

SPECSINTACT Interagency Configuration, Control and Coordinating (SI-CCCB) Meeting Minutes

July 22-23, 2003
Washington, D.C,



Attendees:

Miguel A. Morales, NASA
Bill Brodt, NASA (Washington)
Rick Dahnke, USACE (Washington)
Michael Stovall, USACE (Huntsville)
Steven P. Freitas, USACE (Sacramento)
Jim Quinn, USACE (Huntsville)
Carl Kersten, NAVFAC (Norfolk)
Ed Gallaher, NAVFAC (Norfolk)
Jim Quinn, USACE (Huntsville)
Rick Knutson, InDyne
Pat Robinson, InDyne
Jim Whitehead, InDyne

Introduction/Action Items/NASA Transition to UFGS -Miguel Morales, NASA

- Welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Introduced Rick Knutson, the new IT Manager for InDyne, Inc., subcontractor to Space Gateway Services (SGS), which is the contractor responsible for SpecsIntact development. Also introduced Michael Stovall, the Chief of Cost Engineering Division for the Army Corp of Engineers in Huntsville, Alabama
- Presented an overview of the marketing efforts the SpecsIntact Team has accomplished in the last three months.
 - Pat Robinson and Cheryl Fitz-Simon attended the DOD Infrastructure Conference and NASA Facilities conference.
 - Designed a SpecsIntact poster for version 4.0.
 - Distributed brochures on the new features of SpecsIntact 4.0.
 - Distributed compact discs containing the software and UFGS Master text.
 - Pat Robinson attended the NASA Configuration Control and Coordinating Board (NS-CCCB) meeting.
 - Distributed brochures on the new features of SpecsIntact 4.0.
 - Distributed compact discs containing the software and NASA Master text.
- New SpecsIntact overview brochure was handed out to the SI-CCCB meeting participants.

- Discussed SpecsIntact software milestones of past six months. SpecsIntact version 4.0 released with:
 - Reference Wizard and automatic Reference Article updating
 - New MS Word output
 - Significant improvements to reports
 - Numerous software change requests and enhancements completed
- Presented transition plan for NASA to join Unified Facilities Guide Specifications (UFGS).
 - NASA has agreed to transition to UFGS.
 - Requested a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be written for NASA, Army, Navy, Air Force, and Veterans Administration (VA).
- After MOU is signed, NASA will move the entire database to UFGS.

Action: Miguel Morales requested Bill Brodt to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for NASA to join UFGS. He will coordinate and obtain the appropriate signatures.

Action: Carl Kersten will provide Bill Brodt a copy of MIL-STD-3007B, “Department Of Defense Standard Practice Standard Practice For Unified Facilities Criteria And Unified Facilities Guide Specifications” and their charter to help draft the MOU.

Action: Prior to NASA joining the UFGS, Mr. Quinn will add the unique NASA reference standards to the UMRL.

Status of VA Joining UFGS – Bill Brodt, NASA and Carl Kersten, NAVFAC

- Carl Kersten provided the following highlights:
 - Veterans Administration (VA) is in the process of identifying the specifications to incorporate into the UFGS database.
 - The unique VA specifications will be converted to SpecsIntact format.
 - VA requires a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) before joining UFGS.
 - Plan for VA to transition in three-years to UFGS.
- Bill Brodt provided the following highlights:
 - The budget to convert the unique VA specifications was approved.
 - Working on an effort with an outside contractor for unique VA specifications to be converted into SpecsIntact format.
 - VA will not provide additional funding for the SpecsIntact Project.
 - VA will be encouraged to submit change requests and participate at the SI-CCCB meetings.
 - VA will not be a voting member at the SI-CCCB meetings.

UFGS Working Group Meetings – Ed Gallaher, NAVFAC and Carl Kersten, NAVFAC

- Ed Gallaher provided the following highlights:
 - June 18, 2003, meeting the main topic was to discuss the problems with the unified 01300 SUBMITTAL PROCEDURES section.
 - Army and Navy construction personnel were participants at the meeting.
 - The goal of the meeting was to remove all tailoring options from section 01300.
 - The completed rewrite of section 01300 will be distributed on the October Construction Criteria Base (CCB) disc.
 - Established standard submittal notes and standard paragraphs for section 01300 and all of the UFGS sections.
 - It was agreed that all of the unified sections would specify the submittal item in the body of the text if the submittal was specified in the submittal article.
 - Existing sections that are not unified and that do not currently specify the submittal outside the submittal article will not be corrected, unless those sections are subsequently unified.
 - Unified Facilities Criteria Document was updated to reflect actions agreed upon at the meetings.

