

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)
World Trade Center Outreach and Education – Final Report

Contract/Project Number: 1E11OH010460-02 **Project Period:** 09/01/2012 – 08/31/2014

The principal investigator for this project is Patrick Morrison, Assistant to the General President for Health, Safety, and Medicine. Other project staff include Elizabeth Harman, Assistant to the General President for Grants Administration and HazMat Division; James Brinkley, Director of Occupational Health and Safety; and Theresa Gorman, Health and Safety Assistant.

Project Summary Description

Founded in 1918, the IAFF represents over 300,000 career fire fighters, emergency medical personnel, state and federal fire fighters in the United States and Canada. Through an active Healthy, Safety, and Medicine Division and collaborations with recognized experts in the field of occupational health and safety, the IAFF has become the driving force behind nearly every safety advance in the fire and emergency services. Health and safety training curricula developed by the IAFF have been successfully implemented in fire departments across the nation, affecting 335,150 career fighters and 768,150 volunteer fire fighters in the United States. The target populations for this outreach campaign are active and retired career fire fighters and emergency medical personnel who responded to the September 11th disaster in New York City. This includes FDNY members as well as fire fighters and emergency medical personnel from fire departments outside of New York who participated in rescue/recovery operations at the World Trade Center site. This also includes IAFF members who previously enrolled in the Mount Sinai World Trade Center Medical Monitoring Program but who are no longer active participants in the program.

Project Aims

The first project aim of this outreach effort was to utilize the IAFF's member-driven communication channels, including *The International Fire Fighter Magazine*, *The IAFF Leader* email newsletter, IAFF Facebook, IAFF Twitter, IAFF YouTube videos, and through our direct email notification system, to inform and educate our members about the WTC Health Program,. We have published news updates to the IAFF website regarding our outreach efforts and of the new enrollment period for responders of the Pentagon and Shanksville, PA crash sites. We also published an article in the IAFF magazine about the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund that included a special mention of the IAFF's WTC Health Program outreach campaign. In mid-

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September 2013, we sent an email announcement about the upcoming September 11th Victim Compensation Fund deadline to all active and retired IAFF members.

A second project aim was to conduct outreach presentations at IAFF national conferences, seminars, and symposia. We conducted our first outreach presentation at the IAFF Affiliate Leadership Training Summit (ALTS), held in January 2013 in Phoenix, AZ. More than 2,000 IAFF members attended this conference. The WTC Health Program presentation was attended by 10 IAFF members who were all affiliate leaders in their respective districts from different areas of the United States from Maine to California. The audience also included a representative from the FEMA Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) response teams, who were deployed to WTC site after 9/11 from various locations throughout the United States.

Our next outreach presentation took place at the IAFF Redmond Symposium on August 22nd 2013 in Denver, CO with an attendance of 1,800 IAFF members, physicians, occupational safety professionals, city managers, and fire chiefs. Dr. David Prezant from the FDNY Bureau of Health Services also took part in this presentation, which include information about the health effects of WTC responders, the importance of the WTC Health Program and the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund, and information on how to enroll in these programs. Approximately 40 people attended the presentation and all 50 WTC Health Program applications were given out. The presentation and PowerPoint slides were recorded and uploaded on the IAFF's YouTube Channel and posted on the IAFF WTC Health Program outreach website.

After the success of Redmond Symposium presentation, we were invited to California to do a similar presentation for members of IAFF Local 112, Los Angeles city fire fighters. Many Los Angeles fire fighters self-deployed to the WTC site to serve as volunteers, and some were deployed as part of FEMA USAR teams to the WTC and Pentagon crash sites. This was an important opportunity to reach out to these underserved populations, so staff traveled to Los Angeles to provide the presentation at Local 112's union hall on September 10th 2013. Over 50 active and retired IAFF members attended the presentation, and all 50 applications were handed out and more copies of the application had to be made after the meeting. The presentation slides, program application, and enrollment instructions were posted on Local 112's website for further distribution.

The IAFF also collaborated with the WTC Health Program staff and the Victim Compensation Fund for a series of outreach meetings in Arlington County, VA as part of an effort to reach Pentagon responders. IAFF staff was present for two of meetings held on August

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28th - 29th 2013 at an Arlington County firehouse and the Arlington County public library, which was open to all first responders, including police officers and federal employees.

