

Outlook

Technical Readiness Level

I got an education on Technical Readiness Levels (TRLs) at a recent meeting of our Photonics group. For those of you not in the know, TRL is the method folks at NASA and ESA use to determine the maturity of a technology under consideration for use in a space mission. Basically, they audit the demonstrated capabilities of a product and assign it a number on a scale from 1 to 9. A TRL of 9 is used to describe mature, flight-proven technologies. The slightly lower TRL 8 rating means flight-qualified through ground or space testing and use. You get the idea.

Glenair manufactures dozens of level 9 technologies, including the Glenair connector savers, conduit assemblies and D38999 connectors used in so many space launch applications. We also produce countless TRL 9 Micro-D, Nano, Mighty Mouse and other small form factor connectors used in satellite applications and payloads. High TRL ratings are important, as they indicate to agencies and companies beyond NASA that your parts are of the caliber and durability needed for space. For example, one of our family of Hold Down and Release Mechanisms (HDRM) recently achieved a TRL of 9—exciting news, as it means other mission-platforms can now procure the product with complete confidence. A modified version of the TRL system is also used by the DOD. Glenair STAR-PAN hubs and cables, for example, are TRL 9 rated solutions for soldier personal area networking.

We love to use metaphors in our business discussions here at Glenair. And it seems to me that the Technical Readiness Level system is a suitable metaphor for how we run our entire operation. Because in every respect, it is our ongoing goal to raise each area of our business that impacts customer service and product quality to TRL 9. From product design to qualification testing, from the execution of our worldwide quality system to our daily, personal interactions with customers, from the capacity and capabilities of our factories to the technical training of our field sales force, from our same-day shipment program to our component part and materials inventories—whatever the area, whatever the deliverable, we are taking steps at Glenair to perform the work at Level 9.

Bold words? Perhaps. But we happily welcome our customers to visit our operation and to be their own judge. We believe Glenair is now among the best equipped and most capable companies in the mission-critical interconnect industry. From lead-times to customer service and product quality, we are getting the job done. TRL 9? No doubt about it.

Chris Toomey

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Publisher

Christopher J. Toomey

Managing Editor

Marcus Kaufman

Art Director/Editor

Mike Borgsdorf

Graphic Designer

George Ramirez

Editor

Meghan Taylor

Technical Consultant

Jim Donaldson

Issue Contributors

Davinder Basuita

Jason LaRock

Ron Logan

Mathias Nakatsui

Sonny Sahib

Ramzi Sawires

Chris Van Soest

Photography

Dan Kaufman

Distribution

Terry White

*To subscribe or unsubscribe,
please contact Terry White:
twhite@glenair.com*

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GLENAIR, INC.

1211 AIR WAY
GLENDAL, CA 91201-2497
TEL: 818-247-6000
FAX: 818-500-9912
E-MAIL: sales@glenair.com
www.glenair.com

