

NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE KINGS BAY AWARDED VOLUNTARY PROTECTION PROGRAM STAR STATUS



During a 19 April 2007 ceremony, Naval Submarine Base (NSB) Kings Bay received the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) *Star* designation.¹ OSHA awarded *Star* status to NSB Kings Bay for its worker safety programs and initiatives on and off the job following an inspection of the naval base's safety practices. NSB Kings Bay, which serves as the east coast homeport for the Navy's Trident strategic and guided missile nuclear submarines, joined three of the Naval Sea System Command's shipyards in the ranks of Navy VPP *Star* sites. [Read success stories on these three shipyards 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 a comprehensive safety and health management system with active employee involvement to prevent or control 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*. *Star* is the highest and most challenging participation category. The VPP *Star* award designation indicates that the organization receiving the award has successfully demonstrated ongoing planning, implementation, integration, and control of four interdependent elements:

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

A designated *Star* site must have had all of its occupational safety and health program elements operating effectively for at least one year, and its three-year injury and illness rates compared to a like industry class in the private sector must be below the national average published annually by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for that industry. Injury and illness history for a site is evaluated using a three-year total case incident rate (TCIR) and a three-year day away, restricted, and/or transfer case incident rate (DART rate).

One way that OSHA determines the qualification of applicants and the continuing qualification of participants in the VPP *Star* Program, is to compare site injury and illness rate history to the published BLS industry class rates. For VPP *Star* eligibility, site injury and illness rate history must be below comparable BLS rates for at least one of the three most recent years. The NSB Kings Bay three-year TCIR and DART rate history for 2003-2005 was 58% below and 34% below, respectively, compared to the 2002 BLS industry averages. A summary of this analysis is shown below.



3 YEAR MISHAP TREND ANALYSIS

Civilian

Total Case Injury Rate/Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred (OSHA Formula) Calendar Year 2003 - 2005

Year	Hours	Total # of Cases	TCIR	Number of Cases Involving Days Away from Work, Restricted Activity or Job Transfer	DART Rate
2003	852,800	7	1.6	7	1.6
2004	836,160	9	2.2	8	1.9
2005	684,320	13	3.8	10	2.9
Total	2,373,280	29		25	
Three-Year Rate (2003-2005)			2.4		2.1
<u>X</u> 2002 BLS Rates for SIC 7690 (5.7/3.2)					
2003 BLS Rates for NAICS 811000 (4.2/2.1)			5.7		3.2
2004 BLS Rates for NAICS 811000 (3.9/1.9)					
2006 YTD	563,160	9	3.2	6	2.1

--The 3-year Total Case Incident Rate (TCIR) and Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred (DART) rate for 2003-2005 are 2.4 and 2.1, respectively. In accordance with the Federal Register Notice published December 8, 2003; SUBASE's rates are being compared to the 2002 BLS industry averages. The 3-year TCIR is 58% below and the 3-year DART is 34% below the 2002 BLS industry averages for SIC 7690/NAICS 811000.

According to CAPT Mike McKinnon, former NSB Kings Bay Commanding Officer, employee involvement was vital to creating a culture of safety and attaining OSHA VPP *Star* status at Kings Bay. "Employee involvement and commitment were the keys to this recognition," he said.

The OSHA team performed inspections at NSB Kings Bay in October of 2006. After reviewing the safety records and programs used by the base, OSHA team members conducted inspections and interviews of management and employees. Areas inspected included the indoor small arms range, fire department, RV Park, fitness complex and recycling center. The inspectors verified that all safety notices and proper licenses were present.

"I was very impressed with all the personnel here at Kings Bay. They all have the right attitude and spirit towards safety," said OSHA Inspector Dan DeHart. He felt the program wasn't just a top-down program; but a program accepted and put into action by all employees. "VPP relies on each individual," said DeHart. "The main drive came from the commanding officer; and that's an important factor in Kings Bay's success."

