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Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Data Matrix bar code symbology specification

Technologies de l'information — Techniques d'identification automatique et de capture des données — Spécification de symbologie de code à barres Data Matrix

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Foreword

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The main task of the joint technical committee is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint technical committee are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

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ISO/IEC 16022 was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 31, *Automatic identification and data capture techniques*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO/IEC 16022:2000), which has been technically revised. It also incorporates the Technical Corrigendum ISO/IEC 16022:2000/Cor.1:2004.

Introduction

Data Matrix is a two-dimensional matrix symbology which is made up of nominally square modules arranged within a perimeter finder pattern. Though primarily shown and described in this International Standard as a dark symbol on light background, Data Matrix symbols can also be printed to appear as light on dark.

Manufacturers of bar code equipment and users of the technology require publicly available standard symbology specifications to which they can refer when developing equipment and application standards. The publication of standardised symbology specifications is designed to achieve this.

Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Data Matrix bar code symbology specification

1 Scope

This International Standard defines the requirements for the symbology known as Data Matrix. It specifies the Data Matrix symbology characteristics, data character encodation, symbol formats, dimensions and print quality requirements, error correction rules, decoding algorithm, and user-selectable application parameters.

It applies to all Data Matrix symbols produced by any printing or marking technology.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 15424, *Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Data Carrier Identifiers (including Symbology Identifiers)*

ISO/IEC 19762-1, *Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) techniques — Harmonized vocabulary — Part 1: General terms relating to AIDC*

ISO/IEC 19762-2, *Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) techniques — Harmonized vocabulary — Part 2: Optically readable media (ORM)*

ISO/IEC 15415, *Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Bar code print quality test specification — Two-dimensional symbols*

ISO/IEC 15416, *Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture techniques — Bar code print quality test specification — Linear symbols*

ISO/IEC 646:1991, *Information technology — ISO 7-bit coded character set for information interchange*

ISO/IEC 8859-1, *Information technology — 8-bit single-byte coded graphic character sets — Part 1: Latin alphabet No. 1*

ISO/IEC 8859-5:1999, *Information technology — 8-bit single-byte coded graphic character sets — Part 5: Latin/Cyrillic alphabet*

AIM Inc. ITS/04-001 International Technical Standard: *Extended Channel Interpretations — Part 1: Identification Schemes and Protocol*

3 Terms, definitions, symbols and mathematical/logical notations

3.1 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 19762-1, ISO/IEC 19762-2 and the following apply.

3.1.1
codeword
symbol character value, an intermediate level of coding between source data and the graphical encodation in the symbol

3.1.2
module
single cell in a matrix symbology used to encode one bit of data, nominally a square shape in Data Matrix

3.1.3
convolutional coding
error checking and correcting (ECC) algorithm that processes a set of input bits into a set of output bits that can recover from damage by breaking the input bits into blocks, then convolving each input block with the contents of a multi-stage shift register to produce protected output blocks

NOTE These encoders can be constructed in hardware using input and output switches, shift registers, and exclusive-or (XOR) gates.

3.1.4
pattern randomising
procedure to convert an original bit pattern to another bit pattern, intended to reduce the probability of repeating patterns occurring in the symbol, by inverting selected bits

3.2 Symbols

For the purposes of this document, the following mathematical symbols apply unless defined locally.

d number of error correction codewords

e number of erasures

k (for ECC 000 - 140) the number of bits in a complete segment input to the state machine to generate the convolutional code (for ECC 200) total number of error correction codewords

m the memory order of the convolutional code

n (for ECC 000 - 140) the number of bits in a complete segment generated by the state machine producing the convolutional code (for ECC 200) total number of data codewords

N the numerical base in an encodation scheme

p number of codewords reserved for error detection

S symbol character

t number of errors

u the input bit segment to the state machine, taken k bits at a time

v the output bit segment from the state machine, generated n bits at a time

X horizontal and vertical width of a module

ε error correction codeword

3.3 Mathematical/logical notations

For the purposes of this document, the following notations and mathematical operations apply.

div integer division operator

mod integer remainder after division

XOR exclusive-or logic function whose output is one only when its two inputs are not equivalent.

