



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EPAC)

Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2023

1) EPAC Chair Remarks (EPAC Chair, CDR Gifford)

- a) Welcome to the first meeting of EPAC 2023
- b) Thank you to RDML Wang and CDR KC for your leadership
- c) Thank you to outgoing EPAC Voting Members.
- d) Introduction of 2023 EPAC Executive Committee
- e) Uniforms, Deployment Preparation Plan, Carry over leave, trainings
- f) New 2023 calendar uploaded
- g) "Gifford's Gouge" – You are always making an impact when interacting with others. It can be positive or negative.

2) CPO remarks (RDML Wang)

- a) CCHQ still developing CCIs/POMs
- b) PHS Deployment Safety Academy for Field Experience (D-Safe) Consortium Training
- c) Carryover leave now 120 days.
- d) New Coast Guard Work Uniform to replace ODU 10/1/26

3) Agenda and Silent Roll Call (Executive Secretary, LCDR William Chang)

- a) Opening remarks by EPAC Chair
- b) Subcommittee updates
- c) Special project updates
- d) Liaison updates
- e) Open Floor
- f) Closing remarks
- g) Attendance taken by meeting sign in or email

Leadership	Name	Alternate	Attendance (Yes, No, Excused, Alternate)
Chief Engineer	RADM Emil Wang	Ex-officio	Yes
EPAC Chair	CDR Michael Gifford	CDR Jeremy "Bret" Nickels	Yes
EPAC Chair Elect; Rules Chair	CDR Matthew Mergenthaler	LCDR Julia Majkrzak	Alt
Executive Secretary	LCDR William Chang	Ex-officio	Yes
Rules	LCDR Melissa de Vera	LCDR Derrick Buck	Yes
Awards	LCDR Travis Sorum	LT Michelle Roy	Yes
	LT Drew Katherine	LCDR Jogy George	Excused
Career Development	LCDR Michael Simpson	LCDR Jacob Dyer	Yes
	CDR Chris Fehrman	LT Bijay Tamang	Yes
Events	CDR Roxanne Adeuya	LCDR Vicky Hsu	Yes
	LCDR Jason Eapen	LT Yvesna Blaise	Yes
Information	LCDR Gary Riley	LCDR Matthew Haith	Yes
	LCDR William Chang	LT Morgan Lee	Yes
Public Health Engineering Practice	LT Bryan Wimer	LCDR Michael Shahan	Yes
	LCDR Timothy Martin	LCDR David Sullivan	Yes
Readiness	CAPT Tara Gooen-Bizjak	LCDR Michael Tollon	Yes
	CDR David Gwisdalla	LCDR Steven Tidwell	Yes
Recruitment and Retention	CDR Stacey Yonce	LT Colin Tack	Yes
	CDR Mark Hench	CDR Jeff Allen	Yes

Leadership	Name	Alternate	Attendance (Yes, No, Excused, Alternate)
CCWIAB	CDR Kimberly Piermatteo		Excused
COA	CDR Kurt Kesteloot		Yes
JOAG	LCDR Michael Wandersee		Yes
SAME	LCDR Kevin Remley		Yes

4) Rules Subcommittee Discussion (Vice Chair, LCDR de Vera)

- a) Past highlight aligning with Corp modernization goals
- b) Projects and Goals
 - i) Implement and refine EIF process
 - ii) Review Voting member selection process for transparency, continuity, consistency
- c) Meetings: 10 AM EST on the 3rd Wednesday of every other month (Feb 15, Apr 19, Jun 21, Aug 16, Oct 18, Dec 18th (early due to holidays))
- d) Volunteer Opportunities. Volunteers from IHS, FDA, NPS, and ASPR. Reach out to CDR Mergenthaler and de Vera via email at matthew.mergenthaler@ihs.gov and melissa.devera@ihs.gov

5) Awards Subcommittee Discussion (Chair, LCDR Travis Sorum)

