MANUFACTURING ENGINEERING PORTFOLIO

Manufacturing Process & Traceability Risk Assessment

Independent demonstration case study for a fictional high-reliability electromechanical assembly.

Prepared by	Discipline	Focus
Deon Bigbee	Manufacturing & Quality Engineering	High-Reliability Production

PROJECT OVERVIEW

A fictional high-reliability electromechanical assembly has entered low-rate production. During a routine production-floor review, inconsistencies are discovered between approved manufacturing documentation and actual production practices. The objective is to determine whether the discrepancies are acceptable shop-floor variation or conditions requiring manufacturing and quality intervention.

Identified Conditions

ID	Condition	Observed Risk
01	**Material Traceability**	Controlled electrical material lacks sufficient point-of-use identification to establish material type, lot information, or storage status.
02	**Tool Traceability**	A hand tool used during assembly lacks visible identification needed to confirm asset or calibration status.
03	**Manufacturing Documentation**	The approved work instruction does not accurately represent the sequence currently performed by production personnel.
04	**Process Control**	The operation depends partially on technician knowledge rather than a fully documented and repeatable manufacturing process.

Engineering premise: a physically acceptable product does not, by itself, prove that the manufacturing process was controlled, repeatable, inspectable, and traceable.

ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT & CONTAINMENT

The first objective is to protect both the product and the integrity of the investigation. In a high-reliability environment, conformity includes evidence that correct materials were used, required controls were maintained, tooling was authorized, operations followed approved documentation, inspections were completed, and product history remains traceable.

Recommended Initial Containment

1. Place affected work in an appropriate controlled status pending evaluation.

2. Identify potentially affected assemblies, serial numbers, or production lots.

3. Preserve available manufacturing, inspection, material, and tooling records.

4. Verify material identification and available storage/handling history.

5. Verify tool identity and calibration/control status where applicable.

6. Compare the performed manufacturing sequence against released documentation.

7. Engage the appropriate manufacturing engineering and quality functions.

Risk Matrix

Condition	Likelihood	Impact	Priority	Rationale
Unidentified material	Possible	High	**HIGH**	Material identity/storage history may be unverifiable.
Unverified tooling	Possible	High	**HIGH**	Tool status can affect acceptance evidence and product quality.
Instruction mismatch	Likely	Medium-High	**HIGH**	Released process and actual execution are not aligned.
Tribal knowledge	Likely	Medium	**MEDIUM**	Repeatability depends on individual experience.

Root-Cause Framework

Potential Cause	Engineering Question
Documentation	Incomplete, outdated, ambiguous, or inconsistent work instructions.
Configuration Control	A process change may have occurred without corresponding documentation release.
Material Control	Identification or storage requirements may not be adequately implemented at point of use.
Tool Control	Unidentified or uncontrolled equipment may be able to enter the production area.
Training	A valid learned process may not have been incorporated into controlled documentation.
Process Design	Critical manufacturing knowledge may reside in tribal knowledge instead of the production system.

CORRECTIVE ACTION & PROCESS CONTROL

Corrective action should address the manufacturing system, not merely correct the immediate discrepancy.

Documentation

Revise controlled manufacturing documentation to define operation sequence, required materials/tooling, critical process requirements, inspection points, acceptance criteria, and traceability.

Material Control

Establish positive identification and appropriate storage controls from receipt through point of use.

Tool Control

Ensure production tooling carries the identification needed to establish authorization and calibration status where applicable.

Production Process

Reduce dependence on undocumented technician knowledge by moving critical manufacturing knowledge into controlled instructions.

Training

Train affected personnel on the revised process and record completion according to the quality system.

Manufacturing Control Flow

Engineering Requirements	Manufacturing Documentation	Materials & Tooling	Production Execution	Inspection	Traceability

Verification of Effectiveness

- Controlled material is positively identified at point of use.
- Controlled/calibrated tooling is identifiable and status can be established.
- Production sequence matches released manufacturing documentation.
- Required inspection and production records are complete.
- No recurrence is observed during the defined verification period.
- Personnel can execute the process without relying on undocumented requirements.

CLIENT VALUE & CAPABILITIES

This demonstration illustrates a practical manufacturing-engineering approach: identify risk at the point of execution, contain intelligently, investigate the system rather than blame the operator, correct the process, and verify that the corrective action remains effective.

• Manufacturing risk identification	**• Production-floor engineering assessment**
• Root-cause analysis	**• Manufacturing process control**
• Quality-system thinking	**• Manufacturing documentation**
• Material and tooling traceability	**• Corrective-action development**
• Verification planning	**• High-reliability production environments**

Manufacturing Engineering Principle

Engineering Requirements -> Manufacturing Documentation -> Materials & Tooling -> Production Execution -> Inspection -> Traceability

A weakness anywhere in this chain can create product, quality, schedule, or compliance risk. The manufacturing system must demonstrate that the product can be built correctly, repeatedly, inspectably, and traceably.

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

Independent demonstration project. All organizations, products, hardware, requirements, processes, dimensions, and manufacturing data described in this case study are fictional and were created solely to demonstrate manufacturing-engineering methodology. No proprietary, export-controlled, classified, customer-confidential, or employer-confidential information is included.

DEON BIGBEE

Manufacturing & Quality Engineering | Aerospace & Defense Manufacturing | Production Engineering | High-Reliability Systems