



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
Southwest Region

ORDER
SW3750.14A

Effective Date:

FEB 24 2009

SUBJ: Standard Operating Procedures for the Management of the Potential for Violence
In The Workplace

1. **Purpose of This Order.** This order establishes policies, procedures, and responsibilities for the identification and management of potential and/or actual instances of workplace violence and establishes a Regional Resource Support Group (RSG).
2. **Audience.** This order is distributed to all members of the Southwest Region FAA Regional Management Team, managers and supervisors in all divisions, directorates, staff offices and all FAA field facilities throughout the Southwest Region.
3. **Where Can I Find This Order.** You can find this order on the Directives Management System (DMS) website: https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/.
4. **What This Order Cancels.** FAA Order SW 3750.14, Standard Operating Procedures for the Management of the Potential for Violence in the Workplace, dated May 15, 1996.
5. **Background.** The potential for violence is mitigated through an approach of recognition, assessment, and informed decision making. Our goal in the Southwest Region is to provide a safe and secure work environment for our employees. All managers and supervisors have a responsibility to maintain an environment in which employees are free from direct or indirect threats of violence. Supervisors should ensure that employees understand that such threats are disruptive and could result in appropriate disciplinary action. Also, employees should be instructed to report any acts or threats of violence of which they are aware or may be the target of. This order will serve as a guide and is not intended to provide all the answers to every occurrence. In addition to stating the region's policy it will assist management officials in determining when they need to seek assistance and where within the region they can find support.
6. **Implementation.**
 - a. **Management Officials.** Management Officials, upon becoming aware of a potentially violent situation, shall assess the need for intervention by applying the guidelines that are included in this section. Management Officials shall coordinate through their supervisory chain to determine the need to notify the region's Resource Support Group (RSG). These guidelines should not preclude immediate intervention or a common-sense approach to situation management. In the event of an emergency that precludes coordination through the parent division, the Southwest Regional Operations Center shall be notified immediately. Management Officials are responsible for the following:
 - 1) **Recognize.** The emergence of threat indicators normally precedes the actual act of violence. Although a profile cannot reliably predict who will be a perpetrator of workplace violence, be it to self and/or others, it can be used with other

indicators and background information to help identify a potential problem. Management officials should become familiar with potential violent behavior, see Appendix 2. Management officials should be sensitive to extreme employee behavior and to recognize that everyone involved in a potential violent situation may experience extreme feelings of fear, anger, guilt, and/or humiliation, coupled with a sense of vulnerability and incompetence to deal with the situation. Employees shall be encouraged to use the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) when the supervisor determines that a referral will not exacerbate the situation. One of the keys to successful management of a potential violent situation is to avoid denial and address potential problems early. Appendix 3 identifies enabling behaviors that should be avoided when dealing with a potential violent employee or situation.

- 2) **Document.** Management officials should document the factual circumstances and events precipitating the emergence of a potential threat. It is important to document the basis for the threat in the event disciplinary action is necessary. Continue to document the pertinent details and conversations for as long as the situation exists. All documents shall be held in strict confidence and shall be disposed of in accordance with FAA Order 1350.15X, Records Organization, Transfer, and Destruction Standards.
 - 3) **Assess.** During the assessment process, supervisors should determine the seriousness of the situation they are dealing with. This process may require the organization to consult with a variety of specialists, both inside and outside the FAA, prior to reaching a determination. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, the target/victim's accessibility, the individual's ability to carry out a threat, thoughts/emotions predisposing toward violence versus nonviolence as a means to cope and the balance of stresses versus supports. If there is an imminent risk of violence, either to self and/or others, immediately notify local law enforcement agencies for assistance in defusing the situation.
 - 4) **Confidentiality.** All parties receiving information relative to a potentially violent individual should hold that information confidential, regardless of its source. This is paramount to provide protection for all parties. Information shall be shared on a need-to-know basis.
 - 5) **Taking Action.** At this stage, the management officials decide to either continue to monitor the situation, take corrective action, or request the assistance of the RSG through the chain of command. This decision should be made well before the threat of violence is seen as imminent to allow the RSG to assist the reporting organization in managing a potentially violent situation.
- b. **Resource Support Group (RSG).** The RSG will be convened at the request of the manager or designee from the reporting organization. The RSG will be chaired by the Director, Human Resource Management Office, ASW-10. Nucleus membership will consist of the division manager or designee from the parent division, Security and Hazardous Materials Division, ASW-700; Regional Counsel, ASW-7; Aerospace Medicine Division, ASW-300; and Central Logistics Service Area, ASW-50. The nucleus group can be expanded and tailored to meet situational demands by including other division/directorate managers or resource specialists (both internal and external to

