

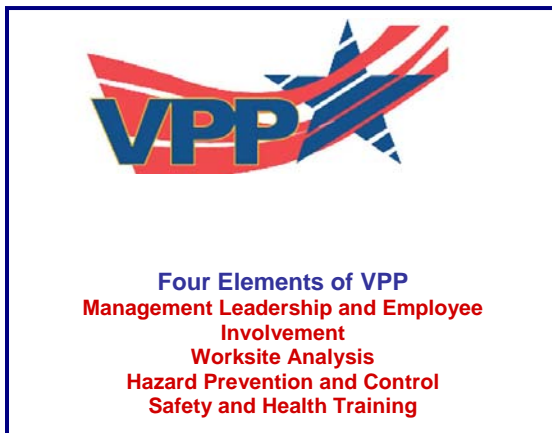
NAVAL WEAPONS STATION CHARLESTON AWARDED OSHA VPP MERIT STATUS



In a 25 May 2007 ceremony, Naval Weapons Station (WPNSTA) Charleston located in Goose Creek, SC was designated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as one of their Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) *Merit* sites. The VPP *Merit* designation is an effective stepping stone to becoming an elite *Star* site. OSHA recognized WPNSTA Charleston for its achievements in worker safety on and off the job following an inspection of the naval base's safety practices. [Read success stories on other VPP sites at:

<http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/success/all.htm>]

VPP demonstrates cooperative action among government, industry, and labor to address worker safety and health issues and expand worker protection. VPP participation requirements center on comprehensive management systems with active employee involvement to prevent or control the safety and health hazards at the worksite.



OSHA approves successful employers by designating them to one of three VPP program levels: *Star*, *Merit*, or *Star Demonstration*. The VPP *Merit* award designation earned by WPNSTA Charleston indicates that the command has “good safety and health management systems” for meeting the four basic VPP elements:

- Management Leadership & Employee Involvement
- Worksite Analysis
- Hazard Prevention & Control
- Safety and Health Training.

As a *Merit* site, WPNSTA Charleston has demonstrated the potential and the commitment to meet within three years goals tailored for them by OSHA to become a *Star* site - the highest participation category indicating the command exceeded the four basic VPP elements.



Mr. John Deifer, OSHA Representative; MM3 Lee, NNPTC (Navy Nuclear Propulsion Training Command); Capt Brennan, Commanding Officer; John Boggs, Safety Specialist; MA2 Alexander, Security; Glenda Middleton, Safety Specialist; Windell Mock, (contractor WSMS); Monique Kozak, Safety Specialist; Lonnie Kenney, MWR; Rick Dangerfield, Safety Director; Milton Pollard, Asst Fire Chief; CDR Edwards, PWO; Michael Moyer, Captain Fire Department; Steve Gagat, Safety Specialist; CDR Claibourn, Executive Officer.

VPP Flag and Certificate to the Commanding Officer, Captain Robert Brennan and Safety Director, Rick Dangerfield.

During the award ceremony, OSHA Representative Mr. John Deifer congratulated WPNSTA Charleston for their achievement. He stated, "The journey to excellence has just begun, so you will have to work hard to maintain and improve on this accomplishment.

Weapons Station Charleston has become an example to the rest of the Navy on how the commitment to safety and health by both management and employees can reduce injuries and illnesses and continue to provide high quality of service." Mr. Deifer then presented the

The following examples illustrate the types of actions taken by WPNSTA Charleston toward attaining VPP Merit recognition:

- 1) Established a written **Statement of Commitment** from top managers and labor to fully support participation in the Voluntary Protection Program and ensure a positive, pro-active safety culture.
- 2) **Increased safety awareness among all employees** and empowered the work force to accept responsibility for their own personal safety and the safety of their co-workers. Employee involvement is one of the keys to a successful program. WPNSTA Charleston conducted several monthly informational briefs/training sessions for management and employees to explain the VPP process and how "Safety" must be integrated into the management system and work process. The following initiatives were also incorporated to ensure and increase employee involvement:

- **VPP Guide** - an educational tool to increase employees' knowledge of VPP and WPNSTA Charleston's safety program. The VPP Guide caused

Examples illustrating actions taken by WPNSTA Charleston toward attaining VPP Merit recognition (continued):

individual employees to become actively involved in learning about their own safety. This guide is made available electronically, and all departments are responsible for ensuring new employees reporting onboard complete the guide within 90 days of their employment. This helps ensure new personnel reporting onboard understand WPNSTA Charleston's participation in OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program and the Station's overall commitment to safety and health.

