

## Traceable MRO inventory for British Airways Maintenance Efficiency Drive

British Airways Maintenance at Cardiff (BAMC) has seen a significant cost reduction in its maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) stock and has had no stock outs following the installation of a Cribmaster inventory management system from BuckHickman InOne.

Introduced by BAMC as part of an efficiency drive for servicing Boeing 747s and 777s, Cribmaster provides visibility for all MRO stock – thousands of different items. BAMC now services over 100 aircraft a year, up from 76 the previous year.

First proposed as part of a continuous improvement initiative, the system builds upon Buck & Hickman barcode driven consignment stock management solution. The new system enables BAMC to drive efficiency savings through full control and traceability of all stock transactions and enjoy the benefits of a vendor managed inventory solution including, consigned stock, electronic ordering, automatic replenishment, single monthly invoicing and proactive stock management.

It is the first time that a dedicated online inventory management system has been deployed in the UK. Hosted over a secure internet connection, the online deployment eliminated the cost and complexity normally associated with implementing such systems within a large blue chip organisation.

Phase two in the system's development will involve the stores management team using the data collected from the Cribmaster software to construct project related toolkits and deliver them directly to the aircraft bay. This will eliminate walk and wait time to and from the central stores and ensure that all the items needed for a maintenance job are readily available.

Currently when an engineer requires an item from stores a hand held radio frequency reader scans three barcodes to collect data. The first barcode is scanned from the person's identity badge, the second identifies the product being taken and finally the third identifies the project or aircraft maintenance bay.

This information is uploaded to Cribmaster in real time. The system records all transaction data, updates inventory levels and calculates reordering needs. When an item runs low or hits its reorder level the system generates a demand notification, which is then reviewed, approved and sent electronically to BuckHickman InOne. Reports produced by the system allow BAMC managers to analyse product usage by person, team and maintenance bay over a period of time or by aircraft.

The same procedure checks non-expendable items back into stores. This ensures that nothing has been left on or in any part of the aircraft before it is released, which is vital for safety.

Cribmaster also manages larger tooling, such as torque wrenches and power tools. The system keeps an audit trail of who used each tool and when and where. It also identifies and tracks which tools need reworking, replacing or calibrating.

By managing the stock more effectively, BAMC has already halved the amount of storage space needed for stocking MRO items. This allows the organisation to stock more aircraft spare parts.

The system currently controls all the stock supplied by Buck & Hickman, including consigned product, and is now being rolled out to include other BAMC suppliers. Cribmaster enables Buck & Hickman and other suppliers to receive stock alerts and replenishment orders electronically, eliminating the need for manual data entry and allowing the supplier to be proactive in responding to low stock situations.

Comments Phil Morgan, inventory and tooling group leader: "We have already seen significant efficiency savings. Using this solution from Buck & Hickman we can now see who is using what tools for each project. As a result people only take out items that they need rather than taking extra as their own spare stock.

"We are only in phase one of this efficiency drive. Being able to collect detailed critical stock and transaction data means that in the future we can plan exactly what stock is needed for maintenance programmes and deliver this to the engineer. This will save the maintenance engineers considerable time and enable BAMC to service more aircraft."

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