

OCTOBER 28, 2003 Meeting Summary
Occupational Safety, Health, and Environmental Compliance Committee
(OSHECCOM)

The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, October 28, 2003, at 10:05 AM in the 9th Floor ABC Conference Room by Sharon Pinkerton, Assistant Administrator for Aviation Policy, Planning and Environment (AEP) and the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO), who was filling in for the Chair, Bruce Johnson, AAT-1. Ms. Pinkerton introduced herself and then asked all OSHECCOM Members and observers to introduce themselves. Ms. Pinkerton thanked everyone for participating.

PREVENTION OF EMPLOYEE INJURIES AND RESTORATION OF INJURED EMPLOYEES TO WORK

Ms. Pinkerton recognized Tom Holloway, AEE-200, who made a presentation describing the white paper and its recommendations regarding the prevention of FAA employee injuries and the restoration of injured employees to work.

Mr. Holloway made the following points:

- In Chargeback Year (CBY) 2002, over 1700 FAA employees filed reports of on-the-job injuries or illnesses, and in the same time period, 4,600 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.
- However, that \$90 million does not include additional incurred agency costs of backfill overtime and other indirect costs.
- A Safety/OWCP Working Group was convened. The Working Group determined that a systematic, progressive, and coordinated effort by all FAA lines of businesses and staff offices (LOB/SO) was needed. The goals/objectives of this effort need to be: preventing injuries; providing excellent medical care when injuries do occur; following up regularly during rehabilitation; and returning employees to work as soon as they are able.
- Several Action Plans were initiated, including:
 - Safety Management Information System (SMIS);
 - Managing New Cases More Effectively [AHR];
 - Returning Long Term Cases to Work Project [ATS]; and
 - Improving Collaboration, Accountability, Training, and Data.
- The Working Group developed the following recommendations:
 - (1) Emphasize agency-wide OWCP training for all managers;
 - (2) Issue an Administrator's Policy Statement on OSH and OWCP;
 - (3) Each LOB/SO establish procedures for management review of all work-related injuries;
 - (4) DASHO brief the Management Board quarterly on employee safety program status; and
 - (5) Discuss with DOT the need for OWCP statutory program changes (to reduce OWCP benefits when the person reaches the normal retirement age).

Mr. Holloway noted that a copy of the White Paper was included in the OSHECCOM notebook.

Mr. Holloway then discussed Why Safety?, describing how senior managers can help, the fact that there are large hidden costs of employee accidents, and that safety pays--300% return on investment.

A variety of questions were asked with comments made by Mr. Holloway and others, including:

- Who has access to SMIS?
 - All supervisors and managers have access for data entry and for the OSHA 300 Logs. Safety professionals and collateral duty safety staff have access to both data entry and all reports.
- Relative to the White Paper Recommendation for OWCP training--is the recommendation for emphasis on the training or is it to make the training mandatory?
 - The workgroup initially recommended mandatory training. The administrator would emphasize the importance of that training.
- What training delivery methods are available - a web-based handbook? self-instruction materials that could be printed from the web? CBI/web-based (like the recent security training)?
 - The training does not have to be expensive. A combination of the above methods can be tailored to the needs of the lines of business.
- There is a shortage of operations funding for safety programs in the Lines of Business and Staff Offices. In the past, F&E money was available to provide safety assistance for all LOBs, but that has been cut back in recent years.
 - Jere Hayslett took an action item to clarify what F&E funds can be used for and what they cannot be used for relative to safety for FAA LOB/SO.
- Employee safety is not in FAA's Flight Plan. Some LOB/SO business plans address employee safety while others do not. What about having the Administrator require all LOB/SOs address safety in their business plans?
 - Good idea. We will be happy to share the language from the AEP business plan as a model.

ADMINISTRATOR/DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR REMARKS

Bobby Sturgell, Deputy Administrator, came to the meeting briefly to provide comments from him and FAA Administrator Marion Blakey. Mr. Sturgell indicated that the Administrator's Office was contemplating the recommendations in the white paper and what were the best first steps to do a better job of keeping FAA employees safe and getting FAA employees back to work when they have been ill or injured.

SAFETY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMIS)

Ms. Pinkerton recognized Michael Thomas, AEE-200, who provided a senior management overview of the FAA "Safety Management Information System" (SMIS) and illustrated how one may access the site and what one would see. Mr. Thomas also illustrated some of the various types of reports the system can generate.

Mr. Thomas made the following points:

- The purpose of SMIS is to report work-related injury or illness, property damage, and motor vehicle and fire mishaps online using the 3900-6 form.
- Because SMIS is a central location to document and track mishaps, the data in SMIS will allow FAA to: (1) improve the collection of statistical information on occupational injuries; (2) improve the ability to determine how, when, where, and why injuries occur; (3) prevent future hazards in like instances through identification and mitigation and thus provide a safer work place; (4) help prioritize employee mishap prevention efforts; and (5) help users maintain local OSHA 300 injury logs.

