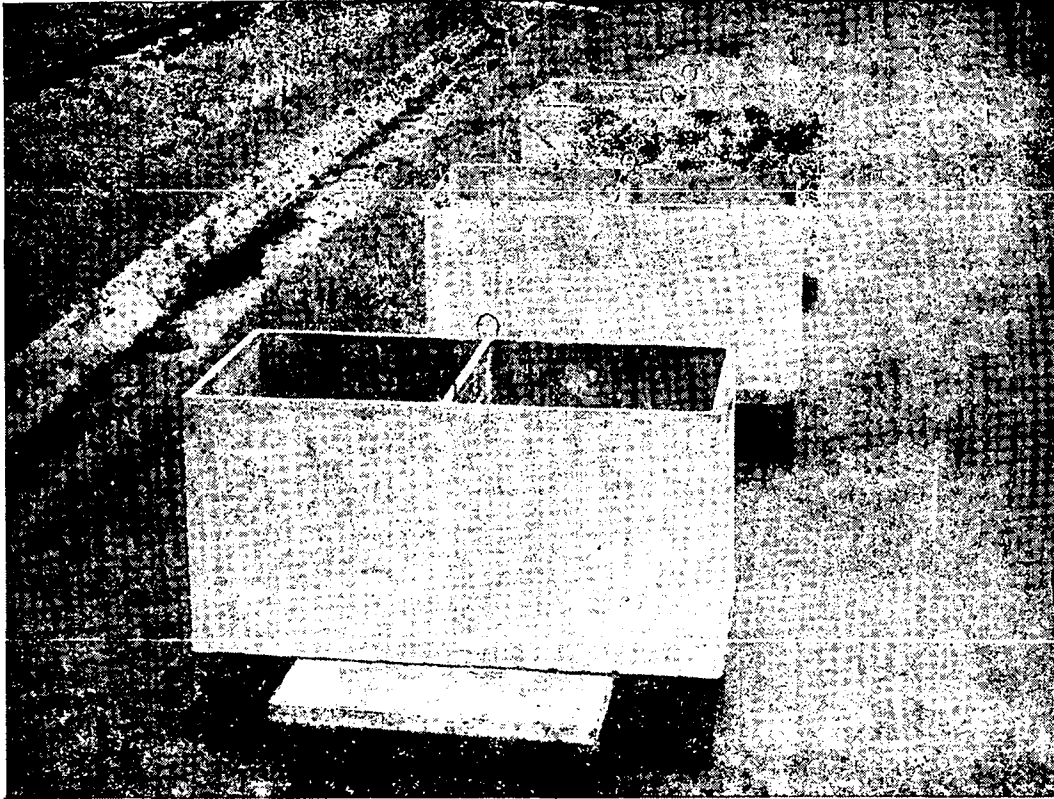


Fig. 4 Ferrocement twin water tank, 2×800 litres capacity (Type C)

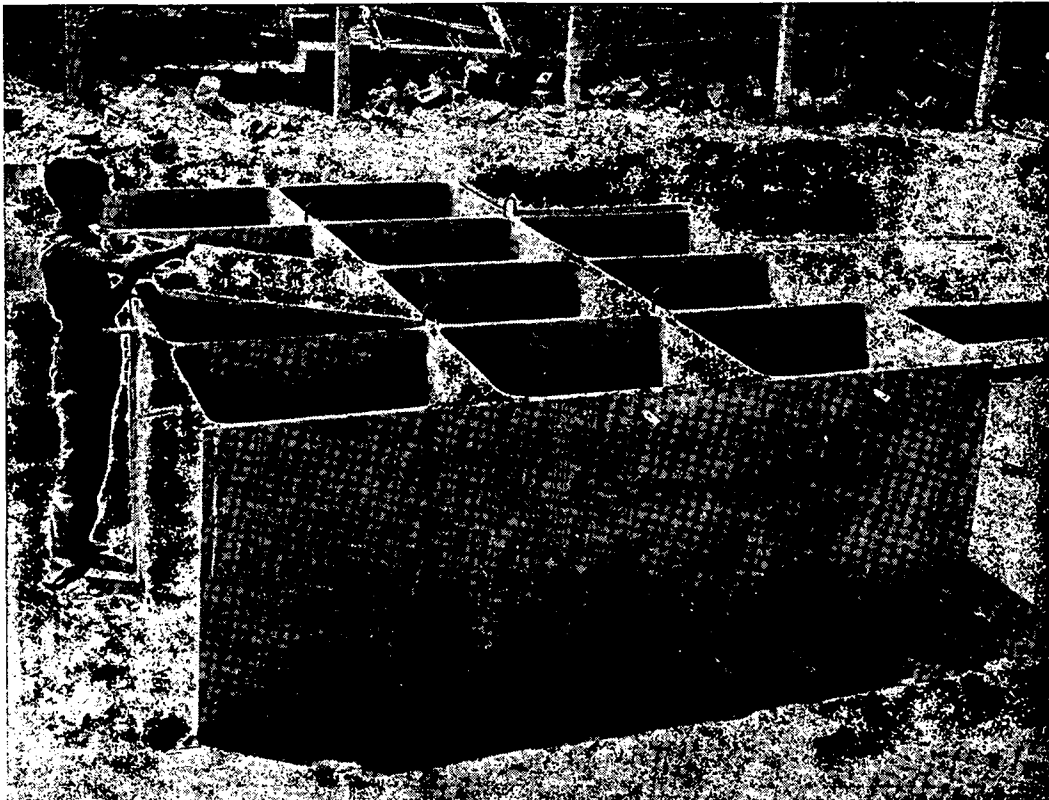


Fig. 5 Battery of rectangular ferrocement water tanks, (625×12) 7500 litres capacity (Type D)

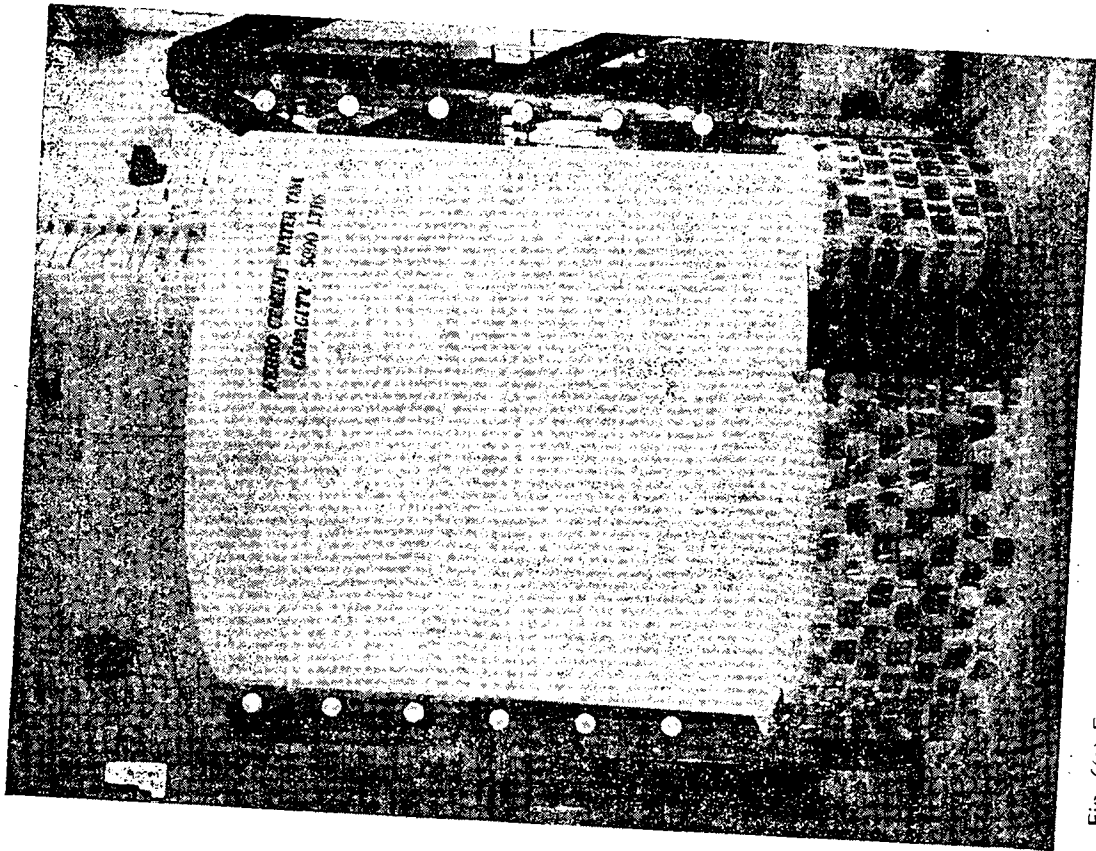


Fig. 6(a) Ferrocement circular water tank, 5,000 litres capacity (Type E), under test

