MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
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UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING
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DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Forecast of Policy for Unique Identification of Tangible Items – UPDATE

On February 11-12, 2003, the Department of Defense (DoD) Unique Identification (UID) Integrated Product Team (IPT), met to further define policy requirements and an implementation strategy to achieve a long-term UID item marking vision. During the two-day offsite meeting, the IPT re-validated the vision established in my December 19, 2002 memorandum, defined key terms for unique identification of tangible items, and made great strides in rationalizing requirements of existing standards to support DoD’s use of unique identification. The purpose of this memorandum is to communicate that progress and establish the next steps for the UID IPT.

The IPT validated that:

- The purpose of UID is to identify a set of data for tangible assets that is globally unique and unambiguous, ensures data integrity and data quality throughout the life of the asset, and supports multi-faceted business applications and users.
- The unique identification of tangible assets will rely, to the maximum extent practicable, on international standards and commercial item markings and not impose unique government requirements.
- Implementation of UID will facilitate item tracking in DoD business systems as well as the capture of reliable and accurate data for life-cycle asset management, accountability, and financial purposes.
- This UID solution is different from that being developed for real property.
The IPT identified the minimum data set for the UID and defined several key terms integral to the implementation of a UID policy. Included in those terms are the data content elements of the UID. Familiarization and understanding of those key terms and the evolving policy can be accomplished by reviewing the attachments to this memorandum.

Additional policy communications will be forthcoming as further definition is achieved. My plan remains to make UID item marking a mandatory requirement for all new weapons systems programs, including major modifications, no later than July 2003.

The IPT will continue to work on remaining issues in the following areas:

- Develop policy for marking of tangible items already in inventory and operational use, specifically focusing on requirements of major system modifications.
- Issue an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to expedite two Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) cases:
  - One on item marking, and
  - One on item value.
- Develop business strategies to prioritize the application of UID to legacy items.
- Submit proposed collaborative standards solution through International Organization of Standards (ISO) process to obtain approval by Sub Committee 31.
- Prepare a pledge document for key business stakeholders to ensure support for this strategic imperative.
- Develop a users guide on UID requirements and application.
- Determine minimum architecture/systems requirements to capture UID information at inspection and acceptance and identify opportunities for rapid implementation.

The point of contact is Lt Col Gregory Redick. Questions concerning this guidance should be addressed to him at (703) 614-3883 or by email at Gregory.redick@osd.mil.

Attachment:
As stated

Michael W. Wynne
Key Terms Defined for Unique Identification (UID) of Tangible Items

The UID Integrated Product Team (IPT) Standards Team defined several key terms integral to the implementation of a UID policy. Included in these terms are content data elements of the UID, the construction of which will provide an item mark that globally, uniquely, and unambiguously identifies tangible assets for traceability. The data elements, and other key terms, are defined as follows:

- **Enterprise**: The entity responsible for assigning [permanent] unique item identifiers to tangible assets
- **Enterprise Identifier**: A code uniquely assigned to an enterprise by a registration (or controlling) authority
- **Registration (or Controlling) Authority**: An organization responsible for assigning a non-repeatable identifier to an enterprise [e.g., Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), European Article Number (EAN), Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code, or Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)]
- **Unique Serial Number**: A code assigned by the enterprise to an item providing for the differentiation of that item from any other like and unlike item
- **Product Serial Number**: A code assigned by the enterprise to an item providing for the differentiation of that item from any other like item
- **Part Number**: A code assigned by the enterprise responsible for the configuration of a class of items with the same form, fit, function, and interface
DRAFT
POLICY FOR
UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION OF TANGIBLE ITEMS

UID Data Content Elements

In defining the optimal data content elements, data elements that could change over time were excluded in order to ensure the UID would remain constant over the life of the asset. To track important data elements susceptible to change over time, such as acquisition cost and part number, the IPT recommended those data elements be linked to the UID via an information system (IS) rather than being embedded in the data content. The following data content elements were identified to fulfill the required purpose of the UID:

- For part numbers that may change over time due to redesign or improvement, the UID is a combination of the enterprise identifier and a unique serial number
- Where industry practice does not change part numbers over the life of the specific item, the UID is a combination of the enterprise identifier, the part number, and the product serial number

Proposed Data Standard (Collaborative Solution)

After defining the necessary data content elements, current industry standards were compared for data content and structure to identify a data standard to support the global UID. Differences in data syntax were found to exist in ISO 15434, Syntax for High Capacity ADC Media and ISO Technical Specification (TS) 21849, Product Identification - Integrated Data Processing Part Management. The Standards Team proposed a collaborative solution to:

- Modify TS 21849 to include ISO/IEC 15434 syntax, specifically data element separator, header, and terminator characters
- Request of the ISO/IEC JTC1/SC31 that the modified TS 21849 be added to ISO/IEC 15434 as a new code format (draft developed; pending submittal to US Technical Advisory Group, Apr 2003)
- Use the proposed revised ISO/IEC 15434 as the UID syntax standard for interim and post approval process

The proposed collaborative data standard will enhance interoperability across industries and governments by providing standard, unambiguous message syntax for machine reading of the UID.

Applying UID

The unique item marking of tangible items is required under certain circumstances, and takes into consideration various requirements of functional areas needing to track and identify item information. In general, a UID is required to be applied to tangible items as follows (also see attached decision tree):
• Commercial markings on tangible items will be accepted as long as they meet data requirements and syntax for unique identification for the DoD.
  o Generally, consumable items are marked by industry with sufficient information to distinguish between unlike items.
  o The Universal Product Code will generally be acceptable for marking items that do not require a differentiation between like items.
• If an item is greater than $5,000 in acquisition cost, it will be uniquely marked.
• If an item is less than $5,000 in acquisition cost, it will be uniquely marked if it is a piece of equipment or a reparable item that is either serially managed, mission essential, or controlled inventory. If the item is either a consumable item or material, it will be uniquely marked only if permanent identification is required.
• Items with an acquisition cost greater than $5,000; or items within an end item will also require a UID where those items are reparable, serially managed, mission essential or controlled inventory with a cost less than $5,000; will be recorded In an appropriate property or inventory management information system. This requirement will impact existing logistics and configuration management processes.
• Equipment items with an acquisition cost greater than $100,000 will be capitalized and depreciated in accordance with the DoD Financial Management Regulation (DoD 7000.14-R).
The application of legal numerals, letters, digits, symbols, or colors to ensure proper handling and identification during shipment and

Diagrams - A visual representation of objects or concepts. Examples include diagrams, flowcharts, timelines, and charts. EXHIBITS M - Provide an image of the event or object being described, should the reader need to refer to it later.

Essential Elements - A concise statement of the main points or critical aspects of the story. Examples include a timeline, a list of events, or a summary.

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E2.12. Item: A generic term meaning any product stocked, issued, or used.

E2.15. End-item: The final combination of end product, component parts, and/or materials, capable of functioning independently.

DUIPOLAGOLIS & MATERIAL FEASIBILITY MEMORANDUM, September 4, 2002, Surgical Item Management (SIM)