Supply Chain Council Awards for Excellence in Supply Chain Operation and Management

U.S. Air Force
Warner Robins Air Logistics Center Strategic Airlift Directorate (WRALC/LT)
Supply Chain Management Initiatives:
Creeper Index and Ageing Fleet Integrity Program (AFIRM)

WR-ALC/LT
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2003 Submission

FEBRUARY 2004

Section 1: General Information and Project Complexity

1-1) Name of Submitting Organization:

Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, Strategic Airlift Directorate

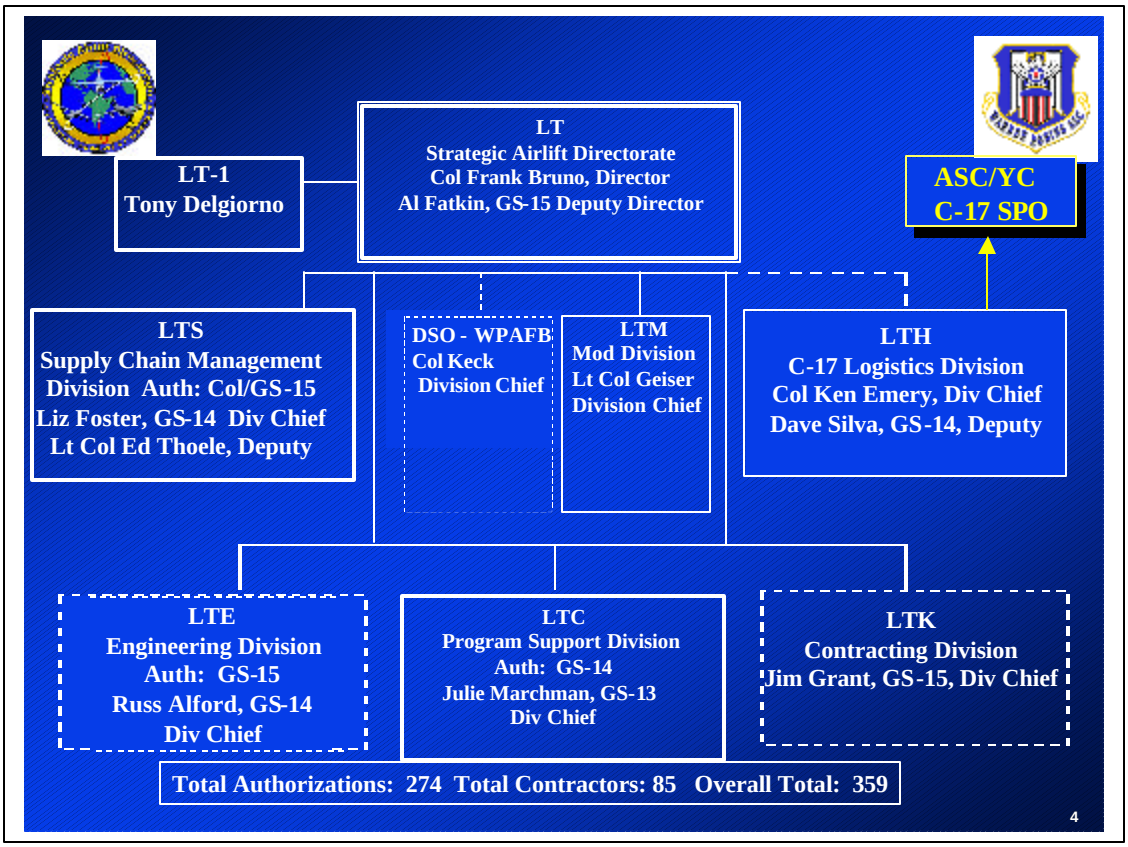
1-2) Name of the Responding Organizational Unit:

Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, Strategic Airlift Directorate, Warfighter Support Branch

1-3) Brief Mission Description:

The Strategic Airlift Directorate's mission is to work as a team to deliver global reach capabilities that exceed the warfighter's expectations. Our vision is one team working together with mutual trust and respect focused on taking great care of people and the Strategic Airlift Mission. The Strategic Airlift Directorate supports C-5, C-141 and C-17 aircraft fleets by providing supply chain management for the aircraft and components throughout their life cycle. We are able to reach our mission through our internal initiatives including the "Creeper Index" process developed by our new Sustainment Division and the Aging Fleet Integrity and Reliability Management (AFIRM) program created by the Reliability and Maintainability Branch within the Engineering Division. These processes are proactive approaches developed by our Supply Chain Management structure within this organization.

In Late 2003, WR-ALC/LJ, the C-141 System Program Office; WR-ALC/LA, the C-5 System Program Office; and WR-ALC/LH, the C-17 SSM formed a new consolidated organization, WR-ALC/LT, the Strategic Airlift Directorate, known as Strat Air.



"Strat Air" Organization Chart

1-4) Category of Submission:

Supply Chain Operational Excellence Award

1-5) Description of the Proposed Supply Chain and Processes:

