

The Tire Mission Inflates at DDRT

Defense Distribution Depot Red River, Texas (DDRT), has seen a marked increase in the receipt and issue of tires to support Army and Air Force customers worldwide. During 4th Quarter of Fiscal year (FY) 03, more than 126,000 tires were received and 112,000 shipped. For FY04 to date, receipts have exceeded 200,000 and shipments in excess of 90,000. Army business alone accounted for over 90% of the receipts and 85% of the issues; many of which are placed on 463L air pallets for direct movement to Southwest Asia and Afghanistan.

Now, a big part of the tire mission includes building complete wheel assemblies. In FY01, DDRT was contacted regarding a program to mount the tire and associated components on a rim, concluding with a completed tire/wheel assembly, ready to install. The pilot assembly was for the Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT). This requirement was driven by a Safety workorder. Several accidents occurred when attempting to mount HEMTT tires on the old style rims. DDRT designed, fabricated in part, and installed assembly process lines equipped with mounting machines. After the logistics of developing a shipment schedule, DDRT embarked upon a five-year assembly program that will extend beyond FY05.

There are many variants of the HEMTT including the M978 Tanker, M983 Tractor, M984 Wrecker, and M985 Cargo. The HEMTT family of vehicles is quite large and is the backbone of transporting fuel, ammunition and other cargo in the field. Initially, DDRT had one shift and one assembly line. This soon grew to two shifts and two lines to meet workload requirements. We currently have the capability to establish a third assembly line if and when the need arises to meet shipment schedules.

“In one week alone, DDRT shipped more than 1,000 HEMTT tire assemblies to U.S. Army customers,” said LTC Hugh

Talley, USA, Commander, DDRT. “Addressing the additional requirements and demand for tire assemblies, the employees of DDRT have risen to the challenge.”

Although assembly output has slowed because of tires being diverted to sustain the war effort, total program requirements will exceed 108,000 assemblies. The FY04 funded program quantity is planned at 31,000 with a possible increase depending upon asset availability.

In addition to the current HEMTT tire assembly workload at DDRT, assembly of the M1000 Heavy Equipment Transporter (HET) Semi-trailer tire assembly has begun. The HETS consists of the M1070 Truck Tractor and the M1000 Heavy Equipment Transporter Semi-trailer and is the primary mover for the M1A1 Abrams. The extreme weight of the Abrams mandates vehicle transportation by rail or a specifically designed trailer, such as the M1000, making this particular vehicle a critical asset in the Army’s inventory. To date 700 assemblies have been completed with another 900 planned as soon as assets become available. Efforts have also begun on an assembly for the M871 trailer. DDRT has assembled 200 to date with another 360 planned.

As the demand for various tire assemblies increase, DDRT is prepared and committed to provide the support when called upon. Recent discussions with U.S. Army Tank Automotive and Armament Command (TACOM) indicated plans are to move in the direction of stocking tire and wheel assemblies in the inventory for most tactical vehicles. By June 2004, TACOM plans to have the various NSNs assigned and assets on hand that will allow the Warfighter to requisition the complete assembly for “quick change,” providing the soldier a more effective, safer solution to breakdowns in the field.

DDOO Team “NOSE” What it Takes to Get the Job Done!

Recently, Minot Air Force Base received two B-52 nose radomes that were damaged during transportation from Tinker Air Force Base. Charles Stoneking, an employee of Defense Distribution Depot Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (DDOO) quickly investigated and realized that the crate specified in the Special Packaging Instruction (SPI) was outdated and offered little protection during transport.

To correct the problem and eliminate it from happening again, Stoneking put together a team of his co-workers, Harold Geurin, Larry Dalton, and Royce Stinnett, who worked closely with the box factory to plan and construct a new style of crate that focused on stability yet gave the radome “wobble-room.”

The team reconfigured several areas, reinforced the entire structure, and redesigned critical support locations providing the necessary protection the nose radome demands. The Air Force SPI authority approved the crate the first time through

inspection and the first three nose radomes packed in the new crates were received at Minot AFB without damage.

This is a testimony to the teamwork dedication, expertise and workmanship of the DDOO team!



From left to right: *Larry Dalton, Harold Geurin, Royce Stinnett, Charles Stoneking.*