September 29, 2000

GEORGE L. LOPEZ
VICE PRESIDENT, SOUTHWEST AREA OPERATIONS

TOM RANFT
DISTRICT MANAGER, ARKANSAS DISTRICT OFFICE

SUBJECT: Audit Report - Review of the Violence Prevention and Response Programs in the Arkansas District (Report Number LB-AR-00-010)

This report presents the results of our review of the violence prevention and response programs in the Arkansas District (Project Number 99EA007ER000). This audit report is one of a series of reports on violence prevention and response efforts within the Postal Service.

The Arkansas District complied with the Threat Assessment Team Guide when reacting to incidents of violence. The district also generally complied with the policies and procedures in the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace. However, the district did not fully implement required proactive strategies designed to prevent violence from occurring as outlined in the Threat Assessment Team Guide. As a result, required controls were not fully implemented to reduce the potential for violence in the workplace. The vice president for the Southwest Area agreed that the six areas reviewed by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) were important to the success of the violence prevention and response programs. He did not agree, however, that the district's zero tolerance statement was not consistently enforced, and stated that evidence provided by the cluster indicated that zero tolerance policies existed, were communicated in a variety of means and was enforced. Both the Southwest Area vice president and the district manager stated there were concerns regarding the OIG's interpretation of the Threat Assessment Team Guide and our interpretation of the data we collected. They stated that according to the manager, Workplace Environment Improvement, "While Threat Assessment Teams are unquestionably mandatory, every detail of the guide is not." The Arkansas District manager provided a copy of the district's planned actions to respond to each of the six OIG recommendations.

Although the Southwest Area vice president and Arkansas District manager did not agree with one of our findings, and our interpretation of the Threat Assessment Team Guide, we believe that the district's planned or implemented actions are responsive and address the issues identified in this report.

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

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Attachment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report present the results of our audit on violence prevention and response efforts within the Arkansas District, located in the Southwest Area. The vice president of Human Resources recommended this district for our review because the Postal Service believed it had one of the better violence prevention and response programs in the nation.

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

Results in Brief

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

- Established its Threat Assessment Team in September 1995-two years prior to the Postal Service's issuance of violence prevention criteria.
- Conducted the two-day threat assessment team orientation training in October 1998.
- Expanded the team's core membership to include eight inquiry threat assessment teams, comprised of union and management personnel in January 1999.
- Established a process with the Postal Inspection Service for referring threats and assaults to the Threat Assessment Team in January 1999.

The district also generally complied with the policies and procedures outlined in the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace. We project that 91 percent of the district facilities had plans on site.

However, the district did not fully implement required 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 it believed the Threat Assessment Team 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 Arkansas District did not:

- Consistently enforce a zero tolerance policy.
- Conduct annual physical security reviews.
- Monitor and evaluate climate indicators.
- Engage in case management.
- Measure team performance.
- Mandate violence awareness training.

Summary of Recommendations

We recommend the vice president, Southwest Area Operations, and the Arkansas District manager implement controls to (1) enforce the zero tolerance policy, (2) ensure annual physical security reviews are conducted, (3) evaluate climate indicators, (4) follow up on risk abatement plans, (5) establish threat assessment team performance measures, and (6) ensure all employees attend violence awareness training.

Summary of Management's Comments

The vice president for the Southwest Area agreed that the six areas reviewed by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) were important to the success of the violence prevention and response programs. He did not agree, however, that the district's zero tolerance statement was not consistently enforced, and stated that evidence provided by the cluster indicates that zero tolerance policies exist, are communicated in a variety of means and are enforced. The district manager responded that the report addressed deficiencies of the threat assessment team to "appropriately document their follow up procedures rather than enforcement" of the district's policy of zero tolerance.

Both the Southwest Area vice president and the district manager stated there were concerns regarding the interpretation of the Threat Assessment Team Guide and the data collected by the OIG. They stated that according to the manager, Workplace Environment Improvement, "While Threat Assessment Teams are unquestionably mandatory, every detail of the guide is not."

The Arkansas District manager provided a copy of the district's planned actions to respond to each of the six OIG recommendations.

We have summarized management's comments, which are included in their entirety in Appendix D of this report.

Summary Evaluation of Management Comments

We do not agree with management that the district's zero tolerance statement was consistently enforced and that the report addressed deficiencies in the documentation of follow up procedures and not enforcement of the district's policy of zero tolerance. While documentation was not complete, in the cases we reviewed, no follow up had occurred.

Regarding the differences in interpretation of the Threat Assessment Team Guide, we viewed the publication as mandatory based on the importance of the guidance it provides, particularly in the areas of violence prevention. The deficiencies we noted were not a result of the district having implemented something different than that recommended by the guide, but rather the district not implementing, or fully implementing, what we believed were key elements of the guide.

Although the Southwest Area vice president and Arkansas District manager did not agree with one of our findings, and our interpretation of the Postal Service guidance, we believe that the district's planned or implemented actions are responsive 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 several 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, and team plans of operation.

- The Administrative Support Manual requires security control officers or their designees to conduct annual physical security reviews.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

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

We 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. We also reviewed United States General Accounting Office (GAO) reports related to labor-management issues.

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

We interviewed Postal Service officials in the Arkansas District, Southwest 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, we reviewed the district's Threat Assessment Team activities, zero tolerance policy, and crisis management plan. We compared the activities, policies, and plans to the Postal Service requirements for violence prevention and response strategies. We also reviewed the district's initiatives for addressing workplace environmental climate issues, including training programs on violence prevention and response.

We reviewed indicators listed in the Threat Assessment Team Guide that may help the Threat Assessment Team to develop preventive measures to moderate risk and liability. Those indicators were the number of employee grievances, Equal Employment Opportunity complaints, and Employee Assistance Program cases for all districts in the Southwest Area including the Arkansas District for the period June 1, 1997, through December 31, 1998.[2] For the same period, we reviewed the workplace climate assessments for the Arkansas District. We also reviewed results from the 1998 and 1999 Voice of Employee surveys conducted in the Arkansas District. We reviewed this data as indicators of conflict that could lead to violence in the Arkansas District. We compared some of the indicators in the Arkansas District to the same indicators in other districts within the Southwest Area.[3]

For fiscal years (FY) 1997 and 1998, we projected the number of facilities where the district officials conducted annual physical security reviews, and if crisis management plans were on site. We used statistical sampling methodologies to determine these numbers. (See Appendix A.)

For the period June 1, 1997, through December 31, 1998, we projected the number of craft employees, managers, and

[2] The Office of Inspector General selected this audit period because the Postal Service first published the Threat Assessment Team Guide and Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace in May 1997.
[3] We obtained this data from the Postal Service's databases but did not verify the accuracy of the data.

supervisors who received the required number of hours of workplace violence awareness training. We also used statistical sampling methodologies to determine these numbers. (See Appendix B.)

We conducted this audit from May 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. We discussed our conclusions and observations with appropriate management officials and included their comments, where appropriate.

AUDIT RESULTS

Implementation of Violence Prevention and Response Programs

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

- Established its Threat Assessment Team in September 1995-two years prior to the issuance of violence prevention criteria.

- Conducted the two-day threat assessment team orientation training in October 1998.

- Expanded the team's core membership to include eight inquiry threat assessment teams, comprised of union and management personnel in January 1999.

- Established a process with the Postal Inspection Service for referring threats and assaults to the Threat Assessment Team in January 1999.

The district also generally complied with the policies and procedures outlined in the Crisis Management Plan for Incidents of Violence in the Workplace. We project that 91 percent of the district facilities had plans on site.

However, the district did not fully implement required 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 it believed the Threat Assessment Team 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 Arkansas District did not:

- Consistently enforce a zero tolerance policy.
- Conduct annual physical security reviews.
- Monitor and evaluate indicators.
- Engage in case management.
- Measure team performance.
- Mandate violence awareness training.

