



# Equipment Management Newsletter

From the Logistics Management Division

FY-14, Issue 1

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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 of ongoing management initiatives and events promoted by the equipment management program. It also introduces interim policy letters, which shall be incorporated in forthcoming updates of NASA Procedural Directives and Procedural Requirements.

## Acquisition Method and Recording of Exhibit/Display Items in the PP&E System

In accordance with Agency policy outlined in NPD 4200.1C (Equipment Management), Exhibit and Display Items are required to be recorded in the PP&E system. An Exhibit and Display Item is NASA property that, **regardless of acquisition cost**, has been identified for stationary display or rotational display as part of the NASA Exhibits Loan Program. A review of the Agency's equipment database and subsequent comparison against Center specific Exhibit Item listings—maintained by Exhibit Managers

across the Agency—revealed that a large percentage of these items are not recorded in the PP&E system. This is primarily the result of the recent policy update making the recording of Exhibit and Display items in the PP&E system a requirement. There are other reasons for this inaccuracy, such as when an item meeting the control criteria was not reactivated in the PP&E system after its identification and allocation as an Exhibit Item from the Artifacts Module.

Centers continue their efforts to identify and record Exhibit and Display Items in the PP&E system. The following paragraphs provide guidance addressing the different acquisition methods and steps to record these items in NASA's system of record.

**Constructed Display Items.** There are instances in which Display Items are constructed for temporary display and later disassembled for reutilization in a different project. In this instance, constructed items shall not be recorded in the PP&E system. Constructed Display Items shall meet the definition of Equipment to be recorded in the PP&E system: *"A tangible asset or end item; it is nonexpendable property that is functionally complete for its intended purpose; it is not intended for sale; it does not lose its identity or become a component part of another item when put into use; it is not intended to be destroyed during an experiment; and it has a useful life of 2 years or more."*

Continued on p 2

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Acquisition Method And Recording of Exhibit/Display Items in the PP&E System
- 2 Agency To Assess Transfer of Unneeded Equipment On Indefinite Loans
- 3 NPR 5900.1 (NASA Spare Parts Acquisition) To Be Cancelled
- 3 Sensitive Items Review Board To Be Established
- 4 Calendar of Events
- 5 Kudos

## **Exhibit/Display Items from p 1**

### **Items Acquired From Excess**

Per NPR 4300.1 (NASA Personal Property Disposal Procedural Requirements), excess personal property may be acquired by NASA organizations from other NASA organizations and other Federal agencies. Personal property reported as excess in N-PROP becomes available for acquisition screening in N-PROP, in GSAXcess® Artifacts Module, or in the regular GSAXcess® Screening Module. Details of the acquisition process are provided in section 2.9 of NPR 4300.1.

Documents that support transfer transactions are GSA's Standard Form (SF)-122 (Transfer Order Excess Personal Property) for property acquired from outside NASA and Department of Defense Form DD-1149 (Requisition and Invoice/Shipping Document) or equivalent NASA form for property acquired from within NASA. These forms reflecting receipt of the property shall be submitted by the Receiving Office to the Center Equipment Management Office in accordance with Chapter 2, NPR 4200.1. In instances when the Disposal Warehouse receives the property, the property Disposal Officer submits the documents to the Center Equipment Management Office in accordance with section 2.9.3.3, NPR 4300.1.

The Center Equipment Management Office shall assign an Equipment Control Number (ECN) and process acquired excess property meeting the control criteria (including Exhibit and Display Items) as prescribed in NPR 4200.1. Recording items that were initially reported as excess and were made inactive during the excess process entails reversing the EMR to active status and selecting the "NASA Exhibit Item" flag in the EMR.

### **Assignment of Property Custodian**

Exhibit and Display Items that are not Government-Furnished Property shall be assigned to property custodian accounts within the Center. It is recommended that Exhibit Items for rotational exhibit purposes be assigned to the exhibit manager's property account and exhibit items located at visitor centers managed by NASA be assigned to the manager of the visitor center. The Center equipment management office shall create corresponding property custodian accounts. Exhibit

Managers manage rotational exhibits through the property loan process outlined in NPR 4200.1 and in accordance to their function and operations governed by NPR 1387.1 (NASA Exhibits Program). Exhibit Managers might position exhibits for display at the local visitor center; in such instance, the items shall remain in the Exhibit Manager's property account and reflect the visitor center as the items' physical location in the PP&E system. There are stationary Exhibit and Display Items across the Agency that because of their significance are positioned inside and outside of facilities other than visitor centers (e.g., aircraft, mockup items, engines). These items shall also be assigned to a property custodian account—primarily to a custodian account belonging to the organization displaying the item.

