

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Engineer Professional Advisory Committee
Thursday September 23, 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 1:00 PM ET in Rockville, MD. The July minutes were approved with editorial changes and will be held for two weeks. The next meeting will be held at 1:00 PM on October 28, 2004 and the location is Plaza Level, Tower Oaks Building, Rockville, Maryland (Library near room 183). 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 engineering category readiness level is currently over 46%, nearing the 50% required by OMB. Officers can login to the CCRF website and verify which requirements they are missing to meet the basic readiness level by selecting “not eligible”.
- Congratulations to all engineers who deployed, participated, or supported in the environmental issues related to the Florida hurricane response. Engineers were well represented in numbers and two were selected as Deputy Team Lead. The Corps had the right capability and capacity to respond to needs on the ground, and a vital contribution to the response.
- Electronic COER forms are available for officers to fill-out and submit to their supervisor. Officers need to update their contact information and supervisor’s contact information by October 1st.
- Nominations for the Engineer of the Year are commencing.
- Engineering Board is currently reviewing a candidate with an engineering technology degree, similar to an ABET accredited degree, to see if this person can qualify to join the Corps.
- The Lewin Group, currently working on a document regarding the transformation of the Corps. The final draft of options and issues for the Secretary to consider is due in a month.
- This report will be in the format of a discussion. It will cover a range of activities (corps assignments, billet and position management, force management, budget authority, training, and recruitment). The workgroup is developing 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.

B. EPAC Chair: CDR Poneleit reported the following:

- Engineers Regalement to be held on October 28, 2004
- The 64th Annual Benefit of the Scholarship Fund Dinner Dance (SAME NYC) will be held on Saturday, November 6th at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City.
- COA PHS Dining Out COA to be held on Saturday, November 6, 2004 at Uniformed Services University, Bethesda, MD.
- Congratulations to the Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee for contacting officers who are not basic ready and providing helpful comments to them.
- The promotion benchmarks, with minor changes, will be available November 1. Please send comments to CDR Poneleit.
- The permanent promotion rates were sent downtown and are awaiting final approval. The permanent promotion percentage rates by rank will be released shortly.

III. NEW BUSINESS

EPAC nominations

- LCDR Mosser reported that the Rules Subcommittee reviewed 20 new self-nominations for the 5 vacancies: EPA, HRSA, CDC, and At Large.
- The following officers were selected for these vacancies:
 - CDC – LCDR Dave Ausdemore
 - HRSA – CDR Jamie Natour
 - EPA – CDR Allen Jarrell
 - At Large – LCDR Hilda Scharen
- The Committee voted and unanimously selected.

Emergency Preparedness Document

- CAPT Sven Rodenbeck discussed new deployment roles for engineers to provide for better force management in an emergency situation. These four new deployment roles are:
 - Biomedical/Clinical Engineer
 - Health Care Facilities Engineer
 - Disaster Engineer
 - Occupational Hygiene and Engineer
- The Committee voted and unanimously approved that these roles be submitted to the Office of Force Response and Deployment (OFRD).

The Engineers' 2004 Regalement will be held at Guapo's at the Rio in Gaithersburg, MD from 4:00-6:00 PM

IV. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Awards: CDR Meredith Bond reported the following:

- Call for Nominations for 2005 PHS Engineer of the Year Award announced via the OCE announcements; posted on www.usphsengineer.org website. Includes link to NSPE website where

nomination form is available as MSWord document. EPAC members are asked to share this with engineers in their office.

- Over next few weeks, the subcommittee will be putting out calls for nominations for the Engineering Literary Awards, and Villforth, Burgess, Lynch, SAME/Green, SAME/Hollis, and SAME/Cumming awards.
- Please submit nominations in electronic format (Word or WordPerfect)
- Seeking to transition to new subcommittee chair in next few months. If you are interested please contact CDR Bond.
- The next meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2004 from 2:00-3:00 PM.

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

- Subcommittee's monthly meeting was held on August 10, 2004; the next meeting is October 12, 2004 from 2:00-3:00 PM.
- The committee for the Surgeon General Workshop on Healthy Indoor Environment continues to move forward.
- The subcommittee continues to work on sharing Environment of Care (EC) information for Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) among HHS health care facilities.
- The Federal Facilities Council is holding a one day forum on September 23, 2004 on best practices for dispute resolution.
- NIH ORF is replacing its workflow process system, and is currently in vendor presentation process.
- Federal agencies in Montgomery County, Maryland will be paying more taxes for electricity and natural gas as the rates have increased more than expected.
- NPS noted emphasis on their waste management and recycling.
- A subcommittee member is involved with the Critical Access Hospital Program for rural hospitals.

C. Career Development: LCDR Jennifer Mosser reported the following:

- The subcommittee developed with CAPT Larry Reed and CDR Scott Earnest a 3-day public health track for the May 17-20, 2005 SAME National Education & Training Conference in Louisville, Kentucky. The general theme is Improving Public Health through Engineering and Environmental Research. The proposed PHS track submitted to the SAME conference planning committee has three topic areas:
 - Indoor Air Quality and Preventing Disease Transmission
 - Protecting the Homeland and Effective Emergency Response
 - Research to Improve the Public Health
- The subcommittee is designing a career development page for the Engineers website to be ready for review next month.
- Planning is underway for the June 6-10, 2005 COA conference in Philadelphia, PA and Category Day is on Tuesday, June 7. The overall conference theme is Global Health. The draft agenda for category day is due October 15, draft agenda with speakers due November 15, and the final agenda due January 10, 2005. The deadline for Category Day submissions is October 15. Contact LCDR Sean Boyd or LCDR Jen Mosser for questions or suggestions concerning the agenda. Engineers are

asked to consider submitting an abstract for category day or attending the conference as a participant.