Zero Tolerance Policy	We found that the Arkansas District had a zero tolerance policy statement that was clear and concise, but it was not consistently enforced. The district's Threat Assessment Team did not consistently enforce the policy because it believed the Threat Assessment Team Guide, which implements the Postal Service, Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace, was not a mandatory requirement. Inconsistent enforcement could increase the risk of an unsafe workplace environment. The Threat Assessment Team Guide states that zero tolerance means each and every act or threat of violence, regardless of the initiator, will elicit an immediate and firm response, which could involve discipline up to and including removal. The Threat Assessment Team did not enforce the zero tolerance policy for the 17 documented threats that occurred from June 1, 1997, through December 31, 1998. For example, in one incident two employees disagreed over seating arrangements. The disagreement escalated and resulted in inappropriate behavior by the employees, and included an allegation that one of the employees had a gun in her vehicle. The Threat Assessment Team investigated and found that both employees acted inappropriately. The team members recommended that the employees needed counseling. As part of the risk abatement plan, the postmaster counseled both employees and placed them on notice that their behavior would not be tolerated. In addition, the team recommended referral of both employees to the Employee Assistance Program and that the postmaster conduct safety, stand-up talks on workplace violence. Finally, the team recommended that facilities display posters to communicate postal policies on guns and sexual harassment. However, according to the employee and workplace intervention analyst and contrary to requirements of the Threat Assessment Team Guide, the team did not monitor and follow up with the postmaster to ensure implementation of its recommendations. Our review disclosed no evidence

that the postmaster acted upon the team's recommendations.

In a second incident, an employee reported that another employee physically threatened him. In addition, other employees complained that they worked in an unhealthy work environment. The Threat Assessment Team recommended a climate survey, and that the postmaster prepare an action plan to resolve the issues identified. However, the climate survey and the action plan were never accomplished.

The district needs to ensure that managers enforce the zero tolerance policy by consistently applying it and holding employees accountable for their actions, as required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide.

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 were not aware of their responsibility for conducting the reviews. The Postal Service Administrative Support Manual (Chapter 2, Section 27) requires the security control officer or designee to conduct annual physical security surveys at all Postal Service facilities to ensure that the appropriate attention is given to security issues.[4] We used a statistical projection to determine if district facilities had conducted physical security reviews for the 634 facilities. We projected that the Arkansas District conducted no more than 171 (27 percent) of the 634 required annual physical security reviews in FY 1997. In FY 1998, no more than 406 (64 percent) of the 634 facilities were reviewed. (See Appendix A.) 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.

[4] 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 Inspection Service on all security matters.

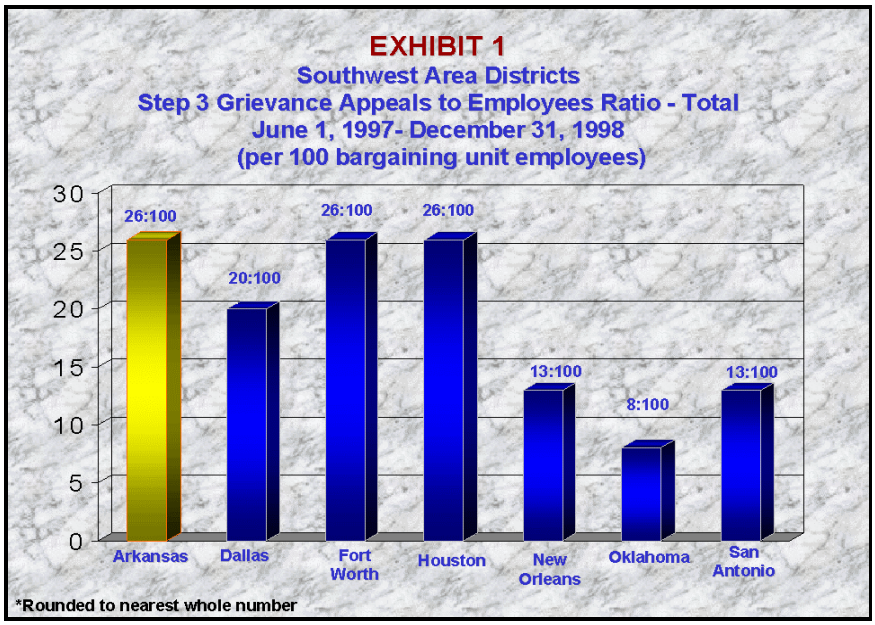
Indicators to Develop Preventive Measures

We found that the district did not monitor and evaluate indicators, because they 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 indicators that are relevant for review, when making such determinations. Among those indicators are grievances, Equal Employment Opportunity complaints, referrals to Employee Assistance Program contacts, labor-management relationships,[5] and climate assessments.

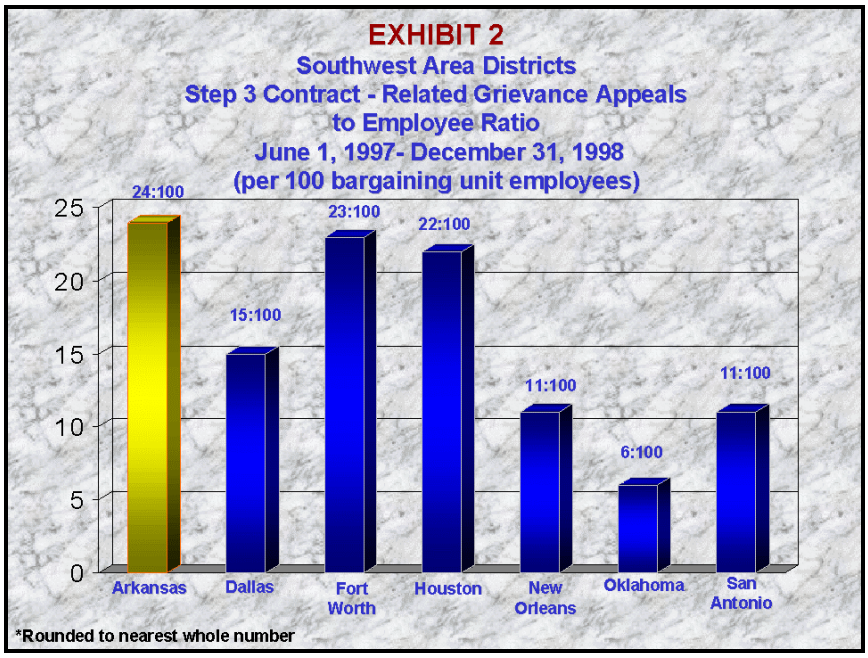
We reviewed several indicators that management could use as benchmarks to assess the workplace climate.