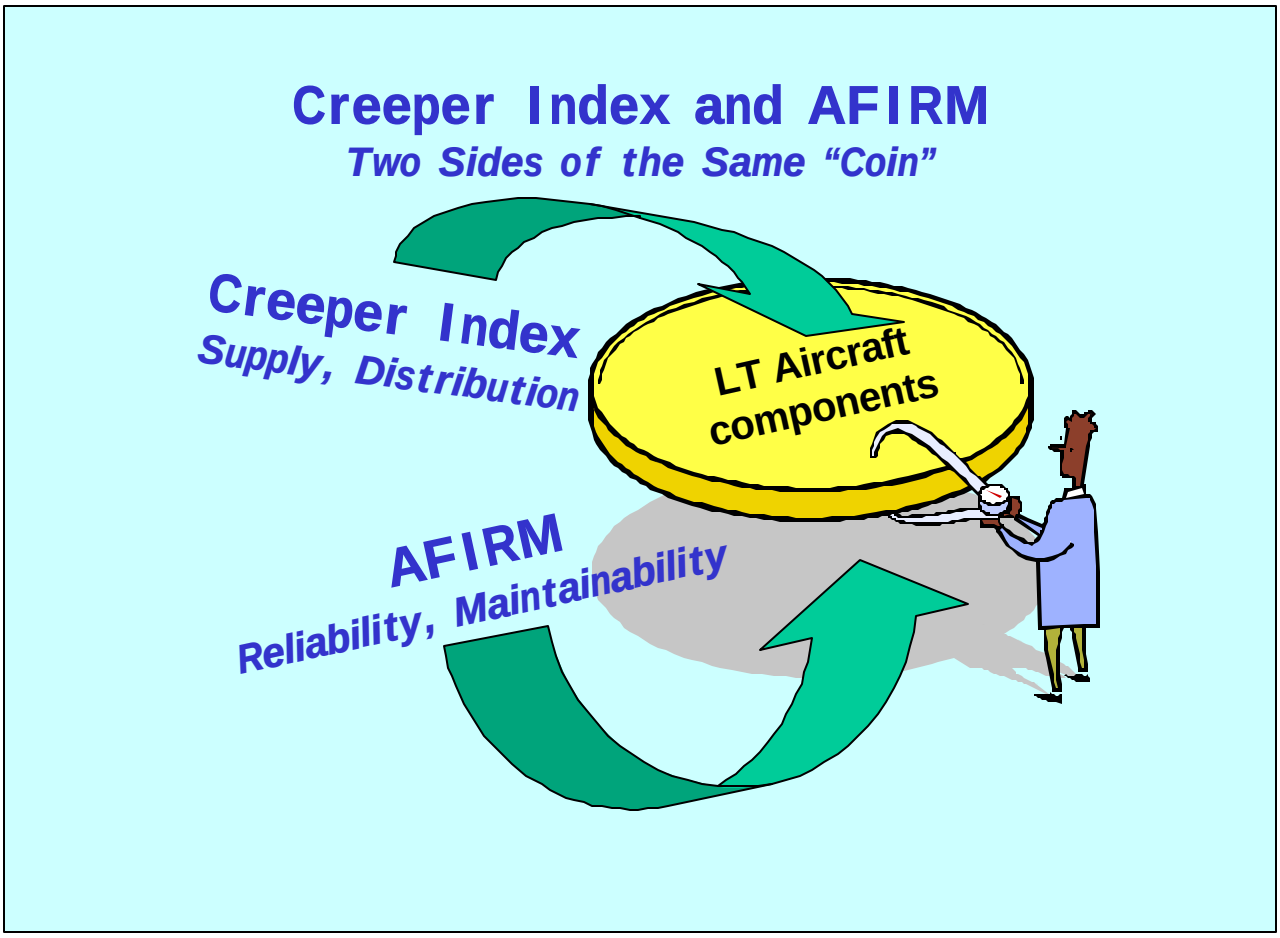
The Strategic Airlift Supply Chain supplies aircraft components and maintenance services such as Programmed Depot Maintenance (PDM), technical services and management oversight to improve the aircraft and related components for the C-141, C-5 and C-17 aircraft. Management of this supply chain also entails a fully coordinated set of related processes including planning, procurement, repair and delivery. All processes are collectively optimized to ensure customer's needs are met.

As the supply chain manager, we are geared to support the C-141, C-5 and C-17 aircraft throughout their life cycle. Not only does this organization focus on production, repair, supply stockage and delivery of components and related maintenance services, we also are responsible for establishing reliability improvement processes, and we reengineer components and aircraft to improve maintainability of these weapon systems. All these processes are inter-linked.

The two processes developed by the Strategic Airlift Directorate directly support our supply chain manager responsibilities. One process, the Creeper Index, provides a forward-looking supply chain management tool that focuses on delivering the right part at the right place

at the right time. The other process is the Aging Fleet Integrity and Reliability Management (AFIRM) and makes available a comprehensive analysis and management tool that allows Strat Air the ability to improve the aircraft and components as well as provides a mechanism for resolving maintainability issues.

These two processes provide a focus that gives WRALC/LT the ability to manage all aspects of an aircraft component. By using these tools we are able to analyze a component in both the logistical side (right number, right place, right amount) and the technical side (right part, right life expectancy). It is the technical analysis, in addition to supply and distribution factors, that provides LT with long-term solutions by improving the product (reliability + ease of maintenance + long term source of supply + correct number of assets to meet requirements = aircraft availability).



1-6) Supply Chain External Partner Organizations:

ARINC
Lockheed Martin
Intergraph

1-7) Internal Partners and Organizations:

HQ AMC/LG
HQ AFRC/LG
Air National Guard Readiness Center
WR-ALC/LT

1-8) POC Information for each Supply Chain Partner:

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Section 2: IMPLEMENTATION

2-1) Explain why the supply chain initiative was undertaken and how it was selected.

The Creeper Index was undertaken because the directorate wanted a predictive supply chain management tool to forecast critical item availability before it impacted weapon system mission capability rates. An IPT was developed to design a process using supportability factors, such as Mission InCapable (MICAP), Readiness Spares Packages (RSP), YBQ backorders, or nongrounding aircraft components that are potential MICAPs, and Requisition Objective (RO). This program was selected because of the proactive approach to supply chain management. It allows us to identify top drivers and future drivers so that we can use implementation processes to improve customer support. The key to this process is not necessarily the rank of a particular item on a given day, it is the amount of change or delta of the rank over a period of time. With this information, our supply chain managers are able to ensure logistics issues are resolved before aircraft availability is affected.

