

SPECSINTACT Interagency Configuration, Control and Coordinating Board Meeting

Washington, D.C.
7-8 December 1999

Attendees:

Miguel A. Morales, NASA
Steven P. Freitas, USACE – Sacramento District
Jim Quinn, USACE
Jim Whitehead, SPECSINTACT
Pat Robinson, SPECSINTACT
Calvin Crofford, Navy - LANTDIV
Rick Waller, Navy - LANTDIV
Ed Gallaher, Navy - LANTDIV
Carl Kersten, Navy
Rick Dahnke, USACE
Thomas Hinshaw, NASA
Mohsen Athari, NAVFAC
Charles Baldi, USACE
Sherry Gebhardt, NASA

Introduction – Miguel Morales, NASA

- Recognized the accomplishments of the SPECSINTACT Development Team working with limited personnel resources.
- Referred to recent budgetary constraints that would limit the amount of SPECSINTACT development that can be performed in the future.
- Indicated that some overhead rates are no longer covered by other fund sources under the new SPECSINTACT contract, Joint Base Operations Support Contract (J-BOSC), and that this will impact the schedules of future development work.

SPECSINTACT Accomplishments – Pat Robinson, SPECSINTACT Development Team

- Enumerated SPECSINTACT software releases since previous board meeting: four releases via NIBS Construction Criteria Base CD, and three additional releases via the SPECSINTACT World Wide Web site.
- Described corrections and enhancements to the SPECSINTACT Software since the last meeting, including substantial changes to support the new, unified submittal format.
- Miguel Morales pointed out that the eventual goal of the Board was to standardize the construction specifications used for all three agencies, and urged that the agencies work toward this goal.

Budget Issues – Miguel Morales, NASA

Miguel Morales described software development limitations imposed by the current SPECSINTACT budget, and mentioned the need to increase programming resources in the SPECSINTACT department. The board members approved an annual budget increase subject to each (member) agency approval.

Review Software Change Requests – Pat Robinson and Jim Whitehead, SPECSINTACT Development Team

- Presented for the Board's consideration 14 new Change Requests

- The board approved or conditionally approved eight of the Change Requests, while rejecting or deferring the remaining six.
- Change Request Evaluations (PDF)

Action: The SPECSINTACT Development Team will write a description of SPECSINTACT installation problems caused by DOD security changes, as well as a description of steps necessary to correct this problem.

Action: Mohsen Athari, United States Navy, will ensure that this description is forwarded to all Navy agencies using SPECSINTACT.

Demonstration of SPECSINTACT Version 3 – Jim Whitehead, SPECSINTACT Development Team

- Demonstrated new functionality and ease of use.
- Discussed suggestions for enhancements that might be incorporated into the software before its official release next year.
- Solicited feedback from the board on the possible inclusion of new capabilities in the software.

Demonstration of DrawSpec Software developed by Navy LANTDIV – Calvin Crofford and Rick Waller, United States Navy, LANTDIV

- Described history of DrawSpec since 1996, when LANTDIV began working on it.
- Demonstrated current DrawSpec software, which lacks an automatic link between CAD software and SPECSINTACT.
- Described tasks currently performed manually, and suggested improvements to SPECSINTACT for automating these tasks.
- Miguel Morales pointed out that Tailoring Options were developed to provide a link between CAD Software and SPECSINTACT, and that using Tailoring Options to provide this link would also allow automatic Specification pre-editing based on components identified in CAD drawings.

Action: The SPECSINTACT Development Team will enhance SPECSINTACT to allow creating a new Job or adding Specification Sections to an existing Job based on a list of Section numbers generated by DrawSpec. This will be done in such a way as to not preclude possible future enhancements to pre-edit the Sections based on list of key words supplied for each Section.

Action: LANTDIV will evaluate the current SPECSINTACT Tailoring Option capability to determine whether Tailoring Options are suitable for use as DrawSpec key words, so as to allow Section tailoring based on DrawSpec key words.