Object Modeling/CAD/GIS – Bill Brodt, NASA

- Bill stated that his vision is to have electronic data set handed over to the owner that contains specifications, drawings, and warranty information, etc. This would be a Maintenance Management System. The system would have a searchable database to maintain the building for a lifetime.
- Presented an overview of CADD/GIS center located in Vicksburg, Mississippi. The CADD/GIS Technology Center for Facilities, Infrastructure, and Environment (formerly the Tri-Service CADD/GIS Technology Center). The center sets standards, promotes system integration, and maintenance of CADD/GIS systems.
- The Common Object Strategy is a plan to evolve CADD and GIS standards information into an environment. Entity relational databases will begin to record the relationships of different but related categories of information. Objects will be organized into classes and objects with functions instead of just recorded data.
- Stated that the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) is the pipeline into congress.
- Stated the Federal Agencies use NIBS to work with the Federal Government and Industry.

- Future links should be added for SpecsIntact and UFGS database.

Whole Building Design Guide (WBDG) - Bambi Tran, NIBS

- Presented a demo of the WBDG.
- The WBDG provides the government and industry information a wide range of building-related guidance, criteria and technology from a whole building perspective.
- Organized into two major categories - Design Guidance and Project Management.
 - Building Types - contains information organized by the type of building or use
 - Design Objectives - contains information organized by the specific design goal
 - Products & Systems - contains information organized by CSI MasterFormat™ or UniFormat™
 - Multiple links between various sections allows easy access all relevant online information related to a topic, including design tools, federal mandates, and government and non-government standards.
 - In-depth technical summaries, called Resource Pages, written by industry experts.
- In the future, access information on specific products and systems by selecting sections based on CSI MasterFormat™ Division or ASTM UNIFORMAT II Major Group Element from the menu.
- The National Institute of Building Sciences makes the web site available.

UFGS Database Issues – Pat Robinson, InDyne

- Presented presentation prepared by Cheryl Fitz-Simon, InDyne, Inc.
- Goal to provide a quality product to our user community.
- Reported on UFGS Report issues on CCB discs 60 and 61.
- Displayed examples of the problems in the UFGS database and the Unified Master Reference List (UMRL).
- Results of not distributing a quality database to the users.
 - Frustrated Users.
 - Specifications require continual updating for each project.
 - Costly for both Government and Architectural Engineering Firms.

- Requires technical support assistance.
- 194 technical support calls resulted because of the UFGS database issues.

Action: By September 2003, all of the UFGS Sections will be updated to reflect the same reference standards contained in the UMRL.

UFGS Database Maintenance Proposal – Rick Knutson, InDyne

- Rick reviewed the cost estimate provided by SGS to maintain the UFGS database.
- Board members felt there was a misunderstanding of the tasks required to perform the quality assurance on the UFGS database.
- The scope of requirements has changed since Mr. Quinn put together the first proposal to perform Quality Assurance on the UFGS database.
- Miguel stated we need to validate the scope and level of effort required to perform Quality Assurance on the UFGS database.
- In fiscal year 2005 each agency will increase its SpecsIntact budget by five percent (5%) to cover the additional work of coordinating UFGS maintenance and performing quality assurance on the UFGS database.

Action: Miguel Morales will submit a Contract Change Request (CCR) for Fiscal Year 2005, for InDyne to perform the quality assurance and distribution of the UFGS database to the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS).

SI Accomplishments – Pat Robinson, InDyne

- Reported software releases on the SpecsIntact Website, Construction Criteria Base disc, and master text.
- Demonstrated the new installation illustrating the new features for SpecsIntact 4.0.
- Reported on recent enhancements incorporated into the final SpecsIntact version 4.0 release, and several enhancements about to be released, including:
 - New Reference Wizard enhancements as directed at the November, 2002 SI CCCB meeting, including automated Reference Article updating
 - Editor redo command
 - Significant improvements to reports and report hyperlinking to Sections
 - New Microsoft Word output capability with renumbered paragraphs and headers and footers
 - New print option to keep paragraph titles together with the paragraph text
 - Job and Master settings for units of measurement and display options
- Reported highly positive customer feedback for both the software and technical support assistance.
- Reported on new help tools.
 - SI Help converted to browser-base.
 - Quick Tours redesigned for 4.0 release.
 - Future action learning tools – the first will cover tags.
 - Printed guides are being redesigned.
- Reported on web site statistics since November meeting.
 - 26,494 hits to the home page.
 - 645 software downloads of v4.0.530.
 - 1,730 software downloads of v4.0.548.

