

September 29, 2000

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VICE PRESIDENT, SOUTHEAST AREA OPERATIONS

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SUBJECT: Audit Report - Review of the Violence Prevention and Response
Programs in the North Florida District (Report Number LB-AR-00-007)

This report presents the results of our review of the violence prevention and response programs in the North Florida District (Project Number 99EA007ER006). We engaged a contractor, Williams, Adley & Company, LLP, to assist us in conducting this audit. This audit report is one of a series of reports on violence prevention and response efforts within the Postal Service.

On the basis of our review, we concluded that required controls were not fully implemented to reduce the potential for violence in the North Florida District and the district's ability to respond to crisis situations could be improved. Although the North Florida District generally complied with the Threat Assessment Team Guide when reacting to incidents of violence, and also complied with some of the policies and procedures in the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace, it did not comply with other violence prevention requirements. The Vice President for the Southeast Area did not agree with our overall conclusions, however we believe the area and district planned or implemented actions are responsive to the recommendations and address the issues identified in this report. Therefore, we will not pursue resolution on this disagreement at this time. Management's comments and our evaluation of these comments are included in this report.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff during the review. If you have any questions, please contact Joyce Hansen, director, Labor Management-Rosslyn, or me at (703) 248-2300.

Debra D. Pettitt
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for Oversight and Business Evaluations

Attachment

cc: Patrick R. Donahoe
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report presents the results of our review of violence prevention and response efforts within the North Florida District, located in the Southeast Area. The North Florida District was one of six districts randomly selected from the nine districts within the Southeast Area.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) engaged a contractor, Williams, Adley, & Company, LLP, to conduct fieldwork and data analysis, prepare working papers, and draft reports. The OIG provided technical support, statistical projections, and quality assurance reviews. The OIG and the contractor prepared the final report.

Our objective was to determine whether the North Florida District implemented Postal Service policies regarding violence prevention and response programs.

Results in Brief

On the basis of the review, we concluded that required controls were not fully implemented to reduce the potential for violence in the North Florida District facilities, and the district's ability to respond to crisis situations could be improved.

The district generally complied with the Threat Assessment Team Guide when reacting to incidents of violence. The district:

- Established a crisis management team in 1993—four years prior to the issuance of violence prevention criteria.
- Consistently communicated and enforced the zero tolerance policy.
- Developed an action plan for handling violence in the workplace.

The North Florida District also generally complied with some of the policies and procedures outlined in the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace.

However, the district did not fully implement proactive strategies designed to prevent violence from occurring, as required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide. The district did not follow many of the established policies and procedures because officials believed the guide was not mandatory. As a result, required controls were not fully implemented to reduce the potential for violence in the workplace. Our audit disclosed the North Florida District did not:

- Conduct annual physical security reviews.
- Monitor and evaluate climate indicators.
- Engage in case management.
- Provide the required two-day orientation training to all threat assessment team members.
- Measure team performance.
- Mandate violence awareness training.

In addition, the district did not ensure receipt of local customized crisis management plans at all facilities in accordance with the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace. We used a statistical sample to project that as many as 114 (39 percent) of the 292 district facilities did not have a copy of their local customized plan on site. (See Appendices B and C.)

**Summary of
Recommendations**

We recommended the vice president, Southeast Area Operations, direct the North Florida District manager to implement seven recommendations designed to ensure controls are implemented to improve the effectiveness of the district's violence prevention and response programs.

**Summary of
Management's
Comments**

The vice president Southeast Area Operations observed that the OIG report focused on the condition of the violence awareness programs in fiscal year 1997 and 1998. He stated that because the OIG based its August 2000 conclusions on data obtained before June 1999 (the majority of which is FY 1997 and FY 1998), the conclusions

are somewhat misleading. The vice president emphasized that the Southeast Area remains committed to the continuous improvement of the violence prevention and response programs and that instructions would be issued to district managers to reinforce the need to implement the controls necessary to improve the effectiveness of the programs.

The North Florida District manager responded to all of the OIG recommendations stating in FY 2000, security reviews were conducted in all offices, and all supervisors, managers, and craft employees received the required violence awareness training. He said the district has ensured that all facilities have localized crisis management plans on site, and that the district has implemented a systematic approach to analyzing climate indicators and the identification and follow-up of threats. He also stated that in FY 2001 all threat assessment team core members would receive the required orientation training and that a performance measurement system for threat assessment team activity would be implemented.

We have summarized management's comments in the report and included the full text of the comments in Appendix E.

**Evaluation of
Management's
Comments**

While we disagree that the OIG report was misleading and focused on the condition of the violence awareness programs in FY 1997 and 1998, using data from those fiscal years was necessary because they were the latest complete fiscal years at the time of our visit. However, interviews with postal officials regarding their implementation of proactive strategies occurred in September 1999.

Although the vice president for the Southeast Area did not agree with our overall conclusions, we believe the area and district planned or implemented actions are responsive to the recommendations and address the issues identified in this report.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Postal Service recognizes the importance of ensuring the safety of its employees by creating and maintaining a work environment that is violence-free. This concept emphasizes using a viable workplace violence prevention program as a first step in helping to ensure a violence-free workplace. An effective program depends on a universal zero tolerance policy and a zero tolerance action plan that is consistently implemented for the management of threats, assaults, and other inappropriate workplace behavior.

The Postal Service established the following initiatives and strategies to prevent and minimize the potential risk for violence in the workplace:

- The Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace states the Postal Service's position that violent and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated by anyone at any level of the Postal Service.
- The Threat Assessment Team Guide, Publication 108, and the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace, Publication 107,¹ require districts to develop appropriate threat assessment and crisis management teams, as well as team plans of operation.
- The Administrative Support Manual requires security control officers or their designees to conduct annual physical security reviews at all facilities.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to determine whether the North Florida District implemented Postal Service policies regarding violence prevention and response programs.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) engaged a contractor to conduct fieldwork and data analysis, prepare working papers, and draft reports. The OIG provided technical support, statistical sampling and projections, and quality assurance reviews. The OIG and the contractor prepared the final report. (See Appendix A for complete Objective, Scope, and Methodology details.)

¹ The Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace is under revision.

AUDIT RESULTS

Potential for Violence in the District

On the basis of the review, we concluded that required controls were not fully implemented to reduce the potential for violence in the North Florida District and the district's ability to respond to crisis situations could be improved. Although the district generally complied with the Threat Assessment Team Guide when reacting to incidents of violence and complied with some of the policies and procedures in the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace, it did not comply with other violence prevention requirements.

Districts that do not comply with these requirements face an increased risk for violence in their facilities. Such violence increases stress, inflicts emotional wounds, and lowers employee morale. Organizationally, it diminishes credibility, decreases productivity, creates work-specific tension, and may lead to damage of property.

Implementation of Violence Prevention and Response Programs

The North Florida District generally complied with the Threat Assessment Team Guide when reacting to incidents of violence. The district:

- Established a crisis management team in 1993—four years prior to the issuance of violence prevention criteria.
- Consistently communicated and enforced the zero tolerance policy.
- Developed an action plan for handling violence in the workplace.

The North Florida District also generally complied with some of the policies and procedures outlined in the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace.

