INTERPRETATION OF I08 INTERCHANGE DATE IN THE ISA SEGMENT

REQUEST

A request for interpretation was submitted asking why the I08 Interchange Date element in the X12 control segment ISA was six digits rather than eight digits, lacking the leading two digits or the four-digit year. The RFI also asked how to interpret the two-digit year field.

RESPONSE

Excerpted below are the paragraphs from the X12 standards that pertain to the interchange date element. They allow the I08 element to remain a six-digit field. An eight-digit date is not a requirement for the ISA segment. ASC X12 Committee has determined that there is no requirement for the interchange date to be unique over a period greater than a hundred years. The interchange date also was not expanded to eight digits because it would result in an incompatible change to the length of the ISA segment, changing the length would cause parsing problems for some EDI software.

Interpretation of the value contained in the I08 two-digit field is not specified in the X12 standard, but X12.5 Section 5.1.2 specifies that the field "may serve as an additional discriminant only to differentiate interchange identify over the longest possible time frame.

From X12.6 Application Control Structure, Release 004010, December 1997:

3.5.1.5 Date

A date data element is used to express the standard date in either YYMMDD or CCYYMMDD format in which CC is the first two digits of the calendar year, YY is the last two digits of the calendar year, MM is the month (01 to 12), and DD is the day in the month (01 to 31). The representation for this data element type is DT.

<date> ::= <year> <month> <day> | <hundred_year> <year> <month> <day>

From X12.5 Interchange Control Structures, December 1997, Version 004010:

3.6.1 Basic Interchange Service - Dates and Times

The dates and times used in the ISA and TA1 segments represent local date and time of the interchange sender.

3.6.3 Interchange Delivery Notice - Dates and Times

For the TA3, the date and time used to identify an interchange is copied from the interchange header and therefore represent local date and time of the interchange sender. The dates and times used as action dates and times shall be UTC.

5.1.2 Interchange Control Header Segment (ISA)

In order to provide sufficient discrimination for the acknowledgment process to operate reliably and to ensure that audit trails are unambiguous, the combination of interchange sender's qualifier and ID (ISA05, ISA06), interchange receiver's qualifier and ID (ISA07, ISA08) and the interchange control number value (ISA13) shall by themselves be unique within a reasonably extended time frame whose boundaries shall be defined by trading partner agreement. Because at some point it may be necessary to reuse a sequence of control numbers, the Interchange Date and Time may serve as an additional discriminant only to differentiate interchange identity over the longest possible time frame.