



National Institute for
Occupational Safety and Health
Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

September 13, 2007

Evaluation Committee for the NIOSH Personal Protective Technology Program Review
The National Academies
500 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Members of the Evaluation Committee:

Thank you for agreeing to assist the National Academies with the evaluation of the NIOSH Personal Protective Technology (PPT) Program. Your commitment to this evaluation process will be an important contribution to the field of personal protective technology. I commend the National Academies on its selection of you and your fellow members. Together, you have a broad mix of training and experience in occupational safety and health and related fields. I am confident your skills will serve both NIOSH and the American worker well.

You are being asked to judge the extent to which the PPT program is relevant to real workplace safety and health problems; the extent to which our science contributes to intermediate and end health and safety outcomes for workers; and the extent to which the program is adequately positioned to deal with emerging issues. Through this evaluation, we want to know where we are doing well and where we are not along with specific guidance as to how we can improve.

We know you will be guided in your review by the Framework document developed by the Committee for the Evaluation of NIOSH Research Programs. We provided input to that Committee and we believe the Framework document addresses our purposes in asking for reviews of our programs by the National Academies.

Expert judgment such as you have agreed to provide is recognized as one of the best ways to evaluate scientific research and development programs, programs which are characterized by multiple inputs, a variety of environmental forces, unpredictable partnerships, and outcomes which often take time to realize. NIOSH believes the key to the success of this evaluation is robust interaction between you and us. NIOSH realizes we must be the source for much of the data you review and we pledge to provide you with what you need in a timely manner so you can fulfill your mission.

We look forward to working with you and to using your advice and recommendations to continue to improve both the PPT program and the health and safety of workers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Howard", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and extends to the right.

John Howard, M.D.
Director



Evidence for the National Academies' Review of the

NIOSH Personal Protective Technology Program



PHOTO CREDITS

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NPPTL Historical File

Preface

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has requested the National Academies undertake a series of program reviews. The goal of this effort is to assess program relevance and impact. The NIOSH Personal Protective Technology (PPT) Program is one of the NIOSH programs chosen for review. This report has been prepared as an evidence package for use by the National Academies Evaluation Committee for review of the PPT Program.

The PPT Program has a longstanding history in NIOSH. The Program extends back to the start of NIOSH in 1972 with respirator certification activities and respiratory protection research. In 2001 the NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) was established to prevent work related injury, illness and death by advancing the state of knowledge and application of PPT. In the current NIOSH industry sector based program portfolio, PPT is a cross sector program. The PPT Program is managed and coordinated by NPPTL. For the PPT Program review the Evaluation Committee is requested to consider impact and relevance of the Program beginning with the establishment of NPPTL in 2001.

Three activities comprise the PPT Program: Research, Policy and Standards Development, and Respirator Certification. The Program defines three strategic goals:

Goal 1: Reduce Exposure to Inhalation Hazards

Goal 2: Reduce Exposure to Dermal Hazards

Goal 3: Reduce Exposure to Injury Hazards

The Program is managed to ensure its activities align with these goals while building in a sustained commitment for evaluations (quality) and research to practice by dedicating resources for these important initiatives. Diversity considerations are an integral part of Program activities since most personal protective equipment needs to interface with the diverse populations that make up the contemporary workforce in the United States and for the international community of workers.

External factors are a major influence on the Program. Terrorist events, natural disasters, the threat of pandemic influenza and mine disasters impact PPT. OSHA regulations, healthcare practices, and the policies and programs of other government agencies impact PPT. The PPT Program also is affected by political and market factors regarding occupational safety and health. The Program balances these external factors with national priorities and stakeholder interests and other planning and production inputs to plan its activities. Through its respirator certification, policy and standards development, research, outreach and evaluation programs, PPT has developed and strives to maintain a strong partner and stakeholder network. This commitment to the partners and stakeholders and awareness about external factors enables the Program to address emerging issues.

