

**Minutes of the Meeting
Engineer Professional Advisory Committee
Thursday, January 26, 2006**

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, LT Roger N. Dahozy at (602) 364-5081 or roger.dahozy@ihs.gov, for the phone and conference access numbers.

I. CALL TO ORDER

CAPT James Ludington, EPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 PM EST. Attendance was taken and a quorum of EPAC members was present. CAPT Ludington thanked everyone for attending the first EPAC meeting of the year. The December minutes were approved with editorial changes and will be held for two weeks and then posted on the Engineers website. The next meeting will be held on March 23, 2006, at 1:30 PM EST. There is no February EPAC meeting due to engineers week activities. All EPAC and subcommittee meetings are stated for Eastern Standard Time (EST) unless otherwise specified.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

- The combined CPO/SG PAC meeting originally scheduled for January 24, 2006 was postponed because of ongoing transformation meetings occurring every Thursday of the month. The transformation meetings are due to report-out at the end of February.
- The Secretary of Health and Human Services officially announced the transformation of the USPHS Commissioned Corps on January 18, 2006. There are now several websites about the Secretaries transformation vision which provide detailed information of the following:
 - All USPHS officers will be grouped onto one of four “functional” categories: Clinical, Applied Public Health, Research, and Mental Health Professionals.
 - All HHS positions should be categorized as either Commissioned Corps, Civilian, or open to both systems.
 - There will be a lot of work on the billet system, in attempt to try and fill difficult positions such as isolated hardship and hazardous duty positions.
 - There will be an implementation of an officer assignment system.
 - There will be a continued emphasis on BOTC and other trainings with a focus on recruitment and retention.
 - “Readiness” will have a four-tiered response capability in terms of who will be deployed first, second, third, and fourth. For example:
 - First – Dedicated training teams
 - Second – Standby teams

- Third – General active duty teams
 - Fourth – Activated inactive reserve or volunteers
- There are currently five committees, led mostly by Rear Admirals, working on developing policy and action plans for the Secretaries goals, with committees working on how the corps will grow from approximately 5,960 officers to a goal of 6,600 officers. The committees are to have their work completed by the end of February 2006.
 - There is a committee investigating classification of positions
 - There is a committee investigating difficult to fill positions
 - There is a committee investigating recruitment and training
 - There is a committee investigating readiness
- Along with the transformation announcement, the public swearing-in of Admiral Agwunobi was done. Admiral Agwunobi is now a four-star Admiral and the Assistant Secretary of Health. He is going to be a tremendously great asset and is a very strong supporter of the corps. He came from leading the Department of Health from the state of Florida and has had prior experience with the Commissioned Corps from prior hurricane deployments. Admiral Agwunobi is very excited about being a USPHS Commissioned Corps officer.
- There has been a concern about who was selected to lead the five committees and the selection process. The selections were not done by the Chief Professional Officers (CPO's) or the PACs, but done by the Assistant Secretary of Health Office. Therefore, there has not been a solicitation of comments directly from the CPOs or the PACs. However, there are several CPOs involved with these committees and there is hope that the CPOs will get a voice in the transformation process.
- Currently the CPO group is attempting to get on Admiral Agwunobi's calendar to meet with him to talk about the transformation and other topics.
- The "three and freeze" policy has been discussed by the CPOs several times and their position is that they are opposed to it in its current form. However, the CPOs have not come to a consensus as to what will replace the current policy; whether to recommend to delete it or substitute something else in its place. The CPO group will make an effort to give their recommendations about not going forth with the current policy with the current promotion cycle.
- During Engineer's Week in February, an engineer's lunch will be held at the Uniformed Services University in Bethesda. During the engineer's lunch, the engineers of the year will be recognized for each of the agencies, plus the PHS engineer of the year and the engineer responder of the year. The guest speaker will be William Stamper who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Facilities Management and Policy of the DHHS and is the highest-ranking civil service engineer in the department.
- The first week in May is the COA meeting in Denver Colorado. The COA conference will be in downtown Denver in a very nice location. Please make your reservations before the rooms fill up. The agenda will mostly be dedicated to emergency preparedness and response. Various leaders from several states, including the governor of Colorado have been invited to speak. The day before the COA conference begins (Sunday), a leadership meeting

