

PORT OF PORTLAND

AOS Training Program Evaluation

An On-the-Job Behavioral Assessment

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AOS Training Program Evaluation

Executive Summary

Airport Operations Supervisors (AOSes) are at the core of Portland International Airport's (PDX's) new operational model. The AOS position was created in 2007 to help meet challenges of increased traveler volume and high customer service standards in an ever more complex environment. This document is an evaluation of the training program the Port of Portland developed to support the new position.

The training program was developed over the summer of 2007 and consists of slide presentations, certification exams, tours, tabletops, and on-the-job training supporting twenty-eight objectives. Program delivery started in late August 2007 and continued through February of 2008, with twelve participants, eleven of which attained certification.

From the trainees' point of view, the (AOS) training program was a success. The team of AOSes reported capability gains in all twenty-eight of the core objectives targeted by the training program.

The AOS training program was also a success from the stakeholders' point of view. Surveyed observers, both Port employees and non-Port employees, also credited the training program with AOS capability gains in all twenty-eight of the core objectives.

Other data also point to the success of the AOS training program. Airfield management has observed a significant reduction in calls relating to inconsistencies that required intervention: the volume of such calls has dropped from approximately one per week to approximately one per month.

Interviews of both AOSes and observers revealed opportunities for improving the training program. More than twenty-five groups of opportunities were identified by interviews. The two categories that received the most attention were:

- The type and depth of on-the-job training
- Refining and training the role of AOSes in PDX operations

Evaluation Method

The training program evaluation was a Kirkpatrick Level 3 evaluation with four components that were intended to reveal the affect of training on on-the-job behavior:

- A survey of AOSes who completed the training program
- One-on-one interviews with every active AOS
- A survey of airport workers (from inside and outside the Port of Portland) who observed AOSes on the job, and
- A discussion forum in which survey participants gave more detailed feedback in person.

The bulk of the evaluation occurred in June 2008, the data analysis occurring in July 2008.

The intention of a Kirkpatrick Level 3 evaluation is to understand if training changed on-the-job behaviors. In the case of the AOS Training Program, objectives of each training module were formulated as on-the-job behaviors. In total, the Program attempted to change twenty-eight behaviors and these twenty-eight objectives for the basis for the evaluation.

Three separate surveys were developed:

- Type A was intended for AOSes and evaluated capability changes as a result of training, the impact of various training modes used in the program, the time spent training each outcome, and the impact of instructors on on-the-job capability.
- Type B was targeted at AOS observers and evaluated capability changes as a result of training. It included all intended program objectives.
- Type C was targeted at AOS observers and evaluated capability changes as a result of training. It was a truncated version of Type B, excluding Snow/Ice and Wildlife objectives.

Survey questions are detailed in Appendix A, which also indicates which questions were used in survey Type A, Type B and Type C.

The survey response rate was remarkably high. Summary response rates are shown in Table 1. The 125% response rate for Survey C indicates electronic redistribution of the survey to a broader audience. This same phenomenon may have occurred with Survey B and may indicate that the larger PDX audience considers the AOS program to be of high importance.

Table 1. Response for AOS Training Program evaluation surveys.

Type	Target Group	Distributed	Returned	Percent Complete
A	AOS	11	9	82%
B	Port and Non-Port Observers	17	15	88%
C	Port Observers	8	10	125%
Total		36	34	94%

Trainee Viewpoint

From a trainee perspective, the AOS training program was a success. Every individual felt prepared for the job by the time training was complete. Fully 81% felt well equipped or better for their duties.

Training for terminal operations had the largest impact on AOS trainees. As a group, AOSes reported significant change in capability for all three major behavioral objectives. Every AOS respondent reported an improvement of their capability to report terminal inspection discrepancies for resolution.

Wildlife training had the least overall impact on AOS trainees. Nearly half of the survey respondents felt the training made no change to their abilities with regard to the core