- The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 14, 2004 at 3:00 PM.

D. Rules: LCDR Jennifer Mosser reported the following:

- The nomination of EPAC Chair-Elect for 2005 will be addressed next month. If you are interested in being considered, please contact LCDR Mosser.

E. Emergency Preparedness: CAPT Rodenbeck reported the following:

- The Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee met on August 11, 2004.
- The subcommittee reviewed the efforts for Engineers to achieve basic level readiness.
- The subcommittee members contacted engineers who were not at the basic level for readiness and officers assigned outside PHS agencies expressed a lack of support from management.
- Officers are reminded to update their contact information on the DCP and CCRF websites.
- The next meeting is October 13, 2004 from 3:00-4:30 PM. Please contact CAPT Sven Rodenbeck for the conference call information.

F. Information: CDR Michael Coene reported the following:

- The subcommittee continues to update the EPAC website.
- The 2004 Engineers' Regalement will be held on October 28, 2004 at Guapo's at the Rio in Gaithersburg, MD from 4:00-6:00 PM.

G. Mentoring: CDR Scofield was not present (report sent electronically):

- The subcommittee met on September 14, 2004
- Quarterly reports were requested and received from some Agency Advisors.
- Eleven new protégé/mentor/advisor teams developed to date in 2004.
- CDR Biddle will draft a letter to EPAC Chair, recommending that the PHS On-Call Mentoring Program be eliminated.
- 20 new PHS engineers were sent a welcome letter.
- CDR Carole Boerner completed the handbook and provided a copy to subcommittee members. It was recommended that the handbook be sent to the EPAC membership for approval at the August EPAC meeting.
- Subcommittee Chair is retiring effective December 1, 2004 and on terminal leave effective October 2, 2004. An Acting Chairperson will be required for the October meeting.
- The next meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2004 at 11:00 AM.

H. Recruiting & Retention: LCDR Hawasly (reporting for CDR Ludington):

- Last meeting was on August 3, 2004.
- 4,000 copies of the "Engineering Career Opportunities". Contact LCDR Carol Rogers if you interested in receiving a copy.
- Currently, there are 30 IHS recruiters with 4 applications pending and 4 in progress. From the other agencies, there are 18 approved recruiters, with 1 pending.

- Job vacancies are posted on the IHS website.
- The next meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2004 at 1:00 PM
- The subcommittee is always looking for new ideas and new members.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. **OCCO/DCCR Liaison:** LCDR Claire Karlson reported the following:

- If you have any difficulty filling positions, LCDR Karlson can assist you. She can be reached preferably by e-mail at Claire.karlson@hhs.gov or 240-453-6047.
- Application Status as of September 8, 2004: 120 General Duty applicants
Number appointment boarded 27 (22.5%)
Number medical cleared 16 (13.33%)
Number boarded and med cleared 14 (11.67%)
- Month of August Total applications all categories: 92
- Engineer: General Duty: 3, Jr COSTEP: 0,
Sr COSTEP: 0
- Total applications for FY October 2003- August 2004: 1,709 applications all categories. Engineer: General Duty: 41, JR COSTEP: 113, SR COSTEP: 14, Closed applications: 9
- All Engineering Boards will be coordinated by Gladys Mells 240-453-6047.
- OCCO/DCCA HR Specialists handling all the PHS officers and applicant orders. If you have any problems or concerns the Supervisor is CAPT Select Bill Wyeth 240-453-6007, or William.Wyeth@hhs.gov
- Applicants with open files for 1 year will be closed. If you know of any files that should not be closed, please notify Claire.Karlson@hhs.gov 240-453-6008.
- If you have any positions that you are having difficult filling, send an email to: Claire.Karlson@hhs.gov. Remember to include the region (state) and job description.
- To be placed on the CC Vacancy list contact: LCDR Edwin Vazquez 240-453-6028, email: Edwin.Vazquez@hhs.gov

B. **TISP Liaison:** CDR Dan Beck not present.

C. **COA Liaison:** LCDR Nate Tatum reported the following:

- The last meeting of the COA Board of Directors was August 14, 2004.
- The next meeting will be on October 27, 2004.
- The COA Board of Directors has expressed a strong interest in supporting the Transformation Recommendation Committee. The board stands ready to assist the committee in anyway possible. The EPAC can reach out to the COA BOD either directly or contact LCDR Tatum.
- COA is considering methods to help connect and incorporate geographically isolated officers by means of virtual branches. This issue will be addressed at the upcoming meeting in October. Any feedback on the engineer's point of view on the value of offering this to engineers stationed at ISOHAR stations or even stations with no branch locally available would be of great value in this decision process.

- The COA has been approached by the Anchor and Caduceus Society to embed them into the COA. An initial vote has been taken to further investigate this request and form a committee to make recommendations.
- The engineering representative to COA has been placed on the following subcommittees for the 2004-2005 terms: Awards, Insurance and the work group for the Anchor and Caduceus Society. This will be the second year of the representatives 3 year term to the COA BOD.
- The COA is also re-broadcasting any Corps related announcements over its list serve.

D. SAME Liaison: CDR Scott Earnest (reporting for CDR Randall Gardner)

- A 3-day public health track for the SAME conference May 17-20, 2005 was submitted the SAME Conference planning committee.
- A formal response from the SAME Conference planning committee to the public health track proposal is expected in a few weeks.

E. Junior Engineer Report: LCDR Matthew Martinson not present.

VI. VACANCIES

- No vacancies to report.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

CDR Poneleit adjourned the meeting 2:45 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