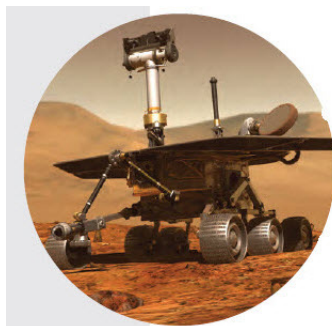


## AEROSPACE SUPPLIER REACHES FOR THE SKY WITH HIGH STANDARDS

By: Jessica Portner

### First Steps

When it comes to quality, Steve Dively says his company aims extremely high. The Vice President of Dicronite® Southwest keeps a



photograph of the Mars Explorer Rover in his Covina, California office to remind him that the manufacturing marvel was built using Dicronite® Southwest's Dry Lubricant coating

process. The thin, durable film which reduces friction, wear and heat, has also been used on the **U.S. Space Shuttle, Formula 1 racecars, superconductors, high-performance engines, commercial and military aircraft, injection molding, and mechanical applications.**

"At 30,000 feet there is no room for error," said Dively. You want to make sure when things are put together they have strict specifications and everything stays together." Dicronite® Southwest's thin, dry film bond (maximum 0.5 micron thickness) when affixed to metal, won't crack, chip or peel.

High standards have served the 43-year-old manufacturing company well in this economic recession. Where some Southern California manufacturers in the aerospace supply chain have seen stagnant growth or job losses, Dicronite® Southwest is thriving. **The company is keeping jobs, growing their business and able to compete for more lucrative work.**

### Quality Standards a Must

Obtaining ISO/AS 9100 Quality Manufacturing Certification was key to that success. The Aerospace industry requires that their suppliers obtain the rigorous certification by December 31, 2011. To become certified, Dicronite® Southwest worked in partnership with California Manufacturing Technology Consulting™ (CMTC) to ensure that when the auditors arrived, the company and employees knew what to expect. To prepare for the audit, each operator had a sheet posted at their workstation detailing the company policies and how to produce a better product for the customer.

The employees were trained in role-playing techniques and taught the standards, procedures and work instructions involved in the quality management system. Everyone in the company that had any direct responsibility for processing a part worked together to meet that benchmark. Teamwork fostered a positive atmosphere.

"You can look at obtaining certifications as more paperwork and cumbersome or you can see it from the standpoint that it makes you better at what you do," said Dively. One of the greatest tools you can use to keep morale of company positive is to show staff that the company is moving forward, he said.

Since they obtained their ISO/AS 9100 certification this year, Dicronite® Southwest has increased sales, reduced costs and enhanced the skills of their workforce. **The company reported \$12,000 in retained sales, \$6,000 in overhead reduction, and \$5,000 savings in unnecessary investments and the retention of one job. Overall, the company registered a 4 to 1 return on investment in just a few months after earning the certification.**



David Bye, the CMTc consultant who worked with the company, said the employees were proud of their accomplishments. "There was excellent teamwork," he said. "The attitude was, "What else can we do to be better?"

### **Next Steps**

The company is now seeking a rigorous NADCAP Certification. The National Aerospace and Defense Contractors Accreditation Program will further improve production and be a likely boost to their customer base. "It's key that Dicronite® Southwest does everything it can to help keep the American aerospace industry competitive on the global market," Dively said, "We are committed to supplying the aerospace industry with what they require to meet today and tomorrow's standards."

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### **FEATURED CUSTOMER:**

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