**Introduction**

MDB promotes a safe environment for all workers through research, analysis, and information dissemination. For more than a decade, MDB has supported the development of educational materials, shaped training policy, and provided technical expertise in support of NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP). This program funds non-profit organizations in developing and delivering training to workers who handle hazardous waste or respond to emergency releases of hazardous material. MDB is especially known for its extensive work in the fields of public and environmental health and worker safety.

MDB has supported the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in their safety and health-related activities.

**MDB’s Worker Safety and Health Services**

Highlights of MDB’s efforts to protect workers and improve understanding of occupational health needs include the following:

- Facilitating the dissemination of technical information related to the development of safety and health training.
- Shaping agendas and developing reports to provide policy recommendations to promote worker safety.
- Developing curricula and educational materials for safety and health training programs.
- Developing, analyzing, and compiling research products to enhance on-going initiatives, support new training initiatives, and the continuation of program efficiency.
- Arranging, managing, and documenting technical meetings and workshops associated with training for hazardous waste workers and emergency responders.

**Project Description: Safety Climate Activity Sheets**

MDB created a set of “how-to” activity sheets focusing on the promotion of workplace safety culture and climate on construction sites. By fostering partnerships with managers and workers, “safety culture” and “safety climate” focus on promoting a positive jobsite safety atmosphere to ensure that jobsite hazards are eliminated, or at least minimized to the maximum extent.

The primary goal of this project was to affect positive culture and climate on construction worksites by providing guidance to construction stakeholders. These activity sheets aim to positively affect safety culture “indicators,” which include management commitment, employee involvement and empowerment, and safety-based accountability.

MDB has been responsible for developing content, design, and layout for these safety climate activity sheets. These materials were then shared with end-users and our staff incorporated feedback.
Project Description: Gulf Responder Resilience Program

Through our work with WTP at NIEHS, MDB is providing services to develop a behavioral health resilience curriculum for disaster workers. This effort has been accomplished in partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The project included three phases. For Phase 1, MDB facilitated a stakeholder meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. Stakeholders from federal, state, and local governments, academia, community organizations, and responders provided input into the behavioral health issues faced by Gulf responders and their families following the Deep Water Horizon oil spill.

For Phase 2, MDB facilitated another meeting of stakeholders in Biloxi, Mississippi, to discuss the approach to curriculum development. A separate meeting of behavioral health subject matter experts was convened in Washington, DC to gather their input.

Phase 3 included the development of training materials for workers. Pilot testing and evaluation of the curriculum for workers, held in conjunction with a local university and non-profit organization, took place in the Gulf region. Additional pilot tests occurred in New York with groups impacted by Hurricane Sandy. MDB is also developing curriculum for supervisors and care providers.

Project Description: Disaster Research Response Project

MDB is supporting efforts to ensure that research responders receive proper safety and health training prior to entering a disaster site. During a recent project held in Los Angeles, we supported a table-top training exercise for local, state, and federal responders, as well as NIEHS training and research grantees.

This exercise explored the interaction between traditional emergency responders and those performing research into health exposures. It further trained participants to explore – and respond to – the health risks, and impacts associated with disasters. This work will provide clinical environmental health research – a current gap in our nation’s disaster preparedness. Related to this project, MDB provided support for the coordination of the ‘Disaster Research Response Workshop,’ held at the NIH Campus in Bethesda, which was co-hosted by NIEHS and the Institutes of Medicine (IOM).

Additional Projects

ASSESSING TRAINING NEEDS

After the horrific attacks on September 11, 2001, MDB consultants were the first to evaluate and report the training needs of workers at Ground Zero. The findings of this report and subsequent WMD workshops sponsored by NIEHS were reported in major trade dailies and national newspapers.

Two national technical workshops have been organized by the NIEHS WTP and MDB on the worker health, safety, and training implications of this disaster and subsequent responses to large-scale attacks. A third workshop was held in conjunction with Johns Hopkins University and NIOSH, focusing on worker training needs.

IMPROVING DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

MDB produced Safety Awareness for Responders booklets for the NIEHS WTP, including “Safety and Health Awareness for Oil Spill Cleanup Workers,” “Protecting Yourself from Avian Influenza,” “Protecting Yourself While Responding to Earthquakes,” and “Protecting Yourself While Responding to Hurricanes.”
These booklets were produced in English, and many were translated into Spanish and Vietnamese.

COMMUNICATION

Since 2000, MDB has operated the National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health Training. The Clearinghouse website is the go-to website for worker safety and health information on hazardous materials, emergency preparedness, and emergency response. This database-driven dynamic website is designed to hold many different types of documents, currently 564 curricula materials and 1,521 health and safety documents. We’re working with our client to plan a major redesign for 2015.

MDB also produced a report documenting the projects and activities of WTP awardees who received American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds. To document the accomplishments, best practices, and lessons learned from activities and programs funded by ARRA, structured interviews were conducted with awardees. Each success story is presented, along with engaging photos of training activities, in a 40-page document “Training for Recovery: Accomplishments under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funding.” A companion video highlighting success stories was also produced.

MDB also manages the weekly eNewsbrief, a unique resource for staying abreast on issues surrounding worker safety, health, and training.

MEETING SUPPORT

MDB provides support in the planning and facilitation of NIEHS WTP workshops. After facilitating the workshops, the Clearinghouse documents its proceedings in a workshop report. Many of the essential NIEHS Worker Safety and Health Training documents are products of this workshop process.

To orchestrate high-quality meetings, MDB’s staff includes an Events Planner, who has been formally recognized as a Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) by the Convention Industry Council. As a whole, MDB applies its professional corporate culture to all of the logistical and administrative aspects of meeting planning and facilitation. By developing detailed timelines, tasking assignments, and adhering to strategic quality control and quality assurance, MDB has mastered the execution of meetings, from pre-meeting preparations to on-site support to post-meeting follow-up.