

State of Arkansas Material Master Assessment

This assessment was conducted for the State of Arkansas over a two-week period on the its material master and its current usability and condition. Discussions were held with various members of the Office of State Procurement (OSP), Office of Information Systems (OIS) and other departments that utilize the SAP system (AASIS).

The assessment was done in the ECQ system that was based on data in a recent copy (July 30, 2017) of the production system. The following recommendation is based on the reader understanding of the current configuration of the AASIS system and how the UNSPSC code functions operates.

Contents

- 1. Current shape of Material Master 2
- 2. Recommendation for standardization of Material Master 6
- 3. Recommendation on changing or replacing material master completely..... 7
- 4. Impact of recommendation from point 3 on Material Master itself 10
- 5. Impact of recommendation from point 3 on Existing Transactional Data..... 14
- 6. Recommendation of Material Master Data maintenance15
- 7. Recommendation for tools and Processes for changes based on Assessment 16
- 8. Material Master and impact on Procurement Process.....17

1. Current shape of Material Master

Today the material masters are primarily used for the procurement of materials and financial recording. On a limited basis inventory tracking at used in some DHS Plants. The material master has been in place since the SAP system went live in 2001. The use of the material master was sporadic throughout the years but has become more and more used in the past few years. There was a lack of standardization in the creation of the materials along with key data elements. Recently the material field was made to be required field for all procurement processes and recently changes were made in the system configuration to prohibit changes to the basic material description in the procurement documents. The chart below details the material master general statistics. (There was no review done on plant 8888 materials for this assessment. This plant is used to oversee the redistribution and sale of state surplus property between state agencies, tax supported entities and to the general public. The use of the 8888 plant is mainly for tracking purposes.)

Plant Number	Plant Description	Number of materials	Number range
0960	Arkansas State Police	7	10000000 - 89999999
1000	DHS Distribution Center	696	10000000 - 89999999
1300	DHS–DMH Ark Health Center	8958	10000000 - 89999999
1350	DHS–DMH Ark State Hospital	1949	10000000 - 89999999
8888	Marketing and Distribution	821,983	90000000 - 99999999
9999	Reference Plant	55316	10000000 - 89999999

A significant part of the material master is the material group field. This field is used for reporting purposes and can be used in other areas of functionality. Currently the material group field is based off a structure that became to be the NIGP code. As with the material master itself, there was a general lack of standardization when creating the codes along with long term goal of its use. The chart below shows the basic statistics of the material group field and at what level of the NIGP they represent. (Z material groups have been left out of the assessment)

Number of Material Groups	Number of Material Groups in Level 1 (3 digits)	Number of Material Groups in Level 2 (5 digits)
541	202	339
	<i>Roughly equal to level 2 in UNSPSC</i>	<i>Roughly equal to level 3 in UNSPSC</i>

The material masters

Below are key points that are being used in the recommendations that follow.

Key points:

1. Material are created for both specific and generic materials and services

2. A large percentage of procurement is done at a generic material level (Material Group)
3. The use of Service materials is not used nor the use of Service processes inside the system
4. The material master uses an eight-digit material number with two main ranges.
5. Material groups are currently using two levels of NIGP like codes. These are basically at level 2 and 3 of the UNSPSC code

Key Issues:

1. The current material groups are based on a pre NIGP code structure which provide little value for reporting purposes.
2. The Material Group codes are not used at the correct level for materials.
3. There is no standardization for level of material group and material master.
4. Large number of obsolete materials – Materials that have not been purchased in the past 10 years is listed below

Plant Number	Plant Description	Number of materials in plant	Number of materials not purchased in last 10 years	Percentage obsolete
0960	Arkansas State Police	7	7	100%
1000	DHS Distribution Center	696	689	99%
1300	DHS–DMH Ark Health Center	8,958	6,217	69%
1350	DHS–DMH Ark State Hospital	1,949	1,263	65%
9999	Reference Plant	55,316	28,149	51%
Total	Across all plants	66,926	36,325	54%

5. Large number of materials created for very specific materials that could be purchased at a higher level and get the same results in reporting.