Grievances. Exhibit 1 shows that the Arkansas District had one of the highest ratios (26:100) in the Southwest Area of step 3 grievance appeals to employees, for the period June 1, 1997, through December 31, 1998.[6]

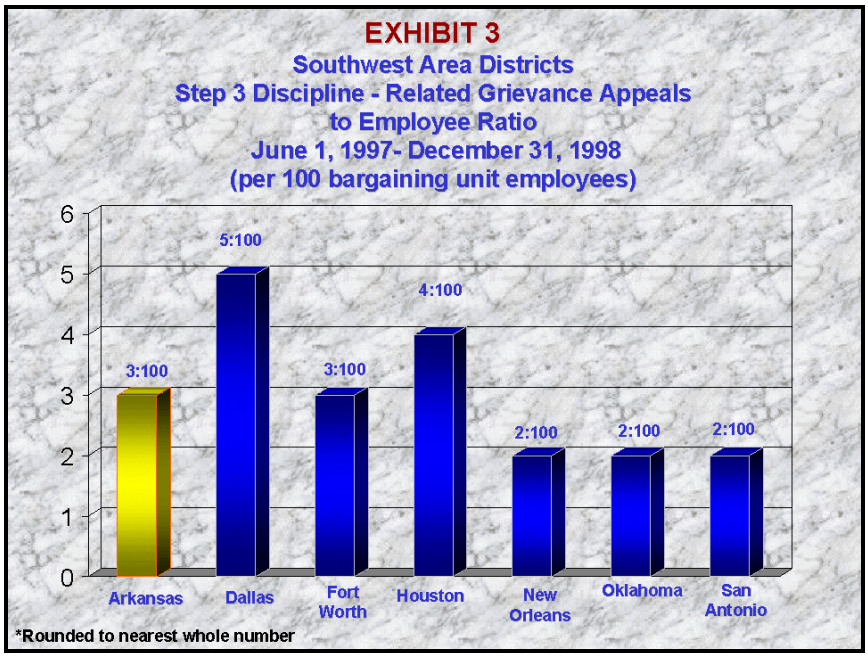


[5] We considered the results of the Voice of the Employee surveys as an indicator of labor-management relationships.
[6] In a report entitled "U.S. Postal Service: Little Progress Made in Addressing Persistent Labor-Management Problems," October 1997, GAO/GGD-98-1, GAO reported that a ratio of 13:100 grievances to employees was a high ratio. Union and management officials did not dispute this claim.

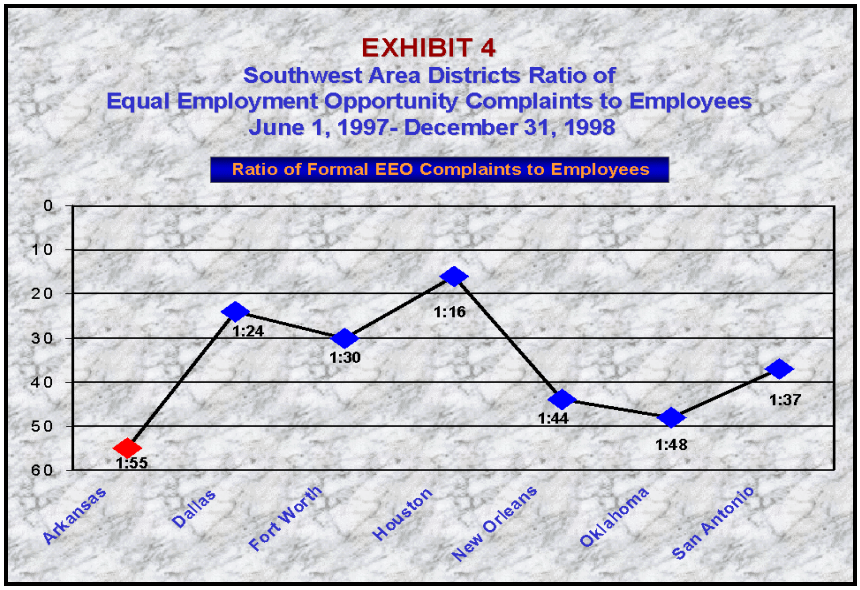
For the same period, Exhibit 2 shows that the district had the highest ratio (24:100) of step 3 contract-related grievance appeals to employees.



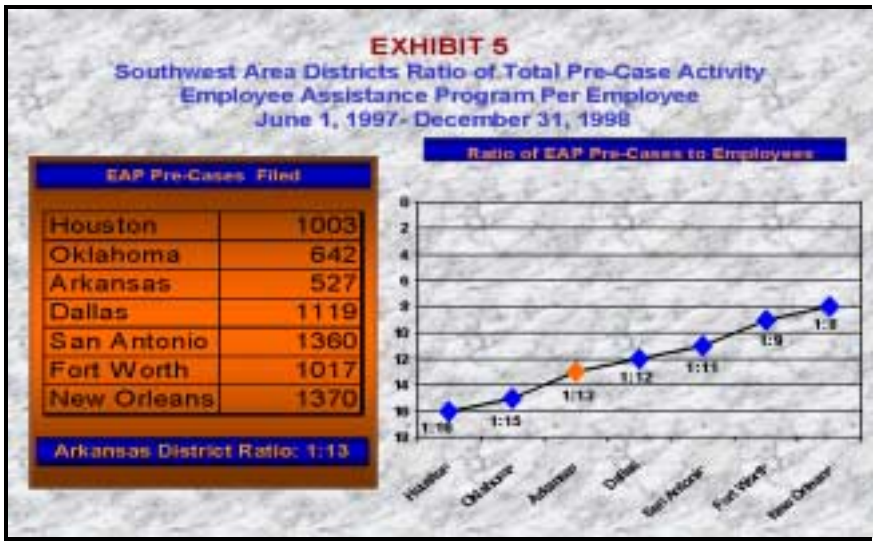
The district had a middle range ratio (3:100) of step 3 discipline-related grievance appeals to employees for the same period, as shown in Exhibit 3.



Equal Employment Opportunity Complaints. For the same period, Exhibit 4 shows that the district had the most favorable ratio (1:55) of Equal Employment Opportunity complaints to employees.

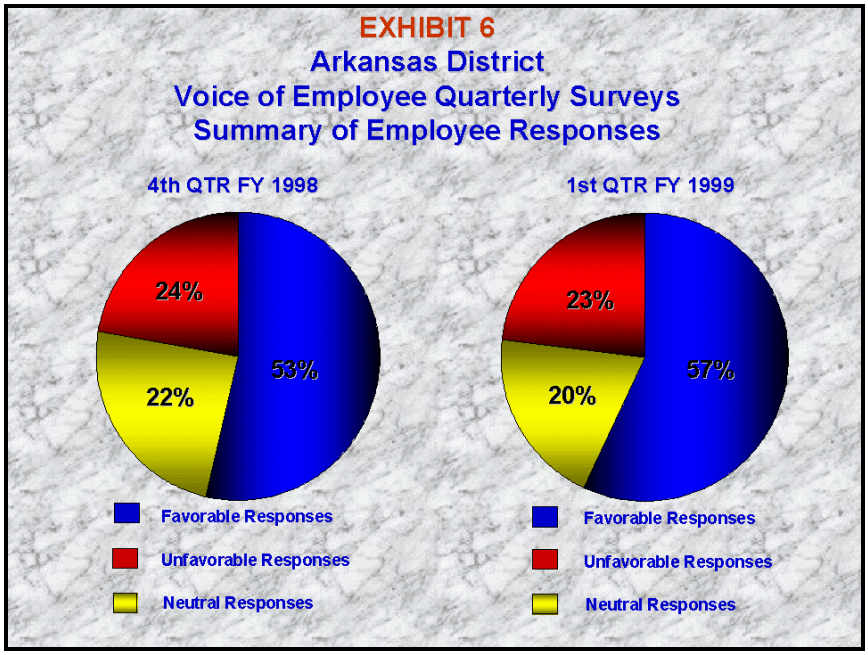


Employee Assistance Program Activity. For the same period, Exhibit 5 shows that the district had the third lowest ratio (1:13) of total pre-case activity[7] Employee Assistance Program cases per employee.

