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**Ministry  
of Defence**

**JSP 886  
THE DEFENCE LOGISTICS SUPPORT CHAIN MANUAL**

**VOLUME 2  
INVENTORY MANAGEMENT**

**PART 303  
ALTERNATIVE ITEMS**

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## **CHAPTER 1: ALTERNATIVE ITEMS**

### **PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of this leaflet is to define 'Alternative' items. These are pieces of equipment which may, with or without restriction, be used instead of another item. These items are normally linked together using Alternative Chains. Individual items may be identified as either Unconditional or Conditional Alternatives.

### **OWNERSHIP AND POINTS OF CONTACT**

2. The policy for Direct Supply Schemes is sponsored by DES JSC SCM-SCPoI-Conv2.

a. The Sponsor contact details, for questions regarding technical content are:

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### **DEFINITIONS**

3. **Alternative Chain.** An alternative chain is a method of grouping together alternative items to facilitate provisioning, satisfaction of demands and the recording of consumption.

4. **Unconditional Alternative.** An Unconditional alternative is an item which, without reservation, can be used in all circumstances instead of another item.

5. **Conditional Alternative.** A Conditional alternative is an item which may not be suitable for use in every circumstance instead of another item. Conditional alternatives will be used in the following cases:

a. Where items are not fully interchangeable for technical reasons.

b. Where items cannot, for reasons of processing, be regarded as unconditional alternatives. In order to be treated as unconditional alternatives, items must have the same Domestic Management Code and Denomination of Quantity. If this is not possible, items must be nominated as conditional alternatives.

### **FEATURES OF ALTERNATIVE CHAINS**

6. Items within alternative chains are linked together by allocation of alternative codes. The code indicates whether the item is an unconditional or a conditional alternative and the relationship with other items in the chain. Details of the range of alternative codes and their meanings are available on SMTN Help Screens.

7. System processing will permit the linking together of up to 99 items by an alternative chain, although any individual item cannot belong to more than one chain. It is in order to use combinations of unconditional alternatives in the same chain, but each item can use

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only one alternative code. Furthermore, there are restrictions on the combinations of unconditional alternative codes which can be used on the same chain; these are detailed at Annex A.

### **CREATION, AMENDMENT AND DELETION OF ALTERNATIVE CHAINS**

8. The Range Manager must obtain written authority from the EA and DA (if appropriate) for the creation or amendment of an alternative chain, by ensuring SM Form 181 or local form based on SM Form 181 is fully completed and duly authorized. The change should be recorded in a central register to be held within the Branch, which should be cross-referred to the completed form. SM Form 181 becomes an auditable document when completed and should be retained within the SMB for the life of the equipment.

9. SA Supply Staff are responsible for creation of alternative chains on the Central System. The appropriate alternative code must be allocated to each item in the chain, depending on its relationship with other items. Alternative chains are created by Transaction Code CAZ and items which are unconditional alternatives must have the same DMC/NSC, Class of Store, Degree of Control Code, Denomination of Quantity and PAF Code.

10. SA staffs are also responsible for maintaining the accuracy of alternative chains. The nature of relationships between items may change or new items may be added to the chain. When creating or amending superseded chains (headed by an Alternative Code 1 or 2 item), items in the chain must be listed in descending order of preference in order to eliminate the oldest items first. Additionally when creating a mixed superseded / replacement chain containing alternative Codes 1, 3 and 5, the Code 5 item must be listed before the Code 3 items but the least preferred Code 3 item must be the replacement for the Code 5 item.

11. Transaction Code AAZ is to be used to amend an alternative chain, unless the amendment involves a change to the preferred item, when Transaction Code AAP should be used. Processing of Transaction Code AAZ involves a complete reconstruction of the chain and it is important to ensure that each item is allocated its correct position in a superseded chain. When a new preferred item is nominated by Transaction Code AAP, the item which was formerly preferred will be relegated to next preferred status and its alternative code will be amended accordingly.

12. As item records become dead, they should be removed from alternative chains. Individual items, other than the preferred item, must be deleted using Transaction Code XAP. The relative position of other items in the chain will then be adjusted accordingly. Transaction Code XAZ is used to delete the preferred item from a superseded chain and this Code is also used to delete a complete chain should the need arise.

13. It is important to note that item records must not be deleted from the Central System, if they are members of alternative chains. Processing will prevent the deletion of any unconditional alternative, but there is no similar check to prevent the deletion of conditional alternatives. Before deleting any item record, a check must be made to establish whether the item is included in an alternative chain. If it is, the chain must be amended to remove the item concerned.

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## **EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVE CHAINS**

14. The use of alternative chains can have far-reaching effects in a number of different areas of processing. The areas affected are:

- a. Stock Replenishment at Units.
- b. Demand Processing.
- c. Re provisioning.
- d. Hastening.

