



# EPAC Career Development Subcommittee January 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes



## Subcommittee Leadership

**Chair:** CAPT Eric Hanssen – [Eric.Hanssen@nih.gov](mailto:Eric.Hanssen@nih.gov) (406) 802-6208

**Vice Chair:** LCDR Michael Simpson – [Michael.Simpson@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Michael.Simpson@fda.hhs.gov) (301) 796-4070

## **Attendees**

CAPT Eric Hanssen

CDR Sean Bush

CDR Kurt Kesteloot

CDR Joshua Sims

CDR Nikhil Thakur

LCDR Omobogie Amadasu

LCDR Abbas Bandukwala

LCDR Noah Buikema

LCDR Kenneth Chen

LCDR David Dar

LCDR Jaison Eapen

LCDR Michael Gu

LCDR Kelly Kachurak

LCDR Teresa Kastner

LCDR Tyrrell Lang

LCDR Tim Martin

LCDR Jeff Meng

LCDR Mary Millner

LCDR Monica Murie

LCDR Armin Oormazdi

LCDR Tom Peter

LCDR Michael Simpson

LCDR Travis Spaeth

LCDR Hanniebey Wiyor

LT Timothy Beck

LT William Chang

LT Adam Cooke

LT Vicky Hsu

LT Drew Katherine

## **Chair/Vice Chair Opening Remarks**

- CDS holds an important role in helping keep EPAC progressing and continuously improving
- We are usually the largest Subcommittee and have the most impact on the development of engineers
- We do this mainly by providing resources to officers to successfully navigate their career
- In addition, several of this year's initiatives are direct request of CPO
- CPO leans on EPAC but especially on CDS to help officers in advancing their career and the category
- CDS may be the only Subcommittee with a deliverable for January and for that we have LCDR Dar to thank – for leading first Senior Officer Panel
- We may have 14 projects/initiatives (which is ambitious) but the goal is to
  - complete 3 out of the 4 projects from 2020
  - document metrics for all 4 work group initiatives
  - complete 3 out of the 6 new projects
- This can be obtainable if everyone on the call can help be a lead or team member on the projects
- Looking forward to a very successful year!

## **Council of Captains (Project Lead: LCDR David Dar – [David.Dar@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:David.Dar@fda.hhs.gov))**

- Council consists of 16 Captains serving at various Agencies and various backgrounds to serve as senior engineers to provide insight and different viewpoints



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- Status Update: senior officer panel successfully held on 1/14; excellent feedback received
- Challenges/problems/request for feedback: after-action meeting held on Friday, 1/22 which discussed (1) how the session went, (2) any unanswered questions, (3) items to maintain for next panel, (4) any follow-up items (posting to EPAC website), etc.
  - LT Will Chang will be helping with moderation and planning on March 11
- Next scheduled milestone with date: LT Will Chang will assist in beginning planning for next senior officer panel covering officer and leadership development
- End deliverable: senior officer panel #2 on 11MAR2021

### **Online Engineering Advanced Degree Programs (Project Lead – LCDR Tyrrell Lang – [Tyrrell.Lang@ihs.gov](mailto:Tyrrell.Lang@ihs.gov))**

- Currently waiting for response from Max.gov account holder, LT Vicky Hsu, on when survey is ready to publish
- Challenges: No current problems. Past problem was finding a platform to publish survey.
- Publish survey by Feb 1st and have open for 4 -6 weeks with multiple reminders to engineers to complete survey.
- Next deliverable: Survey responses compiled and handed over to CDS/EPAC for use and distribution.
- End deliverable: White paper of various Advanced Degree Programs and guidance on how one should go about deciding on which option is best for them. White paper will also cover various funding options for officers to use for paying for degree.

### **Professional Certifications and Credentials Project (Project Lead: LCDR Tom Peter – [Thomas.Peter@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Thomas.Peter@fda.hhs.gov))**

- Currently our benchmarks allow for credentials outside of PE but no guidance for which credentials outside of PE are beneficial for engineers to pursue based on their position
- The survey closed on Friday, January 15. We received 157 responses
- Next step is to clean up and analyze the results to identify the different certifications engineers hold. We will likely need to circle back with respondents where the responses aren't clear and/or cases where we are not able to dig up info about the certifications online Approximate completion mid/late April 2021.
- The ultimate goal of this project is to develop one or more “fact sheets” that help guide engineers towards identifying credentials/certifications that will aid the most value to their career in the role they have and/or aspire to achieve in their career. Such fact sheets will include information about the credentials/certifications such as sponsoring organization, description, website, and the costs/effort of studying, exam length, continuing education requirements, etc. Promotion committee members may use summary information to understand how to “weigh” each credential/certification. We envision it will include:
  - High-level overview to show the breadth of roles that PHS engineers hold.
  - PE has long been the “benchmark” certification but may not be practical, feasible, or value-added for BMEs (and other disciplines?) to become more effective officers.



