****

**Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC)**

***EPAC General Meeting Minutes***

*September 10th, 2020*

1. **Welcome/Call to Order (EPAC Chair, CDR Samantha Spindel)**

* Meeting called to order at 1500 EST

1. **Roll Call (Executive Secretary, LCDR Michael Simpson)**

* Officers or Alternate emailed LCDR Simpson to confirm attendance

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subcommittee** | **Name** | **Alternate** | **Attendance**  **(Yes, No, Excused, Alternate)** |
| **EPAC Chair** | CDR Samantha Spindel | LCDR Michael Simpson | Yes |
| **Executive Secretary** | LCDR Michael Simpson | LCDR Timothy Martin | Yes |
| **Chief Engineer** | RADM Edward Dieser | N/A | Yes |
|  | | | |
| Awards | CDR John Kathol | CDR Michael Termont | Yes |
| CDR Matthew Mergenthaler | LCDR Travis Sorum | Yes |
| Career Development | LCDR Omobogie Amadasu | LCDR Joshua Sims | Yes |
| CAPT Eric Hanssen | CDR Leo Gumapas | Yes |
| Events | LCDR Derrick Buck | LCDR Timothy Martin | Yes |
| LCDR Michael Gifford | CDR Jeremy "Bret" Nickels | Yes |
| Information | CAPT Josh Simms | LT Drew Katherine | Yes |
| LCDR Garrett Chun | LT Adam Ramos | Yes |
| Public Health Engineering Practice | CDR Leo Gumapas | CDR Andrew Yang | Alternate |
| CDR James Coburn | LCDR Hanniebey Wiyor | Alternate |
| Readiness | CDR Frank Chua | CDR Shane Deckert | Yes |
| CDR Sean Bush | CDR Mark Hench | Yes |
| Recruitment and Retention | LCDR Praveen KC | CDR William Fraser | Yes |
| LCDR Fred Kelly | LCDR Kenneth Chen | Yes |
| Rules | CDR Deb Cox | CDR Stacey Yonce | Alternate |
| LCDR Matt Palo | LT Christian Parra | Yes |
| Strategic Planning for Engineering | CAPT David Harvey | LT Melissa De Vera | Excused |
| CDR Sam Russell | CDR David Gwisdalla | Yes |
| ***\* When a member is not available, the Alternate can serve as the voting proxy.***  ***\*\*See Appendix A for more information about each member, including hyperlinks to email addresses*** | | | |
|  | | | |
| **EPAC Liaisons** | | | |
| **CCWIAB** | CAPT Varsha Savalia | CDR Theresa Grant | Yes |
| **COA** | CDR Brad Cunningham | CDR Nikhil Thakur | Yes |
| **JOAG** | LT Colin Tack | LT Jaison Eapen | Yes |
| **SAME** | CDR Steve Sauer | LT Kevin Remley | Alternate |

1. **Chief Professional Officer (CPO) Remarks/Update** **(RADM Edward Dieser)**

* Hold comments until closing to prevent interfering with Subcommittee Reports and Presentation

1. **EPAC Chair Remarks (EPAC Chair, CDR Samantha Spindel)**

* The next Town Hall on Thursday October 8th from 2-3pm Eastern, just prior to our October EPAC call
* Engineers are encouraged to send questions for CPO to address during his Town Hall to Event Lead, LT Drew Katherine ([Drew.Katherine@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Drew.Katherine@fda.hhs.gov)) by **Friday, September 25th**

1. **Awards Subcommittee Discussion (CDR John Kathol, Vice Chair)**
2. **Strategic Initiatives Team (Lead: LCDR Travis Sorum –** [**travis.sorum@ihs.gov**](mailto:travis.sorum@ihs.gov)**)**

* Revised EOY, EROY and Michael Award Nomination Forms have been sent to EPAC Chair for review and submission to RADM Dieser. Awaiting feedback.
* Based on feedback, direction will be made to utilize revised nominations forms and procedures in 2020 or 2021.
* Begin outlining plan for updating Spring Award Forms and Nomination procedures.
* Have an updated form that is up to date will all current processes