will be held in which Vice Admiral Thad Allan will be the key note speaker. VADM Thad Allen was recently selected by the President as the new Commandant of the Coast Guard and will soon be elevated to the rank of Admiral. You may contact CDR Meredith Bond if you have any questions about the Denver area or about the hotel. CDR Bond is stationed in Denver.

- The SAME conference will be held during the last day of May and the first week of June and will be at the Marriott in New Orleans, Louisiana. This will be a unique opportunity to meet with the local engineering community who are dealing with the current issues taking place in New Orleans, which include long term environmental and reconstruction issues. RADM Barror will be a guest speaker along with other PHS officers. There will be no PHS track like there was at previous meetings; however there will be an opportunity for PHS officers to meet.

B. EPAC Chair Announcement: CAPT Ludington reported the following:

- Thank you to LCDR Mosser for a fantastic job she did last year as EPAC chair and her assistance in aiding CAPT Ludington's transition as the new chair.
- Thank you to LT Savalia for her fantastic job as the 2005 EPAC recorder. We all know that being the recorder is a tough job.
- Welcome new voting EPAC members: CDR Mitch Constant, LT Vivian Iskander, CDR Churci Kardous, LT Varsha Savalia, and CDR Adam Scully.

III. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. EPAC Nomination Package:

Along with our new appointed EPAC members, we need to incorporate EPAC members from NIH and if anyone knows of any quality potential members, please forward the names to CAPT Ludington.

B. Scheduling of the Phoenix, AZ EPAC meeting:

The last scheduled EPAC meeting that was to be held in Phoenix was cancelled due to conflicts involving deployments to hurricane Katrina. We are looking at scheduling the next meeting in Phoenix sometime in the fall of 2006.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. 2006 EPAC Schedule:

CAPT Ludington forwarded the 2006 EPAC schedule to all EPAC members. Basically, all meetings are scheduled for every 4th Thursday at 1:30 EST. There will be no meeting in February due to the engineer's luncheon, no meeting in May due to the COA conference, no meeting scheduled for the Month of August, and one meeting will be combined for the months of November and December.

B. New Chairs of the Information and Recruitment & Retention Subcommittees:

CDR Mitch Constant will be the chair of the information subcommittee. Anyone interested in joining this subcommittee, please contact CDR Constant. CDR Kardous will be the new chair of the Recruitment and Retention

subcommittee. Anyone interested in joining this subcommittee, please contact CDR Kardous.

V. **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. **Awards:** CDR Bradley Harris reported the following:

- The awards subcommittee has selected the engineer of the year and engineer responder of the year awards. Nominations were submitted for the Ian K. Burgess Young Engineer of the Year (for corps officers), the Roger Lynch Young Engineer of the Year (civil service), and SAME Green medal. However, no nominations were submitted for the Villfourth COA Leadership Award, SAME Cumming Plaque, and SAME Hollis Medal. Therefore, the awards subcommittee is going to keep the call for awards open through the end of January for the awards that had no nominations. CDR Harris strongly encourages each of you to submit nominations of deserving officers for these awards.
- RADM Barror thanked CDR Harris and his subcommittee for their excellent work.
- CDR Hilda Scharen-Guivel asked if the approval of the Villforth Award is done by the OPDIV liaison. CDR Harris stated that he wasn't sure who that person is, but agreed that the OPDIV liaison would approve the award. RADM Barror commented that for the FDA, the OPDIV liaison would be ADM Tolleson.

