

# Tips for Preparing for an OSHA On-Site VPP Evaluation

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) verifies the effectiveness of your safety management system (SMS) through an on-site Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) evaluation.

Once you submit your OSHA VPP application and OSHA approves it, your OSHA VPP Regional Manager schedules an on-site assessment – on average, on-site evaluations last four (4) days. The evaluation team has a lot to review, so planning is crucial to the efficiency of the visit. Remember, this is your first impression to the assessment team! Use the tips provided in this document to prepare for a successful OSHA VPP on-site evaluation.



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- Contact the OSHA VPP Regional Manager to discuss visit expectations, verify dates, identify the team members, swap personal information, and discuss documentation preferences (electronic vs. hardcopy)
- Draft an agenda for the week
- Arrange for site access, including badges, vehicle passes, and parking
  - Provide badges and passes to the team upon arrival
  - Keep in mind some of the team members may not have Common Access Cards
- Arrange meeting rooms for the opening conference and closing conference
- Add the opening conference and closing conference to leaders' calendars
- Put together your opening conference
- Identify speakers and working lunch presentation topics/exercises
- Conduct dry runs of the opening conference and working lunch presentations prior to the on-site evaluation
- Prepare a private work room suitable for the team to work in, with:
  - Table space, chairs, and outlets or power strips for laptops
  - Access to coffee, water, soft drinks, snacks, and restrooms

## Think about your opening conference! Consider including these items:

- Visitor safety briefing
- Leadership introductions
- Site mission
- Workforce composition (number of civilians, contractors, and military personnel)
- VPP efforts and impacts of VPP on your organization
- Best practices and opportunities for improvements
- Allow the assessment team to introduce themselves

**Have your civilian employees lead the discussions on VPP efforts, impacts, and best practices!**

- Prepare a roster of all employee names and job titles (for formal interview selection)
- Gather and organize S&H documents that support your SMS
  - Ensure documents are readily accessible, organized, and placed in the team’s work room
  - For a list of potential documents, contact the SMCX for a Documentation Checklist
- Set aside private rooms for formal interviews
  - Plan a private room for each team member
  - Plan 20–30 minutes for each interview



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- Arrange a site windshield tour on the first day of the visit
- Process requests to ensure the team has access to personnel, facilities, and documents, including photo permits
- Assign escorts to take team members to each location and take notes and pictures of findings
- Create a Tiger Team to help address and correct findings, provide status updates regarding the correction of findings, and keep formal interviews on track
  - Consider having maintenance personnel as part of this team to correct physical findings
- Have supervisors on standby to introduce themselves when the team enters their work area
- Make sure key stakeholders are available during the site visit – some key stakeholders include:

Leadership Members	Industrial Hygiene	Safety Office Staff
Union Representatives	Occupational Health	Emergency Management
Safety Committee Members	Contracting Personnel	Preventive Maintenance
Budgeting Staff	Human Resources	Training Management

- Plan for daily informal debriefs to recap the events of each day and discuss the status of corrective actions from identified findings
- Reach out to mentors for guidance; they can help answer your questions or conduct mock evaluations

For additional information on the SMCX’s services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smscx.org/>.