

## Counterfeit parts and Conflict minerals

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Counterfeiting has a long and ignoble history, ranging from art and literature to manufactured goods. Unlike other industries, counterfeiting in the aerospace, defence and automotive industries may have life or death consequences. Although it is clear that **counterfeit parts** do enter the industrial supply chain, the time and place of their entry is unpredictable. Managing this uncertainty has become more important due to the recent rise in the incidence of counterfeit reporting.

Most of us are aware of 'blood diamonds' (also called *conflict diamonds*) which are diamonds mined in a war zone and sold to finance an insurgency, an invading army's war efforts, or a warlord's activity! What may be less well-known are **conflict minerals** which share a similar pedigree and may inadvertently enter the supply chain. They include tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold (referred to as '3TG'). Recent legislative and regulatory initiatives by the OECD and EU seek to keep such 'contaminated minerals' out of the industrial supply chain by requiring organizations to prove that such minerals are either not from conflict-affected areas or that their production and trade have not contributed to conflict financing and human rights abuses.

### **What are counterfeit parts?**

A fraudulent part is any part/component that has been confirmed to be a copy, imitation, or substitute that has been represented, identified, or marked as genuine, and/or altered by a source without legal right with intent to mislead, deceive, or defraud. Examples of a counterfeit part can include, but are not limited to, the false identification of marking or labeling, grade, serial number, date code, documentation, or performance characteristics. Although most of the focus is on 'EEE' (Electrical, Electronic, and Electromechanical) parts, the principles and practices are applicable to other commodity types, including –

raw materials

outsourced special processes

mechanical components

standard and COTs parts

IT and communications technology

.. .. in fact, and all types of 'matériel' – i.e. the aggregate of 'things used' or 'needed' by any organization for the production of its products – distinguished from personnel.

### **What are Conflict minerals?**

The minerals that pose the greatest threats are **tin, tantalum, tungsten** and **gold**, collectively known as '**3TG**'. For example, conflict minerals have for some years been a particular problem in minerals sourced from conflict-affected areas of the eastern DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo).

Organizations can, knowingly or unknowingly, be affected by the risk of supply chain 'contamination' with these conflict minerals. This can occur at a number of stages, whether mining or trading in the eastern provinces of DRC, in an adjoining country, or further along the chain.

### **More information and training**

Counterfeit parts and Conflict minerals pose a clear and present danger to organizations, their customer and the end user of products. To ensure that organizations are empowered to meet the challenge, TEC Transnational have developed a 2-day course which covers in detail everything that is needed to develop, document and implement the necessary processes to address Counterfeit parts plus the legislation and regulations associated with Conflict minerals ('3TG').

The demand has been very high. The next public course with available places will be held on 30 - 31 January 2019. We can, of course, run the course as an on-site event at any time. Full details at our [web page](#). Also, we have created a LinkedIn 'Group' specifically focused on Counterfeit parts & Product safety – feel free to join.

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