

May 1, 2015

Dear Colleagues: The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has just released its final count of workplace fatalities for 2013 (the latest year calculated) showing California's death toll that year to be 396 — more than one worker killed every day — with 21 more fatalities than in 2012. The 2013 figure is the highest number of deaths since 2009.

Latino worker deaths in 2013 were 42% higher than the year before — 194 deaths in 2013 compared to 137 in 2012. The death rate jumped to 3.2 per 100,000 Latino workers in 2013 compared to 2.3 per 100,000 in 2012.

Meanwhile the latest available organization charts for Cal/OSHA indicate there were 184 filled field compliance officer positions in March 2015. A reduction of 4 inspectors from February 2015 reflecting continuing retirements among compliance officers.

The March 2015 tally means California had an inspector to worker ratio of 1 inspector to 102,914 workers — much worse than Fed OSHA's ratio of 1 to 59,000, Washington States' ratio of 1 to 25,000, and Oregon's ratio of 1 inspector to 22,000 workers.

The Department of Industrial Relations has a pending "Budget Change Proposal" that would add 26 field compliance officer positions over a two-year period from July 2015 to June 2017. The BCP needs to be approved by the state legislature in June as part of the 2015-16 budget. It is unclear whether the 19 vacant compliance officer positions in March 2015 will be filled, and if so, whether these positions will be in addition to or part of the 26 inspector positions in the proposed BCP.

Attached is an analysis for the pending BCP and a summary of the compliance officer staffing for March 2015.

Best to all,  
Garrett Brown

Attachments:  
March 2015 Summary Chart of CSHOs in the field  
Initial Analysis of DIR's 2015-16 BCP