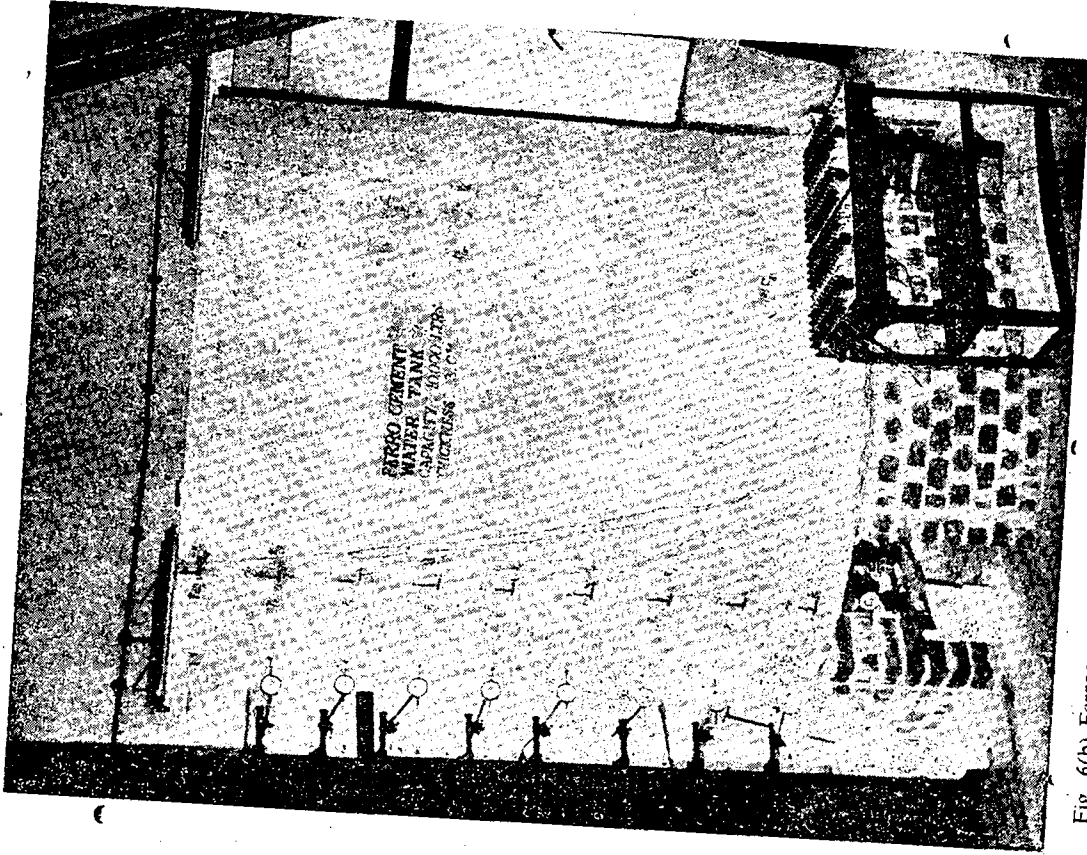


Fig. 6(b) Ferrocement circular water tank, 10,000 litres capacity (Type E) under test

TABLE 1

POSSIBLE SIZES OF FERROCEMENT WATER TANKS BASED ON CAPACITY

Sl. No.	Capacity (litres)	Circular			Square/Rectangular			
		Internal diameter (m)	Height†† (m)	Plan area (m ²)	Inside length* (m)	Inside breadth* (m)	Height†† (m)	Plan area (m ²)
1	300	0.74	0.71	0.430	0.72	0.72	0.58	0.518
2	400	0.81	0.78	0.636	0.80	0.80	0.64	0.640
3	600	0.93	0.89	0.680	0.92	0.92	0.73	0.846
4	800	1.04	1.00	0.850	1.00	1.00	0.80	1.000
5	1000	1.10	1.06	0.950	1.08	1.08	0.86	1.166
6	1500	1.26	1.21	1.227	1.24	1.24	0.99	1.538
7	2000	1.39	1.33	1.517	1.36	1.36	1.09	1.850
8	2500	1.50	1.44	1.767				
9	3000	1.60	1.53	2.010				
10	4000	1.75	1.68	2.405				
11	5000	1.88	1.80	2.776				
12	7000	2.11	2.03	3.497				
13	10,000	2.40	2.30	4.524				

* Suitable rectangular base also can be adopted instead of square

†† Excluding free board

Note : Combinations of the above sizes may be used for multiple and battery type tanks

9.0 Fabrication details

The general fabrication details of ferrocement water tanks of type A, B, C, D and E are given in the Figures mentioned against each type.

Type A	Fig. 7 (a, b, c)
Type B	Fig. 8 (a, b, c)
Type C } Type D }	Fig. 9
Type E	Fig. 10 (a, b)

9.1 Reinforcement

For making a ferrocement water tank, a welded mesh or mild steel rod cage may be made as per the drawing and covered on either side using chicken mesh or square woven mesh as per the requirement. Both meshes and main mild steel rods should be tied together using binding wire along with the fittings such as scour, inlet, outlet and overflow pipe connections and lifting hooks in the correct positions. Now the cage is ready for casting. Similarly, the reinforcement for top cover slab can be made ready including the necessary lifting hooks.

9.2 Casting platform

Since the cage is made to the required shape, a separate shuttering is not necessary while casting the tank. But, to begin with the casting of base slab a plain and level masonry platform is essential. The casting platform is to be lubricated using mould oil in advance before the casting of the tank.

9.3 Casting

Portland cement and river sand sieved through a sieve with aperture size 2.36 may be mixed dry in 1 : 2 proportion by weight. Water is added to the dry mixed mortar. A water cement ratio of 0.5 may be adopted for the preparation of wet mortar. The mesh cage may be placed on the lubricated level platform and the bottom slab of required thickness may be cast. In the second stage, the vertical walls can be plastered with the cement mortar. A small piece of plywood may be used on the opposite side of the plaster as a backup and the mortar may be forced into the cage from one side, and finished to the required thickness by following the same process from either side. Both the inside and outside surfaces should be finished fine after the initial setting of the mortar.

Cover slab may be cast separately on a level platform and finished fine.