the FAA) as deemed appropriate in each instance by the management representative of the parent division and the chair of the RSG. Functions of the various members of the RSG may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) **Chairperson, Director, Human Resource Management Office.**
 - a. Convenes the RSG at the request of the parent organization.
 - b. Coordinates and provides training and development to the RSG team, managers, and supervisors.
 - c. Coordinates the execution of all decisions.
 - d. Provides Labor relations and EAP expertise.
 - e. Provides education/training expertise for employees and leaders.
 - f. Coordinates Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD).
 - 2) **Management Representative of Parent Division Reporting Organization.**
 - a. Conducts the meeting of the RSG in managing the specific situation occurring in the field.
 - b. Responsible for providing guidance and direction to the field facility manager/supervisor.
 - 3) **Manager, Security and Hazardous Materials Division.**
 - a. Responsible for Security and Awareness Procedures.
 - b. Provides access controls, in particular in parking lots and at workstations, which are considered likely locations for workplace violence.
 - c. Responsible for Law Enforcement Coordination.
 - d. Provides Investigative/Interviewing Support.
 - e. Provides National Crime Information Center (NCIC).
 - f. Provides Suitability Determinations (Clearances).
 - g. Conducts Facility Risk/Threat/Vulnerability Assessments.
 - 4) **Regional Flight Surgeon, Aerospace Medicine Division.**
 - a. When applicable, refers an employee for psychological and/or psychiatric evaluations.
 - b. When applicable, refers an employee for additional medical evaluations.
 - c. Reviews evaluations and renders an opinion for the RSG or cognizant supervisor(s).
 - 5) **Regional Counsel.**
 - a. Provides legal counsel to the RSG on all relevant matters including potential agency liability regarding any actions proposed or taken.
 - b. Coordinates with other AGC offices, U.S. Attorney offices, and local District Attorney office when appropriate.
 - 6) **Manager, Central Logistics Service Area.**
 - a. Provides support for contracting services and equipment.
 - b. Coordinates with GSA when appropriate.
 - 7) **Regional Operations Center.** Upon notification from FAA field elements or other facilities, forwards to the management designee of the parent division any reports of potentially dangerous behavior and/or threats or acts of violence against individuals or groups of individuals located within the Southwest Region.
 - 8) **Others.** As determined by the RSG Chairman.
- c. **Employees.** Should notify their supervisor immediately of any threats of violence or violent actions made by or toward any other employee(s).

d. **Education.**

- 1) The RSG will periodically review the order and assess the ongoing training needs to maintain an effective level of awareness.
- 2) Each organizational division shall be responsible for communicating the Regional Workplace Violence Statement contained in Appendix 1 to each employee.



Teresa A. Bruner
Regional Administrator
Southwest Region

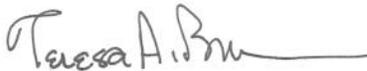
SOUTHWEST REGION WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY STATEMENT

Our goal in the Southwest Region of the Federal Aviation Administration is to provide a safe and secure workplace, free from acts or threats of violence. Violence and threatening behaviors in any form are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

As you know, threatening behavior includes harassment in the form of intimidation, whether it is written, oral, or by gesture, which communicates a direct or indirect threat of physical harm. Any individual who commits an act of violence or threatening behavior may be physically removed from the premises and may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal penalties.