### **The Equipment Master Record**

The majority of equipment items and other property that are identified as Exhibit and Display Items normally lacks original acquisition documentation for recording in the PP&E system. SEMOs or designees shall assist Exhibit Managers in properly identifying these items either by contacting appropriate technicians or other personnel and resources to obtain the necessary information for properly recording exhibit items in the PP&E system. Exhibit Items shall not be recorded as "Found on Station" in the PP&E system (Acquisition Method #12) and shall not be recorded with Federal Supply Class (FSC) Code 6910 (Training)  
**Continued on p 3**

## **Agency To Assess Transfer Of Unneeded Equipment On Indefinite Loans**

The Agency has initiated an action to collect data to determine the size and scope of NASA equipment, including Exhibit/Display Items, on indefinite loan status. The feedback obtained from SEMOs and Exhibit Managers will serve to assess the items on loan with great potential of no return to NASA custody and to assess the workload that this initiative would represent to Center logisticians. HQ/LMD will work closely with the HQ Office of Communications (OCOM) to determine the actions to be taken. ❖

## **Exhibit/Display Items from p 2**

Aids for Classroom Training). Exhibit Items shall retain their identity and FSC when enrolled in the Exhibit Management Program.

“NASA Exhibit Item” is a flag in the Equipment Master Record (EMR) for Equipment Managers to properly identify exhibit items, and it applies to the various forms of acquisition methods. For instance:

(a) **Acquisition Method #18 (Receipt from Not Previously Meeting Criteria for Tagging)** applies to items that normally would not be required to be recorded in the PP&E system and transition to recording requirement per policy update. Method #18 is primarily used when the control criteria change and reduces the burden of finding or producing potentially nonexistent acquisition documents (e.g., purchase orders, transfer documents). Equipment Managers differentiate the use of acquisition method #18 from other applications of method #18 by selecting the “NASA Exhibit Item” flag in the EMR.

b) Items that are receipted from excess will be recorded with **Acquisition Method #13 (Receipt from Excess)**.

### **Reporting and Inventory Process**

Exhibit and Display Items recorded in the PP&E system are governed by NPD 4200.1 and NPR 4200.1. These items will be captured on the LIMS report as “Additions” in the “Other” line. As “Other” additions, they will be included in the Center’s equipment density for loss rate determination and other equipment management metrics in accordance with NPD 4200.1. ❖

## **NPR 5900.1 (NASA Spare Parts Acquisition) To Be Cancelled**

**By Kevin Watson, HQ, LMD**

The Office of Procurement has decided to cancel NPR 5900.1 (NASA Spare Parts Acquisition). To ensure that content important to NASA's flight program logistics community is not lost, NPD 7500.IC (Program and Project Life Cycle Logistics Support Policy) will be slightly modified to define the responsibility of Program Managers and Project Manager to acquire the spares that are necessary to support their efforts. A NASA Interim Directive (NID) for NPD 7500.1 will be issued in the near term to capture this update and a revision will be issued within 1 year. Additional guidance from NPR 5900.1 will be captured in a new NASA Life Cycle Logistics Support guidebook that is being prepared by the Headquarters Logistics Management Division.

## ***Sensitive Items Review Board To Be Established***

**By Miguel A. Rodriguez, Equipment Management Program**

NPR 4200.1 outlines in Appendix C (Minimum Standard Sensitive Items List) the minimum requirements for properly identifying equipment as sensitive, or high-risk, in the PP&E system.

In accordance with NPD 4200.1, A “sensitive item is NASA property that, regardless of its acquisition cost, is subject to exceptional physical security, protection, control, and accountability due to national security, export control regulations, or because it is potentially dangerous to the public.” Examples of sensitive items include weapons and computers, as well as hazardous and radioactive equipment.