B. **Building Design and Construction:** For CDR Jamie Natour, CDR Sue Neurath reported the following:

- The subcommittee met on January 10, 2006.
- Most of the meeting was focused on the presentation from Diane Stewart who is from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Facilities Management and Policy.
- During the presentation, the mission of the office and organization was outlined and the DHHS facilities program manual was discussed in depth.
- The facilities program manual is a revision from the existing manual and is more extensive. The revised manual is currently in the review process, with the several OPDIVs including IHS having comments and questions.
- Next meeting will be on the second Tuesday in February at 2:00PM EST. Please contact CDR Natour or CDR Neurath for call-in information.

C. **Career Development:** CDR Sue Neurath reported the following:

- The subcommittee met on January 12, 2006.
- CDR Neurath will submit to the EPAC a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document regarding billet descriptions. The subcommittee worked very hard on obtaining information for this document. CDR Neurath will email the EPAC for comments. Please provide comments back to CDR Neurath by the February 4, 2006.

- The engineering category day agenda is finalized for the COA conference. An Air Force Colonel from Peterson Air Force Base near Colorado Springs is scheduled to speak, who specializes in emergency response and planning.
- Also being presented at the COA engineering category day is information about geographic information systems (GIS), which is essentially an interactive map that analyzes spatial data. GIS has tremendous promise in the emergency and preparedness field by tracking and identifying resources in comparison to where the resources need to be. This helps get the proper people and equipment to the right places.
- Essentially, the engineering category day will mainly focus on looking at different opportunities, what we are currently doing, to what we can be doing better within the PHS, for emergency preparedness and response.
- As was done at last year's conference, a social event following the category day meetings is being discussed. However, the possibility of combining with the DHHS PAC with doing social extravaganza is also being discussed. A decision will be made at the next subcommittee meeting.
- Volunteers are needed to help with preparations prior to the conference and with work during the conference. Also, the subcommittee needs volunteers for Aide de Camp positions during the COA for various engineer Admirals. Interested officers may contact CDR Neurath.
- The subcommittee is also discussing an engineers reading list for PHS engineers. CDR Nelson Mix has developed the reading list by attending several lectures and conferences where other leaders within the service have cited books to be very interesting. CDR has read several of these books and has found it to be a very effective way to identify with important contemporary issues. CDR Mix is currently developing this reading list and putting it on a test website through Yahoo with the subcommittee adding to the list and ultimately transition it to the EPAC for review.
- The subcommittee will be focusing on career tracks this year and thus investigating how to improve the understanding of what career tracks entail and what things officers can do to become more involved with their own career.
- The next meeting will be on February 9, 2006 at 3:00 EST. Please contact CDR Neurath for call-in information.

D. Emergency Preparedness: CDR Dave Ausdemore reported the following:

- The subcommittee met on January 18, 2006.
- The subcommittee is currently finalizing a "talking paper" that summarizes the lessons learned from the fed back session that was held last fall after the hurricane deployments. CDR Ausdemore is planning to present the paper at the next EPAC meeting.
- Another "talking paper" is being developed entitled "Are you ready?" This is essentially an informational paper developed to increase awareness

for engineers who are new to the PHS regarding deployments. This paper is presently being finalized.

- Meeting dates have been changed for this year. Instead of meeting on the first Wednesday of each month, the meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of each month.
- The next meeting will be on February 8, 2006 at 2:00PM EST. CDR Ausdemore invites anyone who is interested to join the meeting. Please contact CDR Ausdemore for call-in information.

E. **Information:** CDR Mitch Constant was absent.

- No report.

