

Contracting squadron enters into new millennium paperless

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437 AW Public Affairs

Fifty file cabinets have disappeared from the 437th Contracting Squadron, but it's nothing to worry about. The cabinets were used to store foot and half-thick contracts and other key documents that have been replaced by a new "paperless" procurement system.

The Standard Procurement System is more than just a database, it's a new way of processing purchase orders, requests for proposals and contracts because it eliminates all paper document processing.

The system, installed by American Management System of Fairfax, Va., Dec. 6-10, allows contracting officials to save time and money since everything is now as close as their keyboard. AMS was awarded a 10-year contract to install the system and conduct training throughout DoD.

The easy to use desktop interface is similar

to Microsoft Windows Explorer, but adds customized pull-down menus. The system interfaces with the Automated Base Supply System, Defense Finance Accounting System and the 437th Comptroller Squadron computer systems. Charleston leads AMC as the second base to move to this new system.

"The system is modeled after private industry and corporate offices," said Jeannine Kinder, an AMC contract analyst in the Contracting Knowledge Management Directorate at Scott AFB, Ill. She said SPS takes advantage of servers, the web and desktop computers to distribute information.

"It's not just the savings in paper, but in being able to electronically talk and link with the customers on base, finance and in the very near future, the vendor," Kinder said.

The new system will allow the contracting specialist to use a smart card for initiating a contracting action instead of having to sign a paper document. Despite making everything

much more accessible, SPS is a tool and doesn't negate the need for the contracting specialists.

A pre-load team of contract specialists worked day and night to bring the new system on line, which she described as no easy feat. The pre-load team loaded all of the information from an existing database into the SPS.

"It was the process of taking the data from an old computer system, extracting that data and sending it off to AMS where they put it in a format that could be read by the new software. AMS installed both SPS and interface software. We then produced a live award to insure everything worked properly," said Betty Smith, a procurement analyst in the 437th Contracting Squadron.

The pre-load team consisted of Kathy Edenborough, Libby Billham, Anna Nix, Theresa Brutsch and Smith. System administrators on the project were William Bragg and Staff Sgt. Ray Alls. Vita Williams was the

expert that ensured the interface from the ABSS to SPS worked properly.

"One thing I see with this base that has made implementation so successful has been the team approach they use. They pull together, help each other out, and solve problems together," said Kinder.

The Contracting Squadron had to shut down for two weeks to transfer data and files into the new system. Fifty six formal contracts, 400 purchase or delivery orders, 38 Blanket Purchase Agreements and utility contracts had to be entered into the new system.

Although the software was installed Dec. 6 and the first purchase order was awarded on Dec. 10, it wasn't a simple process to get SPS on line.

"We worked months in preparation for this. We had to get old data prepared and turned into new data. We had to get trained and manually load all those old contracts. It was a huge undertaking," Smith said.

Charleston members donate time, bikes to worthy cause

By Tech. Sgt. Dan Murphy
437 AW Public Affairs

Members of Team Charleston made Christmas a little brighter for 36 children from the Jenkins Orphanage in North Charleston. The 373rd Field Training Detachment and AAI/Engineering Support Inc., a civilian contractor from Summerville, who work together on the C-17 Simulator, presented the 36 children with bicycles, helmets and \$500 worth of accessories at a party in their honor Wednesday.

Originally, only 18 bikes were bought for needy children. "Dom Uzzo, our senior engineering technician, was at Wal-Mart the day after Thanksgiving to purchase the bikes," said Tim Wall, a systems engineer at AAI/ESI.

"Dom has been the driving force behind the project," said Donna Cook, logistics administrator for AAI/ESI. "When he returned from buying the bikes we contacted Jenkins about donating them to the children. It was at this time we realized they had 36 children not 18. We sent out an e-mail to our employees and the FTD and within one hour the money came rolling in and we had enough to buy another 18."

"Everybody was willing to pitch in where needed," said Staff Sgt. James Hamm, 373 FTD hydraulics subject matter expert. "We have a great relationship between us and AAI/ESI."

"This is the closest relationship we have had in 15 years," echoed Cook.

That relationship was not lost by the AAI/ESI corporate level. "They donated enough money to

purchase padlocks and water bottles for all the bikes," said Cook.

To complete the ensemble, bike helmets would be needed, so AAI/ESI contacted the Palmetto Cycling Coalition of South Carolina and its president, John Kirby. Kirby immediately made arrangements to send 36 helmets worth \$1,260 for the cause.

His organization promotes the advancement of bicycling access, safety and education in South Carolina.

"The response has been overwhelming," said Wall. "These children are out there and need help. We want anyone willing to help, to step up."

The bikes have brightened a normally sedate time of the year at Jenkins Orphanage said officials from the orphanage.

"This has put sunshine into the children's life where normally they have clouds," said Maurice Johnson, executive director at Jenkins Orphanage. "The Air Force has been here before and they are here again with AAI/ESI."

"We'll deliver the bikes and accessories to the orphanage after the party is over," said Uzzo. "In January, we'll visit the children and make any necessary adjustments to the bikes."

The feeling of giving to these needy children may have changed the way the 373 FTD personnel and the 200 AAI/ESI employees look at giving, said Wall. "In discussions we've had since the purchase of the bikes, we've decided to support this and other areas through out the year and that makes me feel really good about the people I work with."



Down to the wire

Airman 1st Class Sean Gosnell, 437th Communications Squadron, checks a circuit while troubleshooting a TRAC - 187 signal time set. Gosnell was recently selected for promotion to Senior Airman below the Zone.

Senior Airman Corey Clemments

C-17

continued from page 1

original 39 aircraft.

Retrofits were to be completed December 2000 and 17 aircraft had already received the re-work. However, this summer Air Mobility Command and the C-17 SPO decided to accelerate this program.

The one ground rule was to avoid impacting current production requirements. BF Goodrich, as the overall landing gear subcontractor for the aircraft, and Eagle Tool, who is responsible for machining all trunnion collars, developed a process plan that expedited re-work parts through their shops without impacting their current production

runs.

The first step in the re-work process was for Eagle Tool to machine the trunnion collars. These were then delivered to BF Goodrich, where the remaining process and assembly work was completed. Eagle Tool revamped their work-in-process flow, eliminating potential conflicts between production and re-work efforts.

Two retrofit "speed lines" were set up by Boeing to remove and replace the trunnion collars on the affected aircraft—one at the Boeing Aerospace Support Center in San Antonio, and one at Boeing's factory in Long Beach, Calif. Installation on each aircraft, originally planned to require seven days, took

only three days to complete.

The retrofitting caused no setbacks in Charleston AFB operations, said Col. Ron Richardson, 437th Operations Group commander.

"All C-17 aircrews welcome this news about an accelerated effort to install re-designed main landing gear trunnion collars," Richardson said. "We haven't been under any operational restrictions because of past trunnion collar problems, but it's been a cloud over the otherwise outstanding record of the Globemaster III. We have tremendous confidence in the aircraft's ability to perform in any peacetime or contingency environment—this retrofit just makes us that much more confident."