



RON BOOKOUT PHOTO

St. Louis SSG Site Services Final Assembly Production Maintenance Team

From eight hours to 30 minutes. That’s how much we reduced the time it took to provide routine preventative maintenance and repair on hydraulic carts used to test products such as the F-A/18, F-15 and T-45. Lean thinking, a motivated, skilled cross-functional team—and some quick modifications—resulted in the impressive process improvement.

The carts are about the size of golf carts. They simulate an aircraft’s hydraulic power, using an auxiliary power system in order to test the aircraft’s flaps and hydraulic systems without firing up complete power systems on the aircraft.

During a recent Lean accelerated improvement workshop facilitated by the Boeing Lean consultant company Shingijutsu, we analyzed the standard periodic cart maintenance and repair routine in which two mechanics and an electrician service each cart. We realized that instead of using a forklift to remove the top of the cart, we could do it more safely and efficiently—and a lot more quickly—with an already-installed overhead crane. The change required modifications to the cart—cutting out a small area and replacing two bolts with linchpins.

We used regular tools to make the modifications during the Lean workshop, and the improvement was ready to start producing savings and enhanced safety immediately.

Bill Cross, Midwest Lean focal for Site Services, said, “This group is one of our High Performance Work Organization teams—a group of cross-functional craftsmen who are self-directed and used to working in an environment where they’re not waiting to be told what to do. This team is the epitome of a team that is part of a Lean, empowered work force.”

Front row, from left

Dave Odenhal Machine repair	Howard Hall Machine repair	Rick Dorn Machine repair	Kevin Kramer Group manager	A.B. Kelly Electrician	Ron Brinker Machine repair	Mark Elmore Electrician
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Back row, from left

Jim Kues Equipment engineer	Dale Gehner Leadman, Machine repair	Don Lehman Leadman, electrical	John Franks Machine repair	Ron Nelson Electrician
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