

Best Practice #132

Best Practice Title: Use of a Threat Assessment Team

Facility: Y12 Plant, Oak Ridge , Tennessee

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Brief Description of Best Practice: The purpose of this program is to provide the necessary directions for detecting, reporting, and addressing threatening behavior in the workplace. By developing and implementing an effective workplace violence program, B&W Y12 hopes to prevent workplace violence, and thus provide a safe workplace for all employees.

This Best Practice can best be tied to ISM Principle 1, Line management responsibility for Safety, Core Function 2, analyze hazard, and Core Function 5, provide feedback and improvement. As the TAT process is implemented, it is used to identify the potential safety hazard of workplace violence, to evaluate that hazard, and then to implement corrective actions.

Why the best practice was used: It is a proven process that provides expertise and immediate actions to defuse issues.

Briefly describe the issue/improvement opportunity the best practice was developed to address: With a large and diverse population, the potential for workplace violence is a concern that requires proper management attention. This program allows B&W Y-12 management to quickly evaluate and take appropriate action to address any imminent or ongoing risk of harm to person or property.

What are the benefits of the best practice: It is a process that was carried over from a previous program referred to as Aberrant behavior. Since many employees were very familiar with that process they easily detect the early warning signs of threatening behavior; acts of aggression and potential violence in the work place. In addition, employing a three person team made up of Labor Relations, Medical, and Security representatives increases the efficiency in evaluating a situation for potential threats and allows the appropriate organization to take the lead and quickly deal with potential threat situations.

What problems/issues were associated with the best practice: None

How the success of the Best Practice was measured: In a number of documented cases, medical personnel were able to intercede early and appropriately refer employees who were identified as having potential problems to appropriate medical specialists for additional care. In one case, an employee whose actions signaled suicidal tendencies was able to get appropriate and helpful medical attention. Threats from and altercations between employees have been evaluated early and appropriate action taken to possibly avoid more serious workplace violence issues.

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Description of process experience using the Best Practice: The TAT team consists of a company psychologist; the IOSC Program Manager and an employee/labor relations specialist. When a report of threatening statements or behavior, or behavior considered to be abnormal, is reported, the three person team meets to discuss all aspects of the concern, interview alleged victim(s) and witnesses, and ultimately interview the alleged offender. These interviews are conducted with all three TAT team members to ensure the most efficient process possible. When the offender works with or around classified matter or SNM, the team is able to identify threats and remove individuals from these environments quickly. Having the three organizations represented in the interviews allows quick and decisive action to be implemented to address whatever the threat is without having to refer the case to a third party. In cases where the threat is serious, the TAT team is able to administratively suspend access to the facility while the process is ongoing. This ensure separation of witnesses and removes the potential threat from the environment until the threat can be validated. In some cases, employee conduct involved safety related violations that were dealt with accordingly.

The TAT process has proven to be very effective with a number of employees being referred to other professionals for assistance dealing with issues such as anger management and suicidal tendencies, as well as early intervention in potentially threatening situations .