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CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF INSTRUCTION

J-6

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7 October 2023

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR MANAGEMENT AND USE OF UNITED STATES MESSAGE TEXT FORMATTING

References:

See Enclosure D

1. Purpose. This instruction implements policy and procedures for management and use of United States Message Text Format (USMTF)/eXtensible Markup Language-USMTF (XML-MTF) in Department of Defense (DoD) Information Technology (IT) systems, interfaces, and applications via the DoD Information Network (DoDIN). This instruction also implements the policies and procedures set out in reference a.

a. Background. The USMTF Program, as set forth in reference b, establishes the standards and prescribes the rules and conventions governing message text formats (character-oriented information exchange requirements), their XML-MTF representations, and vocabulary for joint reporting systems. USMTF is to be used for all formatted character-oriented Defense Message System (DMS) information exchange requirements (IER) unless specifically excluded by multinational agreement.

b. Intent. Data elements described within the governing Message Text Formats (MTF) establish standards for all joint reporting systems. Reference g is posted to the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) USMTF Portal site on the DISA SharePoint DoD 365-J tenant at <<https://dod365.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/DISA-USMTF/SitePages/Home.aspx>>.

2. Superseded/Cancellation. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 6241.04D, 12 January 2021, "Policy and Procedures for Management and Use of United States Message Text Formatting" is hereby superseded.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to the Combatant Commands (CCMDs), Services, Joint Staff, and those DoD activities and agencies responsive to the CJCS.

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4. Procedures. See Enclosures A–C.

5. Approach. For the purposes of interoperability, supportability, and information sharing, all IT and National Security Systems (NSS) developed for DoD/U.S. forces use in joint and combined USMTF operations must use references b and g. These systems will be certified as interoperable through joint testing with systems that have a requirement to interface or exchange information. Service-unique systems that are not in compliance with these standards must develop migration plans to ensure compliance for the joint arena. Enclosure A provides a USMTF program overview.

a. USMTF Program Objectives

(1) Produces and conducts configuration management of character-oriented information exchange specifications (IESs) for the DoD as determined and derived from IER.

(2) Provides character-oriented IES and all associated metadata in a platform independent, tagged XML schema format. Tagged representation will promote structural and semantic understanding of USMTF data assets and allow implementers to utilize and implement the formatted IER more effectively.

(3) Enables discovery of USMTF XML-MTF schemas in accordance with the DoD Data Services Environment, if operationally required.

(4) Makes all USMTF data assets visible and accessible to the DoD by posting data content in shared spaces such as the DISA USMTF portal site on the DISA SharePoint DoD 365-J tenant at <<https://dod365.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/DISA-USMTF/SitePages/Home.aspx>>.

(5) Facilitates warfighter (or user) comprehension and readability of USMTF messages and data elements and incorporates perspectives of users and implementers of USMTF data assets.

(6) Facilitates and supports interoperability between U.S., North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and other allied and coalition commands.

(7) Reduces time and effort required to draft, transmit/post, analyze, interpret, and process messages through use of XML automation and implementation.

(8) Responds to emerging DoD information sharing requirements that support making USMTF data assets visible, accessible, understandable, linked,

trusted, interoperable, secure, and responsive to the warfighter and DoD communities of interest. Data assets that contain the contents of an organizational message will meet the basic requirements of reliability, accuracy, and security of the original message.

(9) Facilitates communication between DoD and DoD-related entities through doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, education, personnel, facilities, and policy support of a common standard for messages.


6. Summary of Changes. Changes to this instruction:

- a. Adds Table of Contents.
- b. Updates format.
- c. Updates organizations and responsibilities to reflect recent changes.
- d. Updates web sites and uniform resource locators.

7. Releasability. UNRESTRICTED. This instruction is approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited on the Non-classified Internet Protocol Router Network (NIPRNET). DoD Components (to include the CCMDs), other Federal agencies, and the public may obtain copies of this directive through the Internet from the CJCS Directives Electronic Library at <<https://www.jcs.mil/Library/>>. Joint Staff activities may also obtain access via the SECRET Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET) Directives Electronic Library web sites.

8. Effective Date. This INSTRUCTION is effective upon signature.

For the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



MICHAEL L. DOWNS, Maj Gen, USAF
Vice Director, Joint Staff

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Enclosures

- A – USMTF Program Overview
- B – Responsibilities
- C – Procedures
- D – References
- GL – Glossary

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OPR for the subject directive has chosen electronic distribution to the above organizations via e-mail. The Joint Staff Information Management Division has responsibility for publishing the subject directive to the SIPRNET and NIPRNET Joint Electronic Library web sites.

