

**Well Workplace Award  
Executive Summary**

**Saft America Inc.**  
**Bronze Award**

Information in this publication is carefully reviewed for accuracy. Questions, comments, or ideas are welcome. Please direct to Dr. David Hunnicutt, Executive Editor, at the address below.

Information may not be reproduced, copied, cited, or circulated in any printed or electronic form without written permission from the publisher. ©2004 Wellness Councils of America, 9802 Nicholas Street, Suite 315, Omaha, NE 68114; Phone: (402) 827-3590; Fax: (402)827-3594; visit our website at [www.welcoa.org](http://www.welcoa.org).

All rights reserved. Information contained in this document was accurate at the time the award was designated. Due to changing business environments information is subject to change without notification.



**WELLNESS COUNCILS  
OF AMERICA**

©2004

## General Information

### WELL WORKPLACE

Bronze Application

#### Basic Information

Name of Organization: Saft America Inc.

Address of Organization:

Council Affiliation: WELCOA

Contact Person: Bob Kenny

Title: Training/Wellness Manager

Work Phone:

Fax Number:

E-Mail Address:

Alternate Contact: Syd Reames

Parent Organization: Doughty - Hanson

Number of Sites Covered by this Application: 1

Nature of Business or Industry: Manufacturing

Name of CEO: Peter Denoncourt

Date of Application: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004

## Preface

### Organizational and Program Background

#### **Narrative**

Saft America Inc. was founded in 1971, and in 1975 the company moved its corporate headquarters from New Jersey to Valdosta, GA. Saft America's Inc. current organizational structure encompasses three product lines, Aviation, Rail, and Tele Com Batteries. Currently, this Valdosta Georgia site employs 256 employees. 127 of these employees work in the manufacturing of batteries and 129 are administrative personnel. Peter Denoncourt is the acting V.P. of Manufacturing.

Saft America Inc. is a subsidiary of S.A., a France-based company with annual sales of \$700 million, which is one of the world's largest designers and manufacturers of batteries and power systems. The company's extensive product portfolio serves vital power-supply and power-management requirements in all sections of industry, transportations, telecommunications and portable information's systems where high technology plays a key role. Saft operates in 25 countries throughout Europe, North and South America, Southeast Asia, Japan and Australia, and employs more than 4,200 people worldwide. Saft S.A., in turn is a subsidiary of Doughty – Hanson, a British-based investment firm.

With our headquarters being here in Valdosta, Georgia, Saft America Inc. employs approximately 600 people through the United States and Canada. Saft has more than 450,000 square feet of manufacturing, sales, and office space in its six operations.

## **Wellness Initiative**

For many years, Saft Valdosta has been a leader in the community when it comes to Wellness related programs such as Red Cross Blood Drives, local Corporate Cup Challenges, Health/Fitness Programs, and the support of local youth sports. With rising cost in the area of benefits and an ageing workforce, Saft realized a true need for improving the overall health of its workforce.

Saft partnered with the Lowndes County Partnership for Health in 2001 in an effort to change the wellness behavior of its employees. With support from management, Saft offered Weight Loss Programs and provided free Health Screenings on a regular basis. Participation and interest in the company offered health programs proved to be more than expected. Saft continued to endorse these programs by allowing employees to participate in these events, even at work and offering discounts in local fitness programs. The Wellness team meets regularly to review the health program and to find new ways to offer exciting health ideas to its employees.

## **Vision and Mission Statements**

### **Saft America Inc. Vision Statement**

Our customers will simply prefer to do business with Saft America Inc. Our customers and competitors will recognize Saft America Inc. unquestioned leadership in offering the best quality, customer service and product value in the industry. All of our employees share this purpose. They consistently demonstrate excellence in performance and personal involvement in the business process. Our group's successes will create challenging responsibilities, rewarding careers, and enjoyable, safe, stable work environment.