Appendix C outlines the following items as sensitive:

### **C.1 Items, regardless of acquisition value.**

C.1.1 Weapons, all types including but not limited to air, spring, powder, or other propulsions systems.

C.1.2 Hazardous devices, including environmentally hazardous devices.

### **C.2 Items with an acquisition value of \$500 or more.**

C.2.1 Automatic Data Processing Equipment (ADPE), which includes the following:

a. Computers, all microcomputers and personal computers, in-

**Continued on p 4**

## **Review Board from p 3**

cluding desktop systems, work stations, laptops, notebooks, handheld computers (palms), and other portables but excluding mainframes and mini-computers.

b. External computer peripherals, including:

- (1) Printers.
- (2) Disk drives, (fixed and removable media).
- (3) Tape drives.
- (4) CD and DVD drives.
- (5) Scanners.
- (6) Monitors.
- (7) Terminals.

c. Cameras, all types.

d. Recorders and players, including but not limited to digital, laser, cassette, and reel-to-reel.

e. Radios.

f. Receivers.

g. Transceivers.

h. Televisions.

The latest technological advances and the complexities of NASA equipment raise the necessity to the review and update Appendix C of NPR 4200.1. We would have to ask ourselves if a tablet costing \$250 is not as sensitive as a laptop with an acquisition cost of \$1,200. You will probably agree that both are highly pilferable and could contain similar sensitive information. Furthermore, SEMOs probably question whether it is necessary to categorize televisions and printers as sensitive items or if recording them as “controlled” items is sufficient for management purposes without annotating them as “high-risk” items.

My intention is to form a sensitive items review board to answer these and other questions. SEMOs will receive an invitation to meet in mid-November to discuss this topic and for all SEMOs to learn from the challenges they face at their respective Centers. Thanks in advance. ❖

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

THE FOLLOWING COURSES ARE TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED (SUBJECT TO FUNDS AVAILABILITY), AND ARE AVAILABLE FOR ENROLLMENT IN SATERN:

### **SAP, Supply Management System Training (JSC)**

February 3–7, 2014, 8:00 A.M.–4:30 P.M.

### **PP&E TRAINING (MSFC)**

JUNE 16–19, 2014, 8:00 A.M.–4:30 P.M.  
4200, G13A (SELF-STUDY LEARNING CENTER)

### **SAP, Supply Management System Training (MSFC)**

September 11–5, 2014, 8:00 A.M.–4:30 P.M.  
4200, G13A (Self-Study Learning Center)

THE POC FOR TRAINING IS EDWARD A. AHMAD,  
MSFC (256) 544–7964 OR  
PAT HILL, MSFC (256) 544–4501

## **Contact Us**

*Your involvement, understanding, and feedback are essential to make the Equipment Management Program a success. Please send us your questions or comments by calling or e-mailing:*

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*More information on Equipment Management is available at:*

*<http://uid.hq.nasa.gov/equipmgt.html>*

# Kudos

HQ, LMD recognizes NASA Langley Logistics Operation for its continued aggressiveness in implementing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for the management of Government property. Equally important is the initiative of logistics managers at ARC, SSC, and KSC/SPOC (subinstallation) who are conducting market research and coordinating the implementation of RFID technology at their Centers. Their common goal is to reach standardization of hardware and software across the Agency to facilitate equipment management transactions as

equipment moves among NASA Centers. This initiative clearly demonstrates the dedication of NASA organizations to improve the equipment management program by saving resources, expediting the inventory process, and reduce equipment losses. Langley's initiative includes successful submission of their RFID project idea to the Agency's IT Labs program for funding consideration.

IT Labs is a program of the Chief Technology Officer for Information Technology under the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) at NASA Headquarters. Since May 2011, IT Labs has been acting on its vision to bring together diverse communities to seed IT-related ideas and solutions for the greater NASA community.

Through an annual project call, IT Labs solicits ideas from throughout NASA. A review team selects projects to receive funding up to \$30,000 over a 90-day period in one of four project phases: ideas/issues, proofs of concept, prototypes, or pilots.

