



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548



LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS
DIVISION

SEP 19 1977

The Honorable
The Secretary of Defense



LM103401

Attention: Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Comptroller)

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On June 17, 1976, we notified you of our plans to review, under assignment code 947240, the organizational structure and information systems used to manage the Army's depot-level maintenance programs. This work has now been completed. Below are some of our observations based on this work.

The prompt processing of maintenance data still seems to be a significant problem for the Army and undoubtedly has an effect on the usefulness of this data. For example, the Army Aviation Systems Command (AVSCOM) uses data on the application of modification work orders to determine the status of the various approved aircraft modification projects. Aviation maintenance field units report modification accomplishments to the Maintenance Management Center (MMC). MMC converts the data to a different format and forwards it to AVSCOM. However, AVSCOM representatives told us that a large data processing backlog existed at MMC in January 1977 causing data submission delays of up to 12 months. Because of the backlog, AVSCOM directed field units to bypass MMC and submit modification data directly to AVSCOM.

Army Aeronautical Depot Maintenance Center (ARADMAC) representatives told us there was a similar data backlog at ARADMAC. This was data of the type used to control selected aircraft items. Selected items usually are those items or components whose failure would result in the flight safety of the aircraft and selected high dollar value items. Field users and maintenance units are required to prepare this data and forward it to MMC who forwards the data via magnetic tape to AVSCOM. AVSCOM stores this data and compiles a history on each selected item. Data reported includes:

- identification, usage, repair and overhaul data
- removal and installation information
- time operated since new and/or last overhaul.

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Maintaining this historical data enables AVSCOM to answer inquiries from users and maintenance levels whenever paperwork accompanying these items is lost. This prevents items in poor condition being used in repairing or overhauling of an aircraft.

We were told that because of the backlog, ARADMAC decided to reduce the content of the data forwarded from ARADMAC to MMC by 40 percent. While this alleviated the data transmission workload at ARADMAC and helped reduce the size of the data backlog, this could create problems of data compatibility and completeness and might seriously affect the Army's ability to control its selected aircraft items.

There was also a data backlog at an aviation maintenance unit at Fort Hood. Aviation maintenance personnel there told us they had an 8-month data processing backlog which was delaying submission of maintenance performance data and data concerning selected aircraft items. Also, data from Fort Hood was being misdirected to AVSCOM and had to be rerouted to MMC.

AVSCOM is sent aircraft operational readiness data by various Army field units. The same field units convert this data to a format which facilitates electronic transmission and forwards it to several headquarters such as the Army Forces Command, the Training and Doctrine Command, and U.S. Army Europe. These headquarters subsequently forward the data to AVSCOM. Thus AVSCOM receives the same data from separate sources, although in different formats, whereas only one source and format would appear to be sufficient.

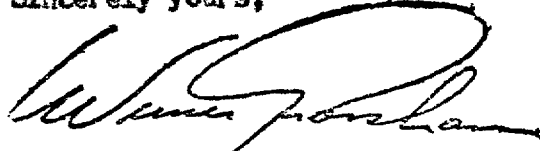
We do not know whether the situations described above are typical of maintenance data problems elsewhere in the Army. However, they appear to indicate the existence of a serious data management problem at several levels. Because of the importance of current and reliable data, we believe the Army should continue to emphasize high standards for prompt and accurate maintenance data. We will be making further inquiries, at a later date, to ascertain the progress made by the Army to improve management of maintenance data.

During this review, we also looked at the relationships between Headquarters, U.S. Army Materiel Development and Readiness Command, the Tank Automotive Materiel Readiness Command and the Aviation Systems Command, the Depot Systems Command, the Maintenance Management Center, and other activities involved in the planning and execution of Army depot-level maintenance programs.

By establishing the Depot Systems Command, the Army has consolidated the responsibilities for depot administration and management with the responsibilities for monitoring maintenance workload planning and execution. This appears to offer the potential for more effective management of depot operations and should result in a more efficient use of the

maintenance capability which exists within the Army's depot maintenance system. We will continue to have an interest in efforts by the Army to improve its management of depot-level maintenance programs. No further reporting on this assignment is planned at this time.

Sincerely yours,



Werner Grosshans
Associate Director

cc: The Inspector General and
Auditor General (DAIG-AI)

bc: Director, LCD



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