



# U.S. Public Health Service Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC)



## Meeting #242 Minutes, 13JULY2021

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### I. Call to Order – CAPT Jessica Havranek, Chair-Elect

The meeting was called to order at 1300 ET.

### II. Roll Call –LCDR Corey Butler, Secretary/Treasurer

Roll call was performed; a quorum was confirmed.

#### Voting Member Attendance Status: Present, Absent, Excused

Last Name	First Name	Rank	Status	Name of Alternate in Attendance
Bales	David	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Bird	Bill	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Bowser	Travis	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Butler	Corey	LCDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Darr	Charles	LCDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Dittrich	Michelle	CDR	Excused	Click or tap here to enter text.
Erling	Doug	LCDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Evans	Erin	CDR	Excused	LCDR James Gooch
Frank	Samuel	LCDR	Excused	Click or tap here to enter text.
Ferry	Krista	LCDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Galvez	Steven	LCDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Havranek	Jessica	CAPT	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Hunter	Candis	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Kupper	Drew	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
McLanahan	Eva	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
McNamara	Kathryn	LT	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Merritt	Steven	LCDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Otto	Jessica	CDR	Excused	Click or tap here to enter text.
Quinn	Mike	CAPT	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Smith	Martin	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Vaouli	Elena	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.
Williams	Racquel	CDR	Present	Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Voting Guests and Attendees Present

Last Name	First Name	Rank	Organization Represented
Eastlake	Adrienne	LCDR	Admin Team

### **III. Chief Professional Officer Report – RADM Kelly Taylor**

- Congratulations to those that were promoted!
- There will be a town hall this Friday, 16JUL2021 1400–1600 EST. Promotion modernization efforts will be discussed.
  - Questions and concerns were collected. A total of 22 questions will be moved forward. They fall into the following categories: awards, direction of Corps, benchmark changes, transparency, promotion, morale, and health/well-being of officers.
- Officer Promotion Package Verification system (OPPVS) system – new system that should help with missing and organization of document required for promotion.
- Surgeon General recently stated priorities for officers:
  - Improving Corps deployability and increasing equitability in deployment. This may mean decreasing mission critical
  - Increase infrastructure to support officers
  - Well-being of officers
- OBC 128 will be next week and there are NO EHOs. We may need to address this in the future.
- EHO appointment standards have been published – please check out the webinar and FAQs.

### **IV. Chair - CDR Jessica Havranek for CDR Jessica Otto**

- Submitted July quad chart to CCHQ
  - Status updates
  - Concerns & Critical Issues
  - Actions Taken
  - Next Steps
- Request to have ASH speak at VTS next month was approved
- Environmental Health Month
  - Will be sending out correspondence requesting engagement from subcommittees. Please start thinking about what you can contribute. Be prepared to submit draft ideas by August.

### **V. Chair-Elect – CDR Jessica Havranek**

- Voting member self-nomination window closed 09JUL2021. Packages to be sent to the current voting members for review by next Friday, 23JUL2021. Please review them and be prepared to discuss during the August meeting.

### **VI. Ex-Officio – CDR Elena Vaouli**

- How is EHOPAC leadership advancing diversity, equity & inclusion (DEI) considerations in our practices, policies and procedures?
  - Creating a space to explore & discuss DEI at weekly Executive Committee & monthly EHOPAC meetings
  - Achieved goal of expanded rank-representation (O3 – O6) on EHOPAC following 2021 temporary promotions
  - Prioritized inclusivity in recent new Voting Member recruitment activities (advertising via multiple channels, duration of application window).
  - Continuing to examine existing EHOPAC policies, procedures and practices through DEI lens, and encouraging all VMs to bring ideas, questions and concerns to the attention of the EC

## VII. Secretary/Treasurer Report –LCDR Corey Butler

### Secretary Updates

- Mid-year volunteer process complete
  - Notification soon
- Please review and vote on June minutes

