

DSS-P.04.03 | Processing / Manufacturing Features

Spandrel Opacity Variation (system tolerance)

Specialty/Decorative Systems - reference; generally not “damage”

Diagnosis summary

Spandrel glass uses an opaque back-paint or ceramic-frit system to mask building elements. Minor opacity/tonal variation is a system/production tolerance (paint film build, substrate/cavity effects) and is not a worked-surface defect. Evaluate using the VIS inspection lighting/geometry;

Field identification cues

- Surface-catch class (MSRT): SC-0 (none). One light, non-marring pass per VIS §5.5; do not abrade or repeat. On suspected coated faces, prefer a polymer stylus or rely on visual cues. MSRT supports classification only.
- Visual signature: Pane-scale opacity/tonal non-uniformity without a local “worked” perimeter, transition edge, chip flanks, or pits/craters.
- Viewing/lighting: Inspect at 12 / 36 / 72 in, normal incidence and oblique sweep (~60°-120°) under raking light; surfaces clean & dry (non-invasive reveal).
- Location/access: Log pane ID & surface numbering (#1-#4; laminate-internal) on forms; acceptance pertains to the exposed surface being evaluated.

Classification, severity and scope

- Not field damage.
- Escalate / reclassify when localized anomalies are present:
- Pinholes/holidays or adhesion-loss islands in the back-paint → Co.04.02 / Co.04.03 (coating defects on spandrel).
- Surface rub/patchiness on an exterior coated face (non-spandrel functional coat) → Co.01/Co.03 and classify by CAT per VIS (appearance-only).
- Between-pane look-alike (fixed parallax in an IGU) → CAT-5 (out of in-place scope by location); refer per project protocol.

Distinguishing criteria

- vs. Coating anomalies (worked-surface): Coating rub/patchiness is localized, may show a worked boundary, and is disallowed at acceptance on coated faces (VIS §6.2.e).
- vs.
- vs. Decorative glazing texture: Patterned/textured glass has intentional surface relief (design).

Documentation and inspection

- Photo set (VIS): 12 / 36 / 72 in, normal + oblique; include raking frames that show pane-scale tone/mottle, and at least one context frame establishing lack of a local.
- MSRT result: Record SC-0 (one pass only; non-marring; polymer stylus on suspected coatings).
- Forms: Pane ID; product family & surface numbering; worked surface Y/N; functional coating present on worked surface?

Safety / repairability boundary: Complete only the non-invasive reveal and inspection steps authorized by the controlling VIS guidance. Classification does not authorize restoration, establish acceptance, or override stop-work, coating, crack, integrity, access, chemical, fall-protection, or project-specific requirements.

Full DSS publication: use the catalog download. Web specification:

<https://a7df714357.nxcli.io/learning-center/resource-center/damage-specification-standards/dss-p-04-03-spandrel-opacity-variation-system-tolerance/>