



Success Story: International Component Repair

Aerospace Repair Manufacturer Prepares for a More Efficient Process

In late 2001, Wayne Dewell, a retired airline mechanic and manager with 31 years of experience working on commercial airliners, started International Component Repair (ICR), an FAA repair shop specializing in the overhaul of commercial aerospace airframes and engine components. Recently, ICR, out of Villa Rica, GA, partnered with IHI of Japan, expanding their operations in a Joint Venture that included an additional FAA Repair Station. They partnered with a Japanese manufacturer to become the sole North American provider of repairs for the V2500 Engine Fuel Diverter & Return Valve that cools airplane engine oil at cruising altitude.

Situation

ICR rents 21,000 square feet of a 300,000 square foot facility, which needs to be extremely secure due to the components within their shop. To further improve security and allow room for growth, Dewell purchased a 41,000 square foot facility, which he plans to move ICR into in the near future.



By bringing in the GaMEP, ICR is:

- *Better prepared for their move to a larger facility.*
- *Able to eliminate a cell operation, creating a single-flow production process.*
- *Creating the opportunity to become at least ten percent more efficient to create room for their latest product line and future growth.*

ICR has the capability to work on more than 4,000 unique parts, each with different repair requirements. In any given month, they are averaging 100 to 250 different parts flowing through their shop, resulting in “on-demand” repair and many one-off repairs.

As parts come into the facility, they are divided into one of three cells, based on need. Cell one, or “front shop”, consists of receiving, welding, inspection, and shipping. Cell two is for non-destructive testing, where they are able to find even the minutest cracks in a component through various testing procedures including, pressure testing and fluorescent magnetic testing. Cell three is where QEC (Quick Engine Change) kitting occurs. Due to the age and layout of the building, the three cells are in individual rooms within the facility and are not adjacent, however more than 85 percent of all parts move between more than one cell within the facility.

»»» Solution

In order to make the move to the new facility more efficient, Dewell knew he needed help restructuring his layout. Through his contacts at the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, he was connected with Larry Alford, South Metro Atlanta region manager, and Tom Sammon, project manager, with the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech.

Sammon worked with Dewell to understand ICR’s needs and then facilitated a session with 15 ICR employees to brainstorm ideas that could make the new plant more efficient. Sammon presented a plan to the management team that eliminated the three cell system and moved into a one cell operation with a straight-line flow. By doing so, the plant would be able to become at least ten percent more efficient in their operations.

Sammon also wrote an operations plan for the new plant, laying out how the product would flow through the plant, each staff member’s responsibility within their job frame, how the process would be managed, how the product would be handed off once work was completed, and how the product would flow through quality control. By creating a product flow and a written document of responsibilities at each station, the process flow for the products will contribute to the overall increased efficiency of the facility.

“Tom helped us set-up a plan for our move that will allow ICR to become more efficient and prepare the company to grow for years to come.”

– Wayne Dewell, General Manager

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