9.4 Curing and transportation

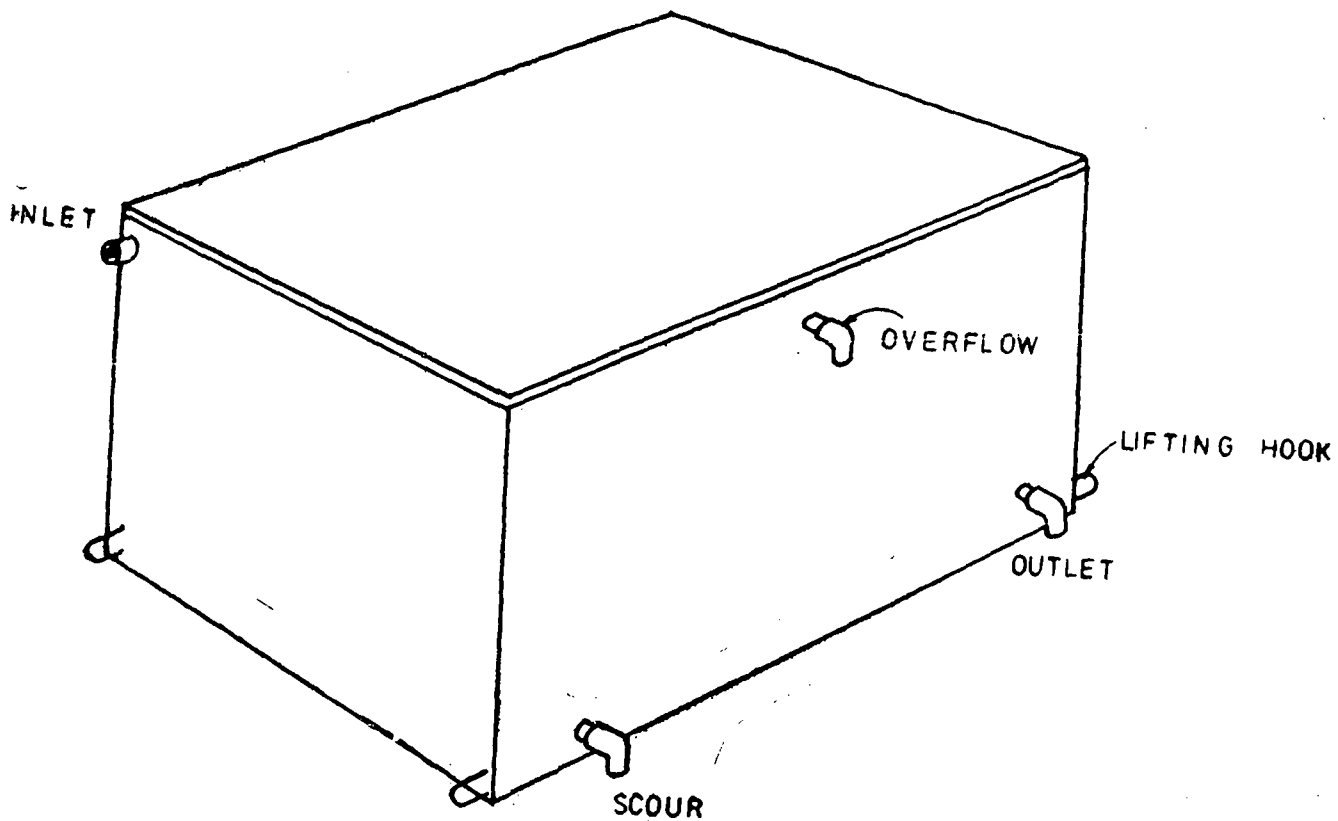
The curing of the tank should be done after 24 hours by using continuous water spray for 7 days. The water tanks will be ready to be handled and transported using lifting hooks by this time.

9.5 Painting

It is always preferable to paint the interior of water tanks using a tankmastic paint of IS-158/8 grade or its equivalent commonly known as drinking water paint. This paint will improve the water tightness.

TABLE - 2 CAPACITY, WEIGHT, AND COST COMPARISON OF FERROCEMENT WATER TANKS

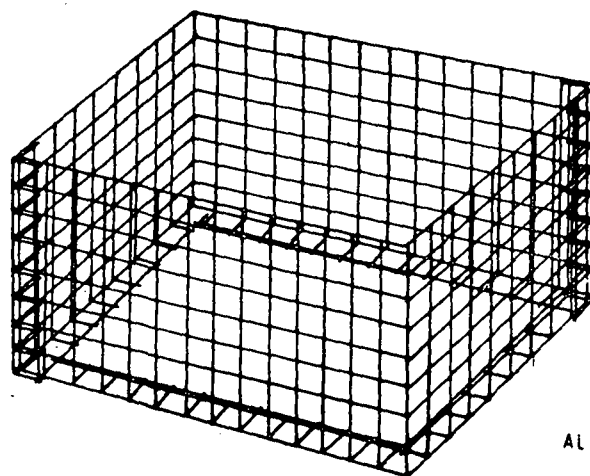
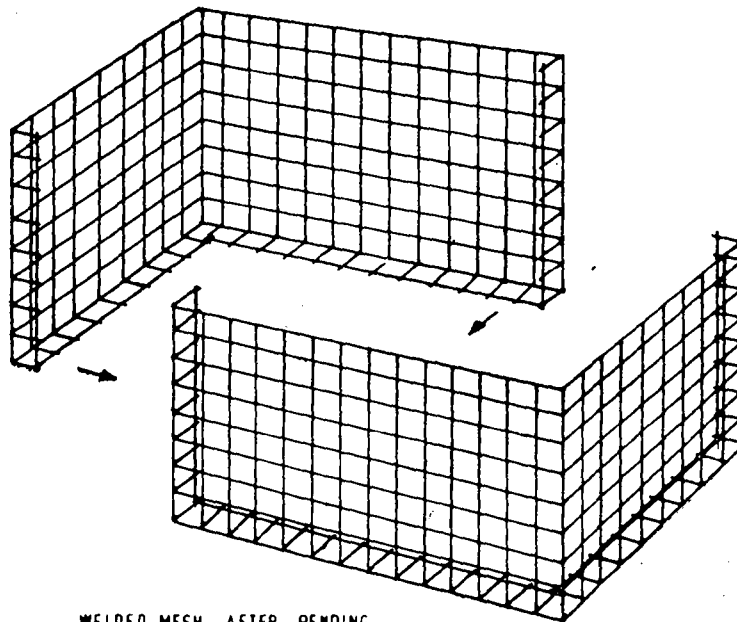
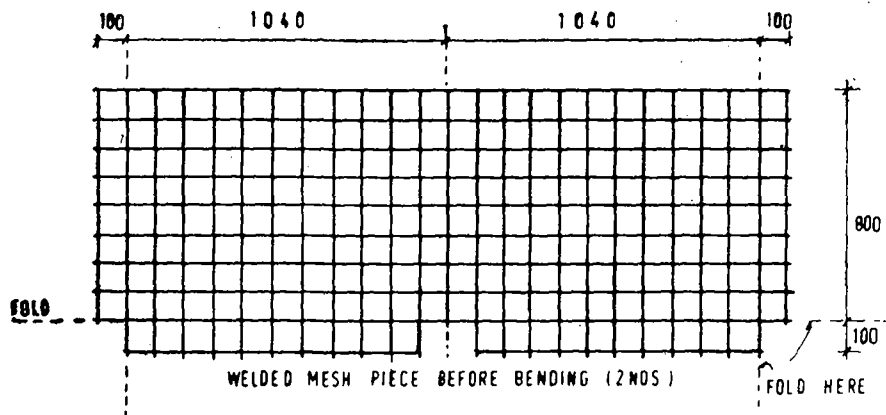
Sl. No.	Type	Description	Capacity litres	Weight Kg.	Cost Rs.
1	A	Rectangular	800	310	250.00
2	B	Circular	800	300	250.00
3	C	Rectangular Twin	1,600 (800 × 2)	580	470.00
4	D	Rectangular Batteries	7,500 (625 × 12)	3300	2200.00
5	E	Circular	5,000	1500	1200.00
	"	"	10,000	2250	2200.00



