

## **ABOUT WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

### **Critical Response Associates**

#### **DEFINITION**

“Any conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive or threatening working environment through unwelcome words, actions, or physical contact.”

#### **EMPLOYER OBLIGATIONS**

- *OSHA Requirements:* “Employers can be cited for violating the ... Clause if there is a recognized hazard of workplace violence in their establishments and they do nothing to prevent or abate it.” - *OSHA 3148, 1998*
- “Each employer shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees.” -Section 5(a) of the OSHA Act

#### **AN IMPORTANT FACT**

Workplace violence can be prevented. Violence is not just an act; it is a process.

#### **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE STATISTICS \***

- The #1 security concern of U.S. Security Directors
- 7,000 homicides (2007) and approximately two million assaults and threats of violence in the workplace annually
- The fastest growing form of homicide in the country, accounting for 20% of all violent crime, and increasing over 400% over the last decade
- The # 1 cause of workplace death for women
- Homicide is #2 leading cause of death on the job for men
- 1 of 4 employees attacked, threatened, harassed verbally or physically at work annually
- Approximately 43 percent of those threatened and 24 percent of those attacked at work do not report incident
- Assaults at work cost average of 3.5 lost days at work per incident, with annual total lost wages estimated at more than \$55 million
- U.S. companies spend roughly \$36 billion per year (not including indirect costs) in the aftermath of workplace violence
- Cost to companies is estimated at \$121 billion annually
  - Includes expenses associated with lost business and productivity, litigation, medical care, psychiatric care, higher insurance rates, increased security measures, negative publicity, and loss of employees
- More than 70 percent of American workplaces do not have a formal program or policy in place to address workplace violence [National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health]

#### **OTHER FORMS OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

- Vandalism and sabotage
- Domestic violence - 74% of abused women report that some abuse occurred while at work; abusers are most likely to seek out their victims while they are at work.
- Cyber-stalking and threatening communications
- Suicides: Up 28% in the workplace last year

## **WHEN VIOLENCE TYPICALLY OCCURS**

- After adverse employment actions
- After an interactional event/conflict
- During times of extreme stress, pressure, uncertainty
- When managers take an action that is considered autocratic or inconsiderate of employees' feelings

## **TOP 5 FACTORS LEADING TO WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

1. Avoidance, denials, delays
2. Not having a threat response plan or team in place
3. Acting too hastily – relying on stopgap measures
4. Lack of employee support or participation
  - Managers not attending to aberrant behaviors
  - Employees not understanding when, how and what to report
  - Employees not understanding or trusting their company's ability to respond effectively
5. Relying on a single menu approach
  - a. There is no single profile for violence.

## **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE IN THE NEWS**

"5 Shot, 2 Killed, former Penske employee in custody" <http://www.ajc.com/news/cobb/5-shot-25-shot-2-killed-273347.html>

"Three Dead in New Mexico Office Shooting"

<http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/us/2010/07/12/nm.office.shooting.presser.krqe?iref=allsearch>

"Napa State Hospital Fined in Cal OSHA Probe"

[http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci\\_17835987?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_17835987?nclick_check=1)

"Gunman Kills 12, Wounds 31 at Fort Hood"

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/33678801/ns/us\\_news-crime\\_and\\_courts/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/33678801/ns/us_news-crime_and_courts/)

## **LINKS TO OTHER RESOURCES**

US Department of Labor - <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/workplaceviolence/index.html>

US Department of Justice/Bureau of Justice Statistics - <http://hr.blr.com/HR-news/Health-Safety/Violence-in-Workplace/DOJ-Report-Nonfatal-Workplace-Violent-Incidents-Ho/>

US Department of Agriculture - <http://www.usda.gov/news/pubs/violence/wpv.htm>

FBI - [www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/workplace-violence](http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/workplace-violence)

CDC - <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/violence/>

\*Sources: Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Study on Workplace Violence, U.S. Department of Justice, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Safe Workplace Institute, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Society for Human Resource Management, Security Director News, Institute for Crisis Management, ASIS International.