

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Engineer Professional Advisory Committee
Thursday July 22, 2004**

The Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC) welcomes your input and participation. Meetings are open to all Public Health Service Engineers and Architects. Those who are not able to attend in person may attend via conference call. Please contact the EPAC Recorder, LCDR Hilda Scharen, at 301-827-6795 for the place and conference access number.

I. CALL TO ORDER

CDR Kathy Poneleit, EPAC Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 PM ET in Bethesda, MD. The June minutes were approved with editorial changes and will be held for two weeks. No meeting will be held in August. The next meeting will be held at 1:00 PM on September 23, 2004 and the location is to TBD. All EPAC and EPAC Subcommittee meetings are held Eastern Time (ET) unless otherwise specified.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Office of the Chief Engineer (OCE): RADM Williams reported the following:

- The Lewin Group, currently working on a document regarding the transformation of the Corps. They are completing their final draft.
- This report will be in the format of a discussion. It will cover a range of activities (force management, training, and recruitment). The report will be reviewed over a period of 8 weeks by selected senior officers and personnel management experts. The workgroup will develop a list of options. They will also characterize the Commissioned Corps by standardization of billets, job responsibilities, career pathways, or a combination of the two.
- Recommendations for central Corps management, career development, and budget issues will be provided.
- October 1st is the deadline for the recommendations of the workgroup.
- The newly revised Manual Circular on Readiness describes several items officers need to complete. These include: CCRF modules, BLS, physical fitness exam, immunizations, and physical fitness test or the President's Challenge. This policy impacts on promotion.
- Several letters of support from OS, the ASH, and SG have been sent to both officers and Agency heads in support of these requirements.
- These requirements are an important part of a general healthy lifestyle, which includes both physical and mental health of officers.
- The number of basic qualified officers directly impacts the Corps, as it is a metric for performance plan of the ASH and Surgeon General. This number indicates to OMB the number of officers who are basic ready qualified to be deployed.
- Engineers can achieve a 50% or beyond basic level readiness and the engineering category needs to challenge other categories by completing

this goal more rapidly. The Emergency Preparedness subcommittee is working on providing direction to engineering officers to accomplish this goal.

- Other incentives in completing these requirements, besides awards (FMRB, CRISA, and NEPA) and training opportunities, will probably be developed in the future that will affect COER, Assimilation, and retention.
- RADM Williams will be sending a letter to engineering officers asking them to complete all the requirements to become basic level readiness qualified.
- COA 2005 will be held in Philadelphia, PA and the theme is “Global Health.” The SG has challenged the COA attendance number for this Conference to be 2000. The Engineer Category Day planning coordinator is LCDR Sean Boyd and he will be working closely with the Career Development subcommittee.
- LCDR Sean Boyd recently graduated from USUHS with his Master of Public Health degree and was selected for the Hooper Award. This award recognizes outstanding achievement in the pursuit of excellence in public health research.
- CAPT Rodenbeck will be scheduling the next Junior Officer’s Call within a few weeks.
- Congratulations to all engineers who were promoted. Those not selected for promotion need to start preparing for the next cycle. These officers may contact CAPT Rodenbeck for support and mentorship on how to better structure their personnel file and emphasize their accomplishments.

B. EPAC Chair: CDR Poneleit reported the following:

- Congratulations to the promoted officers during a cycle of very competitive success rates.
- Officers who need to update their CV should consult the Engineers Handbook and the EHO’s CV and cover sheet format.
- EPAC needs to reexamine and update the engineer CV and coversheet format to incorporate the benchmarks, readiness requirements, and lessons learned from this year’s promotion cycle.
- Looking into a listserv as a means to disseminate OCE news information. This will be done either through NIH or other sources.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Manual Circular – 377 on Readiness

- CDR Poneleit highlighted that officers will not be scored for the Response Readiness precept if they do not meet the basic level of force readiness by December 31, 2004. In addition, officers who do not meet the Basic level of force readiness will be denied permanent and/or temporary grade promotions if they do not meet the requirements for Basic force readiness by May 2005 even if they scored successfully for promotion. Note that **all officers are expected to meet the Basic level of force readiness by May 1, 2005.** Also note that this now includes **completion of both the Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B series.** You will not be considered eligible if you have only completed part of either of these series. This is different from previous readiness policies.

