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Creating and updating control files

When you open a sample AFP file to enhance it, RICOH Visual Workbench can either create a control file or update a control file that you created previously. The control file contains definitions that tell RICOH ProcessDirector how to enhance production AFP files that are similar to the sample AFP file.

If a control file already exists for a sample AFP file and you need to enhance the AFP file again, update the existing control file instead of creating a new control file. All the definitions that apply to the sample AFP file must be in the same control file.

You control which definitions in the control file RICOH ProcessDirector uses when it enhances production AFP files. For example, a control file might contain definitions that AFP Indexer created (such as definitions to add index tags) and definitions that AFP Editor created (such as definitions to add bar codes). If you want to add index tags but no bar codes to some production AFP files, you would add an IndexAFP step to the workflow. If you want to add index tags and bar codes to other production AFP files, you would add an IndexAFP step and an EditAFP step to the workflow (or you could add only an EditAFP step and select the **Index first** option for the step).

To create or update a Visual Workbench control file:

1. In RICOH Visual Workbench, open a sample AFP file.
You see the Open Control File window with the message "Do you want to use an existing control file for this AFP file?"
2. Do one of these:
 - To create a control file, click **No**.
 - To update a control file, click **Yes**. You see the Open window:
 1. Select the control file.
 2. Click **Open**.
3. If you opened the wrong control file, click **File ⇒ Open Control File** and select the correct control file.
If you see message "Your unsaved changes will be lost if you open a new control file. Do you want to continue? ", it means that you have already enhanced the AFP file in this session and you will lose those changes. Do one of these:
 - To open another control file, click **Yes**.
 - To save the open control file first so that you do not lose the definitions you created in this session, click **No**. Then save the control file.
4. Enhance the sample AFP file.
For example, create page groups, index tags, bar codes, text, and white space.
5. Do one of these:
 - To save a new control file or to rename an updated control file:
 1. Click **File ⇒ Save control file as**.
 2. Type the full path name of the control file in the **File name** field.
 3. Click **Save**.

Use a name for the control file that helps you associate the AFP file with its control file. The default extension for control files is `.ctl`.

⚡ **Note:** If you want to use the same workflow for input files that require different control files, you must use a control file name that corresponds to a job property that can be referenced with symbolic notation. For example, if you have two input files, `abc.afp` and `xyz`, you can use `${Job.InputFile}.ctl` as the control file as long as the control files are named, `abc.afp.ctl` and `xyz.ctl`.

- To save an updated control file with the same name, click **File ⇒ Save control file**.

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