

**World Trade Center Health Program  
Scientific/Technical Advisory Committee**

**September 23, 2024**

**Administrator's Opening Remarks**

Good morning and welcome to the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **Scientific/Technical Advisory Committee** for the World Trade Center Health Program. I want to thank each of you for taking time from your busy schedules and to participate in the Committee to offer your advice to the Administrator.

**New STAC Members.** I want to extend a warm welcome to our new members: Drs. Alya Khan and Michele Marcus.

**New Associate Administrator.** I am also pleased to introduce CAPT Lisa Delaney, MS, CIH who has served as the Director of the Division of the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program and Deputy Administrator of the Program since February 20, 2024.

CAPT Delaney received a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Spanish in 1997 from Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, and a Master of Science degree in Environmental and Industrial Hygiene in 1999 from the University of Cincinnati. In 2004, she became a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH).

From 1999 through 2006, CAPT Delaney served as a member of NIOSH's Health Hazard Evaluation Program in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2005, she served as a temporary assignee to the Chemical Weapons Elimination Program in the National Center for Environmental Health at CDC.

In 2006, CAPT Delaney joined the NIOSH Office of the Director in the Emergency Preparedness and Response Office (EPRO). She became EPRO Deputy Director in 2010 and EPRO Associate Director in 2013. Over her career at NIOSH EPRO, CAPT Delaney has done an outstanding job in leading NIOSH's contribution to multiple emergency responses, including the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa, the East Palestine, Ohio, train derailment and toxic spill, and the multi-year COVID-19 pandemic response.

She also successfully improved NIOSH's ability to support the health and safety of response and recovery workers from public health threats through preparedness and planning efforts. Most notably she has improved the Nation's ability to successfully respond to an anthrax event by co-authoring a range of anthrax guidance and policy

documents related to worker protection, response plans, sample collection procedures, and interagency sampling strategies. I want to thank CAPT Delaney for her service to members of the World Trade Center Health Program.

**Research.** At today's meeting, as it is now customary in these meetings, Dr. Travis Kubale will provide an update on the Program's research portfolio. He will talk about initiatives that the Program has undertaken to communicate research findings, funding opportunities, and webinars and meetings, as well as efforts to increase the number of members that consent for participation in research projects.

**Youth Cohort.** During the STAC meeting that took place on June 2023, I asked the Committee to provide your input regarding the establishment of a Youth Research Cohort. The purpose of this cohort is to enable future studies on the health and educational impacts of 9/11 exposures on persons aged 21 years or younger within a certain distance of the WTC site on and after 9/11. I appreciate your previous advice regarding the project timeline and available resources, ensuring effective communications and the need for broad outreach, and the inclusion in the cohort of persons who may have received 9/11-exposure while *in utero*. Dr. Doug Daniels will provide details on the Program's progress in establishing this cohort.

**Expanded Eligibility.** I would also like to draw your attention to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2024 which amended the Zadroga Act to expand eligibility for Pentagon and Shanksville responders to include certain active duty, retired, or reserve members of the military, civilian employees of the Department of Defense (DOD) or other Federal agencies, and certain DOD or Federal contractors who responded to the Pentagon or Shanksville sites. Jessica Bilics and Catharine Hilaker will provide details on the eligibility criteria and regulatory changes that have been made to implement the new law.

**Policy and Procedures.** The STAC will also receive an update on non-substantive changes made to the *Policy and Procedures for Adding Non-Cancer Health Conditions to the List of WTC-Related Health Conditions*. These changes include a new subsection and additional information on how the literature search is conducted. It also includes language revisions to clarify the process applied by the Science Team. As none of these changes have been determined to be substantive by counsel, I am providing the *Policy and Procedures* to you for informational purposes only.

**Peer Reviewers.** Finally, as in past meetings, Dr. Carreón-Valencia and I would appreciate the STAC's suggestions of peer reviewers for proposed additions to the List of WTC-Related Health Conditions.

Thank you again for your service on the Committee and have a good meeting.

John Howard, M.D.  
Administrator