Within the AMA, management of items is carried out by individuals designated as item managers. This person and only this person manages his assigned items. Information which he needs to make effective management decisions is readily available to the item manager. This includes information concerning wearout rates, repair schedules, weapons application, procurement leadtime, and program data.

Each AMA is also assigned management responsibility for a portion of the 300 various weapons and/or support systems. The system support manager (SSM) is responsible for assuring support of his system. He works in conjunction with the items managers and other commands to resolve support problems for his system.

CENTRALIZED CONTROL IS THE KEY

The major development which has made centralized control possible is computer technology combined with improved communications and air transportation. From acquisition of our first computer in 1951 until now, the Air Force has become one of the world's largest users of electronic data processing equipment. By using computers we can supply, in minutes or hours, information which would previously have taken days or weeks to compile.

We are using computers to forecast inventory requirements, formulate budget and financial plans, conduct war gaming and tell us (through simulation) what downstream problems we may encounter on new systems. Since information is the lifeblood of control, we look for a vastly expanded use of computers in logistics management.

Another major feature of our supply system is the elimination of intermediate echelons between our AMA (wholesalers) and our base supply or retail activities. As an example, if Cam Ranh Bay needs a peculiar F–4 part, a requisition is submitted using electrical transmission means, to our Ogden AMA, which is the item manager wholesaler. The requisition is received almost immediately by this item manager without any intervening echelons. Shipment is made direct to Cam Ranh Bay. Processing time and shipment mode are dependent upon requisition priority. If the item is not available, and base need is of sufficient priority, the manager at Ogden may direct redistribution of the part from any Air Force base having the item in stock. Ownership and control of the centrally managed item(s) in our supply system are vested in the AFLC.

Many new systems have been developed to enhance management of our inventory. One of these new systems, pertaining to the high dollar value items, is called the Air Force recoverable assembly management system (AFRAMS) which was implemented November 1, 1967, after many months of development. It gives the AFLC item manager continuous asset information by base, by condition and location, for 77,000 line items subject to repair at depot level. These items represent an investment of over $5 billion.

By knowing the location and condition of the items, the item manager can redistribute those in short supply from bases where they are available to bases which have a priority need. The system permits a high degree of compatibility between total Air Force requirements (and the distribution pattern), while permitting positioning of the items at base level.

AFRAMS provides the item manager a complete history of item consumption to insure greater validity in the computation of buy requirements. In this connection, it permits a closer relationship of the requirements computation with force and activity programs to insure that requirements are predicated on the anticipated flying hours programs.

Plans call for the expansion of this management system to an additional 77,000 recoverable line items having an investment value of $300 million, which are normally only repaired at base level.

Here, let me describe how we tie in our procedures for reparable item control at base level. When a reparable item is removed from an aircraft (or other system) by maintenance and a demand is made for a like replacement item on supply, a due in from maintenance (DIFM) transaction is instituted to insure that the removed item is returned to supply. We do not rest until the item needing repair is returned to supply in a serviceable condition or maintenance indicates the item cannot or should not be repaired. These reparable procedures with the AMA/Base AFRAMS control systems, complete the loop on control of reparable items.

For extremely expensive items such as aircraft engines, F–4 stable platforms, Minuteman missile guidance units, et cetera, we maintain even tighter controls by