

A Message from the Retired Director, Defense Standardization Program Office

Standardization, in one form or another, has been around for thousands of years, and it has often been recognized as a force multiplier in both war and peace-time endeavors. The same cannot be said of the standardization of standardization. The development and application of rules governing the way we standardize, document decisions, manage and control documentation and changes – these are all comparatively recent innovations dating perhaps to the start of the industrial revolution. Many of our best known and most successful engineering and standardization societies, institutes, and organizations are around 100 years old, some even older. The Defense Standardization Program (DSP) was by no means first, or even among the first, to develop these kinds of conventions. But I would argue that it may have been among the best. Many of the conventions, policies, rules, and standards developed by the Defense Department have been adopted or adapted by the largest and most successful private sector standards developers as well as by other governments and inter-governmental and international organizations.

I had the privilege and pleasure of leading the Defense Standardization Program for over 20 years. I stood on the shoulders of many brilliant predecessors who created many of the rules that still govern defense standardization, and worked beside many dedicated and creative people in the DSP Office (DSPO). The DSPO has always sought to improve standardization, and with it, the standards and engineering it represents. With great respect for legacy and with a keen eye for the impact of rules on the future of standardization and engineering, the DSP continues to be one of the leaders of standardization both in the government and in the private sector. As the DSP celebrates a storied 70 years of standardization, I'm confident that the women and men doing the hard work of making rules and writing standards for the Defense Department will continue to be well-respected members of the engineering standardization community for many, many years to come.

Congratulations, DSP! Celebrate a well-deserved anniversary, and then get back to the critical work that has shaped this business for many years.

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