1. **SOP Initiative (Lead: LCDR Abbas Bandukwala –** [**Abbas.Bandukwala@fda.hhs.gov**](mailto:Abbas.Bandukwala@fda.hhs.gov)**)**

* Reviewing Draft of SOP at the Subcommittee Chair Level
* Next Step: Submit to EPAC Chair/CPO for Review (September)

1. **Career Development Subcommittee Discussion (report out by CDS member LT Adam Cooke)**
2. **PE Book Share/Donate (Lead: LCDR Omobogie Amadasu –** [**omobogie.amadasu@ihs.gov**](mailto:omobogie.amadasu@ihs.gov)**)**

* Books shipped. 2 Engineers received out of 7 requests
* Requesting reimbursement for shipping
* One officer offered to donate old books any others?

1. **CPO Fact Sheet (Lead: LCDR Omobogie Amadasu –** [**omobogie.amadasu@ihs.gov**](mailto:omobogie.amadasu@ihs.gov)**)**

* Currently in development, awaiting feedback from CPO

1. **Biomedical Initiative (Lead: LCDR Thomas Peter –** [**Thomas.Peter@fda.hhs.gov**](mailto:Thomas.Peter@fda.hhs.gov)**)**

* Set to meet with CPO to discuss particulars later this month and align goals and project achievable

1. **Honor the late CAPT (ret) Gladys Rodriguez (Lead: Chair)** 
   * Finalized. Will post soon and send with Engineering Announcements
2. **Mentoring Program (Lead: Vice Chair)**
   * Development of database
3. **Online Engineering Masters Programs Survey (Lead: LCDR Tyrrell Lang –** [**Tyrrell.Lang@ihs.gov**](mailto:Tyrrell.Lang@ihs.gov)**)**

* Pending survey to then be release

1. **Events Subcommittee Discussion (LCDR Derrick Buck, Chair)**
2. **Chief Engineer’s Quarterly Meeting (Lead: LT Drew Katherine –** [**Drew.Katherine@fda.hhs.gov**](mailto:Drew.Katherine@fda.hhs.gov) **)**

* Virtual – October 8, 2020; 2-3pm EST
* Quarterly Town Hall right before the EPAC General Meeting. Be on the lookout for a save-the-date.

1. **AMSUS Annual Meeting (Lead: LCDR Michael Simpson –** [**michael.simpson@fda.hhs.gov**](mailto:michael.simpson@fda.hhs.gov)**)**

* Gaylord Nation Resort and Convention Center, MD, Dec. 6-10, 2020
* AMSUS has switched to 100% online. Registration opens September 15th. Reduction in price.
* Looking into having the presentations recorded for CEUs after the event.
* Possible new awards, will let category know of potential engineer focused awards
* Co-Leads: LCDR Michael Tollon, LCDR Hanniebey Wiyor

1. **E-Week (Lead: LT David Sullivan,** [**David.Sullivan@fda.hhs.gov**](mailto:David.Sullivan@fda.hhs.gov)**)**

* 2021 NSPE even is on Thursday, determining if to do morning of or afternoon prior
* Currently in the process of confirming the room and date

1. **COF Symposium (Lead: LCDR Fred Kelly –** [**fred.kelly@nih.gov**](mailto:fred.kelly@nih.gov)**)**

* Soliciting for abstracts later this year
* Possible Pre-Conference Training opportunity (Post-Disaster Response)
* Co-Lead: LCDR Matthew Palo, Lead-on-Deck: LCDR Michael Gifford

1. **SAME – JETC (Lead: CDR Benjamin Marnell –** [**benjamin\_marnell@nps.gov**](mailto:benjamin_marnell@nps.gov)**)**

* Oregon Convention Center, OR, May 18-21, 2021
* An internal kickoff meeting is happening on Friday.

