Micriµm, Inc.

Acronyms, Abbreviations and Mnemonics Dictionary

Application NoteAN-2001

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1.00 Introduction

When creating names for variables and functions (identifiers), it is often the practice to use acronyms (e.g. OS, ISR, TCB and so on), abbreviations (buf, doc etc.) and mnemonics (clr, cmp, etc.). The use of acronyms, abbreviations and mnemonics (from now on AAM) allows an identifier to be descriptive while requiring fewer characters. Unfortunately, if AAMs are not used consistently, they may add confusion. To ensure consistency, we have created a list of AAMs that we use in all our projects. The same AAM is used throughout, once it is assigned. I call this list the *Acronym*, *Abbreviation and Mnemonic Dictionary* and the list for Micriµm is shown in Table 1. As we need more AAMs, we will revise this document.

There might be instances where our doesn't make sense for your products/projects. For instance, if you are an engineering firm working on a project for different clients and the products that you develop are totally unrelated, then a different list for each project would be more appropriate; the vocabulary for the farming industry is not the same as the vocabulary for the defense industry. We use the rule that if all products are similar, they use the same dictionary.

A common dictionary to a project team will also increase the team's productivity. It is important that consistency be maintained throughout a project, irrespective of the individual programmer(s). Once <code>buf</code> has been agreed to mean <code>buffer</code> it should be used by all project members instead of having some individuals use <code>buffer</code> and others use <code>bfr</code>. To further this concept, you should always use <code>buff</code> even if your identifier can accommodate the full name; stick to <code>buff</code> even if you can fully write the word <code>buffer</code>.

2.00 Creating Identifiers using AAMs

#define constants, macros, variables and function names (i.e. identifiers) should make use of the file name as a prefix. This prefix makes it easy to locate identifier declarations in medium to large projects. It also makes it very easy to know where these identifiers are declared and 'belong' to. For example, all functions in a file named KBD.C and functions in a file named VIDEO.C could be declared as follows:

It's not necessary to use the whole file/module name as a prefix. For example, a file called ${\tt KEYBOARD.C}$ could have functions starting with ${\tt Kbd}$ instead of ${\tt Keyboard.}$ It is also preferable to use upper case characters to separate words in an identifier (a.k.a. Camel Back) instead of using underscores. Underscores don't add any meaning to names and they use up character spaces.

As much as possible, use 'module-object-operation' format with AAMs. When creating identifiers, specify the name of the module (or sub-system) first, followed by the object and then the operation as shown below.

```
OSSemPost()
OSSemPend()
```

Here, the module name is OS (Operating System), the object is Sem (Semaphore) and the operation that can be performed on the object is Post or Pend.

What's nice about this technique is that it allows you to group similar items together. Of course, it may be a bit difficult to get used to it in the beginning because it's more natural to think in terms of Action-Object such as OSPostSem(). We prefer the Object-Action method because it groups similar objects with their actions. For example:

```
OSSemAccept()
OSSemCreate()
OSSemDel()
OSSemPost()
OSSemPend()
OSSemQuery()
```

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We have recently started to append an underscore character after the module name to separate the module from the Object-Action. Using the above function name as examples, the function names would now look as follows:

```
OS_SemAccept()
OS_SemCreate()
OS_SemDel()
OS_SemPost()
OS_SemPend()
OS_SemQuery()
```

3.00 **AAM Dictionary**

The table below is the current Micriµm's AAM dictionary. The list is subject to change but would most likely only change by adding names. Once an AAM is assigned, it should not be changed.

Absolute	Abs
Action	Act
Active	Active
Add	Add
Address	Addr
Address Resolution Protocol	ARP
Adjust	Adj
Alarm	Alm
Alarming	Alarming
Application	App
Analog Input	Al
Analog Output	AO
Analog Output Analog to Digital Converter	ADC
Assign	Assign
Assignment	Assign
Attributes	Attrib
Automatic	Auto
Auxiliary	Aux
Average	Avg
Background	Bgnd
Bank	Bank
Binary	Bin
Bit	Bit
Buffer	Buf
Cache	Cache
Calculate	Calc
Calculation(s)	Calc
Calibration	Cal
Change	Chng
Channel	Ch
Character	Chr
Check	Chk
Clear	Clr
Clock	Clk
Column	Col
Command	Cmd
Communications	Comm
Compare	Cmp
Complement	Cpl
Computation	Comp
Compute	Comp
Condition	Cond
Configuration	Cfg
Configure	Cfg
Consecutive	Consec
Constant	Const
Control	Ctrl

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Control Byte	СВ
Control Word	CW
Convention	Conv
Conversion	Conv
Count(s)	Cnt(s)
Counter	Ctr
Create	Create
Creation	Create
Current	Cur
Date	Date
Day	Day
Debug	Dbg
Decrement	Dec
Default	Dflt
Defined	Def
Definition	Def
Delay	Dly
Delete	Del
Denominator	Denom
Depth	Depth
Destination	Dest
Detect	Detect
Development	Dev
Device	Dev
Digit	Dig
Digital	Dig
Digital to Analog Converter	DAC
Direction	Dir
Directory	Dir
Disable	Dis or DISABLE
Disabled	Dis or DISABLED
Discharge	Disc
Disk	Disk
Display	Disp
Divider	Div
Divisor	Div
Driver	Drv
Down	Down
Duration	Dur
Dynamic	Dyn
Edge	Edge
Efficiency	Eff
Elapsed	Elapsed
Enable	En or ENABLE
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Exception	Except
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Extern	Ext
External	Ext
Family	Fam

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Range	Range
Reverse Address Resolution Protocol	RARP
Ratio	Ratio
Read	Rd
Ready	Rdy
Recall	RcI
Receive	Rx
Receiver	Rx
Register	Reg
Relative	Rel
Request	Req
Reserved	Rsvd
Reset	Reset
Respond	Resp
Response	Resp
Restart	Restart
ReSynchronize	ReSync
Retard	Retard
Retries	Retries
Return	Rtn
Right	Right
Row	Row
Run	Run
Scale	Scale
Scaling	Scaling
Schedule	Sched
Scheduler	Sched
Screen	Scr
Second	Sec
Select	Sel
Semaphore	Sem
Send	Send
Sender	Sender
Sense	Sense
Sensitivity	Sens
Sensor	Sensor
Serial Line Interface Protocol	SLIP
Serial Number	SN
Service	Serv
Set	Set
Setpoint	Stp
Shutdown	Sd
Size	Size
Slave	Slave
Slope	Slope
Socket	Sock
Software	Soft
Source	Src
Specification	Spec
Speed	Spd
Stack	Stk
Standard	Std
Start	Start
State	State

State Machine	SM
Static	Static
Statistic(s)	Stat
Status	Status
Stop	Stop
Storage	Sto
Store	Sto
Symbol	Symbol
Synchronize	Sync
System	Sýs
System Network Management	
Protocol	SNMP
Table	Tbl
Target	Target
Task	Task
Task Control Block	ТСВ
Test	Test
Text	Text
Time	Time
Time Base	TB
Timeout	Timeout or TO
Timer	Tmr
Time To Live	TTL
Timing	Timing
Transmit	Tx
Transmission Control Protocol	TCP
Underflow	Undf
User Datagram Protocol	UDP
Units	Units
Update	Update
Upload	Upload
User	User
Valid	Valid
Value(s)	Val
Variable(s)	Var
Vector	Vector
Verify	Verify
Version	Ver
Volume	Vol
Width	Width
Write	Wr

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