

**Summary Minutes of the  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Science Advisory Board Scientific and Technological Achievement Awards Committee  
Closed Meeting, July 16-17, 2019**

Date and Time: Tuesday, July 16, 2019, 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. ET; and Wednesday, July 17, 2019, 9:00 A.M. – 3 P.M. ET.

Location: Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport, 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202

Purpose: The purpose of the closed Scientific and Technological Achievement Awards (STAA) Committee meeting was to discuss award recommendations for the EPA's 2019 STAA program, and to discuss possible improvements to the process and program.

Participants:

2019-2021 SAB STAA Committee (Also see Roster<sup>1</sup>):

Dr. Jay R. Turner, Chair  
Dr. C. Marjorie Aelion  
Dr. Henry Anderson (by phone)  
Dr. Adriana C. Bejarano  
Dr. Linda T.M. Bui  
Dr. Celia Chen  
Dr. Joseph J. DeGeorge  
Dr. Zhihua (Tina) Fan  
Dr. G. Frank Gerberick

Dr. Richard S. Grippio  
Dr. Michael Jayjock  
Dr. Maria Morandi  
Dr. Krishna R. Pagilla  
Dr. Thomas F. Parkerton  
Dr. Robert Puls  
Dr. Thomas L. Theis  
Dr. Kimberly White

EPA SAB Staff:

Dr. Diana Wong, Designated Federal Officer  
Mr. Thomas Brennan, Acting Director, EPA Science Advisory Board Staff Office

### **Meeting Summary**

The closed meeting was announced in the Federal Register<sup>ii</sup> (Volume 84, Number 125, Pages 31064 – 31065, published on June 28, 2019) and was conducted according to the meeting agenda<sup>iii</sup>. A summary of the meeting follows.

### **July 16, 2019**

#### **Opening Statements and Welcome**

Dr. Diana Wong, the DFO, opened the meeting, and made a brief opening statement saying that the STAA Committee of the SAB operates under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). She explained that the meeting was closed to the public because it dealt with selection of awards for employees, a personnel matter with privacy concerns, which is exempt from public disclosure pursuant to section (c)(6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act. She stated that the SAB Staff Office had assessed whether there were any conflict-of-interest or appearance of a lack of impartiality issues for any of the STAA committee members for this review and whether they were co-authors or contributors for any of the nominated papers. She noted that the SAB Staff Office instructed the following Committee members to recuse themselves from the review of certain 2019 STAA nomination packages upon review of the submitted ethics information, due to appearance of loss of impartiality: Drs. Bui, Chen, and Turner. Dr. Wong also noted that minutes were being taken to summarize discussions and action items in accordance with requirements under FACA. Mr. Tom Brennan also welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance and participation. Dr. Wong then turned the meeting over to the Chair, Dr. Jay Turner.

Dr. Turner welcomed everyone and noted that scientists and engineers on the SAB STAA Committee have diverse backgrounds. He stated that the Committee's efforts to review the 2019 STAA nomination packages and develop recommendations for awards was an advisory effort where the Committee would seek consensus on a SAB report that would be prepared by the Committee, then reviewed by the chartered SAB, and sent to the EPA Administrator. He reviewed the Committee's charge which included identification of SAB recommendations for

Level I, II, and III STAA awards, and recommendations for Honorable Mention. He then discussed the criteria that the SAB STAA Committee would consider associated with recommending each of these categories for STAA recognition.

Committee Review of and Deliberation on Nominations:

Two Committee members conducted the initial review of each nomination, with three exceptions: the initial review of three nominations was conducted by an additional Committee member. One STAA member was ill and could not attend the face-to-face meeting. The DFO invited three other STAA members to evaluate this member's three assignments. The principal reviewers started the discussion on each nomination followed by the full Committee's deliberation. The Committee decided whether it agreed on a preliminary final ranking for each nomination. In instances where a strong majority of members did not agree on a single final ranking, Dr. Turner implemented one of two options: 1) requesting further discussion of that nomination later in the meeting, or 2) conducting a vote of the Committee on final recommendations for award. The Committee's preliminary final rankings for each nomination were recorded.

EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) submitted a total of 53 nominations comprised of 98 publications within ten science and technology categories for review by the SAB STAA Committee for the 2019 STAA awards.

The ten topical categories and total number of nominations per category that were submitted to the Committee for review are presented in the table below.

**Table 1. 2019 STAA Nominations by Topic Category**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Number of Nominations Submitted to SAB</b>
Control Systems & Technology	3
Ecological Research	4
Health Effects Research and Human Health Risk Assessment	9
Monitoring and Measurement Methods	5
Transport & Fate	11
Review Articles	1
Environmental Policy and Decision-Making Studies	4
Energy and the Environment	2
Sustainability and Innovation	9
Other Environmental Research	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>

In advance of the meeting, Committee members reviewed the nominations and reported their initial recommendations to the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) who entered this information into a master table.

The Committee recessed its discussions at 5 pm ET on July 16, 2019.

**July 17, 2019**

The Committee resumed its deliberations in closed session. After the Committee developed preliminary final rankings for all nominations, Dr. Turner asked if all members were satisfied with the deliberations and preliminary rankings on each nomination or if members wanted to further discuss any nomination. The Committee then agreed upon the final recommendations for awards.

The Committee then discussed and identified several administrative improvements to certain aspects of the STAA nomination process that would be documented in a separate SAB Report to the EPA Administrator.

Dr. Turner thanked the STAA Committee members for their efforts. With the meeting business concluded, the Designated Federal Officer Diana Wong adjourned the meeting at 3 pm ET.

Respectfully Submitted:

Certified as Accurate:

/s/

/s/

Dr. Diana Wong  
Designated Federal Officer

Dr. Jay R. Turner, Chair  
SAB STAA Committee

NOTE AND DISCLAIMER: The minutes of this closed meeting reflect diverse ideas and suggestions offered by Committee members during the course of deliberations within the meeting. Such ideas, suggestions and deliberations do not necessarily reflect consensus advice from the Committee members. The reader is cautioned to not rely on the minutes to represent final, approved, consensus advice and recommendations offered to the Agency. Such advice and recommendations may be found in the final advisories, commentaries, letters or reports prepared and transmitted to the EPA Administrator following the meeting.

### **Meeting Materials Cited**

The STAA Committee meeting materials are available at the following SAB STAA Committee July 16-17, 2019 meeting page:

<https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/LookupWebProjectsCurrentBOARD/b91bb69d535820538525834b0062ad68!OpenDocument&TableRow=2.2#2>.

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<sup>i</sup> Roster

<sup>ii</sup> Federal Register Notice