

# Don't replace it, repair it

by Laura Pellegrino  
Sunburst staff writer

One shop at Holloman saves the base money by repairing everything from VCRs and telephones to the F-117's computer components.

The five members of the 49th Maintenance Squadron's Air Force Repair Enhancement Program Section — previously known as Gold Flag — will try to repair any piece of equipment as long as it was purchased with government funds.

"The Air Force Repair Enhancement Program is a valuable tool in reducing the number of equipment purchases, costly contract repairs and mission capable conditions, which is when aircraft are grounded due to a need for repairs," said Tech. Sgt. Cooney Sarracino, 49th MXS AFREP program manager. "We are here to find better ways of repairing items, reducing program costs and increasing mission capability."

The team has fixed everything from dental equipment to aircraft parts. In fiscal year 2003, they saved the base \$300,000 in repair and avoidance costs.

One company wanted \$250 per hour just to look at a broken piece of equipment, said Staff Sgt. Frank Lane, AFREP circuit card repair technician. The team ended up fixing the equipment themselves.

"There's no guarantee it can be fixed, but it's already broken," Lane said. "It's better for AFREP to look at it first than to spend money to repair or replace it."

The team is willing to look at a variety of items.

"We sometimes get things we've never seen before," said Lane. "It's challenging, but we use what we've learned in the past to make repairs."

All of the team members have a background in avionics or small elec-

tronics. They attend a six week technical school on miniature and micro-miniature circuit card repair, and from there use ingenuity to fix anything that's broken.

"AFREP technicians really need an overall knowledge of how things work," said Senior Airman Bryan Borgos, AFREP circuit card repair technician. "We use that knowledge to make logical decisions about how to fix equipment."

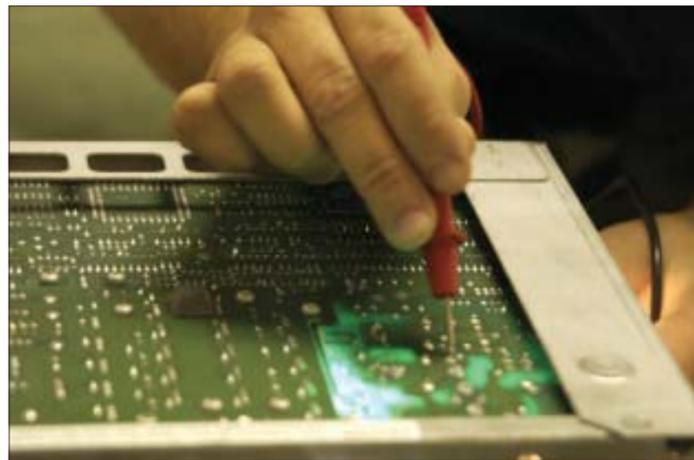
Teamwork plays an important role because each member has a different background, Sarracino said.

"All of us approach things differently," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Trujillo, circuit card repair technician. "Sometimes, I'll totally overlook an electronic aspect, but someone else will catch it."

The AFREP team repairs about 20 items per month, Sarracino said. The more items they receive, the more money the base saves.

"The program is only a success when the base uses it," he said. "If throwing a piece of equipment away doesn't make sense, or if someone thinks a 'depot repairable only' piece of equipment is within local repair capabilities, they should contact us."

For information about getting an item repaired by AFREP, call 572-3653 or go to building 811.



Lights are used to illuminate the circuit card and help technicians see where traces are connected.



Staff Sgt. Frank Lane, circuit card repair technician, fixes a tail hook adapter cable from an F-117.



Senior Airman Bryan Borgos, circuit card repair technician, troubleshoots an uninterrupted power supply unit. Uninterrupted power supply units are the power back-ups for most computers on base.

Photos by Laura Pellegrino



Staff Sgt. Daniel Trujillo, circuit card repair technician, uses a microscope to examine a circuit card.



Staff Sgt. Frank Lane, circuit card repair technician, solders a circuit card from aerospace ground equipment.