A variety of questions were asked with comments made by Mr. Thomas and others, including:

- The need for access to CA-35 forms.
 - AEE took an action item to address this issue. The form is now on SMIS under the Forms tab.
- A comment that there are three levels of prevention. Primary prevention is identifying and removing hazards that would cause mishaps. The analysis of data in SMIS to determine trends is a secondary prevention level. The management of OWCP claims is a tertiary prevention level. While these secondary and tertiary prevention efforts are important, the FAA needs to stress primary prevention.

ATS RETURN-TO-WORK INITIATIVE

Ms. Pinkerton recognized Wanda Reyna, AFZ-200, who discussed ATS' OWCP charge back costs and proactive actions ATS had undertaken in the last year to address the issue, as well as a DOT Inspector General's report regarding FAA OWCP in Air Traffic. Ms. Reyna specifically highlighted a proactive initiative known as ATS's Return-to-Work Initiative.

Ms. Reyna made the following points:

- ATS' Department of Labor (DOL) OWCP charge back costs are high; \$77 million and \$77.5 million for FY 2001 and FY2002 respectively. However, these figures do not include backfill overtime and continuation of pay!
- In a review of the number of ATS cases over one year old (1,936), 35 percent of those are potential return-to-work recipients. These 35 percent (or 675 cases) represent a DOL charge back of \$34.4 million.
- After concluding that available in-house data were insufficient to determine whether these potential return-to-work recipients could actually return to work, ATS decided to review DOL case files for indications that recipients could do some kind of work. FAA's Southern Region (ASO) was selected as it represented 22 percent of the cases.
- Based on these reviews, the Human Resources OWCP manager concurred with 39 resulting ASO reviews and took the following actions:
 - (1) 26 letters were sent to the Department of Labor or physicians requesting up-to-date medical information.
 - (2) 12 "Good News" letters were sent.
 - (3) ASO legal counsel recommended against further contact with 3 due to EEO settlements.
 - (4) Need further consideration of 45 cases, based on age of recipient, pay costs, undergoing medical procedures.
- A variety of issues came up. Examples include:
 - FAA is paying OWCP costs to a 89 year old.
 - One person wanted to be productive, but was not allowed to return to work as an air traffic controller due to the need to take certain medication. While receiving benefits, the person went back to school and received a law degree. FAA is exploring the possibility of a position in AGC.
- ATS progress to date includes:
 - (1) ATS-1 Policy Statement
 - (2) Completed 2 of 12 Department of Labor district office visits.
 - (3) Briefed both AF and AT union leaders.
 - (4) Audited cases - 1 died six months ago and Department of Labor is recovering overpayment of \$5,000 per month.
 - (5) Working with payroll to recover \$350,000 in overpayment of continuation of pay.

- (6) Now reporting and tracking backfill overtime and continuation of pay for injuries using SMIS.
- (7) Have established new positions to place recipients in ATS.
- (8) Joined together the OSH programs in ATS with the OWCP Program.
- (9) Developed a plan to educate Department of Labor examiners and adjudicators.
- ATS still has the following challenges and issues: the lengthy timeframe from initial review of file to final job offer; matching return-to-work participants to work situations that are in the best interest of FAA and the employee; coaching supervisors of returnees; and retraining recipients to perform new tasks.

UPDATE ON OWCP COSTS AND CASE MANAGEMENT PILOT PROJECT

Ms. Pinkerton recognized Cary Leventhal, AHL-100, who made a presentation describing FAA's 2003 workers' compensation chargeback costs. Mr. Leventhal provided a chart (attached) which shows the distribution of cases numbers and chargeback cost by LOB/SO.

Mr. Leventhal made the following points:

- FAA's OWCP chargeback bill was over \$88 million in 2003. Comparisons to the 2002 bill indicated the following: (1) FAA's total bill increased 0.5 percent in 2003 (while government-wide, the total bill increased 4.5 percent in 2003); (2) FAA's medical costs increased 12.9 percent in 2003 (while government-wide, medical costs increased 6.3 percent); and (3) FAA's wage loss compensation decreased 0.9 percent (while the government-wide, wage loss compensation increased 3.9 percent).
- The chart showing the distribution of numbers of cases and chargeback costs by LOB/SOs indicates a total of 4,298 cases in 2003. This includes all cases with expenses in 2003, regardless of the date of occurrence. LOB/SO numbers ranged from 1 (Information Services and AST) to 3,528 (ATS).
- While ATS was specifically focusing on cases older than one year, AHR was focusing on new cases (less than one year old). In the AHR OWCP Case Management Pilot covering ASO and Headquarters, AHR had the following accomplishments to date:
 - 263 new cases were processed since June 1, 2003.
 - 7 returns to work were facilitated.
 - 2 COP controversions were upheld.
 - 4 supervisory training sessions were held.
 - A home visit trip was conducted in Atlanta, Georgia.
 - Estimated cost avoidance to date is \$650,000.
- Other AHR national efforts include: case reviews conducted in Jacksonville, Florida, and New York OWCP offices in conjunction with ATS Return-to-Work Initiative; and OWCP Supervisor's Manual printed and distributed.

