

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Oregon State Office  
P.O. Box 2965  
Portland, Oregon 97208**

**In Reply Refer to:**

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EMS TRANSMISSION 12/05/02  
Information Bulletin No. OR-2003-040

To: DMs, DSDs, Staff and Branch Chiefs  
From: DSD for Management Services  
Subject: Oregon/Washington State Safety Council Meeting Minutes

Attached are the minutes from the November 4, 2002 meeting held at the OR/WA State Office in Portland Oregon.

Any questions concerning these minutes should be directed to Jim Chandler, OR/WA State Safety Manager, at (503) 808-6249.

**Districts with Unions** are reminded to notify their unions of this IB and satisfy any bargaining obligations before implementation. Your servicing Human Resources Office or Labor Relations Specialist can provide you assistance in this matter.

Signed by  
John K. Keith  
Associate Deputy State Director  
For Management Services

Authenticated by  
Cindy Fredrickson

1 Attachment

1- [November 4, 2002, State Safety Council Minutes \(10 pp\)](#)

Distribution

WO-740  
OR-910 (Chuck Wassinger) - 1  
OR-950 (Kathy Eaton, Jim Chandler) - 1  
OR-130 (Joe Buesing) - 1  
OR-090 (Julia Dougan) - 1  
OR-014 (Mel Crockett) - 1  
OR-116 (Howard Hunter) - 1  
OR-024 (Brian Mattox) - 1  
OR-934 (Shelby Gales) - 1

**STATE SAFETY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Host: Oregon State Office  
November 4, 2002**

**Attendance**

Chuck Wassinger - Associate State Director  
Kathy Eaton - Deputy State Director for Management Services  
Joe Buesing - Spokane District Manager (Chairman)  
Julia Dougan - Eugene District Manager  
Brian Mattox – East Side Non-Supervisor Representative  
Howard Hunter - West Side Line Supervisor  
Shelby Gales - SORO, State Office Fire Safety Specialist  
James Chandler - State Safety Manager (Recorder)

**Agenda**

- Introductions
- Accident Trend Analysis
- OWCP Costs Comparison
- Vehicle Accident Experience
- Board of Survey
- CASHE Update
- Lakeview OSHA Update
- COO Plan Status
- Site Entry Policy
- Fire Safety
- Firearms Policy
- What’s Happening Nationally
- Housekeeping

Chuck Wassinger opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. with brief welcoming comments.

**DISCUSSION**

**Accident Experience Review/Cumulative Comparison. Third and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters FY 2002 and FY 2001/2002.**

Note: All Statistical Data is drawn from the DOI SMIS database.

Attachment 1-1

Mr. Chandler reviewed the Personal Injury/Illness experience:

Third Quarter FY 2002 as compared with the Third Quarter FY 2001:

	01 Apr 01 - 01 Apr 02 -	30 Jun 01    30 Jun 02
Total Injury Cases	45	61

Total Illness Cases	3	9
Fatalities	0	0
Lost Time Cases	8	7
No Lost Time Cases	40	63
Days Away From Work	56	26

Fourth Quarter FY 2002 as compared with the Fourth Quarter FY 2001:

	01 Jul 01 - 30 Sep 01	01 Jul02 - 30 Sep 02
Total Injury Cases	64	44
Total Illness Cases	8	5
Fatalities	0	0
Lost Time Cases	22	15
No Lost Time Cases	50	34
Days Away From Work	108	50

Personal Injury/Illness Experience Cumulative Comparison FY 2001 – FY 2002:

	FY 2001	FY 2002
Total Injury Cases	165	142
Total Illness Cases	13	22
Fatalities	0	0
Lost Time Cases	48	30
No Lost Time Cases	130	134
Days Away From Work	213	158

AFR is the Accident Frequency Rate. It can be interpreted as the percentage of employees who suffered a lost time injury during the identified period. Slips, trips and falls, resulting in strains, sprains, and lacerations continue to be our biggest lost time incidents. Supervisors must make employees aware of the risks associated with assigned duties and ensure that situational awareness is high among all employees.