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- Compare the requirements for PE versus select certifications. This might include the costs and amount of studying (books and/or classroom training), the cost to sit for the exam and its length, and continuing education requirements for maintain certification after it has been earned.

### **Update CE/PD Template documents: (Project Lead: LCDR Kelly Kachurak – [Kelly Kachurak@nps.gov](mailto:Kelly.Kachurak@nps.gov))**

- Update will consolidate two documents on CDS website into one
- Comments from the Career Development Subcommittee, CDS, on the proposed changes were received in late October/early November.
- Updating document based on comments from CDS management
- LT Cooke joined the CE Summary Sheet Work Group in November. Another officer recently requested to help the team as well.
- The Work Group is addressing/implementing the comments received by CDS. The intent is to have all comments incorporated in the month of February.
- Challenge: some of the feedback received is contradictory. One comment was to get rid of the multiple columns in which to report training hours (based on different means of certifying training courses), whereas another was to add an additional column. I also received unofficial feedback from an officer asking why they can't simply upload their training record from FAITAS (official record of federal certifications for FAC-CORs, FAC-Program/Project Managers, etc.).
- Guidance Document and Template at CDS Leadership for review and then distribution to EPAC for Vote
- Goal is to have document voted by EPAC by spring but June 10<sup>th</sup> EPAC General meeting at the latest.

### **Licensure Book Share/Recommendations (Work Group Lead: LCDR Omobogie Amadasu - [Omobogie.Amadasu@ihs.gov](mailto:Omobogie.Amadasu@ihs.gov))**

- Status Update: Currently waiting to receive EPAC approved funding from COA
- Starting with PE books but will branch out to book opportunities for other certifications – please reach out to LCDR Amadasu if interested
- Will discuss with LCDR Peter for outcomes of survey to determine other certification books to purchase
- Also, if anyone has credential/certifications books that are no longer being utilized, please also reach out
- Request for feedback: Will reach out to mentor/mentees about potential books
- Next scheduled milestone with date
- 03/01/2021 – Release announcement and reach out to mentor/mentees about opportunity
- 03/15/2021 – Compile list and reach out to selected engineers
- 03/21/2021 – Procure books (ebook)

### **Mentor/Mentee Assignments (Work Group Lead: CDR Sean Bush – [Sean.Bush@ihs.gov](mailto:Sean.Bush@ihs.gov))**

- Currently in the process of confirming all pairing are active, waiting on updates from Mentor/Mentee of contracts on file



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- Also updating ranking and finding new mentors for mentees that lost their mentor due to retirement or agreement concluding
- Will work further with LCDR Bandukwala on database to take backend data and make it more robust than just using excel
- Next scheduled milestone with date: CDR Cox asked to get with CAPT Harvey for mentoring of officers on the bottom quartile (1 page writeup by March)
- 
- End deliverable(s):
  - Database
  - More participation throughout category
  - Increase of resources on website - for example, updated CDS IDP/IAP

### **OBC Open House Representation (Work Group Lead: LCDR Michael Simpson – [Michael.Simpson@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Michael.Simpson@fda.hhs.gov))**

- Last OBC with an engineer occurred in December 2020
  - One Engineer in class: LT Matthew Pfister with IHS
- Due to COVID OBC Open House are not occurring, as a result handouts are provided to OBC Open House Coordinator who provides handout to COTA who provides handout to trainees
- Due to PII concerns, list of trainees in class is solely provided to CPOs – request future workaround with CCHQ
- Still waiting on January roster but next OBC is February 2021, will determine if Engineer in class
- OBC Handout updated for EPAC 2021 changes and to include CDR Setwyn for joining listserv

### **Website development (Work Group Lead: LT Adam Cooke – [Adam.Cooke@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Adam.Cooke@fda.hhs.gov))**

- Project receives input from all Projects/Indicatives to provide a home on the CDS website whether that be within an already existing place or creating a new location
- If you notice something that is outdated and should be looked at to see if still pertinent, please contact LT Cooke
- Status Update:
  - CDS Home Page category update: Council of Captains link added
- Challenges/problems/request for feedback:
  - Black box graphics for Home Page Categories – Should these be changed to something else?
- Next scheduled milestones with dates:
  - Addition of Mission Statement and Vision Statement – 2/15/2021
  - Ensure there's a “home” for all current CDS initiatives, and that “home” is rationally organized with respect to the initiative itself – 3/15/2021
  - Gap assessment of categories of information offered by other PACs – 4/15/2021

### **Data Analytics of Promotion Board Scores and Recommendations (Project Lead LCDR Tim Martin – [Timothy.Martin@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Timothy.Martin@fda.hhs.gov))**



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- Status Update. New project charter developed and previously submitted to CDS. Recruited one new member LCDR Teresa Kastner. Team meeting scheduled for 2/1.
- Challenges/problems/request for feedback. Advice/recommendations on specific data metrics that CDS thinks should be included in the data gathering/analysis. Suggestions provided:
  - Survey recently promoted officers for what feedback they received on their promotion score sheet and what they had to receive said feedback  
[https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS\\_index\\_m.aspx](https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_index_m.aspx)
  - Review HSO PACs robust analysis of officers profiled for successful promotion
  - Potentially reach out to LCDR Amadasu for things to do to help stay out of the lower quartile
- Next Milestone. By 3/31 identify promotion-relevant data metrics.
- End deliverables. By 12/31 draft white paper describing the analysis and results; and present to EPAC.