Example:

Material Number	Material Group	Base Unit of Measure	Material Description
10004840	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,CURVED,LOCK,WIRE CUT,7"
10004841	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,5",CURVED,LOCK,WIRE CUT
10004842	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,LOCKING,WIRE CUT,4"
10004843	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,10"CURVED,LOCK,WIRE CUT
10004844	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,CURVED,LOCK,NO CUT,10"
10004845	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,7"STRAIGHT,LOCKING
10004846	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,LOCKING,10"STRAIGHT
10004847	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,LOCKING,LARGE CAP,12"
10004848	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,4",LONG NOSE,LOCK,WIRE
10004849	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,LONG NOSE,LOCK,WIRE,6"
10004850	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,LONG NOSE,LOCK,WIRE,9"
10004851	44500	EA	PLIERS

10004852	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,9",BENT NOSE,LOCK,WIRE
10004853	44500	EA	PLIERS,VISE-GRIP,7",PINCH-OFF CLAMP
10004857	44500	EA	PLIER,HIGH LEVERAGE"2000 SERIES"SIDE CUT
10004858	44500	EA	PLIERS,HIGH LEVERAGE"2000 SERIES"DIAGL
10004859	44500	EA	PLIER,HD,DIAGONAL CUT,TAPER NOSE,7-11/16
10004860	44500	EA	PLIERS,HD,LONG NOSE,SIDE CUT,SKINNING HO
10004861	44500	EA	PLIERS,HD,LONG NOSE,SIDE CUTTER
10004862	44500	EA	PLIERS,TONGUE&GROOVE,STRAIGHT JAW,6 1/2"
10004863	44500	EA	PLIERS,TONGUE&GROOVE,STRAIGHT JAW,9 1/2"
10004864	44500	EA	PLIERS,TONGUE&GROOVE,STRAIGHT JAW,10"
10004865	44500	EA	PLIERS,TONGUE&GROOVE,STRAIGHT JAW,12"
10004866	44500	EA	PLIER,TONGUE&GROOVE, 16",STRAIGHT JAW
10004867	44500	EA	PLIER,TONGUE&GROOVE,9 1/2",CURVED JAW
10004868	44500	EA	PLIER,TONGUE&GROOVE, 12",CURVED JAW
10004869	44500	EA	PLIER,TONGUE&GROOVE,9 1/2",NUTBUSTER JAW
10004870	44500	EA	PLIER,TONGUE&GROOVE, 14",NUTBUSTER JAW

6. Materials being marked for deletion instead of material status functionality being used.

7. Materials having material groups that are too generic or don't fit material description.

Example: All materials at a high-level material group

Material Number	Material Group	Base Unit of Measure	Material Description
10002550	47500	PAC	DRESSING,4"X4",WOVEN,TYPE VII GAUZE,STER
10002551	47500	EA	DRESSING,COMBO,ABD, STERILE,8"X7.5"2LAY
10002552	47500	EA	ENEMA BAG SET,VINYL BAG,1500ML
10002555	47500	EA	GOWN,EXAM,DISPOSABLE,PAPER,FULL CUT,3PLY
10002556	47500	ROL	PAPER,EXAM TABLE,20"X125',CREPED
10002557	47500	EA	MASK,FACE,W/FLUID SHIELD,HYPOALLERGENIC
10002558	47500	EA	SLIDES,GLASS,1"X3"X3/4",FROSTED
10002566	47500	EA	SWAB,INOKY CALGI,1 ENVELOPE

10002570	47500	EA	JAR, GLASS, COTTON BALL SIZE W/METAL LID
10002571	47500	EA	NEEDLE, PORT HUBER, 22GX1", RIGHT ANGLE
10002572	47500	EA	NEEDLE, DISPOSABLE, STERILE, S/S, 23GX1"
10002573	47500	EA	NEEDLE, DISPOSABLE 21GX1", SS, STERILE
10002574	47500	EA	NEEDLE, VACUTAINER, 1", MONOJET 250123, 20GL

8. Material long description are not being copied from Material Master to Requisition to Purchase Order
9. Material Master search has removed the search tab that uses material group along with description.
10. Material Master long descriptions cannot be searched in SAP currently.
11. Most if not all requests for new materials are adhered too and created in the SAP system.
12. Duplicate materials, one for EA and one for ZLS. Easy for one to be used or the other for the same function.

