

TONY ROMERO PHOTO



“I-GOLD ensures applications are integrated and talking to one another.”

—Gary Bergeron, I-GOLD program manager

Rick Hampton, a Boeing Support Systems composite shop technician in San Antonio, documents discrepancies using I-GOLD and a tablet computer.

# GOLD-en days

## Lean tool redefines maintenance processes

By Ed MEMI

**I**-GOLD (Integrated Government On-Line Data), a business database planning tool, is one of the major Lean tools improving the aircraft maintenance overhaul business performed by IDS Support Systems.

The software tool enables teammates to track planned repair jobs as well as unexpected repair activity, called nonconformance activity, and provides a database that establishes a comprehensive audit trail.

On a typical KC-135 aircraft undergoing Program Depot Maintenance, Boeing may perform 3,300 different tasks and may do as many as 1,100 nonconformance repairs. A nonconformance repair is need-

ed when more work than usual or expected is required to restore the aircraft.

“In the old way of doing things, a mechanic would have to write up a parts order request associated with a task,” said Gary Bergeron, I-GOLD program manager. In I-GOLD, however, there is a scheduling application “that looks at the job and automatically orders the parts, based on trend analysis and task requirements, and determines when they need to be on the floor for the mechanics,” Bergeron said. “I-GOLD handles all timekeeping, scheduling activities, planning, inventory control, financial tracking, and job tasks and ensures applications are integrated and talking to one another.”

Bergeron said I-GOLD captures these activities to a database, and the time savings are huge in terms of eliminating paperwork.

“With I-GOLD, we are able to capture a

nonconformance issue, show it to the customer and get their approval to perform the work as an over-and-above condition and accordingly get paid additional funds,” he said.

“In the old paper world, we would have stacks of paper that had to be carted over to the records department, and they would sit down with the customer, who would have to concur with everything,” said Eric Cavenaux, I-GOLD subject-matter expert for the nonconformance module. “With I-GOLD, as each job is closed down by the mechanic or inspector, everything is archived, and the customer buys off on it immediately, so hours of records review are eliminated.”

I-GOLD has been in development for about six years, but it has only recently come together into an integrated product that can be used by everyone, including mechanics. ■

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