Experience in managing both the C-5 and C-141 aging fleets, coupled with increasing failures of components and increasing issues of parts availability, generated the need to develop a new strategy in how we managed the technical issues of ensuring the warfighter had these aircraft mission ready. The old paradigm of "fly until it fails" was not working. MC rates started to fall, MICAPs were increased, CANNS were increasing and as components aged, new issues in reliability and maintainability surfaced. AFIRM (Aging Fleet Integrity & Reliability Management) is WR-ALC/LT's answer to managing this aspect of our supply chain.

2-2) Indicate the duration of the project. Note if the project was a pilot that is being rolled out. Note if the project is ongoing/still in progress.

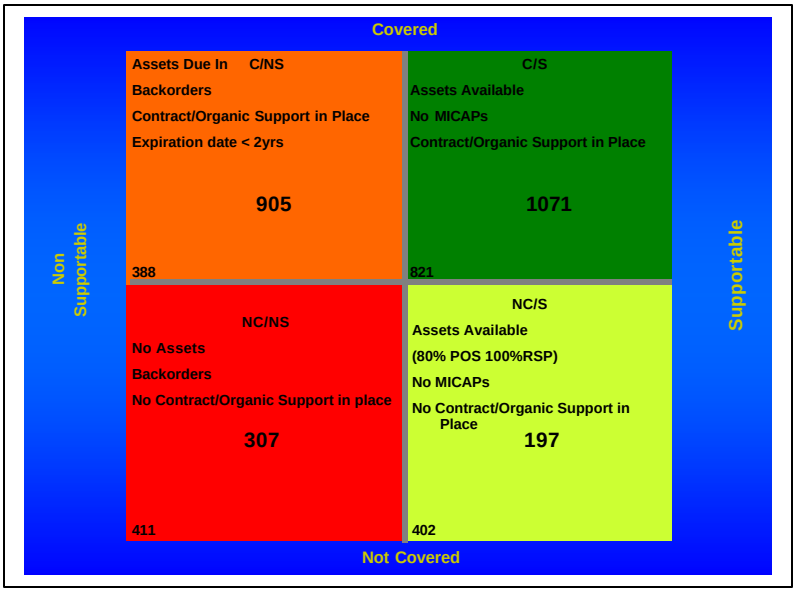
The Creeper Index was initiated in June 2003. It is ongoing with an expected full implementation date of April 2004. We are currently undergoing beta testing with Strat Air's management team reviewing it continuously to validate the process. Meanwhile, item managers use the data from the Creeper Index to resolve issues to ensure the item stops its upward track.

AFIRM, with its subcomponents Functional Systems Integrity Program (FSIP) and the proven Air Force Aircraft Structural Integrity Program (ASIP), had its genesis in efforts of C-141 SPO engineering division prior to the reorganization. After the reorganization LT created a new Reliability and Maintainability branch tasked with maturing and expanding this concept to include all C-5 Mission Design Series (MDS) as well as all C-141 MDS, eventually incorporating the C-17 MDS. AFIRM is an ongoing and viable process that is enhancing our new supply chain and producing results in both aircraft and aircraft component reliability increases and maintainability improvement. We anticipate that next year we shall have a better sight picture with our operational and financial metrics.

2-3) Describe in detail the process used to complete the evaluation:

Once the Director and Deputy Director met with key personnel on the Creeper Index and defined the goal of the program, the members of the team worked on definitions, weighted formulas, and incorporating other systems into the web tool.

There are basically two processes to the Creeper Index. The first process is defining the supportability and coverability of each national stock number (NSN). A supportable NSN is defined as having enough serviceable assets to support the quarterly demand rate (QDR). The NSN must have no MICAPs, have enough carcasses to support the requirement, and must have 100% fill rate on the requisition objective (RO) assets, which includes Readiness Spares Packages (RSP). In addition, the number of serviceable assets divided by QDR must be greater than or equal to one, and one asset should be on the shelf at all times. A covered NSN is defined as having a buy or repair source in place that if not on Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract or driven through EXPRESS, must either meet or exceed the QDR. The item is considered "covered" if it is EXPRESS driven or is covered on IDIQ contract. Each item falls into one of four categories: supportable and covered, covered and not supportable, not covered and supportable, or not covered and not supportable. In this process, a covered and supportable item is the goal. The second process consists of the ranking of the items, which is based on a weighted formula.



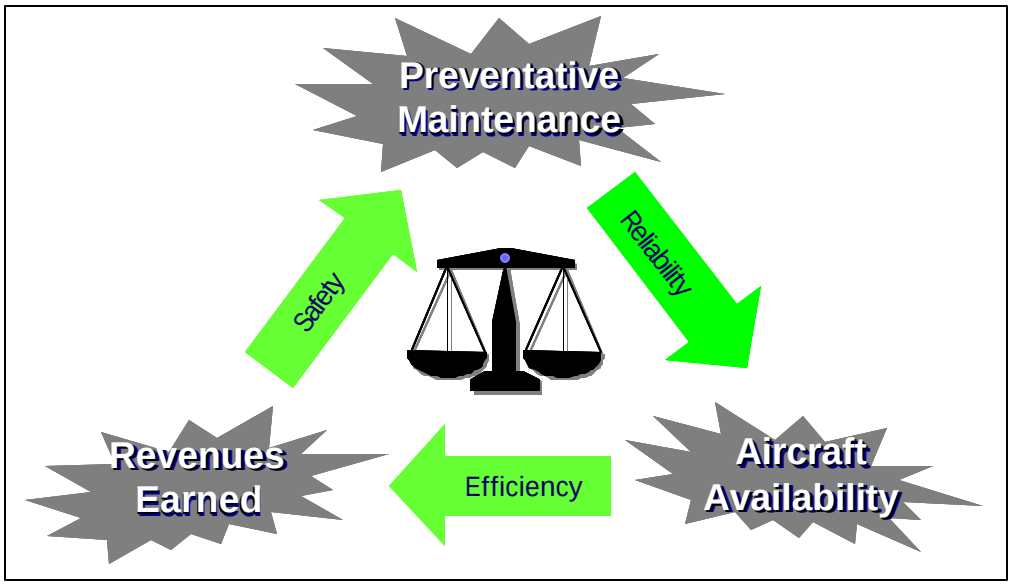
An item is considered a creeper if the rank of the item, compared to other Strat Air managed items, increases over time. In simple terms, the items with the highest deltas, or amount of change, over a period of time are creepers. The formula used to compute rank consists of Mission Capable (MICAP) weighted, Readiness Spares Packages (RSP) weighted, Sustainability Assessment Module (SAM) weighted, RO weighted. The SAM factor, which looks at sustaining war for 30 days and is based on wartime flying hours, is soon going to be replaced by YBQ backorders, or backorders that are potential MICAPs.