- CDR Poneleit developed a Readiness spreadsheet to assist officers in completing the requirements and keeping up with their own deadline dates to remain current for basic readiness level.
- CDR Poneleit emphasized that officers who can not meet certain requirements for basic level can request a medical waiver for that requirement. These include one or more aspects of the physical fitness requirements, one or more of the immunization requirements, etc.
- CDR Beck indicated CCRF is developing guidance for immunizations for officers and history is no longer an acceptable proof for immunizations. Currently, in order to meet the basic level, the required immunizations are Hepatitis B shots plus the titer, Hepatitis A shots only, Adult Polio vaccine (titer only is not acceptable). However, CCRF will continue to accept only the Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B titer only.
- CDR Beck stated that officers will be receiving an e-mail concerning the requirements they are missing in order to meet basic level.
- CDR Beck added that the Office of Force Readiness and Deployment (OFRD) is developing the advanced and intermediate requirements and the Manual Circular will be available in two to three months.

IV. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Awards: CDR Bradley Harris (reporting for CDR Meredith Bond):

- Nothing to report

B. Building Design and Construction: Mr. Brian Kong reported the following:

- Subcommittee's monthly meeting was held on July 13, 2004. The next meeting is scheduled for August 10, 2004 from 2:00-3:00 PM.
- The Surgeon General Workshop on Healthy Indoor Environment is scheduled for January 12-13, 2005 at the NIH Conference Center. Additional funding was received thanks to CAPT Rodenbeck's efforts and IHS will also be providing support, additional funds are being sought.
- A new legislation was introduced to promote the development and construction of environmentally friendly Federal Building and schools and is called the: "High Performance Green Building Act" will highlight issues to be brought up at the SG's Workshop.
- EPAC Subcommittee member Lumberg is the HHS representative to the White House Task Force on recycling, he will provide some insight on any upcoming legislation. In addition, he is leading the "Healthy Office Building" renovation initiative at NIH.
- NIH will be using Value Management as a tool to better manage, monitor, and track performance of building construction projects. This will optimize planning, management and control, as recommended by OMB and training for this tool will be provided at the NIH.
- Subcommittee is seeking additional members and an alternate for the Chair.

C. ShahidAhmed@APPDRUGS.COM Career Development: CDR Poneleit reporting for LCDR Jennifer Mosser

- LCDR Sean Boyd will be serving as the planning coordinator for the Engineer Category Day at COA and working with the subcommittee

D. Rules: CDR Poneleit reporting for LCDR Jennifer Mosser

- A number of nominations have been received for EPAC nominations.
- The subcommittee currently looking at distribution by agency and nomination slots for Corps versus Civil Servants.
- Nominations will be evaluated and results will be available at the next EPAC meeting in September.

E. Emergency Preparedness: CAPT Rodenbeck reported the following:

- The Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee met on July 14, 2004.
- The subcommittee continued to develop and redraft the Response Roles for Engineers (General Environmental Health Officer, Hazardous Waste/Materials, Occupational Hygiene and Engineering, Health Care Facilities Engineer, Biomedical/Clinical Engineer, and Disaster Response Engineer).
- These roles will be ready for the full EPAC review and approval by the September EPAC meeting.
- The next Subcommittee meeting will occur on August 11 from 3:00-4:30 PM. Please contact CAPT Sven Rodenbeck for the conference call information.

F. Information: CDR Michael Coene

- Not present.

