

**Minutes of the Meeting
Engineer Professional Advisory Committee
Thursday, March 23, 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. The January 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 April 27, 2006, at 1:30 PM EST. 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:

- Engineers week was very successful. Many individuals were recognized and in particular CDR John Cardarelli of the EPA was selected as the NSPE Federal Engineer of the Year. Congratulations to CDR Cardarelli for receiving this outstanding national award, in which he competed with 24 nominations many federal agencies, with 3 other PHS nominees. CDR Cardarelli is a registered professional engineer, however is not in the PHS engineer category; he is an HSO category. RADM Barror tried to inquire about getting CDR Cardarelli into the engineer category, however CDR Cardarelli will be the HSO PAC Chair next year and thus was not able to.
- Additional awards will be presented at the COA conference in Denver and SAME conference in New Orleans. RADM Barror is pleased to announce that RADM Gary Hartz will be the recipient of the Villforth COA Leadership Award, LT Samuel Russell is the recipient of the Ian K. Burgess Young Engineer of the Year Award, Erika Schoen of the IHS will receive the Roger Lynch Young Engineer of the Year Award, CDR Brad Harris will receive the SAME Hollis Medal, LT Steven Soyer (IHS) will receive the SAME Green Medal, and the SAME Cummings Award (Unit Award) is awarded to a team of 5 engineers who work for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, under rural utility cooperative demonstration projects.
- Additionally 4 literary awards will be given:
 - Farhad Memarzadeh received recognition for an engineering publication coauthored by a team of people from NIOSH for research for occupational health and hazards for manufacturing wood pallets.

- A management literary award will be awarded to CDR Churci Kardous and two others.
- Another engineering publication award will be awarded to a CDC/NIOSH group for a paper about reduction of irrespirable silica exposure by brick cutting (lead author Bryan Beamer).
- These awards will officially be presented at the COA during engineering category day on May 2, 2006.
- RADM Moritsugu announced six new flag officers during this month's Surgeon General's PAC meeting. There are as follows:
 - CAPT Mitch Cohen (CDC)
 - CAPT Boris Lushniak (FDA)
 - CAPT Newton Kendig (BOP)
 - CAPT Van Hubbard (NIH)
 - CAPT Richie K. Grinnell (IHS)
 - CAPT Vincent Berkley (IHS)
- RADM Moritsugu also announced that effective April 1, 2006 RADM John Babb will be promoted from O-7 to O-8.
- In April, another notice will be sent to all agencies for nominations for additional candidates for flag billets.
- Thank you to CDR Hung Trinh and CDR Prior for their work involving a new PHS operations coin commemorating the deployment to the gulf for the hurricanes. The coin will officially be announced during the COA conference.
- Admiral Knouss made a presentation at the SG PAC meeting basically saying that the 170 page report on the "transformation" completed by the committee will be forwarded to each of the agency heads for their review and comments, which will be followed by a meeting with secretary to discuss the recommendations from the transformation workgroups.
- RADM Babb announced that there continues to be deployments to Louisiana. There are currently deployments being made to Alaska by OB Nurses. Also, 6 PHS officers were identified for a mission to the North Atlantic that will take place in April and May. Six other PHS officers were selected for a 36-day mission in the Philippines.
- All agencies were asked to identify "mission critical" officers. This information is currently being submitted to OFRD. OFRD will be forming the tier-1 teams and SERTs in May. The goal is to have at least one team building exercise before June 1, 2006, with 105 person teams and 10 thirty-person SERTs. The teams and team leaders will be identified around May 1st with training soon to follow. The goal is to say that the PHS is ready with their tier-one teams by the start of hurricane season which is June 1st.
- CDR Heintzman asked a question regarding the involvement of EPAC with the tier-one team formations. The tier-one groups are basically built around an NDMS model in terms of being a clinical model. However, LCDR Mosser, who is on the transformation work group, stated that there are engineers on the tier-one teams. It is recommended that when it comes to building the tier-one teams, the team leaders will be identified through OFRD

and then the teams will be filled by the team leaders through an application process. So, there would be open application process to fill the teams.

