

**Department of Commerce
Occupational Safety and Health Program
Fiscal Year 2006 Annual Agency Report**



**Department of Commerce
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Executive Summary

Statistics

The Department of Commerce (DOC) experienced a seven percent increase in workforce during the fiscal year. Work-related injuries and illnesses increased two percent, however the total rate decreased five percent. The total number of lost time injuries increased six percent, but the lost time rate remained constant at a low level. This information suggests a continued steady to slight reduction in work-related injuries and illnesses.

Category	FY 2006	Change from Previous Year
Civilian employee number	40,292	+7%
Total work-related injuries and illnesses FY 06	470	+2%
Lost time work-related injuries and illnesses FY 06	229	+6%
Total work-related injury and illness case rate FY 06	1.17	-5%
Lost time work-related injury and illness case rate FY 06	0.57	0
Total workers' compensation Charge back year (CBY) 06	\$15,031,446	+4%

Table 1: Summary of Department Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses for FY 2006

There was no significant change in the causes of injuries and illnesses experienced by the Department. The primary cause of injuries for the Department remained trips, slips and falls. The secondary cause was exertions. This is consistent with cause statistics from previous years.

The Department experienced decreased work-related injuries and illnesses since Fiscal Year (FY) 2000. During this time, significant training and information initiatives were implemented. In the Department, occupational safety and health training is emphasized at all levels, from the most senior management to frontline employees. Promotion of safety culture is an ongoing program at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Better reporting and investigation of work-related injuries, illnesses and incidents (i.e. near misses, first aid only injuries) is also emphasized. Best practices are identified and shared throughout the Department. These approaches will continue and new initiatives will be identified and pursued. Two pilot programs are planned for FY 2007 that will address improved safety culture in small bureaus and the return-to-work of employees injured during previous decennials.

The Department experienced one fatality during FY 2006 due to a motor vehicle accident. The accident involved a Census Field Representative driving her private vehicle. Police reports state the employee pulled into an intersection and was hit by a tractor-trailer. The employee was wearing a seat belt. Contributing factors to the accident were wet roads and night driving conditions. The employee had received driver safety training and was evaluated for safe driving practices by her supervisor.

OSHA Initiatives

SHARE: During FY 2006, the Department met and exceeded three of the four goals of the Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) initiative. Goals included increased timeliness for filings, reduced lost time, and total case rates. Despite a five percent decrease in total work-related injuries and illnesses and a constant lost time injury and illness rate, the Department did not meet the goal of reduced lost production days. The slight increase in lost production days was similar to that reported by other agencies. We continue to analyze workers' compensation data to determine the cause(s) within the Department. To date, corrective measures include studying the forms submittal process to identify the source of delays, and providing supervisors training that emphasizes the need for rapid turnaround of all workers' compensation documentation. Supervisors are instructed to remain in regular contact with employees while they are out due to an injury or illness to ensure employees return as soon as medically possible.

Motor Vehicle Safety: The Department experienced 69 motor vehicle accidents during FY 2006. Many of these accidents were minor and did not result in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recordable injuries. The Department considers the most reliable indicator of seat belt use to be police reports. Accidents that resulted in police reports showed a 100% compliance with seat belt use.

The Department continued to emphasize the use of seat belts in FY 2006. All Commerce employees are required to wear seat belts while on official government business. The Commerce Department also strongly encourages employees to wear seat belts in their personal vehicle, encourage family members to always wear seat belts, and use child restraint systems for their children. Seat belt use and safe driving promotions were included in safety fairs. In addition Bureau of Census and NOAA include safe driving and seat belt use in their safety awareness programs. Large bureaus that control their own entry gates and parking conduct seat belt usage checks. Checks show on average a 98 percent compliance rate. To further enforce seat belt usage, police forces of two NIST facilities can issue citations to drivers not using seat belts.

