

Life Cycle Management

Safeguarding customers from the catastrophic and costly effects of vital approved components or materials becoming obsolete or unavailable is a challenge with which Oxley is intimately familiar through its long association with military markets.

The long service life of military equipment - from design concept through to retirement – often involves a platform evolving to take advantage of upgrades and technology advances. But that time-span can also see suppliers closing down or ceasing to manufacture certain components. More recently specification changes forced through RoHS* or REACH** also present a major problem for maintaining supply chains and ensuring continued operational capability.

“It is an integral part of Oxley’s business philosophy to manage obsolescence for customers.”

The company has developed robust and comprehensive processes for supporting clients to avoid or negate obsolescence issues by ensuring components are available throughout the operational life of equipment and platforms.

An EMI filter on BAE Systems’ hugely successful Hawk trainer was originally supplied by a company later taken over by Oxley. The lifespan of the component stretched from the early 1990s to 2012 when the ‘last chance to buy’ offer was made to the supply chain. However, when the now obsolete product was again required to fulfil an order and maintain operational capability, Oxley undertook to develop and requalify new materials and made a substantial investment in its dry press ceramic manufacturing capabilities to re-engineer the filter to its original specifications – supporting the customer through a potential obsolescence crisis.

* *RoHS is a directive based in the United Kingdom that insists substances of very high concern - like cadmium, lead, and mercury - should not be used in the manufacture of electronics and electronic devices. RoHS was fully implemented by the European Union (EU) in 2006. Restrictions of Hazardous Substances.”*

** *REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals, EC No 1907/2006) are the EU chemicals regulations introduced in 2007 with an implementation deadline of 2018. REACH enforces review of the properties of chemicals, identifying the associated health and environmental risks and ensures that information is communicated to suppliers and downstream users in the EU market. The objective of the REACH regulations is to promote phased substitution of the most dangerous substances.*

