

implemented a Leadership Academy to refresh and improve supervisory and interpersonal skills. All of our senior managers and more than a quarter of our supervisors have completed the Academy. The remaining supervisors will complete their training by the end of the summer. So, far the attendee feedback is positive and we are confident that this investment will enable an improved working environment.

“We will continue to work on improving our climate/culture, incorporating the results of the 2006 Climate/Culture Surveys being conducted in March,” BG Lally said. “Your input is invaluable!”

“Safety is always an important part of DDC life,” BG Lally said. “We are striving for a 50 percent reduction in lost time accidents. We have seen improvement but have lots of work to do to ensure a safe working environment for all. Work safely and report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor.

“Our fourth goal emphasizes that we be good stewards of all the resources that are entrusted to us,” BG Lally said.

“Some of the facilities we inherited in 1991 were not in great shape,” BG Lally said. “The facilities you work in can affect your performance and it is important that you have world-class facilities. We have a contractor visiting every facility and developing a plan so that we know what it will take to make our facilities world-class. Unfortunately, the contractor has already found some immediate facility safety issues. The contractor is fixing the problems as he finds them.

“We are preparing to close our Columbus distribution depot, DDCO, as required by the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 2005,” BG Lally said. “Our number one commitment is to assist our impacted employees. There is a good plan and I believe this will go smoothly.

“In closing, the distribution network remains busy and productive. Your continued support is critical to making sure we have the right item at the right time going to the right place to support our Warfighters.”

## DDC Safety Program finds safety in numbers

By Lori Spiegel, DDC Command Affairs

In 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated that the high number of accidents and their associated losses in time and money were unacceptable for the Department of Defense (DOD). He then challenged all the Department’s organizations to reduce their accident numbers by 50 percent over the next two years.

As a testimony to establish safety as a priority, DLA Director VADM Keith Lippert, SC, USN, made it one of his “Top Ten List” priorities.

As a result, since fiscal year (FY)

2002, the Defense Distribution Center (DDC) reduced its total number of accidents by 30 percent and lost time cases by 19 percent, which equates to a lost time case rate of 2.88 for every 100 employees. Among the five agencies monitored by the DLA corporate board, DDC has made the most significant improvements in the reduction of lost time case

rate, which is the number of accidents due to time off work or work restrictions.

Fourteen distribution centers have now met or surpassed Secretary Rumsfeld’s goals. In fact, 12 distribution centers now have a lost time cases rate of zero. Defense Distribution Depot Barstow,

Calif. (DDBC); Defense Distribution Depot Columbus, Ohio (DDCO); and Defense Distribution Depot Warner Robins, Ga. (DDWG), have not had a lost time injury during the last four years.

Defense Distribution Depot Yokosuka, Japan (DDYJ), was the first large distribution center to achieve a global lost time case rate of less than 1.0 in FY 2002. Since then, it has extended its record to a fourth consecutive year.

In FY 2004, DDYJ was joined by Defense Distribution Depot Oklahoma City, Okla. (DDOO), which now has recorded its second year below 1.0. Defense Distribution Depot Norfolk, Va. (DDNV), has reduced its lost time accident rate by 78 percent since FY 2002.

“The key to the success of the depots



**LIFTING:** Ergonomics is a key safety focus throughout DDC and accounts for nearly half of all accidents associated with lost time and money.

is the focus of safety from the commanders and deputy commanders,” according to DLA Enterprise Support (DES)-DDC Safety Manager Dave Mack. “They hold their employees accountable for performing their jobs in a safe and productive manner.”

During audits in FY 2005, the DDC Safety Team determined that the root causes

of most distribution center accidents involved inadequate procedures and improper work practices.

According to warehousing industry statistics, the most frequent lost time injuries over the last four years have been due to sprains, strains, and back

pains (66 percent); bruises (8 percent); fractures to hands and ankles (7.4 percent); cuts to fingers and hands (6.9 percent); and other (11.7 percent).

Based on accident descriptions, most injuries are due to improper lifting



**FALL PROTECTION:**  
*While working in elevated storage locations, DDC employees are required to wear Fall Protection Equipment, which includes a harness.*

of material, particularly material that is too heavy to manually handle, e.g. ergonomic issues—bending, overexertion, and repetitive motions.

And despite the decrease across DLA in workplace accidents, ergonomic issues still account for nearly half of all accidents associated with lost time and money at DDC. Consequently, three key initiatives have recently been implemented to reduce accidents throughout all 26 distribution centers.

The first initiative was established by VADM Lippert in November 2004 through the commitment to pursue the Voluntary Participation Program (VPP) safety plan sustained by Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as a means of distinguishing those facilities whose safety and health programs are among the best in the nation.

Achieving VPP status is a multi-stage process that normally requires three to five years and is the primary initiative for DDC. “VPP principles are being shared throughout DDC, and DLA has implemented completion of this program

at various locations including the five largest DDC sites with expectations to have several sites qualified for the program within the next three years,” said Mack.

The second initiative was the development of an accelerated Experiential Training Program that captivates participants in an immersive three-dimensional Stereoscopic environment and motivates them to

work and live safely, implemented in June 2005. The video, called “It’s All About Choices,” was filmed at DDJC and DDSP and uses real-life situations found in warehousing operations. To date, more than 4,000 employees have attended this new style of video training.

The third initiative is to increase ergonomic awareness and training along with encouraging the development of an Ergonomics Improvement Team that will monitor and manage problems from a production standpoint. The U.S.

Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, or USACHPPM, is currently developing training courses in support of this initiative.



**FORKLIFT:**  
*Material Handling Equipment safety at DDC includes pre-operation safety checks, safe running speeds, and the use of a seatbelt while operating a forklift.*

“DDC is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees with a focus on safety awareness, holding employees accountable for their own safety, and rewarding individuals for following safe work practices,”

said Mack. As a testimony to the focus on safety, DDC will recognize those distribution centers that have achieved lost time accident goals at an upcoming DDC Leadership Conference.

By FY 2008, DOD will further increase its reduction goal in associated losses in time and money goal by 75 percent. With multiple initiatives in place, the DDC Safety Program will “find safety in numbers” as it strives to meet or exceed the new goal.

