

# NATO CODIFICATION SYSTEM



## Newsletter

release 07 dated 10 Jan 2008

### 92<sup>nd</sup> AC/135 Meeting in the Ancient City of Athens

The National Directors on Codification from NATO nations gathered on 6-8 November 2007 in Athens (Greece) for their 92<sup>nd</sup> Main Group Meeting. Recognizing the ever increasing importance of data quality, AC/135 has adopted a detailed plan to implement specific actions and metrics aimed at improving both the quality of existing data and compliance with common processes and methods for NATO codification tasks. The objective is to establish key performance indicators for quality codification. The selected metrics provide an excellent tool for national use and will help entities performing codification to align their efforts on AC/135 strategy and objectives. The next step will involve a more standardized



approach to the training of cataloguers, the idea being to establish a recommended curriculum that would guarantee a common understanding of codification methodology. Under German leadership in this area, quality has become a prime objective and is stimulating progress amongst AC/135 members. In the area of services, AC/135 intends to investigate the possibility of cataloguing services to meet a need felt in the procurement environment. Ambiguities are likely to be resolved through standardized naming of services.

The linkage of NSNs with the Reportable Item Codes used by NATO Response Forces has been the subject of an ongoing feasibility study in which Canada and Belgium have taken the lead to analyse linkage in the ammunition family of items.

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of NATO Codification

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting of AC/135 will be held on 10 June 2008 in the Royal Military Academy in Brussels. Themed on 'Codification - the DNA of Modern Logistics', the event will focus on the logistics challenges of NATO operations and the relevance of codification data to materiel management.

### Sponsorship Concept

In addition to its prime objective of operating the NCS, AC/135 hopes that increased dialogue with nations around the world will also help to foster mutual understanding. In recognition of the invaluable contribution from Tier 2 nations and their commitment to the NCS, the Group of Directors has invited Tier 2 nations to take part in the autumn Main Group meetings. Based on the results of tests performed by Panel A and its positive recommendation, the Directors unanimously endorsed Tier 2 sponsorship for Finland from 1 January 2008. The addition of Finland brings the number of nations participating in the NCS at Tier 2 level to seven, and testing for Tier 2 compliance has just started for Malaysia.



NCB Directors and experts from Argentina, Brazil, Spain and NAMSA under the chairmanship of UK NCB Director attended the "NCS Seminar" held in Chile as speakers. The Sultanate of Oman has recently been successfully connected to the NATO MailBox System. The Main Group also considered new applications for sponsorship from Afghanistan, Georgia and India.

Directors joined the Chairman in thanking Mr H. Rose of NAMSA for his nine years of outstanding efforts to expand the sponsorship concept and bring the BASELOG programme to maturity, and wished him a sunny golfing retirement.

## The largest Materiel Information Database in the World

The enhanced and enriched NATO Master Catalogue of References for Logistics (NMCRL<sup>plus</sup>) contains a wealth of information on all the NATO Stock Numbers in existence. In addition, NMCRL<sup>plus</sup> holds some 32 million manufacturer part numbers and details of over 1.5 million vendors. The catalogue has been significantly expanded to display characteristics data in coded and decoded format and now includes predefined batch queries. From January 2008 onwards, new subscription fees will apply for access to NMCRL<sup>plus</sup> via Internet. This successful product is constantly being improved: enhanced functionalities planned for NMCRL<sup>plus</sup> over the coming months include queries on characteristics data, a batch processing capability and a platform allowing data to be refreshed more frequently.

## NCB College 2008

The Logistics Information Management Course for International Logisticians (NCB College) will be held from August 18 to September 19, 2008. This five week training program is held annually at the Defense Logistics Information Service, Battle Creek, Michigan. To satisfy the ever increasing interest of nations in a more cost effective program, adaptable to the busy schedules of our customers, the program was redesigned from eight to five weeks for 2008. It provides a broad management overview of the procedures, tools, and information system infrastructure necessary to implement a national defense department cataloging system. Participants have the opportunity to be exposed to the Battle Creek community and the American way of life through a variety of informational programs such as visits to the District Court, Fire/Police Departments, and Mayor's Office. You will find full details about the college at [http://www.dlis.dla.mil/nato/ncbc\\_home.asp](http://www.dlis.dla.mil/nato/ncbc_home.asp).

## R&D – Codification at Source



Seeking solution to a constant challenge in obtaining access to the needed technical documentation in a timely manner, AC/135 has elaborated the Smart STEP Codification (SSC) model with a view of harnessing new technologies for data capture and for accelerating codification processes.

This experimental project is the biggest and probably the most complex piece of research and development work that AC/135 has ever embarked upon. The initial objective of the SSC project has been to demonstrate the 'cataloguing at source' concept by using the ECCMA Open Technical Dictionary (eOTD) to codify items associated with a new weapon system: the ROSOMAK advanced modular vehicle (AMV). CTC and ECCMA have delivered an eOTD Application Guide that presents alternate strategies involving collection of data for cataloguing from enterprise resource planning (ERP) and product data management (PDM) systems. The guide describes the processes and materials needed to work with vendors, which will be selected according to their technical ability and willingness to participate in a cataloguing at source project. Step-by-step guidance will be provided to enable vendors to locate cataloguing data and provide it to a requesting NCB.

At this stage of the SSC2 project, software has been demonstrated which is capable of converting eOTD catalogue data into a codification segment format with characteristics data for 50 selected Approved Item Names. The verification and testing process has enabled the Polish NCB to generate the first NSNs, using SSC2 procedures and tools developed in the project.



AC/135's goal is for the NCS to be used by equipment designers, manufacturers, logisticians and materiel managers as a common methodology for identifying and describing items throughout the supply chain process using a common language. The US NCB, in cooperation with Lehigh University, is conducting a project aiming to harness the potential of the OWL Web Ontology Language and eOTD in order to integrate different systems and product language ontologies such as eCI@ss, Common Procurement Vocabulary, NAICS, and UNSPSC.