

WR #	GSCN Name	Effective Date
WR25-0423	Remove content that discourages use of AI (02) and AI (37) homogeneous Healthcare logistic units	Jul-2026

Associated Work Request (WR) Number:

N/A

Background:

Current notes in the General Specifications discourage AI (02)/(37) for regulated healthcare logistic units, favouring SSCC-only with EDI/EPCIS.

In practice, many 3PLs and some Healthcare manufacturers will benefit from having the contained GTIN and count on the physical label for homogeneous, non-trade-item cases/pallets. SSCC alone identifies the unit but does not communicate the content to receivers unless EDI/EPCIS is present and consumed in time. This creates avoidable manual work and exceptions.

The current text is confusing and the reasons behind this recommendation are not clear.

Some healthcare manufacturers already use AI (02)/(37) on cases/pallets for homogeneous units with positive partner feedback - "We use (02)/(37) on logistics units; partners find it helpful; no complaints specific to healthcare."

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See [5.12.3.1](#), Symbol specification table 1 addendum 2 for 2D barcodes

2.2 Logistic units

A logistic unit is an item of any composition established for transport and/or storage that needs to be managed through the supply chain.

Tracking and tracing logistic units in the supply chain is a major application of the GS1 system. Scanning the standard identification number, marked on each logistic unit, allows the physical movement of units to be individually tracked and traced by providing a link between the physical movement of items and the associated information flow. It also opens up the opportunity to implement a wide range of applications, such as cross docking, shipment routing and automated receiving.

Logistic units are identified with a GS1 identification number called the SSCC (Serial Shipping Container Code). The SSCC is the only GS1 key that SHALL be used as the identifier of a logistic unit. The SSCC ensures that logistic units are identified with a number that is unique worldwide.

If, in addition to being a logistic unit, the item is regarded as a trade item by the brand owner, it MAY additionally be identified with a GTIN. The combination of a GTIN and a serial number SHALL NOT replace the SSCC as the identifier of a logistic unit.

If, in addition to being a logistic unit, the item is part of a consignment and or a shipment, it MAY also be associated with the GINC and / or the GSIN.

Attribute information, such as a Global Identification Number for Consignment, AI (401), may be optionally encoded using internationally agreed data structures and a barcode symbology that allow unambiguous interpretation.

2.2.1 Individual logistic units

Application description

A logistic unit is an item of any composition established for transport and/or storage that needs to be managed through the supply chain. The identification and symbol marking of logistic units enables a large number of user applications. In particular, the SSCC (Serial Shipping Container Code) provides a link between the physical logistic unit and information pertaining to the logistic unit that is communicated between trading partners using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).

The SSCC element string AI (00) is used for the identification of logistic units (see section [3](#)). Each individual logistic unit is allocated a unique number, which remains the same for the life of the logistic unit. When assigning an SSCC, the rule is that an individual SSCC number must not be reallocated within one year of the shipment date from the SSCC assignor to a trading partner. However, prevailing regulatory or industry organisation specific requirements may extend this period.

In principle, the SSCC provides a unique reference number that can be used as the key to access information regarding the logistic unit in computer files. However, attributes relating to the logistic unit (e.g., ship to information, logistic weights) are also available as standardised element strings.

GS1 key

Required

- SSCC

The GS1 Application Identifier for the SSCC is AI (00), see section [3.2](#).

Rules

All SSCC rules described in section [4.3](#).

Attributes

Required

Not applicable

Optional

For all the GS1 Application Identifiers that may be used with an SSCC, see section [3.2](#).



Note: Although the use of AI (02), Identification of trade items contained, and AI (37), Count of trade items or trade item pieces contained in a logistic unit, is common in some sectors to describe the content of a logistic unit, the healthcare sector prefers the use of the SSCC alone. The SSCC is used with EDI communications to enable identification and traceability.

Rules

Not applicable.

Data carrier specification

Carrier choices

The mandatory data carrier used to represent individual logistic units is the GS1-128 barcode symbology.

A GS1 DataMatrix or GS1 QR Code symbol MAY be included in addition to the GS1-128 symbol. When used, the 2D barcode SHALL include all element strings included in the GS1-128 symbol(s), and MAY include additional element strings.

If a logistic unit does not have at least one surface area greater than an A6 or 4" x 6" logistic label (see section [6.6.4.5](#)), a GS1 DataMatrix or GS1 QR Code MAY be used by itself on a logistic label, though a GS1-128 containing a SSCC is still recommended. If a logistic label is used with only a GS1 DataMatrix or GS1 QR Code, care must be taken to ensure trading partners are able to scan this barcode.

For healthcare, see the recommendations at the end of section [2.1.5](#) in [Table 2-11](#) *Carrier choices*.

Symbol X-dimensions, minimum symbol height, and minimum symbol quality

See section [5.12.3.5](#), *GS1 symbol specification table 5*.

Symbol placement

All the symbol placement guidelines defined in section [6](#).

Unique application processing requirements

For a description of processing requirements, see section [7](#).

2.2.2 Multiple logistic units – Global Identification Number for Consignment

Application description

- Consignments can comprise one or many logistic units. If the consignment comprises more than one physical object there is no requirement that they are attached together. A consignment number identifies a logical grouping. When a consignment number is read the message is that this physical unit should be associated with any other physical units carrying the same consignment number. Individual physical units carry the SSCC as described in the previous section.
- The Global Identification Number for Consignment is assigned by the freight forwarder or carrier of the transport units and is referenced in the relevant transport messages and documents (e.g., waybill). It may be used as a communication reference by all parties in the transport chain, such as in Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) messages where it can be used as a consignment reference and/or freight forwarders or carriers loading list. See section [3.2](#), Global Identification Number for Consignment (GINC): AI (401).



Note: Shipment and consignment are terms, which may be used interchangeably within the transport and logistics sector however for the purposes of clarity, when referring to