

FY 2000 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AWARD NOMINATION
DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY

“GREENING” THE LOGISTICS PIPELINE
POPULATING THE FEDERAL LOGISTICS INFORMATION SYSTEM WITH
ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES

POLLUTION PREVENTION – TEAM AWARD

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Background:

Federal employees are directed by law, Executive Orders, and other federal and departmental policies to reduce waste and environmental impacts of its activities by minimizing the use of hazardous or toxic substances, promoting the use of recycled materials, improving energy and water efficiency, reduce the volume of waste for disposal, improving worker health and safety. These activities to minimize environmental impacts also often serve to reduce operating costs, saving taxpayer dollars.

In an effort to provide federal agencies with information needed to make environmental purchasing decisions, a multi-Agency Joint Group on Environmental Attributes (JG-EnvAtt) was established by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) to educate federal employees on items of supply that are environmentally oriented. Members of the JG-EnvAtt are multidisciplinary. They are not only logistics specialists and environmental experts, but are also procurement specialists, facilities operations and maintenance managers, and supply specialists. This brings a broad range of knowledge to the group, empowering it to make “cradle to grave” decisions pertaining to designating attributes for inclusion in the FLIS. Based on research presented to the JG-EnvAtt, the group makes the determination for attribute inclusion. There is no other review required.

Federal employees can now requisition National Stock Numbered items of supply through the General Services Administration (GSA) and the DLA based on environmental attributes that are identified in the Federal Logistics Information System (FLIS), a database of more than 7 million supply items managed by GSA and DLA. By applying EPA’s preferable products principles and guidelines, products are being assigned clearly definable, positive environmental attributes to designate products as environmentally oriented.

Accomplishments:

JG-EnvAtt has established criteria for selecting and approving environmental attributes based on three characteristics: the degree to which the attribute addresses a federal policy priority (i.e., part of federal directives or agency policies); its definability (i.e., the presence of standardized definitions and quantifiable criteria); and its potential to offer a lifecycle cost savings. To date,

the JG-EnvAtt has approved four environmental attributes to be incorporated in the database.

Based on the JG-EnvAtt recommendations, in partnership with EPA, DOE and the Department of Agriculture advisors, four attributes and their associated definitions have been approved for incorporation into the FLIS. They are:

(EPA) Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines: “Product meets or exceeds the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines – Recovered Materials Advisory Notices (RMAN).”

Department of Energy’s (DOE) Energy-Efficient Products Standards: “Product meets or exceeds the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Energy-Efficient Products Standards -- products in the top 25 percent of energy efficiency for all similar products, or at least 10% more efficient than required by DOE standards, or meets efficiency criteria of the EPA/DOE Energy Star label.”

Water Conserving are any plumbing fixtures that meet or exceed the Department of Energy (DOE) Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) recommended performance standards for flow rates.

Low VOC meets the VOC content requirements that are established in the California (SCAQMD) Source Specific Standards and are more strict than the Federal VOC content limits, established per the Clean Air Act Section 183 (e).

Based on these definitions GSA and DLA have associated over 2,000 National Stock Numbers (NSNs) with products that meet the definitions.

As shown above, the FLIS is using these well-defined, well-accepted criteria that have been developed by federal government agencies, and accepted by industry and standard-setting organizations for environmentally oriented products. The aim is to eliminate the need for federal employees to conduct extensive research to determine if a product meets or exceeds federal definitions for environmentally oriented products. The FLIS, and its associated FEDLOG, ‘EPRO’* and EMALL applications, provide a “one stop” shopping cataloging approach for federal employees who are seeking designated environmental products. By coding environmentally oriented products in the FLIS, we are not only encouraging users to rethink how and what they buy and consume, but also establishing the federal government as an environmentally conscious steward.

We are encouraging the industrial base to meet these environmental requirements up front during the acquisition process, thus eliminating the costly and time consuming research in finding and 'verifying' environmentally alternative claims. We are also providing a tool for procurement/requisitioning personnel at the installation level to consult one data source versus multiple catalogs and databases to find environmentally oriented products. We are able to provide Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) reports for federal agencies that requisition items through DLA and GSA. This eliminates manual accounting processes by agencies, and provides the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive with more accurate information on environmentally preferable purchases by federal employees. Federal customers of FLIS can also use this information to exercise preference for materials that have a lesser adverse impact on human health and the environment when compared to competing products that serve the same purpose. By taking this approach, federal agencies can easily support compliance with laws and regulations, Presidential Executive Orders, and other agency environmental policies.

Summary:

Federal representatives on the JG-EnvAtt are involved in all aspects of the designation and ultimate approval of environmental attributes. Through their efforts, a number of modifications to FLIS have occurred that are resulting in a greater awareness of environmentally oriented products across the federal government and steadily increasing sales for items designated as "green." By highlighting environmentally friendly products in the FLIS, FEDLOG and the 'DoD EPRO* and EMALL', we have made the process of finding environmentally friendly alternatives much easier for our customers, and have significantly streamlined the process for identifying and promoting the use of environmentally friendly products.

* Added entry: EPRO is scheduled to be operational in July-August 2000