REVISED 6/3/99

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: MAY 14 1999

From: Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (00S/006)

Subj: Occupational Safety and Health Goals for FY 1999

To: See list below

1. In accordance with the requirements of 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1960 and guidance from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the FY 1999 occupational safety and health goals for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) organizations are furnished with this memorandum. See attachment.

2. The Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1) will:

a. Request reports from each of the VA organizations listed to determine which organizations and facilities have met these goals;

b. Provide lost time case rate (LTCR) information for FY 1999 goals to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Materiel Management, the Office of Financial Management, and the Office of Administration; and

c. Publish a summary of the Department's success in attaining these goals. The summary will provide information on each organization's success in meeting its goals. It will also identify facilities with high LTCRs (above 5.34 in VHA, NCA, and VCS, and 2.0 in all other VA organizations) and those with low LTCRs (below 1.5 in VHA, 4.0 in NCA, 2.5 in VCS, and 0.5 in all other VA organizations).

3. All VA medical centers that meet the FY 1999 goals will be nominated for the National Safety Council Health Care Section "Outstanding Safety Achievement Award." VA's Office of Occupational Safety and Health will provide assistance, as necessary, to those medical centers that meet the nomination criteria.

4. Should your staff have any questions concerning this initiative, they may contact Myrna J. Aavedal, Ph.D., VA's Office of Occupational Safety and Health, at 273-9744.

Eugene A. Brickhouse

Attachments

Addressees
Under Secretary for Health (10)
Under Secretary for Benefits (20)
Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs (40)
Assistant Secretary for Financial Management (004)
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration (03)
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management (05)
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Materiel Management (90)

Veterans Health Administration
FY 1999 Occupational Safety and Health Goals

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA)[1] will:

1. Identify facilities with a FY 1997 lost time case rate (LTCR), per 100 employees, of 5.34 or higher (twice the FY 1997 Federal average LTCR of 2.67), as determined by the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1) WC/Safety Tracker, and reduce their LTCRs by 10 percent. Facilities with a LTCR less than 5.34 shall either:

a. Reduce the LTCR 2 percent from their lowest LTCR for the previous five fiscal years; or

b. Maintain their LTCR below a FY 1997 rate of 1.5 (facilities with a LTCR lower than 1.5 can meet the goal by maintaining their low rate and do not have to reduce it by a further 2 percent).

2. Workers' Compensation Claim Form Submission Activities:

a. Increase by 5 percent over the FY 1997 level the number of facility workers' compensation claims submitted to the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) within 14 calendar days from the date the employee signed the claim form (see Federal Worker 2000 Initiative, TAB A); or

b. Maintain an 85 percent or greater on-time submission rate[2] for FY 1999.

3. Ensure that Medical Center Director receives a briefing on safety and health issues and reviews the OSH program at the facility at least annually.

4. Implement a violence prevention plan that includes, but is not limited to a written violence prevention policy and violence prevention program training as specified in VA Handbook 7700.1, paragraph 8b.

5. Ensure that at least one facility OSH official/manager attends a national meeting/conference of a nationally recognized safety and/or health professional group, such as the National Safety Council and the Federal Agency Committee for Occupational Safety and Health. (Facilities that cannot achieve this goal because of insufficient funding for travel and conference costs may provide justification to the DASHO's office as part of the request described in paragraph 2.)

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[1] Elements 1-5 are specifically facility activities. VHA HQ will determine action officers for Elements 6-9.
[2] Claims submitted within 14 calendar days from the date the supervisor receives the employee's signed claim form are considered on time by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

6. The Office of Occupational Safety and Health and Strategic Healthcare Group will identify up to five VHA job classification codes of mutual interest to all Administrations with the highest LTCRs and perform a Job Hazard Analysis for each code based on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines. (See OSHA Publication 3071 "Job Hazard Analysis," Tab B.) Present findings for peer review and publication.

7. Begin the development of a written VHA plan for a comprehensive ergonomic program. As a minimum, the program would include goals and objectives; program interface with existing programs; workplace analysis; hazard prevention and control; health care management; and education and training.

8. Identify at least one VHA medical process involving sharps that does not currently utilize safe sharps devices and provide a safe device where an alternative is available and appropriate.

9. Implement a safe sharp usage program as appropriate.

Veterans Benefits Administration
FY 1999 Occupational Safety and Health Goals

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)[3] will:

1. Facilities with an FY 1997 lost time case rate (LTCR) of 2.0 or higher, as determined by the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1) WC/Safety Tracker, will reduce those LTCRs by 10 percent. Facilities with a LTCR less than 0.50 shall either:

a. Reduce the LTCR 2 percent from their lowest LTCR for the previous five fiscal years; or

b. Maintain their LTCR per 100 employees below a FY 1997 rate of 0.5.

2. Workers' Compensation Claim Form Submission Activities:

a. Increase by 5 percent over the FY 1997 level the number of facility workers' compensation claims submitted to the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) within 14 days from the date the employee signed the claim form (see Federal Worker 2000 Initiative, TAB A); or

b. Maintain an 85 percent or greater on-time submission rate[4] for FY 1999.

3. Ensure that the Senior Management Team members receive a briefing on safety and health issues at the facility or attend at least one safety committee meeting.

4. Implement a violence prevention plan that includes, but is not limited to a written violence prevention policy and violence prevention program training as specified in VA Handbook 7700.1, paragraph 8b.