Example:

Material Number	Material Group	Base Unit of Measure	Material Description
10024129	44000	EA	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC, EACH
10024128	44000	ZLS	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC, LUMP SUM

13. The use of a custom unit of measure ZLS over standard AU
14. Changes to Procurement documents with no change in value or other key business value requires a new release strategy.
15. Lack of training across the procurement process
16. Lack of training on material master creation
17. No archiving strategy for materials.

2. Recommendation for standardization of Material Master

The recommendation for the material master is based on two prime elements. The material master itself and the use of the Material Group in the material master and the procurement process. It's the combination of these two areas that are primarily being reviewed and recommendations on these two items will define the basis of the assessment.

It is recommended that the existing material master and material groups be changed to utilize the UNSPSC codes. The UNSPSC codes will be used in the material group field and replace the existing Pre-NIGP codes.

The UNSPSC codes uses a standard 8 digit along with two succeeding digits for business use. SAP Material group is a 9-digit field, thus only a single digit of the two-digit business use of the UNSPSC can be used. The detail recommendation of the proper levels will be discussed in future sections. Changes to key fields like the description and unit of measure will be minimized with the recommendations in section number 3.

Training will need to be a key piece of the solution. The training is not only in the material master creation, but also the procurement process. A knowledge of how the UNSPSC code fits into material master logic (high and low level materials which is explained in the following sections).

3. Recommendation on changing or replacing material master completely

First, it is recommended that the material group be changed from its current format to one that uses the UNSPSC code. The UNSPSC code will allow greater search capabilities both inside SAP and other non-Arkansas systems for procurement and analysis. SAP recommends replacing the material master during this transition, but using the existing materials as a starting point. The existing materials are a mismatch of specific materials as well as general materials. An excess of materials has been created that offer little value to the end user or OIS/OSP. While the new process does continue this philosophy of high level and detail level materials, the ability to clean the data and eliminate many materials in favor of a higher-level material will streamline the procurement process and allow faster searches by end user and still achieve valuable reporting using the UNSPSC code. The process will also allow the elimination of obsolete materials. Also at this time the unit of measure for ZLS should be changed to AU. The use of new numbering schemes will also facilitate the transition and an understanding of the complete new process. Below are some detail steps along with the some impacts each step that should be considered (Section 4 will dive deeper into the impacts).

1. Map all existing materials Material Groups to the UNSPSC codes at a material master level.
 - a. A process will need to be developed in conjunction with the SAP SLO group (See section 7) to allow the mapping process to exist prior to loading into SAP as discussed in section 2. First any obsolete materials will not be mapped to an existing material, these will be eliminated prior to any mapping exercise. The parameters of what is obsolete will be decided by the OIS and OSP teams. The impact of not mapping obsolete materials will be covered in step 4 below. All old material numbers will be stored in the new material master classification characteristics to allow searching during the transition from the old numbers to the new numbers as well as post go-live on the changes (See section 3a below). While it is possible to use the Old Material Number field in the material master, there will be many duplicates and the need for a more robust solution to search for many old material numbers to a single new material number will be needed. It is recommended that the bulk of this work is done by the people that do the procurement of the materials. This will spread the workload out to many people and those with the knowledge will be able to consolidate the materials as needed.
 - b. The existing material groups will be mapped to a 9 digit UNSPSC code. It is recommended that the level 3 (Class) and level 4 (Commodity) codes be used along with Level 5 (Business function). The level 5 business function (single digit) will be used whenever the mapping of a single UNSPSC code cannot be mapped to a single Reporting Category.
 - c. It is expected that some existing material masters will need to be mapped to level 2 of the UNSPSC code in step 1a. Level 2 Family should only be used in rare cases and only if lower levels (3 and 4) will never be used for a specific material master. A decision will need to be made on mapping existing material groups that would match to level 2 of UNSPSC if they cannot be mapped to a lower level 3 or 4.
 - d. Since the State of Arkansas procures services and materials from a wide range of sources, it is impossible to have a material record for each material or service that is used in the State procurement process. Thus, a material master will be created for every level 2 Family and level 3 class that the OSP department believes will be utilized.

- e. The unit of measure ZLS is a custom unit of measure. These should be changed to AU (Activity Unit). The unit of measure AU allows goods receipt for less than a quantity of 1 as does the unit of measure Hour (HR).