15. **Effect on Stock Replenishment at Units.** The effect of alternative chains on unit stockholding levels and on the need for stock replenishment will depend on the alternative code of the item concerned. All conditional alternatives will be subject to individual stock replenishment, irrespective of whether they are members of conditional or mixed chains. Unconditional alternatives will be processed as follows:

- a. **Alternative Codes 1, 3, 7, 8 and 9.** Individual establishment quantities are calculated for each item and, if demands have been met by issue of an alternative item, establishment quantities are calculated on the item issued. The need for replenishment at individual units is determined by comparing the sum of stock assets with the total of the minimum establishment quantities for all items in the chain. If there is a shortfall, replenishment takes place against the lowest available item in the chain.
- b. **Alternative Code 2.** Individual establishment calculations are carried out against the Code 2 item only with replenishment against that item.
- c. **Alternative Code 5.** No establishments are calculated and no replenishment takes place.
- d. **Alternative Code 6.** Individual establishment quantities are calculated for each item in the chain. At each unit, the total of maximum and minimum establishment quantities for each item in the chain are compared with the total assets of the items concerned. Any replenishment required will be by issue of whichever chained item is available.

16. **Effect on Unit Demands.** The System is constructed to issue the item demanded from the unit's own stock. If this is not possible, the general strategy is to satisfy requirements by issue of the lowest available item in an unconditional alternative chain. At the same time, the demanding unit is advised of the existence of any conditional alternatives and may be given the option of accepting the conditional item. The detail of the stock search pattern is too complex to explain in this document and the procedure can be over-ridden by use of the Item Demand Qualifier by the demanding unit. Where the item demanded is not issued, consumption will be recorded against the issued item. In addition, acceptance of conditional alternative results in the recording of non-recurring consumption against the item issued.

17. **Effect on Re provisioning.** In addition to the rule that items in unconditional chains should have the same parameters (see Paragraph 8 above), there are certain other requirements concerned with specific alternative codes. Alternative code 5 items must have DWSL set at and conditional alternative items must have a Consumption

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Amalgamation Code of or 1. During that part of the Provisioning and Procurement Process which compares available assets with the Provision Action Figure, items in alternative chains are processed according to their alternative codes as follows:

- a. **Conditional Alternatives With Codes 13, 14 or 15.** No attempt is made to link items together. Each conditional item is assessed independently and the appropriate output produced if reprovisioning action is warranted.
- b. **Code 1 Items.** Central System Processing will always accumulate consumption and reprovisioning data for all unconditional items in the chain (except Code 5 items) against the Code 1 item. If reprovisioning action is necessary and a Requisition Request is to be generated, two such outputs would be generated for a Code 1 item. The first, without a serial number, would give information relating to the Code 1 item only and would have no Quantity Proposed calculation; the second, which would bear a serial number, would represent the asset and consumption information for all associated unconditional alternatives (except Code 5 items) in the chain. The Quantity Proposed would represent suggested replenishment, taking account of assets and consumption of all items in the chain. If an unsolicited automatic order is generated on an Alternative Code 1 item, the order will represent the calculated Quantity Proposed, taking account of assets and consumption on all unconditional alternatives in the chain, except Code 5 items.
- c. **Code 2 Items.** No attempt is made to link the consumption information with any associated Code 5 item. If a Requisition Request or unsolicited automatic order should be generated for the Code 5 item, a Requisition Request without a serial number would be generated for the Code 2 item. Similarly, if a Requisition Request or unsolicited automatic order were generated on a Code 2 item, a Requisition Request without serial number would be generated on the Code 5 item. In both instances Quantity Proposed would not be calculated.
- d. **Code 3, 7, 8 and 9 Items.** The Central System Reprovisioning Process handles all items within these alternative codes in the same way. Consumption is recorded against each item in the chain individually and the monthly comparison of assets and liabilities is carried out in the normal way. If there is a shortfall against the requirements on one item, a further check would be made embracing all unconditional alternative items in the chain (except Code 5 items). If a shortfall still exists, the System would recommend reprovisioning against the preferred item and issue a Requisition Request without a serial number in respect of each Code 3, 7, 8 or 9 item in the chain. There would be no Quantity Proposed calculation on these un-numbered Requisition Requests. If the comparison of assets against an Alternative Code 3, 7, 8 or 9 item reveals a shortfall against requirements, but the comparison of all items in the chain confirms a satisfactory situation, no Requisition Requests would be generated.
- e. **Code 5 Items.** No attempt is made to link together the asset or consumption information with any other item in the alternative chain. A requisition request would be produced if the Code 5 item or any Code 1 or Code 2 item linked to it had a shortfall of assets. The requisition request would be serially numbered if the shortfall occurred on the Code 5 item, but would otherwise be for information only. Any unsolicited automatic order generated for a Code 5 item will take no account of assets of other items in the chain and unsolicited orders for Codes 1 and 2 items will take no account of assets of Code 5 items. In both instances, requisition requests

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without a serial number will be produced for associated unconditional alternatives in the chain, but no calculation of Quantity Proposed will be made.

f. **Code 6 Items.** Each Code 6 item is provisioned independently, with no attempt to link consumption on chained items. If a Requisition Request or unsolicited automatic order is generated for any Code 6 item, a Requisition Request without a serial number and with no Quantity Proposed will be generated for all associated Code 6 items in the same chain.

18. **Effect of Deliveries on Hastening.** Reprovisioning of items with alternative Codes 1, 3, 7, 8 or 9 will be against the Code 1 item, using amalgamated provisioning information for all items in the chain. The calculation of quantities to be hastened will be determined by parameter values on the Code 1 item and the aggregated GFDR. Hastening of deliveries for items with Alternative Codes 2, 5 and 6 or any Conditional Codes will be calculated using the parameter values of the individual item concerned.