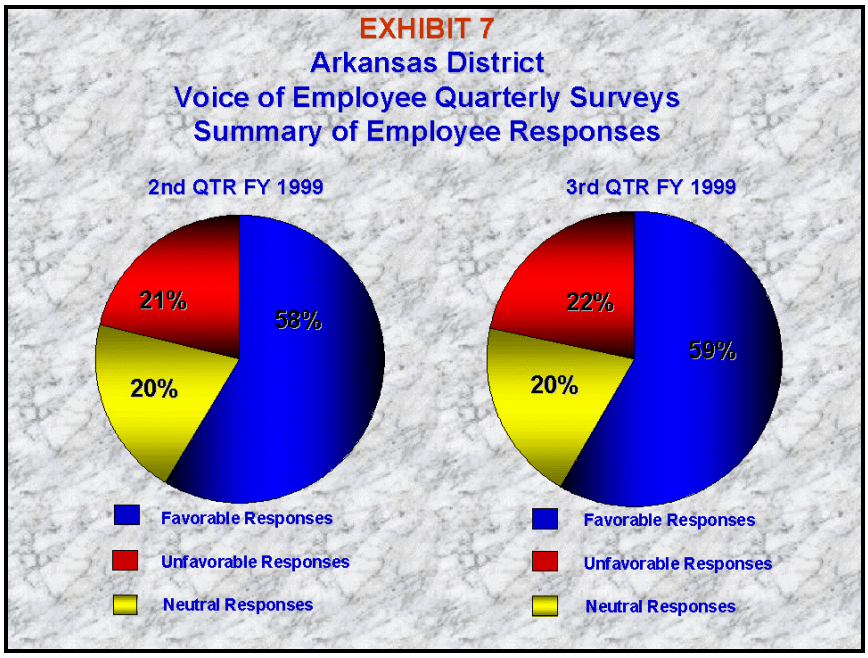


[7] The total pre-case activity contacts included all employees, family members, or supervisors who contacted with the Employee Assistance Program, either by telephone or in person, to set up appointments with an Employee Assistance Program counselor.

Voice of Employee Survey. A majority of the employees who responded to the Voice of Employee[8] survey in the Arkansas 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 53 percent in Quarter 4 of 1998 to about 58 percent in Quarters 1, 2 and 3 of 1999. We noted that about 24 percent of the employees who responded to the survey for Quarter 4 of 1998, and about 21 to 23 percent of the employees who responded to the survey in Quarters 1, 2, and 3 of 1999, provided unfavorable responses regarding their workplace environment. In addition, about 20 percent of the employees who responded for the same quarters remained neutral.



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



While these 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 district conducted four climate assessments during our audit period, but none of the climate assessments were a result of the district's evaluation of indicators. Rather, the employee and workplace intervention analyst conducted the climate assessments in response to requests from union officials, district management, and as follow up to previous work climate issues and other problems reported to her by Employee Assistance Program counselors. Routine analysis of indicators may have identified the need for climate assessments before problems occurred.

For example, a work climate assessment conducted in April 1997 at a district post office disclosed that the workplace lacked effective communication and positive interactions between management and employees.

A work climate assessment conducted in November 1997 at another post office disclosed that there were significant issues with the kind of communication that was occurring between the supervisor and employees.

The issues reflected the supervisor's inappropriate tone and manner of communication.

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

We were told about a proactive initiative that the district took to improve labor-management relations. According to the district senior Labor Relations specialist, the district participated in mediation to help reduce the backlog of grievance cases. This process is an expedited system for settling American Postal Workers Union grievances. The Southeast and Southwest Areas trained about eight people in mediation. The panel team in this instance included one American Postal Workers Union representative, one management official from the Arkansas District, and one management person outside of the district.

Case Management

The Threat Assessment Team did not completely manage all threats or follow up on risk abatement plans developed in response to identified threats, as required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide. A district that does not fully identify and investigate all threats and follow up on risk abatement plans could contribute to 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 that the team engaged in some case management by assessing the level of risk priority[9] and developing risk abatement plans for all 17 threats on their list. However, the team did not follow up on the implementation and results of the risk abatement plans. According to the employee and workplace intervention analyst, the team needed to improve its case management activities. She stated that the team did not

[9] Priority 1 (extreme risk) means a clear and immediate threat of violence to an identifiable target or targets. Priority 2 (high risk) means a threat of violence, usually to an identifiable target, but currently lacking immediacy and/or a specific plan, or a specified plan of violence, but currently lacking a specific target. Priority 3 (low or moderate risk) means a relatively nonspecific threat of violence from a person expressing concerns with personal and/or organizational issues. Priority 4 (no risk) means no threat of violence indicated.

	fully engage in case management because they believed it was not a requirement.
Measurement of Threat Assessment Team Performance	The district's Threat Assessment Team did not establish performance measures as required by the Threat Assessment Team Guide because the employee and workplace intervention analyst did not consider it mandatory. Without performance measures, the team could not objectively measure the effect violence prevention activities had on the 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 is available such as surveys, the number 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 district managers, supervisors, and craft employees in accordance with the Threat Assessment Team Guide because the district did not consider the training as 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 violence awareness training for all craft employees, supervisors, and managers. The Arkansas District's workplace violence awareness training consisted of: • An eight-hour workplace violence awareness training course primarily for managers and supervisors. • A one-hour workplace violence training course provided to craft employees at the Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center.

- An introduction to workplace violence awareness for new employees.[10]

- "Stand-up" sessions on a recurring basis for all employees at the district's facilities.

We used a statistical projection to determine if employees had attended violence awareness training for the 1,144 managers and supervisors and the 5,550 craft employees. We projected that at least 271 (24 percent) of the 1,144 managers and supervisors did not receive any workplace violence training. No more than 345 (30 percent) of the 1,144 managers and supervisors received both the eight-hour workplace violence awareness training course and the four-hours of follow-up. During the same period, no more than 591 (52 percent) of the 1144 managers and supervisors attended some violence awareness training ranging from 3 hours to 18 hours but not including the required 12 hours. (See Appendix B.)

The district developed a one-hour violence awareness training course for craft employees; however, the course had only been offered at the Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center. In that regard, we determined that 4,148 (75 percent) of the 5,550 craft employees in the Arkansas District did not have an opportunity to receive the one-hour training course. In addition, we projected that at least 986 (70 percent) of the 1,402 craft employees at the Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center did not receive the one-hour training course during our audit period. (See Appendix B.)

The senior training specialist told us that craft employees located in Arkansas facilities received some training during stand-up talks. However, he could not provide training records to support who attended the stand-up talks and when they occurred. We questioned the number of employees at district facilities who attended violence awareness training and according to the employee and workplace intervention analyst, the district provided limited

[10] We did not verify attendance at the orientations because it was not within the scope of our audit.

workplace violence awareness training because they did not receive a mandate from Postal Service Headquarters requiring further training.

The Postal Service has recognized violence awareness training for supervisors, managers, and craft employees is a vital component to preventing violence in the workplace. This training is mandatory because employees need effective tools to recognize the warning signs of violence and possibly defuse difficult situations.

Recommendations

We recommend the vice president, Southwest Area Operations, and Arkansas District manager implement controls to improve the effectiveness of the Arkansas District's violence prevention program. Specifically:

1. Enforce the Postal Service zero tolerance policy.

2. Conduct annual physical security reviews at all district facilities.

3. Monitor and evaluate indicators to identify conflict that could lead to violence in the workplace.

4. Follow up to ensure that risk abatement plans are implemented.

5. Establish performance measures to gauge team performance.

6. Mandate attendance at violence awareness training for all craft employees, supervisors, and managers.

Management's Comments

The vice president for the Southwest Area agreed that the six areas reviewed by the OIG were important to the success of the violence prevention and response programs. He did not agree, however, that the district's zero tolerance statement was not enforced, and stated that evidence provided by the cluster indicates that zero tolerance policies exist, are communicated in a variety of means and are enforced. The district manager responded that the report addressed deficiencies of the threat assessment team to "appropriately document their follow-up procedures

rather than enforcement" of the district's policy of zero tolerance.

Both the Southwest Area vice president and the district manager stated there were concerns regarding the interpretation of the Threat Assessment Team Guide and the data collected by the OIG. They stated that according to the manager, Workplace Environment Improvement, "while Threat Assessment Teams are unquestionably mandatory, every detail of the guide is not."

The Arkansas District manager provided the district's planned actions to respond to each of the six OIG recommendations.