G. Mentoring: CDR Biddle (reporting for CDR Scofield):

- Subcommittee members reviewed the on-call mentoring program and decided that the needs of officers are already being met through their supervisor or other systems. The subcommittee is suggesting that this program be discontinued.
- Subcommittee is continuing to update the information on the USPHS Engineers web page
- Last meeting was on July 6, 2004 at 11:00 AM
- Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 11:00 AM; next call is August 10, 2004 11:00 AM

H. Recruiting & Retention: CDR Ludington reported the following:

- Last meeting was on July 6, 2004
- Next call is August 3, 2004 at 1:00 PM
- 4,000 copies of the "Engineering Career Opportunities" handbook were printed and 1,900 have been sent out. Please send requests for these handbooks to LCDR Carol Rogers.
- The subcommittee is working on modernizing and updating the Recruitment and Retention webpage.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. OCCO/DCCR Liaison: LCDR Claire Karlson:

- General Duty Applications received in January - June 2004: 19
 - Sr. COSTEP applications: 8
 - Jr. COSTEP applications: 76
 - Total Applications from January – June: 103
- Calls to Active Duty (CAD) June 2004 : 2
 - Fiscal year 2004 October 1 - May 2004: 22
- Current status of category as of June 2004
 - Retirements in the month of June 2004: 17
 - Separations: 1
 - Inactivations: 1

416 current active duty engineer officers in all agencies as of July 22, 2004.
- LCDR Karlson has been assigned to OCCO/DCCR (Division of Recruitment) and will continue to assist our category until a new person has been nominated. Offices will be moving on August 7-8 to 1101 Wootten Parkway and offices will be re-opening at the new location on August 9.
- No new applications will be processed August 1 - September 15, at which point they will be processed in priority categories.

B. TISP Liaison: CDR Dan Beck:

- The Security for the Built Environment Congress is sponsored by SAME November 7-10, 2004 in St Louis, MI.
- New TISP Breakfast series will provide an opportunity for networking for TISP members in the DC area. The 1st TISP Breakfast will be held at the Army Navy Club on August 12 from 8:00-9:30 AM and the Guest Speaker is Robert Stephan, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security concerning the National Response Plan. To register please reply to the previously sent message or contact CDR Beck. The cost for the breakfast is \$35.00.

C. COA Liaison: CDR Nate Tatum:

- Last Meeting Monday June 7, 2004
- Next Meeting of the Board will be the Board Workshop (Annual Retreat) in the DC Area on August 13-14, 2004.
- The engineering category could have a greater influence on the board and therefore the COA lobby by increasing our presence on the board. While we do only have one seat for a rep from the category, we do have one other engineering officer on the board; CAPT Rich Rubendall field representative. The field representative elected on this ballot ran unopposed. Engineers are encouraged to run for next year's open field representative positions.
- Major congressional issue right now is the elimination of the widow's tax. This is the number one initiative of the military coalition this year. There are still significant obstacles to passing this issue into law, but the matter seems promising.

D. SAME Liaison: CDR Kathy Poneleit (reporting for CDR Randall Gardner)

- August 31, 2004 deadline for submissions for 2005 SAME conference.
- If you are interested in helping with 2005 SAME Conference planning, contact CAPT Sven Rodenbeck.

- E. Junior Engineer Report:** LCDR Matthew Martinson reported the following:
- My term on JOAG will be ending in September. LCDR Katherine Jacobitz will continue to serve as the other engineer category liaison to the Junior Officer Advisory Group and subsequently as the EPAC Liaison.
 - JOAG has 6 openings and the engineering category is restricted to 2 slots. The replacements have not yet been identified.

VI. VACANCIES

- No vacancies to report.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

CDR Poneleit adjourned the meeting 3:40 PM.

VIII. AUTHORIZATION

I have recorded the above EPAC meeting minutes:

LCDR Hilda Scharen Recorder, EPAC	Date

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

CDR Kathy Poneleit Chair, EPAC	Date

I authorize distribution of these minutes:

RADM Robert C. Williams, P.E. Chief Engineer, USPHS	Date