BSD White Paper/SI and SpecLink Summary Comparison – Jim Whitehead, InDyne

- Briefly compared the BSD SpecLink and SpecsIntact software, and distributed a summary comparison of these two applications. Pointed out that:
 - The federal government owns the SpecsIntact software, and can continue to use it indefinitely.
 - The SpecLink software license would have to be purchased annually, or the software would stop working.
 - SpecsIntact uses an open, non-proprietary SGML/XML data format, which is becoming the standard for document portability and data reuse.

- The SpecsIntact master text has substantial engineering intelligence built into the documents via the SGML/XML tagging. This intelligence can enable and facilitate links to other applications, such as CAD and Cost Estimating systems.
 - Abandoning this open SGML/XML data format for the a proprietary data format would limit the opportunities to link the UFGS and NASA Master text with other applications, and would effectively give the owner of the proprietary data format complete control of any such development.
 - The SpecsIntact document intelligence also makes these documents easy to convert into other formats, including proprietary formats, such as the SpecLink data format. Converting back out of such proprietary formats would be much more difficult, and probably could not be completed without the express authorization of the owners of these proprietary formats.
- Bill Brodt stated Rob Dean had contacted personnel with Army, Navy, and NASA to market BSD (SpecLink) to the Federal Government.

Action: Bill Brodt will contact Rob Dean and inform him that the SI-CCCB members are satisfied with the SpecsIntact software, and do not wish to enter into a contractual relationship with BSD, Inc. for software development. Bill Brodt will encourage BSD, Inc. to use the UFGS database as a resource for the SpecLink software.

Alternate Paragraph Numbering – Jim Whitehead, InDyne

- Discussed two related but distinct goals:
 - Goal 1: Providing automated renumbering of itemized paragraphs (proposed CR)
 - Goal 2: Allowing alternative paragraph numbering formats to promote wider and more flexible SpecsIntact use (approved CR)
- Presented and discussed two alternatives for implementing each of these goals:
 - Goal 1 implementation options:
 - Renumbering existing ITM and LST tags
 - Providing new nested, numbered item tags that would automatically renumber
 - Goal 2 implementation options:
 - Using the existing PRT and SPT tags with the existing, numeric subpart numbers embedded in the titles.
 - Providing new paragraph tags that would automatically generate subpart numbers, more easily allowing alternate paragraph numbering formats

- For each goal, using the existing tags would present substantial obstacles, could not be accomplished in an efficient manner, and would not produce correct results in all cases due to inconsistent markup.
- Recommended:
 - Creating new nested renumberable item tags
 - Investigating whether numbered paragraph tags can serve double duty for numbered items and numbered paragraphs
 - Creating new numbered paragraph tags

Action: A teleconference will be scheduled to discuss the options, decide whether to implement the proposed CR, and which option(s) to use when implementing these changes.

Extensible Markup Language (XML) – Jim Whitehead, InDyne

- Stated that achieving XML compliance was not highly prioritized at past meetings.
- Stated that XML compliance would provide all benefits previously discussed, as well as some not yet mentioned. The benefits would include:
 - Facilitating the conversion of the VA Specs into SpecsIntact format
 - Possibly enabling the use of the UFGS Master by the General Services Administration (GSA) by aiding in the conversion of the GSA specs
 - Promoting application tie-ins to CAD and cost accounting applications
 - Permitting the creation of SpecsIntact Sections by other applications
 - Facilitating web publishing of SpecsIntact Sections
 - Simplifying the editing of SpecsIntact Sections with third party XML applications
- Recommended three-phase development effort for SpecsIntact XML compliance:
 - First phase: develop and publish a schema to define valid XML document markup.
 - Second phase: generate and use well formed and valid XML documents
 - Third phase: develop and publish a style sheet

Review Change Requests – Pat Robinson, InDyne, and Jim Whitehead, InDyne

A total of 27 change requests were reviewed. Below is a summary of the results of the change requests reviewed:

Accepted - 7
 Withdrawn - 6
 Rejected - 7
 Deferred – 7

Wrap-Up

Action: The SpecsIntact Team will make recommendations for prioritizing development work, and will schedule a teleconference for the board to review these recommendations and provide direction to the SpecsIntact Team.

The next meeting will be held at Kennedy Space Center November 18-19, 2003.