Threats, assaults, or suspicious activities that require immediate attention by Security or police should be reported immediately to the Federal Protective Service, the Building Guards, or to the local police at 911. Management officials are expected to take immediate action to investigate any reported threats or violence and be familiar with strategies to reduce or eliminate the risk of workplace violence.

The cooperation of our management officials, employees, contractors and visitors is necessary to implement this policy. We must not ignore violent, threatening, harassing, or intimidating behaviors or any suspicious activities in our workplace. The Southwest Region will pursue our goal of a safe and secure workplace through awareness, education, and strategies to handle situations that may arise in our facilities and work areas. We all share the responsibility for the safety of our workplace.



Teresa A. Bruner
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STRATEGIES

1) General Strategies for Coping with Violence.

- a) Know your security division, local law enforcement and other emergency agencies.
- b) Be aware of your surroundings; who's around you, what's around you. Use your senses.
- c) Trust your instincts --- don't dismiss your fears.
- d) Discuss your concerns about violence with your colleagues. This will help lessen fear and increase awareness about how pervasive a problem violence has become.
- e) Use EAP services proactively. A prompt EAP referral might preclude an act of violence.
- f) Know the "Warning Signs of Potentially Violent Behavior" (Appendix 3).

2) Do's And Don'ts.

Do's

- Do treat threats seriously.
- Do apply consistent standards.
- Do respond in a timely manner.
- Do be sensitive to individual rights, fears, and concerns.
- Do use the system: coordinate, cooperate, communicate, and document.

Don'ts

- Don't isolate yourself and go it alone.
- Don't assume anything.
- Don't minimize or underestimate the potential danger.
- Don't over-react, become emotional, or part of the problem.

3) Specific Strategies for Coping with Violence.

Stalker. A management official should consider the following steps when an employee is being harassed by a stalker:

- Take the threat seriously.
- Coordinate with appropriate supervisory levels.
- Increase security awareness and improve security to limit the stalker's access to FAA facility and parking lot. (Consult with Security and Hazardous Materials Division).
- Advise employee to obtain a restraining order for the workplace. Keep a copy of the order at the workplace.
- Advise employee to scatter his/her work hours and entrances/exits to the building. Consider having someone accompany the employee in and out of the building.
- Coordinate a rapid response with local law enforcement. This can be initiated by the Security and Hazardous Materials Division.
- If necessary, confer with Human Resource Management Office regarding leave status and relocation issues.

4) Weapons. In accordance with FAA Order 1600 6C, Appendix 11, the carriage and possession of privately owned firearms in or on FAA-owned or leased property, including vehicles is strictly prohibited. In addition, Federal law, Title 18 United States Code, Section 930, states: Whoever knowingly possesses or causes to be present a firearm or other dangerous weapon in a Federal Facility (or attempt to do so) shall be fined or imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both. If you see or have reason to believe that an employee has a firearm in/on FAA property, which could include the parking lot, you should:

- Immediately report the incident to the nearest Security and Hazardous Materials Division office through the facility's parent division.
- Remind the employee of FAA policy.
- Order the employee to remove the firearm from FAA property.
- Consult with Labor Relations, through the facility's parent division, regarding appropriate disciplinary action for the violation of security regulations.

WARNING SIGNALS OF POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

Certainly not everyone who demonstrates one or even several of these behaviors is potentially violent. As frontline managers, you must exercise the best judgment in all of these cases. Common sense and concern for the safety of all individuals involved should be paramount in any decision you pursue.

Human behavior is unpredictable. We may never know what will "spark" abnormal behavior in an individual. However, we do know that violent behavior rarely surfaces without warning. If a pattern becomes obvious and the work of the organization is being impacted, the Labor Relations Section of the Human Resource Management Office should be contacted, through the parent division, for advice regarding intervention.