### **Splitting/Updating Career Track Guidance/Handbook into White Papers/Webpages (Project Lead LCDR Noah Buikema – [Noah.Buikema@nps.gov](mailto:Noah.Buikema@nps.gov))**

- Still getting oriented with EPAC and how everything functions, this is my first involvement with EPAC
- Need additional guidance/definition on the following task: "Confirm historical information is available on the EPAC": Suggestion/feedback provided:
  - Confirm by reaching out to LT Cooke that information within Handbook is located on EPAC CDS website, slight potential it could be located elsewhere in EPAC website. If not available on EPAC website, provide information to CDS on discussion if it should be listed on EPAC CDS
  - All comments on Handbook document were provided by LCDR Peter
  - Reach out to LCDR Dar for bios of Council of Captains to assist with baseline for career tracks on various engineer specialties (Civil/Mechanical/Electrical/etc.) at various Agencies
- Project charter will evolve as the project is better defined
- Challenges/problems/request for feedback: Need volunteers to assist
- Will review entire document to get oriented with the status - March 1, 2021
- Document with list of identified projects and status of those projects (Completed, Discarded, etc.)

### **PAC Career Development Key Drivers and Activities Analysis (Project Lead LCDR David Sullivan – [David.Sullivan@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:David.Sullivan@fda.hhs.gov))**

- Report provided by LCDR Martin as LCDR Sullivan had a scheduling conflict
- Project will look at each of the PACs website describing their Career Development activities and assess what ongoing activities have been conducted in past and what projects currently ongoing – potentially reaching out to other PACs CDS Chairs/Leads
- Will be able to determine what projects are potentially missing in our CDS and which we can leverage





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- Status Update. New project charter developed and previously submitted to CDS. Team meeting scheduled for 2/1.
- Challenges/problems/request for feedback. Advice/direction on obtaining/generating an EPAC CDS historical activities list? Suggestions provided:
  - LT Cooke would be aware of anything currently on the website and therefore anything that has been accomplished in recent years
  - LT Cooke is also doing a gap analysis of the website designs between EPAC CDS and other PACs, could team up
- Next Milestone. By 3/31 investigate EPAC CDS activities, past and present.
- End deliverables. By 12/31 draft white paper describing the analysis and results; and present to EPAC.

### **Core Competencies Assistance to PHEP SC (Project Lead LCDR Mary Millner – [Mary.Millner@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Mary.Millner@fda.hhs.gov))**

- Status update: PHEP created a database for documenting and tracking certifiable skills, certifications held, degrees, etc. CDS has been tasked with assisting PHEP in expanding the information for the database by providing data sources to upload into database – any data collection projects (online advanced degrees and professional credentials are examples)
- Hopes one day to assist with deployment rosters, mentor mentee development
- Challenges: How will EPAC host a database that will be accessible to officers across agencies?
- Request for feedback: Any data you have collected/or plan to collect that could be useful for the database? Feedback provided:
  - Will reach out to LCDR Praveen KC about survey capturing what you do in job and maybe some of skillsets that you have to be successful in job
  - Will look through past EPAC emails to determine potential addition surveys
  - Sadly, surveys are not passed from one PAC chair to the next
- Next scheduled milestone: Identify any additional CDS data sources that could be populated into the database (01MAR2021).
- End Deliverable: Central database for USPHS Engineers that can be used for deployments, hiring, mentoring, and much more.

### **MOU with non-HHS agencies (Project Lead CDR Kurt Kesteloot – [Kurt.Kesteloot@nps.gov](mailto:Kurt.Kesteloot@nps.gov))**

- Status Update: compiling a list of non-HHS agencies where PHS officers are stationed and therefore would have a Memorandum of Understanding. In addition to list, potentially providing names of officers at this non-HHS agencies to provide insight into work performed there
- Challenges/problems/request for feedback: Determine if MOUs are category specific and if so, which MOUs apply to Engineers
- Next scheduled milestone with date
- End deliverable: Repository of current MOUs with non-HHS agencies



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### General Discussion and Questions

- This time was given to introduce new and current members of CDS members that are not currently serving as Project Leads

### New Business and Closing Remarks

- Project Leads please provide Project Charter by end of month
- Project Charters will be used to create subcommittee org chart and confirm all team members on distribution list
- A lot of new members, if a project interests you please reach out to leads
- Levels of Involvement within Career Development Subcommittee
  - Leading a project
  - On a project team
  - Contributing to subcommittee calls/emails
  - Attending subcommittee calls or reading subcommittee emails

**Next call Monday, February 22nd 3:00pm – 4:00pm EST**

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