

# DARA revolutionises its warehouse with space saving automated storage



Launched on 1 April 1999, the Defence Aviation Repair Agency (DARA) brought together the RAF Maintenance Group Defence Agency (MGDA) and the Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation (NARO). DARA was established as a Trading Fund on 1 April 2001.

Since 1999, DARA has changed beyond recognition. Today, it offers the expertise and ability to completely strip, replace, repair and rebuild everything from systems, components and equipment to whole aircraft, to both military and commercial organisations. DARA's site at St Athan, Barry, recently invested in a new, state of the art super hangar for the servicing of Jaguar, Hawk and Tornado fighter planes and VC10 load carrying planes. DARA required a reliable turnkey storage solution with first class service support for the storage of parts and tools involved in the servicing of these aircraft.

Industore was ultimately chosen to provide this solution. Standard racking and shelving was installed for the storage of larger, less frequently used items such as aircraft panelling; this was complemented by a mezzanine floor which doubled the amount of available floor space that the racking and shelving could cover. The **key component** of this turnkey solution however was the installation of **11 Hänel Lean-Lifts**.

Hänel's automated storage systems are distributed and serviced exclusively across the UK and Ireland by Industore. The Hänel Lean-Lift is a fully automated vertical lift storage system that maximises storage capacity by means of height optimisation. The heights of stored items are automatically measured in order to store them at the most height optimised location; this enables **dramatic floor space savings**. **Picking times are also dramatically reduced**

with goods being brought to the user at an **ergonomically positioned access point**.

With parts brought to the user in seconds at the touch of a button an **increase in productivity** was achieved; this is now helping DARA to service and repair aircraft in a much shorter period of time.

A vital part of the turnkey solution was the storage of fighter jet canopies. For this task, a 3.5m x 4m x 10m lift was installed. 19 canopies are stored within this machine on a footprint of 12.4m<sup>2</sup>, to store these on standard racking and shelving an area of 117.8m<sup>2</sup> would be required. Therefore, **a floor space saving of 89% was made**. The remaining 10 Lean-Lifts, installed in two banks of five, were installed to store small, fast moving components.



The bank of ten Lean-Lifts at DARA's warehouse



Hangar One at DARA, St Athan

“Industore was chosen by the MOD tender process by offering best value for money for the provision of storage units in our new warehouse. The contract was then extended to include the complete fit out of the warehouse with racking and mezzanine flooring. The service to DARA provided during all the phases of the project has been excellent. We are delighted with the service and support given to us by Industore.”

**Bob Bairstow, Head of Facilities at Dara**