

## BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number 02-12-202-10-105, issued to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health.

### WHY READ THE REPORT

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a performance audit of the Site-Specific Targeting (SST) program of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). In 1999, OSHA initiated the SST program – an enforcement plan intended to target general industry worksites reporting the highest injury and illness rates. The SST program selects worksites based on injury and illness rates calculated from employer responses to the annual OSHA Data Initiative (ODI) survey. From August 2010 through September 2011, 13,827 worksites met the SST program targeting criteria of which 2,146 (16 percent) were inspected.

### WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT

Our audit objectives were to answer the following:

1. To what extent did the SST program focus enforcement resources and inspections on the highest risk industries and worksites?
2. What was known about the effectiveness of OSHA's program?

We examined the SST program for the period August 2010 through September 2011 which was developed from rates using 2008 injury and illness data.

### READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full agency response, go to:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2012/02-12-202-10-105.pdf>

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## OSHA'S SITE-SPECIFIC TARGETING PROGRAM HAS LIMITATIONS ON TARGETING AND INSPECTING HIGH-RISK WORKSITES

### WHAT OIG FOUND

The SST program, to a limited extent, focused enforcement resources and targeted inspections on the highest risk industries and worksites. SST inspections excluded some of the highest risk industries and worksites where the most serious injuries and illnesses occurred because certain high-risk worksites were outside the scope of the SST program and targeted worksites were not always inspected.

Specifically, we found that 26 percent of worksites with reported severe injuries and illnesses were outside the program's scope based on their number of employees, location and/or industry. Additionally, 84 percent of targeted worksites were not inspected due to limited resources and competing local priorities and other targeting strategies. OSHA conducted SST inspections at 21 percent of SST targeted worksites. State plan states conducted SST inspections at 6 percent of worksites that met the Federal targeting criteria. As a result, the program targeted inspections to only a small portion of high-risk worksites nationwide.

Currently, the SST program is undergoing a study which is intended to evaluate the program's impact on employee safety. Meanwhile, information on program results is limited to primarily output measures such as inspections completed and citations issued.

### WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

The OIG made three recommendations to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health to: (1) include the highest risk worksites in the ODI survey and the SST program targeting; (2) prioritize and complete inspections of the highest risk worksites to ensure effective and efficient use of resources; and (3) complete the evaluation of the SST program, and implement a monitoring system to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness on an on-going basis.

In his response to the draft report, the Deputy Assistant Secretary partially agreed with our recommendations, but indicated some would require major policy changes with evaluation and supportive evidence.