NOTE :

- (a) 1:2 Cement mortar
- (b) Wall thickness 2.5 cm
- (c) Welded mesh 10 Gauge \times 10 Gauge - 10cm \times 10cm
- (d) Wiremesh 26 Gauge, 2 layers hexagonal 11.5mm spacing
- (e) Suitable lifting hooks are to be provided

Fig. 7(a) Ferrocement rectangular water tank, (Type A) 800 litres capacity



ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MM

Fig. 7(b) Details of welded mesh for square or rectangular tanks (Type A)

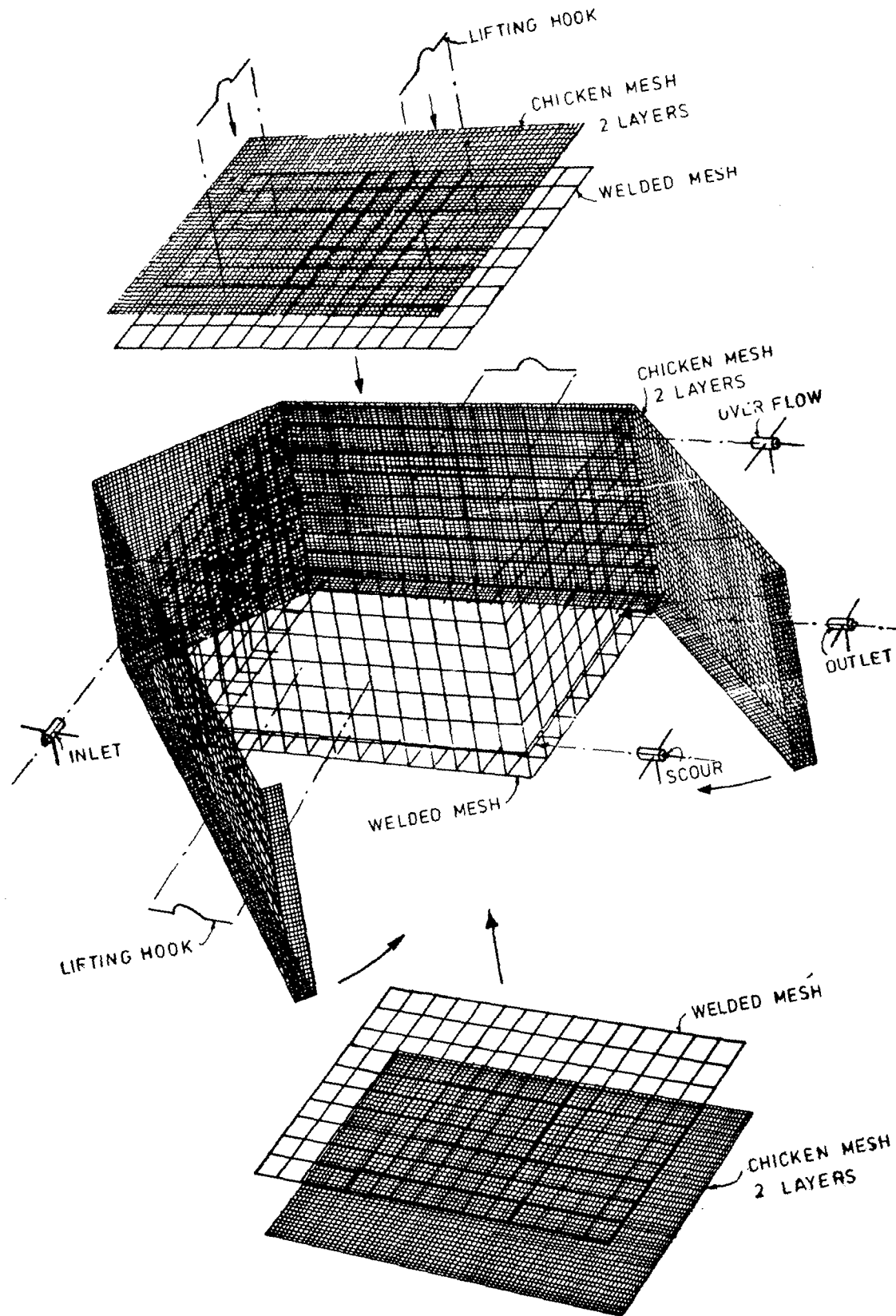
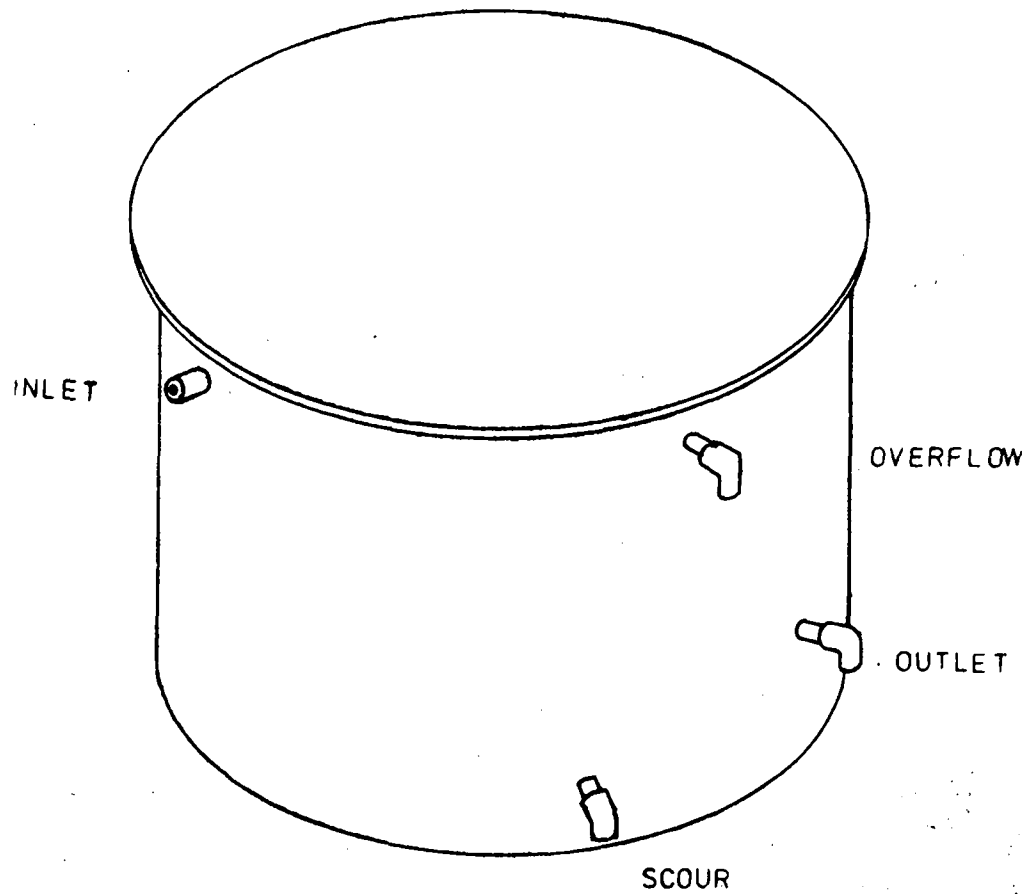