The following examples illustrate the types of actions taken by NSB Kings Bay toward attaining VPP Star recognition:

- Placing focus on increasing employee awareness and developing Job Hazard Analyses (JHAs). Additional emphasis has been placed on housekeeping to help eliminate slips, trips, and falls.
- Including safety as a rating element in Civilian Performance Appraisals. All employees receive an annual performance evaluation and mid-year review. Safety and health performance is part of the evaluation. In addition, the base has an instruction that provides a discipline policy to include recommended actions for violation of specific safety policies.
- Initiating a Safety Management Assessment Program (MAP) that affords supervisors and employees the opportunity to conduct quarterly walk-through assessments to ensure their workplaces are maintained with zero safety deficiencies.
- Managing a fully functioning Enterprise-wide Safety Applications Management System (ESAMS) which has allowed the safety culture to emanate throughout the workforce. The Medical Command at Kings Bay is now entering Medical Surveillance data into ESAMS to keep all records up-to-date and accurate. Tenant commands have been notified that ESAMS is available to them, and the SUBASE Safety Office will assist in training their Points of Contact to manage the ESAMS program within their organization.

- Implementing a Workers Integrated Safety and Health (WISH) Group. The objectives of this group are to ensure supervisors and workers actively participate in the SUBASE safety program; ensure Job Hazard Analyses are routine in the planning and execution of any and all work activities; aggressively monitor and take action to ensure the continuation and improvement of the Integrated Management System (IMS), Operational Risk Management (ORM), and VPP programs at SUBASE Kings Bay; achieve and maintain safe working conditions through sound procedures and practices in all workplaces and day-to-day routines; and develop and/or enhance existing efforts to reduce off duty recreational mishaps.
- Providing special motor vehicle and recreational safety initiatives, including periodic DUI checkpoints, motorcycle safety rodeos, and issuing “think before you drink” cards, providing safety training on a quarterly basis, and conducting safety inspections of all playgrounds and recreational facilities at least annually.

During the VPP award ceremony, former Commander, Navy Region Southeast ADM Mark Boensel expressed his admiration for the dedicated teamwork it took for NSB Kings Bay to achieve VPP *Star* status.

"It is my pleasure to be here today, because I know what type of work it took to achieve this award," he said. "This is an example of what can be done by people who are dedicated to doing good work, who care about being safe and understand that safety is a part of overall readiness."

Said NSB Kings Bay Safety and Occupational Health manager Debra Simeone, "VPP means achieving excellence in the safety culture from the employees' level up to management. Preparation for VPP has helped increase safety awareness with all employees to include safe work habits in everything they do at work and at home."



ADM Mark Boensel, former Commander, Navy Region Southeast speaks at VPP award ceremony.

NSB Kings Bay derives numerous benefits from being a VPP *Star* site. Because NSB has taken its occupational safety and health programs well beyond the minimum regulatory requirements, OSHA has removed the base from its programmed inspection list. NSB employees, however, lose



Capt Mike McKinnon, former Kings Bay Commanding Officer (5th from right) and Safety Manager Debbie Simeone (4th from right) join NSB Safety Specialists, Union representative, and Child Development staff to proudly display the VPP Star banner.

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>

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¹ OSHA VPP Star Sites are based, by OSHA regulation, only on civilians. Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay treats military and civilians equally when it comes to workplace safety. After becoming an OSHA VPP Star Site at the end of 2006, an unfortunate harbor boating mishap on 28 March 2007 took the life of an NSB Kings Bay sailor. A thorough accident investigation was performed and revealed a Navy-wide deficiency. Actions were taken by the Navy to preclude recurrence of this type of mishap.

none of their rights; OSHA is required to respond to reports of major mishaps, valid employee complaints, and chemical spill incidents. Additional advantages include fewer work-related injuries and illnesses, improved employee morale, and reduced costs.

For more information on OSHA's Voluntary