

96th Meeting of AC/135 Main Group

The autumn meeting of AC/135 Main Group took place in the Austrian capital, Vienna, from 10 to 12 November 2009.

This was the first time a meeting of the NATO Group of National Directors on Codification had been hosted by Austria, which is both a Partnership for Peace country and a Tier 2 participant in the NATO codification sponsorship programme.



Directors meeting in Vienna

Contemporary logistics practices require all-embracing solutions to be put in place through Performance Based Logistics (PBL) or Contractor Logistics Support (CLS) contracts. The PBL solution covers both delivery of items and maintenance services; however there are potential concerns that at some point a contractor might withdraw from a contract leaving item codification unsupported. Alongside the increasing number of PBL contracts, National Codification Bureaux (NCBs) are under pressure to assign separate NATO Stock Numbers to allow items to be controlled via a unique identification. Some NCBs had successfully managed to solve these issues through close cooperation with manufacturers enabling codification to be performed in the framework of PBL or CLS arrangements. Partnering with industry is crucial for successful integration of PBL or CLS into the supply architecture.

A number of new Information Technology (IT) projects have been introduced into the NATO Codification System (NCS) over the past two years. AC/135 has included these in the 5-year IT strategy plan that has become an important planning tool for both nations and NAMSAs. One recently approved project is the re-engineering of the NAMSAs Codification Management System (NACOMS) with delivery scheduled by 2014.

Australia's national approach to reducing warehousing costs involves cutting the number of depots and improving management by using more comprehensive data. Packaging and storage data is being considered for exchange between nations and for display in NMCRLplus, which would provide relevant information for transport and operations planning.



Token presented by Austrian NCB

The importance of using Approved Item Names (AIN) was underpinned by the findings drawn from the exercise of linking NATO Codification System and Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) codes which are compulsory for public procurement activities in the European Union. A Belgian-led study had proven that 97% of NSNs with Approved Item Names can be rapidly linked automatically with CPV codes. Further work on enhancing data quality related to AINs is ongoing thanks to the USA's data cleansing and Item Identification Guides (IIG) automation projects.

The TriCod working group's initiative to introduce a corporate listing of acquired weapon systems aims to facilitate the population of databases of purchased equipment to include lists of their spare parts.

Panel A will focus on succeeding in processing 80% of codification requests (LSAs) within 60 days and has already encouraged nations to reject LSAs submitted without supporting documentation. The proposal to have characteristics data submitted with LSAs and the Australian proposal that the first purchasing country should codify might ease some of the LSA processing burden.



24th meeting of TriCod in Skopje

The NATO Master Catalogue of References for Logistics (NMCRL) had been recently enhanced by the introduction of the multilingual catalogue of NATO classes and Approved Item Names (ACodP-2/3), available in 19 languages. A new characteristics data search capability assists users by refining the search criteria based on item technical descriptions. Forthcoming enhancements include links to CPV codes and display of images from Item Identification Guides.

AC/135 and NAMSA continue their efforts both to enhance the user functionalities and to enrich the data content of the NMCRL. Please help us serve you better by taking a few minutes to give us your feedback on the NMCRL by completing the questionnaire accessible via the login page of NMCRLplus <https://www.natolog.com/ac135public/>.

R&D

Phase 3 of the Smart STEP Codification (SSC) project is being coordinated by the United Kingdom NCB in cooperation with BAE Systems, Global Combat Systems, AURA and ESG. The project team is processing TERRIER items by routinely using ISO 8000 transactions until the platform is completely codified to the satisfaction of the UK MoD and the manufacturer. The initial findings from the project indicate a very substantial improvement in the percentage of descriptive cataloguing using SSC as against the standard method. An additional benefit is a reduction in the time it takes to allocate an NSN upon receipt of the source data. The UK is planning to organize an event for major defence sector industry partners to present the findings and promote the project.



Terrier

Non-NATO Countries' Involvement in NCS

In 2009 AC/135 welcomed more sponsored nations than in any year since the sponsorship programme started in the mid-90s. Thirty-four nations have now been approved for sponsorship by AC/135 and a new application from Brunei Darussalam is under consideration.



Chairman AC/135 signing sponsorship agreement with Afghanistan

The sponsorship agreement signed with the Afghan Ministry of Defence allows the Afghan National Army to have the logistics capability to identify items Supporting implementation of NCS in Afghanistan, a team from NCB of Poland has recently instructed Afghan National Army and National Police students in the basics of NATO codification. George Bond, Chairman of AC/135, said “We now have over 60 nations around the world sponsored into the NATO Codification System, but this latest signature involving Afghanistan allows the ANA to move forward in developing capabilities in this crucial area with a view to effective logistics support of NATO operations”.

An AC/135 delegation headed by the Chairman attended the 10th Codification Conference in the Russian Federation to support Russia’s efforts to develop its codification capability and to achieve its goal of Tier 2 sponsorship. The Russian Federation has been enhancing its codification capability and expanding its international cooperation in support of weapon systems for export both through recent acquisitions of codification systems and participation in codification training organized by the Czech Republic.

Under Australian Chairmanship, the Pacific Area Cataloguing Seminar (PACS) has been working on introducing Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to measure productivity and efficiency, including measures of timeliness, quality and cost. Benchmarks for each of these measures have yet to be agreed upon and will be addressed at the next (12th) PACS meeting to be held in Sydney, Australia on 27th-29th April 2010. There will be a forum held in parallel that will provide an opportunity to consult with industry on cataloguing practices and to obtain their feedback.

AC/135 is planning codification workshops in the United Arab Emirates in January 2010 and in Jordan in February 2010.

Season Greetings

Thank you for helping us to put NATO Codification on the map as a unique, comprehensive tool serving many across the globe. We had a wonderful year and look forwards to sharing a great 2010 with you. AC/135 sends seasonal greetings and best wishes for a prosperous 2010 to all our customers and partners.