Accredited Standards Committee
MH 10/Sub-Committee 8
Unit Loads and Transport Packages

Secretariat: Material Handling Industry Association

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Dear Mr. Mullen:

Applications exist that require the smallest possible message length for any variety of data carrier. These applications have very limited space or memory for mandatory data requirements. Historically, this problem was addressed using the ISO/IEC 15434 syntax combined with a specific Data Matrix (ISO/IEC 16022) macro solution to shorten the message length by replacing nine characters of header/trailer indicators with a single macro codeword. This solution does not provide the optimum message length nor is it a general solution for a wide range of application data and data carriers.

Recent events have generated a request for a new macro for the ISO/IEC 15434 format 12 syntax (Text Element Identifiers). This macro (codeword 242) would provide the same savings (9 characters) as the macros for format 05 and 06. Implementation of "macro 12" will require, at minimum, revision of ISO/IEC 16022 and the possible obsolescence of many, if not all, existing readers.

Another solution, using an "empty format", has been suggested using existing macros (236 for format 05 or 237 for format 06) as an envelope for format 12. This solution provides a savings of 6 characters and does not require any changes to existing standards, although some clarification language would be useful for ISO/IEC 15434 regarding the "empty format".
Neither of these solutions provides a general and optimum method for encoding data carriers. It also seems likely that creating a new macro 12 will create a legacy problem.
A long term general solution has been suggested that would necessitate technical development of the solution by the AIM Technical Symbology Committee. The solution would consist of compaction/expansion procedures (algorithms) for specific applications such as GS1 Application Identifiers (AI), ANS MH10 Data Identifiers (DI) and ATA Text Element Identifiers (TEI).

Therefore, MH10.SC8 encourages you to present this request for a new TSC work item to the AIM Standards Advisory Committee for immediate action so that it may be included on the next TSC meeting agenda scheduled for March of 2007.

Best Regards,

Mark S Reboulet

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Chair, ANSI MH 10/SC 8

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