Attachment 1-2

**Vehicle Accident Experience**

Accident Experience Cumulative Comparison 3<sup>rd</sup> QRT FY 2002

	01 Apr 01 - 30 Jun 01	01 Apr 02 - 30 Jun 02
Total Incidents	14	21
Total Costs	\$34,750	\$29,778

Average Cost \$2482 \$1418

Cumulative Comparison 4<sup>th</sup> QRT FY 2002

	01 Jul 01 - 30 Sep 01	01 Jul 02 - 30 Sep 02
Total Incidents	26	23
Total Costs	\$ 80,377**	\$ 76,402***
Average Cost	\$ 3,091	\$3,322

\*\* Two Prinveville Rollover Accidents = \$45,000

\*\*\* Vale Veh. Fire & Coos Bay Rollover = \$51,000

Vehicle Accident Experience Cumulative Comparison FY 2001 - FY 2002

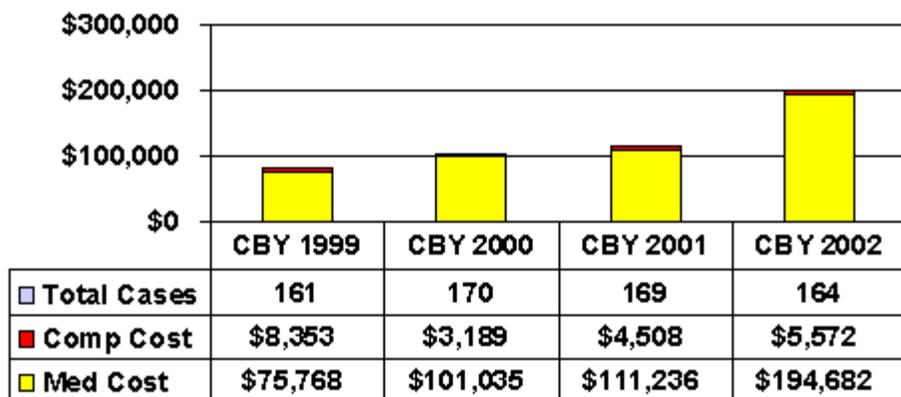
	01 Oct 00 - 30 Sep 01	01 Oct 01 - 30 Sep 02
Total Incidents	54	55
Total Costs	\$ 128,270	\$ 127,713
Average Cost	\$ 2,375	\$ 2,322

Inattention and speed[ing] too fast for conditions are still the primary cause of our accidents. Supervisors must lead by example and safety briefings must include warnings about excessive speed and situational awareness.

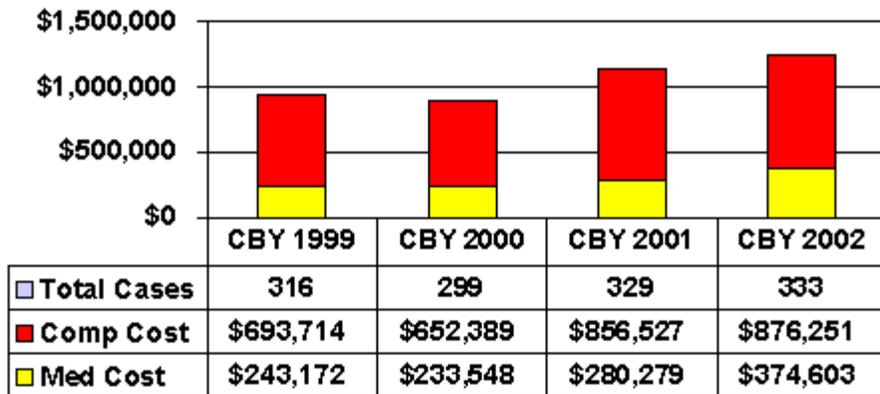
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**OWCP Costs Review:**

**New Cases in OR/WA -**



**All OR/WA Cases -**



According to the WO; Inflation for medical costs nationally was about 46% during the three-year period from 1999 to 2001.

When compared to the previous chart, you can see that the vast majority of OWCP costs are associated with existing cases.

