

Web-based ordering of calibration services successful

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A Web-based system for ordering equipment calibration services through Energy Northwest — developed by a team of Fluor Hanford, DynCorp Tri-Cities Services and Lockheed Martin Services employees — has proven to be a huge success. The system was implemented site-wide in February after several months of pilot testing. Developed as an alternative to BMS PassPort, the system has streamlined the ordering process from 52 steps to 20, and reduced costs for each order by more than half.

In addition to the immediate cost avoidance, the system reduces human error in the ordering process and allows for quicker calibration turnaround times. The feedback from system users has been overwhelmingly positive.

User-friendly system

In calibration classes, trainees commented on how straightforward and user-friendly the system was. After attending, many agreed that the system was so easy to use they could have sat down and figured it out for themselves in less than an hour. As users began placing orders in the field, the system's flexibility became more apparent and users began seeing more advantages.

One drawback to the online system is that multiple items under one order are not allowed. However, users report that the system is still much quicker than the traditional method of entering items through PassPort.

Better for everyone

"The Web-based ordering system is easier and faster," said Jane Boyd, an employee of the Fast Flux Test Facility, the largest current user of the calibration system. "It's easier to prepare the paperwork since the information is already in the database. Calibration turnaround is faster since the calibration instructions can be written directly onto the order form. And, by using the P-Card as the payment method, it's easier and faster to reconcile the bill."

By eliminating invoices and billing directly to company P-Cards, Energy Northwest also benefits from the system. The company now receives payment for services within 48 hours, rather than the estimated payment time of 30 to 120 days using PassPort.

Acquisition Verification Services has also seen beneficial results from the new ordering system. "It is a lot quicker, easier to print and to find orders," said Rocki Del Carlo, who puts together inspection packages for AVS." Because the online system pulls equipment information directly from the Energy Northwest database rather than having it entered by hand, and quality fields are locked, one expected benefit of the new system was a reduction in non-conformance reports from AVS. Del Carlo confirmed that there have been no NCRs issued for items ordered through the new system.

More than half of today's calibration orders are being placed via the Web-based ordering system. It could grow as high as 95 percent of orders when the system is implemented through all site projects. Future enhancements will enable ordering calibration for new equipment and calibration on site, which now require entry into PassPort. Once completed, these enhancements will permit more than 99 percent of the calibration orders to be placed using the Web-based system.

Continued on page 8.

Web-based ordering of calibration services successful, cont.

Proven benefits

The Web-based ordering system has proven itself by reducing the number of individuals involved in the calibration ordering process, improving accuracy of the data entered and saving time in planning and completing calibration of each piece of equipment. All of this has been accomplished while increasing the quality of the end product — maintaining an inventory of reliable, current and accurate equipment.

For more information on the online ordering system or the training offered, contact Danny LaPlante at 376-9309. ♦