Recordkeeping: The Department fully implemented the new recordkeeping requirements under 29 CFR 1960 during FY 2006. Larger bureaus prepared for this change beginning in early 2004. OSHA Form 300A is in use and will be posted for the required period of February 1, 2007, to March 31, 2007.

Employee Support

Occupational safety and health (OSH) training is of primary importance throughout the Department. Basic safety training for employees and supervisors is conducted throughout the bureaus usually as part of new employee orientation. Job specific training is provided as required by regulation or need. Additional training is provided, including incident investigation for supervisors, safety culture promotion, and workers' compensation. During FY 2006 special topics such as pandemic influenza preparedness, cough etiquette, and hand washing were presented. Another special training need was related to the Census occupying a new building. Over 2000 Census employees were relocated to a new building and received site-specific occupant emergency procedures training. This training will continue into FY 2007 and will be presented for each new group of employees relocated to the new facility

All OSH personnel and collateral duty safety managers are encouraged to participate in Federal Council activities in their area. New personnel are particularly supported in their efforts to attend meetings and training opportunities. OSH personnel participate in the activities of the Councils in Metropolitan DC, Colorado, and Indiana, the areas that house the majority of Department employees.

The Department of Commerce OSH Council meets monthly and is attended by the OSH manager of each bureau, their immediate supervisor, the Director and Deputy Director of Human Resources Management, and the agency Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer. Meetings provide opportunities for training, networking, sharing of best practices, and communication between safety officers and senior management. During FY 2006, guest speakers included the Director of Federal Programs for OSHA and senior personnel involved with Federal employee workers' compensation.

The Department supports professional and certified OSH employees by funding training and networking opportunities with organizations such as the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), and American Biological Safety Association (ABSA). During FY 2006, employees from NIST and the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OOSH) attended two national level conferences on Federal employee workers' compensation.

Detailed Report

I. Statistics

a. Injury and Illness Statistics

The Department of Commerce experienced a 7 percent increase in workforce during the fiscal year. The total of work-related injuries increased 2 percent, however the total rate decreased five percent. The total number of lost time injuries increased six percent, but the lost time rate remained constant at a low level. Statistics continue to show improvements over prior years.

During FY 2006, the Department experienced an increase in lost work days, however the actual lost work day rate remained constant. The Department has worked for several years to reduce lost work days. Various initiatives have been implemented, including analyzing the claims submittal process to identify delays that contribute to additional lost days from work. In addition, training provided to supervisors emphasizes their role in the workers' compensation process and the importance of timely document submittal in lost days reduction. To further emphasize the importance of supervisors in this process, workers' compensation elements are under development for supervisors' performance plans.

	FY 2005	FY 2006	Change
Number of Federal Civilian Employees , including full-time, part-time, seasonal, and intermittent employees	37,603	40,292	+2,689 (+7%)
Total Cases Injury/Illness (number of injury/illness cases-no lost-time, first aid, lost-time and fatalities)	462	470	+8 (+2%)
Total Case Rate (rate of all injury/illness cases per 100 employees)	1.23	1.17	-0.06
Lost Time Cases (number of cases that involved days away from work)	216	229	+13
Lost time Case Rate (rate of only the injury/illness cases with days away from work per 100 employees)	0.57	0.57	0
Lost Work Days (number of days away from work)	21.6	22.9	+1.3
Lost Work Day Rate (per 100 employees)	.057	.057	0

Table 1: Summary of Department Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses for FY 2006

The Department has not identified any specific facilities with high injury rates. The vast majority of Department employees work in standard office environments. Department experience indicates that injuries and illnesses increase related to job risk, rather than facility, e.g., National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) employees experience increased falls when on shipboard verses in an office environment. This information and risk assessments are used to target areas for improvement. For example, in FY 2006, NOAA identified driver safety as a potential risk and included a driver safety section in the NOAA employee safety awareness program.

b. Fatalities

The Department of Commerce experienced one fatality during FY 2006 due to a motor vehicle accident. The accident involved a Census Field Representative in her private vehicle. Census Safety Officers and personnel from the Office of Occupational Safety and Health Safety (OOSH) tracked this accident and information pertaining to it. Police reports state the employee pulled into an intersection and was hit by a tractor-trailer. The employee was wearing a seat belt. Contributing factors to the accident were wet roads and night driving conditions. The Census Field Representative training program does include basic driving safety which the employee had received, as well as being evaluated for safe driving by her supervisor.