1. **Information Subcommittee Discussion (CAPT Joshua Simms, Chair)**
2. **Content Management (Lead: CDR Jim Kohler –** [**Kohler.James@epa.gov**](mailto:Kohler.James@epa.gov)**)**

* Up to date on website requests
* Please check your Subcommittee pages for anything you would like
* Submit update requests to [EPAC-POSTINGS@LIST.NIH.GOV](mailto:EPAC-POSTINGS@LIST.NIH.GOV)
* Nothing new on the [Anonymous Feedback](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf-NzIg4JvEPggglkynXTjJrUl1W67q1rXo3n6KjjT9t9_FKg/viewform?c=0&w=1) section on website

1. **Newsletter (Lead: CDR Jason Peterson –** [**Jason.Peterson@cms.hhs.gov**](mailto:Jason.Peterson@cms.hhs.gov)**)**

* We have received 5 articles for inclusion to date for the Fall 2020 EPAC Newsletter
* Final Fall 2020 Newsletter completed around the end of October

1. **Combined Category Newsletter (Lead: CDR Chris Vaught –** [**Christopher.Vaught@ihs.gov**](mailto:Christopher.Vaught@ihs.gov)**)**

* On hold

1. **Public Health Engineering Practice Subcommittee Discussion (CDR Andrew Yang, Chair’s Alternate)**
2. **Administrative (Lead:** **Chair)**

* Addressed comments in SOP from Rules Committee
* Uploaded SOP onto PHEP website

1. **Article Publication and Review (Lead: Chair and Vice Chair)** 
   * Reviewed one article so far
   * If you need assistance with peer reviewed or non-peer reviewed article, then PHEP/Publication Review Work Group is happy to help
     + Email CDR James Coburn - [james.coburn@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:james.coburn@fda.hhs.gov) for article to be reviewed
     + Reviews are to be completed within 14 calendar days
2. **Readiness Subcommittee Discussion (CDR Frank Chua, Vice Chair)**
3. **Deployment Readiness Support (Lead: LCDR Michael Tollon –** [**Michael.Tollon@fda.hhs.gov**](mailto:Michael.Tollon@fda.hhs.gov)**)**

* Survey questions for Readiness Survey updated
* Working on identifying survey platform for distribution to voting members

1. **Readiness Training and Education: Training Curriculum (Lead: LCDR Steven Tidwell –** [**steven\_tidwell@nps.gov**](mailto:steven_tidwell@nps.gov)**)**

* 2021 COA Pre-Conference training collaboration w/ Events SC on *Post Disaster Safety Assessment Training of Buildings*

1. **Healthcare Facilities Training Initiative Developed (Lead: LCDR Praveen K.C. –** [**KC.Praveen@epa.gov**](mailto:KC.Praveen@epa.gov)

* Mini presentation on healthcare facilities codes (NFPA, ASHRAE, FGI)
* Identify various trade tools and equipment (bolometer, anemometer, and differential air pressure gauge) that may be used during deployment.



1. **Information Management/Engineer Booklet: Engineer Deployment Narrative (Lead: CDR Tara Bizjak -** [**Tara.Gooen@fda.hhs.gov**](mailto:Tara.Gooen@fda.hhs.gov)**)**

* 2019 Deployed Engineers Booklet under 508 compliance review
* COVID 19 Engineer Narratives Booklet anticipated complete by 9/30.

1. **Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee Discussion (LCDR Fred Kelly, Chair)**

* Voting Members: Please provide comments on draft survey by September 18th to focus on engineer roles and responsibilities amongst different agencies, deployment roles, and other efforts for PHS Modernization efforts
* Nothing substantive to report this month, meetings are bi-monthly with next meeting September 24th

1. **Rules Subcommittee Discussion (LCDR Matthew Palo, Chair)**
2. **Rules SOP (Lead: CDR Deb Cox –** [**Cox.Deborah@epa.gov**](mailto:Cox.Deborah@epa.gov)**)**

* Rules SOP is posted on EPAC website – <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/documents/EPAC_Rules_Subcommittee_SOP_July_2020.pdf>
* Great job to all Subcommittees submitting SOPs for format review.
* Continue to work with Subcommittees on their SOPs and expect all to be completed and posted by year end.

1. **Voting Member Selection (Lead: CDR Deb Cox –** [**Cox.Deborah@epa.gov**](mailto:Cox.Deborah@epa.gov)**)**

* Congratulations to the new incoming voting members!

