



# Standard Guide for Establishing Security Seal Control and Accountability Procedures<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Scope

1.1 This guide covers procedures for maintaining a continuous line of accountability for security seals from the time of manufacture to destruction of the seal subsequent to its use.

1.2 The procedures contained herein are applicable to usage of security seals that are coded or numbered in a manner to make each seal unique. See also Classification [F832](#).

1.3 *This standard does not purport to address the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*<sup>2</sup>

[F832 Classification for Security Seals](#)

## 3. Significance and Use

3.1 This guide is intended as general guidance in establishing procedures for internal control of the security seals. It is not meant to restrict the use of procedures that may be required for unique or unusual situations. Likewise, not all of the practices will necessarily apply to a particular situation.

## 4. Summary of Procedures

4.1 The intended use of a seal is defeated if strict accountability and disciplined application of seals are not maintained. The accountability starts with the manufacturer and is completed when the seal is destroyed subsequent to its use. This guide deals with the subject in two parts. The first part addresses the responsibilities of those involved in the program,

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

and the second addresses basic procedures to consider in formulating the program.

## 5. Responsibilities

5.1 *Manufacturer Responsibilities*—The manufacturer should establish procedures to assure that no duplicate seals are produced and that all seals produced are accounted for, from the production line to shipment to the customer.

5.1.1 All seals should be embossed with serial numbers.

5.1.2 All seals should be embossed with the user organization's name or appropriate abbreviation.

5.1.3 All application or crimping tools supplied with particular seals should be embossed with the user organization's name or appropriate abbreviation.

5.2 *Security Manager Responsibilities*—The security manager or other designated official responsible for the protection of assets program should do the following:

5.2.1 Approve all seals proposed for use in the organization.

5.2.2 Review and approve all forms and directives used for the accountability of seals.

5.2.3 Periodically review seal control procedures to ensure compliance with approved accountability directives.

5.3 *Designation of Authorized Seal Users*—Management should designate, by name, each person authorized to affix or remove seals and any restrictions, such as limitations to certain times of the day. These designations should clarify when, if ever, outside employees are authorized to affix or remove seals. Appointments should be kept to a minimum commensurate with operational requirements. At fixed locations, such as doors, it might be necessary to post this information.

5.4 *Seal Custodian Controls*—Each location of an organization that is authorized to receive seals should appoint a seal custodian and alternate(s) as necessary. Seal custodian duties should include the following:

5.4.1 Receipt for seals delivered.

5.4.2 Maintenance of an incoming seal record with entries to include, as a minimum:

5.4.2.1 Block of numbers received,

5.4.2.2 Type of seal received and its use(s),

5.4.2.3 Date received, and

5.4.2.4 Remarks.

5.4.3 Maintenance of a seal issuance register(s) to record distribution of seals to subordinate units or to individual users. Seal issuance registers should include, as a minimum, the following entries:

- 5.4.3.1 Seal number(s) issued,
- 5.4.3.2 Signature of recipient,
- 5.4.3.3 Date issued,
- 5.4.3.4 Intended use (for shipments: waybill, manifest, GBL or other similar paperwork numbers will suffice), and
- 5.4.3.5 Remarks.

5.4.4 Protection of unissued seals and seal accountability records to prevent unauthorized seal substitution or their illegal use:

5.4.4.1 Seal logs and unissued seals should be in a locked container when unattended by the custodian or an alternate. The type of container should be determined locally based on the perceived risks and the other security measures in force. When deciding the location of containers, the custodian should consider if it is desirable to have security personnel make after-hours checks.

5.4.4.2 Keys for seal containers and containers holding accountability records should be strictly controlled and accounted for at the close of business.

5.4.5 Protection of special seal installation tools:

5.4.5.1 Seal installation tools, such as crimpers, which add a unique, accountable identification to a seal, should be controlled in the same manner as seals.

5.4.6 Personnel preparing seal requisitions should ensure they indicate in the shipping instructions that seals are to be sent unopened directly to the seal custodian.

5.4.7 Custodians should ensure the organization's seals are not issued to other organizations which with the firm does business.

#### 5.5 *Responsibilities of Unit Using Seals:*

5.5.1 The accountability register held by the seal custodian, or a separate log maintained in each unit affixing seals, should include the following information:

- 5.5.1.1 Seal number,
- 5.5.1.2 Date seal used,
- 5.5.1.3 A container, truck, door, valve, bill of lading or other identification name, number, or location,
- 5.5.1.4 Name of person drawing and affixing seal, and
- 5.5.1.5 Witness to seal affixing (if required).

5.5.2 When seals are affixed to shipping containers or vehicles, seal numbers should be recorded on all pertinent documents where practical. These include such items as bills of lading, loading charts, manifests, and gate passes.

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 *User Internal Security Precautions:*

6.1.1 If necessary, to ensure accountability or to avoid confusion, different components or locations of an organization should requisition seals with distinct color coding or lettering and with separate blocks of serial numbers.

6.1.2 Special purpose seals fabricated within the organization should be marked in the same manner as those requisitioned from a seal manufacturer.

6.1.3 When seals are received with markings that cannot easily be read, they should be returned to the supplier or otherwise properly disposed of with the necessary entries made in accountability registers.

6.2 *Lost Seals*—In any instance in which a seal has been recorded as received and later cannot be accounted for, the following actions should be taken:

6.2.1 An immediate inventory of all unused on-hand seals to verify the loss and ensure no other seals are missing.

6.2.2 The incoming seal log and the user issuance seal register should be annotated to reflect that No. \_\_\_ was discovered missing at (*time*), (*date*).

6.2.3 Notification of organization's security manager and other appropriate officials of the loss.

6.2.4 A thorough review of all seal accountability procedures to identify vulnerable aspects in the control system.

### 6.3 *Seals Found Broken or Suspected of Being Compromised:*

6.3.1 A report should be entered in the appropriate seal log or other report form approved by the organization's security manager.

6.3.2 The report should contain, as a minimum, the following information:

- 6.3.2.1 Date and time of discovery,
- 6.3.2.2 Name and organization of person making discovery,
- 6.3.2.3 Witness(es) (if any),
- 6.3.2.4 Name of manager to which incident was reported,
- 6.3.2.5 Serial numbers of old serial and its replacement, and
- 6.3.2.6 Circumstances (for example, what indicated suspicion of compromise).

6.3.3 If affixed to moving stock, that conveyance or container should be held until the proper officials are notified, an inventory of contents can be made, or for whatever reasons management deems necessary.


6.4 *Seals Accidentally Broken*—When a seal is accidentally broken by an employee or other person, a record should be made of the incident. This record should be recorded on a shift activity log, seal register or paperwork accompanying shipments, or both. It should include the following as a minimum:

- 6.4.1 Location of incident,
- 6.4.2 Date and time,
- 6.4.3 Person discovering or causing breakage, or both,
- 6.4.4 Circumstances causing breakage, and
- 6.4.5 Number of replacing seal and time affixed.

### 6.5 *Disposition of Used Seal:*

6.5.1 Seals should be deformed sufficiently upon removal so that they cannot be reused (to simulate a good seal), unless they are being held as part of an inquiry due to missing items or for other security matters.

6.5.2 If numbers on seals removed match those recorded on accountability records, and they are not being held for security matters, they may be disposed of as normal trash.

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