The primary source of information used in the web tool comes from System Management Analysis Reporting Tool (SMART). Once the Creeper index is matured, the next phase is to also incorporate contract data from J041.

AFIRM is a total integration concept for managing our aging aircraft. It is comprised of two programs. The first program is the Aircraft Structural Integrity Program (ASIP), which is a well known and proven Air Force process that is designed to increase fleet reliability, safety, and mission readiness, and manage the reduction of economic costs of the aircraft. These objectives are accomplished through the use of Individual Aircraft Tracking (IAT), Force Structural Maintenance Plan (FSMP) and Loads Environment Spectra Survey (LESS). The other aspect of AFIRM is the Functional System Integrity Program (FSIP) developed originally by the C-141 SPO and incorporated by the WR-ALC/LT Reliability and Maintainability branch. FSIP seeks to increase Strat Air's fleet reliability, safety, and mission readiness through an aggressive Preventive Maintenance Program as opposed to the traditional "Fly-to Fail". FSIP uses time change during aircraft scheduled maintenance to remove and replace components and parts identified through data collection and predictive algorithms. This process helps to reduce, and eventually eliminate unscheduled aircraft downtime.

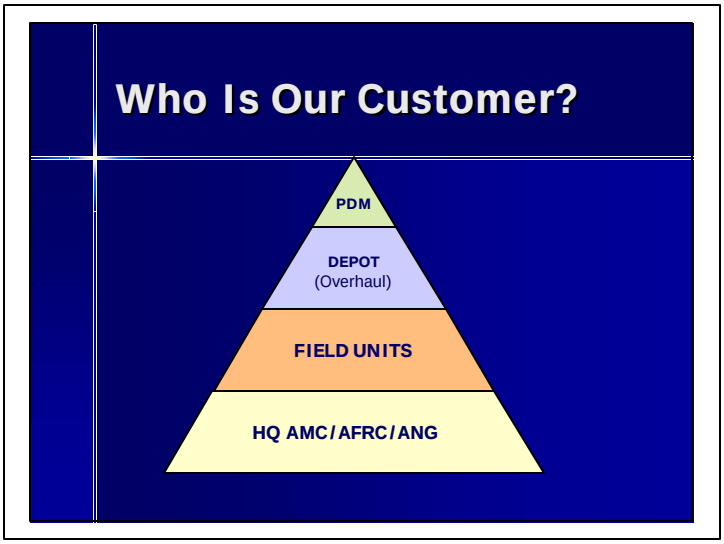
ASIP + FSIP = AFIRM

Since the ASIP program is a proven Air Force Program, we will not go in-depth to describe this program's mechanisms and processes. The focus will be on FSIP. FSIP does not replace any program in place today—FSIP, MECSIP, and MSG 3, acting in synergy, is the avenue we have chosen to achieve our objectives. FSIP strives for two types of reliability-- aircraft and component.



Using FSIP concepts will ensure efficient fleet management by reducing cost while improving safety and aircraft availability. For example: C-141 Loses $18,188 Transportation Working Capital Fund (TWCF) revenue each day it is grounded. By using a "Time Change Interval" for critical items, we not only avoid losing TWCF revenue, but also generate savings in reduction of en route failures (strategic airlifters fly worldwide and are not always at a facility that can support their maintenance). FSIP efficiently uses manpower (Fewer Maintenance Review Teams), improves depot scheduling (personnel and parts), and reduces MICAP actions.

FSIP has several processes and mechanisms to gather and analyze data and project needed component removals. First, we need to identify our "customer" base. Our customers are the source of the raw data that we process in FSIP.



The data that FSIP uses consists of "Component Vitals"; Date of Manufacture, Cage Code, P/N, FSN, Serial Number, IM, ES, PM, Engineer, Technical Data, Overhaul Facility. Once in the system, FSIP begins to monitor the component for the following indicators: Low mean time between failure (MTBF) trending, MICAPS, PDM Line/202s (engineering requests), base shops reports, ISO Inspection reports, en-route failures, and mission aborts. FSIP analysts review data from the Air Force Product Quality Deficiency System and items identified as "bad actors." "Bad actors" are unreliable components that continually cycle through the supply system and drive MTBF downward. "Bad actors" can be identified by serially tracking components. There is a mechanism for any field level or PDM maintenance technician to report components via a web based bulletin board.

