



Eglin Air Force Base

Eglin Air Force Base Achieves Goal of 100% Compliance with EHS Regulations for Hazardous Materials Management

For personnel at Eglin Air Force Base, working with hazardous materials is all part of the job. Yet, thanks to the base's highly successful Hazardous Materials Program (HMP), it is a job that is done safely every day and in full compliance with a host of government and military regulations.

Eglin, an operating unit of the Air Force Materiel Command, is home to the 96th Air Base Wing and the Air Armament Center. The largest base in the U.S. Air Force, Eglin is located on a massive reservation spanning 724 square miles in northeast Florida. Within its 11.6 million square foot physical plant and 3,450 facilities, the base conducts a wide range of mission-critical activities, including traditional military services, civil engineering, personnel, logistics, communications, computer, medical, security and other host services in support of the 46th Test Wing, 919th SOW, 1st SOMXS, Navy EOD, Army Ranger Camp, F35 Joint Strike Fighter and the 7th Special Forces Group.

Many of the manufacturing and maintenance activities conducted at the base involve the use of chemical materials and generate waste materials that are regulated under local, state and federal environmental, health and safety (EHS) regulations. In addition, base personnel must maintain compliance with Air Force standards, some of which are even more stringent than comparable federal government mandates.

For more than a decade, Thomas Prier, the HMP manager for Eglin AFB, has managed a comprehensive program that is among the most successful in the U.S. Air Force. One of the keystones of that program is *Hazardous Material Management System (HMMS)* software from Sphera. Implemented in 2007, *HMMS* supports proactive material and waste management, effective and accurate regulatory compliance, pollution prevention, and data transparency. *HMMS* is deployed at 95 active material issue points across the base – locations where chemical-based products are issued to authorized users. During federal fiscal year (FY) 2010, more than 1,900 unique *HMMS* users recorded 75,000 individual material transactions.

"We're a test and development center, the largest installation in the United States," Prier explains. "We drop a lot of bombs and test many different munitions for our war-fighting capabilities. Sometimes, gathering hazardous material data can be painful because it can require manual processes, including one-on-one interviews. We compile all that information and compare it against our annual reporting limits."

CHALLENGE

- Implement material management system to meet USAF Mission Readiness requirements.
- Comply fully with federal, state and military EHS regulations and ISO 14001 standards
- Minimize burden of compliance processes on base operations, align with overall goals.

SOLUTION

Hazardous Material Management System

- Material Management
- Waste Management

RESULTS

- Achieved 100% compliance with applicable government, military and industry standards
- Earned "Full Conformance" rating from *Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC)* – highest-ever rating from headquarters audit
- Tracked more than 8,000 MSDSs and 140,000 pounds of regulated substances
- Reduced time required for document transactions from hours to minutes
- Monitored 691 hazardous waste collection sites with 230 unique waste profiles and 255,952 pounds of waste

Eglin AFB Environmental Management System Earns Highest Rating

Prier has leveraged *HMMS* to develop a model approach to material and waste management that minimizes the burden on base operations while

- The base's research, development and maintenance functions require tracking of more than 8,000 Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for products stored throughout the reservation. Over the course of a year, the HMP team monitors more than 140,000 pounds of regulated substances. *HMMS* helps them track those substances for annual regulatory reporting.
- Eglin uses the authorized users list process functionality within *HMMS* software to make certain that properly trained personnel are using only authorized materials in designated shops, in compliance with Environmental, Safety and Occupational Health (ESOH) law.
- *HMMS* helps Eglin personnel monitor 691 hazardous waste collection sites, representing approximately 230 unique waste profiles. During FY 2010 Eglin staff used *HMMS* to manage 255,952 pounds of waste, with an estimated value of \$111,056.

The HMP team also uses *HMMS* to drive daily operational efficiencies. Document transactions that would otherwise take hours upon hours of labor-intensive effort using manual processes are easily completed in minutes so the team can focus on mission critical requirements.

"We are required to show exactly how much of each substance we have in our inventory," Prier said. "Our goal is 100 percent compliance with local, state, federal and Air Force requirements, and we are successfully meeting that goal. We feel we have made our environmental management system into the best in the U.S. Air Force."

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Eglin AFB

In fact, during the base's most recent inspection under the Air Force Environmental, Safety, and Occupational Health Compliance Assessment Management Program, the Eglin environmental management system was found to be in Full Conformance – the highest rating ever from an AFMC headquarters audit.

Federal law requires that all Eglin staff members who work with hazardous materials should have access to information about the properties of those products. In support of the base's Hazardous Communications program, Prier led the development of an innovative search and view tool that works with *HMMS* to make MSDS data available through Eglin's HMP web site so personnel who do not have *HMMS* can access this vital information with their Eglin ID card.

Through the use of desktop discovery reporting and standardized data reporting tools, which are supported by *HMMS*, Eglin has achieved:

- Product shelf-life extensions resulting in an 87% reuse of materials that otherwise would have ended up as hazardous waste.
- Material substitutions which have significantly reduced the use of hazardous chemicals and the related compliance burden.
- Annual reductions in hazardous material usage and hazardous waste generation

Eglin's environmental management system is based on the ISO 14001 standard and the USAF EMS Implementation Guidance Series. The HMP is managed by a governing control board called the Hazardous Materials Management Program. Prier convenes regular meetings to highlight best management practices and use of *HMMS* across the base.

Over the years, Prier and his team have worked with Sphera to expand *HMMS*' capabilities in order to meet the evolving needs of the Eglin HMP. "With every new version of *HMMS*, there's always an extra feature that makes our job easier," Prier said. "With the latest release, we can use a PDA [personal digital assistant device] to scan material containers in our inventory, and roll the data into *HMMS*. If we did that manually, we'd lose substantial amounts of time but with *HMMS* it is another step forward in hazardous materials management."