The Department routinely has a low number of fatalities. There were two fatalities in FY 2004, none in FY 2005, and one in FY 2006.

Fatalities	Cause-FY2006
1	Automobile accident

Table 2: Summary of Fatalities for FY 2006

c. Office of Workers' Compensation Program Costs

	CBY 2005	CBY 2006
Total Chargeback	\$14,493,452	\$15,031,446

Table 3: Summary of Department Workers' Compensation Costs.

Chargeback costs for the Department increased \$537,994 in Chargeback Year (CBY) 2006, due primarily to increased medical expenses and salaries. New claims, i.e., claims with a date of injury in CBY 2006 resulted in a cost of \$597,929, meaning that over \$14,000,000 were devoted to claims that occurred in previous years. This breakdown confirms the need for continued management of claims that occurred in previous years as well as effective management of new claims.

d. Significant Trends and Major Causes or Sources of Lost Time Injuries

No changes in trends were identified during FY 2006. The causes of injuries and illnesses are consistent with previous years. Trips, slips, and falls remain the primary cause of lost time accidents. Strains and cumulative trauma injuries remain second, as they have been for several years.

FY 2006 Major Trends		Description
Nature (i.e. sprains, contusions, etc.)	% of Total	
Strains	31%	Strains generally due to falls and lifting
Contusions	22%	Majority are fall related
Fracture	7%	Majority are fall related
Puncture	6%	Employees puncturing themselves with tools and office supplies and dog bites from Census employees
Sprain	6%	Majority are fall related
Laceration	6%	Majority are due to striking against an object
Abrasion	3%	Majority are fall related
Multiple injuries	3%	Multiple causes, but frequently involve falls
Torn Ligament/tendon	2%	Majority are fall related
Crushing	1%	Majority are equipment related
Hernia	1%	Lifting related
Hearing/Cumulative	1%	Work environment related
Emotional Stress	1%	Majority are employee-supervisor issues
Information Only	3%	Incidents filed for information purposes
Misc.	7%	Less than 1% for each nature
Cause of injury (i.e., slips, handing tools, etc.)		
Slips/Trips/Falls	36%	Most of these cases are basic falls, the majority of which do NOT have an identified hazard associated with them, however particularly Census field personnel must deal with icy sidewalks and steps
Exertion	25%	Strains, and cumulative trauma diseases
Struck by	19%	Generally used in context of vehicular accidents
Misc.	8%	Incidents not classified in the other classes
Lacerated (cut, puncture)	7.5%	Cuts and punctures, generally related to tool or office supply use, however some cases are dog bites
Caught on	2%	Employee caught or cut themselves on an object
Exposure/contact with	2.5%	Exposure to chemicals or odors

Table 4: Summary of Trend and Cause Data for FY 2006

The Department continues to address the major causes of accidents. Prevention of trips, slips, and falls is of primary importance at all facilities. Employees are reminded to clean up or report spills. Contact information for spill cleanup is provided in safety orientation materials. In winter, safety personnel coordinate with building maintenance to ensure sidewalks are free of ice and passable. Department facilities provide walk-off mats during inclement weather and many facilities provide umbrella bags at building entrances. Lifting information and training is available throughout the Department. Ergonomic assessments and training are supplied to Department personnel. Vehicle safety is included in basic training at both Census and NOAA, the bureaus with the vast majority of individuals who drive as part of their job. Census constantly monitors vehicle accidents and has done comparisons with organizations such as Federal Express to implement best practices for driver safety.

