DEFENSE STANDARDIZATION PROGRAM OFFICE

Operational Readiness

Affordability

Interoperability

Sustainment

Joint Warfighting

Public law requires the Secretary of Defense, to the highest degree practicable, to standardize items used throughout the Department of Defense (DoD) by developing and using single specifications, eliminating overlapping and duplicate specifications, and reducing the number of sizes and kinds of similar items.

DoD Instruction 4120.24 implements the Defense Standardization Program (DSP) as required by law, assigns responsibilities, and authorizes the procedures in DoD 4120.24-M, *Defense Standardization Program (DSP) Policies and Procedures*. According to the instruction, "the Heads of the DoD Components shall ensure compliance with DSP procedures." The Defense Standardization Program Office (DSPO) oversees the DSP. The DSPO is under the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Engineering and supports the goals to revitalize and institutionalize systems engineering practices to enhance the reliability, availability, and maintainability of defense systems. Specifications and standards are a foundation of systems engineering, defining requirements and key process outputs to establish product baselines and measure compliance.
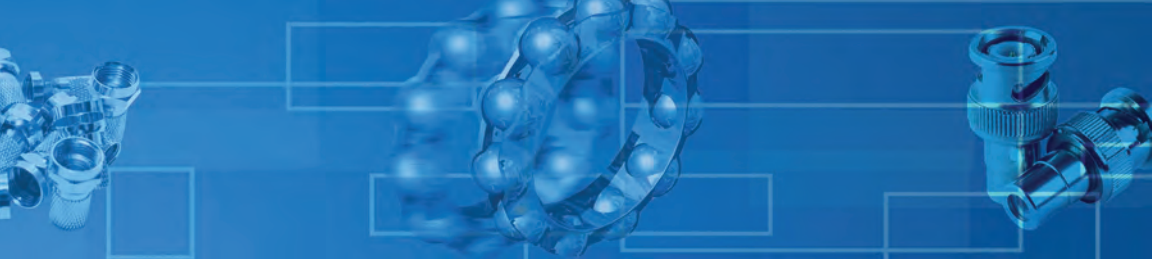
What Are DSPO's Goals?

DSPO's primary goals are to improve operational effectiveness, promote interoperability, sustain readiness, contain costs, and reduce acquisition cycle times by advancing and implementing standardization processes and principles that support the DoD mission.

How Does DSPO Achieve Its Goals?

DSPO achieves its goals through a comprehensive and integrated approach to developing policies and procedures that link the DoD acquisition, operational sustainment, and related military and private-sector communities in a mutually beneficial environment. We strive to provide these communities access to standardization-related processes, products, and services. We also provide them with guidance on all aspects of managing standards and standardization.

What Are DSPO's Programs and How Do They Support the DoD Mission?

ASSIST

ASSIST is a suite of web-based tools that supports defense and civil agencies' standardization management activities. Those activities include preparation and management of standardization documents from the inception of a project through document coordination and distribution. ASSIST is the official DoD source for the most current information on all defense and Federal specifications and standards, military handbooks, commercial item descriptions, adopted non-government standards (NGSs), qualified products lists, and other related technical documents under the DSP. Except for NGSs, copies of most unclassified documents can be downloaded, for free, in PDF format. ASSIST can be accessed at **https://assist.dla.mil**.

Defense Standardization Documents: Military Specifications, Standards, and Handbooks

A library of military-unique specifications, standards, and handbooks is one of the important tools used throughout DoD to acquire and support its weapons systems. Military specifications, standards, and handbooks are pivotal to DoD, because they provide the basis for meeting military-unique requirements at an economical cost while maximizing competition. The continual development, indexing, and maintenance of these documents ensure that truly unique DoD needs are met within time and cost constraints. These documents are available from ASSIST.

Federal Specifications, Federal Standards, and Commercial Item Descriptions

DoD prepares and uses thousands of Federal specifications, Federal standards, and CIDs that help DoD and other Federal agencies acquire commercially available products and processes. These documents are available from ASSIST.

Non-Government Standards

DoD is committed to using and adopting NGSs (also known as voluntary consensus standards), where practical, instead of developing new or updating existing government standards and specifications. Using NGSs has many benefits, including leveraging our expertise in development of documents, sharing the burden of maintaining documents, and gaining access to commercial markets, technologies, and the industrial base.

Integral to ensuring the development of world-class NGSs that incorporate defense requirements is the participation of DoD employees on technical committees. DSPO actively encourages this participation. The DSP website contains a list of NGS bodies and industry associations from which DoD has adopted at least one standard. DoD-adopted NGSs are indexed in ASSIST.