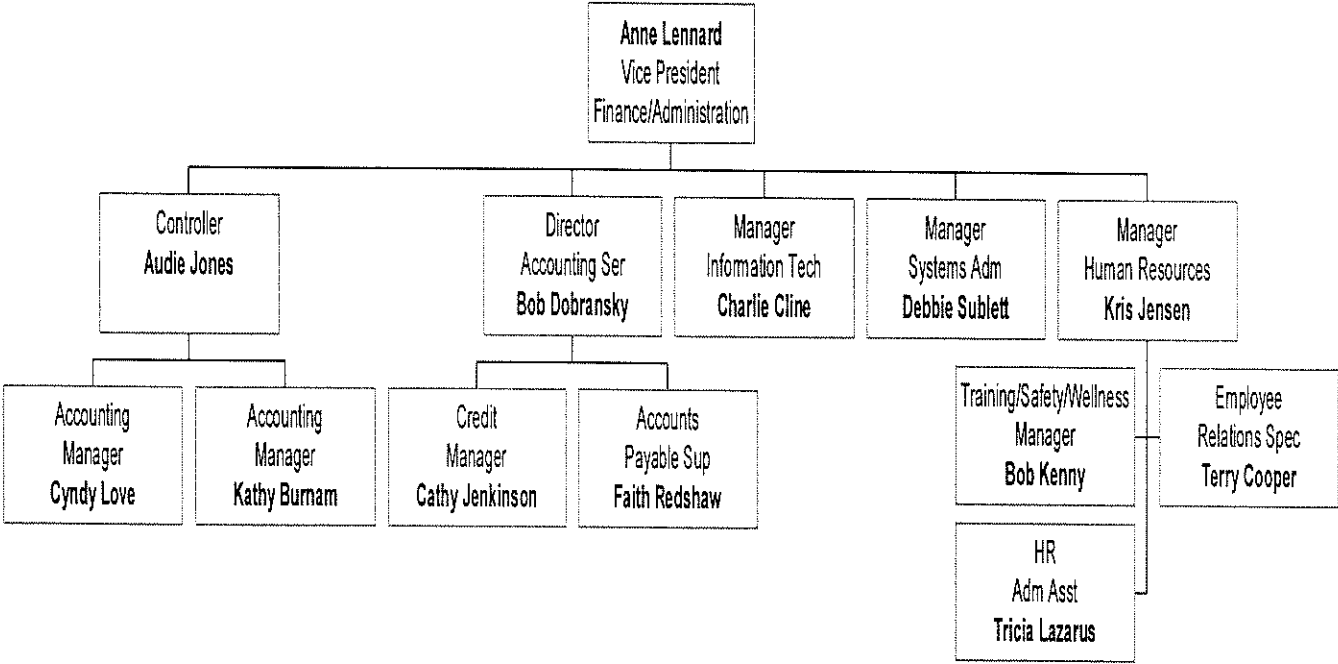
### **Wellness Program Vision Statement**

Provide a balanced and proactive program to employees that will improve their individual health and health behavior patterns and produce tangible improvements in their use of health care services, reduce health-related costs, and enhance their personal well-being.

### **Wellness program Mission Statement**

Promote a safe and healthy work environment and promote long-term health betterment.

# Organizational Chart



## **Benchmark Initiatives**

### **Senior Level Support**

No good program will ever succeed without senior level support. This is why the Wellness Committee asked our Corporate Sales Director—Syd Reames to represent and lead our Wellness Program here at Saft Valdosta. Syd is also a member of the Site Committee having a lead role on corporate decisions and policy changes. With this support, we strongly feel that our Wellness Program will receive the finance and support needed to improve the overall health and wellness of all of our employees.

### **Cohesive Wellness Teams**

After selecting employees from several areas of our manufacturing facility, Saft America Inc. has achieved a well-balanced Wellness Committee who meets regularly to discuss issues concerning health and wellness for all of our employees and families. Each member shares an equal voice when bringing to the table suggestions for events and programs. Minutes from these meeting are typed in a standard format and distributed to all members in a timely manner. The Team Leader maintains a binder with historical data for all meetings. The team's effectiveness is noteworthy from the several successful programs which have been implemented over the past three years. In an effort to maintain true representation in the committee for all employees at Saft, members are asked to rotate from time to time. This allows equal opportunity for those who wish to serve on the committee and be involved in decision making health and wellness events.

### **Program Data Collection**

Data collection at Saft consists of compiling data by several methods. First, all employees were giving the opportunity to participate in health risk appraisals. The

majority of employees responded to this survey with enthusiasm. Another means of collecting data is through our plant-wide Safety Audits. Our well-established Safety committee routinely monitors each area in our manufacturing organization to offer improvements in machine safety and ergonomics factors. Furthermore, the company also offers a suggestion program to all employees to provide a means to make recommendations to top management. With several different types of data collection available, Saft feels that a concrete data collection program is well imbedded in our infrastructure.

### **Operating Plan**

A well-understood and workable operating plan is the foundation to any program's future success. The Wellness Team at Saft America is structure around a well maintained and easy to understand operating plan. The team reviews and updates the plan regularly. The plan is viewed as a "roadmap to better health".

### **Programs and Interventions**

Most all health and wellness programs at Saft America Inc. have resulted in measurable results. Feedback from the workforce indicates that these programs are beneficial in assisting employees and family members with a healthier lifestyle. Though behavior change is always the toughest, the company continues to reiterate health awareness throughout the entire manufacturing facility on a routinely basis. We feel the overlap of knowledge is reaching well beyond our employees. With family programs offered at local fitness centers, check stuffers with wellness facts, and newsletters that go home with the employees, we feel the overall health of our employees will improve exponentially.