We conducted our fifth and final outreach presentation in January 2014 at the ALTS Conference in Orlando, FL. Approximately 10 participants were present, so this became more of an informal discussion, which gave participants a chance to ask questions about the WTC Health Program, the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund and the different deadlines and enrollment criteria. Although attendance was small, we handed out all of our applications as participants were encouraged to take as many materials as they wanted back to their departments.

The IAFF's WTC Health website was launched on September 11, 2013. The layout and content were developed in coordination with WTC Health program staff and graphic designers. The website includes information on the WTC Health Program, detailed instructions on how to enroll, information on 9/11-related health effects, frequently asked questions, background information on the Zadroga Act, and an explanation of the different WTC assistance programs. The responder video testimonials, produced by the WTC Health Program staff, and the recorded information session from the Redmond Symposium, are also posted on the website. Program enrollment forms, fact sheets, and program brochures are available for viewers to download and print. We post periodic news updates to the website regarding 9/11 Victim Compensation deadlines and new health conditions that are covered by the program.

Finally, we have published our own WTC Health Program outreach flyers that we plan to distribute through upcoming IAFF conferences, seminars, the Redmond Health and Safety symposia, and briefing sessions held at our IAFF Affiliate Leadership Training Summit after the grant period has ended. Working with the WTC Health Program staff and the IAFF communications department, we designed a co-branded fact sheet that follows the WTC Health Program style guidelines and features fire fighter-specific information for our members.

Project Evaluation

In order to estimate the number of people reached through the IAFF's nationwide outreach campaign, we kept track of the number of attendees at the outreach presentations, the number of materials distributed during our events and number of website visits on our WTC website. The IAFF Facebook page has over 100,000 Likes and the IAFF Twitter account has roughly 18,000 followers. The WTC-related news stories published on the IAFF homepage

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potentially reached 400,000 people, based on the average number of visits per month to the website. The WTC article published in the IAFF magazine was distributed to over 380,000 subscribers. As of July 2014, the IAFF WTC website has received a total of 3,849 visitors and 7,975 page views since it was launched in September 2013. The website averages 12 unique visitors per day. The most downloaded file from the website was the program brochure for Pentagon/Shanksville responders with 117 downloads. The NYC Responder enrollment form was downloaded 69 times. The FDNY Responder form and the Shanksville/Pentagon Responder enrollment forms were downloaded 67 and 81 times, respectively.

More than 50 enrollment forms were handed out during the WTC outreach presentation at ALTS in January 2013, and marked with “IAFF” to allow the WTC Health Program data center to track IAFF member enrollment. Attendees of this presentation included the IAFF 1st District Vice President, representing 18,000 IAFF members from New York and 3,100 IAFF members from New Jersey; the president of the Professional Fire Fighters of Maine representing 1,000 IAFF members; and the president of our Los Angeles County local representing 3,600 IAFF members. Another 50 enrollment forms were handed out at each of the following presentations: Redmond presentation in August 2013, Los Angeles presentation in September 2013, and the ALTS Conference in January 2014.

With the exception of our presentation in Los Angeles, our outreach presentations did not result in any of our IAFF-marked enrollment forms being submitted to the WTC Health Program. It is possible that some members downloaded the form on their own and mailed it in, or that those in attendance were already enrolled in the program, but we have no way of tracking this information. After our September outreach presentation in Los Angeles, 18 IAFF-marked applications were mailed to the WTC Health Program.

There has been an increase in enrollment activity in the WTC Health Program since the launch of the IAFF WTC website in September 2013. Two hundred enrollment applications were received by the Program from January 2013 – August 2013. After the launch of our website, that number increased to 826 applications received from September 2013 – November 2013. Similarly, the number of applications accepted for enrollment in the Program from January 2013 – August 2013 was 160 applications, and increased to 553 applications enrolled from September 2013 – November 2013. This increase in enrollment activity is most likely to

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due to a combination of increased outreach activities by the IAFF and other grant awardees commemorating the anniversary of the September 11th attacks.

