

between distribution centers, then for items shipped to certain customers, allowing the Warfighter to leverage the asset visibility benefits provided by passive RFID.

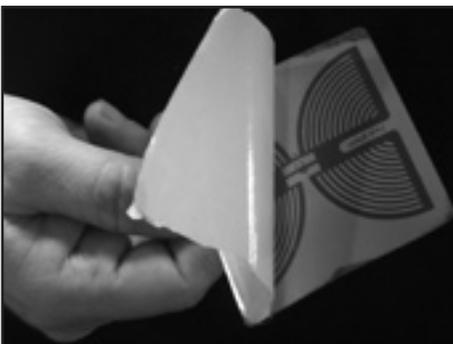
“We’re partnering with the Navy, Air Force and Army to tag shipments at the box closure level for cargo headed to certain locations,” said Lieberman.



Device has dual functions. The hand-held passive RFID readers have been installed on existing devices used to read bar codes.

In addition to increased asset visibility, passive RFID is useful for other functions such as inventory accuracy and supply management. When future enhancements link the technology to DDC’s inventory system, the tags will reduce the chance for human error in the receiving process that is currently completed manually.

Some passive RFID tags can also be used to hold information about item expiration dates, maintenance schedules and manufacturer’s information.



Passive vs. active RFID tags. Passive tags are comprised of a microchip embedded in an antenna and enclosed within a thin label. A passive RFID reader is used to activate the tag and request the information that has been burned onto the tag. Active RFID tags have built-in batteries that allow them to constantly emit a signal that can be detected by an RFID reader.

DDC awaits proposals for passive RFID contract

By Jessica Walter, DDC Command Affairs

The Defense Distribution Center (DDC) held a pre-solicitation conference in January for companies interested in submitting proposals for the installation of passive radio frequency identification, or RFID, equipment across the organization.

Responding to a request for proposals released earlier this year, more than 80 people representing 33 companies attended the summit to learn more about DDC’s requirements to become 100 percent enabled to read incoming vendor shipments tagged with passive RFID.

The contract, which will be awarded this spring, covers the purchasing and installation of passive RFID equipment at DDC’s 26 distribution sites worldwide.

Passive RFID capabilities have already been implemented at DDC’s two



Representatives from more than 30 companies attended the RFID pre-solicitation conference to learn more about DDC’s requirements for installing passive RFID equipment throughout the distribution network.

strategic distribution platforms—Defense Distribution Depots Susquehanna, Pa. (DDSP) and San Joaquin, Calif. (DDJC).

“The implementation of this comprehensive passive RFID system across the organization is in response to the DOD mandate for our distribution centers to be able to receive incoming shipments tagged with passive RFID from vendors and from other distribution centers and shipping points within our



Passive RFID portal at DDSP, DDC’s strategic distribution platform on the East Coast.

network,” said Mark Lieberman of DDC Logistics Operations and Program Manager for the passive RFID contract.

The DOD mandate requires each of these shipments to be tagged at the case and pallet levels.

Each passive tag carries a small amount of data that acts as a license plate to uniquely identify the contents of the container, allowing DDC’s warfighting customers greater visibility of their assets while transiting through the supply chain.

An additional benefit for DDC is the reduced cost of processing incoming material since the tags are read by RFID portals as they enter the distribution center and the information from the tag is automatically sent to a computer system to indicate the receipt.

“The work performed for this contract will not only help DDC meet the mandate, but will also assist in integrating passive RFID into our processes,” said Lieberman.

According to Lieberman, DDC expects to have passive RFID capabilities at all 26 sites worldwide by the end of next year, with the 19 sites within the continental United States outfitted by the end of September 2006.