

Safety Record Earns a Free Lunch

The pace in the Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, California's (DDJC) Freight Terminal is usually fast and furious according to Freight Terminal manager Bob Mahan. It is the final stop at DDJC before the 24-hour on-time performance clock is shut off.

"Most of the 24-hour clock has been used up by the time we get the freight," noted Mahan. "We have to move fast to meet the carriers scheduling deadlines so the customer gets it on time."

The four teams that staff the freight terminal 24/7 care about the service they provide the warfighter and often make suggestions on how to improve the process.

While the production statistics have been good, the safety statistics showed room for improvement. In FY01 there were 14 injury mishaps, which did not cost any lost production time. These ranged from a forklift collision to a cut finger.

"Most were back injuries," pointed out Mahan. "Strains from bending and lifting." Additionally there were four lost time injuries. Several suggestions were implemented to reduce injuries.

"We changed traffic patterns," said Mahan. "We moved loading doors to alleviate congestion and monitored pedestrian traffic."

One of the suggestions to improve safety was to offer a reward. Mahan agreed that if the Freight Terminal could go 90 days without a lost time injury, he would buy lunch.

On April 4, Mahan and his supervisors were outside Warehouse 16 sweating over hot barbecue grills cooking enough chicken, hot links, spaghetti, baked potatoes, chili beans and rolls to feed 60 freight terminal teammates.

The freight terminal went 116 days without a lost time accident.

"It is worth it not having to send anyone to the hospital," admitted Mahan. "The team has really been trying."



Freight Terminal manager Bob Mahan, second from left, directs traffic as his teammates load their plates with BBQ Chicken, spaghetti, baked potatoes and chili beans. Shown from left are: Wayne Fernandez, Greg Lowder and Tracy Redman. Freight Terminal employees were rewarded with the free lunch as a result of going days without a lost time injury.

Direct Booking Improves Customer Service at DDJC

After using Direct Booking on ocean going container shipments for a little more than a year now, DDJC Lead Transportation Specialist, Rosemary Martinez, says it is the best thing that ever happened in the sea van business. And the part she and the other seven transportation assistants like the most, is that they have ownership of the whole process.

"We can do a lot more ourselves," said Martinez. "We can work it from beginning to end and do not have to rely on someone else."

Under the previous Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) system, the transportation process of booking a shipment via ship would take from two hours on a good day to two days. Using Direct Booking, the process takes only minutes.

Under the old process, the Consolidation and Containerization Point (CCP) would accumulate enough freight to fill a van for a customer. Once they had enough freight for a load, the transportation specialists in DDJC's Shipment Planning Branch would book space for the shipment through MTMC, not knowing which carrier or which sailing would be assigned.

"Now when the CCP tells us how many vans they need and the destination, we go to the carrier's web site and book space on the ship that will get it there the fastest," said Martinez.



Transportation Assistants Maxine Roland, left, and Filly Parker, use direct booking.

Through improved coordination between the booking office and the loading floor, the next scheduled sailing information is shared. The proper container can be spotted for loading to begin immediately, cutting days out of the process.

"It's fantastic," DDJC Transportation Division Chief Dennis Barnum, said of the Direct Booking process. "Now we can get into the carrier's system and find out when the next ship is sailing and book to that sailing date. This has enabled DDJC to lead the way in reducing Customer Wait Time (CWT) to our customers in the Pacific.

According to Martinez, Direct Booking has streamlined the whole system. "We like it because we have ownership of the process and the customer gets their freight sooner. The carrier likes it because their containers don't sit around here as long. From a bill paying perspective, it ties into Power Track, which means they get paid faster."