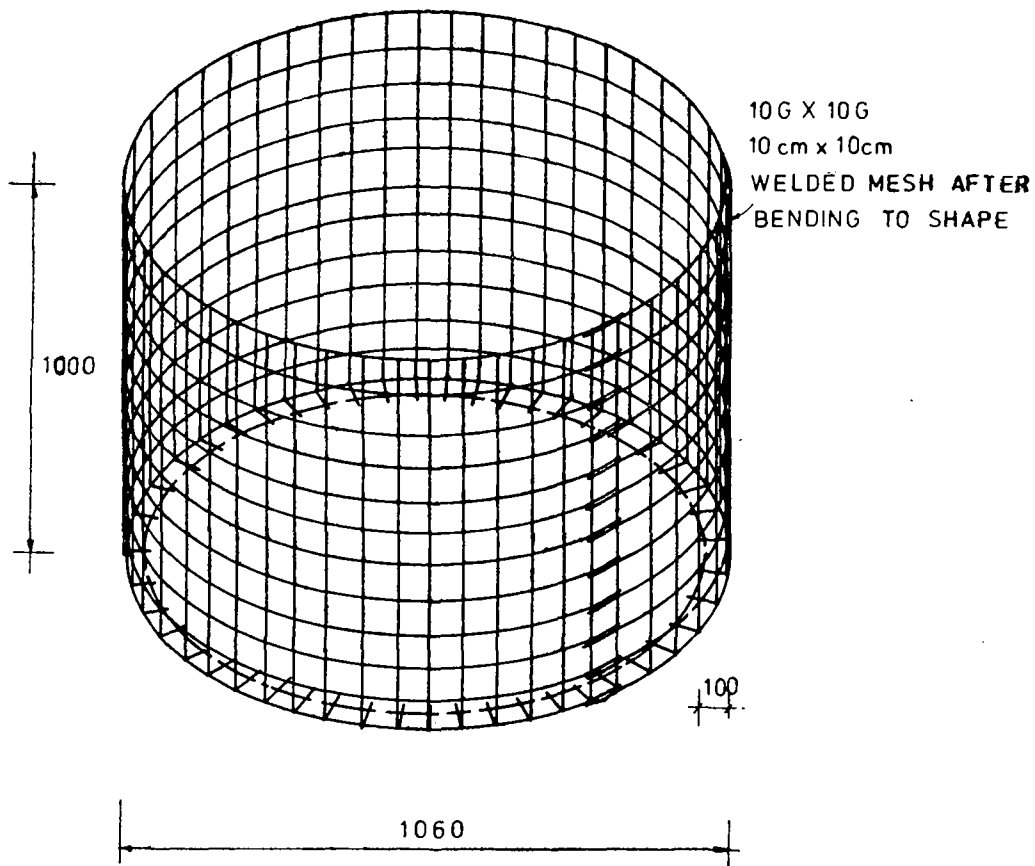
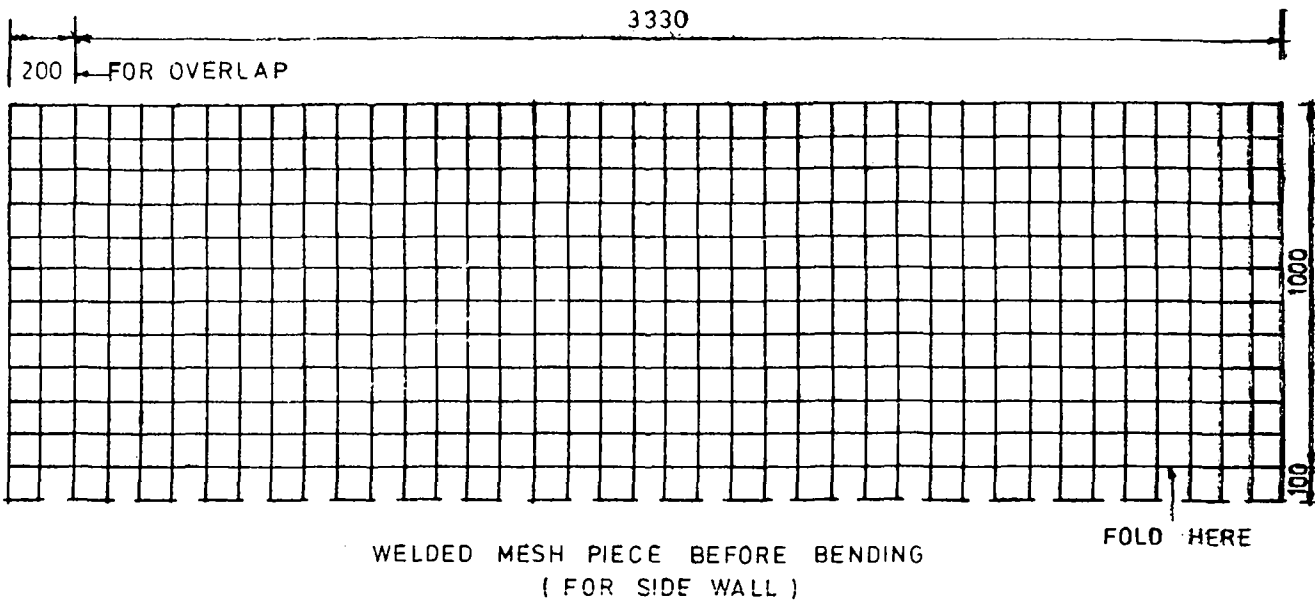
Fig. 7(c) Details of mesh for square or rectangular tanks (Type A)



NOTE :

- (a) 1:2 Cement mortar is to be used
- (b) Wall thickness 2.5 cm
- (c) Welded mesh 10 gauge \times 10 gauge - 10 cm \times 10 cm
- (d) Wiremesh 26 gauge, 2 layers hexagonal 12.5mm spacing
- (e) Suitable lifting hooks are to be provided

Fig. 8(a) Ferrocement circular water tank, 800 litres capacity (Type B)



ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETERS

Fig. 8(b) Details of welded mesh for circular tanks (Type B)