2. Create new materials in SAP

- a. Two new number ranges will be used, one for commodities (2 series) and one for services (3 series). These new number ranges will allow the user to easily identify a service versus a commodity and will create more accurate search, procurement and reporting.

Example:

Old Material Number	New material Number	Material Group	Base Unit of Measure	Material Description
10024128	30024128	44000	ZLS	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC,LUMP SUM
10024129	20024129	44000	EA	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC,EACH

Any new material that has a one to one mapping from the old to the new number will use the existing number with its succeeding 5 digits but with a new prefix as shown in the above example. This will enable end users cheat sheets and inventory tags to have limited impact during and after the change.

- b. The process from changing from the current material numbers to the new numbers will be done in parallel. Both the old and new material numbers will be active at the same time. This will allow time for existing contracts to be changed to the new numbers with minimal impact to the end user community who creates and maintains the contracts. While this might initially be thought as being confusing, with proper training and understanding that all new contracts and procurement that is done without contracts should use the new numbers while purchase orders against old contracts can utilize the old material numbers. Current release strategy should be modified not to be retriggered based on this change.
- c. A key to making this process successful is the creation of a DFA Procurement Website that will house several pieces of information that will allow the end users to use the system more effectively. This should be the starting point for most procurement activities.
 - i. Pieces of the website will contain at least the following:
 1. Ability to search all materials for both short text and long texts (Purchase order text) as well as material group and old material numbers (Characteristics). Both old and new materials will be cross referenced.
 2. Ability to search all UNSPSC codes.
 3. Ability to search all contracts and Purchase Orders and will indicate key data (Dates, open quantity, etc.)
 4. Form for new material numbers and changes along with instructions.
 5. Training documents

3. Transition time from creation of new materials and making old material obsolete

- a. During the transition period of when the new materials/series have been created and the existing old materials are being used, the contracts will be changed to the new material numbers. This transition time will lessen the burden on contract owners to make the changes quickly.

- b. Once all the old contracts have been converted to use the new numbers, the old material numbers (1 series) have their status changed and not allowed for procurement using the material status functionality in SAP. This will prevent new requisitions, purchase order and contracts from using the old material numbers, but still allow open purchase orders to be received and paid against.
 - c. Any material currently not on a Contract will have the material status changed to prevent usage during the start of the transition period.
 - d. With the use of new material numbers scheme, the descriptions will not be needed to be changed as the number scheme along with training and website search information will indicate that these materials are no longer to be used. Once a user receives the error message in the SAP purchasing document, the point will be driven home. The ease of searching that will be created on website will also facilitate the change.
4. Obsolete materials
- a. Since obsolete material were not converted to new numbers, these will have their descriptions changes to read Obsolete – Do Not Use. This will cut done on search results when end users are searching the database for materials.

Spreadsheet with example of mapping to different levels of UNSPSC codes.



material analysis.xlsx

4. Impact of recommendation from point 3 on Material Master itself

The impact from section 3 is outlined below in the corresponding section from section 3.

1. Map all existing materials Material Groups to the UNSPSC codes at a material master level.

The focus will be to break down the existing materials and material groups to the corresponding UNSPSC codes. In most cases a single NIGP code will need multiple UNSPSC codes. This can be seen in the example below. This is where the bulk of the work will need to be done. Due to a single material group being related to multiple UNSPSC material groups, the mass change of material groups must be made at the material level.

Material	Material Group	Base U/M	Material Description	UNSPSC Code	UNSPSC Description
10002550	47500	PAC	DRESSING,4"X4",WOVEN,TYPE VII GAUZE,STER	423115450	Non adhesive dry bandages or dressings
10002551	47500	EA	DRESSING,COMBO,ABD, STERILE,8"X7.5"2LAY	423115450	Non adhesive dry bandages or dressings
10002552	47500	EA	ENEMA BAG SET,VINYL BAG,1500ML	421419030	Enema kits
10002555	47500	EA	GOWN,EXAM,DISPOSABLE,PAPE R,FULL CUT,3PLY	421315040	Patient gowns
10002556	47500	ROL	PAPER,EXAM TABLE,20"X125',CREPED	421920020	Medical exam or procedure table accessories for general use excluding cover sheets
10002557	47500	EA	MASK,FACE,W/FLUID SHIELD,HYPOALLERGENIC	461820050	Mask or respirators filters or accessories
10002558	47500	EA	SLIDES,GLASS,1"X3"X3/4",FROS TED	411226010	Microscope slides