International Standardization

DoD promotes standardization as one of the essential elements to interoperability with U.S. allies and partners. The Department focuses on international standardization agreements (ISAs) generated by multinational treaty alliance organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); the American, British, Canadian, and Australian Armies (ABCA); the Air and Space Interoperability Council (ASIC); and the Australia Canada New Zealand United Kingdom and United States Naval C4 Organization (AUSCANNZUKUS). DSPO supports and participates in the development of standardization policy, procedures, training, and interagency coordination of standardization efforts involving multinational treaty alliance organizations and forums. Copies of ISAs ratified by the United States, along with points of contact, can be found in ASSIST. ASSIST also links to DSP documents implementing the ISAs and displays any U.S. reservations about the ISAs.

Parts Management

Parts management is integral to the acquisition process for design, development, modification, and support of DoD weapons systems and equipment. MIL-STD-3018 provides guidance on parts management. Parts management focuses on selecting preferred parts during the design phase of an acquisition program within an overarching systems engineering framework. Typically, a "preferred" part is one that is described by an NGS or a military specification or that is already in the DoD supply system.

Effective parts management considers the application, standardization, technology, maintainability, supportability, and cost of parts throughout the life of a system. This process enhances weapons system performance and sustainability, providing better support to the warfighter. The use of standard parts ensures positive returns in terms of increased operational availability and reliability, reduced logistics footprint and logistics response time, and payback on decreased total ownership costs. The Parts Standardization and Management Committee is a government and industry forum for parts management within the defense community. (For more information, go to **http://www.landandmaritime.dla.mil/programs/psmc**.)

Qualification

"Qualification" refers to a process of certifying that a certain product, process, or entity meets performance, quality assurance, or other requirements stipulated in a specification or other standard. Qualification occurs in advance of, and independent of, procurement.

DSPO develops qualification policies, procedures, and guidance. Defense qualifying activities either (1) test products or verify results from tests conducted elsewhere, or (2) audit a manufacturer's or distributor's processes to confirm that products conform to a specification's requirements. Qualified products, manufacturers, and distributors are added to the central database—referred to as the Qualified Products Database—associated with the specification to which they conform. This information can be accessed from ASSIST, which serves as the official, real-time source for all qualification information.

The benefit of qualification is improved DoD readiness due to increased availability of products known to meet quality, reliability, performance, and safety requirements.

Joint Standardization Boards

JSBs are intended to recognize standardization opportunities that exist outside of the DSP infrastructure. They serve as forums for high-level oversight and advocacy of strategic standardization initiatives. Their objectives are threefold: advance interoperability, improve operational readiness, and minimize logistics support without compromising the missions of the DoD components.

Government-Industry Data Exchange Program

GIDEP fosters technical collaboration and facilitates the exchange of technical information between government agencies and industry to increase system safety, reliability, and readiness while reducing system development, production, and ownership costs. Information is submitted

by GIDEP members, stored in the GIDEP database, and accessed through a web interface and through custom reports. Information exchanged concerns part, material, and process failure experiences; obsolescence management; product changes; engineering; reliability and maintainability; and metrology. Services provided include monitoring user part lists for GIDEP data, allowing users to query the community through the Urgent Data Request for difficult-to-find information, and providing an online roster of GIDEP members to enable networking.

GIDEP serves as DoD's centralized repository for information on Diminishing Manufacturing Sources and Material Shortages (DMSMS) and as the Federal government's central database for receiving and disseminating information about counterfeit and other nonconforming products and materials. Information is available on military and commercial parts, electronic components, and non-electronic items such as valves, pumps, mechanical components, hardware, and software. Participation in GIDEP is open to U.S. and Canadian government agencies and their supporting industry partners. Visit **http://www.gidep.org/** for more information.

Diminishing Manufacturing Sources and Material Shortages

The loss or impending loss of the last-known manufacturer or supplier of raw material, production parts, or repair parts causes significant sustainment challenges. The DMSMS program and working group compile the best practices from across DoD to manage the risk of obsolescence. These practices help ensure the availability of parts and materials when needed, minimization of life-cycle costs, consideration of design alternatives, and system sustainability.

The DMSMS Knowledge Sharing Portal (**http://www.dmsms.org/**) is a one-stop repository of unbiased information on products, services, educational resources, data interchange techniques, and interactive forums. The portal's information assists DoD with implementing best practices for monitoring, tracking, and resolving obsolescence issues and for performing logistics and engineering analyses related to the impact of obsolescence.

A DSPO guidebook on DMSMS (SD-22), available from ASSIST, contains guidance on managing the risk of obsolescence, addresses electrical and mechanical parts obsolescence issues, and identifies tools for analyzing and tracking the effectiveness of DMSMS programs.

DoD and industry worked together to develop TechAmerica STD-0016, "Standard for Preparing a Diminishing Manufacturing Sources and Material Shortages (DMSMS) Plan," which is the foundation for DoD DMSMS planning. This document can be placed on contracts.

Where Can I Get More Information about DSPO Programs?

DSPO promotes standardization best practices through its *Defense Standardization Program Journal*, case studies, conferences, and training. Information pertaining to these resources and DSPO programs, policies, procedures, guidance documents, points of contact, and more can be found at **http://www.dsp.dla.mil**.

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