Ray Thoman, stepped in as chair for Ms. Pinkerton, who was called away to another meeting.

COMMITTEE LOGISTICS

Ray Thoman quickly described two committee logistics issues before the committee: (1) charter revision to address various FAA organizational changes; and (2) the possible addition of AFSCME to membership. Due to time constraints, there was no discussion of the issues by committee members. Instead, members were asked to do the following:

- Charter revision - a workgroup was to be set up to draft the revision; members were asked to send an email to Ms. Morgan, the OSHECCOM Coordinator, if they would take part in the charter revision workgroup.
- Possible addition of AFSCME to membership - members were requested to provide comments (support or objections) to Ms. Morgan, the OSHECCOM Coordinator.

Lastly, it was noted that the next Scheduled OSHECCOM Meeting is in April 2004, with the possible dates being: Tuesday, April 20, 2004, Wednesday, April 21, 2004, or Thursday, April 29, 2004. Members were requested to provide comments on the best date for the next OSHECCOM meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

Ray Thoman had Tom Holloway, AEE-200, recap the action items that resulted from the meeting. The action items are:

- Each LOB/SO include an OSH/OWCP element in their in LOB/SO business plans
- Jere Hayslett, AFX-800 agreed to provide clarification of the funding of safety for FAA LOB/SOs.
- Each LOB/SO report all their mishaps in SMIS.
- Each LOB/SO emphasize OWCP training.
- Each LOB/SO ensure that each mishap is investigated, identify the cause, and take action to prevent reoccurrence.
- AEE and AHL agreed to work together to make CA-35 forms available on SMIS.
- Members who want to participate in the OSHECCOM charter revision workgroup notify Shaunda Morgan.
- Members provide comments to Ms. Morgan regarding the possible addition of AFSCME to OSHECCOM membership.
- Members specify the best date, of the three provided, for the next OSHECCOM meeting in an email to Ms. Morgan.

Ray Thoman adjourned the meeting at 12:05 PM.

Attendance

Members/Non-Chartered Members --

Robert Howard, NATCA, (NATCA is OSHECCOM Vice Chair)
Dennis King, NATCA
Frank Hatfield, ATX-1, (representing Bruce Johnson, AAT-1; AAT-1 OSHECCOM Chair)
Sharon Pinkerton, AEP-1, DASHO (acted as OSHECCOM Chair for this meeting)
Carl Burleson, AEE-1
Ray Thoman, AHR-2B
Gail Orendorff, AGC-620
Stephen Glowacki, ARN-200/NAATS
Mary Winston, ACR-10
Arlene Saenger, AAM-200
Barbara Brown, ACO-3
Sabreenah Key, ARP-10
Tom Holloway, AEE-200
Frank Lanzetta, AEE-200
Tony Becker, AEA472
Don Wiener, LIB SMO
Peggy Gilligan, AVR-2
Shaunda Morgan, AEE-200 Detail, OSHECCOM Coordinator

Others --

Michael Thomas, AEE-200
Wanda Reyna, AFZ-200
Cary Leventhal, AHL-100
Vicki Hershisier, AEE-200
Jere Hayslett, AFZ-800
Thomas Cuthel, AEA-472
Edward Matheke, AAM-700
Sharon Fletcher, AFZ-200
Roy Daniels, AFZ-200
Carolyn Blum, ARC
Alan Maxton, ARS-110

Siony Hill, API-10, OWCP POC
Suzanne Holloway, ADA-10, OWCP POC
Tom Carroll, ATX-200, OWCP POC

Mary Wingard, ATX-500, OSH POC
Cheryl Mazella, AFZ-800, OSH POC
Vivian Green, ASU-430, OSH POC
Jean Watson, AVR OSH POC
Murry Camp, ARC-10, OSH POC
Theresa Sabino, APA-10, OSH POC
Velma Cooper, ASY-10, OSH POC

There were also some FAA personnel in the Regions and Centers who called into the meeting, including persons in AAK, AGL, and AMC. [Val Jokela, AAL-200; WayneVogelsburg, AGL-471; and Dick Rodine, AMC-2;]

Ruth Ellen Schelhaus, NISC