The district manager stated that the cluster developed and will implement in FY2001, additional instructions for managers and supervisors for handling workplace incidents. Additionally, he provided that the district had achieved an 86 percent compliance rate for security reviews in FY 1999, with all facilities completing the survey in FY 2000. Further, the cluster is currently developing a program to monitor offices with excessive problems in numerous climate indicators, and providing continuous case management through resolution using the cluster's action steps for threats and assaults. Finally, the cluster is developing and implementing several procedures to monitor the threat assessment team performance, and providing training in FY 2000 and 2001 to managers, supervisors and craft employees.

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

Evaluation of Management's Comments

We do not agree with management that the district's zero tolerance statement was consistently enforced and that the report addressed deficiencies in the documentation of follow-up procedures and not enforcement of the district's policy of zero tolerance. While documentation was not complete, in the cases we reviewed, no follow-up had occurred.

Regarding the differences in interpretation of the Threat Assessment Team Guide, we viewed the publication as mandatory based on the importance of the guidance it provides, particularly in the areas of violence prevention. The deficiencies we noted were not a result of the district having implemented something different than that recommended by the guide, but rather the district not implementing, or fully implementing, what we believed were key elements of the guide.

Although the Southwest Area vice president and Arkansas District manager did not agree with one of our findings, and our interpretation of the Threat Assessment Team Guide, we believe that the district's planned or implemented actions are responsive and address the issues identified in this report.

APPENDIX A
STATISTICAL SAMPLING AND PROJECTIONS FOR PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEWS AND THE EXISTENCE OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANSFOR FY 1997 AND 1998

Purpose of the Sampling

One of the objectives of this audit was to assess Arkansas District 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 statistical projection of responses from individual facilities within the Arkansas District.

Definition of the Audit Universe

The audit universe consisted of 634 facilities, specifically, processing and distribution centers, post offices, stations, branches, and postal stores. The Arkansas District management was the source of the universe data.

Sample Design and Modifications

The audit used a simple random sample design. Ninety (90) facilities were randomly selected for review, to provide a one-sided 95 percent confidence interval with an 8 percent precision, based on auditor expectations of approximately a 50 percent level of compliance on some attributes. Appendix C is a list of the 90 facilities that were randomly selected to determine which facilities had physical security reviews conducted on them, and had crisis management plans on hand.

Statistical Projections of the Sample Data

All attributes are projected to the universe of 634 facilities. No differences in universe were provided for FY 1997 versus FY 1998 data.

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 27 percent (171 facilities) of the Arkansas District facilities conducted a physical security review in FY 1997. The unbiased point estimate is 20 percent, or 127 facilities.

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 64 percent (406 facilities) of the Arkansas District facilities conducted a physical security review in FY 1998. The unbiased point estimate is 56 percent (352 facilities).

Attribute 3: Crisis Management Plan on site.

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that at least 91 percent of the Arkansas District facilities had a copy of the district crisis management plan on site. The unbiased point estimate is 95 percent (602 facilities).

APPENDIX B
STATISTICAL SAMPLING AND PROJECTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES TRAINED IN WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AWARENESS FROM JUNE 1, 1997 TO DECEMBER 31, 1998

Purpose of the Sampling

One of the objectives of this audit was to assess Arkansas District 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 two statistical samples. A simple random attribute sample design was used to project the training of craft employees in the Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center. A stratified two-stage cluster sample design was used for the assessment of supervisory-level training throughout the Arkansas District.

Definition of the Audit Universe

For the craft employee assessment, the audit team determined that only the Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center employees had received training in the violence awareness area. The universe that was sampled, therefore, consists of only the 1,402 craft employees at that single facility. No projection is made to the remaining 4,148 craft employees in the Arkansas District.

For the supervisory-level assessment, the audit universe is a total of 1,144 supervisors and managers at 634 facilities in the Arkansas District.

The Arkansas District management was the source of all universe data.

Sample Design and Modifications

For the craft employee assessment, the audit used a simple random sample design. Training records for 100 randomly-selected employees were to be reviewed, to provide a one-sided 95 percent confidence interval with an 8 percent precision, based on auditor expectations of approximately a 50 percent level of compliance. No modifications to this plan were required.

For the supervisory-level assessment, initial calculations indicated the need to examine training records for approximately 70 supervisors/managers, based on a low expected compliance rate and a one-sided 95 percent confidence interval with desired precision of about 8 percent. A cluster sample design was planned, with 20 facilities selected and training records reviewed for all supervisors and managers at the selected facilities. The audit team determined, however, that a preponderance of facilities had only one supervisory-level individual. Additionally, training records for some facilities were merged at the finance number level and could not be readily separated. Therefore, the

resulting sample design had two strata: (I) facilities not grouped by finance number and (II) facilities grouped by finance number. For stratum I, we selected 71 of 567 sites. For stratum II, we selected 10 of the 16 finance number groups, which together included 67 facilities.

A further modification occurred during the course of the audit, as three contractor-only facilities were identified (i.e., not subject to Postal Service supervisory training requirements), requiring adjustment to the universe of facilities. The audit team verified that these were the only three such facilities in the audit universe. Two of the facilities are in stratum I; one facility is in stratum II (i.e., part of a finance number group).

Statistical Projections of the Sample Data

Craft Employee Training Projection (Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center Only)

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. Results are presented for a one-sided confidence interval as well as the point estimate.

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that at least 70.3 percent, or 986, of the 1,402 craft employees at the Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center did not receive training in workplace violence awareness. The unbiased point estimate is that 77 percent, or 1,080, of the craft employees at the Little Rock Processing and Distribution Center did not meet the training criteria.

Supervisors and Managers Training Projection

The sample data were analyzed based on the estimation of a population proportion for a stratified cluster sample as described in Elementary Survey Sampling, Scheaffer, Mendenhall, and Ott, c.1990. 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.

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that at least 23.7 percent, or 271, of the 1,144 Arkansas supervisors and managers received no workplace violence awareness training. The unbiased point estimate is 29.4 percent, or 337 supervisors and managers.

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that no more than 51.6 percent, or 591, of the 1,144 Arkansas supervisors and managers received some training, ranging from 3 to 18 hours of subject-matter training, but not including

the required 12 hours. The unbiased point estimate is 46 percent, or 525 supervisors and managers.

Based on a projection of the sample results, we are 95 percent confident that no more than 30.1 percent, or 345, of the 1,144 Arkansas supervisors and managers met or exceeded the twelve-hour subject-matter training criterion. The unbiased point estimate is 24.6 percent, or 282 supervisors and managers.

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANS ON SITE AND PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEWS CONDUCTED AT ARKANSAS DISTRICT FACILITIESFOR FY 1997 AND 1998