However, the North Florida District did not fully implement proactive strategies designed to prevent violence from occurring, as required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide. The district did not follow many of the policies and procedures because officials believed the guide was not mandatory. As a result, required controls were not fully

implemented to reduce the potential for violence in the workplace. Our audit disclosed the North Florida District did not:

- Conduct annual physical security reviews.
- Monitor and evaluate climate indicators.
- Engage in case management.
- Provide the required two-day orientation training to all threat assessment team members.
- Measure team performance.
- Mandate violence awareness training.

In addition, the district did not ensure receipt of local customized crisis management plans at all facilities in accordance with the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace. We used a statistical sample to project that as many as 114 (39 percent) of the 292 district facilities did not have a copy of their local customized plan on site. (See Appendices B and C.)

Physical Security
Reviews

The district did not conduct annual physical security reviews in all facilities as mandated by the Postal Service Administrative Support Manual. The physical security reviews were not conducted because district officials did not have a clear understanding of the policy.

The Postal Service Administrative Support Manual, Chapter 2, Section 27, requires the security control officer or designee to conduct annual physical security reviews at all Postal Service facilities to ensure that the appropriate attention is given to security issues.²

We used a statistical sample to project the district conducted no more than 53 (18 percent) of the 292 required annual physical security reviews in fiscal year (FY) 1997.

² The chief postal inspector is designated as the security officer for the Postal Service. The security control officers located at each postal facility, liaison with the Postal Inspection Service on all security matters.

For FY 1998, we projected no more than 63 (22 percent) of the 292 facilities were reviewed. (See Appendices B and C.)

According to the district's security control officer, the district's policy for conducting annual physical security reviews was as follows:

- In FY 1997, facilities with more than 100 employees had reviews conducted.
- In FY 1998, facilities with more than 25 employees had reviews conducted.

The lack of physical security reviews at Postal Service facilities may increase the risk of workplace violence or the loss or destruction of Postal Service property and the mail.

Climate Indicators

We found that the North Florida District did not monitor and evaluate climate indicators, because officials believed the requirement in the Threat Assessment Team Guide was not mandatory.

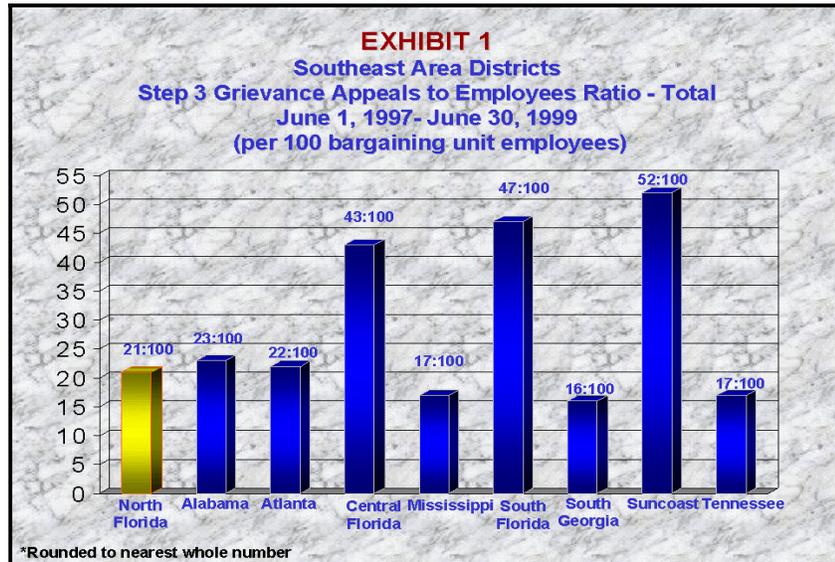
Therefore, the district did not identify and follow up on events that could escalate the potential for violence. As a result, controls associated with identifying and assessing indicators were not used to reduce the potential for violence in the workplace.

The guide outlines several climate indicators that are relevant for review when making such determinations. Among those indicators are grievances, Equal Employment Opportunity complaints, referrals to the Employee Assistance Program, and labor-management relationships.³

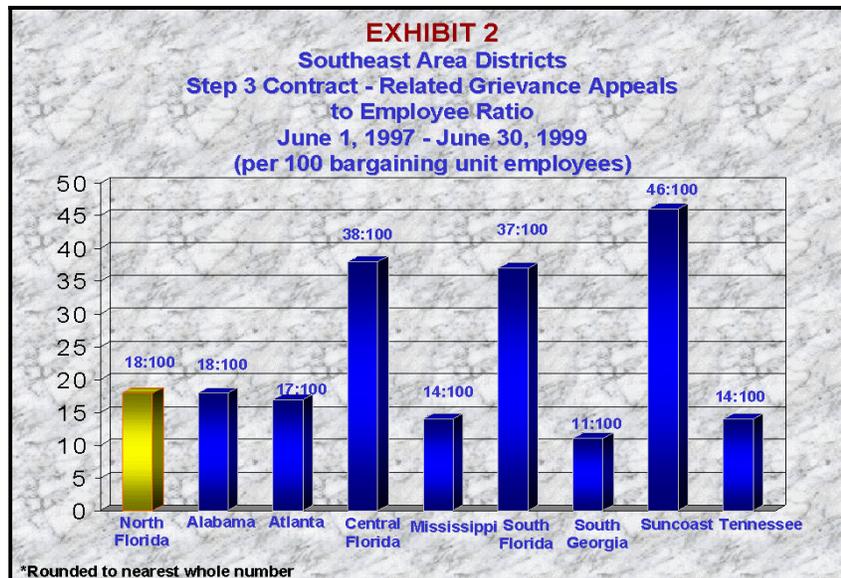
We reviewed several climate indicators that management could use as benchmarks to assess the workplace climate and identify locations that may require a climate assessment.

³ We considered the results of the Voice of the Employee surveys as an indicator of labor-management relationships.

Grievances. Exhibit 1 shows the North Florida District had the sixth highest ratio (21:100) in the Southeast Area of step 3 grievance appeals to employees, for the period June 1, 1997, through June 30, 1999.⁴

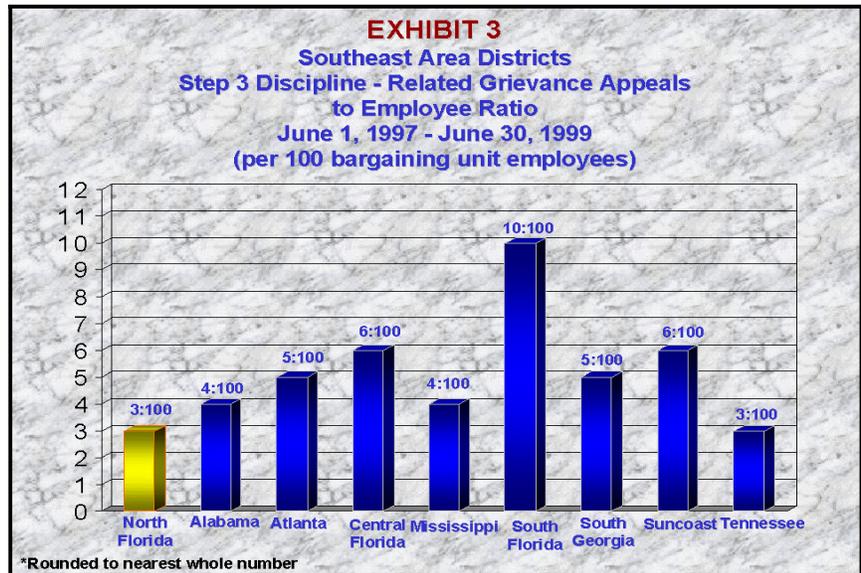


For the same period, Exhibit 2 shows that the district shared the fourth highest ratio (18:100) of step 3 contract-related grievance appeals to employees.