10002566	47500	EA	SWAB,INOKY CALGI,1 ENVELOPE	411041160	Swab collection or transport containers
10002570	47500	EA	JAR,GLASS,COTTON BALL SIZE W/METAL LID	411041160	Swab collection or transport containers
10002571	47500	EA	NEEDLE,PORT HUBER,22GX1",RIGHT ANGLE	422220080	Infusion pump kits
10002572	47500	EA	NEEDLE,DISPOSABLE,STERILE, S/S,23GX1"	421425230	Hypodermic needle
10002573	47500	EA	NEEDLE,DISPOSABLE 21GX1",SS,STERILE	421425230	Hypodermic needle
10002574	47500	EA	NEEDLE,VACUTAINER,1",MONOJ ET 250123,20GL	421425210	Blood collection needles

Multiple approaches can be taken to limit the workload. The elimination of obsolete materials will reduce the numbers of materials to less than half the database. The downside of eliminating obsolete materials is the history from a reporting perspective will be missing. Although since these materials haven't been purchased in over 10 years, the history would be less than ideal. The remaining materials will go through a 3-step process. The order of the steps can be changed based on knowledge of the OIS and OSP of each type of team in each step.

Step 1 – divide the materials up via purchasing group. A report will need to be run to identify what purchasing group has done the most procurement per material group. The entire material group materials will be farmed out to that individual or that individual group of buyers to map the existing materials to the new UNSPSC code as well as a new material number. A one to one material to material will use the logic outlined in section 3 point 2a. A grouping of many materials to a single new material would be identified by the new materials created to represent each high-level material group (Level 2 and 3 of UNSPSC). All level 4's should be specific materials.

Example of each is below:

Current Material Number	New Material number	Old Mat'l Group	Base U/M	Old Material Description	New Material Descriptions	New Material Group (UNSPSC Code)	Material Group Desc
One to One							
10024128	30024128	44000	ZLS	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC,LUMP SUM	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC,LUMP SUM	721530000	Glass and glazing services

10024129	20024129	44000	EA	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC,EACH	GLASS, GLAZE, MISC,EACH	301717000	Glass products
Many to One							
10004840	20012345	44500	EA	PLIERS, VISE- GRIP, CURVED , LOCK, WIRE CUT, 7"	Pliers	271121000	Holding and clamping tools
10004841	20012345	44500	EA	PLIERS, VISE- GRIP, 5", CURV ED, LOCK, WIR E CUT	Pliers	271121000	Holding and clamping tools
10004842	20012345	44500	EA	PLIERS, VISE- GRIP, LOCKIN G, WIRE CUT, 4"	Pliers	271121000	Holding and clamping tools

Step 2 – Any material that cannot be farmed out in step 1 will need to be processed by the OIS group or a third-party group. Knowledge of the materials can be helpful, but a third party or temporary work force can search both the UNSPSC website as well as Google using the description. The combination of these two resources narrow down the possible values quickly.

Step 3 – Contact Suppliers of materials and services. Some will have the UNSPSC code as part of their database and they will know what was sold to the State of Arkansas. (For certain material groups, step 3 will be the first step and not the last step.)

2. Create new materials in SAP

Once all or majority of materials have been mapped to the new material groups and material numbers, the developed SAP SLO program (section 7) to load materials will be used. For one to one materials, the description and other field values can be copied. For the many to one scenario, the material number will already be identified or be created by running a report of all level 2 and 3 material groups that are not mapped to an existing material. These spreadsheets can also be used to cleanup other fields as needed based on a more detail analysis (Better, longer descriptions, U/M, etc.). The SAP SLO program can also change the unit of measure of ZLS to AU.

At time of creating new materials, the website should be live with all relevant search capabilities created along with training documents and forms

3. Transition time from creation of new materials and making old material obsolete

A set amount of time (approximately 6 months, but TBD) will be determined to allow the use of both the old and the new materials. Any material currently not on a contract during the creation of the new materials will have the material status changed not to allow any more procurement. During this transition time, the existing contracts can be changed to the new numbers. A detail analysis will be needed to determine the best method of changing the contracts and the timing of the change.