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ENCLOSURE A

USMTF PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. General. The use of common DoD character-oriented syntax that is visible, understandable, accessible, secure, and trusted provides the foundation for seamless communications and enables situational awareness, sound decision making, and information/decision advantage. An important element of the DoD syntax is the incorporation of a single set of operationally agreed-upon information definitions and expressions for the exchange of information among allied and coalition mission partners, military forces, and supporting agencies of the DoD. The CCMDs, Services, Joint Staff, and those DoD activities and agencies responsive to the CJCS will use USMTF for DMS character-oriented information exchange. To ensure interoperability within the many exchanges of a joint, allied, and coalition mission partner environment, USMTF users and applications needing to interface with DoD compliant systems must use the approved XML-MTF messages governed by reference g to obtain Joint Interoperability Certification or an Interim Certificate to Operate. This is mandated in reference e, located on the GIG Technical Guidance Federation portal site at <<https://jasm.apps.mil/prweb/PRWebLDAP1>>.

2. Programmatic Applicability

a. USMTF applies to all character-oriented IES, as determined and derived from DMS IER, in support of DoD operations. This program is intended to cover all received, processed, and disseminated DMS messages between U.S., NATO, and other allied and coalition commands reporting systems. The USMTF program supports the migration to an information sharing environment by adhering to the goals outlined in reference d, by standardizing character-oriented data processed into or emanating from systems or applications interfacing with the DoDIN. Reference g is a mandatory standard cited in reference e, which mandates the minimum set of standards and guidelines for the acquisition of all DoD systems that produce, use, or exchange DMS messaging IER.

b. XML-MTF Message Schemas. This applies to all DoD system classifications. The associated XML-MTF message schemas are posted to the DISA USMTF Portal site on the DISA SharePoint DoD 365-J tenant at <<https://dod365.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/DISA-USMTF/SitePages/Home.aspx>>.

3. Scope. The USMTF program establishes the standard for preparation, processing, storage, and discovery of USMTF data assets in support of DoD

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operations. The USMTF program includes all associated processes and organizations that participate and share USMTF data elements.

4. Approach. For the purposes of interoperability, supportability, and information sharing, all IT and NSS developed for DoD/U.S. force use in joint and combined USMTF operations must use references b and g. These systems will be certified as interoperable through joint testing with systems that have a requirement to interface or exchange information. Service-unique systems that are not in compliance with these standards must develop migration plans to ensure compliance for the joint arena.

5. USMTF Training

a. USMTF training is required to ensure standardization among U.S., NATO, and other allied and coalition commands. USMTF training will be developed and conducted based on approved and current USMTF program documents and information on the DISA USMTF Portal site (reference e). The Joint Interoperability and Data Link Training Center (JID-TC) data link oriented USMTF training data is available at reference f.

b. The Joint Staff Directorate for Joint Force Development, J-7 Joint Education and Doctrine JID-TC is one of the designated USMTF trainers/facilitators. Joint USMTF training will be provided to end users, support personnel, and executives covering the spectrum of USMTF Messages required for data link familiarization.

6. Relationship to Allied and Coalition Efforts. U.S. and allied MTF standards adopted by mission partners contribute to interoperability among U.S., NATO, other allied or coalition commands, as well as IT and NSS. A cost-effective IT and NSS life-cycle is essential for collaborative/coordinated adoption, implementation, and maintenance of related standards to achieve and maintain desired levels of interoperability. At the same time, USMTF formatting standards must remain flexible enough to meet the demands of a complex and dynamic operational environment in concert with the evolution of IT, NSS, and messaging uses/technologies. Continuous effort is required to ensure that USMTF improvements are rapidly and accurately shared with U.S. mission partners.

7. Publication Relationships. Reference g is the companion to this instruction. Reference g provides technical and procedural guidance for the USMTF program, establishes standards, and prescribes rules and conventions governing message text formats and their XML-MTF representations. The USMTF Message Catalog is part of the Military Standard (MIL-STD), but is

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hosted separately from the rules and conventions. Both are located on the DISA USMTF Portal site. The NATO equivalent to reference g rules and conventions is Allied Data Publication-3 (ADatP-3). This publication is NATO's version of standardized message text format and is covered by reference h. Allied Procedural Publication-11 (APP-11) is the NATO Message Catalogue. APP-11 is equivalent to the USMTF Message Catalog and provides users, system developers, and MTF managers with a library of messages and instructions. APP-11 is covered by reference i.