### Treasurer Updates

- Treasury Closed

## VIII. Executive Committee Liaison Report – CDR Eva McLanahan

- Liaisons
  - Considering other groups and best method
- New NEHA REHS/RS Study Guide has been released. Available at <http://www.neha.org>.
- World Environmental Health Day – 26SEP2021
  - Will coordinate some messages with NEHA. Dr. Dyjack is their lead for messaging. More to come.
- EHO Anonymous Feedback form available throughout the year. Please ensure this is on your signature line!
  - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NDXMFWX>
- Thirty-one new comments since last meeting
  - Both Career Development (CD) and RADM Taylor solicited feedback on benchmarks and promotions. This contributed to the significant increase.
  - Comments and suggestions were shared with CD and RADM Taylor. She sent anonymous EHO feedback to CCHQ for consideration for the Town Hall.
- Anonymous Feedback Comments
  - Even though there were a lot of comments about promotions and benchmarks, some of the comments centered around the EHOPAC activities and how we can support
  - One person asked if the PAC had civilian EH professionals in our ranks since they are a large part of the overall workforce within the [non-commissioned] PHS.
    - The answer to this is no, only in liaison capacity; however, it is something we can discuss.

## IX. Squad Reports

### Awards – CDR Williams

- The Eason, Moran, Todd, and Crow (EMTC) Awards have been shipped to the winners. Next, we'll begin planning for the ROY awards.
- I participated in the first Joint- PAC AWARD Committee Meeting, where I shared EHOPAC's process for SAA, subcommittee unit awards, joint PAC awards, and individual awards. The goal of this joint committee is for PACs to discuss their awards experiences, lessons learned, challenges, and best practices.

### Career Development –CDR Bowser and CAPT Quinn

- Notable News
  - Work Plan 2021 Goals Completed (30%)
    - Milestones updated
    - CEU Summary Sheet Updated
    - Benchmarks
- 2021 Major Initiatives
  - Recent Actions, Activities, Accomplishments
    - Last Call 25JUN2021

- Finalized 2021 Work Plan, SOPs, Roster
- Current Needs
  - None at this time: Requested additional 3-4 volunteers before end of CY
- Next Steps
  - 2021 Work Plan Documents currently being reviewed by Work Groups for edits
  - Reviewing comments on Benchmarks to work on new supplemental guidance
  - Next Meeting 16JUL2021

### Communications – CDR Dittrich and LT McNamara

- We are accepting submissions for the August edition of the *EHO Assessment* newsletter.
  - Please send announcements for August-October to LCDR Matthew Kozler ([matthew\\_kozler@nps.gov](mailto:matthew_kozler@nps.gov)), LCDR Tyler White ([tyler.white@bia.gov](mailto:tyler.white@bia.gov)), and LT Stephanie Bridges ([stephanie\\_bridges@nps.gov](mailto:stephanie_bridges@nps.gov)).
- We are still greatly in need of 2021 photos for the EHOs In Action photobook! We would love some photos of officers in masks performing their duties.
  - Send high resolution photos from 2021 CDR Christopher Smith ([nxz0@cdc.gov](mailto:nxz0@cdc.gov)) with “submission” in the subject line. Include a short description (a sentence or two) that can be used as a caption and identify the officers in the photo. Photo release forms are required for images with non-PHS personnel.
- Thank you to the officers who have submitted their information for the EHO Officer Leader Profiles. Stay tuned for more great profiles of your fellow EHOs in the *EHO Assessment*!
- The Social Media team continues to post important announcements, job opportunities, and items of interest to Facebook and LinkedIn.

### History – CDR Smith and CDR Bird

- ECHO Team - Capturing deployments has resumed and focused on completed missions & excluding missions related to the UC and COVID-19
- ECHO Team - Capturing the EHO Award Winners of previous years is currently making efforts to identify officers prior to 2017
- The Operations Team - Retiree Recognition Program drafting five retiree recognition letters and is making initial contact with the remaining seven retirees
- The 508 Compliance Team - Considering ways for editing the ECHO publication and publishing in a live 508 complaint document