- a) EPAC Fall Awardees currently being vetted through CCHQ. Notifications around end of January.
- b) Departing Officers eligible for Special Assignment Awards
- c) Needs: Outreach Coordinator, Senior Editor (Awards Guide).
- d) Plans for the Upcoming Year:
 - i) Instituting in an Outreach Coordinator to more broadly advertise the Spring and Fall Awards cycles.
 - ii) Put in place an operational playbook to pass off to the next leadership team to continue to build on the improvements to the Subcommittee over the last several years.
- e) Spring Awards Cycle now open! Due FEBRUARY 7TH AT 11:59 P.M. EST. Please send nominations to travis.sorum@ihs.gov and Drew.Katherine@fda.hhs.gov.
 - i) Ian K. Burgess Outstanding Young PHS Engineer Award (Eligible to Commissioned Officers)
 - ii) Roger H. Lynch Outstanding Young PHS Engineer Award (Eligible to Civil Service Employees within a HHS Dept.)
 - iii) RADM John C. Villforth Leadership Award
 - iv) RADM Robert C. Williams Engineering Literary Award (Peer Reviewed)
 - v) RADM Robert C. Williams Engineering Literary Award (Open Category)

6) Career Development Subcommittee Discussion (Chair, LCDR Michael Simpson)

- a) Most Recent Deliverable: Promotion CV template that meets CCHQ requirements (impacts all officers)
- b) Top two 2023 Deliverables:
 - i) Identify and share relevant engineer credential, licensures, and advanced degrees that enhance Engineer officer's knowledge, expertise, and value to the USPHS.
 - ii) Develop recommendations for Engineer career progression paths within Career Pathways and tracks (i.e., technical/SME/senior advisor vs. management/ supervisor path).
- c) Meets fourth Monday from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm ET (next is January 23rd)
- d) Subcommittee makeup: 36 Members across 7 Agencies
- e) Current Needs:
 - i) Moderator/Coordinator for Senior Officer Panel(s)
 - ii) Support to any of the projects (Credentials, Career Paths, OBC Representative, Leadership Repository, Subcommittee Liaisons)

7) Events Subcommittee Discussion (Chair, CDR Roxanne Adeuya)

- a) 2023 Events and Initiatives
 - i) AMSUS 2023: 13-16 FEB –National Harbor, MD
 - ii) E-Week 2023: 23 FEB –IHS HQ, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD
 - iii) Social @ Top Golf prior to event –Announcement to come (22FEB 6-8PM)
 - iv) SAME JETC 2023: 2-4 MAY -San Antonio, TX