Single Master Reference List – Jim Quinn, USACE, Miguel Morales, NASA, Pat Robinson, SPECSINTACT Development Team

- Described the potential advantages to the SPECSINTACT funding agencies if all three agencies supported and made full use of the Single Master Reference List (SMRL) that is currently maintained and used by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Discussed the possible use and limitations of the Index of Industry Standards.
- All three agencies discussed the frequency of updates to and reviews of the Specification Sections. Navy and NASA stated that they had never experienced significant problems due to out-of-date publication references in a Section.

Action: Jim Quinn, Army will verify the cost required for Information Handling Services (IHS) to update and maintain the SMRL.

Action: Tom Hinshaw, NASA will coordinate and schedule in January a teleconference with representatives from all three agencies to discuss the issue of SPECSINTACT funding being used to update and maintain the SMRL.

CCB Update – Earl Kennett, NIBS

- Discussed design issues and the availability of the Whole Building Design Guide, at <http://www.wbdg.org/>
- Emphasized the importance of developing and using standards to facilitate links between written specifications and drawings.

Specification Standardization Issues, Round Table

- Discussed obstacles to specification standardization, and ways to overcome these obstacles

Action: Tom Hinshaw, NASA will coordinate and schedule in January a teleconference with representatives from all three agencies to review the document he compiled regarding Uniform Section Numbers and Titles.

Action: As an experiment, NASA Centers will undertake one or two design projects using Navy and/or Army Specifications.

Demonstration of Web-based SPECSINTACT Technical Support Using Microsoft Netmeeting® – Pat Robinson, SPECSINTACT Development Team

- Demonstrated feasibility of web-based support, which was well received by the Board.
- Discussed issues of providing such support and training, in addition to current methods.

Action: Sherry Gebhardt, NASA and Tom Hinshaw, NASA will contact the Agency Chief Information Officer (CIO) in Cleveland to discuss security issues raised by the use of Netmeeting for customer support.

SPECSINTACT Editors: SI Editor and WordSpec – Round Table

- It was agreed that both Editors serve important purposes for SPECSINTACT, and that SPECSINTACT users should be aware that WordSpec was designed as an alternate SPECSINTACT Editor, and not as a substitute for the SPECSINTACT software.
- WordSpec limitations were discussed, including the inability to use Tailoring Options, or any other feature that would require more than two Word styles to be active at one time.

Action: Jim Whitehead will draft and circulate a note describing WordSpec's limitations, as well as its intended function as an alternate SPECSINTACT Editor.

Amendments – Steve Freitas, USACE, Sacramento District

- Need the capability of printing a given page by specifying the page number. SPECSINTACT has been historically inaccurate in printing a specified page number.
- Need a Job property that specifies whether a Job has been amended.
- For Electronic Bid Sets, need to be able to create and view multiple versions of PDF files, with each version representing a separate amendment.

Action: The SPECSINTACT Development Team will correct SPECSINTACT's inability to print a specified Specification page number, and will incorporate the requested enhancements into the 32-bit version of the SPECSINTACT software.

SPECSINTACT Beta Testing – Jim Whitehead, SPECSINTACT Development Team

- Described plan to bring interested users to Kennedy Space Center January 26-28, 2000 for extensive testing of the new SPECSINTACT software. The SPECSINTACT Development Team is seeking any interested individuals, either from the public or private sector, to participate in this testing period. Testers will have the opportunity to help correct deficiencies in software functions that are important to them, as well the opportunity to influence the direction of future improvements. Testers should be familiar with the use of the SPECSINTACT software, and should plan to bring actual SPECSINTACT work to be completed during the testing period.
- Described additional internal SPECSINTACT quality assurance methods, including code reviews, internal testing, and user beta testing
- Discussed additional user beta testing planned prior to official release of the new SPECSINTACT software, including off-site private beta testing, as well as public beta testing.

Action: The SPECSINTACT Development Team will send e-mail notification of the planned KSC testing to representatives from all three governing agencies.

Action: Representatives from the three governing agencies will notify the SPECSINTACT Development Team of the individuals who will attend the KSC testing sessions. Any other individuals wishing to attend should send e-mail to SPECSINTACT, at specsintact@ksc.nasa.gov.

Wrap-Up – Miguel Morales, NASA, and Pat Robinson, SPECSINTACT Development Team

It was agreed to hold the next SI-CCCB meeting June 13-15, 2000, in Washington, D.C.