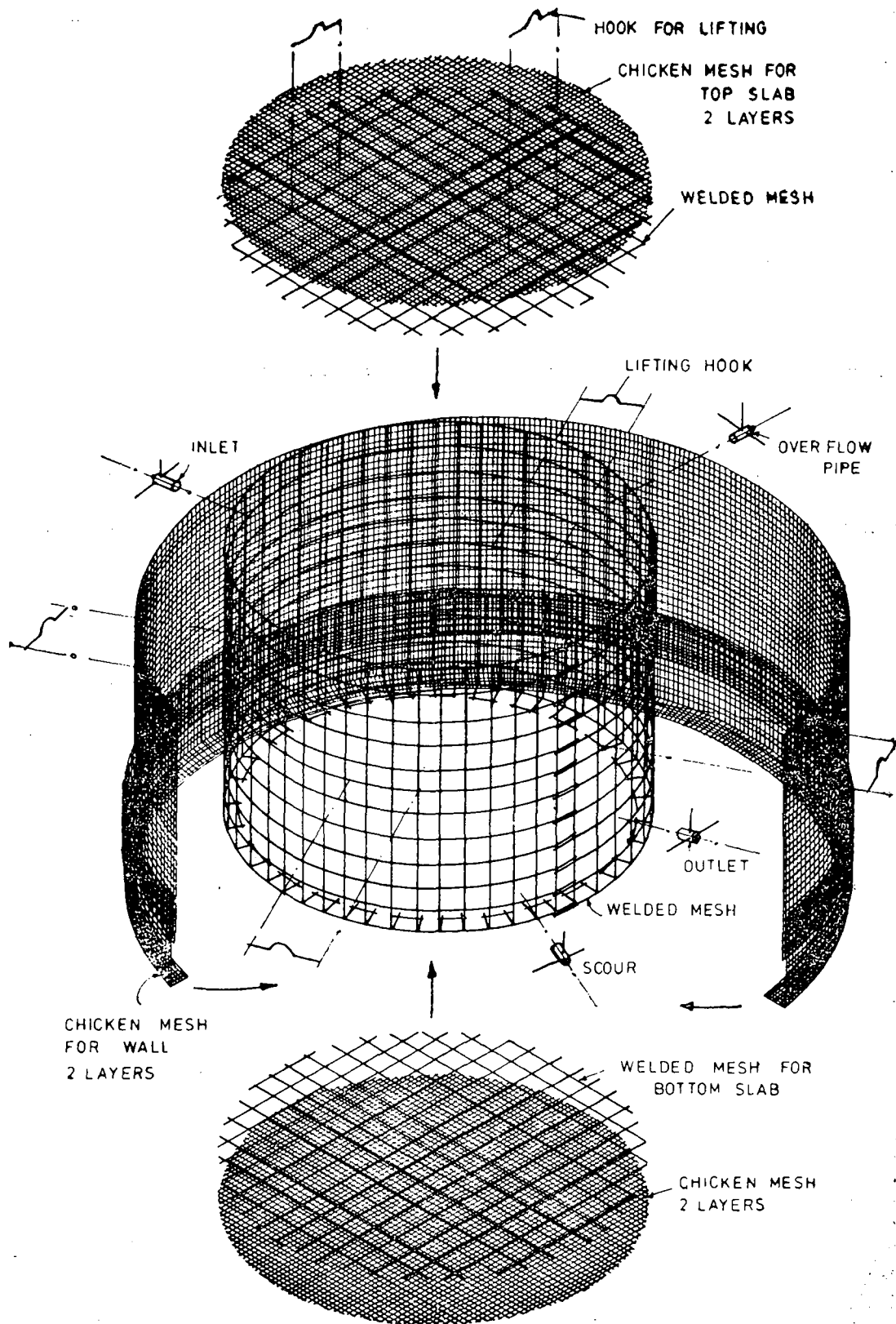


Fig. 8(c) Details of mesh for circular tanks (Type B)

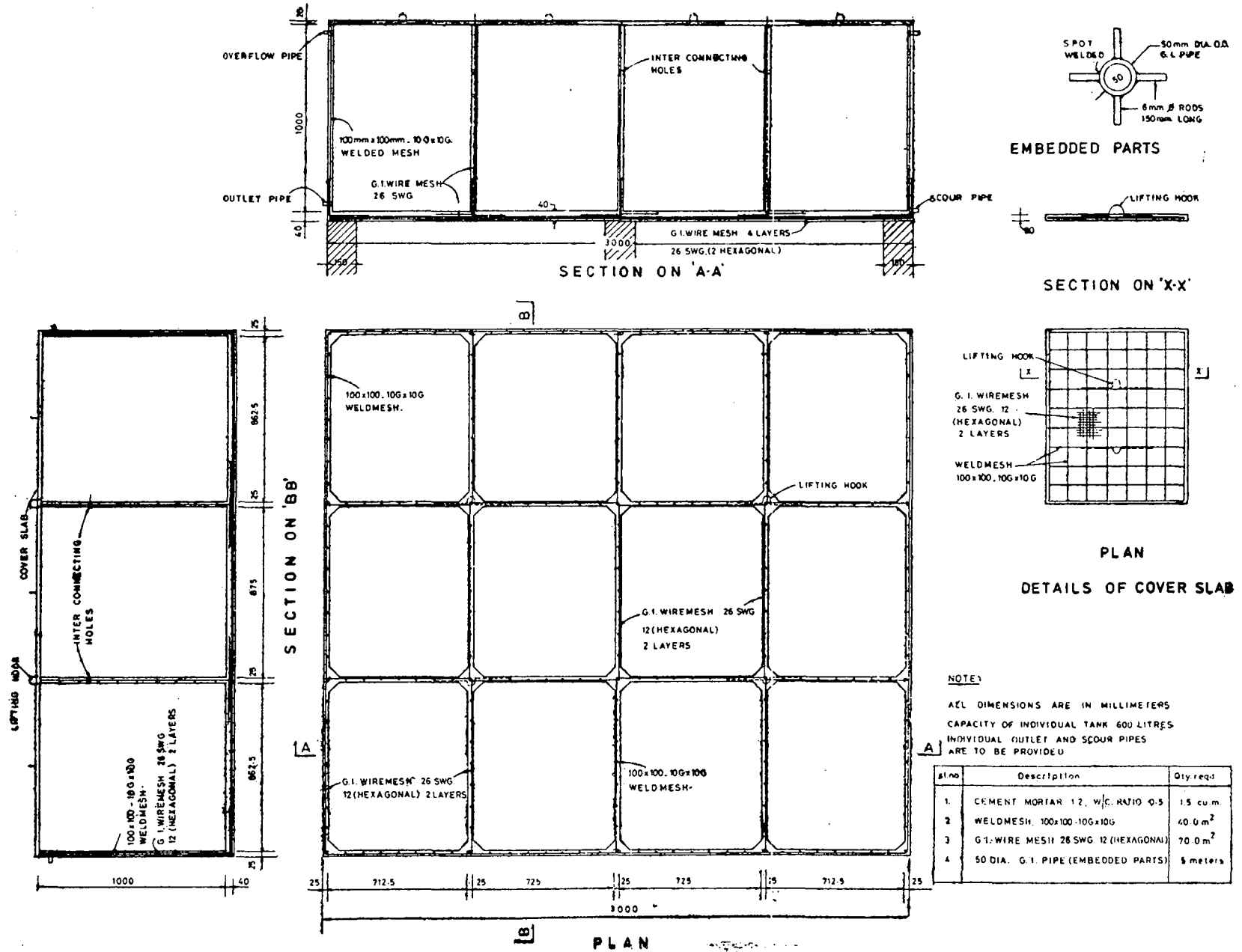
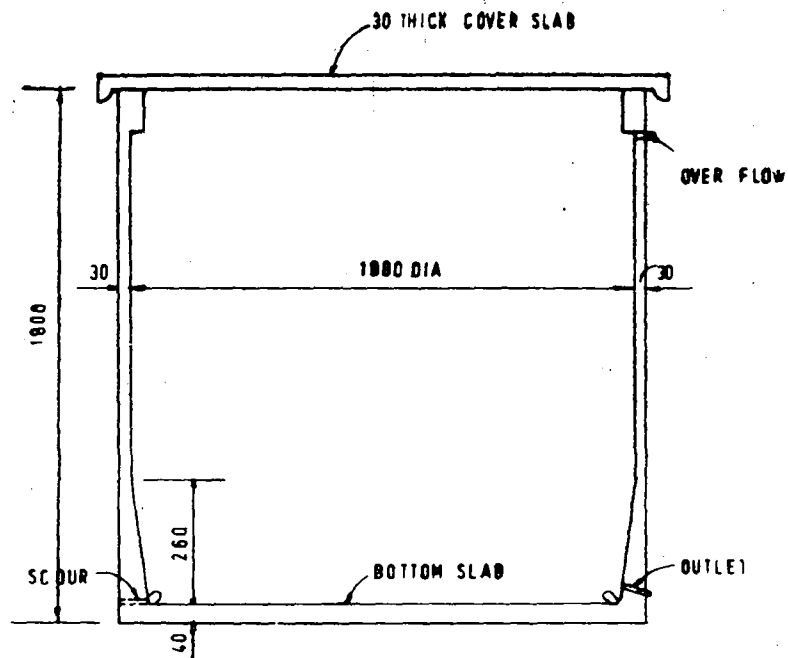
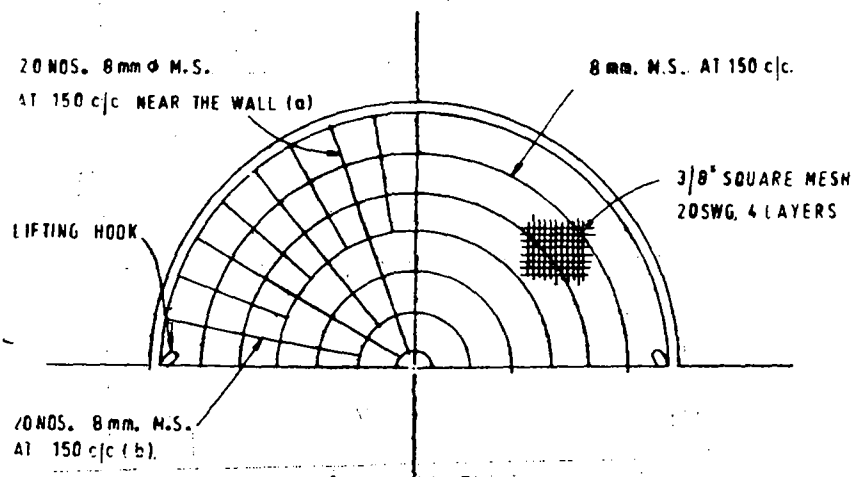


Fig. 9 Battery of rectangular ferrocement tanks (Type D) 7500 litres capacity (12x625 litres approx.)