5. Ensure that at least one person assigned collateral duty safety responsibilities on a national level attends a national meeting/conference of a nationally recognized safety and/or health professional group, such as the National Safety Council and OSHA's Federal Advisory Committee for Occupational Safety and Health.

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[3] Elements 1-5 are specifically facility activities. VBA HQ will determine action officers for Elements 6-7.
[4] Claims submitted within 14 calendar days from the date the the supervisor receives the employee's signed claim form are considered on time by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

6. In cooperation with the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1), identify up to five VBA job classification codes with the highest LTCRs and coordinate the development of a Job Hazard Analysis with VHA for each position based on OSHA guidelines. (See OSHA Publication 3071 "Job Hazard Analysis," TAB B.) Present findings for peer review and publication.

7. Begin the development of a written VBA plan for a comprehensive ergonomic program. As a minimum, the program would include goals and objectives; program interface with existing programs; workplace analysis; hazard prevention and control; health care management; and education and training.

National Cemetery Administration (NCA), Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management (OAMM), Office of Financial Management (OFM), and Office of Administration (OA)
FY 1999 Occupational Safety and Health Goals

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA)[5], Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management (OAMM), Office of Financial Management (OFM), and Office of Administration (OA) must:

1. Identify facilities with a FY 1997 lost time case rate, per 100 employees, of 5.34 or higher (twice the FY 1997 Federal average LTCR of 2.67) in NCA and 2.0 in OAMM, OFM, and OA, as determined by the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1) WC/Safety Tracker, and reduce their LTCRs by 10 percent. Facilities with a LTCR less than 4.0 in NCA and 0.50 in other organizations shall either:

a. Reduce the LTCR 2 percent from their lowest LTCR for the previous five fiscal years, or

b. Maintain their LTCR per 100 employees below a FY 1997 rate of 4.0 in NCA and 0.5 in OAMM, OFM, and OA.

2. Workers' Compensation Claim Form Submission Activities:

a. Increase by 5 percent over the FY 1997 level the number of facility workers' compensation claims submitted to the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) within 14 days from the date the employee signed the claim form (see Federal Worker 2000 Initiative, TAB A); or

b. Maintain an 85 percent or greater on-time submission rate[6] for FY 1999.

3. Ensure that Senior Management Team members receive a briefing on safety and health issues at the facility or attend at least one safety committee meeting.

4. Implement a violence prevention plan that includes, but is not limited to a written violence prevention program training as specified in VA Handbook 7700.1, paragraph 8b.

5. Ensure that at least one person assigned safety responsibilities for the organization on a collateral duty basis attends a national meeting/conference of a nationally recognized safety and/or health professional group such as the National Safety Council and the Federal Agency Committee for Occupational Safety and Health.

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[5] Elements 1-5 are specifically facility activities. NCA HQ will determine action officers for Elements 6-7.
[6] Claims submitted within 14 calendar days from the date the supervisor receives the employee's signed claim form are considered on time by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

6. In cooperation with the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1), identify up to five NCA job classification codes with the highest LTCRs and coordinate the development of a Job Hazard Analysis with VHA for each position based on OSHA guidelines. (See OSHA Publication 3071 "Job Hazard Analysis," TAB B.) Present findings for peer review and publication.

7. Begin the development of a written plan for a comprehensive ergonomic program. As a minimum, the program would include goals and objectives; program interface with existing programs; workplace analysis; hazard prevention and control; health care management; and education and training.

Veterans Canteen Service
FY 1999 Occupational Safety and Health Goals

Veterans Canteen Service (VCS)[7] must:

1. Identify facilities with a FY 1997 lost time case rate, per 100 employees, of 5.34 or higher (twice the FY 1997 Federal average LTCR of 2.67), as determined by the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1) WC/Safety Tracker, and reduce their LTCRs by 10 percent. Facilities with a LTCR less than 2.5 shall either:

a. Reduce the LTCR 2 percent from their lowest LTCR for the previous five fiscal years; or

b. Maintain their LTCR per 100 employees below a FY 1997 rate of 2.5.

2. Workers' Compensation Claim Form Submission Activities:

a. Increase by 5 percent over the FY 1997 level the number of facility workers' compensation claims submitted to the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) within 14 days from the date the employee signed the claim form (see Federal Worker 2000 Initiative, TAB A); or

b. Maintain an 85 percent or greater on-time submission rate[8] for FY 1999.

3. Ensure that the Senior Management Team members receive a briefing on safety and health issues at the facility or attend at least one safety committee meeting.

4. Implement a violence prevention plan that includes, but is not limited to a written violence prevention policy and violence prevention program training as specified in VA Handbook 7700.1, paragraph 8b.

5. Ensure that at least one person assigned safety responsibilities for the organization on a collateral duty basis attends a national meeting/conference of a nationally recognized safety and/or health professional group such as the National Safety Council and the Federal Agency Committee for Occupational Safety and Health.

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[7] Elements 1-5 are specifically facility activities. VCS HQ will determine action officers for Elements 6-7.
[8] Claims submitted within 14 calendar days from the date the supervisor receives the employee's signed claim form are considered on time by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

6. In cooperation with the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (00S1), identify up to five VCS job classification codes with the highest LTCRs and coordinate the development of a Job Hazard Analysis with VHA for each position based on OSHA guidelines. (See OSHA Publication 3071 "Job Hazard Analysis," TAB B.) Present findings for peer review and publication.

7. Begin the development of a written VCS plan for a comprehensive ergonomic program. As a minimum, the program will include goals and objectives; program interface with existing programs; workplace analysis; hazard prevention and control; health care management; and education and training.