



# Logistics Management Newsletter

FROM THE LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT DIVISION

FY15 | ISSUE 3

JUNE 2015

Welcome. This newsletter is brought to you by the Logistics Management Division (LMD). Its purpose is to keep you abreast of the latest business practices and to share information about ongoing logistics management initiatives and events. It also introduces interim policy letters, which shall be incorporated in forthcoming updates of NASA Procedural Directives and Procedural Requirements.

## Equipment Management

### The National Stock Number

#### What Is an NSN?

A National Stock Number (NSN) is simply the official label applied to an item of supply that is repeatedly procured, stocked, stored, issued, and used throughout the Federal supply system. It is a unique item identifying series of numbers.

When a NSN is assigned to an

item of supply, data are assembled to describe the item. Some data elements include information such as an item name, manufacturer's part number, unit price, and physical and performance characteristics. NSNs are an essential part of the logistics supply chain used in managing, moving, storing, and disposing of material.

NSNs are used to identify and manage nearly every imaginable

item, from aircraft parts to light bulbs. The use of NSNs facilitates the standardization of item names, supply language, characteristics and management data, and aids in reducing duplicate items in the Federal inventory. It also helps to standardize the military requirements for testing and evaluation of potential items of supply, as well as identifying potential duplicate items.

## IN THIS ISSUE

1

Equipment Management

4

Disposal Management



Many types of commercially made light bulbs are assigned NSNs.

NSNs are officially recognized by the U.S. Government, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and many governments around the world. Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense (DOD) and NASA, use NSNs to buy and manage billions of dollars' worth of supplies annually. Currently, there are over 6 million NSNs in the Federal supply system.

### Why Was the Concept of an NSN Created?

During World War II, it was common to find different names applied to a single item of supply used by each military service—this practice made it difficult for the military services to locate supplies and, in most cases, impossible to share items of supply. Using different naming conventions often resulted in item depletion situations for one service and item surplus situations for another. To illustrate this complex issue, consider the name of the pictured item. Is it a washer, a spacer, or a shim?



The correct name for this item is WASHER, FLAT.

This is one example of why it is so important to establish a common name and description for a single item of supply. If each of the military services called this washer by a different name, there would be no way to identify and move assets from one service to another when needed. Additionally, it was determined to be essential that DOD describe all like items the same, with the same characteristics to facilitate comparison of items and avoid proliferation of like items in the DOD inventory.

Even today, commercial entities continue to justify and reinforce the need for a standardized national stock numbering system. Manufacturers, as in the case of the preceding washer, use a variety of item names for identical parts. Cataloging these items with different item names creates inconsistencies in the various logistics management systems, making it difficult to identify, separate, and control the inventory of items.

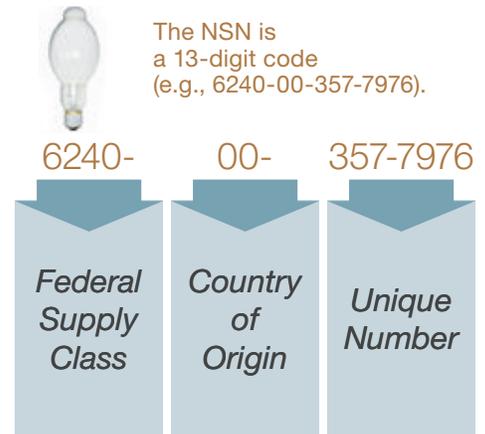
Manufacturers use many different commercial part-numbering conventions. For example, manufacturers may refer to their items of supply using various descriptors like a Universal Product Code (UPC), a National Drug Code, and/or a Universal Standard Products and Services Classification Code (UNSPSC) as part of the item description. The

NSN alleviates manufacturers from using various languages to describe items of supply by standardizing naming conventions and logistics management data.

### What Does an NSN Structure Look Like?

Americans recognize this number system: 269-961-7766. The three distinct parts of a phone number are easily identifiable. The first part is the area code, the second part is the exchange, and the third part is a unique four-digit number.

Just as each part of a telephone number has a distinct meaning, an NSN is formatted to convey specific information about the item of supply.



The first four digits of the NSN are known as the Federal Supply Class (FSC). For example, 6240 is the FSC for electric lamps. It is used to group like items, which would include fluorescent lamps, incandescent lamps, mercury lamps, and sodium lamps. The next two digits make up the Country of

Origin code. This code signifies the country that originally requested the NSN assignment. Codes 00 and 01 are both used to identify the United States. The remaining seven digits are sequentially assigned and are unique to each NSN.