LSB least significant bit

MSB most significant bit

4 Symbol description

4.1 Basic characteristics

Data Matrix is a two-dimensional matrix symbology.

There are two types:

ECC 200 which uses Reed-Solomon error correction. ECC 200 is recommended for new applications.

ECC 000 - 140 with several available levels of convolutional error correction, referred to as ECC 000, ECC 050, ECC 080, ECC 100 and ECC 140 respectively. ECC 000 - 140 should only be used in closed applications where a single party controls both the production and reading of the symbols and is responsible for overall system performance.

The characteristics of Data Matrix are:

a) Encodable character set:

1) values 0 – 127 in accordance with the US national version of ISO/IEC 646

NOTE 1 This version consists of the G0 set of ISO/IEC 646 and the C0 set of ISO/IEC 6429 with values 28 – 31 modified to FS, GS, RS and US respectively.

2) values 128 - 255 in accordance with ISO 8859-1. These are referred to as extended ASCII.

b) Representation of data: A dark module is a binary one and a light module is a zero.

NOTE 2 This International Standard specifies Data Matrix symbols in terms of dark modules marked on a light background. However, subclause 4.2 provides that symbols may also be produced with light and dark modules reversed in colour (see 4.2), and in such symbols references in this International Standard to dark modules should be taken as references to light modules, and vice versa.

c) Symbol size in modules (not including quiet zone):

ECC 200	10 x 10 to 144 x 144 even values only
ECC 000 – 140	9 x 9 to 49 x 49, odd values only

d) Data characters per symbol (for maximum symbol size in ECC200):

   1) Alphanumeric data: up to 2 335 characters

   2) 8-bit byte data: 1 555 characters

   3) Numeric data: 3 116 digits.

e) Selectable error correction:

   ECC 200: Reed-Solomon error correction.

   ECC 000 - 140: Four levels of convolutional error correction, plus the option to apply only error detection

f) Code type: Matrix

g) Orientation independence: Yes

4.2 Summary of additional features

The following summarises additional features which are inherent or optional in Data Matrix:

a) Reflectance reversal: (Inherent): Symbols are intended to be read when marked so that the image is either dark on light or light on dark (see Figure 1). The specifications in this International Standard are based on dark images on a light background, therefore references to dark or light modules should be taken as references to light or dark modules respectively in the case of symbols produced with reflectance reversal.

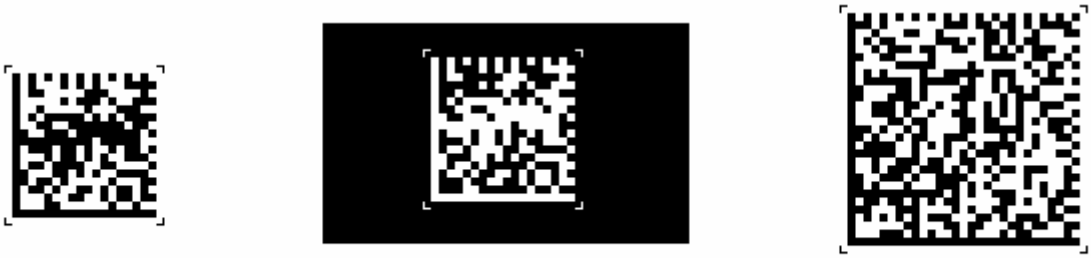
b) Extended Channel Interpretations: (ECC 200 only, optional): This mechanism enables characters from other character sets (e.g. Arabic, Cyrillic, Greek, Hebrew) and other data interpretations or industry-specific requirements to be represented.

c) Rectangular symbols: (ECC 200 only, optional): Six symbol formats are specified in a rectangular form.

d) Structured append: (ECC 200 only, optional): This allows files of data to be represented in up to 16 Data Matrix symbols. The original data can be correctly reconstructed regardless of the order in which the symbols are scanned.

