

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Engineer Professional Advisory Committee**  
Thursday, January 24, 2002

The Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC) welcomes your input and participation. Meetings are open to all PHS Engineers and Architects. Those who are not able to attend in person may attend via conference call.

**CALL TO ORDER**

CDR Michael Coene, EPAC Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. EST at FDA, 9200 Corporate Boulevard, Conference Room 330V, Rockville, Maryland. The December 15, 2001, meeting minutes were approved. The next meeting will be held Thursday, February 28, 2002, at 1:00 p.m. EST at the FDA Building, Room 330V and the IHS Twinbrook Building, both in Rockville, Maryland.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Office of the Chief Engineer (OCE):** RADM Robert Williams reported the following announcements.

A. Welcome

RADM Williams extended a warm welcome to new EPAC Chair, CDR Coene, to the new Rules subcommittee chair, CAPT Cuzme and to all new EPAC members.

B. EPAC Members Recognized

CDR Paula Simenauer (FDA), Farhad Menarqid, Juan Raiz received Engineer of the Year Awards. The awards were presented at the National Society of Professional Engineers Award luncheon on January 18, 2001. In addition, CDR Simenauer was named one of the top ten finalists for Federal Engineer of the Year Award. Congratulations! PHS Engineers are doing a great job and are being recognized by other agencies and services!

C. Engineers Week - February 19-22

The awards luncheon will be held on Friday, February 22 at USUHS in the small dining room. Please see the attached link to the flyer for more details.

<http://www.usphsengineers.org/Announcements/luncheon2002.htm>

D. Visioning Session

To discuss the future of engineers in the corps and the visioning and strategic planning needed for engineers to be in sync with the rest of PHS, while meeting the needs of the engineers as well. Approximately 20 engineers (both commissioned

corps and civil servants) will participate and they will meet at the Twinbrook Building on February 21 and 22.

E. CPO PAC meeting

Today CDR Coene presented each CPO with a musical CD, which included recordings of the PHS March (both long and short versions) and other patriotic marches and bugle calls. Coincidentally, RADM Moritsugu had just handed out the words to the PHS March at this meeting. We will be making more copies and will be accepting orders. The goal is to build spirit in our service.

F. SAME benefit ball in NYC

RADM Williams attended the annual SAME ball in NYC to benefit their scholarship fund in November. It was a fabulous affair and each toast made by the various other service chiefs mentioned the PHS response to the terror attacks both at the WTC in NY and at various locations for anthrax outbreaks.

G. Surgeon General (SG) Satcher Retirement February 13

Reception on February 6<sup>th</sup>. Junior officers (O-3 and below) will be reimbursed \$15 by the COA Foundation. RADM Williams encourages all engineers to attend. Engineers will present VADM Satcher with a hardhat and a small, etched glass trophy with the engineers' emblem on it.

After VADM Satcher's departure, the Acting Surgeon General will be RADM Moritsugu.

H. Changes in CCRF requirements for deployment

Please refer to the January 2002 CC Bulletin for information regarding the strict adherence to the new requirements.

I. DCP announcement for JOAG advisor

Please refer to the February 2002 CC Bulletin for information regarding this new group and the search for an advisor for it.

J. Office of the Surgeon General

OSG has recently lost 3 people and are currently looking for temporary and full time assistance. If you are interested, please respond to the recently issued vacancy announcement.

K. COA Foundation

The foundation is supporting the PHS wide recruitment and retention effort by reviewing our recruitment materials, and convening a focus group to receive comments and do an independent evaluation of our methods and techniques. This includes interviewing a officers from various categories and of different ranks.

L. Monthly CPO Meeting Changes

CPOs will be meeting an extra 1/2 day prior to standing meeting. At this month's premeeting, each CPO was asked to determine the 3 most important issues to members of their PAC.

**EPAC Chair:** CDR Coene reported the following.

A. Welcome New Members

LCDR David Ausdemore, CDR Todd Scofield, CAPT Rao Surampalli, and LCDR Jamie Natour. It was confirmed by LCDR Tatum that welcome/acknowledgement letters have been sent from the Office of the Surgeon General. Some of the new members reported having already received their letter.