- v) Category Day 2023: 8-11 MAY –Tulsa, OK
 - b) Leadership Volunteering Opportunities –Contact: CDR Adeuya and LCDR Eapen via email at roxanne.adeuya@fda.hhs.gov and Jaison.Eapen@hhs.gov
- 8) **Information Subcommittee Discussion (Chair, LCDR Gary Riley)**
- a) EPAC Newsletter
 - i) Fall 2022 Newsletter has been released
 - ii) Spring 2023 article submission deadline is February 28, 2023
 - b) EPAC Website
 - i) Updates and changes made to reflect EPAC 2023 Operational year
 - ii) Improved web analytics coming soon
 - iii) Email: epac-postings@list.nih.gov for change requests/update
 - c) Information Subcommittee Meetings 2023, 2nd Monday of January and then every other month on the 2nd Monday
- 9) **Mentoring Subcommittee (Vice Chair LCDR Juliane Junes-Harvey)**
- a) Mandatory response to the 2022 End of The Year Questionnaire indicating whether you plan on continuing your existing mentor/mentee partnership.
 - b) Open Recruitment –If you’re interested in the program, go the EPAC Mentoring website and fill out the intake questionnaire. If you have a mentor/mentee in mind, fill out the contract. Submit to ‘epac.mentoring@gmail.com’.
 - c) Upcoming Mentoring Events: COA Leadership Series: The Incredible Power of Praise, Linda Bruno, MBA; February 1, 2023 12:00 pm. Look for the email sent through the EPAC Mentoring Sub-committee ‘epac.mentoring@gmail.com’, dated 1/9/2023 at 0800 EST.
 - d) Mentoring SC Interest? Meetings are the 4th Wednesday of every month at 1600 Eastern Standard Time. Email CDR Thakur (Nikhil.Thakur@fda.hhs.gov) and LCDR Junes-Harvey (juliane.junes-harvey@ihs.gov) directly.
- 10) **Public Health Engineering Practice Subcommittee Discussion (Chair, LT Bryan Wimer)**
- a) PHEP Workshop –date officially set -February 2nd
 - i) 4-5 Presentations highlighting PHEP work over the last year
 - ii) PDH Certificates will be issued
 - iii) Topics will include:
 - (1) Effects of wildfires on drinking water
 - (2) Extending life of thermosiphon cooled foundations
 - (3) HVAC design and control measures for dental departments
 - (4) Practical GIS use and experiences
 - (5) NIOSH PPE Research and N95 based respirator approvals
 - b) PHEP General Meeting information: 3rdThursday each month at 2pm Eastern
 - i) LT Wimer Bwimer@cdc.gov
 - ii) LCDR Martin timothy.martin@hhs.gov
- 11) **Readiness Subcommittee Discussion (Chair, CDR David Gwisdalla)**
- a) RSC Impacts –Where we’ve been and where we are going
 - i) Historically, the largest impact of the RSC has been keeping our Officers prepared to deploy through: Surveys of your needs/capabilities and documenting them in our Eng Capabilities documents, documenting your deployments in our annual Engineering Booklets, and providing resources: Trainings (Health Care Facilities, Disaster Response), Engineer Resource Library, and now through the Deployment Support Team (DST) formed in December of 2022.
 - b) **Where we are going in CY2023:** Refining and further documenting our capabilities and working with RDB to educate them on the same, so we can work to get our officers deployed in areas that meet our unique capabilities. We also plan on continuing the Subcommittee’s legacy by continuing to provide our engineers with resources they need to be prepared– a few of the key items are: providing DRE and Safety deployment role resources, and executing the DST.

- c) CY2023 Key Project Updates:
 - i) Deployment Support Team, DST –Initial DST was formed! The DST is working on the development of an SOP for program implementation. Meeting in early January to set team expectations.
 - ii) Disaster Response Engineer (DRE) deployment roles to align with the needs of ESFs #3, #6, #8 – Hotwash for 9 engineers deployed in DRE role serving ACF (ESF#6) in October demonstrated a need for DREs and also for training and program development; working to schedule a meeting with ACF. Number of DRE related projects in 2023.
 - iii) The make-up of the subcommittee recently includes officers from HHS, IHS, FDA, CDC, EPA, and NPS, with ranks from O3-O6; that include approximately 28 officers, with frequently 15-20 in attendance any given month.
 - iv) ***If you are interested in getting involved in the Subcommittee's CY2023 projects and initiatives, we have a number of projects that could use your leadership and/or support. Join us at our next or future meeting (details below). A few we have planned for CY2023 are:***
 - (1) DRE Certification Process – LCDR Steven Tidwell.
 - (2) Safety Officer Resources Guide – LCDR Steven Fields
 - (3) Develop 2022 Engineer Booklet – LCDR George Ngatha
 - (4) Support Deployment Panel – CDR Marcus Yambot
 - (5) Engineer Deployment Advocacy – **Looking for someone to lead!**
- d) RSC meets on the 3rdThursdays of the month from 1130-1230 ET: (MS Teams link) or call in (audio only) at +1 513-769-4574,,335304847#
- e) Check CCHQ readiness updates (9JAN23 email) on new BLS requirements and deployment preparedness plans (DPP) are due NLT 31MAR23for all officers.
- f) RSC Readiness Deployment Panel (23MAR23 1500-1700 ET) mark your calendars now!

12) Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board Update (CDR Gifford for Liaison)

- a) 1st CCWIAB Listening Session –Tentatively Scheduled for Jan. 26th, 2023 from Noon –1 PM ET.
- b) Reminder of Current CCWIAB Resources:
 - i) Resource Guide for USPHS Officers Getting Married or Getting Divorced, and for Dependents Surviving the Death of a USPHS Officer (Version 3.0, May 2019)
 - ii) Resource-Guide-for-Expectant-Parents-Version-2.0.pdf
 - iii) (Coming Soon) Updated Resource Guide for Officers Diagnosed with Breast Cancer
- c) If you have any questions or issues you wish to raise to CCWIAB, please send an email to kimberly.piermatteo@fda.hhs.gov

13) Commissioned Officers Association Update (CDR Gifford for Liaison)

- a) Please consider nominating officers for COA awards. Nominations are due 1/20/2023: COA Awards (coausphs.org)
- b) USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium May 2023 (Early Bird 3/22/23): Registration -PHS (phscof.org)
- c) Deadline for the COA Coin Contest has been extended to next Friday, January 20, 2023

14) Society of American Military Engineers Update (CDR Gifford for Liaison)

- a) 2023 Career Transition Workshop (Virtual and In-Person), 17 January through 16 February
 - i) Resume reviews, access to recruiters across the industry, interview opportunities, etc.
 - ii) Free for SAME members, \$25 for non-members
 - iii) <https://www.same.org/event/career-transition-workshop/>
- b) SAME STEM Camp: looking for mentors, contact LCDR Remley
- c) Join SAME! Only \$55/year for an individual, \$40/year if 39 and younger
 - i) <https://my.same.org/join-membership>

15) Junior Officers Advisory Group Update (CDR Gifford for Liaison)

- a) JOAG will have volunteer opportunities coming out soon with AMSUS, some include aide-de-camp
- b) APFT event will be held at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center the Saturday before AMSUS

16) Open Floor

CDR Gifford: EPAC Heritage/History Officer. Members supported via chat messages. If any engineer is interested, email michael.gifford@nps.gov immediately to allow time to gather information and create a presentation to EPAC in the 3rd or 4th quarter touting USPHS Engineering.

17) Closing Remarks (EPAC Chair, CDR Gifford)

- a) Thank you all for joining us today
- b) Mark your calendars for PHEP Workshop, February 2nd 1500-1700 EST
- c) E-Week Award Ceremony, February 23rd 1400-1600 ES
- d) Special Event –R&R Subcommittee Network Event, March 1st , 1700-1800 EST
- e) Our next EPAC General Meeting, March 9th 1500-1630 EST
- f) Find the latest EPAC information and (subject to change) calendar updates on our website <https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/engineer/>

Appendix A. Upcoming Meetings

Date	Time	Event
Thursday, February 2	1500-1700 ET	<u>SPECIAL EVENT!</u> PHEP Subcommittee PDH Webinar
Monday - Thursday February 13-16		<u>AMSUS 2023</u>
Thursday, February 23	1400-1600 ET	E-Week Award Ceremony
Wednesday, March 1	1700-1800 ET	<u>SPECIAL EVENT!</u> R&R Subcommittee Networking
Thursday, March 9	1500-1700 ET	EPAC General Meeting/CPO Town Hall
Thursday, March 23	1500-1700 ET	<u>SPECIAL EVENT!</u> Readiness Subcommittee Deployment Panel
Thursday, April 13	1500-1700 ET	EPAC General Meeting
Tuesday – Thursday May 2-4		SAME <u>Joint Engineer Training Conference 2023</u> (JETC)
Monday – Friday May 8-11	0800-1730 CT	<u>COA USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium</u> <i>(Category Day = May 10th)</i>
Thursday, May 25	1500-1700 ET	Senior Officer Panel
Thursday, June 8	1500-1900 ET	EPAC Voting Member Meeting (Mid-Year Check in Event)
Thursday, July 13	1500-1630 ET	EPAC General Meeting
Thursday, August 10	1500-1630 ET	CPO Townhall

Thursday, September 14	1500-1700 ET	EPAC General + Voting Member Meeting
Thursday, October 19	1500-1630 ET	Senior Officer Panel
Thursday, November 9	1500-1630 ET	EPAC General Meeting
Thursday, December 14	1500-1700 ET	EPAC General + Voting Member Meeting (2023 wrap up & hotwash)

Appendix B. Copy of PowerPoint slides.

Double-click to preview slides.



Final January 12
2023 meeting agenc