
Transportation Support to the FMS Customer: Keeping Things Moving for the Navy Customer

By

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Readers of this *Journal* may recall reading our report on the PowerTrack[®] system that appeared in the summer 2000 *Journal* (Vol.22 No.4, page 117) issue. It outlined and described our efforts in using this internet-based product to process supply discrepancy report material. PowerTrack[®] is an online freight payment and transaction tracking system which offers powerful control for the logistics process. PowerTrack's[®] single-source information center provides instant access to shipment data for both carriers and shippers; eliminates the need for reconciling freight bills and invoices; guarantees fast, accurate payments; and provides exceptional, real-time and analytical reporting tools for better logistics management decisions. Some exciting developments have taken place in that process since that report and we wanted to take the opportunity to cover some other evolutions in transportation services to the FMS customer.

We have kept track of PowerTrack[®] performance and compared it with material tracked by other means. This is what we find:

Table 1
PowerTrack[®] Comparison

Category	PowerTrack[®]	Other Means
Disposition to Depot Receipt	48.51 Days	111.11 Days
Disposition to Credit	101.26 Days	216.63 Days
Percent Missed Timeframe	<1.0%	13.02%
Percent Lost in Transit	0.0%	4.69%

Table 2
PowerTrack[®] Metrics

Carrier Delivery Time	9.83 Days
Payment to U.S. Bank	14.1 Days
Cost Savings over Defense Transportation System	47.5%

It is clear, from any of the criteria listed, that PowerTrack[®] is a powerful tool that has improved customer service. We have begun testing this system for tracking transport of repair and return material. We are hopeful that the test will validate this as providing end-to-end ownership, shipment control, asset visibility, and consequent improvement in financial management and customer service.

We have developed a global transportation tracking system (GTTS) that monitors FMS material being transported through the defense transportation system (DTS) worldwide. The system provides a customer, located anywhere in the world, a seamless capability to access transportation information on a near real time basis. GTTS collects and integrates transportation information from several government and private carrier tracking systems. One of the features that sets GTTS apart from other logistics management systems is comprehensive in-transit

visibility (ITV) functionality. ITV gives users and transportation managers the ability to look into the DTS pipeline at anytime to track status of FMS shipments; ITV also provides a tool to users to monitor and correct problems within DTS so that FMS material can be kept moving to its ultimate destination. GTTS will be will available on the NAVICP International Programs e-business suite within the near future.

We continue to work with Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) so that Navy FMS customers realize optimal service from the largest provider of consumable items. We have been focused on three initiatives which we are quite excited about:

- We are working on application of bar code technology to read shipping information from shipping labels. This capability will enable freight forwarders to print appropriate forms after scanning the label, thereby enabling us to remove the material from frustrated status due to missing documentation.

- We are going to test the use of optical memory cards on multi-pack FMS shipments. Information contained on these cards will contain all relevant information for the contents of the multi-pack shipments. The cards will have a 2.8 MeG data capacity, cost about \$6 per card, and be reusable. The cards will be impervious to bad weather and magnetic interference. Customer freight forwarders will need to obtain specialized hardware and software to support the cards. A test with a freight forwarder will commence in the near future; Defense Logistics Agency headquarters will monitor the test.

- The final initiative involves use of modified commercial software, called Package Track, to address documentation and tracking problems experienced by freight forwarders. Package Track provides a mirror image of documentation used to ship FMS material from DLA depots to freight forwarders. DLA depots and freight forwarders can securely log on the Package Track web site and produce required documentation and reports. The system provides freight forwarders with copies of DD1348-1A and DD 1149 forms. It also allows freight forwarders to produce required export documents directly from the information provided on the shipments. This will significantly reduce the man-hours invested in processing shipments for export and will afford freight forwarder the ability to produce DD 250 documentation and commercial packing lists and incorporate them into the required export documentation. This enhancement will be extended to DLA direct vendor deliveries in the future.

Our continued active partnering with the Defense Distribution Center (DDC) has resulted in significant reductions in errors (frustrated/misdirected cargo) related to FMS DLA depot shipments compared to the previous year. A documented 75 percent reduction in errors from last year, in addition to all the other initiatives cited in this article, means that we are serious when say, "FMS customers deserve to receive what they ordered on time, everytime."

About the Author

Raymond J. Biló was the Director of the Transportation Department at NAVICP-OF. He had been the director for sixteen years. Ray Biló was recently promoted, and in his new position, will be working domestic transportation issues for NAVICP.