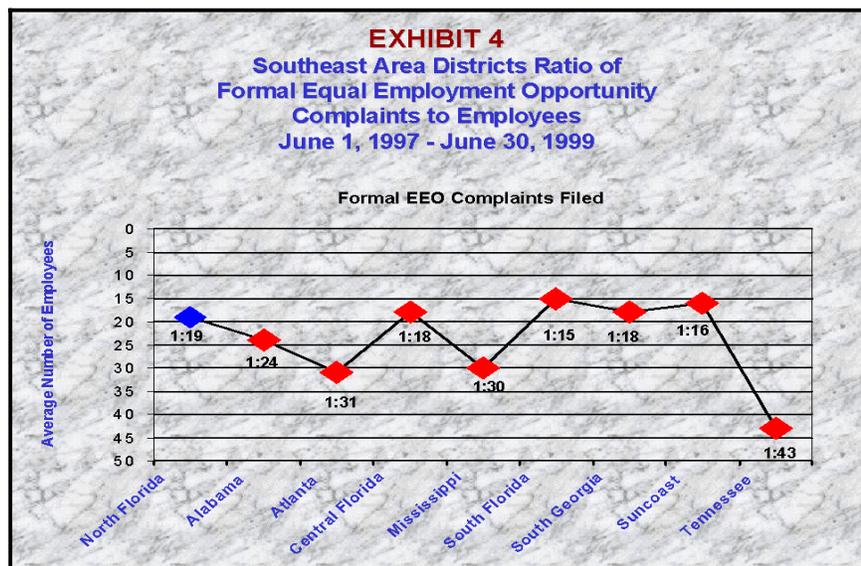


⁴ In a report entitled, "U.S. Postal Service: Little Progress Made in Addressing Persistent Labor-Management Problems," October 1997, GAO/GGD-98-1, GAO reported that a ratio of 13:100 grievances to employees was a high ratio. Union and management officials did not dispute this claim.

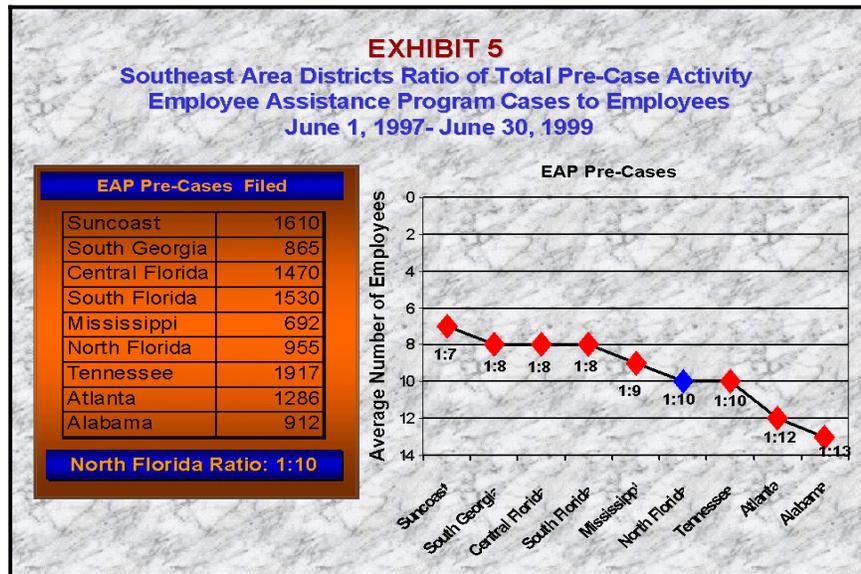
The district shared the lowest ratio (3:100) of step 3 discipline-related grievance appeals to employees, for the same period, as shown in Exhibit 3.



Equal Employment Opportunity Complaints. Exhibit 4 shows that during the period June 1, 1997, to June 30, 1999, the district had the fourth highest ratio (1:19) of Equal Employment Opportunity formal complaints to employees, in the Southeast Area.

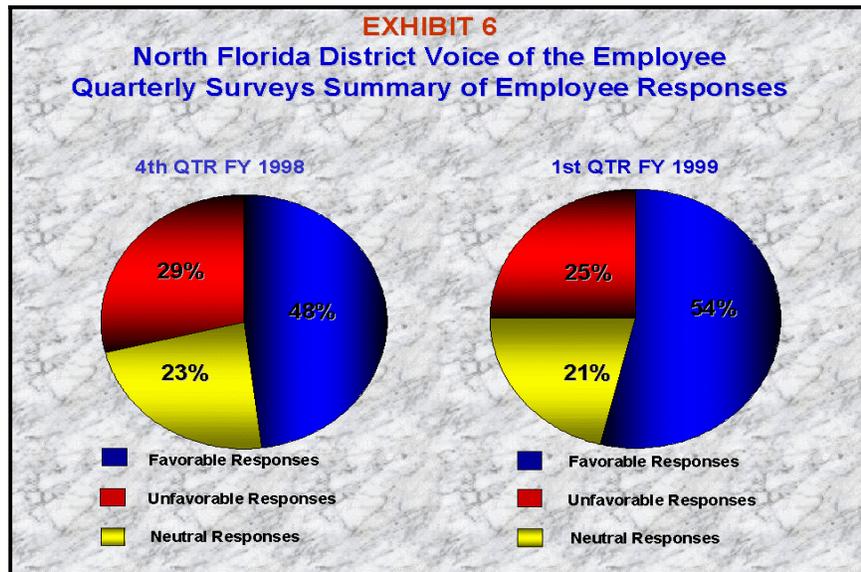


Employee Assistance Program Cases. For the same period, the district shared the third lowest ratio (1:10) of total pre-case activity⁵ Employee Assistance program cases per employee as depicted in Exhibit 5.

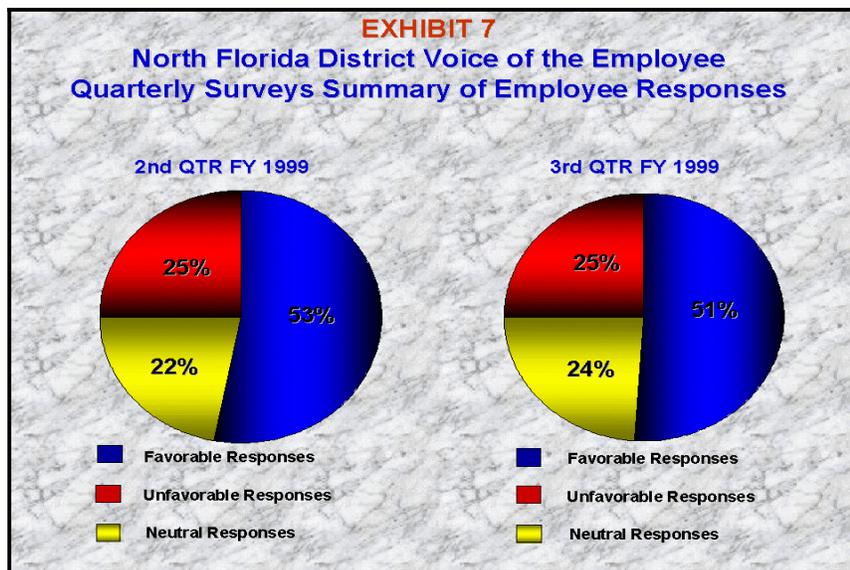


⁵ The total pre-case activity contacts include all those employees, family members, or supervisors who made contact with the Employee Assistance Program to set up appointments with an Employee Assistance Program counselor.

