



# Report-o-phobia!

Idaho ISM Conference  
Feedback and Improvement Track  
Aug 28, 2008

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*"DOE's Feedback and Improvement Engine"*



# Overview



- Importance of Reporting
- LTA Reporting Examples
- CAIRS/ORPS and liability
- Using reports as report cards



What's so bad  
about reporting an  
injury or event?



# Importance



- Reporting programs form the core of feedback and improvement processes
- CAIRS
  - OSHA allows us to use our own system—*expects DOE to reliably report*
  - Consistent and accurate reporting enables trending and lessons learned across the complex, and with OSHA, at even higher levels
- ORPS
  - Drives the lessons learned program and we can target many DOE-specific areas of interest
- Line management must understand the importance and benefits of reporting to make the program work well!



# Examples



- Recent independent assessments and audits have revealed misunderstandings:
  - About key reporting criteria
  - On the burden of proof of whether to report or not (OSHA thresholds)
- We also notice
  - Significant decreases in ORPS “near miss” reporting
  - Sudden shifts in number of events
  - People spending a lot of time figuring out how to justify not reporting
- “Good” reports versus “bad” reports
  - “Found it” before “it found us”



# Pressures



- Reasons for not reporting we've seen or heard
  - Desire for the numbers to “look good” ? everyone “feels good”
  - Work-related declarations and fear of liability
  - Contract end of year awards – using “number of reports” or injury/occurrence rates as a measure of “goodness”
  - Safety statistics used in future contract competitions



# Liability Issues



- Workman's comp and liability work-related determinations are completely separate from CAIRS determinations
  - OSHA has clearly established the “no-fault” concept because of the low reporting threshold for “work-relatedness” in the rule
  - The work-related determination rules for workman's comp are different than for CAIRS, but in general workman's comp is more stringent
  - OSHA (and CAIRS) presumes an injury is work-related and the employer has to show that there is NO possible work connection before it is not reported (exemptions to geographical presumption)
- Bottom line: don't use fear of liability as a reason not to report



# Safety Report Cards



- Using the number of reports (TRC rates, ORPS reports, etc.) as a performance criteria undercuts efforts to establish a good safety culture
  - Provides a disincentive to report as it affects the bottom line
  - “Looking good” (even if you really aren’t) becomes a full time job
- Kills feedback and improvement programs
  - Lack of data, fewer investigations
  - People quit reporting safety issues because they know they won’t be acted on
- Eventually, the lack of reporting will be exposed because of some serious event (causing a real investigation where it will be found the near misses have abounded)
  - As we consider how to encourage better reporting (required by CFR 851), enforcement is an option



# Alternative



- How can DOE better assess ES&H program effectiveness?
  - Must use more indirect methods to assess the quality of ES&H programs in addition to performance metrics
- Potential indicators used in other places (examples)
  - Key position fill rate and qualifications
  - Maintenance backlogs, preventive maintenance status
  - Quality of contractor investigations
  - Leadership visibility in the workplace
  - Corrective action timeliness and effectiveness
  - Reporting quality, number of “good” reports (proactive)
  - Independent safety culture surveys
  - More...
- Selected indicators can be assembled into a reasonable scorecard
  - Key is to look beyond incident data streams to other safety-related data streams that the ES&H community isn't primarily responsible for
  - If possible, integrate ES&H performance with overall performance measures



# Summary



- Reporting is key to a learning organization
- It is easy to incentivize bad reporting behavior
  - Rating safety performance using self-generated reporting metrics is counter-productive
- Potential liability should not be an issue
- Must ensure management understands the benefits of reporting and find ways to incentivize good reporting behavior
  - Develop and use alternative report card methodology