

Cal/OSHA Fact Sheet – January 2004

Staffing issue

Category	1980	March 1994	Nov 2001	July 2003	January 2004
Civilian Labor Force	11,607,000	15,404,900	17,285,600	17,661,000	17,682,000 (December 2003)
Number of workplaces	500,400	877,629	1,075,523	1,062,775 (January 2003, latest available)	1,140,971 (March 2003, latest available)
Federal OSHA benchmark	805 inspectors	198 inspectors*	198 inspectors*	198 inspectors*	198 inspectors*
Actual number of DOSH field inspectors	Not available	186 inspectors	200.5 inspectors	182 inspectors	176.5 inspectors**
Ratio: inspector to workers	1 inspector for 14,419 workers (benchmark)	1 inspector for 82,822 workers	1 inspector for 86,212 workers	1 inspector for 97,038 workers	1 inspector for 100,181 workers
Ratio: inspector to workplace	1 inspector for 622 worksites (benchmark)	1 inspector for 4,718 worksites	1 inspector for 5,364 worksites	1 inspector for 5,839 worksites	1 inspector for 6,464 worksites

* = Federal OSHA approved a Cal/OSHA proposal to reduce the staffing benchmarks to 198 compliance officers from 805 officers. (Federal Register, 59:14584-14586, March 29, 1994).

** = Total does not include 7 inspectors on long term leaves who are not available to make field inspections.

In addition to the 176.5 actual field inspectors in January 2004, Cal/OSHA had 13 vacant inspector positions (8 safety engineer and 5 industrial hygienist positions). There is a hiring freeze which prevents these vacant positions from being filled and they are likely to be permanently abolished in the next budget cut. During calendar 2003, 24 field inspector positions (8 safety engineer and 16 industrial hygiene positions) were permanently abolished due to the state fiscal crisis.

If the 1980 Federal OSHA benchmark ratios were applied in 2004, Cal/OSHA should have between 1,179 and 1,826 inspectors for ratios of 1 inspector to 15,000 workers and 625 workplaces. The agency has 176.5 inspectors actually at work in the field in January 2004. Of these field inspectors, in August 2003, only 29 were fluent in a language other than English – 20 in Spanish, 3 in Mandarin Chinese, 2 in Cantonese Chinese, 2 in Korean, 1 in Arabic, and 1 fluent in both Korean and Japanese. The non-English speaking workforce in California is estimated to be more than 6 million workers.

In January 2004, California had 33% more Fish & Game Wardens than workplace health and safety inspectors – 234 wardens v. 176.5 inspectors.

There are continuing vacancies at the leadership levels of the agency. Former Chief Dr. John Howard left to be Director of NIOSH in July 2002. Between July 2002 and April 2003 there was no Cal/OSHA Chief. In April 2003, Len Welsh, DOSH Special Counsel for Regulatory Development, became Acting Chief, but he has not been confirmed. One of the two Deputy Chief positions – Deputy Chief for Health – has been vacant since November 2000. The last time Cal/OSHA had the Chief and the two Deputy Chief positions filled was in October 2000.

Comparison in November 2001

Category	California	Oregon	Washington State	British Columbia
Total civilian workforce	17.2 million	1.78 million	2.55 million	1.92 million
Number of workplaces	1.07 million	99,183	217,516	170,000
Number of field inspectors	200.5	80	118	201
Ratio: inspector to worker	1 inspector for 86,212 workers	1 inspector for 22,286 workers	1 inspector for 21,655 workers	1 inspector for 9,549 workers
Ratio: inspector to workplace	1 inspector for 5,364 worksites	1 inspector for 1,239 worksites	1 inspector for 1,834 worksites	1 inspector for 845 worksites