e. Contract Employees

During FY 2006, the Department did not track the work-related injuries and illnesses of contractor employees on a Department-wide basis. It is the policy of the Department and all bureaus to investigate all incidents, regardless of who is involved and to obtain, at a minimum, the information contained on the OSHA Form 301, Injury and Illness Report. Safety personnel respond to incidents involving contractors using the same procedures used for employees. The same procedures are also used for site visitors.

f. Volunteers

Overall the Department does not make wide use of volunteers. NOAA is the only bureau that utilizes volunteers and that use is variable and involves only a small number of individuals. No volunteer injuries were reported for FY 2006; however procedures are in place to treat any volunteer incident in the same manner as an employee incident, including investigations and recordkeeping.

II. OSHA Initiatives

a. SHARE

During FY2006, the Department met and exceeded three of the four goals of Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) initiative. Goals included increased timeliness for filing CA-1 and CA-2 forms with OWCP, reduced lost time work-related injuries and illnesses, and total injury and illness case rates for no lost time and lost time cases (per 100 employees).

Currently the Department does not have an automated claims filing system. Timeliness is addressed by training and customer service provided by the Department's workers' compensation contractor.

Despite a five percent decrease in total work-related injuries and illnesses and a constant lost time injury and illness rate, the Department did not meet the goal to reduce lost production days. The slight increase in lost production days experience was similar to that reported by other agencies, as described in Secretary Chao's SHARE extension memorandum. The Department has worked for several years to reduce lost work days. Various initiatives have been implemented, including studying the claims submittal process to identify delays that contribute

to additional lost days from work. Delays in this process can cause employees to remain out of work additional days while they wait for claim numbers and medical authorizations. In addition, training provided to supervisors emphasizes their role in the workers' compensation process and the importance of timely document submittal in lost days reduction. A claim number can not be issued until a CA-1 or CA-2, signed by the supervisor, is received by OWCP again causing employees to remain out of work awaiting claim numbers and medical approval. To further emphasize the importance of supervisors in this process, workers' compensation elements are under development for supervisors' performance plans.

US Department of Commerce SHARE Goals	FY 2003 Baseline	FY 2004 Target	FY2004 Actual	FY 2005 Target	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 Actual
Lost Production Days (Reduce 1% Each Year)	19.8	19.6	20.2	19.4	21.0	19.2	22.8
CA-1/CA-2 Timeliness (Reduce 5% Each Year)	34.0%	35.7%	56.7%	34.5%	53.5%	39.4%	53.0%
Total Case Rate (Reduce 3% Each Year)	1.46	1.42	1.39	1.38	1.23	1.34	1.17
Lost Time Case Rate (Reduce 3% Each Year)	0.70	0.68	0.60	0.66	0.57	0.64	0.58

Table 5: Summary of SHARE Performance

b. Motor Vehicle/Seat Belt Safety

	FY 2006
Number of motor vehicle accidents experienced by employees	69
Number of accidents resulting in personal injury	41
Number of accidents resulting in lost time	37
Amount of liability claims against the agency due to accidents	\$2,000,000 (estimated)

Table 6: Summary of Motor Vehicle Accidents

The Department of Commerce continued to emphasize the use of seat belts in Fiscal Year 2006. All Commerce employees are required to wear seat belts while on official government business. The Department also strongly encourages employees to wear seat belts in their personal vehicles, encourage family members to always wear seat belts, and use child restraint systems for their children also. The legal requirements for these practices are also emphasized. In the last year, driver safety and seat belt use were featured at safety fairs conducted at NOAA, NIST, and at Commerce Headquarters. Representatives from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and various state police organizations spoke, distributed information, and demonstrated equipment.

