

DDC begins placing passive RFID tags on customer shipments

By Jessica Walter, DDC Command Affairs

Beginning March 14, the Defense Distribution Center (DDC) began placing passive Radio Frequency Identification, or RFID, tags on shipments to customers.

“This is not a test,” said Mark Lieberman, DDC Senior Supply Management Specialist. “This is the beginning of tagging all of our shipments to our customers with passive RFID.”

The first customer requisitions to be tagged with passive RFID were for repair parts and other supplies sent from Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, Calif. (DDJC), to Naval Intermediate Maintenance Facility (IMF) at Naval Submarine Base, Bangor, Wash.

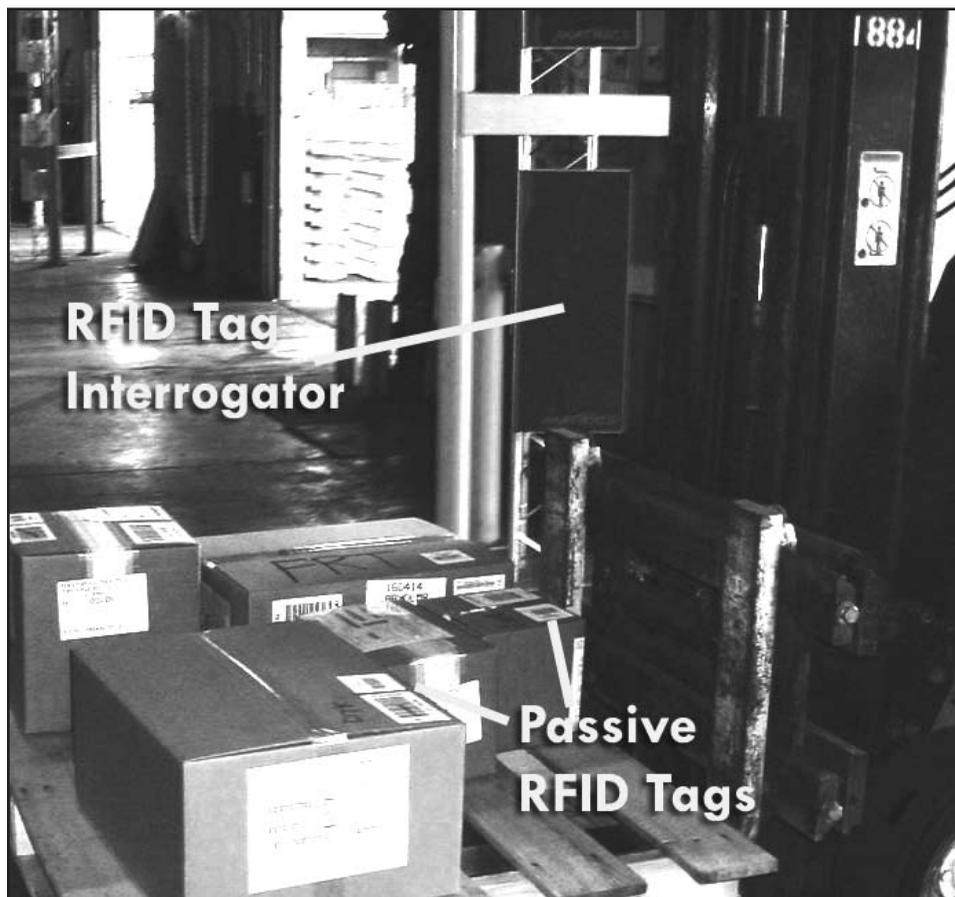
“We’re tagging at the box closure level,” explained Lieberman.

DDC’s Information Operations Wireless Team Leader Larry Loiacono added, “When the packer in the warehouse accesses the DSS [Distribution Standard System] screen to close out the requisition, he or she is prompted with a message that indicates an RFID tag is required for that delivery location.”

The employee then places the tag on the container and scans the barcode on the tag. That action prompts DDC’s warehousing and transportation system, DSS, to issue an advance shipping notice to the customer.

The advance shipping notice includes information specific to that requisition including document number, national stock number (NSN), customer location, and transportation control number (TCN).

“When the shipment arrives at the customer’s site, a passive RFID portal will read the tag and marry the information on the tag to the data already



The tagged cargo is passed through an RFID portal at DDJC to verify the readability of the passive tags prior to shipment to the Navy customers in Bangor, Wash.

received as a result of the advance shipping notice,” explained Loiacono.

According to Luis Avila, Chief of DDJC’s Systems Division, each of the tags on the cargo sent to Navy customers at IMF Bangor last week has been read successfully. “We’ve been in touch with the customer, and everything looks like

it’s moving along smoothly.”

DDJC provides a dedicated truck delivery service to IMF Bangor three times each week.

The DDC Logistics Operations Directorate plans to increase the number of customers receiving shipments tagged with passive RFID incrementally as

customers upgrade their warehousing systems to receive passive RFID tags. “DDC will be tagging shipments to additional delivery locations later this year in support of passive RFID implementation across DOD,” said Lieberman.



Passive RFID tags are comprised of a microchip embedded in an antenna and enclosed within a thin label. A passive RFID interrogator is used to activate the tag and transmit the information that has been burned onto the tag to a warehouse management system.