**Note: This is a representative picture only, of this item.**

**Reference/Part Number**

[Back to Top](#)

REF/PN	CAGE-CD	STAT	RNCC	RNVC	DAC	RNAAC	RNFC	RNSC	RNJC	SADC	HCC	MSDS
500E37SBW120	12117	H	5	9	5	SB	1	B				
37106	51454	A	3	2	E	CX	3	D			N1	BDXDH
SBER	62607	A	5	9	4	CX		B				

### Who Assigns an NSN?

The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Logistics Information Service, located in Battle Creek, MI, assigns all NSNs at the request of the military services, certain Federal and civil agencies, and ally countries. Each NSN assignment is the result of a careful review process known as cataloging. Cataloging is the process whereby each item of supply is named, assigned an FSC, described to identify all known characteristics and performance data, and ultimately assigned a NSN. This information is contained and maintained in the Federal Logistics Information System (FLIS), which is managed by the DLA Logistics Information Service (DLIS). The DLA Logistics Information Service is the only organization authorized to assign NSNs.

Requests for NSNs are initiated whenever a non-stocked item is repeatedly ordered or when a new (weapons) system is being developed. Whenever a new (weapon) system is deployed by a military service, the service engages in an upfront review known as a provisioning process. This process

**Characteristics (Decoded)**

REQUIREMENT STATEMENT	CLEAR TEXT REPLY
ITEM NAME	LAMP,MERCURY VAPOR
OVERALL LENGTH	11.750 INCHES MAXIMUM
LIGHT OUTPUT RATING	11780.000 LUMENS NOMINAL SINGLE RATING
AVERAGE LIFE RATING IN HOURS	16000.0
EMITTED LIGHT CHARACTERISTIC	WHITE
VOLTAGE RATING	120.000 VOLTS NOMINAL
WATTAGE RATING	500.000 WATTS

identifies all potential spares to ensure support throughout the life cycle of the (weapon) system. This step is essential to properly provide support to the end user. During the provisioning process, all potential spare parts are identified and requests for NSN assignment are submitted to the DLA Logistics Information Service.

During NSN assignment, a wide range of logistics data are assembled to describe the item. This information includes the item name, the manufacturer's part number, the unit price, the physical and performance characteristics, and the shelf life and shipping data, as well as special handling, storage, and disposal instructions.

Throughout the life of the NSN, these data are routinely updated to include new manufacturers, price changes, part number changes, or other changes affecting the support, logistics data, or characteristics of the item.

### Who Uses NSNs?

The NSN is used by domestic and foreign governments, U.S. military services, and various Federal and civil agencies. The NSN affords the opportunity for greater cross-servicing potential and facilitates operations that involve many military services from many nations.

### Federal Agencies

Many Federal agencies use the NSN to buy and manage billions

of dollars' worth of supplies yearly. The DLA establishes how each DLA-managed NSN will be stocked, stored, and issued. The DLA evaluates usage demands to determine required quantities of NSNs. The NSN is the foundation for logistics coordination between the services and government agencies.

### **Military Services**

The practice of using a single language of supply like the NSN is increasingly important as it promotes readiness, availability to all users, and coordination between the military services. The NSN is also critical to the effective integration of the services in joint military endeavors.

The NSN enables military services to access the same information and identify like items of supply. Mechanics, technical inspectors, and maintenance and other supply personnel can review NSN data in the FLIS to locate information on all the parts needed to maintain and support weapon systems.

The use of NSNs provides logistics managers, procurement personnel, operations planners, and industrial

base assessment personnel with a standard method of identifying and tracking items of supply in-storage, in-process, in-transit, and in-theater.

### **Defense Reutilization**

The DLA Disposition Services identify products for reutilization and/or disposal using the NSN to clearly identify like items to support reutilization; to distinguish which items require special handling upon disposal/demilitarization; and to identify items that may contain precious metals, hazardous materials, or sensitive technology.

### **What's the Real Value of an NSN?**

- Reduces downtime by enabling procurement personnel to quickly identify, locate, and order parts or supplies
- Accounts for existing inventory
- Identifies the shelf life of an item of supply
- Maximizes the use of available spares by identifying items of supply that are interchangeable or substitutable
- Provides pricing information, which is valuable when negotiating contracts and managing military budgets

- Improves cycle times for design, manufacture, and repair processes while extending weapon system life cycles
- Centralizes item information on all items managed within DOD
- Provides built-in protection for safeguarding proprietary information and limiting access to only those entities requiring such information
- Records multiple manufacturers on NSNs, increasing supportability
- Aids in identifying duplicate items of supply
- Perhaps the most significant and far-reaching benefit of the NSN is that it provides life-cycle management of items of supply, from requisition to acquisition to maintenance to disposal.

### **The Bottom Line**

The NSN is the international language of logistics. The use of NSN make sense in the often confusing array of suppliers and supply parts, and it provides affordable mission readiness and a reduction in total ownership cost.

