

DoD Ergonomics Working Group NEWS



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Reducing Preventable Accidents

*A Challenge from Secretary of Defense
Donald Rumsfeld, 19 May 2003*

“World-class organizations do not tolerate preventable accidents. Our accident rates have increased recently, and we need to turn this situation around. I challenge all of you to reduce the number of mishaps and accident rates by at least 50% in the next two years. These goals are achievable, and will directly increase our operational readiness. We owe no less to the men and women who defend our Nation.

“I have asked the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to lead a department-wide effort to focus our accident reduction effort. I intend to be updated on our progress routinely. The USD(P&R) will provide detailed instructions in separate correspondence.”

Ask Yourself

How can an Effective Ergonomics Program at my installation address Mr. Rumsfeld’s directive to “reduce the number of mishaps and accident rates by at least 50% in the next two years”?

Implementing and maintaining an effective ergonomics program at your facility means **working smarter and safer** to—

- Prevent or control injuries and illnesses by eliminating or reducing worker exposure to work-related musculoskeletal disorder (WMSD) risk factors such as awkward postures, repetition, force, mechanical compression, duration, vibration, temperature extremes, excessive noise levels, inadequate lighting, and improper ventilation.
- Reduce the potential for fatigue, error, or unsafe acts by adapting the job and workplace to the workers’ capabilities and limitations.
- Reduce absenteeism and worker turnover.
- Increase the overall productivity and quality of the work force.
- Reduce workers’ compensation claims and associated costs.
- Improve overall unit readiness.

Ask the Experts

There are many resources available to you to meet the 50% reduction challenge—whether you need to establish an ergonomics program or enhance an existing one. For expert assistance, contact the United States Army Center for Health Promotion & Preventive Medicine (USACHHPM) Ergonomics Program: Toll-Free: 800-222-9698, ext. 3928; Commercial: 410-436-3928; DSN: 584-3928.