Managers and Supervisors must work to get employees off of the OWCP roles. This can be accomplished by several means, including returning to full duty, return to limited duty, and medical retirement.

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**STATE BOARD OF SURVEY**

The President of the Board, Lisa Blackburn, wanted the Council to know that the Board works closely with safety to compliment the accident prevention program. She added that the State Safety Manager is a permanent member of the Board. The State Board of Survey reviews the facts surrounding accidents that occur around the state and are forward to the Board for review. While the primary mission of the Board is to determine if an employee was negligent in the incident, the members carefully consider the circumstances of the accident and make recommendations to help eliminate the possibility of recurrence. One other critical consideration that the Board must address is the opinion of the solicitor. The Solicitor reviews all cases where the Board finds an employee negligent. While the facts of the incident may be obvious, often times the Solicitor finds legal issues with the case and recommends that the employee not be held liable.

**CASHE (Compliance Assessment, Safety, Health, and Environment)**

The State Safety Manager, Jim Chandler, has been appointed as State lead for the CASHE. Safety Managers working closely with Engineering, HAZMAT, and Managers should help ensure that identified hazards are abated in a timely manner and required reports and updates to the National Office are made.

He added that CASHE should be an added benefit to BLM’s overall Safety and Health Program. District Safety Managers are encouraged to work closely with the CASHE Teams and voice their concerns and offer constructive input if they think the program needs adjustment.

The CASHE inspection schedule for FY 2003 was reviewed. OR/WA Offices Scheduled for this year (FY 2003):

- Lakeview                Nov. 4-8, 2002
- Burns                    Mar. 10-14, 2003
- Salem/OSO            August 18 - 22, 2003

Status is reported annually as part of BLM’s Annual Performance Plan. The percentage of facilities in “good”

condition is reported. Because of the importance of abating serious hazards and deficiencies (RAC 1 and 2 Safety Hazards and Class 1A and Class 1B Environmental Hazards) the State Safety Manager will develop a system to track the abatement of these hazards starting next year. The objective of the review is not to get involved in the Districts abatement plans, but to ensure that the State Safety Manager, State Engineer, and State Environmental Protection Specialist are working to assist Districts in abating identified hazards when appropriate and that hazards are abated on a worst first basis. This system will also allow serious repeat findings to be identified to help ensure they are abated.

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## **HAZARDOUS SITE ENTRY POLICY**

The Council was briefed on a new policy issued by the Assistant Director, Minerals, Realty and Resource Protection, Instruction Memorandum No. 2003-008. The policy provides guidance for all BLM HAZMAT employees who enter sites with potential or known hazardous substances for specific purposes within their job responsibilities. The policy provides flexibility for each State to determine which employees, if any, will be authorized to enter such sites. The responsibility for these determinations remains with each State Director.

The policy stipulates that BLM employees will not enter Level A sites and once a site is determined to be Level B only HAZMAT contractors can enter and work in the site. Normally our HAZMAT employees do not enter sites that are higher than the lowest category, Level D, sites. Based on the new policy, our operational capabilities and requirements, and best management practices, the State Safety Manager and the State Environmental Protection Specialist highly recommended to the Council that OR/WA BLM adopt a policy that will allow our HAZMAT employees to enter only known Level D sites. That is largely consistent with our current strategy to handle HAZMAT emergencies. The Council agreed and the State Safety Manager and Environmental Protection Specialist will draft a policy for review.

## **ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES**

The Council reviewed the findings of a vehicle fire that occurred in the Vale District and destroyed the vehicle. The vehicle was not a dedicated fire vehicle, but it was supporting fire operations. The Council's concern was that the vehicle was an "alternative fuel vehicle"; it was equipped with a propane tank. The State Safety Manager discussed the matter with Robert Stroud, the BLM Fire Equipment Development Unit Supervisor at NIFC. Mr. Stroud said that he recommends only diesel equipment be used for fire operations due to its lower flash point. The State Safety Manager will do more research on the actual hazard and report back to the Council at the next meeting.