Once the transition period is over (or contracts open for said materials), all 1 series numbers will be marked for no Procurement allowed using material status. These materials will still be available for reporting and history. But since the number scheme is different, users would be trained to ignore them. The website to be developed will play a crucial role in telling the end user what number to use along with other relevant data.

4. Obsolete materials

All obsolete materials should be marked as obsolete in using status along with the description. All other materials will keep their descriptions and using classification point to new numbers.

5. Impact of recommendation from point 3 on Existing Transactional Data

Since the mapping of a single material to a new material will be done, the data to map the old material group to the new material group will be established at the individual material level. This will allow the OIS/OSP the option to determine if the transactional data is worth changing. The OIS and OSP groups need to determine if the cost is worth the benefit. My recommendation is that all transaction data be changed. While the history of the old material groups might not be accurate, the end user of the reports can make this determination and can always filter out the old transaction data. SAP uses a tool (SLO) and process to change all transaction data for the material group based on the mapping completed for each material, see section 7.

6. Recommendation of Material Master Data maintenance

Material Master maintenance is always best handled in a centralized fashion. A central team of knowledgeable people is the preferred method of maintenance and creation. Currently the OIS team oversees material masters. A standard process with detail instructions and training is required to be able to maintain the materials and have correct data for input. Currently a form is being used, but the form lacks key data and has outdated information. It's suggested that more in-depth training and instructions be developed for the material master team. Not every material request should become a new material. A review to see if a high-level material can be or should be used. Some suggestion below on what the form needs to contain.

All key fields for end user to fill in. Key fields to be review by material master team prior to input Help material should be accessible to the end user (UNSPSC codes, current materials, guidelines, etc.) A question and answer section to better explain the purpose of the new material along with guiding the end user on what material should be created. This will also help the material master team with field inputs or to look for already existing materials, etc.

Examples:

- § Is this material used for a service?
- § Has this material been procured before by you or anyone else you know from State of Arkansas?
- § Do you expect this material be ordered multiple times in a year?
- § Will this material be stored in an inventory location? If yes, where?
- § What Person (or group) will be purchasing this material?
- § Can this material be ordered in other orders of Unit (Case, box, Dozen, feet, etc.) If yes, please list?
- § Is there a known supplier for this material, if Yes, please list?
- § What plant/location will this be procured for?
- § Is there a supplier description available, if Yes, please provide?

7. Recommendation for tools and Processes for changes based on Assessment

SAP provides the tools and expertise to change key data at the database level. This group, the System Landscape Optimization group (SLO), offers multiple levels of support. The group offers a comprehensive service suite addressing various SAP landscape transformation requirements and provides both a high degree of standardization and the flexibility to fulfill special customer requirements. For this type of task in this assessment, SAP offers the "Material Group Conversion" service based on SAP Landscape Transformation software (SAP LT). The relevant data is changed directly at database level using an SAP LT-based service. Therefore, only the new values exist in the system after the conversion, so that the system will then look as if it had always been in the new state. An SAP LT-based service covers all required data changes in all affected SAP components in the system. It covers master data, transaction data, and Customizing data. Standard SAP tables are automatically included. Tables that were created in your company as well as modifications of standard SAP tables can also be included.

8. Material Master and impact on Procurement Process

This assessment for the State of Arkansas was mainly looking at the current state of the material master. But because the material master is one of the foundations of any ERP system, it is not possible to assess the master data without considering the entire process. The key process that the material master uses is the procurement process for the State of Arkansas. Currently the State of Arkansas uses a simple Procure to Pay process. This process while not robust does achieve the basic functionality of buying, receiving and paying for materials, both commodities and services. The use of the material master to do both commodities and services, while not the preferred method does have its place in the State of Arkansas procurement process. Since the process has been in place for many years and covers a large and diverse population, I do not recommend changing this process now. Prior to do a wholesale change on the procurement process, the OIS and other groups need to understand the long-term path of the SAP system, other SAP software (Ariba and Field Glass) and future upgrades and the impacts that these will have on the procurement process. Prior to finalizing the path forward for the material master/group changes, a knowledge of the future path the SAP AASIS will take should be known to see if any impacts to the final design.

Written by Joe Wolff
Principal Consultant
Logistics/Supply Chain
Solutions Delivery
SAP America
3999 West Chester Pike
Newtown Square, PA 19073