## **Disposal Management**

### **Excess Personal Property—FY15 Statistics**

As of May 4, 2015, NASA Centers disposed of 38,831 individual disposal "cases" with a total original

acquisition cost of \$407,868,152. At the same time, there were 48,912 cases awaiting disposition in the

disposal system. The disposal amount has remained constant over recent years. Centers are encouraged to look at multiple venues to disposition their excess property in accordance with Federal property laws and regulations and NASA property policies and procedures.

### Computers for Learning

As of the end of April 2015, NASA Centers have leveraged the General Services Administration's (GSA) Computers for Learning (CFL) online program to transfer 338 pieces of computer technology to eligible schools with a total acquisition cost of \$896,990.

### GSA Online Auctions Sales

**Exchange/Sale**—As of the end of April 2015, NASA netted a total of \$1.02 million from the exchange and sale of personal property—the proceeds of which can be used toward the acquisition, in whole or in part, of replacement equipment.

**Surplus Sale**—For FY15, NASA netted a total of nearly \$1.3 million from the sale of surplus property through GSA online auctions. The proceeds from GSA surplus sales can be used to defray NASA expenses related to the sale of the surplus property in accordance with the Federal Management Regulation 102-38.295-300, Disposition of Proceeds, and

NASA Procedural Requirement 4300.1C, section 5.5.2, to include:

- expenses associated with warehouses/storage
- sales preparation
- environmental services
- demilitarization services
- advertising, appraisals
- security, transportation of property
- labor or contract costs related to the sale of the property
- NASA Centers' established overhead rates for these functions

### UNICOR Recycling of NASA Excess Federal Electronic Assets (FEA)

The Federal Government has determined that the improper disposal of used electronics may potentially harm human health and the environment. Accordingly, electronic product(s) must be disposed of at their end of useful life in accordance with all Federal, state, and local laws. NASA and UNICOR entered into an agreement to appropriately disposition NASA's electronic assets to keep nonfunctioning Federal electronics out of landfills. UNICOR is NASA's designated responsible recycler for e-waste at NASA Centers. For the first and second quarter of FY 2015, NASA has given UNICOR a total of 1,047,067 pounds of e-waste. NASA is expected

to receive about \$104,706.70 from its recycling efforts.

### Donation Success Story

In October 2014, two Shuttle-era locomotives were excessed to the Kennedy Space Center's (KSC) Reutilization, Recycling, and Marketing Facility (RRMF) for disposition. KSC's disposal personnel worked closely with GSA to expedite the screening, and the locomotives were quickly allocated and approved by GSA for donation: one locomotive to the Louisiana State Agency for Surplus Property (SASP) and the other locomotive to the Indiana SASP.

After the transfer documentation was approved, KSC disposal personnel discovered the locomotives could not be removed due to faulty railroad track sections. In response, KSC, the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad, the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), and the KSC Railroad Manager coordinated for nearly 6 months to resolve the issue and provide safe movement of the railcars.

The successful removal of the railcars is a testament to KSC's disposal and transportation personnel's fortitude and determination to get the job done while prioritizing the safety of people and preserving the value of Federal assets.



The FEC train crosses the Jay Jay Bridge.



The Jay Jay Bridge undergoes inspection.



Passing the Vehicle Assembly Building.



Passing the Orbiter Processing Facilities.



On Jay Jay Bridge.



Crossing Jay Jay Bridge.



After crossing the Jay Jay Bridge.

## Contact Us

Your involvement, understanding, and feedback are essential to making the Logistics Management Program a success. Please send us your questions or stories to share by calling or e-mailing:

### **Miguel A. Rodriguez**

Equipment Management Program  
Office: 202-358-1065  
[miguel.a.rodriguez-1@nasa.gov](mailto:miguel.a.rodriguez-1@nasa.gov)  
<http://ld.hq.nasa.gov/equipmgt.html>

### **Marjorie C. Jackson**

Contract Property Management Program  
Office: 202-358-2464  
[marjorie.c.jackson@nasa.gov](mailto:marjorie.c.jackson@nasa.gov)  
<http://ld.hq.nasa.gov/cpm.html>

### **Timothy A. Currie**

Transportation Management Program  
Office: 202-358-1219  
[timothy.a.currie@nasa.gov](mailto:timothy.a.currie@nasa.gov)  
<http://ld.hq.nasa.gov/ato.html>

### **Angelo I. Wilson**

Supply Management Program  
Office: 202-358-0491  
[angelo.i.wilson@nasa.gov](mailto:angelo.i.wilson@nasa.gov)  
<http://ld.hq.nasa.gov/supmgt.html>

### **Michael Eaton**

Disposal Management Program  
Office: 202-358-1439  
[michael.eaton-1@NASA.gov](mailto:michael.eaton-1@NASA.gov)  
<http://ld.hq.nasa.gov/prodis.html>