### Information Technology – CDR Evans (LCDR Gooch)

- The website editor tool, called the “Jarmanator”, was created by PHS Officer CAPT Dwayne Jarman. OASH has approved CAPT Jarman to target and resolve the problems with the editing issue, however CAPT Jarman is currently on deployment and those duties supersede the authorized resolution of the editor tool. The IT website team is creating and maintaining a spreadsheet that categorizes and prioritizes all website updates so that when the tool is repaired all updates can be made in the order they were received or based on PAC priority.
- The Information Technology Chartered Advisory Committee (ICAC) is preparing to solicit for new voting members, including one EHO. IT is working with the EC to develop an application process that is fair and equitable and will ensure EHO representation on the ICAC. The ICAC EHO VM selectee will serve a three-year term 10/1/2021-9/30/2024. The official call for nominations will be made across all PACs/PAGs mid-July with a likely deadline of July 31.
- IT assisted M&R by hosting and recording the EHO Recruitment Webinar. IT is currently working on 508 compliance of the video for future web posting. We’re hoping this will serve as a proof of concept to allow for easier and quicker distribution of recorded videos that are 508 compliant to broader audiences. IT is also researching the potential use of a private or public YouTube channel (Thanks to LCDR Merritt for advocating for this potential solution) in the hopes that the PAC can more easily post

and share videos in future. IT will present the YouTube findings and options to the EC for consideration and approval.

- IT is finalizing our APAN vs MAX.gov considerations and recommendations to share with the EC.
- Two IT team members are leaving or have left on maternity leave so we're a bit short staffed. We're hoping to add a new website team member to fill one of those gaps. However, we'll be a bit shorthanded on the APAN/Listserv team for a bit. In the meantime, if there are APAN/Listserv needs, please reach out to CDR Evans.

### **Marketing and Recruitment – CDR Bales and CDR Kupper**

- AAP Workgroup members are attending the Inter-PAC Recruitment call with other PAC recruitment members. Workgroup member reached out to CCHQ to see if someone from CCHQ could join in on the workgroup calls. This resulted in them being told PACs are not supposed to be involved with any active applicants – that is, an applicant that has submitted their packet for consideration. In short, it sounded like CCHQ is OK with PACs engaging in recruitment activities, but nothing afterward, including providing assistance in securing positions, following up on the progress of a packet, and other activities that PACs have done in the past— the main purpose of the AAP Workgroup. It was speculated that there may be legal/privacy issues from PACs engaging in such activities, and it may also explain why PACs stopped receiving the names of applicants, but this has not been confirmed.
  - Action Item: We should figure out the best way to see how we can either work with these restrictions, or advocate for a change, or at least an explanation of this roadblock. We are not sure if this is best handled by the PAC or the CPO, but based on comments made on the call, this is an item of significant concern to all the PACs, as it inhibits our ability to assist any applicants and can even have a detrimental effect on recruitment activities. It is clear that CCHQ does not have the bandwidth to support all of the applicants, and yet they are not leveraging the resources of the PACs to do so.
- AAP also - Review and revision of current AAP documents
  - Frequently Asked Questions
  - USAJobs job aid presentation
  - Securing Your First Assignment
  - AAP Welcome Letter
- AAP - Reviewed and updated the Hiring Officials spreadsheet
- M&R Hosted the Recruitment Webinar. We had multiple WGs involved. Our RAE workgroup Lead, LT Pink took the lead on updating the EHO recruitment presentation with the new USPHS branding. Thanks to the JRCOSTEP WG members LT Wrona, LCDR Kincaid, & LT Steiner, and a former COSTEP for putting on the presentation and RADM Taylor for her opening/closing remarks.
  - Also appreciate RAE WG Lead LCDR Joplin for distributing the information to our Adopt-a-school and all reps for their efforts. Thanks as well to IT SC for their assistance with the virtual platform and 508 compliance to assist us with being able to share the presentation and recording.
- Marketing and Materials (M&M) WG – Developed an EHO “one pager” that introduces the EHO category. Document was requested by leadership for the new administration.
- Upcoming Needs/Priorities –
  - Continue to assist applicants as they reach out to M&R for assistance.
  - Also wanted to highlight that the 2022 JRCOSTEP open application window is currently open until 30SEP2021.

