

Improvement in the Army's Support Storage Activity



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Abstract

The lack of efficiency in the turn-in and shipping sections are some of the issues that are affecting the fiscal budget of the Army's Support Storage Activity (SSA) in Ft. Buchanan. The main causes of these problems are the lack of key personnel willing to understand the importance of complying with the regulations and procedures, while also including many unit supply members throughout the entire process or workflow that ultimately is affecting the SSA and the organization. The procedure for each section of the SSA was identified and analyzed to improve the errors, time, and cost. After the initial meeting, the SSA manager estimated that through direct communication between crucial personnel commanders and periodic orientations to all sections, the SSA improved by 60% weekly. To this date after implementing the improvement, the SSA has managed to have zero errors.

Introduction

The US Army has a Support Storage Activity (SSA) located in Ft. Buchanan, Puerto Rico. The SSA is a facility where all military equipment is to be either phased out or phased in to establish the yearly fiscal budget and improve all units.

The SSA's turn-in section must be operating efficiently and effectively, and it should also be considered the area for the initial quality control of the SSA. The turn-in area is perhaps the most critical in the SSA facility since it can enable or disable the rest of the facilities section, such as the shipping, transportation, vault section.

This project was conducted due to the constant problems that delayed each process and made it less efficient and ineffective at each section while causing more significant expenses and a waste of necessary resources that other supervisors could use to improve these and other departments further. The objectives for this project are the following. Make the turn-in section more efficient, ship all equipment faster and with less hassle and create a larger budget for each new fiscal year.

Once the turn-in area becomes proficient, the shipping section can continue to phase-in or phase-out the military equipment at a much quicker pace and large scale, creating a larger end-of-year fiscal budget for the organization.

Background

The findings of the project were established in accordance with regulations of the Army Regulation 710-2 Supply Support at all levels in the organization and it was clear that many personnel were not complying at all. The staff took it upon analyzing all the resources wasted and with the regulation and crucial personnel the problem was one that could be solved with little to no extra budget.

Methodology

The methodology used for this project is an existing structure of regulations and processes that the Department of Defense established. The process within the methodology was initially to see the problems and the possible outcome by implementing a sequence of procedures. The procedures were simple but must be constant and carried out as indicated.

The process established was to begin with an initial meeting having all crucial personnel from all the departments that were to be involved. Once that meeting occurred it was clear what sequence of events needed to take place to accomplish the objectives. It was required by the commanders that weekly meetings were to be held, and that the supply unit members were to contact the Public Book Officer (PBO) and their commander to present the list of equipment. It indicated that no unit supply member would arrive at the SSA facilities if not first cleared by the PBO and that all items had to have proper documentation.

The meeting sequence also included a daily e-mail communication of all the parties involved to avoid any situation prior to the arrival at the SSA. All meetings continued to take place as mentioned, and other issues continued to appear and are in the process of correcting, such as orientations that will educate all personnel on how to fill out appropriately all needed documentation and if any update or changes would occur.

The meetings took place with the necessary personnel. Given the fact that they listened to the people in the working field and later acknowledged the importance of making things happen and holding people accountable, the goals started to take shape, which were to make the process with fewer errors in the turn-in section, the shipping section, increase the fiscal year budget and have the whole system working in unison. That took place, and the results showed that the volume of errors decreased, and the phasing-in and phasing-out improved tremendously by the end of the first month implemented.

The continuous follow-up meetings and weekly e-mails between the vital component personnel of each area must continue improving along the way. The manager was monitoring the changes that occurred daily and then weekly would share it in the follow up meeting. It was clear that the quantity of the items that needed to be shipped or phased out was not in accordance with regulations.

Results

As a result of all the meetings, e-mails, orientations and constant follow-up by crucial personnel, errors dropped each week. In just the first week, the manager of the SSA notice a decline of errors by more than 50%. Throughout the following weeks of the process and constant meetings, it continued to decrease and became simple once more to keep track of all the equipment to be phased out and phased in, which resulted in zero errors in the SSA process facility.

There came a moment when some personnel did not comply with the method established in the meetings, and the unit supply members held accountable for their actions, because they continued to make mistakes the resulted in a drawback without acknowledging the implementation of constant communication between commanders, PBO's, and SSA key personnel. That created a major significant issue in that they had no concern over their actions' negative impact on the organization, finances, and other employees.

The results of being more efficient and effective in the SSA has positively changed the whole process. Having a better outcome of phasing-in and phasing-out equipment by committing fewer errors at the turn-in section led towards a better shipping process and logistical effectiveness. This has positively impacted the budget. Refer to figure 1 shows how the errors went decreasing by month, according to the manager of SSA.

