

Interagency Meeting

Safety, Health and Return-to-Employment

OWCP Announces Goals

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On June 30, 2004, OWCP held an interagency meeting that focused on the SHARE initiative from both the OWCP and OSHA perspectives. Also discussed was the state of FECA and an update on central bill pay and medical authorizations.

On January 9, 2004, President Bush announced the Safety, Health and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) Initiative directing federal agencies to establish goals and track performance in four major areas. Federal agencies were charged with lowering workplace injury and illness case rates, lowering lost-time injury and illness case rates, timely reporting of injuries and illnesses and reducing lost days resulting from work injuries and illnesses.

The Initiative is scheduled to run for three years (FY 04—FY 06) and uses the baseline year of 2003 for all of the goals. The

Initiative builds on what we have learned through Federal Worker 2000. What makes this Initiative different is that OWCP and OSHA have committed to assisting Federal agencies in meeting the goals that they have established for themselves.

workplace strategies to improve safety and health at high injury rate sites.

If we are successful in reaching these goals, the savings in compensation costs, lost production and employee morale will be immeasurable.

Goals

Reduce Total Case Rates by at least 3%.

Reduce Total Lost Day Case Rates by at least 3%.

Increase Timely submission of CA-1 / CA-2 by at least 5%.

Reduce Lost Production Days by at least 1%

Simply put, a 3% reduction in total injuries and in lost time injuries would result in a savings to the government of approximately \$41 million for this year alone. When you add this to the fact that there are nearly 169,000 injuries each year that cost the government \$2.36 billion in benefits, you can't help but see the benefit in making the workplace safer for our employees.

Most Agencies have established their own goals for the initiative. Some of these goals are more stringent than the ones initially established through the SHARE initiative. A list of the actual goals is on the next page.

From the start, the Department of Labor worked collaboratively with each agency in setting goals and developing new

FISCAL YEAR 2004 Goals

Agency	Total Case Rate	Lost Time Case	Timeliness	LPD
All Government (Less USPS)	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Agriculture	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Air Force	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Army	- 3%	- 3%	4%	- 1%
Commerce	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Defense	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Education	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Energy	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Health & Human Services	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Homeland Security	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Housing & Urban Development	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Interior	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Justice	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Labor	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 2%
Navy	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
State	- 3%	- 3%	225%	- 1%
Transportation	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%
Treasury	- 6%	- 6%	5%	- 3%
Veterans Affairs	- 3%	- 3%	5%	- 1%

Goals have been established for FY04, FY05, and FY06. These goals and their performance targets can be found for all of the above listed agencies, as well as for independent agencies at :

www.dol-esa.gov/share

CA-1 / CA-2 Timeliness

Agency	Baseline	1st Quarter 04	2nd Quarter 04
All Government (Less USPS)	49.6%	54.4%	61.9%
US Postal Service	79.0%	85.1%	87.2%
Department of Agriculture	29.1%	26.2%	35.5%
Department of Air Force	56.1%	55.7%	62.1%
Department of the Army	54.3%	57.0%	65.8%
Department of Commerce	34.0%	31.5%	29.3%
Department of Defense	36.1%	42.8%	51.2%
Department of Education	43.6%	22.2%	52.6%
Department of Energy	47.5%	56.8%	61.0%
Department of Health and Human Services	34.9%	38.1%	30.7%
Department of Homeland Security	44.1%	59.6%	66.9%
Department of Housing and Urban Development	34.2%	54.3%	52.8%
Department of Interior	41.8%	38.1%	41.5%
Department of Justice	48.3%	49.5%	50.8%
Department of Labor	83.6%	81.4%	92.5%
Department of Navy	53.8%	59.0%	59.8%
Department of State	7.7%	9.1%	25.0%
Department of Transportation	57.1%	51.7%	59.0%
Department of Treasury	72.7%	76.1%	80.4%
Department of Veterans Affairs	67.8%	67.6%	77.9%