4.3 Symbol structure

Each Data Matrix symbol consists of data regions which contain nominally square modules set out in a regular array. In larger ECC 200 symbols, data regions are separated by alignment patterns. The data region, or set of data regions and alignment patterns, is surrounded by a finder pattern, and this shall in turn be surrounded on all four sides by a quiet zone border. Figure 1 illustrates an ECC 140 and two representations of an ECC 200 symbol.



(a) ECC200, dark on light (b) ECC200, light on dark (c) ECC140, dark on light

Figure 1 — ECC 200 (a & b) and ECC 140 (c) encoding "A1B2C3D4E5F6G7H8I9J0K1L2"

4.3.1 Finder pattern

The finder pattern is a perimeter to the data region and is one module wide. Two adjacent sides, the left and lower sides, forming the L boundary, are solid dark lines; these are used primarily to determine physical size, orientation and symbol distortion. The two opposite sides are made up of alternating dark and light modules. These are used primarily to define the cell structure of the symbol, but also can assist in determining physical size and distortion. The extent of the quiet zone is indicated by the corner marks in Figure 1.

4.3.2 Symbol sizes and capacities

ECC 200 symbols have an even number of rows and an even number of columns. Some symbols are square with sizes from 10 x 10 to 144 x 144 not including quiet zones. Some symbols are rectangular with sizes from 8 x 18 to 16 x 48 not including quiet zones. All ECC 200 symbols can be recognised by the upper right corner module being light. The complete attributes of ECC 200 symbols are given in Table 7 in Section 5.5.

ECC 000 - 140 symbols have an odd number of rows and an odd number of columns. Symbols are square with sizes from 9 x 9 to 49 x 49 (modules) not including quiet zones. These symbols can be recognised by the upper right corner module being dark. The complete attributes of ECC 000 - 140 symbols are given in Annex G.

5 ECC 200 requirements

5.1 Encode procedure overview

This section provides an overview of the encoding procedure. Following sections will provide more details. An encoding example for ECC 200 is given in Annex O. The following steps convert user data to an ECC 200 symbol:

Step 1: Data encodation

> Analyse the data stream to identify the variety of different characters to be encoded. ECC 200 includes various encodation schemes which allow a defined set of characters to be converted into codewords more efficiently than the default scheme. Insert additional codewords to switch between the encodation schemes and to perform other functions. Add pad characters as needed to fill the required number of codewords. If the user does not specify the matrix size, then choose the smallest size that accommodates the data. A complete list of matrix sizes is shown in Section 5.5, Table 7.

Table 1 — Encodation schemes for ECC 200

Encodation scheme	Characters	Bits per data character
ASCII	double digit numerics	4
	ASCII values 0 - 127	8
	Extended ASCII values 128 - 255	16
C40	Upper-case alphanumeric	5,33
	Lower case and special characters	10,66[a]
Text	Lower-case alphanumeric	5,33
	Upper case and special characters	10,66[b]
X12	ANSI X12 EDI data set	5,33
EDIFACT	ASCII values 32 - 94	6
Base 256	All byte values 0 - 255	8

[a] encoded as two C40 values as result of use of a shift character

[b] encoded as two Text values as result of use of a shift character

Step 2: Error checking and correcting codeword generation

For symbols with more than 255 codewords, sub-divide the codeword stream into interleaved blocks to enable the error correction algorithms to be processed as shown in Annex A. Generate the error correction codewords for each block. The result of this process expands the codeword stream by the number of error correction codewords. Place the error correction codewords after the data codewords.

Step 3: Module placement in matrix

Place the codeword modules in the matrix. Insert the alignment pattern modules, if any, in the matrix. Add the finder pattern modules around the matrix.

5.2 Data encodation

5.2.1 Overview

The data may be encoded using any combination of six encodation schemes (see Table 1). ASCII encodation is the basic scheme. All other encodation schemes are invoked from ASCII encodation and return to this scheme. The compaction efficiencies given in Table 1 need to be interpreted carefully. The best scheme for a given set of data may not be the one with the fewest bits per data character. If the highest degree of compaction is required, account has to be taken of switching between encodation schemes and between code sets within an encodation scheme (see Annex P). It should also be noted that even if the number of codewords is minimised, the codeword stream might need to be expanded to fill a symbol. This fill process is done using pad characters.