Data gathering and analysis are continuous processes. G081 (CAMS) Low MTBF: G081 data is collected and analyzed for low MTBF. Our program will keep this data indefinitely and will provide a one year, two year, three year or longer database. We assign each component a Mean Acceptable Performance (MAP) level based on the MTBF and use the MAP for Alerts. We monitor MICAPS by Work Unit Code (WUC), an aircraft systems/components alpha numeric designator. If one component has had an excessively high MICAP rate against it, we will investigate. FSIP engineers contact the technicians working the PDM line through personal visits. If a component is causing them a delay or excessive down time, we will investigate and initiate a performance improvement project for that component. We communicate with the base shops through the use of WEB Based Bulletin Boards. They inform us of daily problems and assist in locating components hurting the aircraft's reliability. We capture all data entered in the G081 system for each isochronal inspection and consolidate this information. We then develop a top 20 listing for the entire fleet and begin working the problem areas. When a WUC is constantly charged against the aborts, we investigate and determine a course of action to eliminate or minimize failures.

The WR-ALC/LT's technical staff and the user select part numbers or work unit codes (WUC) for Bad Actor management. The Product Working Improvement Group (PWIG) is the forum where the field and depot identify part numbers or WUCs for Bad Actor management.

No method of finding the problem is ranked higher than the other. Each one has to be actively pursued. Most cases involving a problem will show two or more areas with defects

Under FSIP we classify the components into four categories to ensure our attention is directed to the most important components to best utilize our limited personnel and funding resources.

1) Safety Critical: Failure would cause loss of the aircraft, injury to personnel, or extensive damage to critical equipment. Normally we would redesign this part if possible.

2) Mission Critical: Failure would:

a) prohibit the execution of a critical mission, or

b) significantly reduce the operational mission capability or

c) significantly increase the system vulnerability during a critical mission. Most items we monitor will be in this category.

3) Durability Critical Controlling Devices: Failure would result in major economic impact on the system requiring costly maintenance. Durability critical controlling devices are devices that control the MSI components and are divided into two categories:

a) Legacy—wires, circuit breakers, racks, and engine indicators, and:

b) Interfacing—torque tubes, quadrants, pulleys, ducting etc

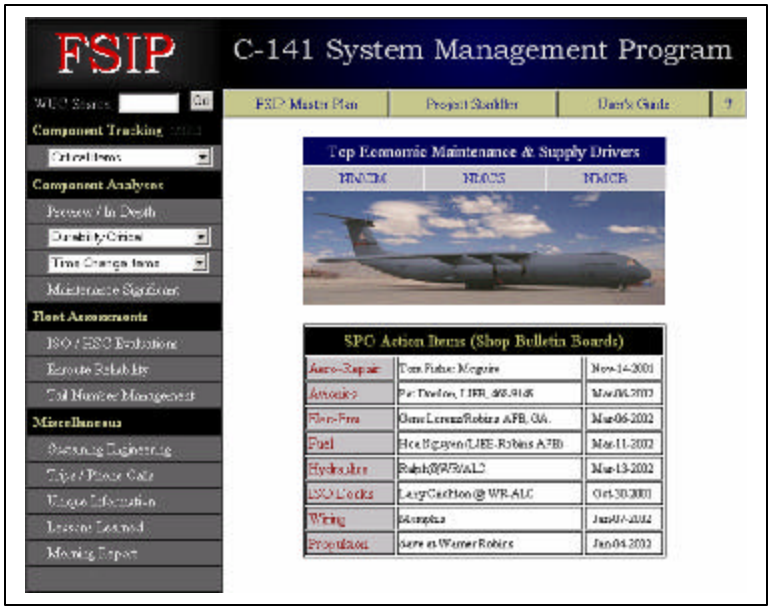
4) Other/Expendable– Components not requiring special attention

Preview analyses are performed on components that have not met their expected in-service life. This is just a paper search of the component to find management type problems. We must determine if the failure is a functional failure or potential failure. Potential failures must have a cost effectiveness analysis performed also.

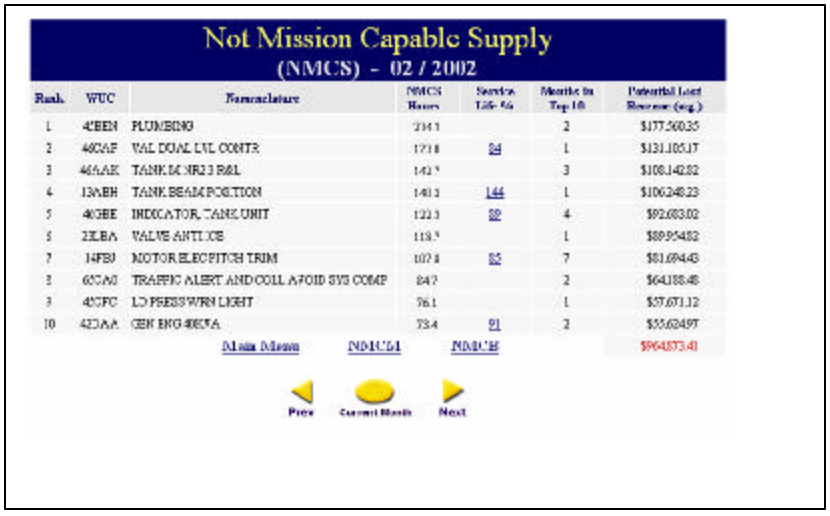
In-depth analyses are performed if the preview fails to identify the problem. This may include full tear down of the component or monitoring the overhaul procedures. Overhaul analyses consist of an IPT reviewing the Bill of Material (BOM) to recommend new items to replace, ensuring availability of the parts, ensuring the test equipment is operational, and putting a process in place to procure parts for the component or test equipment that is not available. We normally set up IPT teams to perform these tasks.

With an aging fleet, obsolete parts and components are constantly identified. FSIP personnel form an IPT to investigate and recommend a course of action to reprocure a form, fit, function substitute component. This IPT consist of a responsible engineer, an equipment specialist, the item manager and program manager or logisitics management specialist.