During FY 2006, the Department experienced 69 motor vehicle accidents. Of these, 37 involved injuries severe enough to cause employees to be out of work. Currently, the Department does

not track the actual cost of motor vehicle accidents and the cost of repairs. This is particularly true because the majority of accidents are experienced by Bureau of the Census Field employees who use their personal vehicles in performance of their duties. FY 2006 was an unusually costly year for vehicle accident liability. The Department's Office of the General Counsel reports that over \$2,000,000 was paid out in vehicle liability in FY 2006. This is approximately \$1,000,000 over usual costs because a single liability case was settled for \$1,400,000 in FY 2006.

Bureaus develop and implement additional seat belt and vehicle use programs. Specific bureau information follows:

Census: Bureau of the Census employees are responsible for the vast majority of miles driven by Commerce employees and vehicle safety is given primary importance by the Census Safety office. Seat belt and motor vehicle safety is focused on field representatives with the goal of reducing car accidents experienced by these employees. The Bureau of the Census and the Field Directors emphasize:

- Training field representatives in safe driving techniques.
- Providing frequent safety tips to field representatives to remind them that seat belt usage is mandatory while operating motor vehicles in the performance of official duties.
- Observing employee driving behavior as part of the annual field representative's supervisory observations.
- Updating field manuals and training materials to include specific language about the requirement to wear seat belts while operating a motor vehicle and that a failure to wear seat belts may result in disciplinary action.
- Using safe driving checklist in the Observation/Evaluation Checklist for field representatives used by senior representatives and supervisors to evaluate driving skills and identify any unsafe driving acts.

NIST: At NIST, employees are reminded to wear seat belts as they enter the facilities. The guard force issues verbal reminders and signs are also placed at facility entrances. The guard-force at both the Gaithersburg, Maryland and Boulder, Colorado, facilities have the authority to issue citations for failure to wear seat belts. NIST is a certified member of the Maryland T-SAFE Project. Both T-SAFE and the Maryland Department of Transportation had booths at the annual training and awareness event at Gaithersburg, Maryland, in June 2006.

NOAA: NOAA continues to emphasize motor vehicle safety and seat belt usage. In addition to the annual inspections by the General Services Administration, the National Ocean Service requires all vehicles to be inspected once a year to ensure each vehicle is maintained for safe operation.

c. Recordkeeping Requirements

The Department fully implemented the new recordkeeping requirements under 29 CFR 1960 during FY 2006. Larger bureaus prepared for this change beginning in early 2004. OSHA Form 300A is in use and will be posted for the required period of February 1, 2007, to March 31, 2007.

All collateral duty safety managers were trained on the new recordkeeping requirements in FY 2005. Additional training will be included in FY 2007 training and updates.

There are a variety of recordkeeping systems within the Department, but no central system allows data aggregation. Workers' compensation claims are forwarded via overnight carrier to the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). Smaller bureaus and the Office of the Secretary rely on paper based tracking methods. Safety officers of the larger bureaus and the staff of the Office of Occupational Safety and Health have access to the workers' compensation contractor's database which captures the required data fields of the OSHA Form 300. Larger bureaus, i.e., Census, NIST, and NOAA have instituted their own tracking and reporting systems and mainly rely on these systems for their trending and data analysis. These systems do accept safety incidents, such as near misses and no-injury accidents.

A web-based accident/illness reporting system used by the National Weather Service (NWS) is being expanded to all of NOAA and will soon replace paper injury and illness reports. The new reporting system assists managers in analyzing the major causes of accidents/illnesses, identifies locations where significant numbers of accidents/illnesses are occurring, and aids in reducing workers' compensation costs. This program is being studied for possible implementation agency-wide.

The Bureau of the Census provided extensive training on revised OSHA reporting requirements to all collateral duty safety staff with recordkeeping responsibilities. This included a nationwide teleconference for regional staff, which was offered during late 2004. The Headquarters Safety Office continues to provide review and support to the regional offices on a monthly basis to ensure implementation of the revised standards.

The Department does not utilize volunteers; therefore, volunteers are not tracked on the OSHA Form 300. If volunteers were utilized, any incidents involving them would be investigated and tracked using the same methods used for Department employees.

