

# DDMA “FLIPs” for Their Customers

Defense Distribution Depot Mapping Activity (DDMA) distributes all maps, charts, and other geodetic material produced by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency, as well as those produced by other U.S. government agencies and foreign countries. Part of their inventory includes Flight Information Products (FLIP) – updated maps and information for military pilots and aircrew. Those aircrews require continuously updated flight information. To meet that need, DDMA is continually improving its automatic distribution of new or revised products.

Every month DDMA receives a special series of 12 to 26 revised FLIPs. These special products, also called sectionals, are sent to DDMA to ship to the customers before the “effective date” – the date when the newly revised product replaces the old product.

DDMA normally receives these on a Wednesday and they become effective one week later on Thursday. With receipt processing, printing the Material Release Orders (MROs), issuing, packing and shipping process times, plus actual shipping time, DDMA does not have much leeway. The normal number of sectional MROs printed is between 5,000 and 6,000 (almost double DDMA’s normal daily workload).

In order to process these high visibility cyclic products, DDMA uses a walk-and-pick process. DDMA has special rolling cages with several shelves to stage or store the lines. DDMA staff mark the shelves with placards to identify the products by National Stock Number (NSN).

To speed the process, DDMA has the MROs released using the shipment unit sequence, rather than location sequence. This groups all the MROs for a specific customer. DDMA staff then walk-and-pick the items in appropriate quantities to fill the

customer’s order. The fully consolidated shipping units are then sent to packing.

Since packing receives a fully consolidated shipping unit, they can immediately pack the shipment and forward it to our shipping section, reducing the number of times people have to touch the product and eliminating the need for staging and sorting. This unitizing also allows the order to be quickly routed through all processes so that it is ready for pick up by the post office or other shippers.

DDMA keeps the portable racks for the new products staged very close to the packing section, reducing the distance and time for transporting the completed shipping unit.

“This method definitely reduces processing time,” said CDR Emil Spillman, SC, USN, Commander, DDMA. “It allows the total process to be placed in a very visible area for management oversight, and it minimizes cost while meeting the customer’s required delivery date. It also has no impact to material handlers equipment requirements even though it is a large surge in workload.”

DDMA applies similar processes to every case where numerous lines of new or revised products can be made available for automatic distribution going to similar customers.

As part of its worldwide responsibility, DDMA operates nine manned satellite facilities around the globe and one unmanned storage site. These Map Support Offices are geographically located to provide responsive distribution support to unified and major theater commanders, within their area of responsibility and at designated local area installations, in support of peacetime and crisis contingency operations.

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## DDMA Delivers Innovation in CD Storage

Defense Distribution Depot Mapping Activity (DDMA) is responsible for the worldwide physical distribution of all maps, charts, and other geodetic material produced by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency, as well as those produced by other U.S. government agencies and foreign countries. The primary distribution facility is located in Richmond, Virginia.

DDMA stocks a large volume of mapping products on Compact Discs (CDs). Storage of these state-of-the-art map products can be awkward to accommodate quick and accurate selection. To improve storage and issue of these important products, DDMA designed and purchased CD storage racks. The new CD racks have handles on the front and a compartment to store a sample CD where the National Stock Number (NSN) is very visible.

Each CD rack accommodates 60 CDs, plus the one on the front of the rack, for a total storage capacity of 61. They operate as pull-drawers on the shelf. This set-up enables a selector to

see what is in the CD rack, pull the drawer, make fast and accurate selection/inventory of the mapping product and then replace the CD rack drawer.

“This CD rack storage process has been so successful at DDMA,” said CDR Ed Spillman, SC, USN, Commander, DDMA, “that we have exported it to some of our other Map Support Offices (MSOs) for their utilization. The CD racks are of heavy construction wiring material, but light weight for ease of operation.”

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DDMA was established in January 1999 as part of the overall transfer of distribution services for map products to DLA. The primary distribution facility is located in Richmond, Virginia.