Voice of the Employee Survey Results. A majority of employees who responded to the Voice of the Employee survey⁶ in the North Florida District were satisfied with their work environment. As shown in Exhibits 6 and 7, the number of employees who responded favorably to their workplace environment ranged from about 48 percent for quarter 4 of 1998, to about 53 percent of employees responding in quarters 1,2, and 3, of 1999. The number of employees who responded unfavorably to their workplace environment, ranged from about 29 percent in quarter 4, 1998, to about 25 percent in quarters 1, 2, and 3, 1999. In addition, about 23 percent of the employees, who responded for the same quarters, remained neutral.



⁶ The Voice of the Employee survey is a data collection instrument that the Postal Service has established to help improve workplace relationships and ensure that all employees are treated with fairness, feel safe in their workplace, have opportunities to participate and take pride in being postal employees.



While these climate indicators cannot be used as the sole basis for reaching conclusions concerning the district's workplace environment, the Threat Assessment Team can use them to assess the potential for violence in the district.

Climate Assessments. The North Florida District conducted 45 climate assessments during our audit period. However, the climate assessments were not a result of the district's evaluation of any of the climate indicators discussed earlier. The Employee and Workplace Intervention Analyst conducted these 45 assessments at the request of postal management and district officials. Routine analysis of climate indicators may have identified the need for climate assessments at these sites before problems occurred.

For example, a climate assessment was conducted at a facility based on a request made by the plant manager to study conflicts that had occurred between management and craft employees. The Employee and Workplace Intervention Analyst recommended that facility management conduct systemic interviews and observations regarding employees concerns about management's interaction with them, discuss employee opportunities, attend communication related seminars/workshops, and promote treatment of employees with respect, sensitivity, and positive recognition.

The district could improve its process for evaluating the workplace climate by proactively identifying and monitoring sites or situations that have the potential for violence. Reviewing the indicators on a periodic basis may provide valuable information about conflict in district facilities.

Case Management

The North Florida District threat assessment team did not manage all threats or follow up on risk abatement plans developed in response to identified threats, as required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide. According to the Employee and Workplace Intervention Analyst, facility management was responsible for developing an action plan to correct problems and to follow up to ensure that the situation improved at their facility. A district that does not fully identify and investigate all threats and follow up on risk abatement plans could contribute toward an unsafe workplace for employees.

The Threat Assessment Team Guide requires the threat assessment team to engage in case management of threats, including developing a risk abatement plan and engaging in follow up. We found the Employee and Workplace Intervention Analyst maintained individual case files about some of the incidents that occurred in the district. However, the threat assessment team did not respond to all of the threateners in the district. Our review of the team's list of individual threats showed that the district documented 84 threats during the period June 1, 1997, through June 30, 1999. The Postal Inspection Service also provided us threat investigation reports for 65 employee-related threats⁷ for the same period. Of the 65 individual threats documented by the Postal Inspection Service, only nine of them appeared on the Threat Assessment Team list, and thus were not responded to, or followed up on by the team. District officials were not able to explain the discrepancy between the two lists.

Threat Assessment
Team Orientation

Only one of the seven threat assessment team core members received the two-day orientation training required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide. According to the Human Resources manager, the remaining six members did

⁷There were 97 total threats documented in the Inspection Service reports, of which 32 were customer-related threats and the remaining 65 were employee related.

not attend because he believed it was not mandatory to follow the requirement in the guide. As a result, the threat assessment team was not adequately trained to establish an effective violence prevention program.

The Threat Assessment Team Guide requires that all core threat assessment team members and Postal Inspectors receive a two-day orientation regarding the Postal Service approach to the threat assessment team process. This training is to make each participant aware of the Postal Service's commitment to a strategic plan for reducing violence in the workplace.

Measurement of Threat
Assessment Team
Performance

The North Florida District's Threat Assessment Team did not establish performance measures as required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide. According to district officials, the team measured its performance by tracking the number of violent incidents that led to fatalities and reviewing the employee responses from the Voice of the Employee survey. Without performance measures, the team could not objectively measure the effect their violence prevention efforts had on workplace climate and operations.

Performance measures help reduce the risk of violence in the workplace because they provide objective information to management on baseline performance and measure the effect of the violence prevention program. Objective data can be obtained through the use of surveys, the numbers and types of threats and assaults, the tracking system, and post-incident analysis of each violent incident.

Violence Awareness
Training

The district did not provide workplace violence awareness training for all district managers, supervisors, and craft employees in accordance with the Threat Assessment Team Guide because, according to district officials, they did not believe Postal Service Headquarters had made training mandatory. Employees who have not received violence awareness training may not be effective in preventing violence in the workplace.

The Threat Assessment Team Guide states that every Postal Service manager and supervisor should complete eight hours of workplace violence awareness program training and four hours of follow up training. Training topics should include defusing a difficult situation and providing

effective supervision. In September 1998, Postal Service management mandated one hour of violence awareness training for all craft employees, supervisors, and managers.

The North Florida District workplace violence awareness training consisted of:

- Workplace violence training primarily for managers and supervisors.
- Video and television displays concerning workplace violence.
- An introduction to workplace violence awareness for new employees.⁸
- Stand-up sessions on a recurring basis for all employees at the district's facilities.⁹

We used a statistical sample to project the number of managers, supervisors, and craft employees who had attended violence awareness training from June 1, 1997, through June 30, 1999. We projected that up to 468 (56 percent) of the 842 managers and supervisors in the district, had no workplace violence awareness training. We projected that no more than 100 (12 percent) of the 842 managers and supervisors received both the eight-hour workplace violence awareness training and the four-hour follow up training. For the same period, we projected that up to 536 (64 percent) of the 842 managers and supervisors received some workplace violence awareness training, ranging from 1 to 67 hours, but did not meet the specific 12-hour criterion. (See Appendix D.)

We projected that no more than 472 (6 percent) of the 8,029 craft employees in the North Florida District received the required one-hour violence awareness training course. (See Appendix D.)

The Postal Service has recognized violence awareness training for supervisors, managers, and craft employees as a vital component in preventing violence in the workplace.

⁸ We could not verify attendance at the orientation training because the district did not maintain a record of attendees.

⁹ We could not verify attendance at the stand-up sessions because the district did not maintain a record of attendees.

This training is mandatory because employees need effective tools to recognize the warning signs of violence and possibly defuse difficult situations.

Crisis Management
Plans Available at
Facilities

The North Florida District did not ensure receipt of local, customized crisis management plans at all district facilities in accordance with the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace. Facility managers told us they could not locate the plans.

We used a statistical sample to project that as many as 114 (39 percent) of the 292 facilities in the district did not have a copy of their local plan. (See Appendices B and C.)