Data Collection and Management Plan

For each IAFF WTC outreach presentation, information is collected on the number of enrollment forms and fact sheets handed out, the number of presentation attendees, the number of IAFF affiliate leaders in attendance along with how many IAFF members they represent, and feedback received from attendees. Enrollment applications that are given out at all IAFF outreach presentations are marked with “IAFF” and include the name of the event where it was distributed. The WTC Health Program enrollment team reports to the IAFF if they receive any application with our name on it so that we may track the success of our outreach efforts.

The information on the IAFF WTC outreach website reflects the suggestions and feedback we received at our outreach presentations. We have added more detailed information, based on questions received during our presentations, regarding supporting documentation and information on the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund. We have also published news updates to clarify the different upcoming deadlines for the Victim Compensation Fund. We also publish periodic news updates regarding upcoming deadlines for the Victim Compensation Fund and changes to the cancer coverage for the WTC Health Program. We will continue to update our website beyond the period of performance so that it remains an important source of timely information for our members.

Lessons Learned

Through our outreach presentation in January 2013, we learned that we should also target the FEMA USAR response teams who reported to the WTC site from locations throughout the United States, and responders who worked at the Pentagon and Shanksville crash sites. These responders were not eligible for the initial WTC Medical Monitoring program established by Mount Sinai Hospital, and therefore may not be aware they now eligible for the WTC Health Program. We focused our outreach efforts on events outside the New York area and conducted presentations at our national conferences in Phoenix, AZ and Denver CO, and traveled to Los

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Angeles, CA and Arlington VA in attempt to reach both USAR responders and responders from outside the New York area who worked at the Pentagon.

We learned that there is ongoing confusion about the differences between the WTC Health Program, the Mount Sinai Medical Monitoring Program, the FDNY WTC Medical Monitoring Program, and the WTC Health Registry. Based on the feedback we received from our members during our outreach efforts, we created a dedicated section on our WTC website describing all of the 9/11 assistance programs, what they do, how to enroll, and how to contact the program representatives. There is also confusion regarding the different deadlines to register for the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund, so we continuously update our website when these deadlines approach.

Additionally, we learned that we needed to streamline the enrollment process for our members as much as possible; this includes providing step by step enrollment instructions and specific information about the supporting documentation required for enrollment. Following guidelines provided by the WTC Health Program staff and incorporating feedback from our members, we created a supporting documentation fact sheet on our website that provides our members with detailed information on how to get the documents they need to properly enroll. This document was also distributed with enrollment instructions at our outreach event in Denver in August 2013 and posted on our website.

Conclusion

Overall, the goals of this outreach effort to the professional fire fighters and emergency medical personnel who responded to the September 11th WTC attacks were met and included:

- Improved knowledge of what responders were exposed to during their work at the WTC site. This includes the contents and characteristics of the vapors and particulate matter that resulted from the collapse of the WTC buildings and from the fires at the site.
- Improved knowledge of the potential health outcomes of these exposures and the risks for both cancer and non-cancerous diseases as a result of working at the site.

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- Increased awareness and knowledge of the various services and programs offered under the WTC Health Program and the eligibility criteria for enrollment. Some of our members, particularly FDNY fire fighters, are already enrolled in one or more WTC monitoring program and may be unsure if they need to register again for the WTC Health Program; while other members may not be enrolled in any program.

- Increased understanding about the importance of participating in the WTC Health Program. Not only will increased participation help our members with treatment and monitoring of 9/11-related diseases, but it will also contribute to a better overall understanding of 9/11-related health outcomes.



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

HAROLD A. SCHAIBERGER
General President

THOMAS H. MILLER
General Secretary-Treasurer

August 13, 2014

Peter E Grandillo
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Procurement and Grants Office
Acquisition & Field Assistance Branch
626 Cochran Mill Road MS P-05
Pittsburgh, PA 15236

Re: Final Progress Report Grant 5E11OH010460-02

Dear Mr. Grandillo:

Please find attached a final progress report for the International Association of Fire Fighters' (IAFF) Plan for WTC Outreach and Education for the project period September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2014.

The IAFF looks forward to continuing its partnership with NIOSH. Please feel free to contact me at 202-824-1534 or via email at eharman@iaff.org if we can provide any additional materials or information.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth M. Harman
Assistant to the General President

cc: Travis Kubale, CDC, NIOSH
Mary Pat Shanahan, CDC NIOSH
Peter L. Gorman, Chief of Staff to the General President
Patrick J. Morrison, Assistant to the General President