ITEM NO.	TYPE OF FACILITY	LOCATION	ZIP CODE	CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN ON SITE	PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEW	
					FY 97	FY 98
1	Main Post Office	Adona	72001	Yes	No	Yes
2	Main Post Office	Alleene	71820	Yes	No	Yes
3	Main Post Office	Almyra	72003	Yes	No	No
4	Main Post Office	Arkansas City	71630	No	No	No
5	Main Post Office	Bald Knob	72010	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Main Post Office	Bassett	72313	Yes	No	No
7	Main Post Office	Batesville	75201	Yes	No	No
8	Main Post Office	Bay	72411	Yes	No	No
9	Main Post Office	Bigelow	72016	No	No	Yes
10	Main Post Office	Biscoe	72017	Yes	No	No
11	Main Post Office	Board Camp	71932	Yes	No	Yes
12	Main Post Office	Boles	72926	Yes	No	No
13	Main Post Office	Bono	72416	Yes	No	Yes
14	Main Post Office	Caldwell	72322	Yes	No	Yes
15	Main Post Office	Cale	71828	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	Carrier Annex	Camden Carrier Annex	71701	Yes	No	Yes
17	Main Post Office	Camp	72520	Yes	No	No
18	Main Post Office	Carlisle	72024	Yes	No	No
19	Main Post Office	Carthage	71725	Yes	Yes	Yes
20	Post Office	Cherokee Village CPO	72525	Yes	No	No
21	Main Post Office	Compton	72624	Yes	No	Yes
22	Main Post Office	Cord	72524	Yes	No	Yes
23	Main Post Office	Damascus	72039	Yes	Yes	Yes
24	Main Post Office	Delaplaine	72425	Yes	No	Yes
25	Main Post Office	Desha	72527	Yes	No	No
26	Main Post Office	El Dorado	71730	Yes	No	No
27	Main Post Office	England	72046	Yes	Yes	No
28	Carrier Annex	Fayetteville Carrier Annex	72701	Yes	No	No
29	Station	Fort Smith Downtown	72901	Yes	No	No
30	Main Post Office	Frenchman's Bayou	72338	Yes	No	Yes
31	Main Post Office	Gepp	72538	Yes	No	Yes
32	Main Post Office	Harrell	71745	Yes	Yes	Yes
33	Main Post Office	Hot Springs Nat'l Park	71913	Yes	No	No
34	Main Post Office	Houston	72070	No	No	No
35	Main Post Office	Hughes	72348	Yes	No	No
36	Main Post Office	Huttig	71747	Yes	Yes	Yes
37	Main Post Office	Imoden	72434	Yes	No	No
38	Main Post Office	Ivan	71748	Yes	No	Yes
39	Main Post Office	Jacksonport	72075	Yes	No	Yes
40	Main Post Office	Jessieville	71949	Yes	No	Yes

ITEM NO.	TYPE OF FACILITY	LOCATION	ZIP CODE	CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN ON SITE	PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEW	
					FY 97	FY 98
41	Station	Jonesboro Nettleton	72402	Yes	No	No
42	Main Post Office	Kensett	72082	Yes	No	No
43	Main Post Office	Kingsland	71652	Yes	No	Yes
44	Main Post Office	Kingston	72742	Yes	No	No
45	Main Post Office	Langley	71952	Yes	No	No
46	Main Post Office	Lepanto	72354	Yes	No	No
47	Main Post Office	Little Rock Downtown	72202	Yes	No	No
48	Station	Little Rock State Capitol	72201	Yes	No	No
49	Main Post Office	Lynn	72440	Yes	No	Yes
50	Main Post Office	Magness	72553	Yes	No	Yes
51	Main Post Office	Mansfield	72944	Yes	No	No
52	Main Post Office	Marion	72364	Yes	No	No
53	Main Post Office	Marked Tree	72365	Yes	Yes	Yes
54	Main Post Office	Monroe	72108	Yes	No	No
55	Main Post Office	Moscow	71659	Yes	No	Yes
56	Main Post Office	Mount Pleasant	72561	Yes	No	Yes
57	Main Post Office	Mountain Home	72653	Yes	No	No
58	Main Post Office	Newport	72112	Yes	Yes	Yes
59	Main Post Office	Omaha	72662	Yes	No	Yes
60	Main Post Office	Onia	72663	Yes	Yes	Yes
61	Main Post Office	Ozone	72854	Yes	No	No
62	Main Post Office	Paris	72855	Yes	Yes	Yes
63	Main Post Office	Parkdale	71661	Yes	No	No
64	Main Post Office	Paron	72122	Yes	No	Yes
65	Main Post Office	Parthenon	72666	Yes	No	No
66	Main Post Office	Perryville	72126	Yes	Yes	Yes
67	Station	Pine Bluff Oak Park	71603	Yes	No	No
68	Main Post Office	Poplar Grove	72374	Yes	No	Yes
69	Main Post Office	Poughkeepsie	72569	Yes	No	Yes
70	Main Post Office	Prairie Grove	72753	Yes	No	No
71	Main Post Office	Ravenden	72459	Yes	No	No
72	Main Post Office	Rector	72461	Yes	No	Yes
73	Main Post Office	Reyno	72462	Yes	No	Yes
74	Main Post Office	Rosie	72571	Yes	No	Yes
75	Main Post Office	Scotland	72141	Yes	Yes	Yes
76	Main Post Office	Sherrill	72152	Yes	No	Yes
77	Main Post Office	Sidney	72577	No	No	No
78	Main Post Office	Siloam Springs	72761	Yes	Yes	Yes
79	Main Post Office	Sulphur Rock	72579	Yes	Yes	Yes
80	Main Post Office	Sweet Home	72164	Yes	No	Yes
81	Main Post Office	Tilly	72679	Yes	No	Yes
82	Main Post Office	Timbo	72680	Yes	Yes	Yes
83	Main Post Office	Trumann	72472	Yes	Yes	Yes
84	Main Post Office	Tuckerman	72473	Yes	No	No
85	Main Post Office	Turner	72383	Yes	No	Yes

ITEM NO.	TYPE OF FACILITY	LOCATION	ZIP CODE	CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN ON SITE	PHYSICAL SECURITY REVIEW	
					FY 97	FY 98
86	Main Post Office	Ulm	72170	Yes	No	No
87	Main Post Office	West Ridge	72391	Yes	No	No
88	Main Post Office	Wilson	72395	No	No	Yes
89	Main Post Office	Winslow	72959	Yes	No	Yes
90	Main Post Office	Woodson	72180	Yes	Yes	Yes

APPENDIX D. MANAGEMENT'S COMMENTS

GEORGE L. LOPEZ
VICE PRESIDENT, SOUTHWEST AREA OPERATIONS

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

August 4, 2000

Billy Sauls
Assistant Inspector General for Oversight and Business Evaluations
1735 N Lynn St
Arlington VA 22209-2020

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

This is in response to the investigative report of June 27, 2000, concerning violence prevention and response programs in the Arkansas Cluster. The fact the Cluster was chosen for having "one of the better violence prevention and response programs in the nation", is a good starting point. The review of their programs has provided an opportunity for the Cluster to carefully review and improve upon existing practices, as it has since the inception of its Threat Assessment Team (TAT) process.

There is no disagreement, the six items reviewed in the audit are important to the success of these programs. There are concerns, however, around interpretation of Publication 108, *Threat Assessment Team Guide* and the interpretation of the data collected by the OIG inspectors.

In respect to Publication 108, according to the Manager, Workplace Environment Improvement, "while Threat Assessment Teams are unquestionably mandatory, every detail of the guide is not". Review comments indicate Publication 108 was used as the absolute measure of all violence prevention and response programs.

The preponderance of evidence presented by the Cluster indicates that zero tolerance policies exist, are communicated in a variety of means and are enforced. The number of physical security reviews conducted annually, while not meeting an acceptable level, have increased annually for the last three years and are expected to meet requirements in 2001. A tracking system has been implemented.

Simple reviews of EEO activity and grievances have proven inadequate as indicators of workplace climate, as demonstrated in the Arkansas response. In depth reviews, however, could prove useful and the Cluster has developed a tool to implement such reviews. An assessment of the usefulness of this tool will be conducted after a trial period to assure it actually identifies units with poor climates.

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Case management and follow-through are not thoroughly defined in Pub. 108. The Cluster's new *Action Steps for Threats and Assaults* provides the protocol to assure cases are followed through to resolution.

The report implies the Threat Assessment Team Survey in Pub. 108, is the only method to measure TAT performance. The Cluster did use other processes, which they believe provide more valuable feedback than the Survey. As a result of the audit report, they have developed additional, more formal procedures.

Data supplied by the Cluster demonstrates that violence training was provided but may not be well documented as exemplified by programs that include this subject. Additional, appropriate training has taken place post-audit.