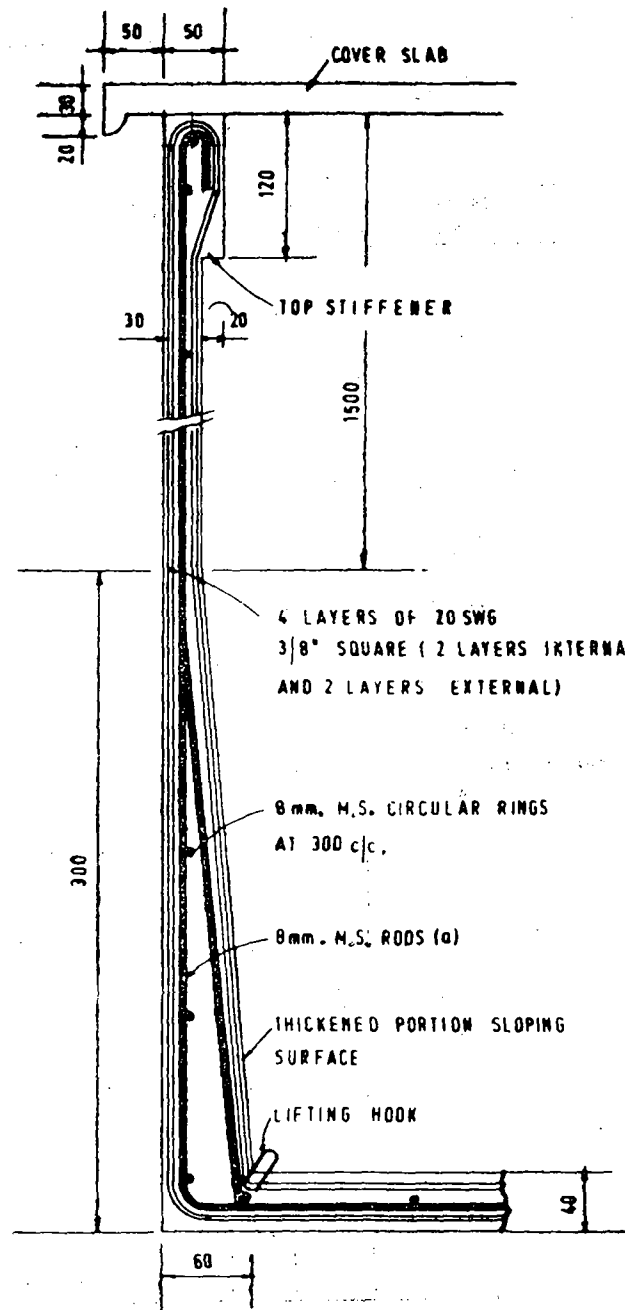


SECTION ON 'A-A'



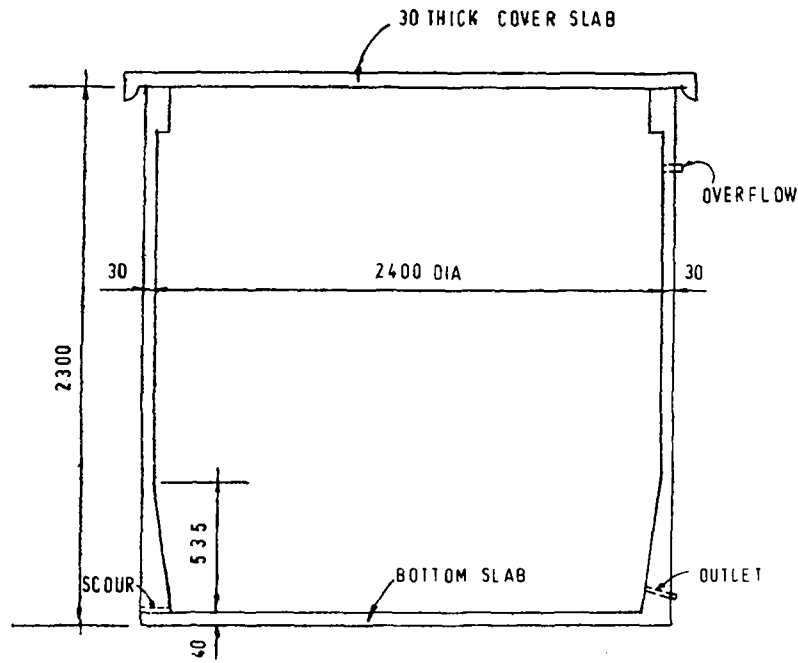
PLAN

NOTE: ALL DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETER

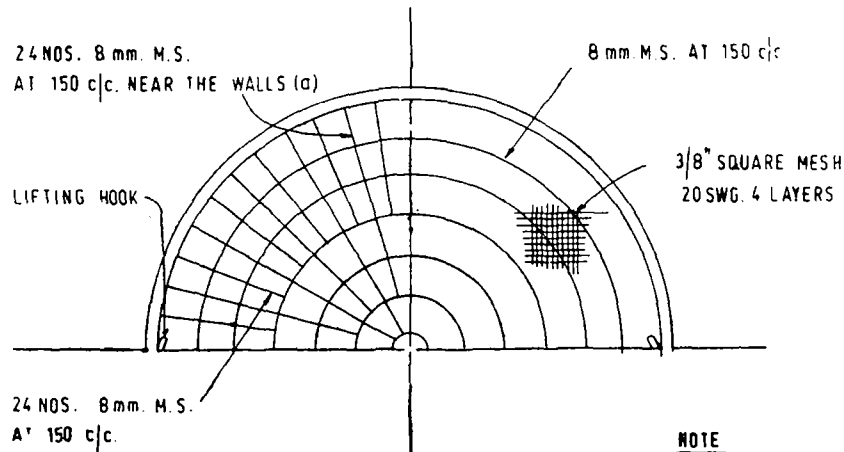


SECTION (ENLARGED)

Fig. 10(a) Ferrocement water tank, 5,000 litres capacity (Type E)