- LCDR Mosser also stated that there are two-teams that have a strong emphasis with engineering, environmental health, and industrial hygiene type missions. There will be a lot of opportunities for engineers to be involved with the two-tier teams.
- The “three and freeze” policy looks like it will be “stopped in its tracks”, as reported by the PAC. RADM Barror was unable to determine if the policy was stopped or simply postponed. However, all indications are that the policy will not be implemented after this promotion cycle. There hasn’t been an official document that has been signed yet, but it is very apparent that it’s only a matter of time.
- OCCO has several O-3 to O-5 vacancies. Detailed information is on the OCCO list serve. Application deadlines are next week. OCCO wants these vacancies filled right away.
- CAPT Bill Knight (OCFAM) discussed, during the PAC meeting, consolidating all the PAC websites to one server and possibly standardizing them so that there is consistency of information and format. EPAC needs to identify a person who can work with CAPT Knight and represent the EPAC on this project. This may be a good venue to improve the engineer’s website.
- CAPT Ludington asked if the transformation reports will be reviewed by the PACs. RADM Barror stated that this will not be done in the near future. The reports are still considered “draft” until the agencies have had their input. Once the agencies have reviewed and commented on the draft, then they are considered completed, with confirmation by the secretary. There has been no role yet for the PAC chairs in this process.

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

- Thank you to all those that attended the engineer’s luncheon last month and those that helped with the functions.

III. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Frequently Asked Questions for Billets Paper:

CDR Neurath asked if the FAQ Billets Paper update could be postponed till the April meeting. The updates have been made based on the comments received and need to be resubmitted.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Engineer Lessons Learned Talking Paper:

- CDR Ausdemore reported that this paper is information prepared by the Emergency Preparedness subcommittee for EPAC review. The subcommittee recommends forwarding this paper to the Chief Engineer for his use. This document was sent to the EPAC prior to the start of today’s meeting and CDR Ausdemore would like comments and feedback with a motion of approval to accept the paper during April’s EPAC meeting.

- Information was gathered regarding the hurricane deployments as to what worked well and what areas could be improved. The paper is divided into various sections. Executive Summary, Purpose, Overview of engineering deployments.
- Data was provided by OFRD. The twelve deployment roles were investigated to see how they were utilized. Then, mission assignments were investigated, with regards to what types of missions were supported by engineers.
- The document includes various graphs of information. One graph depicted 90 engineers deployed to the field, 13 engineers deployed to support the HHS headquarters, and 15 engineers deployed to support the agencies.
- Another graph depicted the different type of missions assigned by OFRD: 30 engineers supported medical teams, 25 engineers supported SERT activities, 24 engineers conducted engineering assessments, 5 engineers supported shelters and camps, and 7 engineers conducted miscellaneous assignments.
- The paper discusses evaluation procedures on how the information was obtained and organized. Last fall, conference call meetings were done to obtain feedback about the deployments from various engineers deployed.
- Four areas of information include: Role definition, Training, Internal Networking, and External Partnership.
- Eleven recommendations have been identified with each recommendation prioritized. The subcommittee wants to focus on these recommendations and use them as goals for the upcoming year.
- Comments for this paper are due to CDR Ausdemore by April 7, 2006.
- CDR Helgeson complimented CDR Ausdemore and the subcommittees' work in this endeavor. This paper is a possible vehicle to formally voice the engineer's recommendations up the chain of command. CDR Helgeson asked if this document will include an Appendix to summarize the content of the paper which will help communicate the information to field engineers.

A. CO Involvement in Initiating an American Legion Resolution:

- CDR Milne is asking for help and has been working on an effort (non sanctioned activity) to get the American Legion to accept PHS officers on the basis of public health service. CDR Milne has been relatively unsuccessful doing this on his own. He has written a resolution that has been initiated at the local post level. Therefore he is looking for people across the country who might want to help who may or may not be current legion members. So far this issue has made it to a state level in West Virginia, but CDR Milne wishes to push this activity to a national level. He believes it would certainly benefit the PHS such that it will help with the recognition of PHS by the other services.
- CAPT Ludington suggested to CDR Milne to draft up a summary and then it could be sent out on the list serve. Anyone interested may contact CDR Milne directly.
- There will be an article about this effort written by CDR Milne that will be included in the next COA Frontline.

V. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- No report.