Due to the nature and sensitivity of the OIG's investigation, I request the report be restricted from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) per exemption two—Internal Agency Rules. The reasons for this request are that some of the information relates to specific offices and personnel. Other information could be subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act. In some cases, there are issues still to be resolved as a part of the grievance/arbitration procedure and the EEO process. The release of information could possibly be prejudicial to the position of both parties in these cases.

The information this review provided will aid in continued improvement to these programs.

Carol Garvey
George L. Lopez

cc: Yvonne D. Maguire
Suzanne H. Milton
Stan McCord
Carol Garvey
E. W. Waldemayer, Jr.
Marchelle Williams

E. W. Waldemayer, Jr.
District Manager, Arkansas

UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE

August 4, 2000

GEORGE L. LOPEZ
VICE PRESIDENT
SOUTHWEST AREA OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Response to the Office of Inspector Generals Report (LB-AR-00 Draft) Violence Prevention and Response Programs

This document is the Arkansas Cluster Response to the June 27, 2000 report generated by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) regarding the Review of the Violence Prevention and Response Programs. The OIG's Audit Report focused on the Threat Assessment & Critical Incident Process from June 1997 to December 31, 1998.

The Arkansas District asks that the report concerning the Threat Assessment process not be placed on the Inspector General's website. The reasons for this request are that some of the information relates to specific offices and personnel. Other information could be subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act. In some cases, there are issues still to be resolved as a part of the grievance/arbitration procedure and the EEO process. The release of information could possibly be prejudicial to the position of both parties in these cases.

The Inspector General's (IG) report (page I) indicates the Arkansas Cluster was recommended for review by the Manager of Workplace Environment Improvement at Postal Headquarters. The recommendation was based on having "one of the better violence prevention and response programs in the nation". It was the Cluster's understanding the program was recommended because of changes incorporated during the FY 1999. It should be noted enhancements to the existing program were not implemented during the period of the OIG's evaluation.

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Violence Prevention and Response Program
Arkansas Cluster

The portion of the review that refers to Publication 108, *Threat Assessment Team Guide*[1] makes the assertion this guide is mandatory. Recent conversations with the Manager, Workplace Environment confirmed that while Threat Assessment Teams are unquestionably mandatory, every detail of the guide is not. The intent of the guide was to assist field users in the development and implementation of threat assessment teams rather than setting rigid mandatory requirements. Publication 108 is not a policy or mandatory requirement. Accordingly, statements on pages 5, 7, 13, and 14 regarding the Cluster viewing Publication 108 as non-mandatory are inappropriate and further, should not be generalized to other areas, including Zero Tolerance Policy, TAT follow-up and training of employees. At the time of the OIG evaluation, the Cluster had a functional Threat Assessment Team using Publication 108 as a guideline to further enhance the effectiveness. We are in compliance with current policy and request statements to the contrary listed above, be removed from the report.

Response to OIG Recommendations:

1. ***Consistently Enforce a Zero Tolerance Policy***

The cases documented in the OIG's draft report regarding the enforcement of the zero tolerance policy actually address deficiencies of the Threat Assessment Team to appropriately document their follow-up procedures rather than enforcement of the Cluster's policy of zero tolerance.

In regard to communicating on issues of zero tolerance, the Cluster distributes two workplace behavior statements to all postal employees in the performance cluster. The Cluster Manager's Zero Tolerance Policy[2], first distributed in January 1995 addresses workplace violence and threats. This policy has been covered in standup talks with employees and is posted on all official bulletin boards. The second policy statement, Maintaining A Respectful Workplace[3], was mailed to all Cluster employees during January 1999, addressing acceptable behavior at work.

In response to the recommendations contained in the OIG report concerning follow-up to workplace incidents, the Cluster developed and will implement by AP 1 of 2001, additional instructions for Managers and Supervisors. This booklet[4] details guidelines and procedures for handling disruptive workplace behavior, including action planning, documentation, intervention, and follow-up. To ensure compliance with the Zero Tolerance Policy, if an incident occurs, local management will be required to submit written documentation to their Manager Post Office Operations,

[1] "Publication 108 was developed by the Threat Assessment Team Task Force. It provides **guidance** to postal management in responding to and assessing the seriousness of violent and potentially violent situations." See Appendix 1 – Headquarters Transmittal Letter May 1997.
[2] See Appendix 2 – Zero Tolerance Policy Statement.
[3] See Appendix 3 – Maintaining A Respectful Workplace Statement.
[4] See Appendix 4 – Action Steps for Threats and Assaults (draft copy) 16 pages.

labor relations, and the workplace intervention analyst on actions taken. The documentation will be verified by the appropriate Manager-Post Office Operations and will be discussed at the next Threat Assessment Team Meeting.

The example cited in the report (page 5) indicates the Threat Assessment Team failed to enforce the investigator's recommendation for EAP referrals for two employees. Threat Assessment Teams may suggest employee referrals to the Employee Assistance Program. However, Section 872.221 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) states employees have the right to refuse a referral. Only under certain conditions, as outlined in the ELM, can the Cluster monitor attendance at counseling sessions. Otherwise, counseling sessions remain confidential and the Cluster is not privy to **any** information, including employee participation.

> **ELM 872.221 Management Referrals (reads as follows)**
> *If a supervisor or manager observes such characteristics as listed in 872.21, or has some other reason to believe that the EAP could provide needed assistance to an employee, he or she may refer an employee to EAP in writing using the EAP referral form. The supervisor or manager should not attempt to diagnose the perceived problem.* ***The employee has the option to refuse the referral, and the employee cannot be disciplined for noncompliance.***
>
> ***Exception:*** *In instances when there is a Last Chance Agreement, or when the employee has signed a settlement agreement agreeing to participate in the EAP, the employee can be disciplined for noncompliance within the terms of the signed agreement.* ***Regulations do not permit any EAP documentation to be placed in an employee's official personnel file (OPF).***

The Threat Assessment Team follows consistent policy in determining whether a threat exists or if action is needed. The National Agreements between the Postal Service and the Unions dictate that any discipline or related action is at the discretion of local management. The Threat Assessment Team and Cluster Core Team may advise local management and suggest a course of action. They cannot become directly involved in the disciplinary process.

2. *Physical Security Reviews*

In November 1998, the Southwest Area appointed an Area Security Coordinator (ASC). A responsibility of the ASC was to coordinate the annual facility security surveys. As a result, a continual improvement in completion percentages has been achieved. This is demonstrated by 86% compliance in 1999 versus the projections of the OIG report of 27% in 1997 and 64% in 1998. As a result of the security reviews the Arkansas Cluster spent a total of $169, 388 in FY 99 and $63,937 in FY 00 on security updates.

Violence Prevention and Response Program
Arkansas Cluster

In FY 01, the Postal Service will activate a National Security Database System. This system provides real-time data to indicate a current status of the facility security inspection and identified deficiencies. This further improves the monitoring and tracking capabilities from a National, Area and Cluster perspective. All facilities are currently completing the 2000 survey, which will be used to populate the National Security Database System. The ASC is closely monitoring the data collection process for the new system.

3. *Indicators to Develop Preventive Measures*

The OIG's report reveals a high number of overall Step 3 grievance appeals[5] during 1997 and 1998. The reason for this grievance activity was not identified nor was a correlation identified between grievance, EEO activity and violence in the workplace. Moreover, the record reflects the majority of grievances were filed in a few offices and were the result of multiple filings by the same individuals. The issue in almost all instances concerned the Arkansas Cluster's policy mandating carriers return to the office by 5:00 p.m. Four offices contributed to the bulk of these grievances. Since this issue has been resolved grievance and EEO[6] activity has declined.

