

# PDS INTERPRETATION AND RULES GUIDE – VERSION 1

This guide provides interpretation and usage guidance for the ASA Product Data Standard (PDS). It supports consistent implementation across manufacturers, distributors, and solution providers by clarifying how existing definitions and templates should be applied when ambiguity exists.

## Purpose and Scope

This document explains how to interpret the Product Data Standard in practical implementation scenarios. It does not introduce new required attributes or replace the Data Dictionary. Instead, it clarifies how existing definitions, templates, and guidance should be applied.

## Interpretation Precedence

- The Data Dictionary defines the authoritative meaning of each field.
- Templates illustrate expected structure and usage.
- Examples are illustrative and do not override definitions.
- For transactional fields, ERP and system constraints take precedence over marketing guidance.

## Product Lifecycle Status Interpretation

Lifecycle status reflects manufacturing and orderability, not inventory position.

- **Active:** Currently manufactured or sourced and orderable through normal channels.
- **Discontinued:** No longer manufactured or sourced, but may remain available or supported for a limited time.
- **Obsolete:** No longer manufactured, orderable, or supported; retained for historical reference only.



## Color Family – Interpretive Guidance

Color Family is an interpretive construct intended to improve product discovery, analytics, and reporting across the PHCP and PVF ecosystem. It is designed to normalize how color-, material-, and finish-related information is categorized without altering existing transactional or descriptive requirements.

Color Family is **not a required attribute** under the Product Data Standard and does not replace detailed finish, material, coating, or specification fields defined elsewhere in the Data Dictionary.

This guidance is provided to support consistent usage when organizations choose to implement Color Family voluntarily.

### Color Family Hierarchy

When implemented, Color Family should be structured using a two-level hierarchy:

- **Level 1 – Color Family:**  
Represents broad, stable groupings that reflect material type, coating class, plastic family, or industrial color usage.  
Examples include metals and alloys (e.g., Stainless Steel, Copper), coatings (e.g., Galvanized, Epoxy Coated), plastics (e.g., PVC, PEX), and safety or system colors (e.g., Red, Blue, Yellow).
- **Level 2 – Color Detail:**  
Represents specific finishes, treatments, grades, system identifiers, or commonly used industry descriptors associated with a Level 1 family.  
Examples include finish treatments (e.g., Polished, Brushed), alloy grades, pipe types, safety classifications, or color variants.

Level 1 values are intended to remain relatively stable over time.

Level 2 values are expected to expand as new catalog conventions and industry practices emerge.

### Description Field Roles and Constraints

Description fields serve different purposes. Transactional descriptions should align with ERP constraints. Marketing descriptions may be richer where supported. Duplication across description fields may be necessary to meet system requirements.

### Allowed Values and Controlled Lists

Where the Data Dictionary defines allowed values, only those values should be used. Free-text substitutions are not permitted unless explicitly allowed.



## Change and Versioning Principles

Clarifications and documentation improvements may be published as part of routine maintenance. Structural changes, including new attributes or allowed values, follow established governance review processes.

Interpretive constructs such as Color Family may evolve over time to reflect industry usage.

Updates to example lists, illustrative hierarchies, or explanatory guidance may be published as documentation updates and do not, by themselves, constitute changes to the Product Data Standard.

Any proposal to formalize Color Family as a required attribute or to enforce controlled value lists would follow the established governance review process.