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ENCLOSURE B

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Office of the Department of Defense Chief Information Officer. The DoD Chief Information Officer (CIO) provides policy, standards, and guidance in accordance with reference k, and other directives therein. The DoD CIO serves in an advisory and oversight role for compliance with policies for interoperability and supportability of IT and NSS.

2. The Joint Staff Directorate for Command, Control, Communications, and Computers/Cyber, J-6

a. Oversees the USMTF program by establishing policy for all aspects of the program and resolving issues regarding the policy established.

b. Monitors USMTF efforts to ensure that U.S., NATO, allied/coalition command interoperability and IER are met.

c. Ensures USMTF program efforts are coordinated and consistent with the DoD Data Strategy.

d. Establishes and validates IT and NSS technical requirements applicable to the USMTF program.

e. Establishes and validates operational requirements that involve planning, development, and integration of USMTF and associated system programs (e.g., Global Command and Control System – Joint). These include prioritization of projects, resource expenditures, operational concepts, policies, and procedures.

f. Reviews and provides recommendations to the DoD CIO concerning developmental plans and related programming documents for the USMTF program.

g. Coordinates with CCMDs and Services to enhance DoD operational concepts and supporting elements used to exchange information via USMTF.

h. Ensures the use and effectiveness of USMTF are included as items for evaluation in joint exercise programs, major field experiments, limited objective experiments, and advanced concept technology demonstrations, in conjunction with other Joint Staff Directorates (J-Dirs), CCMDs, Services, and other DoD agencies and activities.

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- i. Ensures the USMTF program continuously evaluates mission partner requirements in addressing the combined operational needs of U.S. and coalition forces.
 - j. Promotes compliance with approved USMTF program guidance and coordinates compliance with related Intelligence Community programs as appropriate.
 - k. Provides Configuration Management (CM) guidance and direction for the USMTF program.
 - l. Verifies USMTF compliance by DoD components with DoD regulations and directives related to disclosure of military information to foreign governments and international organizations.
 - m. Serves as the advocate and spokesperson for CCMDs at forums addressing USMTF and character-oriented information exchanges, to include the USMTF Configuration Control Board (CCB).
 - n. Serves as the advocate and spokesperson to evolve USMTF from a net-centric into the data-centric community.
3. Director, DISA. In addition to paragraph 5 above, the Director, DISA will establish the necessary organizational elements to support the USMTF program, to include a program management structure and the formal appointment of a Program Manager (PM). The Director, DISA will provide CM support for the USMTF program, to include the necessary automation support tools needed to manage the program. In addition, the Director, DISA will:
- a. Provide CM and developmental assistance for the USMTF program, along with data asset management.
 - b. Communicate directly with appropriate personnel of other DoD components on matters related to the USMTF program.
 - c. Define, develop, test, and maintain the interface specifications required to ensure interoperability and information flow among IT and NSS implementing USMTF.
 - d. Certify proper implementation of USMTF in IT and NSS.

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e. Monitor and coordinate with other DoD Component programs and government agencies that may affect interoperability of IT and NSS implementing USMTF standards.

f. Support development and maintenance of the necessary supporting structures and tools for the USMTF program.

g. Represent the United States, as directed by DoD CIO or CJCS, in international forums responsible for the development, testing, and maintenance of information standards for use by IT and NSS in combined operations.

h. Provide technical support and function as the U.S. representative and/or U.S. head of delegation, as directed by DoD CIO or CJCS, at appropriate NATO and other allied and/or coalition interoperability forums.

i. Monitor and report annually to DoD CIO and CJCS regarding the compliance of U.S. military forces with approved USMTF program standards.

j. Support USMTF training as requested by the Joint Staff through DISA's Standards Management Branch, assigned as the USMTF PM. The USMTF PM will:

(1) Provide the products of the USMTF program CM process to the JID-TC and other organizations conducting USMTF training.

(2) Review USMTF training materials and curriculums to ensure compliance with USMTF standards.

(3) Maintain the USMTF Portal site, accessible through DISA SharePoint DoD 365-J tenant at <<https://dod365.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/DISA-USMTF/SitePages/Home.aspx>>

(4) Promote USMTF training and training products.

(5) Provide oversight for information assurance for the USMTF program.

(6) Develop and publish the charter for the USMTF CCB.

(7) Define USMTF CCB specific vocabularies and taxonomies.