The Southwest Area conducted an independent review of 60 major facilities across the Area in 1999. In that review, data was collected on lost workday injuries, limited duty ratios, overtime ratios, stress claims, and informal EEO activity as compared to VOE survey data. The results indicated no direct correlation between any one indicator and workplace climate. However, the Cluster is currently developing a program designed to monitor offices with excessive problems in the following indicators:

- Grievances
- Disciplinary actions
- Threats (Reported through the TAT team and the Inspection Service)
- Total accidents (including motor vehicles and lost workday incidents)
- Sick leave usage
- EEOs

This process entails developing Cluster averages (means) for similar sized offices in the above categories. Prior to any action being taken by the Threat Assessment Team, a pre-action analysis for anomalies will be conducted. Anomalies consist of multiple people on extended sick leave, multiple EEO filings by one person, multiple contractual grievances on one issue, etc. Facilities with above average mean

[5] See Appendix 5 – Arkansas Cluster Grievances – Appeals Received by Accounting Period Through FY 00 AP 11 vs SPLY.
[6] See Appendix 6 – EEO Complaint Activity.

scores in 3 out of 6 categories will be considered for a workplace environment action plan, which may include the following assessments:

- Individual interviews
- Focus groups
- Climate Surveys

The Manager Post Office Operations will monitor offices for improvement with regard to the indicators previously listed and identify offices with high-tension levels. Projected Implementation is Quarter 1, Fiscal Year 2001.

4. *Case Management*

The procedures and documents provided in the Arkansas Cluster's Action Steps for Threats and Assaults[7] will provide for continued case management through resolution. To monitor compliance with follow-up procedures, management will be required to submit written documentation to the appropriate Manager Post Office Operations, labor relations, and the workplace intervention analyst. Documentation will be verified by the Manager Post Office Operations and discussed at the next Threat Assessment Team Meeting.

Threat Assessment Team Procedures were revised during the spring of 1999. The revisions are part of the enhancements previously noted in the opening comments. but were not part of the OIG's evaluation. The Managers Post Operations (MPOO) were included as Threat Assessment Core Team members for offices under their authority. The MPOO updates the team on interventions and activities. Since the beginning of 1999, every office involved in a TAT assessment has been reviewed. In addition, when necessary, local managers (i.e. postmasters, managers of distribution and customer service) participate in core team meetings and the review of action plans.

5. *Threat Assessment Performance*

Once again, the OIG report implies Publication 108 is a mandatory document. The Manager, WEI does not consider the Threat Assessment Team Survey, as produced in Publication 108, the only method for providing feedback on team performance. In fact, they are reviewing other feedback methods for inclusion in future revisions to Pub. 108. We concur there is a need to monitor TAT team performance. The Cluster had implemented the following procedures to monitor TAT performance:

[7] See Appendix 4 – Action Steps for Threats and Assaults (draft copy) 16 pages.

1. Monitoring the appropriateness of team members to perform inquiries. Inexperienced team members are only paired with experienced team members who, along with the Employee and Workplace Intervention Analyst, evaluate performance (i.e. interviewing techniques, objectivity, report writing, etc.). In some cases decisions were made that without additional training some team members were not appropriate for assignments.

2. The Employee & Workplace Intervention Analyst informally interviewed postmasters, facility managers, and employees to discuss the TAT proceedings to assure fairness, neutrality, etc. with the Threat Assessment Process. Individuals with concerns were urged to submit written documents, which were attached as additions to formal reports.

As a result of the OIG's findings, additional monitoring procedures are being developed as follows:

1. Review the number and types of threats/assaults reported to the Inspection Service each AP to identify problem locations.

2. Developing a report, which reflects the number and status of complaints reported to the team versus SPLY[8]. Each time information concerning an alleged threat is received the pertinent data concerning the situation is entered into a computer database. The tracking system will be finalized and implemented beginning with FY 2001 and include data from previous fiscal years.

   In addition, each threat assessment team report will provide a post-incident analysis and detail any further conflict in the office.

6. *Violence Awareness Training*

Manager and Supervisor Training:

In the report, page 14 the statistical analysis indicated approximately 271 or 24% of managers and supervisors had not received the eight hour violence in the workplace training. Further analysis indicates this anomaly to be partly associated with the level A through E and level 11 postmasters who do not supervise employees. Approximately 30% of the 271 managers and supervisors mentioned in the IG report are lower level postmasters who do not supervise employees. Publication 108 does not indicate that EAS employees without subordinates, require this training. Postmasters without subordinates were provided the one-hour video on violence awareness training.

[8] See Appendix 7 - AR Cluster Workplace Environment Complaints – 2 pages.

In addition to the above, Associate Supervisor Trainees receive eight hours training on Workplace Violence and Threat Assessment; however, this training is a part of the Course curriculum and not reflected as a separate violence in the workplace course number.

While the additional four-hour workplace improvement training for supervisors is mentioned in Publication 108, there was no clear indication of what this entailed or who was responsible for development. The Cluster provided five hours of this type of training in FY-2000 and will provide four hours in 2001.

Craft:

Publication 108 indicates the only training required for craft employees is for new employees and will be introduced during new employee orientation. Information on Threat Assessment Teams and Zero Tolerance Policy will be communicated to employees through a variety of means such as newsletters, standup talks, posters and direct mailings. These policies have been appropriately disseminated as presented in Item 1 above, in Appendix 2 and 3, and as described below.

During Fiscal Year 2000, the Manager of Training received and distributed two videos from headquarters for craft employees and managers. The "Building a Better Workplace" videos, Course #11251-00 and 11251-05, have been viewed by 949[9] craft employees and 773[10] managers and supervisors. The "Workplace Violence Awareness, for Craft Employees and New Employees" video Course # 21558-03 has been viewed by 502[11] craft employees.

At the time of the report, standup talks on workplace violence[12] had been provided to all Cluster facilities during FY 1996 and 1997. Those talks are documented locally and not entered into the National Training Database (NTD) system.

Additionally, during the last three years, the Cluster has sponsored joint training for supervisory and rural craft employees, during which participants have received two hours of Workplace Violence training. Over this period, more than 1800 employees have participated and been trained. Cluster threat assessment team members have provided training sessions for local offices at the request of Postmasters and have also provided training sessions for Postmaster and QWL/EI meetings. Again, this training is a part of a course curriculum and is not reflected as a separate violence in the workplace course.

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[9] See Appendix 8 – Human Resources Information Systems – Employees By Course – Build a Better Workplace – craft.

[10] See Appendix 9 – Human Resources Information Systems – Employees By Course – Build a Better Workplace - EAS.

[11] See Appendix 10 – Human Resources Information Systems – Employees By Course – Workplace Violence Awareness for Craft Employees and New Employees.

[12] See Appendix 11 – Workplace Violence Service Talks and Cover Letters – 3 pages.

Violence Prevention and Response Program
Arkansas Cluster

The Employee & Workplace Intervention Analyst regularly distributes newsletters *for employees*[13] *and management*[14]. The employee newsletter addresses life issues that may or may not effect the workplace. (Copies are attached.) The supervisor newsletter addresses management/employee issues such as communication, leadership skills, dealing with anger, etc. Both newsletters promote and encourage participation in the employee assistance program.

In accordance with the National Mental Health Calendar activity list, the Employee & Workplace Intervention Analyst releases informational documents[15] for management and employees, designed to facilitate awareness and intervention within the workplace.

There was a significant amount of work that went into this audit and its response. While we do not fully agree with the conclusions, it has given the Arkansas Cluster the opportunity to focus on these programs, identify processes to be improved and build on past success. This brings us closer to having the best violence prevention and response program in the nation.

E.W. Waldemayer, Jr.
District Manager

[13] See Appendix 12 – Employee Assistance Program Newsletters for Employees – 12 pages.
[14] See Appendix 13 – Employee Assistance Program Supervisor Newsletter – 11 pages.
[15] See Appendix 14 – National Domestic Violence Awareness Month & National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month handouts and Stand up talks – 6 pages.