To view figures for the Legislative Branch, Bureaus within Executive Branch Departments and Independent Agencies, Bureaus, Commissions and Offices go to:

www.dol-esa.gov/share

Lost Production Days

Agency	Baseline	1st Quarter 04	2nd Quarter 04
All Government (Less USPS)	56.0	64.6	60.8
US Postal Service	147.6	154.0	145.4
Department of Agriculture	66.3	62.9	63.8
Department of Air Force	41.3	35.8	30.3
Department of the Army	41.0	42.6	36.1
Department of Commerce	19.8	18.7	24.1
Department of Defense	51.5	51.9	32.5
Department of Education	18.8	31.5	16.7
Department of Energy	26.3	23.9	34.0
Department of Health and Human Services	28.1	34.2	36.8
Department of Homeland Security	168.4	223.4	252.6
Department of Housing and Urban Development	41.9	47.8	38.3
Department of Interior	70.7	80.4	72.2
Department of Justice	59.5	74.9	76.2
Department of Labor	41.3	44.3	31.3
Department of Navy	60.2	64.1	50.8
Department of State	14.9	18.9	25.6
Department of Transportation	36.7	48.6	35.6
Department of Treasury	35.8	44.9	52.5
Department of Veterans Affairs	65.4	73.0	58.4

Lost Production Days (LPD) are reported quarterly as a rate per 100 employees. The method of calculation includes only claims with dates of initial or recurrent disability within one-year of the quarter being reported. LPD combines the number of continuation-of-pay (COP) days reported by Federal agencies in a given quarter with the number of days for which OWCP paid wage-loss compensation in the same quarter. Because OWCP has 13 payment cycles in the fiscal year, a consequence of this method is that one out of every four quarters will always include an "extra" payment. When this occurs, that quarter's LPD will be overstated by a certain percentage when compared to other quarters in the same fiscal year. (For example, first quarter contained the "extra" payment for FY 2004, which caused LPD to be overstated by approximately 14%.) The effects of this overstatement even out over the fiscal year as each quarter's LPD are added to an agency's cumulative performance.



Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)

One of the currently available resources that is being pursued, in order to assist you with meeting the goals established by your agency for SHARE is Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). As a major goal of SHARE, the timely submission of CA-1 and CA-2 forms should be a focus for all agencies. In order to assist with this goal, OWCP is strongly encouraging the use of EDI.

EDI is the computer to computer exchange of business documents in a standardized format without the re-keying of data. It is a fast and accurate method of ensuring that all claims are received within the 14 day statutory limitation.

The data entry application is used to enter CA-1 and CA-2 data as an electronic docu-

ment that is transmitted to OWCP. The documentation may appear exactly as the paper CA-1 and CA-2. This application may be created by the agency or obtained from a commercial vendor. Prior to data entry, the paper document may be filled out by the claimant. An option is to have the paper printed directly from the application. Either way, the document must be signed by the claimant and the supervisor and retained by the agency.

Within 24 to 48 hours of receipt of the claim, OWCP will electronically transmit the case number to the submitting agency. During 2003, 92.7% of CA-1/CA-2's were assigned a case number and returned to the agency within 24 hours.

By having access to a claim number so quickly, agency personnel and injured workers can begin forwarding medical reports and bills immediately. This allows your injury compensation professionals to focus on important return to work programs, which ultimately will reduce your workers' compensation costs.

If your agency is not currently participating in EDI and would like to know more about it, contact the Branch of Coordination and Control at the OWCP National Office. Roland Wilson has been designated as your point of contact. He can be reached at: 202-693-1022.

What is OWCP doing to help!

On-Line Training

The OWCP website now contains multiple training tools that can be accessed at: www.dol-esa.gov/share.

The tools that are currently available are:

1. Front-Line Supervisors which is a basic guide for supervisors in the field who are required to process and assist employees with the filing of a compensation claim.
2. Returning Injured Workers to Suitable Employment which is a guide for Injury Compensation Specialist who have the responsibility of making job offers to injured employees. The training explains the process and requirements necessary in making a written job offer.
3. Nurse Intervention which is a basic explanation of the process.
4. CA-810 Video Training for Injury Compensation Specialists. This video training is currently available in CD-Rom format, but will be made available on the website in the very near future.

Website Reports

To assist you in meeting your SHARE goals we thought it was important to provide you with some history of how you were doing in the past and to provide some newer reports you could use to track your progress.

You will find the following historical reports at www.dol-esa.gov/share:

1. FY03 Baselines
2. 3 Year Performance History (FY00–FY03)
3. CA-1 / CA-2 Timeliness Report for baseline year 2003.
4. Total Case Rate OSHA report.
5. Lost Time Case Rate OSHA data.
6. Lost Production Day history (FY01—FY03)

In addition to these static reports, you will see some new reports that will be updated on a quarterly basis. These reports are:

1. CA-1 / CA-2 Timeliness
2. LPD Report
3. CA-7 Timeliness
4. Chargeback Query Tool for CA-1, CA-2 and CA-7
5. Federal Injury and Illness Statistics from OSHA.