Facilities that do not have crisis management plans on site may not have the necessary information to manage a crisis through to a successful conclusion.

Recommendations

We recommend the vice president, Southeast Area Operations, direct the North Florida District manager to implement controls to improve the effectiveness of the violence prevention program. Specifically:

1. Conduct annual physical security reviews at all district facilities.
2. Monitor and evaluate climate indicators to identify conflict that could lead to violence in the workplace.
3. Identify all threats and follow up to ensure that risk abatement plans are implemented.
4. Provide the required two day orientation training to all core members of the threat assessment team.
5. Establish performance measures to gauge team performance.
6. Mandate attendance at violence awareness training for all craft employees, supervisors, and managers.
7. Ensure receipt of local customized crisis management plans at all facilities.

**Management's
Comments**

The vice president Southeast Area Operations observed that the OIG report focused on the condition of the violence awareness programs in FY 1997 and 1998. He stated that because the OIG based its August 2000 conclusions on data obtained before June 1999 (the majority of which is FY 1997 and FY 1998), the conclusions are somewhat misleading. He added that the report does not reference any information/data during the past year (data pre-dates June 1999). For example, the vice president pointed out that the Southeast Area mandated the necessary Violence Awareness Training in September 1999 for FY 2000 and that training has now been fully completed and documented. The vice president emphasized that the Southeast Area remains committed to the continuous improvement of the violence prevention and response programs and that instructions would be issued to district managers to reinforce the need to implement the controls necessary to improve the effectiveness of the programs.

The North Florida District manager responded that in FY 2000 security reviews were conducted in all offices. Prior to the audit, it was understood that security reviews were only required in offices with 26 or more employees. In addition, he stated that the district has implemented a systematic approach to analyzing climate indicators and that beginning in December 1998, the district issued to its cluster members workplace environment indicator reports on an approximate frequency of every other accounting period. He identified efforts to improve the identification and follow up of threats, and noted that core members of the Threat Assessment Team received the required training; however, the team would be retrained in FY 2001. The district manager added that a database would be used to measure Threat Assessment Team performance.

The district manager commented that in utilizing a statistical sample, the draft report cited a deficiency concerning violence awareness training from June 1, 1997, through June 30, 1999. He believed that this methodology did not take into consideration training given to senior managers in FY 1996 and training mandated in FY 2000. He noted that in FY 2000 training was given to managers, supervisors, and all craft employees.

He said the district has ensured that all facilities have localized crisis management plans on site. He added that three of the seven offices noted in the report (Station A, Cecil Field, and Mayport) are finance stations. He stated that craft employees only work at these locations. He stated that the administrative manager is physically located elsewhere and does have a crisis management plan. He observed that the remaining offices (Worthington Springs, Archer, Oxford, and Alford) have no recollection of being contacted for this plan. He sites a possible miscommunication on the part of the auditors and the managers or postmasters in these small offices as a reason for not remembering the calls. Regardless, he commits to follow up with each location to ensure that plans are in place.

We have summarized management's comments in the report and included the full text of the comments in Appendix E.

**Evaluation of
Management's
Comments**

While we disagree that the OIG report was misleading and focused on the condition of the violence awareness programs in FY 1997 and 1998, using data from those fiscal years was necessary because they were the latest complete fiscal years at the time of our visit. However, interviews with postal officials regarding their implementation of proactive strategies occurred in September 1999. We do acknowledge that some time lapsed between the completion of our fieldwork and release of our draft report to management due to the application of this review at 24 other districts. Yet, we believe the report presents a fair portrayal of the district's threat assessment program.

The district manager took exception with information presented on monitoring climate indicators and customized crisis management plans. We reported on data and information provided to us at the time of our fieldwork; consequently, we cannot refute the district manager's assertions that the indicators were monitored and plans were available.

Although the vice president for the Southeast Area did not agree with our overall conclusions, we believe the area and district planned or implemented actions are responsive to the recommendations and address the issues identified in this report.

APPENDIX A. OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the contractor reviewed applicable laws, policies, procedures, climate assessments, and other documents, such as the Postal Inspection Service's Assault and Threats Incident Reports and investigative worksheets. The OIG and contractor also reviewed United States General Accounting Office (GAO) reports related to labor-management issues.

The OIG and contractor interviewed Postal Service officials in the North Florida District, Southeast Area, and headquarters to obtain information about the Postal Service workplace environment, and the procedures and policies implemented to ensure a safe and violence-free workplace.

To determine the district's compliance with policies and procedures, the OIG and contractor reviewed the district's Threat Assessment Team activities, zero tolerance policy, and crisis management plan. The OIG and contractor compared the activities, policies, and plans to the Postal Service requirements for violence prevention and response strategies. The district's initiatives for addressing workplace environmental climate issues, including training programs on violence prevention and response were also reviewed.

The OIG and contractor reviewed climate indicators outlined in the Threat Assessment Team Guide that may help the Threat Assessment Team develop preventive measures to moderate risk and liability. Those climate indicators were the number of employee grievances, Equal Employment Opportunity complaints, and Employee Assistance Program cases for all districts in the Southeast Area, including the North Florida District, for the period of June 1, 1997, through June 30, 1999.¹⁰ For the same period, the OIG and contractor reviewed the workplace climate assessments for the North Florida District. The OIG and contractor also reviewed results from the 1998 and 1999 Voice of the Employee surveys conducted in the North Florida District. We reviewed this data as indicators of conflict that could lead to violence in the North Florida District. The OIG and contractor compared the indicators in the North Florida District to the same indicators in other districts within the Southeast Area.¹¹

For fiscal years (FY) 1997 and 1998, the OIG projected the number of facilities where district officials conducted annual physical security reviews, and maintained crisis management plans on site.¹² We used statistical sampling methodologies to determine these numbers. (See Appendices B and C.)

¹⁰The OIG selected this audit period because Postal Service published the Threat Assessment Team Guide and Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace in May 1997.

¹¹ The OIG obtained this data from the Postal Service databases but did not verify the accuracy of the data.

¹² The OIG obtained this data from the Postal Service database. We did not verify the accuracy of the data, however, the audit team made every effort to include only sites that fell under Postal Service violence prevention and threat assessment guidelines. The team effort therefore included removing locations such as contractor-only facilities, parking lots, land, and antenna sites from the data provided, to arrive at the facility population size.

For the period June 1, 1997, through June 30, 1999, the OIG projected the number of craft employees, supervisors and managers who received the required number of hours of workplace violence awareness training. We used statistical sampling methodologies to project these numbers.¹³ (See Appendix D.)

The OIG and the contractor conducted the audit from September 1999 through September 2000, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included such tests of internal controls as were considered necessary under the circumstances. The OIG and contractor discussed the conclusions and observations with appropriate management officials and included their comments where appropriate.

¹³ See footnote number 11.

APPENDIX B

STATISTICAL SAMPLING AND PROJECTIONS FOR PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEWS AND THE EXISTENCE OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR FACILITIES IN THE NORTH FLORIDA DISTRICT FISCAL YEARS 1997 AND 1998

Purpose of the Sampling

One of the objectives of this audit was to assess the North Florida District's implementation of Postal Service policy regarding physical security reviews and crisis management plans. In support of this objective, the audit team employed a simple random attribute sample design that allows a statistical projection of responses from individual facilities within the North Florida District.