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

- The last meeting was held on February 14, 2006. The next meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2006, from 2:00pm-3:00pm.
- There are a few new members, but only one was present at the meeting. He introduced himself to the group as an electrical engineer from NIH.
- A presentation on the Whole Building Design Guide will be given soon. There's also a Product Guide, which is to provide a simple means for manufacturers to identify products which meet federal requirements as stated in the Unified Facilities Guide Specifications, and to provide a single source for the technical documentation which the government requires.
- A possible "in person" subcommittee was discussed, especially since there are new members. Possibly scheduling it at the same time as an upcoming EPAC meeting.
- CDR Sue Neurath, informed the subcommittee of CDC's Healthy Homes Initiative, which is an approach to preventing diseases and injuries resulting from housing-related hazards and deficiencies. The focus of the initiative is to identify health, safety, and quality-of-life issues in the home environment and to act to eliminate or mitigate problems. The group has been able to put together a workshop inviting state and federal partners to look at what can be done in future planning stages.
- We were informed that OMB is updating their Capital Planning Guide on how to put together budget and planning. Some of the biggest issues they will be addressing are risk management and performance analysis. At the time of our meeting, the draft was expected to be out by the end of February.
- Topics were discussed which included our goals mostly related to resource sharing. One point in particular that we agreed on, since most of us had been involved in the aftermath of Katrina, was that we would like to be involved in the creation of Guidelines for Temporary Healthcare Facilities, if one does not exist. The Subcommittee plans to discuss our thoughts more in detail at our next meeting.
- The subcommittee is also looking into getting an update as to the status of the Surgeon General's report on the Workshop on Indoor Air that was put together by Brian Kong.

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

- The subcommittee met on March 9, 2006.
- Discussed were updates to the career development website and updates on the COA conference and engineer category day.

- As of early March, 300 participants have signed up for the COA conference. There is currently no information on how many were “early bird” participants. However, a large turn-out is expected. We look forward to seeing everyone there!
- Nelson Mix provided an update on the reading list project. He’s received very good feedback from many people, including RADM Barror who has suggested a few books about leadership and PHS history. This information is currently on a Yahoo website that is being used as a test website. Right now the subcommittee is waiting to see how this website works-out to ultimately upload the information to the EPAC website.
- The subcommittee is discussing the release of an engineering survey to obtain information regarding the status of Engineers as whole in terms of educational backgrounds, degree levels, and professional certifications. This document will eventually be used as a career development planning tool.
- The subcommittee is also piloting a project to honor recent PHS engineer retirees by illustrating their careers to capture the idea of what their most memorable parts of their careers were and what advice they would have for junior engineers. This would give a quick overview of what careers look like for a PHS engineer. This will be done by interviewing recent retirees. The first interview has been completed by Retired CAPT Charles Dowel and was very interesting and informative.
- Other projects include the development of guidance documents and Officers’ CV. There also is an ongoing effort that involves the development of a professional journal, in terms guidance for organizing an Officer’s professional journal with regards to training, classes, and activities.
- Also the subcommittee is trying to sponsor and schedule a telephone conference that will specifically be a question and answer session regarding guidance for the development of an officers’ CV cover sheet, CV and professional journal. They are hoping to schedule this sometime during September 2006.
- CAPT Ludington asked about the reading list website address. If you go to the Yahoo website, you can do a simple search for the PHS reading list and people should be able to find it. Sue will let everyone know the actual address soon. However, some people have had problems with accessing the website, because in some areas the Yahoo webpage? is blocked.
- Also CAPT Ludington asked about the retiree’s web page. The subcommittee is hoping to have a link on the career development webpage for the interested officers to have an easy access.
- CAPT Ludington and RADM Barror thanked CDR Neurath and the entire career development subcommittee for their work with the COA engineering category day activities. He also reminded everyone to attend the social soon after the category day events. The social will be at the Denver history museum and there is link on the COA website to sign up.

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

- The Subcommittee held its monthly meeting on February 8 and March. The EPS continued to work on the Hurricane Deployments Lessons Learned talking paper. This paper summarizes the role that PHS engineers served during the 2005 hurricane responses. Information was compiled from feedback sessions and from deployment data provided by OFRD. The paper has been finalized and will be presented to the EPAC members during the March meeting.
- For the upcoming year, EPS will focus on the 11 recommendations identified in the talking paper as our group's goal for the upcoming year. There are two action plan items identified in the Engineer Strategic Action Plan that overlap with the EPS talking paper recommendations.
- The subcommittee has submitted their action plans and goals.
- The next subcommittee meeting will be held on April 2nd at 2:00PM.