- **Job Hazard Analysis** – Supervisors and employees developed a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) or Area JHA for each process performed. This enabled management and employee involvement as they worked together to identify the steps involved with performing various tasks, the potential hazards associated with each step in conducting the task, and the proper mitigation for each hazard identified. By participating in the development of JHA's employees soon realized the value added in taking the time to formally analyze individual tasks. These JHA's were also used to train new employees or employees called upon to perform non-routine/repetitive type work.

- **Safety Committees** – WPNSTA Charleston established a Worker's Integrated Safety and Health (WISH) Committee made up of employees that volunteered to represent their individual shops/departments. The Committee meets at least monthly to train, assist in conducting shop/building safety inspections, and work together to solve safety issues in their work areas.

- **Monthly and/or Quarterly Worksite Inspections** – The Safety Department provided training to WISH Committee members and supervisory personnel, as well as provided them with checklists for administrative and industrial work areas. This training and use of checklists enabled industrial work areas to be inspected by supervisors and employees at least monthly and administrative areas to receive at least quarterly safety inspections.

Previously, the Safety Department personnel only conducted an annual inspection of most work areas, but now with the assistance of supervisors and employees, inspections are being conducted more frequently, and deficiencies are being corrected in a timely manner.

- **Employee Recognition** – In addition to On-the Spot Awards and other programs used to recognize employees, the WPNSTA Charleston implemented an "Applause Award." This award recognizes employees that go the extra mile to ensure a safe and healthful workplace. The intent of this award is to recognize employees who actively demonstrate caring for and/or ensuring the safety of their co-workers. For example, employees could be nominated by fellow employees for guarding a hazard to prevent a mishap; warning a co-worker of a potential hazard; or lending a helping hand to safely perform a task.

Rick Dangerfield, Safety Director, WPNSTA Charleston, applauded all WPNSTA employees for accomplishing this great mission. “It's management and employees working together, applying the principles of ORM, and accepting ownership to ensure all identified hazards or potential hazards are immediately abated. Implementing Job Hazard Analysis and funding of preventative maintenance programs was a must and without the support of Command, Management, our local union and each employee working as a team, VPP would not have been possible.”

Captain Robert Brennan, WPNSTA Charleston Commanding Officer, thanked all employees for working safely each day and making WPNSTA Charleston a success. He stated, “WPNSTA Charleston is the recipient of many awards each year and it's due to all the hard work and dedication of everyone who works here, including many of our supported commands.” CAPT Brennan encouraged all to keep up the good work and to not become complacent.

WPNSTA Charleston derives numerous benefits from being a VPP *Merit* site. Advantages include fewer work-related injuries and illnesses, improved employee morale, and reduced costs. The entire Navy benefits from WPNSTA Charleston as a model for embracing the OSHA VPP and the installation's achievement on its path to *Star* status.

For more information on OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program, how to qualify, a VPP eligibility checklist, and a VPP application, visit these websites:

OSHA VPP Guidance

<http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/>

VPP Participants' Association

<http://www.vpppa.org/>

VPP Eligibility Checklist

<http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/vppflyer.pdf>

VPP Information Kit

http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/VPP_Kit.pdf

VPP Application Information, OSHA Instruction TED 8.4

http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/Directive_pdf/TED_8_4.pdf

Naval Safety Center VPP Guidance

<http://safetycenter.navy.mil/osh/shore/VPP.htm>

DoD VPP Center of Excellence (CX)

<http://www.vppcx.org/>

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