



In This Issue...

We look at Vendor Information Requests (VIRs) by clarifying the 'Description of Problem' section. We also focus on an available VIR Help Screen and proper use of Electronic Signatures. The USS *Bonhomme Richard* fire and its' impact on all shipyards is addressed.

Update

Connecticut's travel advisory states anyone traveling from a state with a 10% test positivity rate over a seven day rolling average will have to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Connecticut updates the list every Tuesday. Stay informed on whether your state is on the list.

FEEDBACK

Please let us know what you think about this bulletin!

Send questions about any article, content suggestions and comments to Ken Mason at 860.433.4834 or email

EBSIB@gdeb.com

LETTER TO THE SUPPLIERS

As we transition from the balmy, sun-filled days of summer to the cooler, colorful days of fall, it is appropriate to take a few moments to reflect on the year thus far.

2020 has been a year unlike any other that I have experienced in my career. Faced with a relentless pandemic, the horrific wild fires and mass destruction of homes and businesses and a steady drumbeat of hurricanes and tropical depressions our people and our companies have faced incredible challenges.

Despite these obstacles, the supply base providing materials and services for our shipyard has worked tirelessly to keep the production engine running. For this, I felt like this was an appropriate time to provide a heart-felt "Thank You" to each of you. Material is the gasoline that keeps the shipyard production engine humming. Provided the right material at the right time our incredible shipyard trade teams can turn raw steel into the most complex machine mankind has ever produced—a nuclear submarine.

Your resiliency, commitment to the task, and dedication to your craft has been inspiring. Mask wearing, social distancing, working from home, blue-gold shifts in your facilities, endless telecons, zooms, and web-ex's, no travel, temperature screening, caring for fellow employees displaced by flood waters and roaring infernos has at least for the present become the new normal. Despite all this, we have managed to keep our people safe and continued to do what we come to work for everyday, building the finest warships we can to ensure our brave men and women in our armed forces never have to fight a fair fight.

As a result of your continued support and contributions we have achieved many significant events in the Quonset Point facility and on the Groton waterfront. Modules continue to be shipped north and south, ships have been launched and prepared to go to sea, facilities have been expanded and modernized as we prepare for the future and every day the next generation of master shipbuilders walks through our gates.

With the on-going construction of Virginia Block IV ships, the commencement of Virginia Block V ships with acoustic superiority and variable payload modules and the early stages of Columbia construction, the country's top military acquisition program, our future is bright. We must, however, never once let down our guard. First time quality, on schedule, cost-effective material is what we count on each of you for and the reason why each of us should be proud to come to work every day.

In closing, let me again thank you for what you do. We have a generational opportunity staring us in the face and for the sake of our country and the liberties and freedom we are so privileged to have, we cannot fail.

Deep appreciation for your amazing support throughout the year and the highest of confidence that we will continue to succeed going forward. Working together, we can do incredible things.

Be safe, I cannot wait to again show up in your facilities to thank you personally.

Your partner in shipbuilding excellence,


T. Blair Decker

BEST PRACTICES

Vendor Information Request 'Description of Problem'

Vendor Information Requests (VIRs) are applicable only to those Purchase Order Line Items (POLIs) listed in the VIR header. If a VIR 'Description of Problem' section identifies POLIs that are not specifically contained in the VIR listing, those additional POLIs are not affected by the VIR.

As an example, this VIR lists POLI PPB197=032-0001 **only**. This is the only POLI that can be addressed by this VIR disposition.

GENERAL DYNAMICS
Electric Boat

SUPPLIER VERSION 6/1/20 12:54 PM

Completed/CLOSED 7/30/18

Final Disposition: Approved

Vendor Information Request

Interpretation



Disposition Req'd by: **7/31/18**

Reference Drawing: No Reference Drawing Supplied

Material Status: In Progress

Supplier W/O Number:

VIR Responsibility: Shipyard

Notice to Supplier:

The disposition outlined is applicable to the material defined on this VIR Only. Shipping documents for this material must reference this VIR. All nonconforming material accepted by this VIR must be marked with the VIR number unless otherwise noted in the disposition.

Purchase Order	Item	VIR Qty	Part Number	Noun Name
PPB197=032	0001	12	218087874	VALVE

Does the issue identified in this VIR apply to material previously delivered to either Electric Boat or NGSB ? NO

Description of Problem

incorporated into the completed valve assemblies being procured on PPB197=032 POLI's 0001 and 0002. At receipt of the completed assemblies.