A few of the questions which need to be resolved are as follows:

- Is there a possible risk of violence, but the situation appears manageable?
- Is the perpetrator's behavior better dealt with through discipline or other corrective action?
- Is this a troubled or depressed employee best served by the EAP or private counseling?
- Has there been a violation of FAA Order 3750.4A, Conduct/Discipline Order? If so, consider the timing, appropriate action and consequences.
- Is the alleged perpetrator remorseful or willing to correct his/her inappropriate behaviors?

Note: The following lists the most common characteristics identified by numerous authors and studies of violence in the workplace.

- Non-communicative loner, with no social network
- Intimidation of others (verbal and/or physical; harassing phone calls and stalking are examples)
- Obsessive behavior
- Any destructive behavior, even if minor (such as knocking over a desk, trashing an office, smashing the time clock)
- Sudden changes in disposition, evasive or extremely personable, or out of character
- Disregard for the safety of coworkers
- Threats to harm self or others
- Has low self-esteem
- Little tolerance of others
- Coworkers feel employee is capable of committing violent acts, comment on individual being "strange," "wound too tight", "a time bomb ready to go off"
- Lies, exaggerates, overreacts consistently
- Extreme reaction to change, new policy, and/or procedures
- Moral righteousness and believing the agency is not following its rules and procedures

- Inflexible to hearing new ideas or suggestions, and may take them as criticism of their methods
- Receives minimally acceptable ratings
- Loss of job with no viable options
- Feels frustrated or stymied in job
- Low or no job satisfaction
- Inability to take criticism of job performance, holding a grudge, especially against a supervisor; oftentimes verbalizing hope for something to happen to the person against whom the employee has the grudge
- Dramatic or sudden change in quality of work, work habits, dress (one extreme or another)
- Perceived office pressures/job stress
- Blames others for failure and disappointments
- Perceived unfairness, injustice or malice in others that is not warranted
- Domestic problems (marital stress or separation)
- History of substance abuse
- History of violent episodes or criminal acts. Talks about killings/violent acts in past or as if planning
- Expression of extreme desperation over recent family, financial or personal problems
- History of violence towards females, animals, and children
- Fond of violent movies/television
- Fascination with weapons
- Carrying a concealed weapon or flashing a weapon to test reactions
- Fascination with incidents of workplace violence

ACTIONS TO AVOID

There are many things that management officials do that enable the situation and prolong an employee's problem. The following list of actions should be avoided.

- a) Covering up the employee's mistakes.
- b) Making excuses for the employee's behavior.
- c) Avoiding dealing with the problem because of the employee's gender or race.
- d) Refusing to listen to coworkers complaints about the employee.
- e) Failing to keep a written record of unusual behavior or performance problems.
- f) Excusing the employee's verbally abusive language.
- g) Attempting to provide counsel to the employee rather than referring him/her to a professional.
- h) Failing to take disciplinary action.
- i) Failing to keep EAP and Human Resource Management professionals informed of an employee's problem through proper channels.
- j) Allowing or ignoring the use of alcohol and drugs in the workplace.
- k) Attempting to handle the problem internally without accessing expert guidance.

CONTACT NUMBERS

Regional Administrator & Staff	(817) 222-5001
Regional Counsel for Southwest Region	(817) 222-5099
Human Resource Management Office	(817) 222-5810
Central Logistics Service Area	(817) 222-4301
Aircraft Certification	(817) 222-5100
Flight Standards Division	(817) 222-5200
Aerospace Medicine Division	(817) 222-5300
ATO Central Service Center	(817) 222-4000
Security & Hazardous Materials Division	(817) 222-5700
Airports Division	(817) 222-5600
EAP	(817) 222-5821
After Hours:	
Regional Operations Center	(817) 222-5006