The Department is interested in acquiring an electronic Government-wide recordkeeping system to manage OSHA recordkeeping requirements, generate reports, submit claims to OWCP, and manage workers' compensation data. In 2004 and 2005, the Department investigated SHIMS, however due to delayed implementation dates and increased costs above the available budget; the system was not purchased at that time. The system is still under consideration for the future and discussions continue with SHIMS project group.

III. Employee Support

a. OSH Training

Occupational safety and health training is of primary importance throughout the Department. Training needs are determined and implemented at the bureau level. Tracking of training is generally at the office level. Program audits from the agency level ensure appropriated training is being conducted. Basic safety training, including awareness and hazard recognition, for employees and supervisors is conducted throughout the bureaus. Job specific training is provided as required by regulation or need. Additional training is provided, including incident investigation for supervisors, safety culture promotion, and workers' compensation.

The Department work-related injuries and illnesses have decreased since FY 2000. Much of this decrease is related to training efforts, particularly instructing supervisors of their roles in occupational safety and health and workers' compensation. Several bureaus have provided supervisors with incident investigation training which involves them in the hazards identification and abatement processes.

	Types of Training Provided in FY 2006
Top Management Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers' compensation costs and potential controls • SHARE initiative
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Safety • Workers' Compensation for Supervisors • Dupont Supervisor Safety Training (44)
Safety and Health Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers' compensation training • Attendance at professional conferences and associated continuing education. This training is individualized based on the need of the bureau and/or individual
Collateral Duty Safety and Health Personnel and Committee Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers' compensation costs and potential controls • SHARE initiative • Pandemic Influenza preparation and planning
Employees and Employee Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New employee safety orientation • Occupant emergency procedures • Personal protective equipment • Walking and working surfaces • Hazard communication • Electrical safety awareness • Machine guarding • Lock-out/ tag-out authorized person • Respiratory Protection • Pandemic Influenza awareness/cough etiquette/hand washing • Fire extinguisher training

Table 7: Summary of Training

b. Field Federal Safety and Health Councils

All OSH personnel and collateral duty safety managers are encouraged to participate in Federal Council activities in their area. New personnel are particularly supported in their efforts to attend meetings and training opportunities and are given first priority for attendance. OSH personnel participate in the activities of the Councils in Metropolitan DC, Colorado, and Indiana, the areas that house the majority of Department employees. The Department has hosted Metropolitan Field Council meetings at the Herbert C. Hoover Building.

c. Other Support Activities

The Department and its bureaus support membership in professional safety and health organizations. Professional OSH personnel are members of the American Society of Safety Engineers, American Industrial Hygiene Association, American Biological Safety Association, and the American Council of Governmental Industrial Hygienists. Funds are made available for conference attendance, as well as continuing educations. During FY 2006, employees attended the American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exposition, the National Safety Congress, numerous ASSE Seminarfests, and two national level workers' compensation conferences. Every effort will be made to continue to provide these opportunities.

IV. Accomplishments

Numerous OSH Program accomplishments and initiatives were implemented throughout the Department of Commerce in Fiscal Year 2006 to address accident trends, increase safety awareness, and improve workers' compensation program performance. Examples of these accomplishments and initiatives include:

Staff members were major participant in Pandemic Influenza planning for the Department, drafting major portions of the agency plan, and serving as the Department's reviewers for documents developed by other organizations.

The Office of Occupational Safety and Health conducted five safety evaluations. Three of these evaluations were completed in support of small bureau safety programs and were used as training opportunities for collateral duty safety managers.

Programmatic oversight assessments were conducted of four Commerce bureaus to assess the effectiveness of programs and determine the level of compliance. A report of findings was provided to each bureau following the assessments.