Definition of the Audit Universe

The audit universe consisted of 300 facilities, such as post offices, stations, branches, postal stores, and processing and distribution centers. The North Florida District management was the source of the universe data. In the North Florida District, an initial database search provided a universe of 252 facilities. Subsequent data yielded another 48 facilities that did not appear on the first listing, for a total of 300 facilities. The audit team made every effort to clean the database to include only sites that fell under Postal Service violence prevention and threat assessment guidelines. The team effort, therefore, included removing locations such as contractor-only parking lots, land, and antenna sites from the data provided, to arrive at the above-stated 300-facility population size.

Sample Design and Modifications

The audit used a stratified simple random sample design. For the first stratum, 35 facilities were randomly selected for review from the initial listing of 252 facilities. This sample size was planned to select facilities at the second stage of a two-stage design and was therefore not designed to provide a predetermined level of precision for an individual district projection. In changing to district-level projections, the audit team agreed to accept whatever level of precision derived from the existing sample size.

By the time the additional 48 facilities were identified, the team had already reviewed the first sample set. Rather than redraw the entire sample, we chose to include the additional 48 facilities in a separate stratum and to sample 20 of the 48 facilities. A further complication arose when four contractor-only facilities (i.e., inapplicable to the review) were discovered in the second stratum sample. Because no specific data was available to determine exactly how many other such facilities might be in the stratum, we had to make an estimate of the size of the applicable subpopulation for that stratum.

Using $((N-n)/N)$ as an unbiased estimator for $((N1-n1)/N1)$, where $N1$ is unknown, we arrived at an estimated stratum subpopulation size of 40 (Elementary Survey Sampling, Scheaffer, Mendenhall, and Ott, c.1990, chapter 11.3).

The resulting total estimated population size for the North Florida District is 292 facilities. Three separate attributes were included for the facility analysis.

Statistical Projections of the Sample Data

All attributes are projected to the estimated universe of 292 facilities. No differences in universe were provided for FY 1997 versus FY 1998.

For each of the three attributes analyzed, the North Florida District results included one stratum with either a very low or very high number of “positive” responses. In each such case the stratum was analyzed using the hypergeometric adaptation of the binomial attribute table for controls testing, found in the General Accounting Office’s Financial Audit Manual (the “FAM”). Because the population size is small, the tabulated values (for 95 percent reliability) were adjusted by the corresponding hypergeometric finite population correction, $((N-n)/(N-1))^{0.5}$.

In each case, the remaining stratum was analyzed using the formulas for estimation of a population proportion for a simple random sample and the two strata for each attribute were combined using stratum weights, as described in Elementary Survey Sampling, Scheaffer, Mendenhall, and Ott, c.1990.

Attribute 1: Physical Security Reviews Conducted In FY 1997

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that no more than 53 (18 percent) of the North Florida District facilities conducted a physical security review in FY 1997. The unbiased point estimate is 25 (about 9 percent) facilities. (Estimated universe: 292)

Attribute 2: Physical Security Reviews Conducted In FY 1998

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that no more than 63 (22 percent) of the North Florida District facilities conducted a physical security review in FY 1998. The unbiased point estimate is 32 (about 11 percent) facilities. (Estimated universe: 292)

Attribute 3: Crisis Management Plans On Site

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that as many as 114 (39 percent) of the North Florida District facilities did not have a copy of the district crisis management plan. The unbiased point estimate is 223 (about 76 percent) facilities with the crisis management plan. (Estimated universe: 292)

APPENDIX C

**SAMPLE OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANS
ON SITE AND PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEWS CONDUCTED AT
NORTH FLORIDA DISTRICT FACILITIES
FISCAL YEARS 1997 AND 1998**

| ITEM NO. | TYPE OF FACILITY | LOCATION | ZIP CODE | CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANS ON SITE | PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEWS CONDUCTED | |
|----------|------------------|---------------------|----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| | | | | | FY 97 | FY 98 |
| 1 | Main Post Office | Oxford | 34484 | NO | NO | NO |
| 2 | Main Post Office | Lamont | 32336 | YES | NO | NO |
| 3 | Station | Main Street Station | 32601 | YES | NO | NO |
| 4 | Main Post Office | Fort White | 32038 | YES | NO | NO |
| 5 | Main Post Office | Hernando | 34442 | YES | NO | NO |
| 6 | Main Post Office | Cross City | 32628 | YES | NO | NO |
| 7 | Main Post Office | Lady Lake | 32159 | YES | NO | NO |
| 8 | Main Post Office | Clarksville | 32430 | YES | NO | NO |
| 9 | Main Post Office | Cantonment | 32533 | YES | YES | YES |
| 10 | Main Post Office | Alford | 32420 | NO | NO | NO |
| 11 | Main Post Office | McIntosh | 32664 | YES | NO | NO |
| 12 | Main Post Office | Bonifay | 32425 | YES | NO | NO |
| 13 | Main Post Office | Penney Farms | 32079 | YES | NO | NO |
| 14 | Main Post Office | Glen Saint Mary | 32040 | YES | NO | NO |
| 15 | Station | Park Avenue Station | 32302 | YES | NO | NO |
| 16 | Station | Port Orange Branch | 32127 | YES | NO | NO |
| 17 | Main Post Office | Starke | 32091 | YES | NO | NO |
| 18 | Main Post Office | Altha | 32421 | YES | NO | NO |
| 19 | Main Post Office | Putnam Hall | 32185 | YES | NO | NO |
| 20 | Main Post Office | Hawthorne | 32640 | YES | NO | NO |
| 21 | Station | Palm Coast | 32137 | YES | NO | NO |
| 22 | Main Post Office | Yulee | 32097 | YES | NO | NO |
| 23 | Main Post Office | Blountstown | 32424 | YES | NO | NO |
| 24 | Main Post Office | Ponce De Leon | 32455 | YES | NO | NO |
| 25 | Main Post Office | Candler | 32111 | YES | NO | NO |
| 26 | Main Post Office | Wewahitchka | 32465 | YES | NO | NO |
| 27 | Main Post Office | Eglin | 32542 | YES | NO | NO |

