

conventional types of lubrication cannot be used.

1.9 Lubrication and Surface Finishes

Rolling contact bearings have to be lubricated in addition to having exceedingly good surface finishes.

The life of a rolling element bearing depends to a large extent on the smoothness of the contacting surfaces – the balls, rollers, and races. Typical surface roughness dimensions for production bearings are as follows:

Balls	2– 3 $\mu\text{in rms}$
Ball races	6–10 $\mu\text{in rms}$
Rollers	8–12 $\mu\text{in rms}$
Roller races	10–20 $\mu\text{in rms}$

These are in terms of microinches or millionths of an inch, usually written μin .

The unit of measurement of the surface roughness is rms which stands for “root-mean-square height”. This value is obtained by drawing a diamond point instrument over the surface with a magnified readout. These measurements are taken at equidistant points on the profile, squaring these values, adding them, dividing the sum by the number of readings taken and taking the square root of this average.

There are calibrated specimens available and surface roughness can be established by comparison to the specimen.

Surface finishes of bearings vary considerably from manufacturer to manufacturer. They are usually not given specifically for each product.

As far as lubrication is concerned, in general, the application environment will usually dictate the proper lube required. Today’s lubrication selection has varied greatly over the past few years. Modern methods of mixing, compounding and blending various additives and bases has become a very exact science, a far cry from late 1940 when almost all lubricants were a refined petroleum product.

Operational conditions such as temperature, loads, speed, environment and torque available, will determine what type should be used – oil, grease or dry films. Oil fluid is the base lubricant for nearly all bearings, whereas grease is an oil that has been thickened. The use of lubrication will reduce friction and wear, prevent corrosion or oxidation and help to prevent heat buildup within the bearing. Other benefits that result from proper lubrication are quietness, lower torque and extended life. Lubrication selection is very important to good bearing performance. The following tables of lubrications shown are the most widely used by bearing users today. Due to the constant change of product demand and scientific technology, we recommend that a QBC engineer be consulted if you cannot locate a suitable lubrication in the following charts.

Unless otherwise specified by the customer, QBC will supply bearings with an oil lubrication meeting military specifications (MIL-L-6085A) or grease meeting (MIL-G-23827A).

The numbering system developed by QBC incorporates a lubrication code. This gives the user an opportunity to specify the lubricant required as per **Table 1-10**. In case the code numbers assigned do not cover the lubricant required, **Tables 1-11** thru **1-13** list the lubricants available on special orders.