5.2.2 Default character interpretation

The default character interpretation for character values 0 to 127 shall conform to ISO/IEC 646. The default character interpretation for character values 128 to 255 shall conform to ISO 8859-1: Latin Alphabet No. 1. The graphical representation of data characters shown throughout this document complies with the default interpretation. This interpretation can be changed using Extended Channel Interpretation (ECI) escape sequences, see 5.4. The default interpretation corresponds to ECI 000003.

5.2.3 ASCII encodation

ASCII encodation is the default set for the first symbol character in all symbol sizes. It encodes ASCII data, double density numeric data and symbology control characters. Symbology control characters include function characters, the pad character and the switches to other code sets. ASCII data is encoded as codewords 1 to 128 (ASCII value plus 1). Extended ASCII (data values 128 to 255) is encoded using the upper shift symbology control character (see 5.2.4.2). The digit pairs 00 to 99 are encoded with codewords 130 to 229 (numeric value plus 130). The ASCII code assignments are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 — ASCII encodation values

Codeword	Data or function
1 - 128	ASCII data (ASCII value + 1)
129	Pad
130 - 229	2-digit data 00 - 99 (Numeric Value + 130)
230	Latch to C40 encodation
231	Latch to Base 256 encodation
232	FNC1
233	Structured Append
234	Reader Programming
235	Upper Shift (shift to Extended ASCII)
236	05 Macro
237	06 Macro
238	Latch to ANSI X12 encodation
239	Latch to Text encodation
240	Latch to EDIFACT encodation
241	ECI Character
242 - 255	Not to be used in ASCII encodation

5.2.4 Symbology control characters

ECC 200 symbols have several special symbology control characters, which have particular significance to the encodation scheme. These characters shall be used to instruct the decoder to perform certain functions or to send specific data to the host computer as described in 5.2.4.1 to 5.2.4.9. These symbology control characters, with the exception of values from 242 through 255, are found in the ASCII encodation set (see Table 2).

5.2.4.1 Latch characters

A Latch Character shall be used to switch from ASCII encodation to one of the other encodation schemes. All codewords which follow a Latch Character shall be compacted according to the new encodation scheme. The encodation schemes have different methods for returning to the ASCII encodation set.

5.2.4.2 Upper Shift character

The Upper Shift character is used in combination with an ASCII value (1 - 128) to encode an extended ASCII character (129-255). An extended ASCII character encoded in the ASCII, C40, or Text encodation scheme requires a preceding Upper Shift character and the extended ASCII character value decreased by 128 is then encoded according to the rules of the encodation scheme. In ASCII encodation, the Upper Shift character is represented by codeword 235. The reduced data value (i.e. ASCII value minus 128) is transformed into its codeword value by adding 1. For example, to encode ¥ (Yen currency symbol) (ASCII value 165), an Upper Shift character (Codeword 235) is followed by value 37 (165 - 128), which is encoded as codeword 38. If there are long data strings of characters from the extended ASCII range, a Latch to Base 256 encodation should be more efficient.

5.2.4.3 Pad character

If the encoded data, irrespective of the encodation scheme in force, does not fill the data capacity of the symbol, pad characters (value 129 in ASCII encodation) shall be added to fill the remaining data capacity of the symbol. The pad characters shall only be used for this purpose. Before inserting pad characters, it is necessary to return to ASCII encodation if in any other encodation mode. The 253-State pattern randomising algorithm is applied to the pad characters starting at the second pad character and continuing to the end of the symbol (see Annex B.1).

5.2.4.4 Extended Channel Interpretation character

An Extended Channel Interpretation (ECI) character is used to change from the default interpretation used to encode data. The Extended Channel Interpretation protocol is common across a number of symbologies and its application to ECC 200 is defined more fully in 5.4. The ECI character shall be followed by one, two, or three codewords which identify the ECI being invoked. The new ECI remains in place until the end of the encoded data, or until another ECI character is used to invoke another interpretation.