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(a) Shared vocabularies should be developed to support machine-to-machine understanding of data elements.

(b) Taxonomies should be developed to categorize and classify schemas that the USMTF CCB uses to group and relate its data assets.

4. Combatant Commanders

a. Identify new and/or changed IER for military operations to the Joint Staff for validation and inclusion in the USMTF program.

b. Ensure that U.S. military forces and support elements assigned or attached to the command operate in accordance with the procedures outlined in this instruction and reference g.

c. Coordinate, review, and submit requirements for changes to USMTF to Joint Staff J-6.

d. Conduct or participate in exercises and technical tests to evaluate IT and NSS procedures and standards developed under the USMTF program.

e. Assist in the management of the USMTF program by performing specific CM reviews, testing, or training when requested by the Joint Staff.

f. Participate in the management of the USMTF program and actively support the management efforts of the designated PM.

g. Evaluate USMTF interoperability in joint exercise programs, to include major field experiments, limited-objective experiments, and advanced concept technology demonstrations.

5. Joint Staff Director for Joint Force Development, J-7

a. Executes USMTF training in accordance with the Joint command and control training management structure established through reference i.

b. Maintains limited online USMTF training through Joint Knowledge Online course J3O P-US1380, "Introduction to Joint Multi-TDL Network (MTN) Operations."

c. Oversees the Joint Tactical Operations (JTO) Joint Training Committee (JTC), normally co-chaired by the Director of the JID-TC. The JTO JTC is a

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senior-level forum for the resolution of crucial training issues and the validation of USMTF training requirements. The JTO JTC Chairperson will:

- (1) Develop, maintain, and administer, in collaboration with membership, the terms of reference for the JTO JTC.
- (2) Coordinate with other J-Dirs, CCMDs, Services, and defense agencies for representation or support in JTO JTC activities, as required.
- (3) Prepare and forward JTC recommendations to the Joint Staff J-6 for review, action, or approval, as appropriate.

6. Service Chiefs, Directors of Defense Agencies, and Combatant Commanders (as appropriate)

- a. Ensure information systems that exchange character-oriented information adhere to USMTF standards.
- b. Identify new, changed, and/or deleted IER to DISA, for joint operations, joint validation, and inclusion in the USMTF program.
- c. Participate in USMTF program management, and actively support the management efforts of the designated PM.
- d. Provide all proposed schedule, applicable system, or interface specification changes that apply to the USMTF program configuration to the Director, DISA.
- e. Coordinate, review, and submit requirements for changes to the USMTF standard to DISA.
- f. Plan, program, and budget for maintenance, testing, and implementation of the approved USMTF standard in those systems implementing the standard.
- g. Notify the CJCS, DoD CIO, and Director, DISA of changes in funds, personnel, facilities, materials, and/or Service training issues that may affect development, implementation, or management of the USMTF standard.
- h. Incorporate, as appropriate, systems implementing USMTF into the Joint Interoperability Test Command (JITC) master test schedule.
- i. Ensure systems implementing USMTF are certified for interoperability on the current message version.

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- j. Participate in joint interoperability certification testing as required.
- k. Ensure that all applicable U.S. military personnel are trained in the correct use of USMTF. USMTF training should be included in programs and exercises where character-oriented information exchanges are a requirement. Training should be conducted using a USMTF compliant and JITC-certified message generation system. Program participants will provide feedback to the Joint Staff J-7 for improvements.
 - (1) Provide representation to the JTO JTC to coordinate development of training objectives, plans of instruction, and training materials, ensuring programs and materials represent the current USMTF Catalog.
 - (2) Designate a point of contact to coordinate USMTF training and training quotas.
- 1. Recommend objectives and thresholds for those aspects of tactical system compatibility and interoperability related to training standards.

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ENCLOSURE C

PROCEDURES

1. General. USMTF data provides the means to achieve interoperability at the information level across all functional and mission areas and will be leveraged by communications and information systems used throughout the DoD.

USMTF is a common message text format standard that facilitates information exchange across DoD and related entities. Effective, seamless interoperability is achieved through exposure and reuse of data. The agreed definitions and expressions serve as the foundation for interoperability between the military forces and its multinational and interagency partners. USMTF leverages common information syntax and data structures to maximize successful interpretation and utilization regardless of the data provider. This ability to exchange and share information increases visibility, understanding, and lethality, and is critical for enabling ongoing and future battlespace management.

