

Info - Brief

In the Store

*There were pumps, sumps, many mystery lumps
In the store, in the store
Dah d dah, dah, dah dah dah d dah
...in the Quar-ter-mast-ers store.*

Legend has it that there were many surprises awaiting the unsuspecting in the Quartermasters store. Maintenance stores too have their mysteries.

Maintenance stores are known by many different names and found in a variety of locations such as central store, tool store, motor store, graveyard, borrow pit, idle plant store, satellite store, workshop store, supervisors cupboard, tradesmen's workbench drawer and toolboxes. Going a bit far you might think, but during our audits we discover the amazing lengths some people go to make sure they are well covered for those nasty breakdowns – "just in case".

The equipment items held in those stores fall into a number of categories including, as-new, used but OK, used but faulty, used and obsolete, obsolete but may be handy, left over from construction, old obsolete & faulty, not sure, and - we've always kept one of them. Unfortunately far too much working capital is tied up in poorly controlled stores and satellite or emotional stores.

In establishing or upgrading an operating maintenance stores system there are many fundamental principles that should be applied. Here are a few of them:

- Avoid satellite stores as far as possible – keeping only small quantities of consumables in area workshops,
- Make the store available at all times including specified arrangements for after "normal" hours requirements,
- Provide a spares catalogue search capability to assist with job planning activities,
- Link spare parts to equipment,
- Link spare parts issues to work orders,
- Strategically determine the appropriate holding of spare parts or assemblies in accordance with the criticality of the item in the process,
- Manage spare parts requirements and specifications through a formal change process and have appropriate approvals.
- Purchase spare parts from the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) unless specifically authorised.

Ross Francis Consulting ensures stores setups are based on fundamental principles of doing maintenance the right way, so as to minimise the risk of operating plant being out of action unnecessarily. This is accomplished by:

- Accurately knowing the specifications of all installed plant.
- Specifying the relationship (hierarchy) of all equipment (maintainable items) in the operating process and their interrelated importance (criticality)
- Knowing what the components of each piece of equipment are
- Understanding what happens (the consequences) if any piece of equipment fails.
- Having detailed parts lists available (BOM's)
- Having a process whereby the components and / or assemblies can be installed in the operating plant as part of planned maintenance activities when impending failure is determined (predictive & preventive) or for breakdown maintenance.