The scope of a project is limited to one of these phases and is reviewed at the end of 90 days for potential continuation to the next phase. The goal of this approach is to produce more manageable activity for project teams and provide a sandbox for testing technologies

and methods without committing to a more costly and time-consuming scope of research and development.

The following is an extract of the IT Labs Annual Report (2012–2013) in which Langley's RFID initiative is recognized as one of NASA's top IT projects:

*"NASA Langley determined that the use of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags is a new enhancement that is needed for inventorying equipment because the current inventory process is very tedious and labor intensive. Each item to be inventoried must be*

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**With ECN tags, the inventory specialist must stand within 6 to 12 inches away from the item to scan it, whereas with RFID technology, an item can be scanned by simply walking around a room and moving the scanner in a wand-like fashion several feet away from the item.**

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*sighted in order to conduct the inventory. This means that the owner of the equipment must ensure that every item is removed from drawers, cabinets, shelves, etc. so that the item can be scanned.*

*Conducting the inventory is further exacerbated by the fact that items are often moved from one room to another without proper documentation due to reorgani-*

*zations, job changes, and attrition. This makes it difficult to ensure that accurate information is maintained in the equipment database. Consequently, a faster method for conducting the inventory is desirable.*

*NASA Langley's decision to choose RFID technology was spawned by a pilot study that was conducted by Steve Mercier of the Science Directorate. Mercier was in charge of a large computer facility that had numerous racks of computer equipment that were frequently swapped from one rack to another. When it was time to conduct an inventory and several items were determined to be missing, Mercier had difficulty finding the items. He therefore tested the use of RFID tags and found that the time it took him to find an item was reduced from days to less than an hour. The Logistics Management Branch at Langley decided to expand*

**Continued on p 6**

## **Kudos from p 5**

*this success by applying RFID tags to the equipment inventory for the entire Center. One of the major differences between RFID and Equipment Control Number (ECN) tags is the proximity required between the person conducting the inventory and the item being inventoried. With ECN tags, the inventory specialist must stand within 6 to 12 inches away from the item to scan it, whereas with RFID technology, an item can be scanned by simply walking around a room and moving the scanner in a wand-like fashion several feet away from the item.*

*Since RFID scanning allows items to be detected that are not in plain sight, fewer items are missing at the end of the inventory.*

*The time that it takes to conduct an inventory, at minimum, can be cut in half. This translates into benefits such as less time searching for lost items, fewer lost items, less time completing survey reports, and the potential to reduce the number of people required to conduct the inventory.*

*However, RFID technology is not perfect. For example, the scanners are not able to detect items that are in metal containers or items that are out of range such as in high-reach locations. In addition, Wi-Fi transfer of data from the scanner to the computer has not been perfected. Currently, batch mode downloads of data are still required. Another disadvantage is that RFID technology has not yet been adopted Agency-wide.*

*Therefore, dual tagging with both an RFID tag and an ECN tag is still necessary to allow transfer of items from one NASA Center to another. Other pending issues include the inability to communicate directly with SAP, the financial management system. Although*

*uploading the data from a text file to SAP is a viable alternative, it is not the most efficient one.*

*Some of the lessons learned that might be of benefit to others who want to conduct inventories using RFID technology include ensuring that the scanners that you select do not interfere with the radio frequencies on your Center. It is also imperative that you engage an IT person, preferably one with equipment management knowledge, to support your project throughout the definition, installation, and testing phases. From a funding perspective, there will be an annual maintenance fee for technical support as well as for updates to the RFID software and scanner software. When considering whether to purchase the Web-based software that allows managers to access reports of the RFID tagging progress, purchasing the main RFID software program with a site license for multiple users might be a better solution.*

*One final precaution would be to coordinate the purchase of RFID tags to ensure that the tag numbers are not duplicated when there are several locations that are initiating the purchases of tags. One future enhancement that can be pursued is to apply Wi-Fi technology to share files between the scanner, computer, and SAP financial system instead of using batch processing. With RFID, NASA Langley has been able to demonstrate that it is possible to reduce the time it takes to conduct an inventory by at least one-half and found that there is also the potential to reduce the number of people required to conduct the inventory from three to two. As a result of Langley's experience, it is recommended that others explore using RFID technology to conduct their equipment inventories." ❖*