THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

JUN - 6 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATION, INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE AND IT ACQUISITION
USD(AT&L) DIRECT REPORTS
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Department of Defense (DoD) Country Code Standard

DoD business processes must consistently identify worldwide countries in transactions to achieve transparency and interoperability among automated information systems. Establishing DoD-wide standards for electronic exchange is key to data integrity and critical to open-government initiatives.

The National Institute for Standards and Technology withdrew the Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Publication 10-4, "Countries, Dependencies, Areas of Special Sovereignty, and Their Principal Administrative Divisions," in September 2008, and the DoD IT Standards Committee allowed for its use until December 31, 2012. The International Standards Organization has established a more current standard under International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 3166-1, "Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions – Part 1: Country codes."

The Department fully commits to establishing and maintaining a U.S. Profile of ISO 3166-1 as the sole country code standard for the DoD. Components shall immediately begin to transition to this code standard:

- Each DoD Component must complete transition to the ISO 3166-1 in full replacement of FIPS 10-4 by September 30, 2012.
- Program managers shall, at a minimum, ensure complete transition to the digraph (two-character) alpha version of ISO 3166-1 by September 30, 2012. Program Managers may choose to move directly to ISO 3166-1 trigraph with support for ISO 3166-1 digraph and should consider the use of the enterprise-level mediation capability described below to maintain interoperability.

- All DoD requests for additional country codes not already incorporated in ISO 3166-1 shall be submitted to the Director, International Cooperation (IC), for consideration and formal staffing to the U.S. representative to the ISO committee that governs the standard.

I have asked the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy (DPAP), to work with the Joint Staff to ensure this decision is incorporated in an AT&L instruction in accordance with DoD Directive 8320.03, Unique Identification Standards for a Net-Centric Department of Defense. This decision is consistent with the DoD Chief Information Officer May 5, 2010, memorandum, "Monitoring of Country Code Standard Transition."

A survey was conducted for the current usage of country code standards and the results showed that the majority of DoD entities use either the FIPS 10-4 or ISO 3166-1, or some variation of one of these standards (the results of the survey can be found here: http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/pdi/pc/docs/Country_Code_Survey_Results_and_Analysis.pdf). The survey also indicates the trigraph (three-character) version of this code is the preferred standard for data integrity and is in use today by the Integrated Acquisition Environment portfolio of systems and the DoD Activity Address Directory. However, many legacy systems throughout the Department are still programmed to a two-character format to support high volume, fixed-length transactions; it might be cost prohibitive to update these systems at this time.

The Director, DPAP, will also coordinate with the Deputy Chief Management Officer (DCMO) to update the Business Enterprise Architecture, including the Standard Financial Information Structure, to reflect ISO 3166-1. The Director, DPAP, has coordinated this change with the Business Enterprise Common Core Metadata Community of Interest that will assist the DCMO with oversight of system transition planning. The DCMO will monitor the progress of the transitions and identify an efficient approach to develop, host and maintain the long-term enterprise-level electronic mediation capability to translate between ISO 3166-1 trigraph and digraph and other commonly used DoD country code formats in cases where legacy systems or processes use an alternate format and cannot be updated in a timely manner. This mediation capability must be provided on an enterprise level for an expected transition period through 2020.

My points of contact are Mr. Robert Leibrandt, DPAP/PDI, at 703-602-8019 or Robert.Leibrandt@osd.mil, Mr. Wright Yarborough, IC, at 703-693-0780 or Wright.Yarborough@osd.mil, and Mr. Dennis Wisnosky, DCMO, at 703-693-0358 or Dennis.Wisnosky@osd.mil.

Ashton B. Carter