The Program uses a tactical focus with standards development organizations (SDOs). This tactic creates opportunities for Program researchers to interact with PPT users, technology developers, technology providers, government, academia and other PPT experts. SDO involvement enables researchers to both deliver and receive information concerning PPT. This involvement is useful for addressing the complex issues of technology transfer and research to practice.

Program features discussed above are presented and discussed in this report. The report is organized into five chapters.

Chapter One:	Introduction to NIOSH
Chapter Two:	NIOSH Personal Protective Technology Program Overview
Chapter Three:	Goal 1: Reduce Exposure to Inhalation Hazards
Chapter Four:	Goal 2: Reduce Exposure to Dermal Hazards
Chapter Five:	Goal 3: Reduce Exposure to Injury Hazards

Chapter One is an Introduction to NIOSH. Chapter Two discusses the PPT Program history, strategic goals, funding, staff and operational logic model. Chapters Three, Four and Five discuss the intermediate goals, associated issues, external factors, approach, outputs, intermediate outcomes, outcomes and what's next for each strategic goal.

PPT Program staff are enthusiastic and committed to preventing work related injury, illness and death by advancing the state of knowledge and application of PPT. The staff looks forward to the outcome of the evaluation and the recommendations provided by the Evaluation Committee with a high interest to further improve the NIOSH PPT Program.

Les Boord
Director, NPPTL
Program Manager, Personal Protective Technology Program

NIOSH Personal Protective Technology Program Evidence Package Table of Contents

Section	Title	Page
Chapter 1	Introduction to NIOSH	8
Chapter 2	NIOSH Personal Protective Technology Program Overview	23
Chapter 3	Strategic Goal 1: Reduce Exposure to Inhalation Hazards	71
Objective 1	Ensure the Integrity of the National Inventory of Respirators Through the Implementation of a Just-in-Time Respirator Certification Process	81
Objective 2	CBRN Respirator Standards Development	99
Objective 3	Mine Emergency Respirators/Self Contained Self Rescuers	111
Objective 4	Facial Anthropometrics and Respirator Fit	123
Objective 5	Pandemic Influenza Preparedness	135
Objective 6	Evaluate the Nanofiber-Based Fabrics and NIOSH-Certified Respirators for Respiratory Protection Against Nanoparticles	143
Objective 7	Sensor Technology Development for End of Service Life Indicators	155
Objective 8	Respirator Use Surveillance and Dissemination	161
Chapter 4	Strategic Goal 2: Reduce Exposure to Dermal Hazards	185
Objective 1	Improve Chemical/Barrier Protective Clothing Testing and Use Practices to Reduce Worker Exposure to Chemical Dermal Hazards	189
Objective 2	Improve Emergency Responder Protective Clothing to Reduce Exposure to Thermal, Biological, and Chemical Dermal Hazards	199
Objective 3	Investigate Physiological and Ergonomic Impact of Protective Ensembles on Individual Wearers in Affecting Worker Exposure to Dermal Hazards	207
Chapter 5	Strategic Goal 3: Reduce Exposure to Injury Hazards	221
Objective 1	Develop and Evaluate Warning Devices for Fire Services.	224
Appendices	Appendices_090707FinalR.pdf	

Chapter 1-Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO NIOSH.....2

1.1 OVERVIEW2

1.2 LEGISLATIVE FOUNDATIONS3

1.3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT4

1.4 RESOURCES9

1.5 PLANNING AND LOGIC MODEL.....10

1.6 OUTPUTS AND TRANSFER.....12

1.7 OUTCOMES.....13

REFERENCES.....15

List of Figures

FIGURE 1.1 - ORGANIZATIONAL COMPONENTS OF NIOSH.....5

FIGURE 1.2 - NIOSH PROGRAM PORTFOLIO.....7

FIGURE 1.3 - NIOSH OPERATIONAL LOGIC MODEL OF WORK RELATED INJURIES AND ILLNESSES11

List of Tables

TABLE 1.1 - NIOSH PROGRAM PORTFOLIO.....6

TABLE 1.2 - NIOSH BUDGET, 2001 - 2006.....9