A web-based accident/illness reporting system used by the National Weather Service is being expanded to all of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and will soon replace paper injury and illness reports. The new reporting system assists managers in analyzing the major causes of accidents/illnesses, identifies locations where significant numbers of accidents/illnesses are occurring, and aids in reducing workers' compensation costs. This program is being studied for possible implementation agency-wide.

The Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-810 Workers' Compensation, underwent a major revision in FY 2006. The current version includes expanded sections on return-to-work, creates a workers' compensation point of contact position at each bureau, and clarifies roles and responsibilities for workers' compensations. This DAO also describes the use of return-to-work teams to facilitate the return of an employee to work. A specific discussion of interagency networking to identify alternative employment is included.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a thorough evaluation of the Department's workers' compensation program. Results were published in the 2nd Quarter of Fiscal Year 2006. Since then responses and action plans were prepared for all OIG recommendations. Actions taken to make improvements include:

- Hiring a second workers' compensation specialist
- Submitting 26 cases to the OIG for possible fraud
- Reviewing periodic roll cases to identify employees with employability potential
- Identifying employees on the periodic rolls who may be employable for the 2010 Decennial
- Study of use of workers' compensation elements in individual supervisor performance plans

Three highly successful safety fairs were conducted during FY 2006. NIST, NOAA, and Commerce Headquarters hosted fairs. Numerous representatives from a variety of organizations, including OSHA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, were available to answer employee questions, deliver presentations, and hand out informational materials.

Thousands of temporary employees will be hired by The Bureau of the Census to conduct Decennial 2010. Work has begun to prevent work-related injuries and illnesses in these employees. New and expanded safety training materials were developed and deployed in support of the ongoing special and test censuses that precede the decennial.

The periodic rolls were reviewed for Census employees injured in prior decennials. The Office of Occupational Safety and Health is piloting a program with District 25 of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs to identify employees with employability and facilitate the employment suitability process to return them to work during the 2010 Decennial.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) expanded its evolving safety program. Corrections were made to address deficiencies noted in the 2005 baseline. Actions taken included:

- Researching floor loading issues
- Providing office ergonomic training
- Mounting and proper placement of fire extinguishers

During the 2005 BEA baseline inspection, a recurring problem was excessive paper storage and clutter. The problem was too pervasive to be dealt with successfully on an individual basis. Instead, developed and implemented a "Reduce the Clutter" campaign. Individual offices scheduled a reduce the clutter day. The collateral duty safety officer provided dumpsters and coordination with the building owner to have discarded materials removed. The result was a significantly reduced fire load and decreased nesting places for insects and rodents.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration developed a safety mascot, the Safety Seagull, which has been highly visible and successful in drawing attention to the safety program. This mascot is utilized to promote safety topics and initiatives.

b. Achievement of Fiscal Year 2005 Goals

In FY 2006, the Department established objectives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the safety, health, and workers’ compensation programs. These objectives included: review all worker’s compensation claims for return to work potential, increase the number of recovered workers returned to work, and reduce workplace injuries and illnesses. Accomplishing these three objectives will not only reduce the number of accidents experienced by employees, it will meet the four Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) initiatives. To accomplish these objectives, a series of tasks were provided in the FY 2005 Annual Report to OSHA. A list of these tasks and current status are summarized in the following table. It should be noted that the majority of these tasks are directly related to FY 2006 accomplishments described in the previous section. All tasks are either complete or in progress nearing completion. No major barriers or delays are anticipated.

