



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Date

November 12, 2010

To

Robert Tapella, Public Printer

From

J. Anthony Ogden, Inspector General

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Anthony Ogden', written over the printed name.

Subject

**Management Implication Report
Employee Misconduct on Second and Third Shifts**

PURPOSE:

Over the past two years, the GPO Office of Inspector General (OIG), Office of Investigations (OI) has received from Plant Operations multiple allegations of misconduct committed during the second and third shifts. Subsequent OI investigations have substantiated some of those allegations and identified significant concerns regarding the management and supervision of Plant Operations personnel. This Management Implication Report summarizes those concerns and offers recommendations to improve supervisory controls, employee accountability, safety and productivity, and efficient use of human resources.

BACKGROUND:

OI investigations have revealed inadequate management and an overall lack of accountability for second and third shift Plant Operations personnel. Specifically, OI found that Plant Operations managers have allowed employees to:

- work an unapproved and potentially unsafe schedule;
- be absent from duty without authorization; and
- sleep while on duty.

Several supervisors stated that they were aware of the infractions detailed in GPO Directive 655.4B – Corrective Actions, but chose not to take administrative action. In addition, supervisors were aware employees were engaged in unsafe, unapproved work practices, but again took no action.

Second Shift Print Plant Workers (PPW) Packers Worked an Unapproved and Potentially Unsafe Schedule

In October 2008, the OI initiated an investigation (Case Number I-2009-0004) based on anonymous employee misconduct allegations on the second and third shifts. As part of that investigation, the OI interviewed several Offset Press Division (OPD) employees and identified a recurring problem with the scheduling of the second shift PPW packers.

Packers who work on the Group 98 and 86 web presses are required to work one hour on the press, then switch with another packer and take a one hour break. While this schedule is not mandated by official GPO policy, directive, or regulation, it is based on past practice with the objective to reduce injuries and give the packers a break from the heavy lifting. The second shift packers, however, created their own method of working the shift. One packer works the first four hours and then switches with another packer, who then works the last four hours of the shift. This current practice leaves half the packers unaccounted for at any given time during the shift, and obviates the objective to provide an interval from heavy lifting, resulting in the potential increase of work-related injuries.

OPD supervisors admitted they do not enforce the one hour on/one hour off schedule. A senior manager stated he does not condone the way the packers schedule their work, but has made no effort to reprimand supervisors who allow the unapproved and potentially unsafe behavior to continue.

Electronic Pre-Press Division (EPD) Employees Were Absent Without Leave

OI recently investigated allegations of employee misconduct in the EPD (Case Number I-2009-0004). The investigation determined that three Digital Pre-Press employees on the second shift took extended lunch breaks and went to strip clubs while on duty. EPD management officials received numerous complaints from other employees and were aware of the misconduct but took no disciplinary action. Evidence in the investigation suggests that the offending employees were absent without leave for periods in excess of two hours. This matter has been forwarded to management for administrative action consideration.

Interviews of EPD management also revealed a lack of available work on the second shift which contributes to employee misconduct and inefficient use of human resources. Senior EPD managers reported that they engaged in informal discussions with union officials about eliminating the second shift because of low productivity and a lack of work. However, no formal proposal has been developed to address these concerns.

Employees Slept While on Duty

OI also assisted the Uniformed Police Branch (UPB) in the investigation of a third shift Elevator Branch PPW who was allegedly sleeping in an electrical closet on the sixth floor. The employee admitted to sleeping in the closet for approximately four to five hours per day over the past 20 years. Subsequent to the UPB investigation, the OI identified that the subject has also worked over 1000 hours of overtime in the past five years. The UPB has transmitted a report of the investigation to GPO management for administrative action consideration.

Lastly, my office received allegations that a third shift PPW in the Paper Warehouse Section has been sleeping in the basement for the last three years (Case Number C-2010-0014). The allegation was referred to GPO management and UPB for information and action.

PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED:

To date, our investigations have identified the following:

- Plant Operations management has no general accountability for their second and third shift employees.
- There is no written policy or procedure establishing how packers are required to schedule their work.
- The unapproved and potentially unsafe schedule adopted by second shift packers could lead to an increase in work-related injuries.
- EPD supervisors knew that employees frequently took extended lunches and were absent without leave, but took no disciplinary action against them.
- The second and third shifts are potentially over-staffed, which creates the opportunity for employee misconduct, including sleeping on duty and being absent from the GPO building without leave.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The OIG recommends that GPO management consider taking the following actions for all Plant Operations shifts:

1. Establish rating criteria in Plant Operations supervisors' performance plans to hold them accountable for managing the performance and conduct of their subordinates. Those supervisors who fail to meet expectations in this area should be required to undergo remedial training and face adverse action.
2. Develop and implement policies and procedures that define how packers and other PPWs are utilized on the second and third shifts and how work is scheduled to promote effective, efficient, and safe operations and reduce or minimize overtime.
3. Require division level Superintendents to perform and document random inspections of each shift. The inspections should verify that policies and procedures are being followed and that all employees on the shift are accounted for.
4. Review staffing and productivity of the different divisions within Plant Operations, to include (a) the number of employees on all shifts, (b) the number of authorized overtime hours, (c) the productivity of each division and shift, and (d) the assignment of work between the shifts. This analysis may reveal a need to adjust shift staffing levels according to actual workloads and ways to reduce or minimize overtime.

Please provide a written response to these recommendations by January 12, 2011. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me or Matthew Elliott, Assistant Inspector for Investigations, at 2-0318.

cc: Paul Erickson, Deputy Public Printer
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