### **Mentoring and Orientation – CDR Ferry and CDR Hunter**

- Officer Basic Course (OBC) was cancelled for June 2021. The July OBC Open House is tentatively scheduled for 27JUL2021 but no EHOs are rostered.
- 2020 Mentoring Program evaluation survey results have been received and the workgroup is in the process of analysis. Results will be used to improve this year's mentoring program and will be published in the EHOPAC newsletter. The survey response rate was low, and we are considering making the survey mandatory for receipt of a program participation thank you letter.
- Currently revising the EHOPAC OBC Open House and Graduation SOPs

- Need to fill remaining 4 SC volunteer positions
- Currently soliciting Officers in the DC area who would be interested in attending OBC Open House and Graduation in preparation of returning to in person
- Mentoring Program and Database workgroup will be opening the soliciting for mentors and mentees for the 2021 program in August.
- Next all hands meeting will be held on 27JUL2021

### **Policies and Standards – LCDR Erling**

- CCHQ released the revision to Category Specific Appointment Standards, CCI 213.03 on 25JUN2021.
- The following are a list of changes from the previous appointment standards:
  1. Removal of doctoral degrees from EHAC and ABET programs due to the non-existence of accreditation for these degrees.
  2. Addition of the requirement for candidates applying with a CEPH-accredited qualifying degree to provide additional evidence the degree met the requirements for specialization or concentration in environmental health, occupational health and safety, or industrial hygiene on an official transcript or confirmation on school letterhead by the director or chair of the degree program.
  3. Addition of the requirement for candidates applying with a CEPH-accredited qualifying degree to possess a current NEHA REHS/RS, REHS/RS-IT or a state issued RS or REHS eligible for NEHA reciprocity.
  4. Removal of qualifying candidates with a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in any field possessing certification as an industrial hygienist (CIH) by the American Board of Industrial Hygiene or certification as a health physicist (CHP) by the American Board of Health Physics.
- P&S to submit an article detailing these changes in the next EHO Assessment.

### **Readiness –LCDR Merritt and LCDR Darr**

- Policy Updates
  - New issuance on Medical Readiness (CCI 221.02 Effective: 14JUN2021) has been posted to CCMIS. The instructions updates on policy on the completion, review, and disposition of medical reports.
  - Additional updates on readiness have posted to the RDB Self Service Home Page covering:
    - Field Medical Readiness Badge - relocated within RDB Self-Service and is now displayed within the "Certification and Training" section, as item #3. The next eligibility report was generated JULY 1. Officers identified as eligible will be notified upon conclusion of the review period (approximately early September).
    - Influenza - An N/A is displayed on the dashboard for the 90-day projection (September). Readiness checks for Influenza do not occur during September-December months, allowing officers to obtain this readiness requirement and submit documentation no later than 31DEC2021
    - BLS - Officers identified as "Not Qualified" for 01JUL2021 readiness due to missing BLS need to submit this missing readiness item before the 01AUG2021readiness check.
- Completed June Readiness Reminder
  - Highlighted: BLS Deadline; Deployment Procedures POM Revision; and Operation Artemis Deployment Survey
- Presented CEU certificates of completion to Readiness Down to Basics webinar participants
- 2021 Major Initiatives
  - Webinar archiving: File compression process is underway
  - Developing presentations for upcoming webinars

### **Training and Events – LCDR Frank and LCDR Galvez**

- Virtual Training Series
  - Dr. Rachel Levine, Assistant Secretary for Health is confirmed special guest presenter
  - Career Development SC and T&E Events WG presentations confirmed

- VTS Day 2 being coordinated with ad hoc Environmental Justice workgroup
- Received 6 abstracts for speaker presentations
- Next steps:
  - Select speaker(s), coordinate presentation of EHOPAC awards, CEU approval through IHS EHSC
- Training Listserv
  - Working with IT Subcommittee to determine how Listserv will be operationalized
  - Finalize: administrator roles, process for submission(s), and user control on frequency of notifications.
  - Next Steps: Demo Listserv

### **Environmental Justice – CDR Dittrich**

- Monthly meetings scheduled for remainder of operational year
- Current membership: two leads, an advisor, and seven volunteers
- 2021 Working Group Activities
  - EHO Communications (in collaboration with EHOPAC Communications SC)
  - September social media campaign
- Distribution of EJ webinars and trainings
  - September Training Event (in collaboration with EHOPAC Training and Events SC)
  - Part I: EJ Presentation
  - Part II: EHO Panel Presentation
- Document recommendations to EHOPAC on future work for CY2022 and beyond
- Invites and additional information to come

## **X. Open Discussion**

## **XI. Adjournment – CDR Jessica Havranek for CDR Jessica Otto**

- The meeting was adjourned at 1415 EST