Goal/Objective	Status
Conduct quarterly reviews of the Social Security Death Rolls to identify workers’ compensation claimants who have died and notify the DOL so compensation will cease.	Each quarter, the chargeback report provided by the Department of Labor is compared with the Social Security Death Rolls. This procedure is listed in the newly revised workers’ compensation standard operating procedures. Performance of this task is listed in individual performance plans.
Conduct quarterly reviews of the DOL Agency Query System to identify third party involvement and identify sources of reimbursement.	<p>Quarterly chargeback reports were reviewed for potential third party cases. When cases were identified, OWCP was contacted.</p> <p>In addition to review of existing cases, OOSH implemented a three-tiered case review system to identify third party involvement in new cases. The workers’ compensation contractor checks each CA form for a checked third party block and reviews the incident description for any indication a third party was involved. When copies of CA forms are forwarded to OOSH, the claim is again reviewed for third party involvement. These procedures are detailed in the workers’ compensation standard operating procedures.</p>

<p>Conduct a complete review of all claim files identifying potential to return to work.</p>	<p>All 473 periodic roll claims received an initial employability review. Claims with some employability potential were identified. Claims identified with the highest chance of return and cases related to the decennial, are receiving priority claims management.</p> <p>The Department's workers' compensation contractor handles non-periodic roll cases.</p>
<p>Implement a hiring team composed of safety, health, human resources management, and supervisors to assist employees out on worker's compensation in returning to work.</p>	<p>The use of a return-to-work hiring team is described in detail in the Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-810, Workers' Compensation, which is undergoing a major revision.</p>
<p>Request the Office of Inspector General investigate each case that has potential fraud.</p>	<p>To date, 26 cases have been referred to the Department's Inspector General for fraud review. This represents 100% of cases with fraud indicators.</p>
<p>Coordinate an agency-wide effort to return employees to work if a job is not available in their bureau.</p>	<p>Efforts continue to identify return-to-work opportunities, including crossing organizational lines. DAO 202-810, Workers' Compensation, was revised to include an expanded return-to-work section, which addresses inter-bureau return-to-work and job identification.</p>
<p>Emphasize baseline surveys of each workplace.</p>	<p>Baseline surveys continue to be emphasized. When a bureau has not conducted a baseline or needs assistance, OOSH personnel assist with baseline inspections.</p>
<p>Conduct an assessment of no less than four bureaus each year to identify lessons learned and benchmarks to raise the performance of all bureaus within the Department.</p>	<p>Four bureau programmatic assessments were conducted during FY 2006. At least four more assessments will be conducted in FY 2007. Performing four assessments per year is now a standard performance element for the OOSH and is included in individual performance plans.</p>

Table 8: Summary of FY 2005 Objectives Status

V. Resources

During FY 2006, a second full-time workers' compensation specialist was added to the Office of Occupational Safety and Health. This brought a higher skill level to the workers' compensation program and allowed general safety staff who had assisted with workers' compensation to return to their usual duties.

VI. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The overall goal of the Department of Commerce Occupational Safety and Health Program is to reduce work-related injuries and illnesses and ensure employees obtain the compensation they need to recover and return to employment as soon as medically possible. In support of this goal, the following tasks will be implemented or completed in FY 2007:

- Conduct an assessment of no less than four bureaus each year to identify lessons learned and benchmarks to raise the performance of all bureaus within the Department.
- Complete safety inspections of 100% of the Herbert C. Hoover Building.
- Implement a hiring team composed of safety, health, human resources management, and supervisors to assist employees out on worker's compensation in returning to work.
- Coordinate an agency wide effort to return employees to work if a job is not available in their bureau.
- Conduct collateral duty safety manager training for new personnel and provide update training for experienced collateral duty personnel.
- Work to identify an automated workers' compensation, illness and injury system.

VII. Questions/Comments

a. Comment: Status of the Safety and Health Information Management System (SHIMS)

The Department considered purchasing and implementing SHIMS but due to program and scheduling difficulties, has not. Obtaining information, including updates, program status, etc., has been difficult and necessitated calls to the Department of Labor. It is recommended that a SHIMS communication program be started, utilizing e-mails or written materials.

b. Comment: Format changes provided to agencies sooner

The format used for this year requested significant amounts of data that are not tracked at the agency, bureau levels, or at all. This made providing some of the requested information impossible to obtain. It is recommended agencies be informed of data requirements approximately one year in advance so that procedures to collect the required information can be implemented.