B. Alternates Needed

Each member of EPAC needs to identify an alternate who will attend meeting and report in the event that the EPAC member is unable to make it to a meeting.

C. Subcommittee Participation

All EPAC members are strongly encouraged to participate in two subcommittees.

D. Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2002

Schedule attached. Please send an email LCDR Wolanski ([nlw@cdrh.fda.gov](mailto:nlw@cdrh.fda.gov)) if you want to add anything to this schedule.

E. Off-site meetings

Please email CDR Coene ([msc@cdrh.fda.gov](mailto:msc@cdrh.fda.gov)) with any proposals for off-site locations for EPAC meetings in 2002.

**OLD BUSINESS** - CDR Coene reported there is no old business.

**NEW BUSINESS** - CDR Coene opened discussions on the following:

A. Healthy Building Subcommittee Chair Vacancy

CAPT Martinez retired from EPAC, leaving a chairperson vacancy for the Healthy Building subcommittee. We will have to see where this committee fits into the next surgeon generals list of priorities.

B. Changes to the Newsletter

CAPT Sullenger proposed changes to the quarterly engineers newsletter to eliminate the "Paper" version of the newsletter and have an "Open & Continuous" Newsletter posted on the Web. Currently, LCDR Tatum has 2 articles ready to go without a paper newsletter to publish. It would take a "Reading Room" format. Articles will stay in the reading room and then move to an archive location. SAME & Lit Award articles are very appropriate for this format. We can also consider the concept of

allowing people to comment on articles, to the author only. Currently the Chief Engineer's office reviews all articles.

After a brief discussion, a vote was taken and the proposal was unanimously accepted.

C. Revised Agenda Format

CDR Coene drew everyone's attention to the new agenda format, with the announcements from DCP liaison, COA liaison, SAME liaison, and Junior Engineer Report moved to the end of the meeting.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. Awards: CDR West was called away at the last minute, therefore there was not report from the Awards committee.

It was mentioned that the nominations for the following awards: Vilforth, Ike Burgess, and Literary are due at end of January; while nominations for the SAME award are due on March 30,2002. The engineer of the year awards will be distributed at the Engineers luncheon on February 22, 2002.

2. Building Design & Construction: CDR Coene repeated that he is in search of a new chairperson for this subcommittee.

If you are interested, please contact him directly. If he does not receive a volunteer, he will recruit one!

3. Career Development: Ms. Hayes reported the following.

The Career Development Subcommittee is spending the majority of their time planning the agenda for category day at the COA conference. The agenda is coming together very well. The agenda is going to center around engineers' roles in the response to the World Trade Center attacks and the anthrax outbreaks. If anyone would like to be included in the category day agenda, please let Lisa know. We will have a couple of panel presentations and some poster presentations on the agenda, which should provide an opportunity for a lot of folks to participate.

The Engineer Handbook should be revised and available in draft for EPAC comment soon.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 14 at 3:00 EST.

4. Leadership Development Seminar Ad hoc Subcommittee: LT Jennifer Martin reported the following.

A. Seminar Location - The subcommittee has settled on either Phoenix or Tucson, Arizona for the location of the 2003 seminar. The final decision will be made

once we start working with a conference planner and look into potential meeting sites and hotel accommodations.

- B. Agenda - A couple brainstorming sessions have been held to come up with possible session topics. We have a lot of good ideas and are currently working toward an agenda.

The next Leadership Development Seminar ad-hoc subcommittee meeting will be on Thursday, February 21 at 1:00 EST. Anyone interested in joining the call can contact LT Martin for more information.

5. Emergency Preparedness: CAPT Rodenbeck reported the following.

The Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee met on January 10, 2002. Meetings are being shifted from the first Thursday to the second Thursday of each month, at 3:00-4:30 p.m. EST. Please contact CAPT Rodenbeck to obtain the conference call bridge and code numbers.

6. Information: CAPT Gene Sullenger reported the following.

Web site: LCDR Tatum has accepted the role of CDR Coene's backup as Web Master. Will attempt to make it one stop shopping, with links to relevant information/sites.