5.2.4.5 Shift characters in C40 and Text encodation

In C40 and Text Encoding, three special characters, called shift characters, are used as a prefix to one of 40 values to encode about three quarters of the ASCII characters. This allows the remaining ASCII characters to be encoded in a more condensed way with single values.

5.2.4.6 FNC1 alternate data type identifier

To encode data to conform to specific industry standards as authorised by AIM Inc., a FNC1 character shall appear in the first or second symbol character position (or in the fifth or sixth data positions of the first symbol of Structured Append). FNC1 encoded in any other position is used as a field separator and shall be transmitted as $^{G}_{S}$ control character (ASCII value 29).

5.2.4.7 Macro characters

Data Matrix provides a means of abbreviating an industry specific header and trailer in one symbol character. This feature exists to reduce the number of symbol characters needed to encode data in a symbol using certain structured formats. A Macro character must be in the first character position of a symbol. They shall not be used in conjunction with Structured Append and their functions are defined in Table 3. The header shall be transmitted as a prefix to the data stream and the trailer shall be transmitted as a suffix to the data stream. The symbology identifier, if used, shall precede the header.

Table 3 — Macro functions

Macro codeword	Name	Interpretation	
		Header	Trailer
236	05 Macro	[)>$^{R}{}_{S}$05$^{G}{}_{S}$	$^{R}{}_{S}{}^{E}$O$_{T}$
237	06 Macro	[)>$^{R}{}_{S}$06$^{G}{}_{S}$	$^{R}{}_{S}{}^{E}$O$_{T}$

5.2.4.8 Structured Append character

A Structured Append character is used to indicate that the symbol is part of a Structured Append sequence according to the rules defined in 5.6.

5.2.4.9 Reader Programming character

A Reader Programming character indicates that the symbol encodes a message used to program the reader system. The Reader Programming character shall appear as the first codeword of the symbol and Reader Programming shall not be used with Structured Append.

5.2.5 C40 encodation

The C40 encodation scheme is designed to optimise the encoding of upper-case alphabetic and numeric characters but also enables other characters to be encoded by the use of shift characters in conjunction with the data character.

C40 characters are partitioned into 4 subsets. Characters of the first set, called the basic set, are the three special shift characters, the space character, and the ASCII characters A-Z and 0-9. They are assigned to a single C40 values. Characters of the other sets are assigned to one of the three shift characters, pointing to one of the 3 remaining subset, followed by one of the C40 values (see Annex C, Table C.1).

As a first stage, each data character is converted into a single C40 value or a pair of C40 values. The complete string of C40 values is then decomposed into groups of three values (special rules apply if one or two values remain at the end, see 5.2.5.2.). Each triplet (C1, C2, C3) is then encoded into a 16-bit value according to the formula: (1600 * C1) + (40 * C2) + C3 + 1. Each 16-bit value is then separated into 2 codewords by taking the most significant 8 bits and the least significant 8 bits.

5.2.5.1 Switching to and from C40 encodation

It is possible to switch to C40 encodation from ASCII encodation using the appropriate latch codeword (230). Codeword 254 immediately following a pair of codewords in C40 encodation acts as an Unlatch codeword to switch back to ASCII encodation. Otherwise, the C40 encodation remains in effect to the end of the data encoded in the symbol.

5.2.5.2 C40 encodation rules

Each pair of codewords represents a 16-bit value where the first codeword represents the most significant 8 bits. Three C40 values (*C1*, *C2*, *C3*) shall be encoded as:

$$(1600 * C1) + (40 * C2) + C3 + 1$$

which produces a value from 1 to 64000. Figure 2 illustrates three C40 values compacted into two codewords. Characters in the Shift 1, Shift 2 and Shift 3 sets shall be encoded by first encoding the appropriate shift character, and then the C40 value for the data. C40 encodation may be in effect at the end of the symbol's codewords which encode data.