2. Management Approach. USMTF program management incorporates a CCB approach and consists of:

a. Managing changes to the USMTF rules, conventions, message formats, standards, and interface documentation via the receipt, circulation, review, and approval or disapproval of interface change proposals.

b. Documenting and exposing USMTF standard character-oriented data.

c. Technical liaison and administrative support associated with managing the USMTF effort.

d. Promote homogenous messaging within the DoD and federal agencies as well as with mission partners.

e. When necessary, develop capabilities to support the exposure of USMTF data.

f. Application of technological innovations to modernize the program, where applicable, e.g., eXtensible Markup Language, data modeling, Web-enabling user access, and electronic-government, market-based concepts.

3. Implementation Procedures. Detailed implementation procedures for the program are contained in the USMTF CCB Charter.

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a. The Director, DISA will develop and publish the charter, terms of reference, and configuration management technical procedures documents for the USMTF CCB. These documents will include operating procedures, guidance to program participants, and configuration management procedures. The documents will be approved by the USMTF CCB and will serve as the basis for management of the program.

b. Proposed changes to the USMTF Catalog or reference g must be submitted to the USMTF CCB in accordance with procedures established in the USMTF CCB charter. The USMTF CCB will review each Service's engineering assessment of the impact of the new requirements to include a comparison and mapping of new-to-old data. The identified differences must be reconciled prior to implementation of new messages or updates to the MIL-STD. Once new messages, changes to messages, or updates to the MIL-STD are approved by the USMTF CCB, they are new requirements for systems that support USMTF. The new requirements are expected to be acted on in a timely manner for implementation by participating members.

c. Each message included in the USMTF program will have a voting member's sponsorship within the USMTF CCB. Information about message sponsorship is contained in "Configuration Management Technical Procedures for the USMTF Configuration Control Board (CCB)" located on the USMTF Portal.

d. Detailed information regarding procedures for transmitting and receiving USMTF messages in joint operations is accessible on the USMTF Portal site at: DISA SharePoint DoD 365-J tenant at <<https://dod365.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/DISA-USMTF/SitePages/Home.aspx>>

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REFERENCES

- a. CJCSI 3265.02 series, “Joint Command and Control Systems Training Management”
- b. CJCSM 3150.01 series, “Joint Reporting Structure General Instructions”
- c. DISA USMTF Portal site access is through DISA SharePoint DoD 365-J tenant at: <<https://dod365.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/DISA-USMTF/SitePages/Home.aspx>> (last accessed 28 August 2023)
- d. *DoD Data Strategy*, 30 September 2020
- e. DoD Information Technical Standards Registry access is through the GIG Technical Guidance Federation portal site at: <<https://jasm.apps.mil/prweb/PRWebLDAP1>> (last accessed 28 August 2023)
- f. JID-TC Share Point site access is at: <<https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/jid/default.aspx>> (last accessed 28 August 2023)
- g. MIL-STD-6040 series, “Department of Defense Interface Standard: U.S. Message Text Format (USMTF) Description”
- h. STANAG 5500 (Series), Concept of NATO Message Text Formatting System (CONFORMETS) - ADatP-03
- i. STANAG 7149 (Series), NATO Message Catalogue - APP-11
- j. USMTF Configuration Control Board Charter, 12 January 2017
- k. DoDD 5144.02, 21 November 2014, “DoD Chief Information Officer (DoD CIO)”

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

1. CJCSI 5705.01 series, “Standardization of Military and Associated Terminology”
2. DoDI 5025.12, 5 March 2020, “Standardization of Military and Associated Terminology”
3. DoDI 8320.07, 3 August 2015, “Implementing the Sharing of Data, Information, and Information Technology (IT) Services in the Department of Defense”

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GLOSSARY

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADatP	Allied Data Publication
CCB	Configuration Control Board
CCMD	Combatant Command
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
CM	Configuration Management
DISA	Defense Information Systems Agency
DMS	Defense Message System
DoD	Department of Defense
DoDIN	Department of Defense Information Network
IER	Information Exchange Requirements
IES	Information Exchange Specification
IT	information technology
JID-TC	Joint Interoperability and Data Link Training Center
JITC	Joint Interoperability Test Command
JTC	Joint Training Committee
MIL-STD	Military Standard
MTF	Message Text Format
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSS	National Security Systems
PM	Program Manager
STANAG	Standardization Agreement (NATO)
USMTF	United States Message Text Format
XML	eXtensible Markup Language
XML-MTF	eXtensible Markup Language – USMTF

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