

MEL Mysteries



Dear Editor,

I feel that I have a fairly thorough knowledge of maintenance expenditure limits (MELs). In the MEL article in PS 695 (Oct 2010) issue, I found one of the explanations on Page 60 misleading.

The question was asked, "What price do I use in MEL calculations?" The answering paragraph tells us, "The forecasted MEL dollar value is the price you use for the MEL." This is questionable, because I know that the MEL is actually a percentage (found in the TB) of the forecasted MEL planning price (from the Standard Study Number System or SSNS).

During my years as a surface maintenance mechanic inspector, I was taught to use the percentage (shown in the TB) of the forecasted price—for example, 65 percent (shown in the TB) of \$10,000 (the forecasted price taken from the MEL planning report in SSNS). So, in this example, that equals a MEL of \$6,500.

But this article implied that the forecasted MEL price is the actual MEL. If this was the case, there would be no need for the TB 43-0002 series of publications. My concern is that Soldiers will use the forecasted prices from the SSNS as actual MELs, and spend way too much on equipment that should be turned in for replacement.

MSG Eric Fink
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Editor's note:

Thanks for writing, Master Sergeant Fink. You're correct, and the explanation and example you gave us here will surely help out the field.

Readers, most of the MEL article was straightforward, but we need to clarify that sentence. The forecasted MEL price is used in **calculating** the MEL, but it is not the **actual** MEL.

To determine the actual MEL on an item, you need two figures:

First, get the forecasted MEL price for that specific item from the most current SSNS Report.

Second, find the percentage to use in your calculation. You will find that percentage in the item's TB.

Multiply the forecasted MEL price for the item by the percentage listed in the TB, and you'll get your MEL.

Finally, compare that MEL against the estimated cost of repair. For example, if your MEL is \$6,500, but the cost to fix the equipment is \$8,000, repair is not authorized unless a waiver is requested and approved.

MEL calculation

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Estimated Repair Costs (per vehicle): | \$ _____ |
| b. Army Unit Price on FED LOG: | \$ _____ |
| c. MEL Percentage: | _____ % |
| d. MEL [Army Unit Price (b) x MEL Percentage (c)]: | \$ _____ |
| e. Do estimated repair costs (a) exceed the MEL (d)? | Yes [<input type="checkbox"/>] No [<input type="checkbox"/>] |

Complete step by step MEL process