The following rules apply when only one or two symbol characters remain in the symbol before the start of the error correction codewords:

a) If two symbol characters remain and three C40 values remain to be encoded (which may include both data and shift characters) encode the three C40 values in the last two symbol characters. A final Unlatch codeword is not required.

b) If two symbol characters remain and two C40 values remain to be encoded (the first C40 value may be a shift or data character but the second must represent a data character); encode the two remaining C40 values followed by a pad C40 value of 0 (Shift 1) in the last two symbol characters. A final Unlatch codeword again is not required.

c) If two symbol characters remain and only one C40 value (data character) remains to be encoded, the first symbol character is encoded as an Unlatch character and the last symbol character is encoded with the data character using the ASCII encodation scheme.

d) If one symbol character remains and one C40 value (data character) remains to be encoded, the last symbol character is encoded with the data character using the ASCII encodation scheme. The Unlatch character is not encoded, but is assumed, before the last symbol character.

In all other cases, either an Unlatch character is used to exit the C40 encodation scheme before the end of the symbol, or a larger symbol size is required to encode the data.

Data characters	AIM
C40 values	14, 22, 26
Calculate 16-bit value	(1600 * 14) + (40 * 22) + 26 + 1 = 23307
1st codeword: (16-bit value) div 256	23307 div 256 = 91
2nd codeword: (16-bit value) mod 256	23307 mod 256 = 11
Codewords	91, 11

Figure 2 — Example of C40 encoding

5.2.5.3 Use of Upper Shift with C40

In C40 encodation the Upper Shift character is not a symbology function character but a shift within the encodation set. When a data character from the extended ASCII character range is encountered, three or four values in C40 encodation need to be encoded according to the following rule:

IF [ASCII value - 128] is in the Basic Set then:

[1(Shift 2)] [30(Upper Shift)] [V(ASCII value - 128)]

ELSE

[1(Shift 2)] [30(Upper Shift)] [0, 1, or 2(Shift 1, 2, or 3)] [V(ASCII value - 128)]

In the rule the number in [ ] equates to the C40 values from Annex C.1; V has been used to indicate the appropriate C40 value.

5.2.6 Text encodation

Text encodation is designed to encode normal printed text, which is predominantly lowercase characters. It is similar in structure to the C40 encodation set, except that lowercase alphabetic characters are directly encoded (i.e. without using a shift). Upper-case alphabetic characters are preceded by a Shift 3. The full Text encodation character set assignments are shown in Annex C, Table C.2.

5.2.6.1 Switching to and from Text encodation

It is possible to switch to Text encodation from ASCII encodation using the appropriate latch codeword (239). Codeword 254 immediately following a pair of codewords in text encodation acts as an Unlatch codeword to switch back to ASCII encodation. Otherwise, the Text encodation remains in effect to the end of the data encoded in the symbol.

5.2.6.2 Text encodation rules

The rules for C40 encodation apply.

5.2.7 ANSI X12 encodation

ANSI X12 encodation is used to encode the standard ANSI X12 electronic data interchange characters, which are compacted three data characters to two codewords in a manner similar to C40 encodation. It encodes upper-case alphabetic characters, numerics, space and the three standard ANSI X12 terminator and separator characters. The ANSI X12 code assignments are shown in Table 4. There are no shift characters in the ANSI X12 encodation set.

Table 4 — ANSI X12 encodation set

X12 value	Encoded characters	ASCII values
0	X12 segment terminator <CR>	13
1	X12 segment separator *	42
2	X12 sub-element separator >	62
3	space	32
4 - 13	0 - 9	48 - 57
14 - 39	A - Z	65 - 90

5.2.7.1 Switching to and from ANSI X12 encodation

It is possible to switch to ANSI X12 encodation from ASCII encodation using the appropriate latch codeword (238). Codeword 254 immediately following a pair of codewords in ANSI X12 encodation acts as an Unlatch codeword to switch back to ASCII encodation. Otherwise, the ANSI X12 encodation remains in effect to the end of the data encoded in the symbol.

5.2.7.2 ANSI X12 encodation rules

The rules of C40 encodation apply. The exception is at the end of encoding ANSI X12 data. If the data characters do not fully utilise pairs of codewords, then following the last complete pair of codewords switch to ASCII using codeword 254 and continue using ASCII encodation, except when a single symbol character is left at the end before the first error correction character. This single symbol character uses the ASCII encodation scheme without requiring an Unlatch codeword.