Overview of FECA

Shelby Hallmark, Director of OWCP provided an overview of the state of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act.

During his presentation, he showed how both medical and compensation costs have continued to rise over the last 10 years.

To explain these rising costs, he showed how lost production days for both cases in their first year of disability and those on the long term rolls have failed to reduce significantly over the years. Although the figures have made slight dips, there are still over 52,000 injured workers being paid compensation in the long term.

Mr. Hallmark also focused his attention on the timely submission of CA-7 claims. Al-

though this is not a focus of the SHARE initiative, it is still crucial to reducing compensation costs.

In 2004, only 50% of all CA-7s were submitted by agencies to OWCP within the statutory time frame of 5 working days.

In addition to statistical data, agency attendees were informed of OWCP's communication efforts.

OWCP is striving to improve services in key communication areas. The focus is on:

- **Availability:** Increased use of electronic services such as the Agency Query System, Interactive Voice Response, Electronic Data Interchange, and the OWCP

website.

- **Access:** Reduce average times spent on hold when contacting OWCP district offices and the ACS Central Bill Pay system.
- **Responsiveness:** Reduce average response time for phone calls and written correspondence.
- **Effectiveness:** Increase the percentage of calls resolved on the first try.
- **Quality:** OWCP staff are charged with meeting standards for courtesy, knowledge, accuracy of response, and use of clear language.

Central Bill Pay and Medical Authorization

During the interagency meeting, Mr. Hallmark and staff members from the Division of Federal Employees' Compensation Branch of Technical Assistance provided an overview of the ACS Central Bill Pay system as well as some in depth training on how to access the system to find information about a bill and/or medical authorization.

As of now, nearly 200,000 medical providers have enrolled with ACS. We are handling approximately 2,600 calls per day concerning bill inquiries and 2,100 calls per day for medical authorizations.

When ACS was first introduced, callers could expect to be on hold for nearly 17 minutes each time they called about a bill. Through a strong focus on customer service goals, these times have been reduced to under 2 minutes for bill inquiries and under 49 seconds for medical authorizations

Nearly 98% of all bills submitted through ACS are processed within 28 days, and requests for medical authorizations are processed in less than 4 days.

OWCP is continuing its efforts to improve upon the services provided through ACS. We are working with ACS to assist in the training of Client Service Representatives.

We have also implemented a problem solving system that allows for intervention and assistance at the most local level.

Each district office has been assigned an ACS liaison and a trouble shooter who specialize in working with injured workers and providers to correct any errors and provide guidance. If these two groups of people are unable to resolve an issue, the matter is raised to the national level trouble shooter.

OWCP is also monitoring ACS performance on a daily basis. We have initiated service level agreements (SLAs) to measure key contract performance levels.

The central bill pay and medical authorization process will continue to grow, and enhancements will be made to the web portal whenever needed.

Some of the more recent enhancements include access to ACS through the Agency Query System. This enhancement allows agency personnel to access claimant bills and authorizations without having to leave AQS to enter the medical bill processing portal. This link provides information on eligibility, medical authorizations and bill payments.

- Eligibility inquiries allow you to view what type of authorization is needed for particular procedures. Level 1 procedures such as office visits, MRIs and other routine diagnostic tests, do not require authorization. Level 2 procedures can be authorized by ACS, often over the telephone. Level 3 and Level 4 procedures are requested through ACS and require authorization by a claims examiner.
- Medical Authorization inquiries allow users to see what procedures have been authorized for a particular case.
- Bill Status inquiries allow you to view the status of bills submitted through ACS. The new enhancement allows up to 200 bills to be viewed at a time.

Agencies are urged to encourage medical providers to enroll in ACS and to submit their bills electronically. It is also recommended that agency personnel provide the accepted condition ICD9 codes and descriptions to providers and injured workers.

OWCP appreciates your willingness to work with us to create a system that works for all of our customers: injured workers, providers and employing agencies.

Website Updates

The following new reports will be available at
www.dol-esa.gov/share:

- SHARE Goals FY 2004—FY 2006 with FY 2003 Baselines and FY 2004 Performance Targets
- FY 2004 2nd Quarter Timeliness Report
- FY 2004 2nd Quarter LPD Report
- Interagency Presentation from June 30, 2004

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