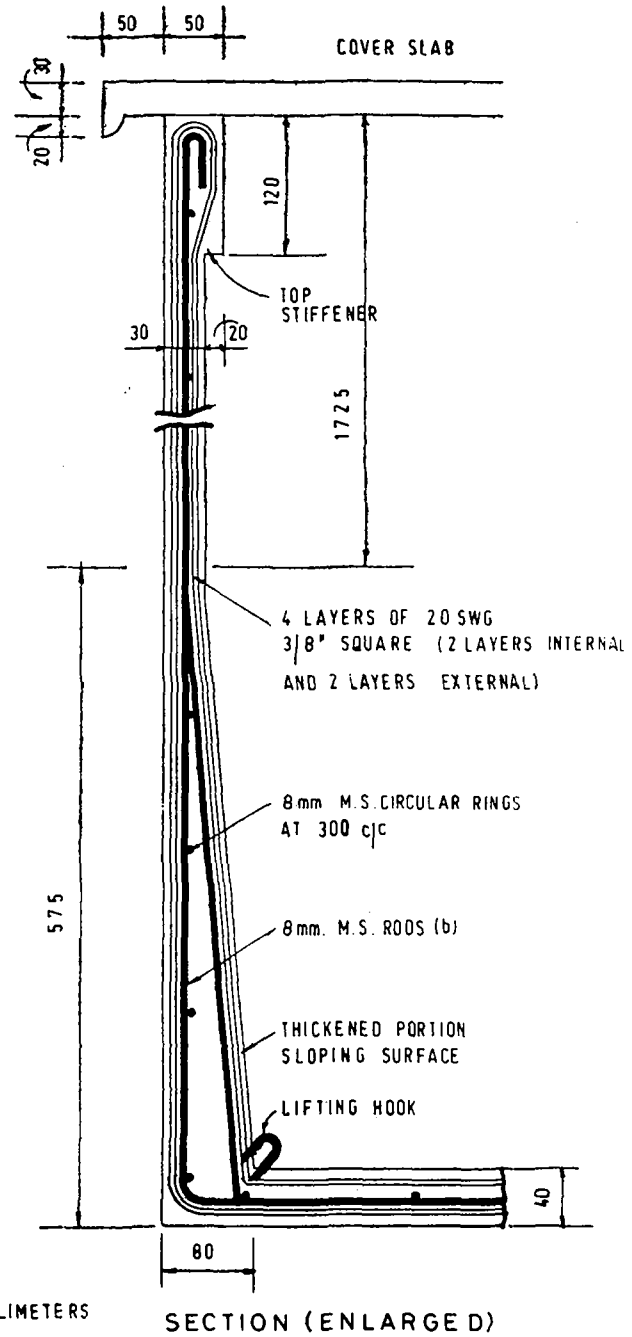
SECTION ON A-A



PLAN

NOTE

ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETERS



SECTION (ENLARGED)

Fig. 10(b) Ferrocement water tank, 10,000 litres capacity (Type E)

APPENDIX 1

I. COST OF FERROCEMENT WATER TANKS OF 800 LITRES CAPACITY

Rectangular (Type A)

Clear size $1.00\text{m} \times 1.00\text{m} \times 0.8\text{m (h)}$

1. Qty. of welded mesh 10 gauge \times 10 gauge — 10cm \times 10cm

Base slab $= 1.00 \times 1.00 = 1.00 \text{ m}^2$
 Side wall $= 4.20 \times 1.00 = 4.20 \text{ m}^2$
 Cover slab $= 1.00 \times 1.00 = 1.00 \text{ m}^2$

6.20 m²

Add for wastage 0.80 m^2

Total 7.00 m²

2. Chicken mesh 20 gauge - spacing 1.25 cm

Base slab $= 2 \times 1.00 \times 1.00 = 2.00 \text{ m}^2$
 Side wall $= 2 \times 4.20 \times 1.00 = 8.40 \text{ m}^2$
 Cover slab $= 2 \times 1.00 \times 1.00 = 2.00 \text{ m}^2$

12.40 m²

Add for wastage 0.60 m^2

Total 13.00 m²

3. 6 mm M.S. rod

For hook - $2 \times 0.6\text{m} \times 0.22 = 0.30 \text{ Kg}$

Fins of fixtures $4 \times 0.15\text{m} \times 3 \times 0.22 = 0.40 \text{ Kg}$

0.70 Kg

4. Cement

Volume of cement mortar 1 : 2

Base slab $= 1.04 \times 1.04 \times 0.03 = 0.034 \text{ m}^3$

Cover slab $= 1.08 \times 1.08 \times 0.03 = 0.035 \text{ m}^3$

Side wall $= 4.08 \times 0.80 \times 0.02 = 0.065 \text{ m}^3$

0.134 m³

Quantity of cement required

$0.134 \times 720 = 97.00 \text{ Kg}$

Add for wastage $= 13.00 \text{ Kg}$

Total 110.00 Kg

5. Sand

Sand required $= 0.134 \text{ m}^3$

Wastage etc. $= 0.013 \text{ m}^3$

0.147 m³

6. Labour L. S.

7. Welding L. S.

COST

Rs. P.

1 Weld mesh 7.00 m^2 at Rs. 8/m² $= 56.00$

2 Chicken mesh 13.0 m^2 at Rs. 6.00/m² $= 78.00$

3 6 mm M.S rod 0.7 Kg at Rs. 2472/M.T. $= 1.69$

4 Cement 2.2 bags at Rs. 21/bag $= 46.20$

5 Sand 0.147 m^3 at Rs. 35/m³ $= 5.15$

6 Labour L.S. $= 40.00$

7 Welding of fins for outlets and scour $= 10.00$

8 Oil, grease, mixer, etc. L.S. $= 12.00$

Total = 249.04

Say $= 250.00$

Cost per litre $= \text{Rs. } 0.31$

Cost per gallon $= \text{Rs. } 1.42$

II CONVENTIONAL WATER TANK WITH BRICK WORK, 800 LITRES CAPACITY

Size of the tank = 4'0" × 3' 0" × 2'4½"

1. Cement concrete 1 : 1½ : 3 for RCC base slab

Base slab = 1 × 5'6" × 4'6" × 0'4" = 8.25 cft or
(0.233 m³)

2. Brick work in CM 1 : 3 using stock bricks :

Wall around = 1 × 17'0" × 0'9" × 2'4½" = 30.28
cft (0.857 m³)

3. Plastering with CM 1 : 3, ½" thick mixed with water proofing compound

Bottom 1 × 4'0" × 3'0" = 12.00 sft

Inside 1 × 14'0" × 2'4½" = 33.25 sft

—————
Total 45.25 sft (4.20m²)
—————

4. Plastering with CM 1 : 5, ½" thick

Outside 1 × 20'0" × 2'10½" = 57.50 sft (5.34 m²)

5. Providing form work

Bottom of base and cover slab 2 × 4'0" × 3'0"
= 24.00 sft

Side of base slab 1 × 20'0" × 0'4" }
1 × 20'0" × 0'2" } = 10.00 sft

—————
34.00 sft
Total (3.16 m²)

6. Cement concrete 1 : 2 : 4 for RCC cover slab

Cover slab: 1 × 5'6" × 4'6" × 0'2" = 4.13 cft

Deduct for manhole cover: 1 × 1'6" × 1'6" × 0'2"
= 0.38 cft

—————
Net Total 3.75 cft)
(0.106m³)

7. Fabrication of mild steel : 2.3 × 9 = 20.7 Kg

8. 18" × 18" G.I. manhole cover fan 1 × 1 = 1 No.

ABSTRACT

	Rs. P.
1. C.C. 1 : 1½ : 3 for base slab excluding cost of steel and formwork 0.233 cum at Rs. 265.92/cum	61.96
2. Brickwork in CM 1:3, 0.857 cu.m at Rs. 138.87/cum	119.01
3. Plastering with CM 1:3, ½" thick mixed with W.P.C. 4.20 sq.m at Rs. 6.00/sqm	25.20
4. Plastering with CM 1:5, ½" thick 5.34 sqm at Rs. 3.95/m²	21.09
5. Formwork 3.16m² at Rs.14.32/m²	45.25
6. C.C. 1:2:4 for RCC cover slab 0.106 cum at Rs. 224.85/m³	23.83
7. Mild steel cost including fabrication charge	51.17
8. Manhole cover fan with erection charge	32.00
Total	379.51
	Say Rs. 380.00

Cost per litre Rs. 0.48

Cost per gallon Rs. 2.16

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