## **NON-LAW ENFORCEMENT FIREARM POLICY**

BLM Policy is outlined in BLM Manual 1112-1, Safety, and the BLM Manual Handbook 1112-2, a.k.a. the Yellow book. The Department is developing Policy that may affect the current Bureau policy. We have been using the basic BLM guidance but we need to develop a State Policy that outlines our process. The State Safety Manager has drafted a policy that has been reviewed by Law Enforcement. The Draft Policy covers three basic areas: Authorization and training, safe handling, use, and transport, safe storage, criminal background checks, and the use of trigger locks. Our draft policy is consistent with the new Department Policy. Note: Subsequent to this meeting additional information regarding the DOI Policy indicates that the employee training requirement might differ significantly with the proposed OR/WA Policy. Therefore, we will wait to publish a policy until the DOI Policy is signed or the requirements are made clearer.

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## **LAKEVIEW OSHA PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

The Partnership has been in place now for two years. Jim Chandler recently spoke with Carl Halgren, Fed OSHA, who thought that the Partnership was going well. Per the written agreement a review is required to see if satisfactory

progress has been made and to see if both sides want the partnership to continue for the full five-year term of the agreement.

## **NATIONAL UPDATE**

The big news nationally is that the BLM Safety Office has moved [back] to Washington D.C. They are located in the MIB. Hopefully the move will prove valuable and allow the Safety Program to become better connected to other Bureau Programs as well as senior management in Washington.

The new BLM Manual 1112-1, Safety and Health Management, was recently completed and published. The manual outlines requirements for managing BLM Safety and Health Programs. Over the next few months published OR/WA BLM Safety and Health policy letters will be rewritten as an OR/WA amendment to the BLM Manual 1112-1.

The DOI Safety Manager Position has been filled.

Diane Schmitz was chosen as the new Department of the Interior Safety Manager. She is currently the Safety Manager for the Department of Education and has worked for the Public Health Administration in the past. Her primary experience is in Occupational Health.

## **CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS**

As always, work on Continuity of Operations and Emergency Management never ends. The State Office met all of the milestones required for FY 2002. This included getting the plan certified by the Bureau Director and having an exercise. During FY 2003 all District plans will have to meet the same requirements. Those requirements are outlined in WO IM 2002-181, Continuity of Operations. By the end of FY 2003 all BLM facilities must be covered by a COO Plan. This is not to say that each facility must have a COO Plan – they must simply be covered by one. It could be the Districts plan or a Resource Area plan, etc. District COO Plans must be in place and certified by the Director no later than September 15, 2003.

The State Office safety Manager is working on a template based on the WO COO Plan. It is anticipated that all plans will have to be in the new template by the end of FY 2003 to allow the WO COO Coordinator to develop a searchable database.

Mr. Chandler clarified some concern about the required exercise. Initially the requirement was to actually relocate to a designated area and conduct some minimal operations. The WO has since revised the requirement; a tabletop exercise will meet the requirement. The exercise should include as many members of the Emergency Response Team as possible, the exercise

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should require managers to address specific responsibilities they have, and lessons learned should be included in subsequent reviews of the COO Plan. The exercise scenario package that the State Office used to conduct its exercise in July is available to all safety managers for review. Contact the State Safety Manager for a copy.

The WO has also said that it is working on the requirement to have a reference to Continuity of Operations in each employee's EPPRR. The requirement was first changed to Managers and Supervisors, and then it was going to be combined with an IT requirement, now. . . we are not sure what the status is. A recent check with the WO COO Coordinator did not clarify this requirement – it is still being discussed.

Two of the main management challenges we have with emergency operations are that emphasis on Emergency Management diminishes with the calendar and there is no clear delegation of authority to manage emergencies. As we get farther from 9/11 without further attacks, the support and interest in the COO process diminishes. The other is a more practical issue, as far as we can determine, Managers do not have a broad delegation of authority to manage emergencies. During an emergency decisions may have to be made that may be contrary to Bureau or Department

policy. The WO COO Coordinator has elevated that concern and was told that decisions managers make during an emergency would be supported. Our strategy at this time is to anticipate as many of those types of situations as possible and include them in our COO Plans. Once the plans are approved, the authority exists for managers to make decisions consistent with the emergency. The State Safety Manager is working this issue with the WO COO Coordinator.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

Shelby Gales, SORO Fire and Aviation Safety Manager, gave a comprehensive review of the new BLM Medical Standards program that is due to be tested here in the PNW in the next few weeks. The comprehensive program establishes the levels of minimum medical fitness that the agency has determined to be necessary for safe and efficient job performance.