E. Information: CDR Mitch Constant reported the following.

- Several meetings have taken place to discuss and figure out the protocols and technology.
- Goals and objectives have been established for the upcoming year. The primary goal is to update the existing PHS engineer's website where substantial work has been already done. A lot of the old references have been removed and replaced with new ones.
- Another goal is to obtain a complete list of the 2006 EPAC members and update the information on the website.
- CDR Mitch Constant will be the "gate keeper" of the website. If any subcommittees wish to have information or updates posted on the website, please contact Mitch.
- Also the subcommittee is discussing the development of a Newsletter and posting it on the EPAC website within the next couple of months. It will include information regarding agency and department updates, publishing accomplishments and commending engineers who are making a difference.
- CDR Constant and his subcommittee will be more than willing to work with CAPT Knight in helping to consolidate the PAC websites onto one server. RADM Barror will forward CDR Constants contact information to CAPT Knight.
- In the meantime CDR Coene and CDR Beck are developing an action plan to integrate two separate list serves into one, which will provide a single source to distribute information to engineers.
- Conference call meetings for the information subcommittee will be held on the third Tuesday of each month at 1:00PM EST.

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

- The date for the leadership conference are August 8, 9, 10, 2006 and the rotations are set. The subcommittee has trainers confirmed and funding is available through various resources.
- Currently, CEUs are being investigated and established for the conference.
- Soliciting for registration for the conference is expected to begin by the next EPAC meeting.
- The subcommittee is currently working on the flyer.

G. Mentoring: CDR Tom Heintzman reported the following:

- Subcommittee last met on February 7th, 2006. 2006 Goals and Action plan has been developed.
- In early March, e-mails introducing the Mentoring Program were sent to 13 recent CO hires. This has been quite effective as 6 Protégé applications have been returned this month. These new Protégés are being teamed with Mentors.
- Number of teams less than 1 year old is 13. Total teams since March 2003 is 35.
- CDR Mike Stover is working with the Leadership Seminar Committee to include mentoring in the upcoming San Diego Seminar.
- Next meeting will be April 4, 2006, 11 AM PST.

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

- The subcommittee meeting was held on March 7, 2006.
- Two meetings have been held with CDR Kardous as the new chair. Currently the goal is to address any outstanding action items from last year. Efforts are being focused on drafting the strategic plan and should be complete shortly.
- The subcommittee is trying to establish a central location for access to engineering recruiting materials and information. Information would include events and vacancy listings.
- The subcommittee is trying to establish a “nucleus” of engineers, recruiters, and mentors within each agency that can help with the recruitment and support of new officers.
- An annual recruitment agenda is being developed and planned.
- A list of proposed recommendations for improved retention among officers is currently being developed. This information will be organized to help determine career longevity and reasons why officers leave the PHS early.
- The next meeting will be on April 4, 2006 at 1:00PM EST.

I. Rules: CDR Ausdemore reported the following:

- Nominations are now being accepted for next year's EPAC membership. Self-nomination forms can be found on the usphsengineers.org web site and should be forwarded to CDR Ausdemore by June 30, 2006.

- This year the Rules Subcommittee plans on reviewing and updating the EPAC charter and by-laws. If anyone is interested in being part of the Rules Subcommittee, please contact CDR Ausdemore.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. **OCCO/DCCR liaison:** LCDR Rhondalyn Cox reported the following:
- General Duty Applications: 20
 - Senior COSTEP Applications: 3
 - Junior COSTEP Applications: 63
 - “Call to Active Duty” for month of February: 1
 - Current Status of Category: 396
 - Current Status of Corps: 5937
 - Largest Agency with Engineering Officers: IHS 244
 - Second Largest Agency with Engineering Officers: FDA 44
- B. **TISP Liaison:** CDR Dan Beck was absent.
- No report.
- C. **COA Liaison:** CDR Nate Tatum was absent.
- No report.
- D. **SAME Liaison:** CDR Randall Gardner reported the following:
- RADM Barror gave a presentation on the PHS at the SAME Services Briefing.
 - The next event will be a strategic planning session. Goals and objectives for 2005 and 2006 include:
 - Increase diversity in public sector participation in the Society through leadership at the national level.
 - Reducing public sector dues and eliminating post dues.
 - Revise the regional conference guidelines for local public sector employees.
 - Support continuing education for licensure and professional development of members. For example the organization is supporting facility management training.
 - Thus the information provided is a good mix of public and private sector information that will aid all members.
 - The proposed objectives for 2006 and 2007 are:
 - Increase diversity in public sector participation.
 - Conduct SAME readiness and homeland security program.
 - Recommend initiatives to support the national response plan.
 - Facilitate support to the uniformed services and implementation of transportation initiatives.
 - There will be an education and training conference in New Orleans on March 29th. There will be specific sessions for PHS engineers. RADM Barror will be in attendance.