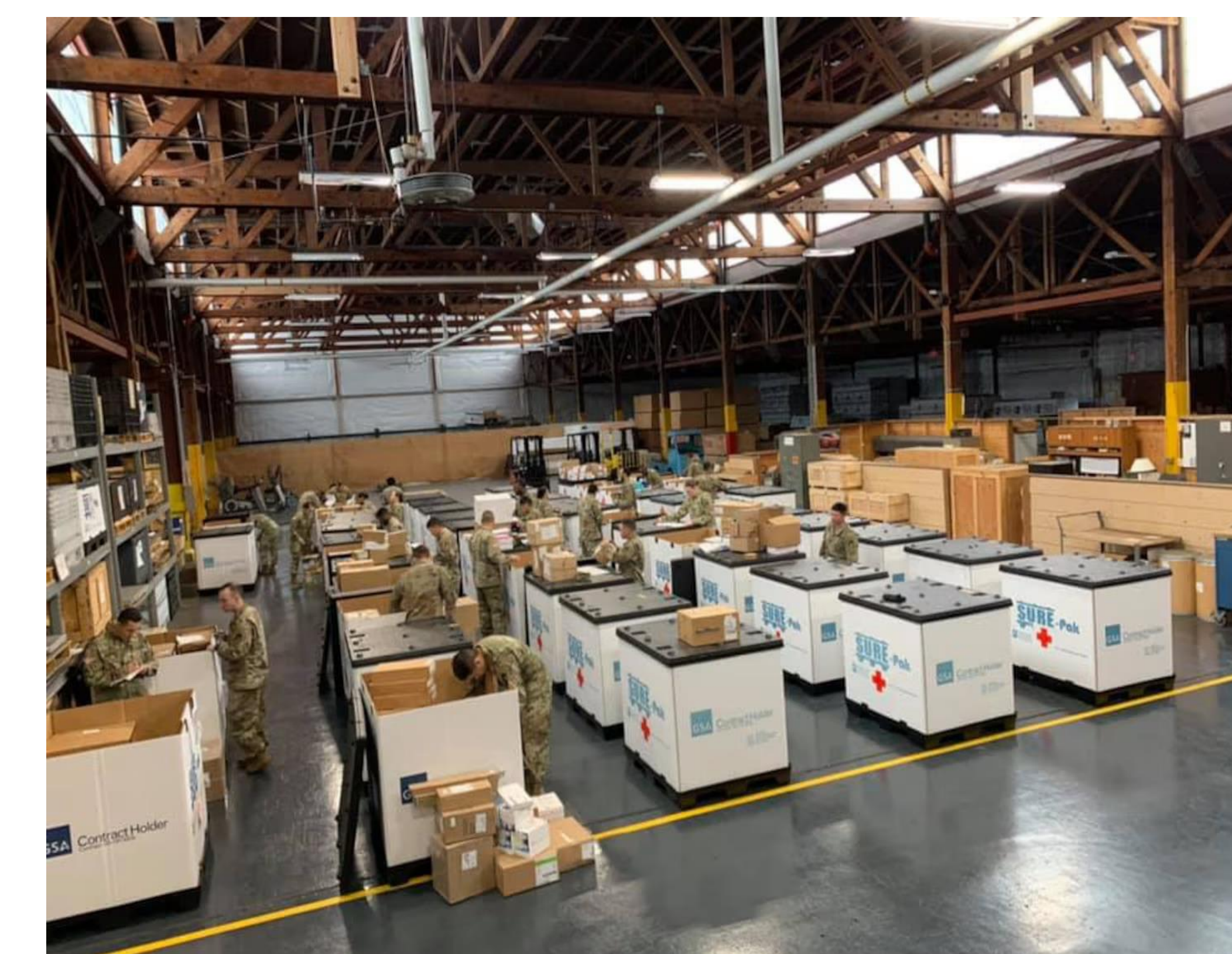


Figure 1. Turn-in section at SSA

Conclusions

It was found the problem that this project targeted was by personnel that lacked knowledge of the effects of not following a specific method and how it can damage the organization. The significant findings of this project were that many key personnel did not want to understand the significance of the negative impact it had on the different aspects of the organization, such as finances, budget, sections and employees.

As the meetings continued, there are still many areas that are getting improved to have a better outcome soon. Each unit supply member should have constant education on all phases of each section that is in the process of equipment and material that are in the units. SSA personnel should brief at least quarterly each unit supply the importance of inspections, filling out the proper forms and let them know of any updates needed to have appropriately before arriving at the SSA. The Public Book Officer (PBO) should also be part of the quarterly meeting to clarify any doubt or concern from both unit supply member and SSA personnel, therefore constantly updating each section and personnel as changes continue to happen within the organization. Figure 2. assembly of logistical phasing-in equipment.



References

- [1] Supply Policy Below the National Level, 1988 ed., Headquarters Department of the Army., Washington DC, 2008, pp. 01-328.