

Since 1968, Thistle Generators has supplied, installed, commissioned and supported standby generator power systems. The company has an outstanding commitment to excellent customer service delivered by one of the industry's most experienced teams. Quality accreditations have been secured through SELECT the world's first trade association for the electrical industry, The Association of Manufacturers of Power Systems (AMPS), The Construction Licensing Executive (CLE) and the British Safety Council.



#### Lean Team

**Nigel Feeny**  
Sales Director

**Donnie MacDonald**  
Operations Director

**Willie Lafferty**  
Mechanical Engineering Director

**David McDougal**  
Senior Engineer

**Duncan Boyle**  
Technical Support Engineer

**Lorna Tennant**  
Credit Control

#### Lean Project

As an SME employing 43 people the company engaged in a project to look at the process flow of activity through the whole business from enquiry to Project Completion. This resulted in focused activity in the following areas

- Management of Quotes
- Workplace Organisation
- Warranty Claims
- Movement of Vehicles

#### Data Analysis

The team produced a high level process map early on in the project which demonstrated the amount of opportunities available for improvement in a simple and visible way. This led to analysis of the company structure and the business decision making processes that have evolved.

#### Management of Quotations

The team's analysis highlighted that in materials alone £4,521 was being spent per annum in printing quotes. This has been set down as a benchmark to work throughout the supply chain to reduce paper wastage through more electronic data transfer.

#### Work Place Organisation

The workshop area had become messy and disorganised with multiple movements of fork trucks. Immediate use of the "5S" philosophy was put in place. Simple activities were introduced such as a focused clear up, disposing of disused materials, planning of equipment usage and education of the workforce. Low cost / No cost improvement.

A new layout is being implemented with the generator off loading and fuelling stations being merged to reduce movement. Traffic congestion will be reduced by 50% with the introduction of a second access point. All this along with improved preparation at the pre delivery inspection will increase capacity, increase flexibility, further improve customer service and drive down operational costs.

The quantified savings on this project show a 21% reduction in lead time which increased capacity and resulted in an annual benefit of **£70,400**. The environmental benefit will be a reduction in **Co2 of 7,150kg**

Energy management in the warehouse highlighted a targeted 25% reduction in electricity through switching of lights. This reduced costs by £490 per annum.

#### Warranty Claims

The nature of the business means that warranty claims are a significant contributor to activity. Controls need to be tight as costs can soon be incurred by the company if procedures are not managed. The team analysed activity through 2009 and highlighted a potential loss of £54,658 if current practices continued.

This led to a Cost of Failure (Failure Demand) exercise which will be used as the benchmark for improvement

#### Vehicle Movement

Analysis of the fleet activity demonstrated the need for standardisation of procedures for tooling, site van sharing and materials management. This will result in a reduction of mileage and fuel usage, improved flexibility to react to on site problems and reduced Co2.