

AIT Resolves Urgent Aircraft on Ground Situations with Dedicated Government and Aerospace Control Tower Solution

The Challenge

When one of the world's largest defense contractors needed to add an ultra-reliable partner to their roster of trusted forwarders, they turned to the Government and Aerospace team at AIT Worldwide Logistics. Tasked with committing to shipment requests (also known as "tenders") in extremely tight windows of time, the team knew they would have to demonstrate exceptionally high performance when planning and executing deliveries of highly sensitive controlled goods across the United States.



The uncertain nature of the tenders meant the team could not plan and schedule potential routing in advance. Tenders could come through at any time with origins and destinations all over the country in Arizona, Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Ohio, Texas and more.

The Solution

The skill set to manage unpredictability with specialized shipments is a shared competency at AIT, especially among the logistics experts who form the Government and Aerospace team. To prepare for a diverse array of incoming tenders, the team created a dedicated Control Tower environment for the customer and developed a detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) supported by the company's vast network of preferred carriers.

The Control Tower dedicated to this ongoing project is staffed 24/7 by highly-trained Government and Aerospace team members with deep experience when it comes to handling mission-critical shipments in general and AOG deliveries in particular. Given that most of the shipments are in response to AOG situations or instances when a manufacturing line has gone down, the customer requires tenders to be accepted within a narrow 30-minute window. The Control Tower team is prepared to react at a moment's notice to react and commit to all incoming tenders. Centralizing operations with a Control Tower solution provides the customer with a single point of contact throughout the shipment lifecycle which streamlines communications.

Case Study: Government

Incoming tenders can be as small as a 10-pound box or as large as multiple 300-pound skids. The potential combinations of origins and destinations are nearly limitless. To mitigate this uncertainty, the Government and Aerospace team adheres to their strict SOP that anticipates solutions for all possible requests.

Communication expectations are outlined in a multi-step process and general shipment procedures are pre-assigned to designated offices throughout AIT's network. These locations are staffed by professionals who have been trained to support AOG deliveries in their regions. The SOP includes checklists to guarantee DoD compliance. Likewise, additional checklists define the shipment particulars to ensure the achievement of service levels ranging from 3-Day and Economy to Next Day AM and Next Flight Out (NFO). Required documentation is also outlined in exact detail and defined escalation procedures are in place for the rare occasion when an exception occurs.

To meet the delivery requirements for each tender, the Control Tower harnesses AIT's vast U.S. network of preferred air and road carriers. Over the course of more than four decades, AIT has built and refined one of the strongest freight forwarding networks in the U.S. including carriers who meet the special requirements for government and aerospace shipments. The team works with select high-end asset-based carriers to support the customer's critical AOG shipments.

When possible, deliveries are shipped via air, but oftentimes a dedicated "hot shot" van or box truck is required. Drivers must be U.S. citizens, TSA-approved and approved to drive onto military bases. No brokers are ever used for AOG deliveries.

Did You Know?

In the fast-paced world of aircraft maintenance for the armed forces, large aerospace and defense technology corporations rely on a small network of freight forwarders with highly-specialized credentials to handle urgent AOG (aircraft on ground) and "line down" shipments. These extremely sensitive deliveries require the highest level of compliance to ensure customer expectations and U.S. Department of Defense standards are being upheld.

The Result

Since the inception of the project, AIT's dedicated Government and Aerospace Control Tower team has responded affirmatively to every single tender received within the 30-minute requirement. Shipments with routes that crisscross the entire U.S. are handled by a single point of contact which streamlines communications back to the customer. The Control Tower coordinates shipments with support from regional teams in AIT offices around the country and the entire process is backed by an iron-clad SOP.

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