



UID Compliance Aids Asset Tracking

Metalcraft works with Department of Defense on durable UID nameplates

OPPORTUNITY/CHALLENGE

The Department of Defense (DoD) has mandated that certain assets and Government Furnished Property (GFP), including assets in the possession of Defense contractors, be tracked with unique, machine-readable identification numbers (UID).

The UID policy aims to modernize the largest supply chain in the world - enabling government and private contractors to manage inventory more effectively. Since the policy began to take shape in 2003, Defense contractors have worked to develop systems for complying with the two main processes required by the mandate - marking and registry of individual items.

Marking requires a machine-readable, permanent identifier - a two-dimensional data matrix code that is engineered to last the lifetime of the item. Each matrix enables unique identification of individual items using existing data elements, including the manufacturer's identification and the item's serial number, among other elements.

Columbia, MD-based Integral Systems provides integrated technology solutions for secure management, delivery and distribution of data from space and terrestrial-based platforms into networks for military, government and commercial satellite and aerospace customers.

Integral Systems SATCOM Solutions, a division within the larger company, works closely with the U.S. military and must comply with UID policy in their provision of secure, satellite-based communication solutions to Defense customers. Specifically, Integral Systems SATCOM Solutions needed to attach UID labels to their 'cased products' - highly portable solutions for satellite and cellular communication.

The cases are designed to minimize weight and maximize ruggedness and reliability for military users in harsh environments. Integral Systems SATCOM Solutions prides itself on turnkey service, providing repair and replacement service on the systems integrated in the case. So, tracking the Defense-owned cases in their custody is important, too.

SOLUTION

Quang Le manages the configuration of the cased products and led the search for a UID label supplier. He found Iowa-based Metalcraft online in 2005 and considered their products well-suited for the demanding application.

The U.S. Army, Navy, Coast Guard and other customers expect the cases to perform in punishing environments – constant exposure to abrasion and shock, desert heat, salt water spray and other extreme circumstances.

UID nameplate and label specialists at Metalcraft produced designs for Le on anodized aluminum – one of the six families of label products they customize for Defense contractors. "The quality of the anodized metal products set Metalcraft apart," said Le. "Pricing on their UID nameplates is good, too."

The nameplates include the required UID data matrix and optional linear bar codes, remaining machine and human readable at close range. Moreover, Metalcraft verifies the print quality of the UID and validates the information contained in each UID label to ensure speedy acceptance by DoD. Orders for additional UID nameplates are processed in one business day.

RESULT

Integral Systems SATCOM Solutions cases are engineered to last three to five years in the field. Le says cases are often exposed to harsh conditions in the field.

To date, the UID nameplates have remained unharmed on all the cases returned to the company. He is satisfied with how Metalcraft is helping the company and its customers comply with the mandate and speed of repairs and replacements.

"Metalcraft's UID nameplates make it easier for us to track cases for servicing and delivery," said Le. "Also, sometimes we get orders that we must fulfill quickly; we value Metalcraft's ability to expedite orders."

To learn more about our asset tracking solutions, contact us today at info@idplate.com.

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QUANG LE

Cased Product Manager
- Integral Systems SATCOM Solutions