| ITEM NO. | TYPE OF FACILITY | LOCATION | ZIP CODE | CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANS ON SITE | PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEWS CONDUCTED | |
|----------|------------------------------|---------------------|----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| | | | | | FY 97 | FY 98 |
| 28 | Main Post Office | Worthington Springs | 32697 | NO | NO | NO |
| 29 | Main Post Office | Bascom | 32423 | YES | NO | NO |
| 30 | Main Post Office | Jasper | 32052 | YES | NO | NO |
| 31 | Station | Station A | 32122 | NO | NO | NO |
| 32 | Main Post Office | Archer | 32618 | NO | NO | NO |
| 33 | Station | Century | 32535 | YES | NO | NO |
| 34 | Main Post Office | Welaka | 32193 | YES | NO | NO |
| 35 | Main Post Office | Palatka | 32177 | YES | NO | NO |
| 36 | Station | Jacksonville | 32210 | YES | YES | YES |
| 37 | Station | North Jacksonville | 32218 | YES | NO | YES |
| 38 | Station | Jacksonville Beach | 32250 | YES | NO | NO |
| 39 | Bulk Mail Facility | Jacksonville Beach | 32099 | YES | YES | NO |
| 40 | Station | Panama City | 32405 | YES | NO | NO |
| 41 | Station | Cecil Field | 32202 | NO | NO | NO |
| 42 | Station | Jacksonville | 32234 | YES | YES | YES |
| 43 | Station | Jacksonville | 32225 | YES | YES | YES |
| 44 | Station | Mayport | 32233 | NO | NO | NO |
| 45 | Station | Jacksonville | 32201 | YES | NO | NO |
| 46 | Vehicle Maintenance Facility | Jacksonville | 32203 | Yes | NO | NO |
| 47 | Station | Jacksonville | 32257 | YES | YES | NO |
| 48 | Station | Pensacola | 32503 | YES | NO | NO |
| 49 | Station | Jacksonville | 32255 | YES | NO | NO |
| 50 | Mail Processing Annex | Jacksonville | 32218 | YES | NO | YES |
| 51 | Vehicle Maintenance Facility | Gainesville | 32608 | YES | NO | NO |
| 52 | Station | Jacksonville | 32211 | YES | YES | YES |
| 53 | Remote Encoding Center | Jacksonville | 32218 | YES | YES | YES |
| 54 | Station | Carver | 32009 | YES | YES | YES |
| 55 | Mail Processing Annex | St. Augustine | 32084 | YES | YES | YES |

APPENDIX D

STATISTICAL SAMPLING AND PROJECTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES TRAINED IN WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AWARENESS IN THE NORTH FLORIDA DISTRICT JUNE 1, 1997 TO JUNE 30, 1999

Purpose of the Sampling

One of the objectives of this audit was to assess the North Florida District's implementation of Postal Service policy to train supervisors/managers and craft employees in conflict resolution and workplace violence awareness. In support of this objective, the audit team conducted statistical samples of personnel from each of the two groups. A simple random attribute sample design was used in both cases.

Definition of the Audit Universe

For the craft employee assessment, the audit universe consists of 8,029 craft employees in the North Florida District. For the supervisory-level assessment, the audit universe is a total of 842 supervisors and managers in the district.

All training information came from the Postal Service personnel database in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Sample Design and Modifications

The audit used a simple random sample design. We randomly selected 50 craft employees and 50 managers and supervisors for review. This sample size was planned to select employees at the second stage of a two-stage design and was therefore not designed to provide a predetermined level of precision for an individual district projection. In changing to district-level projections, the audit team agreed to accept whatever level of precision derived from the existing sample size. Three separate attributes were included for the supervisory-level training analysis.

Statistical Projections of the Sample Data

In general, the sample data were analyzed based on the estimation of a population proportion for a simple random sample as described in Elementary Survey Sampling, Scheaffer, Mendenhall, and Ott, c.1990.

In some cases, a low number of "positive" responses in the sample required analysis using the hypergeometric adaptation of the binomial attribute table for controls testing, found in the General Accounting Office's Financial Audit Manual (the "FAM"). The tabulated values (for 95 percent reliability) are adjusted by the hypergeometric finite population correction, $((N-n)/(N-1))^{0.5}$.

Results are presented for a one-sided confidence interval as well as the point estimate. For the collection of supervisory attributes, the sum of the point estimates will equal the total population. A sum of the upper bounds is meaningless because any increases in one category would be offset by reductions in another.

Craft Employee Training Projection

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that no more than 472 (6 percent) of the 8,029 craft employees in the North Florida District received training in workplace violence awareness. The unbiased point estimate is that no employees met the training criterion.

Supervisors and Managers: Training Projection

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that up to 468 (56 percent) of the 842 North Florida District supervisors and managers received no workplace violence awareness training. The unbiased point estimate is 44 percent, or 370 supervisors and managers, who received no subject-matter training.

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that up to 536 (64 percent) of the 842 North Florida District supervisors and managers received some subject-matter training, possibly as part of other supervisory courses. The unbiased point estimate is 52 percent, or 438 supervisors and managers.

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that no more than 100 (12 percent) of the 842 North Florida District supervisors and managers met or exceeded the 12-hour subject-matter training criterion. The unbiased point estimate is that 4 percent, or 34 supervisors and managers, met the 12-hour training criterion.

APPENDIX E. MANAGEMENT'S COMMENTS

09/21/00 11:18 FAX 214 775 9216

USPS-OIG DALLAS

SEP. 21. 2000 11:18AM SOUTHEAST AREA OFFICE

NO. 650 P. 2

WILLIAM J. BRANN
VICE PRESIDENT, AREA OPERATIONS
SOUTHEAST AREA



September 18, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ms. Debra D. Pettitt
Acting Assistant Inspector General
For Oversight and Business Evaluation
Office of Inspector General
1735 N. Lynn Street
Arlington, VA 22209-2020

SUBJECT: Audit Reports-Review of Violence Prevention and Response
Programs in the South Georgia District, North Florida District,
Atlanta District, South Florida District, and Mississippi District
(Report # LB-AR-00-DRAFT)

This is a response to the five draft reports concerning the Reviews of the Violence Prevention and Response Programs in the Districts listed above, dated August 18, 2000, and received in the Southeast Area Office on August 28, 2000.

Each relevant District Manager will appropriately provide the specific management response to the District recommendations under separate cover. This response will address the recommendations in all five reports that the Area Vice President directs the above five District Managers to implement controls to improve the effectiveness of the violence prevention and response programs.

Again, I will reiterate the observation that the draft report focused on the condition of the Violence Awareness Programs in FY 97 and FY 98. To draw conclusions in August 2000, based on data that pre-dates June 1999 (the majority of which is FY 97 and FY 98), is somewhat misleading. For instance, the Southeast Area mandated the necessary Violence Awareness Training in September 1999 for FY 2000; that training has now been fully completed (records available in the National Training Database (NTD)). Also, the Southeast Area issued instructions in March 1999 for completion of the required security reviews in accordance with the ASM (completion records available from Area SCO). However, the report does not reference any information/data during the past year (data pre-dates June 1999).

The Southeast Area, however, remains committed to the continuous improvement of the Violence Prevention and Response Programs. Therefore, instructions will be issued to District Managers to reinforce the need to implement the controls necessary to improve the effectiveness of the Violence Prevention and Response Programs (copy attached).

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Review of the Violence Prevention and Response
Programs in the North Florida District

LB-AR-00-007

09/21/00 11:19 FAX 214 775 9216

USPS-OIG DALLAS

SEP.21.2000 11:19AM SOUTHEAST AREA OFFICE

NO.650 P.3

Page 2

If you require any additional information, please contact Karen Borowski, Manager, Human Resources, at 901-747-7200.



