LABEL CERTIFICATION
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: **After my label passes certification is it still possible to receive a PRR?**

Answer: Yes. Even though your label passes certification for form and function, we cannot guarantee future labels to be within specification. A preventative maintenance program should be set up to ensure proper working order of your barcode equipment. As well, a QC check should be periodically performed with verification equipment on your barcodes to ensure correct data and scanability.

Question: **If I use the portal to print my labels am I immune to PRRs?**

Answer: No. Even though the label may be technically accurate you are still responsible for the print quality and data accuracy.

Question: **How many labels should I submit?**

Answer: Each label type (container, master, mixed) submitted should be accompanied by a duplicate. Labels are to be unmarked, and contain as much real time data as possible.

Question: **How do I make the American Axle Order ID bar code fit in the area provided?**

Answer: You must use Code 128 subset C for the data. The Code 128 bar code contains three subsets A, B and C. Subset A contains some special characters you will not use. Subset B is the most commonly used subset and has all the characters in subset A minus a few special characters. Subset C is only used for pairs of numbers and will actually pair two numbers into one symbol in the bar code. In order to fit the required 35 mil bar code on the label, subset B must be used for the data identifier 9K and subset C should be used for the data if there is an even number of digits. If the digits are uneven, you must include the odd digit with the data identifier using subset B and the rest in subset C . The data will be a maximum of 8 digits. Most labeling software will have an 'Auto' feature for the subset that will make the switch from subset B to subset C for you.

Question: **What are the GS, RS and EOT characters in the PDF 417?**

Answer: These are special characters and cannot be typed literally. A group separator (GS) has a Hex value of 1D. A record separator (RS) has a hex value of 1E. The end of transmission character (EOT) has a hex value of 04. All labeling software is unique as to how you enter these characters into the data string. Calling your software provider or searching the help provided within your software will usually provide you with the answer.

Question: **What does X dimension refer to?**

Answer: X dimension is the width of the narrowest bar in your barcode. The lower the X dimension the smaller the barcode will be, thus the higher the density

will be and vise versa. This setting is adjustable within your barcode software and has a direct impact from the printer you are using.

Question: What is Bar Tolerance?

Answer: This is the average bar print error. It is the value or amount of average bar growth or shrinkage in the measured symbol relative to its X dimension. Bar Gain/Loss can be caused by many factors in the printing process such as the ink applied to form the bars spreading on the background material. The ideal situation would be to have 0% variation. In case of high bar gain/loss, adjustments need to be made to the original artwork, plate-making, ink application and print head temperature.

Question: What is ANSI print quality?

Answer: ANSI (American National Standards Institute) is a committee that produces acceptable values, which we measure against. In this case a subcommittee of ANSI studies reasonably acceptable barcodes and releases its findings to the public. These values are then used in barcode verification equipment to provide feedback to the end user producing the labels.

Question: I am using a barcode font to create my barcodes, why am I failing?

Answer: Barcode fonts do not allow for direct manipulation of the X Dimension. These fonts also tend to scale the barcode to adjust for the requested point size. Barcodes that have been scaled will either return incorrect information, or not scan at all. In order to produce a barcode that no reader will have a problem decoding, software designed to produce barcodes should be used.

Question: Will my label fail if the only section I fail is Slashed Zeros Recommended?

Answer: No. We recommend that all labels use a slashed zero, but you will not fail if that is the only problem with the label. Slash zeros help the user determine the difference between a zero, the letter o, and other similar characters.

Question: When do I make my payment and what forms of payment do you accept?

Answer: Aalstec accept payments for label certifications by wire transfer, Paypal and credit card (via Paypal) for new customers. Existing customers can pay via their normal means.