Engineer Database: CAPT Sullenger & CDR Coene are working on allowing access to this under the new Vario scheme.

Engineer Week: February 19 through 22

- PHS Engineer's luncheon on Feb.22, 2002; 11:30 - 2:00
- Booth will be set up on February 15, 2002 (CDR Trinh will coordinate with CDR Tatum)

Next Engineer Symposium: Can we do something for those who can not attend? Post something on the Web? Can we use Web-Cast; maybe NIH will host?

Meeting held on second Tuesday of the month.

7. Mentoring: Mr. Mitchell Williams reported the following.

The Mentoring Subcommittee addressed the proposal for the PHS Engineer Mentoring Program to offer informal mentoring advice or guidance on an as-needed basis. The members present concluded that incorporating this additional service would offer advantages to the program, so long as this service was not offered to supplant the current mentoring program (i.e., formal mentoring teams), so we agreed to proceed.

The next step will be to develop the details of how this service will be offered, e.g., establishing a list of on-demand “mentors” to advise those requesting guidance, how to publicize this service, a schedule/timetable for making the service available, how those requesting the service would make contact, etc. The Subcommittee will begin to put these details together over the next month, so that we can have a starting point for discussions to take place at our next subcommittee meeting. Any proposals regarding the details mentioned above should be forwarded to Mitch Williams ([william7@niehs.nih.gov](mailto:william7@niehs.nih.gov)) in time for them to be incorporated and disseminated prior to our next meeting.

In addition to continuation of this effort, the next meeting will include agreement upon the Subcommittee’s goals for calendar year 2002.

The next meeting of the Mentoring Subcommittee is scheduled for Tuesday, 12 FEB 2002 at 11:00am EST. The call-in number will be (919) 541-1996.

8. Recruiting and Retention: LCDR Scott Helgeson reported the following:

Last R/R Conference Call: Tuesday, January 8.

I. Associate Recruiter Program Update.

- 4 IHS AR’s submitted to OCE for approval.
- Need more participation. Contact LCDR Helgeson or LCDR Tatum for specific information and instructions.
- Personal GOAL: Each AR to recruit two in zero two!
- DCP Associate Recruiter Conf. call was held on Wed. January 9. In addition to Category leads, DCP needs Agency leads to help coordinate to implementation of the program.
- Briefing by Helgeson scheduled for IHS SFC Branch Chiefs on the EPAC R/R activities as well as AR Program, February 7, San Diego.

II. Update on specific R/R Initiatives

- Update, print and promote the “Engineers Career Opportunities Booklet”. LCDR Tatum reports that the book should be published in February. It is currently in the ATSDR graphics department.
- Update the document: Engineering Professionals: Choose a Challenging Career in the U.S. PHS Commissioned Corps.

This document is designed to be a CO engineer specific insert for the back of the new DCP brochure, or a standalone handout to prospective engineer recruits. Currently in Final Draft. This should be submitted for approval at the next EPAC meeting.

- R/R Website materials:  
<http://www.usphsengineers.org/recruitment/default.htm>>

Updated Agency Engineer Contact List on line. Inventory of Recruitment Materials online. Still working on designing a new layout for the webpage.

- Upcoming Recruitment Events: New Engineer Recruitment Calendar to be posted to the web. (email to CDR Coene). February Schools to be visited by IHS Associate Recruiters: UMaine, U Nebraska, Iowa State, & Oregon State.

III. Issue: How to pay entrance fees at recruitment events?

- Sometimes request gets denied at the local level. Issue to be discussed with DCP at the next Associate Recruiter Conf. Call. & IHS SFC Chiefs Meeting (IHS recruiters only).

IV. Next Conference Call: Tuesday, February 5

- Brainstorm for 2002 R/R initiatives. New goals and priorities will be set at the next R/R meeting. New members are always welcome to join the subcommittee! Any questions or comments from EPAC?

9. Rules: CAPT Cozume reported the following.

Reactivation of the Rules subcommittee, with all communication by email as there was no January meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for February 6, 2002 at 2 pm EST. Topics of discussion include goals and the agenda for 2002. Participation is welcome.