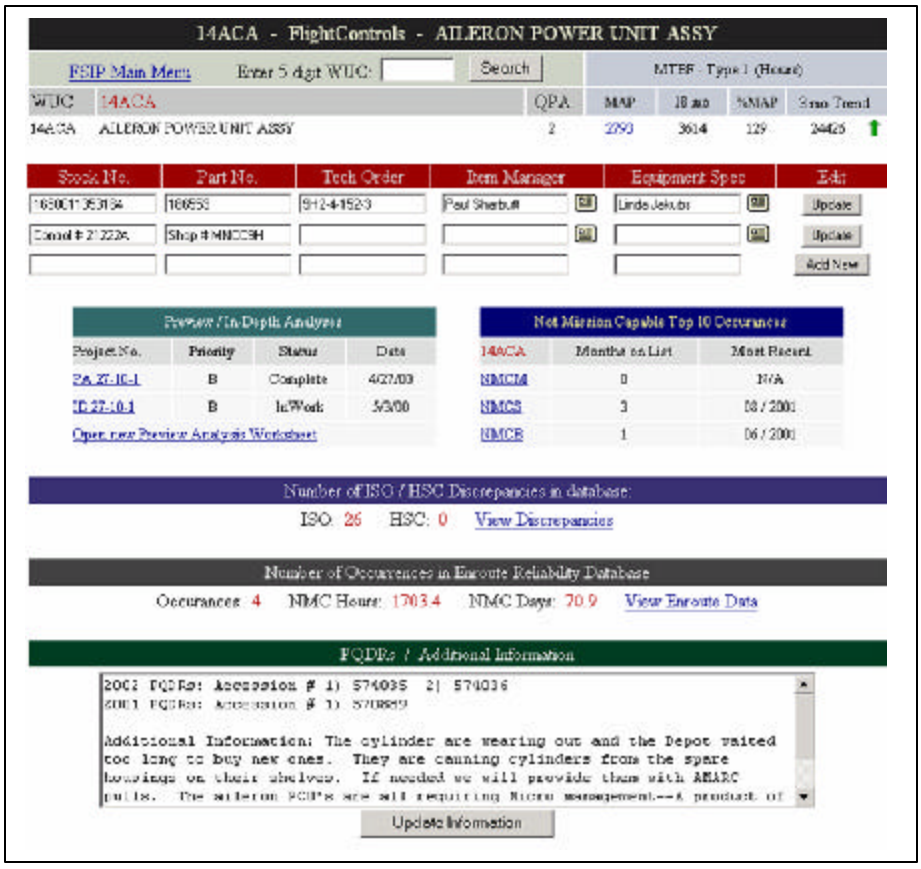
FSIP WEBSITE:
Everything associated with FSIP is combined in one place, a website at https://c141.robins.af.mil/fsip. This website provides a user-friendly interface to GO81 data and displays monthly list of NMC, AMARC, and ISO items. Several bulletin boards provide link between bases and engineering.



The System Management Program Home Page is the one place where you can see all the different aspects of the program. The center piece appears to be the shop bulletin board, and from a communication perspective it is. This is where we can view user's questions or concerns. We can see if there were any new postings from this view. When a posting is entered, the date will turn blue indicating it was posted today. The view for the user is slightly different, and they also have the option to ask a more private question by submitting an on-line engineering request, that will be answered by e-mail directly to the person asking the question.



This page displays the NMC information for the month indicated. The number of (Not Mission Capable) NMC hours, MAP, months in the Top 10, and the potential lost revenue average, based on the TWCF.

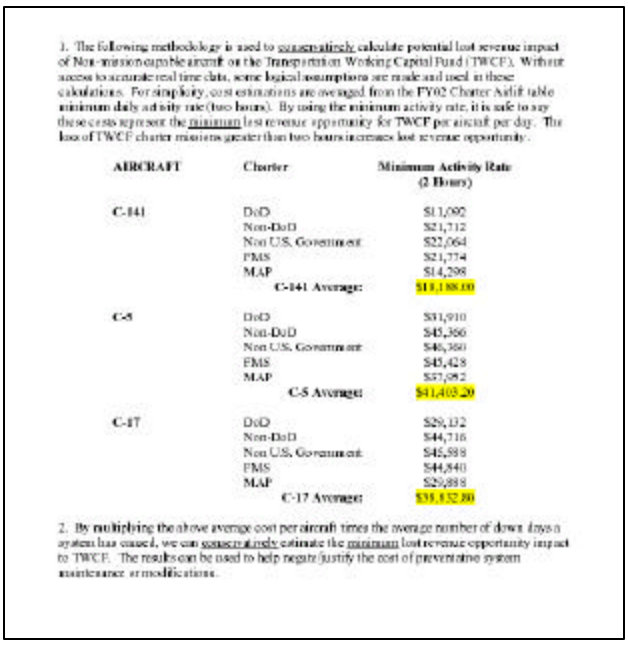


The top line gives us the WUC, Nomenclature, Quantity/Airplane, MTBF-1 information. MAP is the Minimum Acceptable Performance. This is a target MTBF-1 that will give us an alert. We can adjust this number higher or lower as the reliability changes. For example, if the MAP is 129%, then we may consider increasing the map, as the reliability has improved, either by improved technology or improved repair processes. The 18 month data is a continuous update of G081 MTBF-1 data. It is directly input into the database from G081. The percent MAP is the 18 month number divided by the MAP. When it is less than 80 percent, an automatic alert to a possible problem is generated. The three month trend is the preceding three month MTBF-1 average from G081. It is just an indicator of the current trend. A quick reference is the arrow to the right, green (up) or red (down).