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Voting Member** | **Agency** | **Duty Station** | |
| CDR Gregory Ault | IHS | Billings | MT |
| CDR Tara Gooen Bizjak | FDA | Silver Spring | MD |
| CDR Stacey Yonce | EPA | Washington | DC |
| LCDR Melissa de Vera | IHS | Bemidji | MN |
| LCDR Michael Simpson | FDA | Silver Spring | MD |
| LCDR Travis Sorum | IHS | Ukiah | CA |
| LT Bryan Wimer | CDC | Morgantown | WV |

1. **Strategic Planning for Engineering Subcommittee Discussion (CDR Samuel Russell, Vice Chair)**

* CDR Russell had a recent meeting with RADM Dieser and hope to provide a fulfilling update at next month’s call

1. **EPAC Funding Proposal**

* Career Development Subcommittee (LCDR Omobogie Amadasu, Chair)
  + PE Book Exchange Shipping Costs ($50)
    - CDS is making old Civil PE reference books available for officers attempting to pass their PE exam.
    - Preference will be given to officers/civil servants with the least amount of experience.
    - The Career Development Chair donated his PE book and study material in hopes other potentially will,
    - This $50 will reimburse initial shipment and if this program was to continue then the CDS Chair/Project Lead would cover the cost and then ask EPAC for additional reimbursements
    - If there is interest further and the $50 runs out then there will be a future request, potentially for greater than $50 if there is more interest or books available
* Events Subcommittee (LCDR Derrick Buck, Chair)
  + Flag Rain Covers and Shipping Cost ($137.17)
    - The flag sets were approved for purchase in April of 2019
    - Approved U.S. Flag Set & USPHS Set (04/09/2019): $370.00
    - Approved Amendment for Mounting Set (08/08/2019): $109.00
    - The three (US, USPHS, and Flag Officer flags) rain covers are sold by the same company which is supplying the flag sets. Once the protective covers have been approved, the procurement of the flag sets and covers will be made

1. **General Discussion/Questions**

* No general questions discussed

1. **Statement of Intent for 2021 EPAC Chair Elect and 2022 EPAC Chair**

* LCDR Praveen K.C.



1. **Commissioned Corps Women’s Issues Advisory Board Update (CAPT Varsha Savalia)**

* CCWIAB liaison to JOAG needed
* Maternal Mortality Initiative and Parental Leave Proposal: both pending update status from CCHQ
* Uniform Updates is coming. CCHQ confirmed some of the proposal from CCWAIB was incorporated but did not indicate which ones.
* CCWAIB goal this year to develop OBC anti-harassment and discrimination resource and training.
* ACTION ITEM: Engineer Liaison for CCWIAB from Jan 2021 to Dec 2023.
  + Engineer will be a voting member of CCWAIB. Will need to attend both monthly CCWIAB calls and EPAC calls as well as be active member of the CCWIAB. Please contact CAPT Varsha B. Savalia at Varsha.Savalia@FDA.hhs.gov with your interest.

1. **Commissioned Officer’s Association Update (CDR Brad Cunningham)**

* The Nothing substantive to report this month

1. **Junior Officers Advisory Group Update (LT Colin Tack)**

* JOAG OY20-21 begins on 10/1/2020, my term is ending on 9/30/2020
* OY20-21 JOAG Chair is LCDR Beth Wittry
* Your new EPAC/JOAG Liaison for OY20-21 is LCDR Michael Wandersee
* It’s been my pleasure to serve in this role and I look forward to other opportunities to serve EPAC
* Please join us for a **Journeyman Speaker Series (JSS)** presentation on Friday, September 11th, 2020 at 1300-1400 EST
  + **CDR William Bird** will be presenting on ***Overview of PACE – Prevention Through Active Community Engagement***
  + Conference Call Dial-in: 1-302-202-1106  
    Conference Code: 825385
* With the incoming Operational year there will be a great amount of volunteer opportunities within Subcommittees or even to lead Subcommittees

