

July 18, 2001

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SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES

SUBJECT: Review of the Effectiveness of the Employee
and Workplace Intervention Analyst Program in
the Central Florida District
(Report Number LC-MA-01-001)

This report presents the results of our review of the effectiveness of the Employee and Workplace Intervention Analyst Program in the Central Florida District (Project Number 00JA013LC000). We conducted this review to respond to a request from a congressional representative.

Background

In 1993, the Postal Service established an employee assistance program coordinator position for each Postal Service district. The coordinator's primary responsibility was the administration of the Employee Assistance Program.

In 1997, the Postal Service changed the employee assistance program coordinator's title to employee and workplace intervention analyst (intervention analyst). This change focused the analyst's responsibilities on improving the workplace environment. The duties of the intervention analyst included:

- Training employees in violence awareness.
- Promoting effective working relationships among managers, supervisors, union officials, and employees.
- Intervening in tense or hostile work situations.
- Ensuring development of a crisis readiness plan.

Between November 1998 and March 1999, the former intervention analyst for the Central Florida District wrote a number of letters to the postmaster general, the Postal Service inspector general, and various senior Postal

Service managers, alleging the suppression and falsification of data related to troubled work sites in the Central Florida District. The analyst also sent this information to a congressional representative.

**Objectives, Scope,
and Methodology**

The overall objective of our review was to assess the effectiveness of the Employee and Workplace Intervention Analyst Program. We began our work in the Central Florida District because of the congressional complaint from the district's former intervention analyst. Our specific objectives were to:

- Determine whether the allegations made by the former intervention analyst concerning suppression and falsification of data related to troubled work sites in the Central Florida District had merit.
- Determine whether the current Central Florida District intervention analyst was performing the requirements of the position effectively.
- Evaluate the quality of the findings and recommendations of the internal assessment of the intervention analyst program conducted by Postal Service Headquarters.

To accomplish the first objective, we interviewed the former Central Florida District intervention analyst to obtain details of his allegations and supporting documentation. We also requested assault and credible threat reports from the Postal Inspection Service in Orlando and from Central Florida District officials. To accomplish the second objective, we met with the manager, Central Florida District, the current intervention analyst, and senior members of the district management team. To accomplish the third objective, we discussed the internal assessment with headquarters officials and analyzed data used to develop their findings. We obtained documentation related to the effectiveness of the current intervention analyst and files related to allegations made by the former intervention analyst.

This review was conducted from July 2000 through July 2001 in accordance with the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, Quality Standards for Inspections. We discussed our conclusions and observations with appropriate management officials and included their comments, where appropriate.

**Former Intervention
Analyst's Allegations
Did Not Have Merit**

We found that the allegations made by the former intervention analyst did not have merit. Specifically, the former analyst made allegations regarding suppression and falsification of data related to troubled work sites. However, the information he provided was predominantly anecdotal, consisting of second-hand information from other Postal Service employees and newspaper articles. Furthermore, his allegations generally concerned complaints by individual employees rather than systemic problems affecting numerous employees or the duties of the intervention analyst. Finally, his allegations were not substantiated by documentation from either Central Florida District files or Postal Inspection Service files.

**Current Intervention
Analyst Was Effective**

We found that the current intervention analyst in the Central Florida District was performing the requirements of the position effectively. The intervention analyst had employed a number of analytical and human relation techniques, which contributed to an improved work climate in the district in a variety of ways, including:

- Crisis management planning.
- Threat assessment and violence prevention.
- Organizational assessments.
- Partnering with other human resources initiatives.
- Administering Employee Assistance Program services.

During our visit to the Central Florida District, the district manager and several of her senior staff told us that the district and the current intervention analyst had developed a relationship based on trust. In addition, we noted that the district had provided the analyst with a full-time employee to assist in evaluating threat assessments, analyzing survey

responses, organizing files, and compiling a database of climate assessment results.

**Internal Assessment
Was Sufficient**

In July 2000, we learned that the Office of Workplace Environment Improvement at Postal Service Headquarters was conducting an internal assessment of the intervention analyst program. We found the headquarters' assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention analyst position included extensive information obtained through questionnaires, interviews with managers and intervention analysts, focus groups, and a nationwide meeting of intervention analysts. The findings and recommendations of the assessment focused on reorganizing job priorities, improving communication channels, and changing the position description and qualification standards for the position.

Headquarters officials are working with district-level managers to implement these recommendations throughout the nation. For example, headquarters and field managers advised that they are developing strategies to encourage more consistent use of intervention analysts and improve accountability at the district and area levels.

Conclusion

We offer no recommendations to Postal Service management at this time. Additionally, we do not plan to perform additional work on this subject because we believe the internal headquarters' assessment of this program sufficiently identified issues requiring management attention and included recommended actions to alleviate those problems.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff and the staff of the Central Florida District Office during the review. If you have any questions, please contact JoAnn Crosby, acting director, Labor Management, or me at (703) 248-2300.

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for Oversight and Business Evaluations

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in the Central Florida District**

LC-MA-01-001

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