



# How a Modern Task Management Tool Transformed Comptroller Operations

## Innovative Task Management with Due Out Tool (DOT)

When the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC) stood up in 2015, they assumed financial operations capabilities from the MAJCOMs. From a manpower perspective, AFIMSC assumed all of the functional responsibilities from the MAJCOMs, but at a 40% resource alignment, according to an internal study. Consequently, AFIMSC had to quickly find new solutions to introduce efficiency in combat support programs while maintaining a high level of customer service to the bases.

One of the jobs of AFIMSC is gathering information from the bases. When AFIMSC first stood up, these requests for information from the squadrons were being managed by organization workflow email inboxes. AFIMSC used these shared email accounts to manage information requests, but this process provided no oversight regarding the status of each request or which bases had yet to respond.

“I had one task that required 900 audit samples to be submitted to me by all of the 80 bases to review every entitlement paid and I had no way to track it,” notes Linda Alcalá, AFIMSC Division Chief for the Financial Operations, “I had no way to know who answered the task without digging through all the email responses and checking them off in a box. I had to constantly resend emails to everyone, despite the fact that some had completed the task.”

For Alcalá, who has over 25 years of FM experience for the Air Force, this large task exposed the inefficiencies of trying to scale manual task management to the new demands and resource restrictions at the AFIMSC. Alcalá set about putting a team together to rethink the FM task management process to improve FM productivity, lower costs, and improve workload management at the base level.

Alcalá vetted several contractors with Federal agency experience, ultimately choosing Idea Entity, who had experience developing tailored software solutions for Federal agencies and whose team included prior military FM, people who “understood the language” and the problems being faced by AFIMSC. The result of that collaboration was the Due Out Tool (“DOT”) task management solution.

*“I’m always asking ‘What can we do better? What can we do to take care of our folks out in the field better? How can we drive more efficient ways to do our job?’ This tool is definitely one of them.”*

**Linda Alcalá,**  
**AFIMSC Division Chief for the Financial Operations**

### The Rhybus Difference

- 24 hr response from 48-72 hr+
- 100% on time submission
- Eliminated task overtime





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## Streamlined Task Management Oversight

The Air Force as a whole relies on other task management tools that can be licensed by AFIMSC, but these tools did not meet the specific needs of AFIMSC in terms of process or budget. Instead, Alcalá and her team met with Idea Entity to design a system that would be “simple but efficient.”

“I need to get this tasker down, I need to get it back up,” notes Alcalá of the task requests (referred to as taskers), “And I need the in between: I need to be able to automatically track who’s responded, who hasn’t responded, and to provide the input back to the people who sent me that requirement and be on time.”

Design, prototype, and test of the Due Out Tool were performed by Idea Entity in close collaboration with Alcalá and her team. Testing included direct contact with bases and even looping in FMs at MAJCOM, who had many similar frustrations with task management and visibility at the base level.

The resulting Due Out Tool helps simplify the management of AFIMSC Resource Management Directorate tasks to installation comptroller squadrons with enterprise-level visibility over tasks and full automation of task oversight to those who

four hours to create and send, with untold overtime hours spent managing responses, the task creation process is now just 10-15 minutes.

“We can generate automatic reminders in the system that will go only to installations that have not responded,” Alcalá said, “and we can generate a report on the status of the tasker without sending repeat emails.”

The AFIMSC has a goal of delivering 95% of their packages on-time, which they are now consistently able to achieve. According to AFIMSC, all documents are currently being submitted on time.

“The Due Out Tool plays a huge part in the success of what we get done every day,” notes Alcalá.

## Improved Collaboration & Workload Transparency

Although the Due Out Tool was created to address efficiencies in task management, it has also improved collaboration between the AFIMSC and base-level financial service offices as well as between the AFIMSC and the source of the inquiry, which could be the Air Force Accounting and Finance Office (AFAFO), the quality assurance team, or the Financial Improvement and Audit Response (FIAR) team.

In many cases, the task may come from AFAFO and created within the Due Out Tool, streamlining how tasks are then passed to bases:

“AFAFO is our big partner,” Alcalá said. “They will send requests to us which are entered into this tool rather than by email, which will help us respond more quickly because we’ve created the tasker in the tool.”

The Due Out Tool helps streamline how data is extracted and passed back to whoever needs it, whether within

*“The Due Out Tool captures who hasn’t responded with no work on our end. We set a reminder date and only the people that didn’t answer get an email. It’s 150% more efficient.”*

have not responded. Where a task used to take three to



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*“The Due Out Tool reflects the status when someone from our team researches, responds and completes a tasker. With this new asset, the days of having to figure out whether or not a response was sent will be long gone. It will be a more efficient and effective way to operate.”*

**Senior Master Sgt.  
Fabio Horton,  
7th Comptroller  
Squadron superintendent**

the DOT (such as to the AFAFO) or extracted for inquiries based outside the DOT.

At the base level, the DOT has reduced the volume of email, most of which had been unnecessary, and increased the clarity over each tasker. Unlike email, where text can become overwhelming or requests can get lost in unread messages, the design of the Due Out Tool clearly indicates the requirements of each inquiry, the due date, and provides a means to squadrons to respond “on the DOT.”

The Due Out Tool provides transparency and visibility on workload associated with tasks, with the ability for squadrons to assign tasks to team members quickly and easily - no rekeying of requirements required or wondering if a task was completed or not. At the base end, this has helped free time for additional customer service support and other financial management functions.

## Cost Efficiencies

Prior to the rollout of the DOT, the unit had to put in a lot of overtime to manage taskers, communicate with the bases, and package the responses to where they needed

to go. In the case of the 900 samples required in the earlier example, the AFIMSC did not achieve a 100% response rate and were not able to respond within the given timeframe. In this case, the data was being used to develop the pay rate across the Air Force; with inaccurate data, the result was a “pretty high improper pay rate” due to a lack of documentation.

For the first time ever, AFIMSC was able to run the same 900 sample audit using the Due Out Tool. “For the first time ever, we had a very minimal improper pay rate.” Rather than struggling to track the 900 individual responses, the DOT provided automated oversight on document tracking, allowing AFIMSC to focus time and effort on quality assurance review of the documents and on meeting the demands of the inquiry.

While manual task management was a huge source of organizational overtime, the DOT has allowed AFIMSC

to meet requirements for 24 hour turnaround on urgent inquiries with a higher rate of response, eliminating overtime and resulting in higher quality data. “I have not had overtime in quite a long time,” notes Alcalá.

Further, unlike the task system favored by the Air Force, which incurs a yearly license fee, the Due Out Tool was created under contract with no recurring licensing fees, providing “transparency efficiencies on every side.”

*“We love the Due Out Tool!  
Very easy to use, track/  
complete tasks. I wish all  
reports and tasks were on the  
Due Out Tool!”*

**Financial Services Officer  
from Andersen AFB**