1. **Society of American Military Engineers Update (CDR Steve Sauer)**

* Executive Advisory Group (formerly USAG) 25 Aug 2020
  + SAME briefed group on Small Business Conference (SBC) developments
  + SAME briefed group on National Leader Development Program
    - 1st years class graduated, 2nd class has one PHS officer
  + Centennial Golden Eagles Awards postponed until Capital Week
  + Project Management Agreement and Cost Estimating work groups gave updates
* Small Business Conference will be virtual but not the same as JETC
  + Market Research Event
  + No Chiefs Panel this year
  + 8 Professional development tracks – 2 health care oriented
  + 04-06 November 2020
  + <https://www.samesbc.org/about.cfm>

1. **Closing Remarks (RADM Edward Dieser)**

* Difficult times continue and is most likely enhanced by schools starting back (remotely or in-person)
* Make time to take care of your own resiliency – there is not changes to the amount of leave to be carried over so I recommend using some this month if you can
* Remind officers to pursue getting physicals done, even if the PHU currently has a waiver, it is always best to do it now than rushing to do it later
* APFT waivers have expired as of 01 September therefore you have until the month of September to complete and log your APFT
* In August, RADM Dieser requested feedback from the category for the format of the current Town Halls by the ASH and SG as well as feedback for concerns of the category
  + The concerns and recommendations were heard throughout the categories
  + As a result, CPOs will have more input in future Town Halls to assist addressing all the questions
  + More information on dates and times forthcoming
* CPO Town Hall in October and shortly after a Panel Discussion of Senior Engineers to address questions and their experiences, how their career has evolved and ways to demonstrate leadership in their agency
  + Will focus on leadership but address other questions asked
* Those officers in the lowest quartile are required to receive counseling from senior officers, if you would like, RADM Dieser will offer the counseling, or if you have a senior officer in your agency, RADM Dieser can reach out for that possibility
* Congratulations to those who earned the vote to be an incoming Voting Member but please be aware it is contingent on the Surgeon General’s approval
* Commend LCDR Praveen KC’s bid to bring the category together and help show the amazing diversity throughout the category and look forward to working with you as a deputy next year
* In 2018 I began working with a “Counsel of Captains” that help improve the Category Benchmarks
* In 2019 I was preoccupied with being the Board Chair for the Chief Professional Officers
* In 2020 The Counsel has requested to make their members public to help officers know who they can turn to for leadership and counseling advice
  + Their names are in a forthcoming email

1. **Closing Remarks and Adjourn (RADM Dieser and CDR Samantha Spindel)**

* Voting Members: Reminder to vote by COB September 14 for two EPAC Funding Requests, currently have 30% of the votes
  + For PE book exchange shipping costs by the Career Development Subcommittee
  + For rain covers and shipping costs of flags by the Events Subcommittee
* Voting Members: Please provide recommendations for spending EPAC funds
* Please submit COVID-19 narratives to [epacreadiness@gmail.com](mailto:epacreadiness@gmail.com)!



* Please continue to maintain your readiness. Check Self Service Platform for the latest announcements
  + APFT Waiver expires in September
  + Vaccinations are not automatically waived
* Thank you to all who have deployed!
* COSTEP applications are open until September 30, 2020 for Summer 2021

