



TECH TALK

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A NAVY AIRCRAFT TECHNICIAN

We recently sat down with Sean G. to hear what he dealt with on an average day as a Navy Aircraft Technician. He shares what the demands of the job are, the top tools he uses and what helps make his job easier.

Sean worked as part of the I-WAT (In-port Watch) team, and was responsible for security, safety and oversight of a naval hangar, and night work often meant processing multiple aircraft to ensure their systems were functioning as intended. The job demanded nimble work and quick trial and error. He stated that many repairs didn't begin with pricey high-end tools, but rather, a dependable set of screwdrivers, a speed handle and a size 7/16 socket wrench. These simple tools almost exclusively covered much of the day-to-day work even though the systems they fixed were not.

From Red Status to Flight Ready

In military aviation, readiness is visible before the tool comes out. Sean started many mornings during his service at 6:30 am, prepping for a briefing that set the pace for the day. His team relied on a system that showed the overall health of the aircraft. It looked simple: green meant good, yellow meant flyable (but not ideal), and red meant it needed a lot more time on the ground, and this was often far from simple.

A red aircraft might mean a faulty mission computer, an electrical issue, a weapons system discrepancy, a failed connection, or an intermittent issue hiding somewhere in a complex network of systems. Sean's role covered the electronic infrastructure that allowed an aircraft to perform its mission: computer systems, electrical systems, cryptological equipment, weapons systems and the avionics that tie them all together. "The job was essentially anything electronic on the aircraft," he explained.

The work required methodical troubleshooting, even when speed was the currency. A technician would take ownership of a discrepancy, check out the required equipment, verify the failure, isolate the cause and determine whether the component could be reseated, repaired, re-pinned, re-crimped or replaced. Then came the documentation: part numbers, serial numbers, a list of work performed and the aircraft's updated status.

"During flight operations, we also had to respond to real-time issues. If a pilot was already in the seat and an issue appeared, we had to run to the aircraft, diagnose the problem and fix it as quickly as possible so the pilot could still take off"
confirmed Sean.

Some maintenance issues arrived as scheduled work, while others appeared as a critical AOG (Aircraft On Ground).

In those moments, every minute matters. A grounded aircraft can disrupt flight operations, delay schedules and place additional pressure on maintenance teams to diagnose the issue and return the flight to service quickly.

A Cable is Never Just a Cable

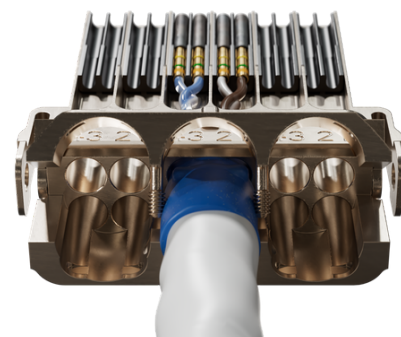
Cable assemblies and harnesses were part of the regular maintenance Sean encountered daily. A failed connection could sometimes be addressed by pin repair, connector re-pinning, stripping, recrimping or doing full replacements. This type of work was not only done on easily accessible assemblies, but also on entombed cable networks that someone like Sean has experience with.



Ultralite Cables

That distinction matters for companies that serve aerospace and defense customers. At the technician level, product value is often measured in practical terms: Can it be identified quickly? How easily can it be accessed? Can it be repaired or replaced efficiently? Is the needed part readily available? And will the process hold up under operational demands?

Sean recalls “There were some delays on some support equipment that had been on order for a long time. At one time, we had certain test gear for missile systems that had been on order since 2022 and they still had not arrived.”



High-Speed Module (HSM) for
Machforce® Connectors

This is why it's critical to have the right interconnect solutions partner.

For Sean and all the others in his crew, the underlying challenge was rarely limited by one faulty part, but the systems built around it. Greenlighting an aircraft stems from readiness of the larger systems around it. Tools, test equipment, documentation, supply channels, and organization operations all served their part in successfully restoring an aircraft.

The real value of an interconnect solution is tested in the field, when a technician needs to accurately and quickly diagnose a failure, access tight spots, and make repairs in the industry that uses speed as currency. That is why maintainability deserves the same consideration as performance. Reliable assemblies, clear identification, practical access, repairable terminations, responsive replacement options and knowledgeable technical support all help reduce friction when time matters most.

PIC Wire & Cable brings both engineering knowledge and an operational mindset to each product or project, helping teams select and build cables, connectors and assembly solutions to not only perform in demanding environments, but also to support the teams that maintain them

This is why we love what we do at PIC Wire & Cable – We Make our Customers' Jobs Easier.



See how we can help you!