



White Paper on Prevention of Employee Injuries and Restoration of Injured Employees to Work

**Presented by Tom Holloway, AEE-200
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ISSUE:

- In CBY 2002, over 1700 FAA employees filed reports of on-the-job injuries or illnesses.
- In the same time period, 4600 claims, both old and new, received some form of payment.
- The cost in 2002 exceeded \$90 million in compensation for lost wages, survivor benefits, medical costs, and continuation of pay.

ISSUE:

- In addition, the agency incurred backfill overtime and other indirect costs.
- Costs have grown 2% per year since 1992. (Government average 3.5%)
- Cost increase in CBY 2002 was 0.5%
- These costs of not preventing injuries and illnesses directly reduce what the FAA can spend to help employees accomplish their jobs.

APPROACH:

A systematic, progressive, coordinated effort to:

- Prevent injuries
- Provide excellent medical care when injuries do occur
- Follow up regularly during rehabilitation.
- Return employees to work as soon as they are able.

KEY CHALLENGES:

- Clear **policy**.
- Commit **staff and money** to manage these programs.
- Provide **training** to supervisors.
- Ensure that supervisors, claims specialists, safety professionals, and medical personnel have **accurate data** to allow them to manage these issues actively.
- Reenergize efforts to bring people **back to work**.

INITIATIVES:

- Mishap prevention
 - Training
 - Hazard assessments and mitigation
 - Design reviews
 - Data collection and analysis (SMIS)
 - Oversight evaluations and safety committees.

- AHR Pilot on managing OWCP claims in Southern Region and Headquarters, with emphasis on new claims.

- ATS Pilot on returning employees to work, with emphasis on long-term OWCP claims.
 - Review case files
 - Identify claimants who can do some work, and match with FAA needs.
 - Train supervisors, managers, employees
 - Use SMIS as a reporting/tracking tool.

- ATS early interventions on new cases including:
 - Training
 - Regular contact with employees who were injured.
 - Controversion or disputing of questionable claims
 - Tracking of Continuation of Pay and backfill overtime

ACTION PLANS:

Safety Management Information System (SMIS)

- July 31, 2003: Evaluated pilot results and made appropriate program changes. Asked the Southern Region to enter mishap data. (AEP)
- October 1, 2003: Enter all mishaps into SMIS agency-wide to enable mishap tracking, trend analysis, and lessons learned. (All LOB/SO)

ACTION PLANS:

Managing New Cases More Effectively (AHR)

- **May 31, 2003:** Hired staff and set up the program. Staff now reviews all new claims for the Southern Region and Headquarters. (AHR)
- **June 30, 2003:** Manage long-term cases outside the scope of the ATS pilot. (AHR)
- **July 1, 2004:** Provide the Administrator with an evaluation of the program. If expansion is justified, identify needed personnel and funds. (AHR)

ACTION PLANS:

Returning Long-Term Cases To Work (ATS)

- July 30, 2003: Notified all eligible ASO employees about the return to work initiative. (ATS)
- August 29, 2003: Worked with local managers to match employee's skills and capabilities to work assignments within the Southern Region. (ATS)

ACTION PLANS:

Returning Long-Term Cases To Work (ATS)

- September 30, 2003: Made formal job offers to eligible employees to return to work. (ATS)
- October 30, 2003: Provide the Administrator with an evaluation of the program. If expansion is justified, identify the necessary personnel and funds. (ATS)

ACTION PLANS:

Improving Collaboration, Accountability, Training And Data

- August 31, 2003: Determined feasibility of expanding data fields in SMIS for ATS, to meet a recommendation made by the Inspector General. Ensured access for OWCP points of contact. (AEP)
- January 30, 2004: Develop a mandatory OWCP training program for all managers and LOB-specific supplemental training materials. (AHR, ATS)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Emphasize agency-wide OWCP training for all managers.
- Issue Administrator's Policy Statement on OSH and OWCP.

- Each LOB/SO establish procedures for management review of all work-related injuries.
- DASHO brief the Management Board quarterly on employee safety program status.
- Discuss with DOT the need for OWCP statutory program changes (to reduce OWCP benefits when the person reaches the normal retirement age).

Thanks To The OWCP Working Group

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