**Next EPAC Meeting**

**2nd Thursday of the Month**

October 8th, 2020

1500 – 1600 EST

**Webex**: [**Start the meeting**\*](https://fda1.webex.com/fda1/j.php?MTID=m1ce91e7c5ae9bedeb962c2fb23d8ecf0)

*\*Click on URL and have system call you.*

***OR Call In***

**Call-In Number**: 210-795-0506

**Meeting Access Code:** 904 995 269

**APPENDIX A**

**2020 EPAC VOTING MEMBER FULL ROSTER**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chief Engineer** | | | | | |
| **Term** | **Name** | **Rank** | **Agency** | **EPAC Role** | **Location** |
| 2018-2021 | [Dieser, Edward](mailto:eyn3@cdc.gov) | RADM | CDC | Ex-Officio | Atlanta, GA |
| **EPAC Voting Members** | | | | | |
| **Term** | **Name** | **Rank** | **Agency** | **EPAC Role** | **Location** |
| 2018-2020 | [Spindel, Samantha](mailto:Samantha.Spindel@fda.hhs.gov) | CDR | FDA | EPAC Chair | Beltsville, MD |
| 2018-2020 | [Buck, Derrick](mailto:derrick.buck@ihs.gov) | LCDR | IHS | Events, Chair | Tempe, AZ |
| 2018-2020 | [Simms, Joshua](mailto:joshua.simms@fda.hhs.gov) | CAPT | FDA | Information, Chair | Silver Spring, MD |
| 2018-2020 | [Harvey, David](mailto:david.harvey@ihs.gov) | CAPT | IHS | Strategic Planning for Engineering, Chair | Rockville, MD |
| 2018-2020 | [Gumapas, Leo](mailto:leoangelo.gumapas@nih.gov) | CDR | NIH | Public Health Engineering Practice, Chair | Bethesda, MD |
| 2018-2020 | [Palo, Matthew](mailto:matthew.palo@fda.hhs.gov) | LCDR | CDC | Rules, Vice Chair | Jamaica, NY |
| 2019-2021 | [Hanssen, Eric](mailto:eric.hanssen@nih.gov) | CAPT | NIH | Career Development, Vice Chair | Hamilton, MT |
| 2019-2021 | [Amadasu, Omobogie](mailto:omobogie.amadasu@ihs.gov) | LCDR | IHS | Career Development, Chair | Rockville, MD |
| 2019-2021 | [Bush, Sean](mailto:sean.bush@ihs.gov) | CDR | IHS | Readiness, Vice Chair | Escondido, CA |
| 2019-2021 | [Praveen, KC](mailto:kc.praveen@epa.gov) | LCDR | EPA | Recruitment and Retention, Chair | Washington, DC |
| 2019-2021 | [Cox, Deborah](mailto:cox.deborah@epa.gov) | CDR | EPA | Rules, Chair | Atlanta, GA |
| 2019-2021 | [Russell, Sam](mailto:russell.sam@epa.gov) | CDR | EPA | Strategic Planning for Engineering, Vice Chair | Washington, DC |
| 2020-2022 | [Kathol, John](mailto:John.Kathol@ihs.gov) | CDR | IHS | Awards, Chair | Tempe, AZ |
| 2020-2022 | [Mergenthaler, Matthew](mailto:matthew.mergenthaler@ihs.gov) | CDR | IHS | Awards, Vice Chair | Sacramento, CA |
| 2020-2022 | [Gifford, Michael](mailto:michael_gifford@nps.gov) | LCDR | NPS | Events, Vice Chair | Washington, DC |
| 2020-2022 | [Chun, Garrett](mailto:garrett_chun@nps.gov) | LCDR | NPS | Information, Vice Chair | Portal, CA |
| 2020-2022 | [Coburn, James](mailto:James.Coburn@fda.hhs.gov) | CDR | FDA | Public Health Engineering Practice, Vice Chair | Silver Spring, MD |
| 2020-2022 | [Chua, Frank](mailto:Francis.Chua@ihs.gov) | CDR | IHS | Readiness, Chair | Sacramento, CA |
| 2020-2022 | [Kelly, Fred](mailto:fred.kelly@nih.gov) | LCDR | NIH | Recruitment and Retention, Vice Chair | Bethesda, MD |
| **Ex-Officio Volunteers** | | | | | |
| 2020 | [Simpson, Michael](mailto:michael.simpson@fda.hhs.gov) | LCDR | FDA | Executive Secretary | Silver Spring, MD |
| 2020-2021 | [Cunningham, Bradley](mailto:Bradley.Cunningham@fda.hhs.gov) | CDR | FDA | COA Liaison | Silver Spring, MD |
| 2019-2020 | [Savalia, Varsha](mailto:varsha.savalia@fda.hhs.gov) | CAPT | FDA | CCWIAB Liaison | San Antonio, TX |
| 2019-2020 | [Tack, Colin](mailto:colin.tack@fda.hhs.gov) | LT | FDA | JOAG Liaison | Jamaica, NY |
| 2019-2020 | [Sauer, Steve](mailto:Steve.Sauer@ihs.gov) | CDR | IHS | SAME Liaison | Spokane, WA |

\*Clicking on the Voting Member name will open their email address