F. **Leadership Development Seminar:** CDR John Longstaff reported the following:

- The subcommittee has set a date for August 8, 9, 10, 2006.
- Mark your calendars! The subcommittee has secured the North Island conference facility at the Naval Air Station at Coronado Island in San Diego, CA to hold the seminar. Reservations were secured at the Navy lodge located on the beach.
- These dates were motioned for approval and were approved by the EPAC.
- CRD Longstaff has reserved 75 units at the Navy Lodge in his name. A separate reservation form will be sent to officers when they sign up for the seminar and thus will be sent to the Navy Lodge in which a room will be put into the officer's name. The room rate is \$75.00 per night.
- Most of the rooms have a "pull out" couch with bed, and are more or less small suites. CDR Longstaff will seek more information about the rooms and will have more information at the next EPAC meeting.
- If anyone needs any information about San Diego, you may contact LT Iskander who is stationed in San Diego.
- Next step is to develop the seminar agenda.
- Next meeting will be February 9, 2006.

G. **Mentoring:** CDR Tom Heintzman reported the following:

- Subcommittee last met on December 6, 2005.
- A list of calls to active duty for 2005 was received from LCDR Cox at OCCO. Subcommittee will be contacting these people regarding the availability of the Mentoring Program.
- Two new mentoring teams formed in January, both in the Indian Health Service. One of the protégés applied to the program because of the Welcome Package from the Chief Engineer.
- Currently have 8 mentoring teams less than 1 year old and since March 2003 there have been 29 teams.
- Next meeting will be February 7, 2006, 11 AM MST.

H. **Recruiting & Retention:** CDR Churci Kardous reported the following:

- Meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of the month at 1:00PM EST.

- I. **Rules:** CDR Ausdemore reported the following:
- CDR Ausdemore had nothing to report for this meeting.

VI. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A. **OCCO/DCCR liaison:** LCDR Rhondalyn Cox reported the following:
- General Duty Applications: 7
 - Senior COSTEP Applications: 4
 - Junior COSTEP Applications: 56
 - Total Engineer Applications Open: 7
 - “Call to Active Duty” for month of January: 0
 - Current Status of Category: 398
 - Current Status of Corps: 5942
 - Largest Agency with Engineering Officers: IHS 243
 - Second Largest Agency with Engineering Officers: FDA 45
 - CDR Koski also mentioned that 42 COSTEPS were actually chosen with an additional 10 turning down the offer.
- B. **TISP Liaison:** CDR Dan Beck was absent.
- No report.
- C. **COA Liason:** CDR Nate Tatum was absent.
- No report.
- D. **SAME Liaison:** CDR Randall Gardner reported the following:
- A meeting was held concerning the facility management certification program SAME is offering.
 - One of the main issues that was being focused on was the sponsorship of the program and trying to correct issues such as conflicts of interest. The IHS and PHS truly support this program.
 - CAPT Cuzme mentioned that the SAME is entertaining a partnership with the Construction Management Association to support formal certifications for construction management of water, sewer, and building projects. A potential conflict of interest exists because of the uniform services support of a private university. The overall goal is to create more opportunities for PHS engineers. People will be certified at the cost of approximately \$500. The motion will be passed on to the executive board of SAME.
 - On March 17, 2006 the independent service chief of federal programs of the uniform services will have an announcement about their programs for the upcoming year. RADM Barror will be making a presentation at this luncheon. An awards dinner will take place on the following day in which General Charles Williams, USAF (Retired) will be honored. General Williams was the director of oversees building operations for the State Department.