The next area identifies the NSN, part number, tech order, item manager, and equipment specialist for the part. Below that is the Preview and In-depth Analysis area. Any analysis that has been done will be listed in this area. The Project Number is a hyperlink to the actual analysis.
To the right is the NMC Occurrences listing. To the right of the NMC area is the number of times it was on the Top 10 List. Clicking on the hyperlink will take you to the NMC listing of its last occurrence.

The next area is the Home Station Check (HSC)/ISOchronal Inspection (ISO) area, which is a database of all the discrepancies entered into G081 during the HSC and ISO. Click on the View Discrepancies hyperlink, and all the HSC/ISO write-ups for that WUC is displayed. The en-route data displays the number of NMC hours and days that the WUC has sustained at en-route stations. To view the en-route write-ups for that WUC, select the View En-route Data hyperlink.

The Product Quality Deficiency Report (PQDR) section identifies the PQDR Accession numbers, listed by year. Additional information is also entered in this area, such as possible directions to take to improve reliability.

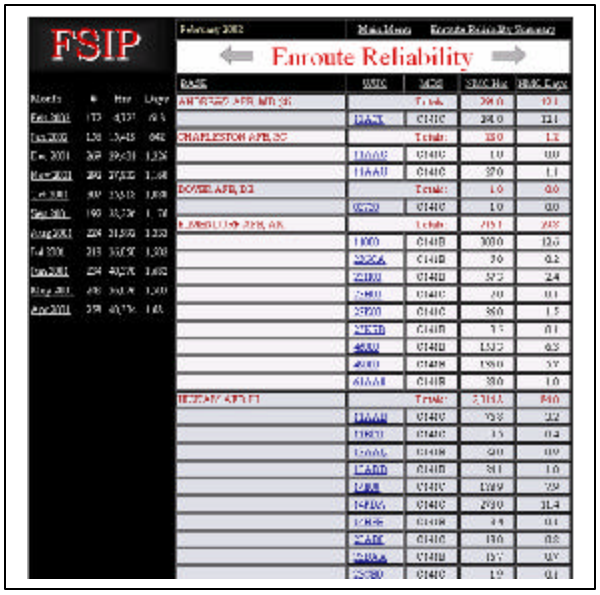


1. The following methodology is used to conservatively calculate potential lost revenue impact of Non-mission capable aircraft on the Transportation Working Capital Fund (TWCF). Without access to accurate real time data, some logical assumptions are made and used in these calculations. For simplicity, cost estimations are averaged from the FY02 Charter Airlift table minimum daily activity rate (two hours). By using the minimum activity rate, it is safe to say these costs represent the minimum lost revenue opportunity for TWCF per aircraft per day. The loss of TWCF charter missions greater than two hours increases lost revenue opportunity.

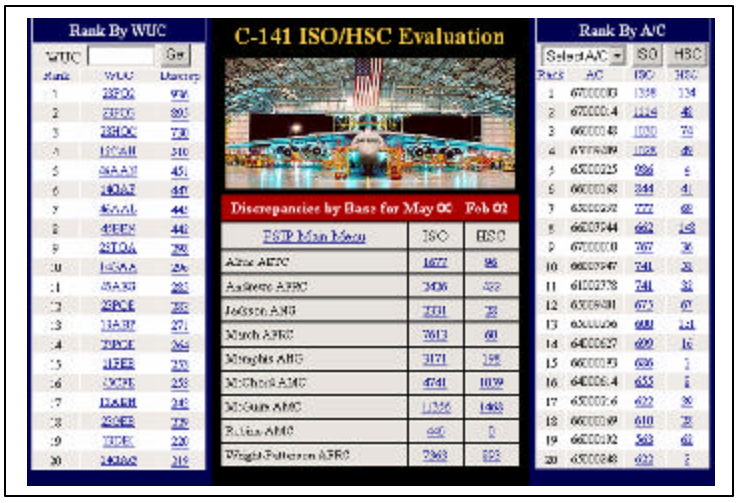
AIRCRAFT	Charter	Minimum Activity Rate (2 Hours)
C-141	DoD	$11,092
	Non-DoD	$21,712
	Non U.S. Government	$22,064
	FMS	$21,774
	MAP	$14,298
	C-141 Average:	$18,188.00
C-5	DoD	$31,910
	Non-DoD	$45,366
	Non U.S. Government	$46,360
	FMS	$45,428
	MAP	$27,092
	C-5 Average:	$41,403.20
C-17	DoD	$29,132
	Non-DoD	$44,716
	Non U.S. Government	$45,888
	FMS	$44,840
	MAP	$29,888
	C-17 Average:	$35,532.80

2. By multiplying the above average cost per aircraft times the average number of down days a system has caused, we can conservatively estimate the minimum lost revenue opportunity impact to TWCF. The results can be used to help negate/justify the cost of preventative system maintenance or modifications.

We used the minimum daily activity rate (two hours), multiplied by the number of NMC hours, to come up with the lost revenue. If the mission loss was greater than two hours, the lost revenue would be greater.



This page is found by selecting the heading for the column, base, WUC, MDS, NMC hours, or NMC Days. The following listing displays the data for en-route maintenance performed at the bases listed, for that WUC. The left side of the page provides the totals for the preceding months. The total number of NMC incidents, hours and equivalent days. Clicking on the WUC hyperlink will take you back to the WUC Data page we started from.



The information is listed by WUC, base, and airplane. Clicking on the hyperlinks will take you to more detailed data. By clicking on the Discrep hyperlink, a list of all the write-ups for the WUC will appear. Clicking on the WUC will take you to the page that has very detailed information about the WUC. If you click on the ISO or HSC number to the right of the base, will you will see the list of the airplanes in the database for that base, choosing a particular tail number will produce a list with all the write-ups for the ISO or HSC. The column on the right lists the ISO/HSC write-ups ranked by the airplane with the highest ISO and HSC total. To display the information for a particular airplane, select the airplane from the drop-down menu, or if it is one of the Top 20, select the ISO or HSC hyperlink number.

