

## Reinventing the **Annual Self-Evaluation** process for **VPPPA** members.



The Voluntary Protection Programs Participants' Association (VPPPA) is a leader in helping worksites achieve continuous improvement toward their occupational safety and health goals.

Founded in 1985, the American nonprofit has grown from 30 participants to an established community of over 2,200 member sites.

Many VPPPA members are involved, or interested in pursuing, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP).

### BACKGROUND

The VPP recognizes employers and workers in the private industry and federal agencies who have implemented effective safety and health management systems and maintain injury and illness rates below national Bureau of Labor Statistics averages for their respective industries.

To participate in the VPP, employers must submit an application and undergo a rigorous onsite evaluation by a team of safety and health professionals.

VPP participants must then submit Annual Self-Evaluations (ASEs) and are re-evaluated every three to five years to remain in the programs. Participants are exempt from OSHA inspections while they maintain their VPP status.

The existing paper-based process for submitting these ASEs was long and complex, so VPPPA partnered with AuditSoft to make the process easier.

## GOAL

To create a platform for VPP sites to complete their ASEs electronically via a *collaborative, automated, and standardized* process.



## SOLUTION

VPPPA and Auditsoft consulted with federal OSHA and OSHA officials from various states. VPPPA also met with VPP state managers to better understand their requirements for the platform.

AuditSoft developed the platform based on these insights, along with features that make the audit process collaborative, automated, and standardized:

### Collaborative

The new cloud-based platform allows for easy collaboration between 20+ team members by providing a single location for all report information and supporting documents to be uploaded and stored.

### Automated

The platform reduces calculation errors commonly seen in the self-evaluation process by automatically calculating the necessary statistics that are required for submitting the report, including injury and illness rates by NAICS code.

### Standardized

The platform standardizes the ASE by creating a consistent process to upload and deliver the information in the correct format, which can be repeated year after year.

In August of 2021, **VPP Online** was presented at VPPPA's annual national **Safety+ Conference**, to all state plan managers for their review and feedback.

The platform was also introduced to the VPP community, and a select group tested the platform for the 2022 VPP self-evaluation.

**The feedback has been great! See for yourself.**

## USER GROUP FEEDBACK

Below are responses from VPP Managers at Hunter Douglas, Reuter-Stokes, Washington Power Plant, and NuStar Energy.



*"We loved it. It worked perfectly. We loved that we could proof-read each others contributions. I could see when a new piece had been added for review. We were easily able to add PDFs, images, charts, and excel documents into the report. It worked out great for us."*



*"We really liked it. We liked that it will hold the injury and illness data and you'll only need to add in the following year. We really liked that feature."*



*"We really liked the platform. We liked that more than one person could use the platform at a time. It was really nice to be able to input information simultaneously."*



*"I loved the VPP Online platform. It was very easy to work with."*



*"We absolutely loved the VPP Online process. As you print out the report, we loved that we could see the "Linked Items" in the document that would immediately take you to that section of the report."*

*"It is probably one of the best software programs we have seen. It is very user-friendly. We love that you can go back and write something down during the year and look back on it when it is time to work on the report. It was very simple."*



*"I like this option a whole lot more than just completing a Word document."*

## RESULTS

**VPP Online** is enabling VPPPA to provide members with a much easier format for submitting their ASEs.

The tool's **24/7/365** availability is also improving the process by extending it into a year-round activity - aligning with the VPP's goal of continual improvement.

So far, a majority of the 22 State Plan States and almost half of the Federal OSHA regions have approved the platform and confirmed they will accept the report.

**The VPPPA and AuditSoft are continuing their partnership to explore how they can further support VPPPA members achieve and sustain safety excellence.**

## TESTIMONIAL



*"The VPP Online platform expands the capabilities of collaboration and will help make the experience of submitting annual self-evaluations much more seamless, saving VPP Managers and their teams hours of time compiling these reports."*

**TERRY SCHULTE, VPPPA  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**

Interested in learning more about VPPPA?  
Visit [vpppa.org](http://vpppa.org) or call 703-761-1146.



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We invite your association to explore how AuditSoft can streamline your auditing process. Get in touch with our team:



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