

# ENGINEERING, FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

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## Career Advisor's Corner

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### Farewell from CMSgt Johnnie L. King

I am happy to say that I will be retiring from the United States Air Force on 1 September 1996. My 24-year career in the Air Force was very enjoyable, especially the 21 years in Biomedical Engineering Technology. The career field has changed tremendously during the years, from the vacuum tube ECGs to the high technology MRIs and CTs. The way we do business changed considerably, from the batch mode of computer processing to our present on-line AT&T computer systems. Rules and regulations, JCAHO, FDA and other regulating agencies had to keep up with changes in equipment technology and the improved way of doing business. Overall, there was a lot happening in the 21 years I was in this career field. No regrets and extremely happy. I do have one concern. Biomedical Engineering Technicians tend to limit themselves to only this career field. We don't like taking the Facility Management position, taking other responsibilities such as computer systems maintenance and other challenging areas. We love to be alone in the basement just fixing medical equipment. All of us need to take a look at ourselves, our training (the best in the world), our capabilities and our field. We are in the real world of economics. Not doing our job to the best of our ability in the most efficient manner could force the commanders and administrators to contract our services. We must all strive to make ourselves indispensable. Take on the challenge! Take the initiative to take on equipment normally on maintenance contracts, take on areas not normally the responsibility of Biomedical Engineering, keep track and document all savings and get to know the

commanders and administrators and tell them of your indispensability. We're not only technicians and managers, we are people that upper management tend to rely on to get the job done. Yes, I will miss the Air Force and our field, but I especially will miss the people who I served with during my career. As always, I am not saying good-bye, but so long. Our field is very small and we will cross paths someday. (AFMLO/FOM-E, CMSgt Al Christian, DSN 343-4040)

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## Quality Assurance

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### Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Recalls/Alert Notices

**Attachment 2**, paragraph 1, provides information on FDA medical equipment recalls and alerts. Personnel from clinical engineering, biomedical equipment maintenance, quality assurance, and safety should follow the guidance provided to ensure the effective maintenance and management of medical equipment. (AFMLO/FOM-P, Capt David Zemkosky, DSN 343-4028)

## **Type III Materiel Complaints - Information Exchange**

Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) has completed their investigation of several Type III Materiel Complaints. The results of these investigations are furnished for your information.

### **Steam Sterilizers, Pelton and Crane Validators 8 and 10**

The original complaint was published in AFMLL 7-95.

**Summary of Complaint:** An activity reports purchasing eight Validator Plus 8 and three Validator Plus 10 sterilizers which were received in December 1993. The equipment was functional upon arrival. The problem is reported as a trend of non-operation since September 1994 when a fuse holder melted. In November 1994, a unit had a water leak. In December 1994, a unit's door would not shut and the equipment began whistling. In January 1995, another water leak occurred. The problems were identified by the MERC, and four units were sent back for repair.

**Investigation Findings:** The manufacturer issued a Product Recall on both the Validator 8 and 10 model steam sterilizers in July 1995. The recall was issued due to a problem with the driver board assemblies smoking or catching fire. Pelton and Crane is offering a replacement kit.

**Actions taken to correct existing deficiency and preclude recurrence:** DPSC notified the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the manufacturer of the reported complaint for their corrective actions as necessary.

**Disposition Instructions:** Ensure recalled driver board assemblies have been replaced. For more information on replacement kits, contact George Szalony at (704) 523-3212.

### **Ventilator, Volume Portable,**

## **Aequitron Medical LP10**

The original complaint was published in AFMLL 4-95.

**Summary of Complaint:** During an unscheduled power outage, the ventilator switched over to internal backup battery power, as it should. The power interruption may have been caused by a power surge. After the power was restored, it was later discovered the ventilator did not switch back to main electrical power. This depleted the battery. As a result, the ventilator momentarily stopped working, putting the patient at risk. However, the alarms sounded and medical support reacted.

**Investigation Findings:** The manufacturer reports that the unit's circuit breaker must be manually reset in order for the ventilator to operate on the main power source. The manufacturer also stated that this incident is not a common occurrence with the subject ventilator.

**Actions taken to correct existing deficiency and preclude recurrence:** DPSC notified the FDA and the manufacturer for their corrective actions as necessary. Manufacturer's recommended instructions for operation should be followed to preclude recurrence. (AFMLO/FOM-P, Capt David Zemkosky, DSN 343-4028)

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## **Medical Equipment Management**

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### **Shared Procurement Equipment Items Currently Available**

AFMLL 16-96, Attachment 1, page 1, contains a list of all current Shared Procurement contracts and optional contracts available through the Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC). If you plan to order any of these items for your facility, use the specific ordering instructions and overall program guidance contained in AFMLL 04-96, pages CE-4 and CE-5. (AFMLO/FOM-P, Capt David Zemkosky, DSN 343-4028)

### **“Piggyback” Contracts Currently Available**

AFMLL 16-96, Attachment 1, pages 4 and 5, contains a list of all current “piggyback” contracts currently available through DPSC. These contracts will allow facilities to “piggyback” requirements onto existing orders placed for specific quantities. Many of these contracts are designed to buy large quantities at reduced prices, and are written with the option of buying additional quantities at the same price. The list includes available quantities and “Order By” dates. To order, send your MILSTRIP requisitions to DPSC, and reference the contract number (from the listing) in the notes section. (AFMLO/FOM-P, Capt David Zemkosky, DSN 343-4028)

JEFFREY W. COOPER, Colonel, USAF, MSC  
Chief, Air Force Medical Logistics Office