



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
National Labor Relations Board
Office of Inspector General

Memorandum

October 21, 2004

To: Angela Crawford
Procurement and Facilities Branch Chief

From: Jane E. Altenhofen
Inspector General *Jane E. Altenhofen*

Subject: Inspection Report No. OIG-INS-35-05-01: Review of Spending for
Safety Supplies and Services

We initiated this inspection in August to evaluate aspects of the workplace safety program, particularly the need assessed, funds allocated, and purchases for safety supplies and services.

The National Labor Relations Board's (NLRB or Agency) spending for safety supplies and services was for identified needs and for appropriate items. The Agency performed annual inspections of both Headquarters and most Field Offices, tracked identified deficiencies, and abated identified conditions. Injury and illness logs were maintained, and external reporting was in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements. The Agency effectively monitored cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid training for Emergency Coordinators at Headquarters.

Forty-nine percent of Field Offices did not have current CPR training and 47 percent did not have first aid training needed for compliance with the Occupant Emergency Plans (OEPs). The Advisory Committee on Health and Safety did not meet semi-annually as set forth in union agreements. The Agency did not post all required safety and health related information.

SCOPE

We reviewed the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970; Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees; Federal Regulations; and information provided by OSHA. We also reviewed Agency policies and procedures including the NLRB Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual; Administrative Bulletin (AB) 94-54, Federal Hazard Communication Program; AB 03-08, Automated External Defibrillation Program Available in the Headquarters Health Unit; and the Health and Safety Section's desk manual.

We reviewed actions taken by the Agency including annual inspections during FY 2004, record keeping and external reporting, and whether safety related information was displayed throughout the Agency. We used these inspections to identify actions needing abatement and to determine whether Field Office personnel received necessary first aid and CPR training. We interviewed members of Procurement and Facilities Branch (PFB), Finance Branch, Budget Branch, and the Office of Employee Development (OED), and we reviewed the Occupant Emergency Programs (Programs) and the NLRB union contracts to identify and gain an understanding of the Agency's safety program. We reviewed the Security Survey/Risk Assessment Report performed by the Federal Protective Service to identify Agency needs. We reviewed safety related expenditures to determine whether identified needs were satisfied.

We conducted this review from August through October 2004. This review was done in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency.

BACKGROUND

The NLRB is required by Executive Order and the Occupational Safety and Health Act to provide safe and healthful working conditions for all workers. The Director of Administration is the Agency Occupational Safety and Health Official and is responsible for the overall administration of the NLRB Safety and Health Program. The PFB Chief is responsible for the operation of the Agency Occupational Safety and Health Program.

Annual inspections are conducted at Headquarters and each Field Office. Headquarters inspections are conducted by PFB employees and, if requested, a union representative. Field Office inspections are conducted by the Regional Director, Office Manager, or Safety Designee in consultation with the local union representative. The Field Offices include 32 Regional Offices, 3 Subregional Offices, 16 Resident Offices, and 3 Division of Judges satellite offices. The Washington, DC Resident Office is located at and reviewed with

Headquarters. Field Office inspection reports are forwarded to the Safety Specialist who works with the offices to abate identified hazards.

As part of the safety and health program, the Agency developed OEPs, which are procedures to protect life and property in Federally occupied space under defined emergency conditions. Separate OEPs are prepared for Headquarters and each Field Office. The OEPs include Emergency Coordinators that are employees with ancillary safety duties. They are required to obtain first aid and CPR training.

RESULTS

Spending for Safety Supplies

The Agency spent \$26,301 for safety related supplies and services in FY 2004. This included services such as asbestos testing in identified Field Offices, National Safety Council Membership, fire extinguisher servicing, and wheelchair repairs identified during the annual inspection of the Health Unit. Supplies purchased included flashlights, first aid kits, and reflective armbands to assist employees in emergencies. In addition, the OED provided CPR and first aid training for all Emergency Coordinators at Headquarters at a cost of \$2,035. Automated External Defibrillators are provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and not charged directly to the Agency.

The PFB identifies safety requirements by reviewing the information provided by OSHA and the National Safety Council and conducting annual safety inspections to identify Agency safety needs. We reviewed safety related regulations and expenditures and did not identify additional safety related requirements necessary for Agency compliance. The PFB stated that safety related expenditures are always given top priority and could not recall an example where any expenditure was denied.

Currently, defibrillators are located in all Agency Field Offices that are located in a Federal Building that have a health unit. In addition, Headquarters has a defibrillator located in the Health Unit. The defibrillators and training of Health Unit personnel were provided by HHS. One of the Agency's initiatives, as reported to the U.S. Department of Labor, is to pursue with HHS in getting defibrillators in all Agency office locations.

CPR and First Aid Certification

Forty-nine percent of Field Offices did not have current CPR training and 47 percent did not have first aid training needed for compliance with the OEPs. The Health and Safety Section's desk manual states that the safety staff has the responsibility to establish procedures in order that Agency personnel can respond to such conditions as fire, bomb threat, building evacuation, natural disaster, or medical emergency. These procedures are detailed in the OEPs. The Field Office OEPs require that Emergency Coordinators seek or have first aid training and/or emergency training in administering CPR. Without current certification, offices are unable to comply with their OEPs.

CPR Certification in the Field

| | Field Offices | Percentage |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Did not receive training | 26 | 49 |
| Received training | 22 | 42 |
| No inspection report | 5 | 9 |
| Total | 53 | 100 |

First Aid Certification in the Field

| | Field Offices | Percentage |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Did not receive training | 25 | 47 |
| Received training | 23 | 44 |
| No inspection report | 5 | 9 |
| Total | 53 | 100 |

The PFB has initiated action to monitor CPR and first aid training in Field Offices. On April 19, 2004 PFB sent a memo to all Regional Directors and Office Managers requesting that they identify a Safety and Health Designee whose duties would include ensuring that Emergency Coordinators in each office receive and maintain current certifications in first aid and CPR. On September 24, 2004, the PFB sent a survey to the Field Offices requesting training information for their Emergency Coordinators. Because they received limited responses, PFB issued a reminder notice on October 14, 2004.

Advisory Committee on Health and Safety

No Advisory Committee meetings were held in FY 2004. According to NLRB Union contracts, an Advisory Committee on Health and Safety that consists of management and union representatives will be established and will meet on a semi-annual basis. The last meeting was held in June 2003 and the

next meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2004. The PFB and a union representative stated that no meetings were held in FY 2004 due to budgetary constraints. Management proposed meeting in a video conference, but the union committee representative preferred to meet face-to-face.

Safety Committee Postings

The Agency's Occupational Safety and Health Protection for National Labor Relations Board Employees posters were located in appropriate Headquarters locations, but did not include information regarding the safety and health committee required by the Federal Regulations. In response to our draft report, management developed a revised poster with the required information that is currently under review.

SUGGESTIONS

We suggest that the Procurement and Facilities Branch Chief:

1. Ensure that Field Office Emergency Coordinators obtain CPR and first aid training.
2. Finalize the revised Occupational Safety and Health Protection for National Labor Relations Board Employees poster.