MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CHERRY POINT, N.C. — Aircraft Mechanics, observed by Quality Assurance Specialists, install the floorboard in the fuselage of an H-53 during the assembly phase of production in Hangar 3. Processes in the aircraft production line were targeted in recent completed and ongoing Continuous Process Improvement projects.

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CHERRY POINT, N.C. — Fleet Readiness Center East is the Naval Aviation Enterprise AIRSpeed Site of the Year, Level 3, as declared by the Naval Aviation Enterprise Continuous Process Improvement Governance Board. The award highlights the comprehensive Continuous Process Improvement program for training, awareness, initiatives, projects and other contributions to the command on the way to realizing corporate strategic goals.

“It contributed to what I think it means to have a successful CPI program,” said Mike Moore, CPI Division head, who explained the organization worked diligently to effect a CPI culture, align actions and with strategic goals – Hoshin Kanri – and ensure workforce development and training.

He added, that “CPI is not about three or four people doing great things. It’s about three or four thousand doing great things. It’s really about getting 4,000 people moving in the same direction on how they approach their jobs. There are 4,000 problem solvers here. CPI involves everyone, and we did a considerable effort on that.”

The CPI program is administered by the CPI Division, Code 6.3.4, and was implemented.
Aug. 21, 2016. CPI Division members work among a diverse cross-section of the workforce as coaches and mentors for process improvement. The division facilitates diverse types of training to promulgate a corporate continuous process improvement mindset. More than 1,000 members in the workforce are at least white- or yellow-belt trained in the Six Sigma methodology. About 50 champions or project sponsors are working through completing projects throughout the command. The division also facilitated additional CPI training opportunities for nearly 600 of the workforce in courses such as Pendaran, Structured Problem-solving and other efficiency-focused software programs. “We’re generating some momentum in terms of folks volunteering and willing to take the next step in training (in process improvement),” said Moore.

The corporate effort involved a number of completed and ongoing actions categorized as rapid improvement events; define, measure, analyze, improve and control (DMAIC); and just-do-its projects, and earned the organization notable NAE acclaim. The projects demonstrated alignment with the NAE Strategic Plan and the Commander’s Intent of Integrated Capabilities with focus on speed and increased readiness. The projects also supported the FRC East Operations Plan goals for people, products, processes and resources.

Completed projects include the CH-53 and AV-8 Rework Phase Variability Reduction Project; FRC East Beyond Economical Repair (BER) Process; and Code 6.3 Cultural Change Award Team, Recognition and Awards Automated Tracker. The projects have brought about the reduction in phase variability for AV-8 and H-53 production and reduced turnaround time for aircraft; improved the organization’s Beyond Economical Repair process and recouped $13 million; and impacted workforce morale with the creation of an awards tracker that improved the awards routing process for one of the organization’s competencies.

**Ongoing and future projects include:**

The Speed Trap Reduction in Valves and Regulator Shop Project sought to address the problem of lost work days that was creating delays in throughput and increasing turnaround time. The shop was producing 10 percent below its weekly goals. A formula to reduce wait time for components, increase weekly throughput, adequately load shop to capacity and improve process flow will increase throughput of ready-for-issue assets. It will further reduce operating cost, increase capacity, increase customer satisfaction and reduce wait time.

The H-53E Assembly Phase Kitting Project dealt with the issue of incomplete kits to start the aircraft assembly phase of production. The delays had a domino effect on subsequent phases, ultimately impacting delivery to the customer. The goal to reduce process time in the assembly phase, develop and build kits to specific tasks, ensure 100 percent availability of all consumables and piece parts, and the decision to install kits immediately upon receipt from Aircraft Storage Kitting and Retrieval System (ASKARS) reduced the assembly phase of H-53 to 49 days and resulted in on-time delivery to the customer.

The Pendaran Shop Performance Teams (SPT) Project is addressing the complexities of
working in an industrial environment, and the inherent risks of working in such an environment. The project empowers the experts with the authority and time to identify problems, get to the root causes, and solve them, thereby cultivating an environment where the organization meets the need of customer needs through Safety, Quality, Throughput and Cost. The project has led to the roll out of 16 SPT to various work centers, employing the structured problem-solving process and producing incremental improvements for long-term gains.

The Organizational Structure Proposal is aimed at realigning and better defining the roles and responsibilities of the CPI program, with the goal of instilling and improving dependability, cost effectiveness and throughput by maximizing a CPI mindset. The proposed structure for Code 6.3.4 would allow the division to perform as a core or major team, working across multiple functions in the organization to provide analysis and recommendations to leaders regarding progress against strategic objectives and initiatives, action items, readiness issues, current and future year resourcing decisions and process improvement efforts.

The progress made from the corporate process improvement efforts stands to serve as a solid foundation for the organization moving forward.

[Editor’s note: Annual enterprise AIRSpeed awards, administered by the NAE Continuous Process Improvement Governance Board, are intended to stimulate a culture of continuous process improvement through recognition of improved customer satisfaction, further integration between maintenance and supply, application of the AIRSpeed concepts, execution of AIRSpeed enablers, and deployment of CPI sustainment initiatives.]

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CHERRY POINT, N.C. — Chris Goldman works to disassemble an anti-ice valve in Shop 94401. Shop 94401 processes is a focus of the project to reduce loss of work days or speed traps in the production process.
AIRSpeed Site of the Year: Corporate process improvement efforts garner NAE acclaim