While the problem description *also* included reference to POLI 0002, Electric Boat Engineering provided a response for POLI 0001 only because that was the only POLI *listed* on the VIR.

Concur. [redacted] may ship the valves ordered by purchase order PPB197=032, line item 0001 with open liabilities. The shock and vibration qualification requirements for the valve actuators being incorporated into the completed valve assemblies shall be identified in the rejection of the subject valve assembly part numbers at receipt per the instructions below.

When initiating a VIR, be certain the all the POLIs you want addressed are included in the VIR listing. If there are any questions or concerns regarding this bulletin, please contact Brian Keith at bkeith@gdeb.com or email us at EBSIB@gdeb.com

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Electronic Signatures

This Supply Chain Communications article covers electronic signature acceptability, control, application, and the preferred method for their appearance on documents.

Since there is no specific direction concerning how an electronic signature must appear when it is applied, differentiating a typewritten name from a cut and paste image from an actual electronic signature can be problematic, and can lead to unnecessary delays processing documentation.

Following these guidelines can help you avoid having issues with your electronically signed documents.

Electronic signatures **MUST**:

- Be authenticated back to a token or device available *only* to, or a unique PIN known *only* by, the signatory.
- Appear with information clearly providing the signatory's identity (e.g., the signatory's printed name or title).

Electronic signatures **SHOULD**:

- Contain reference, either within the electronic signature itself or within the body of the document, that the applied signature is 'digital' or 'electronic'.

Electronic signatures **MAY**:

- Be supplemented with a graphic representation of the person's signature (at the signatory's option).

The current directives are in EB Spec 2678N para 2.6 and standard clause 60-5 para 10. Please [review to familiarize](#) and contact Jim Snook at jsnook@gdeb.com or Cliff Graillat at cgrailla@gdeb.com with any questions.

VIR Help Screen Available

In an effort to improve VIR quality and perhaps speed up processing, EB has uploaded a VIR Help Screen to SPARS. The help screen can be accessed via the VIR Initiation screen. Please share this message with your folks who submit VIRs, and encourage them to use this guidance. Let us know if you have ideas to improve this help screen.

The help screen gives:

- An overview for submitting VIRs
- A guide for choosing the correct VIR Reason (Nonconformance, Spec Change, Interpretation, etc.)
- General requirements for describing the specific problem or question
- Information about the 'Help Floats' feature that provides field-specific help information

Some of the biggest issues EB has faced are suppliers selecting the wrong VIR Reason, providing unclear requests, or providing insufficient information to support timely evaluation of the VIR.

The Help Overview Button is on the left side of your screen.



The previous paper VIR form included some directions on the back of the form. VIR instructions may have been provided at the time of the transition to SPARS; unfortunately, those instructions were not sustained. This help screen fixes that problem.

We expect performance to improve now that direction is available.

FROM THE SECURITY DESK

September is National Insider Threat Awareness Month. Several Government agencies (NCSC, DHS, DCSA, FBI) have teamed up to support this initiative. Raising Insider Threat awareness impacts protection of our program data, our business, and our people. Insider threat programs and protections only work when it's reported. We all know the words, "Security is Everyone's Responsibility," and "See Something, Say Something," but do you know where to report an insider threat within your company?

It should be your company's policy that all Insider Threat reports can be made anonymously; but more importantly, do you know why you should report?

It's because the earlier your company can intervene, the better chance we all have to mitigate a threat.

"Threat" is not limited to the threat from hostile intelli-

gence activity, but encompasses a broad spectrum. Workplace violence and suicides are, unfortunately, prevalent in our society. Let's highlight a secondary, but no less relevant, concern regarding insider threats.

We all have basic expectations regarding the circumstances we will encounter during a normal business day; and it should be evident when daily habits change with a co-worker. Anyone can have a bad day; but dramatic changes in personal habits, work schedule, or simply appearing more agitated should raise concerns.

We should always be looking out for each other. These changes in personal habits may not fall under the typical activity you would report as an insider threat; but consider that a report by a co-worker may just start the process that helps "right the ship" for someone.

The historic foundry pour of the first propulsor mold for the COLUMBIA-class submarine program recently took place in Philadelphia, PA.

At more than 200,000 lbs., the casting represented the largest of its kind in American history.

Photo: Office of Rep. Joe Courtney (CT-2).



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Update:

The USS *Bonhomme Richard* fire has placed a significant emphasis on fire safety for all shipyards and the US Navy. As a supplier, your facilities' safety needs to be a top priority.

This [USNI News article](#) contains Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition James Geurts' memo to shipbuilders and ship maintainers.

