



## How Delos helped Messier Dowty implement SOP globally and raise production by 50 %

### The company

Messier-Dowty, a SAFRAN Group company, is the world leader in the design, development, manufacture and support of landing gear systems. Messier-Dowty landing gear are in service on more than 19,000 aircraft making over 30,000 landings every day. The company supplies 30 air-frame manufacturers and supports 750 operators of large commercial aircraft, regional and business aircraft, military aircraft and helicopters.

Messier-Dowty is also the majority shareholder of the worldwide MRO RO network, Messier Services. Messier-Dowty and Messier Services together have 4,000 employees across sites in Europe, North America and Asia, and posted consolidated sales of roughly 734 million euros in 2005.

### The challenge

In early 2003, Messier-Dowty decided to implement a Global Strategic and Operations Planning (GS&OP) process to replace their existing PIC (Plan Industriel et Commercial). Although PIC translates from French as Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP), the process only served as a means of communicating demand and did not address, on a global level, how that demand would be met by Production or Procurement.

It was also recognized that the PIC process only covered approximately 73% of the OE (Original Equipment) demands and it was not always used by all sites. For example, two different sites manufacturing the same component on the same OE program did not always base their planning on the same volumes.

Also, the PIC did not always cover the full five-year horizon of their Strategic Plan, only de-

tailed annual volumes and did not capture any of the assumptions behind the forecasts.

Another reason why Messier-Dowty decided to implement a new GS&OP was that there was no standard format defined for analysing load and capacity. Similarly, reviews took place on an ad-hoc basis as and when required.

### How Delos met the challenge

Colin Thornton, then Operations Director for the Messier-Dowty Gloucester facility was nominated as Global Project Manager of the GS&OP project. Three companies were asked to bid for the project. Based upon the responses, the Delos Partnership were asked to help his company design and implement the new process into Messier-Dowty sites in France, UK, Canada, North America and China.



Thornton said: “Out of all of the bids, Delos Partnership presented us with the most flexible approach. The plan was broken down into different elements so that we could decide exactly what would suit Messier-Dowty’s multi-site project.

*‘The key selling point was the fact that the plan could be adapted along the way which you normally don’t get in a large company - its normally one model fits all.’*



Colin Thornton – Project Manager  
Global SOP project

“The first thing that Delos did”, Thornton continued; “was to get the Messier-Dowty core team to a good level of understanding of how

the project was going to work. The team originally included: myself, Karen Jones who was the GS&OP Co-ordinator, Adrian Betts (Velizy), Francois Paquette (Montreal), Jason Brodie (Toronto), Laurent Pinon (Bidos) and Alan Chong (Suzhou). The Delos team led by Richard Watkins (UK) and Gilles Lauga (France) then carried out a series of structured bespoke workshops and training programs in French and English to translate their “text book” view into the real world i.e. they put the frame-work of Messier-Dowty into the Delos seven step Global Sales and Operations Planning model.

“They then provided us with a consultancy program to train and implement local project teams in Canada, UK, France and China to help develop the processes and get buy-in, and then came back to do a three month and then a nine month review, using their assessment tool, to iron out any problems. The beauty of Delos’ approach was that the people involved learnt the process and could then teach the process internally. This was key. Our ultimate aim was to get consultants in to initiate the project and then the internal

team to implement it. When the process had been designed, the Delos Team worked alongside Karen and myself to deliver the description of the process throughout the whole management team including the Messier-Dowty board, which gained a real commitment to the process.



Karen Jones  
GS&OP co-ordinator

“Finally, the Delos Partnership helped Karen to carry out a formal assessment of the progress of the project as part of a post-project implementation review, which helped us identify how to take the process up to further levels of excellence”

*‘The test of any project is does it continue to deliver. With this project it has!’*



## The results

The new GS&OP process went live in August 2004 and Messier-Dowty hasn't looked back. Thanks to the top level commitment and a willingness throughout the company to live by the GS&OP rules, Messier-Dowty has seen a number of results including:

- One set of agreed numbers
- The new GS&OP Demand Plans provides a five year view with assumptions, risks and opportunities.
- Routine reviews and reporting. The GS&OP process has a clearly defined calendar of activities across the globe allowing us to be proactive
- Improved communications  
All functions now receive regular communications detailing the load and capacity profiles, the issues and opportunities identified, and progress updates on any related actions.
- Shared decision making across all functions
- Greater ability to deal effectively with non-routine situations  
information and use the same formats for

presenting outputs.

- Improved load and capacity balance  
Since implementing GS&OP, each site's load and capacity balance has either improved or they now have detailed action plans in place to overcome any issues.
- The system now allows defined targets to be met. Previously, the objective was simply for load to be less than the available capacity (i.e. number of men x number of hours worked). However, to be balanced, load now needs to be between +5% and -10% of demonstrated capacity (i.e. number of men x number of hours of demonstrated productive output).
- The GS&OP process communicates all demands (Original Equipment, Spares volumes and Research & Technology) globally. Local load and capacity analysis is then carried out at all manufacturing sites in line with a global process which may then require decisions to be made either locally or escalated up to a global level to the Business Units or

ultimately the Executive Committee. At the end of each cycle, a summary document is then issued globally to all sites.

- Business growth has been supported as now delivering 30 sets of landing gear for the Airbus single aisle program when previously they were delivering 20 sets; a 50% increase in production levels was managed effectively.

## The Future

Thornton summarises: "The future is in our hands. Delos has provided us with a sustainable GS&OP process that is already providing us with significant results. It's now up to us to keep the momentum going and develop it."

*'I would recommend anyone to consider the Delos Partnership approach to the implementation of an integrated strategic planning system.'*