

VA



**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

**Karen Block, Ph.D.
Gulf War Research Program
Office of Research and Development
Department of Veterans Affairs
November 18, 2020**



1990-1991 Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Toxicants/Exposures (complex)



Depleted Uranium



Oil Well Fires



Pesticides, solvents, fuels



Airborne Hazards

**psychological and
physical Stress**



Burn Pits



Vaccinations



Chemical & Biological Weapons



**Pyridostigmine Bromide
(PB)**

- ❖ Gulf War Servicemembers were exposed to single/combination toxicants of unknown quantities.
- ❖ GWI Symptoms (mild to severe): Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Pain, Fibromyalgia, Cognitive dysfunction, Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders, Depression, Headaches, Insomnia...

A white starburst graphic with a red outline and a yellow drop shadow, containing the text "News Release".

News Release

Joint VA/DoD Gulf War Illness State of the
Science Conference
Draws Hundreds of Researchers and Veterans

Online Event Coincides with 30-Year Anniversary of Operation Desert Shield

HIGHLIGHTS



VA:DOD 2020 Gulf War SOTS Highlights

Planning Committee:

Co-Chairs: VA Karen Block, PhD; DOD Kristy Lidie, PhD

Members: Peter Rumm, MD; Mike Falvo, PhD; Dane Cook, PhD; Marsha Turner; Brett Chaney

Gulf War Veterans: Anthony Hardie; Peter Greene

Meeting Goals:

Present and advance the state of the science on Gulf War Illness

Raise awareness of the Federal research funding landscape related to Gulf War Illness

Encourage collaboration among research groups across disciplines



VA:DOD 2020 Gulf War SOTS Highlights



VA Welcome Opening Comments:

Rachel Ramoni, DMD, ScD, ORD Chief Research & Development Officer



DOD Welcome Opening Comments:

COL Sarah B. Goldman, Director CDMRP



Keynote Address:

COL John R. Gingrich, USA-Ret.



VA:DOD 2020 Gulf War SOTS Highlights

Gulf War Veteran Panel:

Co-Chairs: Anthony Hardie; Peter Greene

Members: *Kimberly Adams, *Brent Casey, Vera Roddy; *William (Bill) Watts

Topics:

Veterans Perspectives on Gulf War Research

Barriers to Participation in GWI Research

Importance of participating in GWI studies

The Cognitive Impact of GWI and GWI Clinical Care

Evidence-based GWI Research and its Partnership with VA Clinical Care

Q & A Session with Gulf War Panelists



VA:DOD 2020 Gulf War SOTS Highlights

Subject	Oral (53)	Poster (50)
Treatments		
VA	5	9
DOD	6	9
Epidemiology		
VA	3	-
DOD	3	-
Definition and Diagnostic Biomarkers		
VA	6	0
DOD	4	8
Pathology		
VA	8	8
DOD	7	16

Subject	Oral	Poster
Consortia		
VA	0	-
DOD	8	-
Biorepository		
VA	2	-
DOD	1	-

https://cdmrp.army.mil/gwirp/research_highlights/20SOTS_highlight



VA:DoD 2020 Gulf War SOTS Highlights

Attendance:

Day 1: ~650 participants

Day 2: ~400 participants

Post-Meeting:

News Release: Joint VA/DoD Gulf War Illness State of the Science Conference Draws Hundreds of Researchers and Veterans. By Kate Poindexter

Survey: positive feed back and suggestions

Call for original papers: Co-Leaders: Dane Cook, PhD and Mike Falvo, PhD
Special Issue *Life Sciences* journal

RAC-GWVI Committee Review: November 18, 2020



VA-ORD Gulf War Research

Thank-you