

## VOLUNTARY PROTECTION PROGRAMS

# Mobile Workforce

## Demonstration Program

Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
Aug 14, 2002, Rev6

### **Background**

OSHA has been working with industry and labor for several years to find ways to bring companies with mobile workforces into the Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP). Until now, only fixed worksites have been eligible to participate in VPP, which recognizes exemplary safety and health performance. The VPP Mobile Workforce Demonstration Program, approved on November 13, 1998, gives companies employing mobile workforces an opportunity to test their ability to provide top-notch protection. Several companies already have stepped forward and submitted applications.

By creating a Demonstration Program, OSHA is able to recognize and learn more about the worker protection at companies whose work practices differ in significant ways from the normal requirements of VPP's Star Program. In this instance,

- p The applicant's employees work from 1 hour to several months at a site and then move on to the next site,
- p The applicant employer does not control the site where work is performed, and
- p The applicant's employees often work alone and without regular supervision.

The VPP Mobile Workforce Demonstration Program is open to companies whose employees are regularly exposed to changing work environments. Examples of eligible companies include those that provide delivery, maintenance, and repair services for home appliances, telephones, electric utilities, hospital apparatus, and factory machinery. Employers in the home health care and construction industries also may apply.



### **Terms of the Demonstration Program**

The unique terms of the Mobile Workforce Demonstration Program include:

- p 10 companies will be accepted for participation.; more if resources allow.
- p The Demonstration Program will end no more than 5 years after approval of the first applicant company.
- p OSHA will identify a defined geographic area (State or Region) for each applicant in order to limit the resources OSHA will need to administer the Demonstration Program. Federal OSHA cannot extend this program or cover workers that work in OSHA State Plan States.
- p All elements of an applicant's safety and health program must meet current VPP Star requirements except for the additional and/or modified requirements approved under the Demonstration and documented in the Applicant Participation Plan that OSHA and each applicant will jointly develop (see below).
- p The Company's headquarters/division/direct management must normally reside in a state that is under Federal OSHA jurisdiction. Case-by-case exceptions may be granted. The nature, scope and degree of the headquarter portion of the evaluation will be defined in the implementation plan.

### **Mobile Workforce Program Criteria**

OSHA will work with Demonstration applicants to ensure industry-specific requirements and assessment protocols are clearly defined prior to approval.

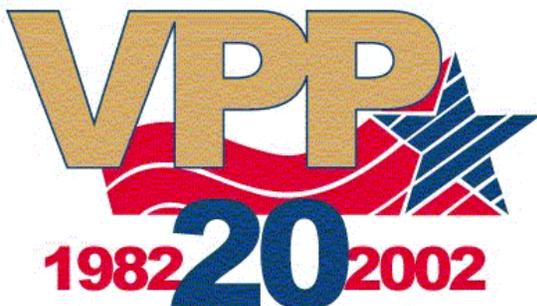
- p OSHA and the company will cooperatively develop a written Applicant Participation Plan that documents the unique aspects of the company's Demonstration Program participation. This plan will identify hazards & controls specific to the work performed; unique management leadership and employee involvement strategies, such as the ability for employees to leave the worksite if unsafe conditions exist; the number of sites to be evaluated for initial and ongoing approvals and methods of evaluation; and modifications to Star and other requirements critical to the Demonstration.

p Each applicant will be required to undergo comprehensive VPP onsite pre-approval visits (including the central office facility, if applicable, and a minimum of two representative worksites) before the applicant can be recommended for approval to the Demonstration Program.

p Prior to an OSHA onsite pre-approval visit, the applicant shall inform and gain written permission from the site owner (or duly authorized representative) for OSHA to enter and accompany the applicant. At least two sites must provide this permission. Further, the applicant must inform the site owner that any conditions (including those created by other subcontractors) deemed a violation of an OSHA rule must be abated immediately or confirmed as abated according to an abatement plan approved by OSHA. If correction does not occur, then OSHA will proceed with normal enforcement procedures. If the conditions are corrected immediately or with an approved plan, then no enforcement activity or citation will occur.

p Once OSHA approves an applicant, the agency will evaluate at least two additional worksites each year for the duration of the Demonstration. Demonstration participants will be required to share with OSHA where work will be performed according to a schedule agreed to and documented in the Applicant Participation Plan. This plan also will contain the protocol for conducting onsite evaluations. OSHA will conduct unannounced evaluation visits if feasible.

p If a worksite “fails” an evaluation, i.e., does not meet the Demonstration Program requirements, the appropriate Regional Administrator will take one of the following actions: 1) give the company 30 days to bring its safety and health program into compliance, 2) request that the company withdraw from the program, or 3) remove the company from the program. If two worksites “fail” an evaluation in 1 year, the company will be asked to withdraw from the program or will be removed by the Regional Administrator. Companies may appeal a Regional Administrator’s decisions to the Assistant Secretary.



## *Application Approval Process*

1. An application for the Demonstration Program can be submitted to either the Regional or National Office in accordance with this document and standard VPP requirements.
2. The Regional and National Office VPP staff will review the application and jointly decide whether to accept or reject it. In cooperation with the applicant, either the National Office or the Regional VPP Manager will draft an Applicant Participation Plan for each Demonstration participant.
3. Once OSHA has accepted an applicant into the Demonstration Program, the Region will arrange and conduct the pre-approval visits per normal VPP guidelines. National Office VPP staff will participate on pre-approval visits when appropriate.
4. Similar to current VPP procedures, the Assistant Secretary will approve an applicant’s participation in the Demonstration based upon the report and recommendations of the VPP onsite review team.

You can obtain application guidelines from any OSHA Regional Office. After OSHA has reviewed and approved your written application, the VPP Manager in your Region will contact you to schedule an onsite review.

## *Where Can I Get More Information?*

The VPP Manager in your OSHA Regional Office can provide you with a VPP information kit and can help answer your questions.

Additionally, there is a wealth of useful information from OSHA’s Internet site at <http://www.osha.gov>. VPP information begins at:

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

You may also direct your questions or comments to Cathy Oliver, VPP Chief, or Christopher Warren, Safety Specialist at the number listed below.

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