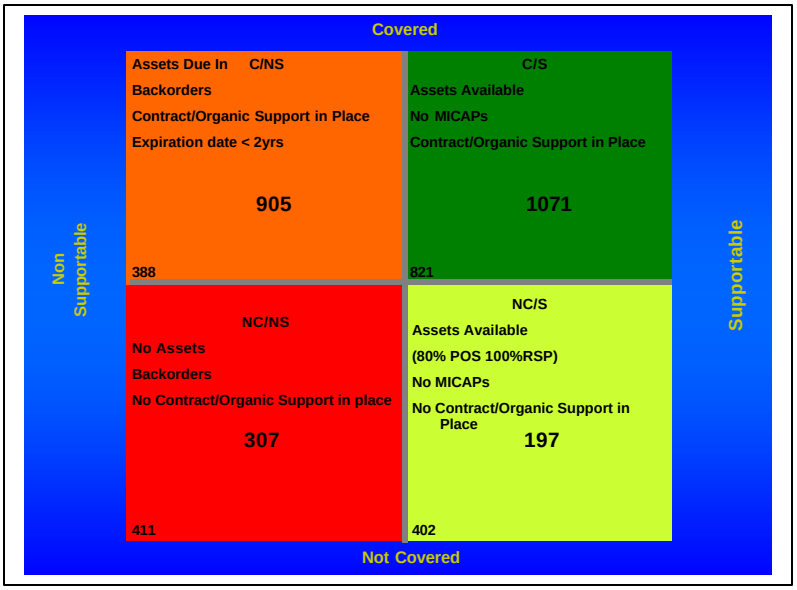
2-4) Identify significant challenges encountered, the process for resolution, and the solutions. Identify any best practices employed or developed.

The biggest challenges encountered are automating the Creeper Index. As management molds the factors used in computing the top drivers and creepers, changes are made to the system everyday. The contractor, computer programmer, and Logistics Management Specialist work together to incorporate the best contributing factors to the creepers.

2-5) Identify the metrics used to measure progress and success.

For the Creeper Index we captured the number of items in each of the quadrants (covered/not supportable, covered/supportable, not covered/not supportable, and not covered/supportable). The lower left hand corner of each quadrant represents the number of NSNs that were in each category when the program started in June 03. The larger number in the center of each quadrant

represents the most recent figures. As you can see, there have been improvements in each category.



AFIRM's metrics are related to aircraft availability and mission capable rates, which are influenced by several factors not related to AFIRM's focus. However, since initiating AFIRM, the C-141 fleet has performed well in these Metrics.

2-6) Document and quantify cost and performance benefits, including the project's return on investment and changes in the value of one or more of the SCOR Level 1 metrics.

The Creeper Index promotes cost avoidance rather than cost savings. Direct results of the program include fewer urgent requirements, unpriced orders, and accelerated delivery requests.

These initiatives have already produced two concrete results:

- Successfully eliminated need for dedicated C-5 Cann aircraft at Travis AFB, assuring the availability of one more aircraft for warfighter use.

- Reduced MICAP hours from over one million to below 250 thousand

2-7) Outline how the success of the organization supports the organizations objectives described in Section 1, Item 3.

Our organization is working as a team to deliver global reach capabilities that exceed the warfighter's expectations through the Creeper Index. It has taken the teamwork of key personnel to initiate and implement the program to a successful one. With the identification of the creepers, the focus is placed on developing supply chain processes like planning, procurement,

repair, and delivery to ensure that the requirements of the customer are planned for and executed to the customer's satisfaction.

The efforts of the Strat Air SPO has resulted in decreased cannibalization (CANN) rates, decreased shop flow days, and decreased open MICAP hours and incidents. The CANN rate decreased from 28.9 per 100 sorties in FY 02 to 22.0 per 100 sorties in FY 03. There was a reduction in the average shop flow days, from 280 in 2002 to 268 in 2003. There were 269,827 open MICAP hours and 1,894 incidents at the beginning of 2003, and by the end of 2003, our open MICAP hours reduced to 207,939 and 1,171 incidents. PDM, with the help of the Strat Air SPO, was able to produce 23 aircraft through PDM in 2003 for the first time ever. In previous years, only 17 were accomplished. In addition, our April 03 Mission Capable (MC) rate was 70.7 percent, the highest it has been since DESERT STORM. We also eliminated the cannibalization (CANN) bird at Travis Air Force Base through the combined efforts of HQ USAF, AFMC, DLA, Travis maintainers, Logistic Readiness Squadron (LRS) personnel, HQ AMC weapon system managers, the AMC Regional Supply Squadron (RSS), and WR-ALC personnel.

SECTION 3: KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

3-1) Describe the efforts to share lessons from this effort with other internal organizations.

The F-15 SPO at WR-ALC has developed an interest in the Creeper Index. Top level management has discussed the benefits, and our organization is currently working with personnel in the F-15 SPO to start their own internal Creeper Index. It has also been briefed to HQ/AMC.

AFIRM has been briefed at HQ AMC and to the C-130 System Program Office.

3-2) Explain how this initiative can be transferred to other organizations and specify the likely candidates for transference.

Other ALCs and PDs would be good candidates for the Creeper Index. It is a good management tool for viewing items that may become a problem in advance. The Creeper index can be adapted to any weapon system or product group.

The FSIP website framework can easily be converted to meet the needs of most Air Force aircraft. The organization would have to change to model the WR-ALC/LT framework in order for the process to work.