William J. Brown

Attachment

cc: District Managers: Atlanta, North Florida, South Florida, Mississippi, South Georgia
Yvonne Maguire, Vice President, Employee Resource Management, HQs
Suzanne Milton, Manager, Workplace Environment Improvement, HQs

Review of the Violence Prevention and Response
Programs in the North Florida District

LB-AR-00-007

09/21/00 11:18 FAX 214 775 9216

USPS-OIG DALLAS

SEP. 21. 2000 11:19AM SOUTHEAST AREA OFFICE

NO. 650 P. 4

WILLIAM J. BROWN
Vice President, Area Operations
Southeast Area



September 18, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: District Managers
SUBJECT: Violence Prevention and Response Programs

Recent audits by the Office of the Inspector General have revealed the need to improve our Violence Prevention and Response Programs. In an effort toward continuous improvement in this critical area, please take the necessary action to assure the following controls are in place in your cluster to improve our program effectiveness:

- Verify that the FY 2000 mandated Violence Awareness Training has occurred.
- Assure the required two-day orientation training is provided to all Threat Assessment Team (TAT) members.
- Verify that the necessary annual Security Reviews are conducted in accordance with the provisions of the ASM.
- Effectively utilize relevant climate indicators as a means of assessing and reducing the potential for violence.
- Establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure receipt of local customized crisis management plans at all facilities.
- Assure implementation of the necessary TAT performance measures as described in Chapter 5, Publication 108, Threat Assessment Guide.
- Assure that TATs engage in appropriate case management in accordance with Chapter 4 of Publication 108, Threat Assessment Guide.

If we are to provide the "safest possible work environment" for all of our employees, it is imperative that we continuously monitor, evaluate, and improve our processes and procedures in the area of violence prevention and security. The Southeast Area remains committed to a proactive approach of violence prevention and effective emergency response programs.


William J. Brown

cc: Yvonne Maguire, Vice President, Employee Resource Management, HQs
Suzanne Milton, Manager, Workplace Environment Improvement
Managers, Human Resources (Districts)

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received 9-15-00
RDP

DISTRICT MANAGER
NORTH FLORIDA DISTRICT/CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SALES

 **UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE**
September 11, 2000

Memorandum for: Debra D. Pettitt
Acting Assistant Inspector General
For Oversight and Business Evaluations
Office of Inspector General
1735 N. Lynn Street
Arlington VA 22209-2020

Subject: Audit Report Response – Report Number LM-AR-00-Draft

This response addresses the conclusions and recommendations offered by the Office of the Inspector General, which were formulated in an audit of the North Florida District's violence and response programs conducted in September 1999 and received in this office on August 29, 2000.

Physical Security Reviews

The District will conduct annual security reviews in accordance with the provisions of the current ASM. Prior to this audit, it was understood that security reviews were only required in offices with 26 or more employees. In FY 2000, security audit reviews have been conducted in all offices in accordance with ASM Chapter 2, Section 27. I refer you to the letter of completion which was sent by the District Security Officer to Raleigh concerning this project, dated September 6, 2000 (Attachment A).

Monitoring and Evaluation of Climate Indicators

The North Florida District has implemented a systematic approach to analyzing climate indicators. However, no one indicator can be utilized as a determining factor for potential violence. Beginning in December, 1998, the district issued to its cluster

- 2 -

members a workplace environment indicators report on an approximate frequency of every other accounting period. I refer you to Attachment B for copies of these reports.

Our EAP annualized contact utilization rate for the period of April 1, 2000 through May 31, 2000 indicates a rate of 6.30% and an annualized case utilization rate of 5.00%. These percentages exceed the national and area rates and are, we believe positive indicators that employees and their families are seeking help to relieve the stressors in their working and personal lives. We will continue to actively market our EAP services to employees.

Identification and Follow-up of Threats

The Threat Assessment Team has met with the Inspection Service domiciled in Jacksonville and Tallahassee to ensure a system of cross referencing calls is in place. The EWIA is now receiving copies of all potential threats the Inspection Service receives directly.

The minutes of the TAT meetings reflect the abatement activities assigned to the team members. However, we would like to note that in the training provided by USPS Headquarters, it was recommended that minutes of TAT meetings be as brief as possible and that the TAT members be accountable for the abatement items assigned. In other words, there was caution issued in favor of minimal documentation.

In addition, the EWIA had already implemented follow-up procedures for fourteen days, thirty days, sixty days and ninety days after the potential threat has been resolved. (See Attachment C) These are monitored and followed-up on a case by case basis.

Two-day Orientation Training to Core Members of the TAT

Two of the core members of our TAT received the training provided by Headquarters on the Threat Assessment Team Guide, Publication 108. Two other members engaged in self-study via the training videos provided by Headquarters. They then gave a summary training session to the other team members. Nonetheless, we will retrain all TAT members with the two-day training session by the close of A/P 2, FY 2001. This has been tasked to the EWIA.

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Threat Assessment Performance Measures

Since the implementation of the Threat Assessment Team, North Florida's EWIA developed a tracking database of all Credible Threat Assault reports filed. This database identifies all threat assessment cases by date, locale, management official, risk level, and status of the case. Beginning in fiscal year 2001, the EWIA will expand this database to provide summary information to the TAT members and cluster relative to numbers of referrals, risk ratings, locales, repeat threateners, etc. This will service as a performance measure to gauge the Threat Assessment Team's performance.

Violence Awareness Training

In utilizing a statistical sample, the draft report cited a deficiency concerning Violence Awareness Training from June 1, 1997 through June 30, 1999. Not taken into consideration was the fact that workplace violence awareness training was given in FY 1996 to EAS employees. Eight hours of violence awareness training was also mandated for all EAS during fiscal year 2000. Attachment D indicates attendance of 1350 for the 1996 and 2000 training sessions.

During fiscal year 1998, two hours of threat assessment team training was provided to EAS employees in a supervisory capacity. Five hundred sixty nine postmasters, managers, and supervisors attended this training. (Attachment E)

During fiscal year 2000, four hours of communications and conflict training was mandated for EAS employees in the North Florida District. Attachment F indicates 819 enrollments for this training.

In addition, during fiscal year 2000, 100% of craft pay locations received four hours of training on workplace environment improvement. One hour of the four was mandated on the topic of violence awareness. Please refer to Attachment G as documentation of this training having been completed in all craft units.

To provide additional emphasis on workplace violence, security and EAP services, we have emphasized these topics on our monthly satellite broadcasts and produced two videos featuring our EWIA and EAP counselors. The workplace violence video was sent to all our units in FY 98 and the EAP services video was distributed in August of this year.

- 4 -

Localized Crisis Management Plans

All facilities have localized crisis management plans. These plans not only include violence, but natural disasters, fires, bomb threats, etc. Because North Florida District has been extremely susceptible to hurricanes, flooding, etc. this has always been a priority in this District. Copies of the core plan are kept in the District Safety Office for reference with the postmaster or manager keeping the actual plan. All plans are updated annually. Names, phone numbers, addresses are kept current.

The District Safety Manager contacted the offices on pages 18 and 19 of the draft report. Three of the seven units cited are finance stations (Station A, Cecil Field, and Mayport). Craft employees only work at these locations. The administrative manager is physically located elsewhere and does have a crisis management plan for that facility.

The remaining offices (Worthington Springs, Archer, Oxford, and Alford) have no recollection of being contacted for this plan. Either there was a miscommunication between the auditors and the manager, or the postmasters in these small facilities were away from their offices and the calls were received by others. Regardless, we will follow up with each location to ensure operating procedures are in place so the crisis plans are familiar to those employees on site and can be readily accessed. (Attachment H)

We have also taken measures to ensure that these plans remain an accountable item in each location when personnel changes are made. The plans are on a checklist that must be signed off by the outgoing postmaster/manager and the incoming postmaster/manager. The transfer postmaster completes these forms. This system has been in place since A/P 4 this fiscal year.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your findings. You may be assured the North Florida District will continue its ongoing commitment to address workplace environment concerns.

Nancy Z. Rohr

for Harold L. Swinton