E. Junior Engineer Report: LCDR Geoffrey Wachs reported the following:

- The JOAG meeting was held on January 13, 2006.
- CAPT Lee Shackelford, Director of Division of Commissioned Corps Training and Career Development, provided a presentation and talked with Junior Officers about Officership and Leadership.
 - Leadership:
 - Responsibility
 - Accountability
 - Integrity
 - Loyalty
 - Excellence
 - Tenacity
 - Suggested Reading List:
 - Army Leadership: Be, Know, Do; FM 22-100
 - The Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell; Oren Harari.
 - Lincoln on Leadership; Donald T. Phillip
 - Koop; C. Everett Koop
 - We Were Soldiers Once... And Young; Lt. Gen. Harold G. Moore (ret.) and Joseph L. Galloway
 - A Victor Not a Butcher: Ulysses S. Grant's Overlooked Military Genius; Edward H. Bonekemper III
 - Soul of the Lion: A Biography of Joshua L. Chamberlin; Willard M. Wallace
- "History speaks for itself" on what defines a good/bad leader.
- As you go through your career, establish Mentors.
- JOAG will have very special guests for our February meeting. On Friday, 10 February 2006, 1:00 PM Eastern, we'll be joined by our Surgeon General, VADM Richard H. Carmona, our Deputy Surgeon General, RADM Kenneth P. Moritsugu, and our Chief of Staff, RADM Robert C. Williams. JOAG is compiling a list of discussion topics and specific questions for this meeting.
- Friday, 10 February 2006 will be the next scheduled JOAG meeting.
- CALL-IN NUMBER: 866-772-5230 PASSCODE: 4413222
- For Official JOAG meeting minutes and other JOAG information, reference the JOAG website at <http://www.joag.org/minutes.html>

VII. VACANCIES

- CDR Meredith Bond announced that she will be posting an announcement within the next 2 to 3 weeks for the Fish and Wildlife Service Air Quality and will be advertised as a GS-7 to GS-9 (O-2 to O-3 level). The position will be open to Commissioned Corps officers. CDR Bond will send to the EPAC and the Recruitment and Retention subcommittee.
- RADM Barror mentioned that he and CAPT Craig Shepard who is the CPO of the Environmental Health Office will meet with head of human resources and administrator of EPA on February 10, 2006. They will discuss EPA hiring more Commissioned Officers.

- RADM Barror said he will be contacting current Commissioned Officers to possibly discuss associated issues. CDR Bond said that she would be willing to discuss her experience with the EPA and the hiring issues. CDR Bond no longer works with the EPA but work with them for 10 years. CDR Bond mentioned the hiring of Commissioned Officers is more of a region by region issue and there is some cultural issues too.
- CDR Kardous of CDC will pass on names to RADM Barror of officers who worked with the EPA and now work for the CDC.
- The EPA at one had well over 200 engineers and now the numbers are down to around 30.
- For official JOAG meeting minutes and other JOAG information, reference the JOAG website at www.joag.org/minutes.html

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Any officer that missed the roll call, please submit your contact information to LT Roger Dahozy at roger.dahozy@ihs.gov.
CAPT Ludington adjourned the meeting at 2:40 PM EST.

IX. **EPAC MEETING PARTICIPATION**

Participants: (Members in bold)

CDR David Ausdemore (CDC), CDR Meredith Bond (At Large), LTJG Bradley Cunningham (FDA), CDR Bradley Harris (NPS), CDR Tom Heintzman (IHS), LT Vivian Iskander (IHS), CDR Churci Kardous (CDC), CDR John Longstaff (IHS), CAPT James Ludington (IHS), LCDR Jennifer Mosser (OS), CDR Sue Neurath (CDC), LT Varsha Savalia (FDA), LCDR Hilda Scharen-Guivel (At Large), CDR Adam Scully (FDA), LCDR Emil Wang (FDA), RADM Richard Barror (CPO, ex-officio), CAPT Jose Cuzme (FDA, ex-officio), LT Roger Dahozy (Recorder, ex-officio).

Members Absent:

CDR Mitch Constant (IHS), CDR Allen Jarrell (EPA), CDR Jamie Natour (HRSA)

Official Alternates Present:

LCDR Jonathan Rash, LTJG Nazmul Hassan

Guests:

CAPT Dave Koski (IHS), LT Jennifer Schuppe (CDC), CDR Steven Rhodes.

X. **AUTHORIZATION**

I have recorded the above EPAC meeting minutes:

LT Roger N. Dahozy
Recorder, EPAC

Date

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

CAPT James Ludington, P.E.
Chair, EPAC

Date

I authorize distribution of these minutes:

RADM Rick Barror, P.E.
Chief Engineer, USPHS

Date