## **Supportive Environment**

Saft America Inc. fosters a well supportive environment when health and wellness is concerned. From providing a smoke free work place to requiring forklift operators to wear seat belts at all times, employees are constantly reminded that Saft is supportive in maintaining their betterment for a healthier lifestyle. The company also screens all new employees with pre-employment drug and alcohol test to send a strong message to its employees and the local community that we are serious about maintaining a well work place. Being a leader in the local employment community, Saft America Inc. offers numerous health and wellness benefits to all employees. Some of these benefits are offered free of charge and others at a very reasonable rate.

## **Evaluation**

As a means to measure the effectiveness of our health and wellness program, the Wellness Committee consistently evaluates results. From tracking participants in Walk Challenges to offering feed back sessions at all employee meeting, we continue to find a means to improve all programs so each and every employee is offered a change to participate. We feel that the current evaluation process is very effective and will ultimately provide success to our Wellness Program.

## **Individual Bibliography**

One of the company's true leaders who is responsible for the success of the Health and Wellness initiatives at Saft America Inc. is the Human Resources Manager, Kris Jensen. Kris relocated to our area in April of 1999. He brought with him his Wife and three daughters from Canada. Since his tenure at Saft, Kris has fostered several health and wellness programs at this manufacturing organization. Living a healthy lifestyle, Kris acts as a role model to all of the employees by not only being a long-standing active member at the local physical fitness facility, but also demonstrating a dedicative effort to the health betterment of Saft employees and their families.

## **Unique Strengths of the Wellness Initiative**

### **Management**

One of the first and foremost unique strengths of the Wellness Initiative at Saft America Inc. is Management support. The company is historically supportive in offering to its employees several internal local health and wellness programs. In addition to caring for its employees, Saft also realizes the potential savings in employee turn over rates and reduced medical cost when the employees live and practice a healthier lifestyle. Listed below are some of the numerous programs that are traditionally supported by Saft management. Normally there are 3—4 blood drives conducted at the Valdosta facility, which are sponsored by the American Red Cross. Our blood drives normally generate 20—30 pints of usable for this needy cause. Each year Saft is a proud contributing sponsor of the Relay for Life sponsored by the American Cancer Society. All employees are offered a reduced rate if they choose to participate at the local fitness center. Health and Life insurance are offered at very competitive rates to all full time employees. A well

supportive program for offering medical leaves of absences for employees and family members is currently in place that exceeds federal FMLA guidelines.

### **Enthusiasm**

When you talk to Saft employees about health and wellness programs in the work place, you will hear a very positive and energetic response. Participation in company offered programs are normally well above average for the Valdosta manufacturing facility. For example, in 2003 we conducted our first Walk Challenge. Thirteen teams of five employees each wore pedometers and recorded over 59 million steps during the two-month period. Only two months later, employees are eagerly requesting a second walking contest. Employees were walking before work in the dark with flashlights on our 1/3 mile walking track. More than 60 of our employees eagerly participated in the free flu shots that have been offered each year for the last two years. One employee reported to the Wellness manager last year "I was going to have surgery, but now I am first going to try and get in shape by eating right and walking every day".

### **Open Minded Approach**

Another unique strength that the Saft America Inc. Wellness Program possesses is an open-minded approach. Our company is continually researching new methods to solicit employee feedback for improvement in all programs including health and wellness. One such program is our Suggestion Program. This program is approaching three years in maturity now. Employees receive rewards for quality and quantity. Saft incorporates these award sessions into our Quarterly all employee meetings with emphases on supporting an open-minded approach. Our company also heavily endorses an "open door" policy when it pertains to employee communications. Employees know they have

several resources to contact concerning any issues including health and safety. There is a fair representation of the total employee population on the acting Safety Committee. Suggestions and comments concerning health and safety from these meeting are noted and responded to accordingly.

### **Most Popular Program**

Several programs are unsurpassed in being most popular with Saft America employees. The free flu shots provided by the company are very popular in the Fall each year. Employees are very attracted to the Well Workplace newsletters that are distributed each month. Often, they will notice the person who is issuing them to the various departments and stop to come over and ask, "is that the new one for this month...I want one". However, without question, the Saft Walking Challenge is the most requested, most popular health and wellness program ever offered at this company. From the participation, the total amount of steps recorded, employees seemed to enjoy this program the most. Several employees were noticed each day proudly displaying their pedometers and bragging in reference to the amount of steps that they had achieved for the day or week. The main event of our 2003 Christmas party was the announcement of the winners and distributing the prizes. First place winners each received a \$75 gift certificate.