Specific training will be conducted for appropriate employees to ensure that all of the requirements are understood. Due to their complexity and the possibility of putting out incorrect information, the requirements will not be covered in these minutes.

Shelby also reviewed the PNW fire season. There were nearly 1,100,000 acres burned and 36 homes were lost in 982 reported fires. Reported fires this season were 157% of average. Forty-three of the fires were large fires or fire complexes. Approximately 100 fires were included in the Tiller Complex fire. The PNW typically has one lightning episode in July that results in multiple fires, in July 2003 there were three lightning events that resulted in fires. Resources were scarce due to the high number of fires. The PNW hosted 79 Incident Management Teams and seven area Command Teams. The MAC group met for 45 days.

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## **SAFETY AWARDS**

The Council talked briefly about Safety Awards. The new BLM Safety Manual 1112-1, Chapter 7 covers safety awards. There are seven awards:

- Director's Award of Excellence in Safety
- Bureau Safety Manager's Special Award of Excellence in Safety
- BLM Award of Excellence in Safety
- BLM Accident Prevention Award of Honor in Safety
- BLM Accident Prevention Award of Accomplishment in Safety
- BLM Motor Vehicle Driver Safety Award
- National Wildland Fire Safety Award

Managers are encouraged to review the requirements and submit employees for awards when appropriate. The State Safety Manager will work with the District Safety Managers to develop an award policy for OR/WA to supplement the awards in BLM Safety Manual 1112-1.

## **SAFETY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

Several members of the Council, including the Chair, need to be replaced in accordance with the Charter. Julia Dougan, Eugene District Manager, is now the Chair of the State Safety Council. The East Side District Manager is Barron Bail. The Council is seeking the following members as well: East side Supervisor Representative, East and West Side Non-Supervisor Representative. The State Safety Manager will send out an IB requesting nominations.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

Chuck Wassinger made closing remarks and thanked everyone for their time. This was the last meeting for the current Chair of the Council, Joe Buesing. Joe has served as the chair for well over year and has provided great leadership and

support to the State Safety Program. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

The State Safety Manager will develop a system to track the abatement of serious hazards, RAC 1 or 2 Safety Hazards and Class 1A and 1B Environmental Hazards, to ensure that the State Safety Manager, State Engineer, and State Environmental Protection Specialist are working to assist Districts in abating identified hazards when appropriate and that hazards are abated on a worst first basis. This system will also allow serious repeat findings to be identified to help ensure they are abated. Estimated Completion Date: March 2003

The State Safety Manager and the State Environmental Protection Specialist will draft a policy regarding Hazardous Site Entry by HAZMAT workers. Estimated Completion Date: January 2003

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The State Safety Manager will research the hazards associated with Natural Gas powered vehicles, particularly as it applies to firefighting support duties. Estimated Completion Date: January 2003

State Safety Policies will be rewritten as supplements to the BLM Manual 1112-1. The State Safety Manager will work with District Safety Managers to ensure a comprehensive document as possible. Estimated Completion Date: September 2003

The State Office Safety Manager is currently working on a COO Template that will assist District Safety Managers in developing their COO Plans by the end of this FY. The State Safety Manager will ensure the template is available for use and is complete by January 2003. Estimated Completion Date: January 2003

The COO exercise scenario that the State Office used to conduct their COO exercise this past July will be posted on the Safety Intranet page to allow District Safety Managers to refer to it as necessary. Estimated Completion Date: January 2003

The State Safety Council needs new members in accordance with the Charter. The State Safety Manager will issue an IB soliciting nominations. Estimated Completion Date: January 2003

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