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

- The JOAG meeting was held on 10 March 2006; here are issues discussed in the meeting that are of interest to EPAC in general and more specifically to Junior Engineer Officers
- CAPT Chen received the “Outstanding Service Medal” – congratulations
- The Outstanding Service Medal is presented in recognition of continuous outstanding leadership in carrying out the mission of the Public Health Service, or performance of a single accomplishment which had a major effect on the health of the Nation, or performance of a heroic act resulting in the preservation of health or property.
- Thanks to members for their COA convention preparation and JOAG programs, activities, etc.
- JOAG bylaws being revised
- Call for new members: We will have open seats in the following categories: Dental (1), Engineer (1), HSO (3), Pharmacy (1), Medical (1), and Therapy (1).
- White House Report on The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,
 - USPHS referenced: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/reports/katrina-lessons-learned/>
- More Co-Steps coming into Corps
- There were 188 outstanding COERS
 - <https://dcp.psc.gov/cclogin/ccmislogin.aspx>
 - http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF_docs/MC380.pdf
- Annual leave that was disapproved during Hurricanes will be automatically reinstated.
 - <http://dcp.psc.gov/sgletters.asp>
- Statistics provided on the “Three and freeze” policy – workgroup report pending final approval before being released, the policy increases completion for promotion and reduced promotion opportunity for 20-30+ year career officers. The ASH has the final say in approval/disapproval of policy.
- Sizing of the Corps – To develop the best way to transition the Corps’ current size and professional distribution to an ideal number, based on estimates for basic needs and more aggressive needs.
- Classification and Positions – Tasked with developing implementation plans for grouping officers, position identification, billet content, and billet approval process.
- Assignments – Tasked with developing implementation plans related to isolated/hardship, hazardous duty and difficult-to-fill positions, officer assignments, and position allocation systems.
- Recruitment and Training – Tasked with developing implementation plans related to recruitment and training.
- COA Conference

- Leadership Institute – removed limits on participants, all are welcome. Two (2) Junior Officer panels and planned event.
- JOAG Vice Chair report:
 - Great work on the new website look. <http://www.joag.org/>
 - Encourage membership and running for executive positions. JOAG Voting Membership Call for Nominations
- Membership - JOAG Voting Membership Call for Nominations, due 14 April 2006
 - <http://www.joag.org/join.html#The JOAG call for Nominations>
 - Three basic criteria are required for eligibility. Officers applying:
 - Must have a rank of Temporary O-4 and below;
 - Must meet Basic Readiness; and
 - Must not be eligible for O-5 until the 2008 Promotion Cycle.
- Communications / Publications – ongoing meetings, newsletter, articles and R&R
- Professional Development – JOAG medallion (coin) to be sold at COA Convention, career presentation to be provided to Junior Officers, great job on CO-Step letter.
- T-Shirt Contest Completed – T-Shirts, coffee cups, and water bottles will be available at the convention. No mail in orders
- COTA – BOTC training continues, training to be provided at COA Convention
 - <http://dcp.psc.gov/COTA/default.asp>
 - <http://www.coausphsconference.org/PrePost.cfm>
- Check your PIR for deployment information (must be deployed for 7+ days)
- COA Liaison - PHS Operation coin for the hurricanes of 2005 Katrina, Rita and Wilma to available at COA Convention.
- RADM William Craig Vanderwagen, Director, OCPS – to present at April JOAG Meeting
- Friday, 14 April 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

No vacancy announcements.

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 3:02 PM EST.

IX. EPAC MEETING PARTICIPATION

Participants: (Members in bold)

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

Members Absent:

CDR Meredith Bond (At Large), CDR Mitch Constant (IHS), CDR Allen Jarrell (EPA), CDR Jamie Natour (HRSA), CDR Randall Gardner (SAME, ex-officio),

Official Alternates Present:

LTJG Nazmul Hassan, LCDR Jonathan Rash

Guests:

CDR Kevin Milne, 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