



U.S. NAVY INTEGRATES U. S. AND SPANISH OSH PROGRAMS

The U.S. Naval Activities Spain (NAVACTS) and the U. S. Naval Station (NAVSTA) in Rota, Spain are guests of the Spanish government and the Spanish people. The U. S. Navy's Occupational Safety and Health management recognizes that compliance with Spain's Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Law, which went into effect in 1995, is essential to maintaining a good relationship between the two countries and with the U.S. Navy's Spanish workforce. The NAVACTS Safety Office took on the challenge and succeeded in integrating Spanish employees into the Spanish OSH program along with the Navy's Occupational Safety and Health (NAVOSH) program.

The NAVACTS Safety Office provides safety services to a port facility and an airport servicing aircraft from Navy carriers, the U.S. Airforce, and the Naval Station. It also supports fuel facilities, maintenance and other U. S. Navy operations. Approximately 70 percent of the civilian workforce of U.S. Naval Activities Spain and other Navy tenant organizations in Spain is Spanish, requiring the Navy to employ qualified Spanish safety professionals in addition to its staff of American safety professionals. It also means that safety professionals need to work closely with Spanish supervisors and their American counterparts to ensure an understanding of both Navy and Spanish OSH requirements.

Spanish OSH law requires safety professionals to be university educated and have professional licenses or certifications in safety and occupational health. These requirements were used in finding Spanish OSH professionals with the necessary experience and credentials to keep the Navy in compliance with Spanish safety and health requirements. The new Spanish OSH professionals are teamed with current Spanish NAVACTS Safety Office staff members who are also learning about Spanish OSH laws. For example, one Spanish employee of the Safety Office recently completed a university-based education program resulting in intermediate level certification in Spanish Safety and Occupational Health. Another Safety Office Spanish employee has enrolled in courses leading to professional level Spanish OSH certification.



Ignacio Rosso, Safety Engineer, conducts a safety inspection. He is enrolled in a program to become a Certified Spanish Safety Professional, Superior Level.

Each NAVACTS safety professional manages specific safety programs to protect the Navy's workforce from workplace hazards and to ensure compliance with both NAVOSH regulations and Spanish OSH laws. Based on their qualifications, Spanish safety professionals are assigned to work areas, such as Public Works and Port Operations that

have the most Spanish workers. Additionally, local national Spanish and Navy civilian Safety Office staff members work as a team to support base leadership in ensuring a safe, healthful, and OSH-compliant workplace.

Examples of how this teamwork pays off include:

- Safety training seminars and lectures are translated into Spanish to provide equivalent training for Spanish employees on Operational Risk Management (ORM), Hazardous Energy Control, Hazard Communication, Confined Space Entry, electrical safety, respiratory protection, ergonomics, and other safety training as it is developed.
- Spanish supervisors are trained to develop and conduct *toolbox safety talks* that consider risk issues as an integral part of setting up for a new work activity and in so doing help to better integrate principles of operational risk management into everyday practice in their work areas. ORM principles include accepting risk when benefits outweigh cost, accepting no unnecessary risk, and anticipating and managing risk by planning and making risk decisions at the correct level.
- Following the lead of Naval Hospital, Rota's Industrial Hygiene Department, which prepares industrial hygiene reports in English and in Spanish, the NAVACTS Safety Office provides Spanish language translations of its NAVOSH deficiency reports to supervisors with employees who read or speak only Spanish.



Antonio Grimaldi, Safety Technician/pending Spanish Safety Professional, Intermediate Level certification, translated and presented the Safety Center's ORM overview in Spanish.

Another challenge for NAVACTS was to understand, in detail, the Spanish OSH law, especially where it differs from NAVOSH requirements. A first step was translation of Spanish OSH law into English. In addition, since Spain is a member of the European Union (EU), the Spanish OSH law continues to change in response to the EU's emerging guidelines. The Navy recognized and fulfilled the need to supplement its safety and industrial hygiene staffs with Spanish OSH professionals. These professionals, including qualified Spanish staff members of the NAVACTS Safety Office, Spanish Industrial Hygiene staff and the Occupational Physician of the Naval Hospital have become the NAVSTA Rota link to compliance with Spanish law.

In meeting this challenge these professionals have:

- Coordinated Naval Station funding to contract a Spanish government certified English language translator to translate the Spanish OSH Law into English. The English translation is shared by the Safety Office, the Industrial Hygiene and Occupational Medicine Departments of the Naval Hospital, collateral duty safety officers and representatives at U. S. Naval Activities Spain, and tenant organizations' work areas.

- Consulted to the U. S. Navy's construction and public works managers regarding the opportunity to review the available safety and Spanish Government OSH compliance records



Juan Campos, Sr. Safety Specialist, and Fernando Lopez, Safety Engineer, prepare training for compliance with NAVOSH and Spanish OSH. Both men are Certified Spanish Safety Professionals, Superior Level.

and accident ratings for potential Spanish contractors to U. S. Naval Activities Spain and tenant organizations. This ensures that the contractors comply with Spanish OSH laws by providing their employees with safe and healthful working conditions.

- Scheduled OSH training of Safety Delegates who are collateral duty safety representatives selected by organized labor or by employees as required by Spanish OSH law.

- Prepared and presented training on both NAVOSH and Spanish OSH concerns to all Spanish employees and supervisors in Spanish and to English speaking U.S. service members and civilians in English.

NAVACTS' successful integration of Spanish employees of the U. S. Navy into the NAVOSH Program while complying with the requirements of Spanish OSH law is the result of the dedication of the Spanish and American staff of the NAVACTS Safety Office, the Naval Hospital's Industrial Hygiene and Occupational Medicine Departments, and Navy management throughout NAVACTS. Of particular note is the leadership commitment to safety of the Naval Station Supply Officer, Public Works Officer and the Public Works Department Production Group Superintendent. These forward thinking leaders made it possible to integrate both sets of OSH requirements for the protection of the Navy's Spanish and American employees from workplace hazards.

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