10. Division of Commissioned Personnel (DCP) Liaison: LCDR Karlson reported the following.

29 Engineering Applicants seeking a position with the public health service for the past 6 months, or wanting a position within the next 6 months. List sent to Scott Helgeson of applicants that are available.

11. Commissioned Officers Association (COA) Liaison: CDR Kathy Poneleit reported the following.

A reiteration of the reminder about the Surgeon General Farewell Reception to be held on February 6, 2002

Many officers are experiencing the problem with the rule of 5 (no more than 5 individuals from one of the OPDIVs are allowed to attend an outside meeting) when trying to get approval to attend the upcoming Annual COA meeting.

There was a letter to the editor published in response to a recent article in the Washington Post

- To view the entire article for "Leadership Void Slows Top Health Agencies", go to <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A22667-2002Jan9.html>.
- To view the entire article for "Reinforce Our First Line Of Defense", go to <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A6931-2002Jan19.html>.

12. Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) Liaison: LCDR Hilda Scharen was absent so there was no report.

13. Junior Engineer Report: LT Sean Boyd reported the following:

The JOAG is continuing its rebuilding effort in the New Year and is confirming its old membership and seeking new members for existing vacancies. If there are any junior engineer officers interested in participating on a JOAG committee, you can volunteer by contacting LT Sean Boyd at [sbb@cdrh.fda.gov](mailto:sbb@cdrh.fda.gov) or 301-594-4654 x128.

Also, the OSG is currently seeking a senior advisor to the JOAG. The senior advisor must be at the O-6 grade, should be interested in the welfare of junior officers, should be familiar with Corps policies and procedures, and should have professional advisory committee experience. The JOAG senior advisor must commit to a term of 3 years and must have agency support. There is no requirement that the senior advisor be located in the DC Metro area. Interested officers should send a CV and brief statement (2 page max) indicating why you're interested in the role and how you perceive the responsibilities of JOAG Senior Advisor to CAPT Richard Barror. This is an excellent opportunity for a senior officer to interact with the OSG while "giving back" to the corps by growing its future officers.

14. Job Vacancies: Known vacancies are now posted or linked on the PHS Engineers website ([www.usphsengineers.org](http://www.usphsengineers.org)). The weekly OCE statements from LCDR Tatum via e-mail are another resource.

**ADJOURNMENT**: The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m. EDT.

### **EPAC MEETING PARTICIPATION:**

**Participants**: (Members in bold, with alternates attending matched by number to the members absent):

**Mr. Michael Adjodha (FDA), LCDR Meredith Bond (EPA), LT Sean Boyd (FDA, ex-officio), CAPT Kevin Chadwick (IHS), CDR Michael Coene (FDA), CAPT Jose Cuzme (IHS), Ms. Lisa Hayes (ATSDR), LCDR Scott Helgeson (IHS), Mr. Kyung Kim (NIH), Mr. Brian Kong (NIH), LT Jennifer Martin (CDC), CAPT Ronald L. Mickelsen (CDC), LCDR Denman Ondelacy (IHS), CDR Kathy Poneleit (FDA), CAPT Gene Sullenger (FDA), CAPT Sven Rodenbeck (ATSDR), LCDR Nathan Tatum (ATSDR, ex-officio), Mr. F. Mitchell Williams (NIH), RADM Robert Williams (ATSDR, ex-officio), LCDR Nicole Wolanski (FDA).**

**Members Absent:**

CDR Jo Ann Griffith (EPA, ex-officio), LCDR Hilda Scharen (OEP, ex-officio), **CDR Maurice West (NPS)**

**GUESTS:**

None present

**AUTHORIZATION:**

I have recorded the above EPAC meeting minutes:

\_\_\_\_\_  
LCDR Nicole Wolanski  
Executive Secretary, EPAC

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have read the above minutes, which accurately describe this meeting, and on behalf of the EPAC approve their distribution:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CDR Michael Coene  
Chairperson, EPAC

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I authorize distribution of these minutes:

\_\_\_\_\_  
RADM Robert C. Williams, P.E.  
Chief Engineer, USPHS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date