



**Health Services Officer Category**  
**OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE**  
*Strength Through Diversity*



**Medical Laboratory Scientist Professional Advisory Group - MLSPAG**

**August 12, 2019**

**Time: 1500 to 1600 EST**

**Teleconference call number: 1-877-465-7975 Meeting #: 906 468 718**

(Also see calendar invite for the Meeting # and [link](#) to join the virtual meeting room)

**MEETING Agenda**

Attendance		Voting MEMBERS			Subgroup/Role
	Rank	Last Name	First Name	OP DIV	
√	CDR	Flores	Lisa	FDA	<b>Chair</b> <a href="mailto:Lisa.Flores@fda.hhs.gov">Lisa.Flores@fda.hhs.gov</a>
<b>Operations</b>					
√	CDR	Bledsoe	Toni	CDC	<b>Communications</b> <a href="mailto:tab4@cdc.gov">tab4@cdc.gov</a>
√	LCDR	Richard	Bashay	FDA	<b>Awards</b> <a href="mailto:Richard.Bashay@fda.hhs.gov">Richard.Bashay@fda.hhs.gov</a>
√	CDR	Babatunde	Oloyede	BOP	<b>Stakeholder Community Engagement</b> <a href="mailto:BOloyede@bop.gov">BOloyede@bop.gov</a>
<b>Officer Support</b>					
√	CDR	Lundy	Patrick	FDA	<b>Training, Education &amp; Mentorship</b> <a href="mailto:Lundy.Patrick@fda.hhs.gov">Lundy.Patrick@fda.hhs.gov</a>
√	LCDR	Damon	Jessica	CDC	<b>Chair-Elect/ Technical Readiness</b> <a href="mailto:lyy0@cdc.gov">lyy0@cdc.gov</a>
√	LT	Danielle	Baquero	FDA	<b>Data &amp; Evaluation</b> <a href="mailto:Danielle.Baquero@fda.hhs.gov">Danielle.Baquero@fda.hhs.gov</a>
<b>Management</b>					
√	LCDR	Thomas	Maruna	FDA	<b>Policy</b> <a href="mailto:Thomas.Maruna@fda.hhs.gov">Thomas.Maruna@fda.hhs.gov</a>
√	CDR	Camille	Mitchell	BOP	<b>Administrative &amp; MGT.</b> <a href="mailto:C2Mitchell@bop.gov">C2Mitchell@bop.gov</a>
Note: Full Attendance Roster is captured by SurveyMonkey. Use link <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LHNXFFR">https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LHNXFFR</a> to register your attendance.					



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- I. Call to Order: Chair, Lisa Flores
- II. Roll Call: Secretary, LCDR Osamede Chris Onaghise
- III. Introduction: Chair, Lisa Flores
  - A) Welcome
  - B) Approval of last meeting's minutes: LCDR Maruna and LCDR Bashay
  - C) Chair updates:
    1. Open Application for Chair-elect (closes August 14, 2019)
    2. Voting Member drive begins August 15, 2019
    3. Clinical Hours Initiative- LCDR Damon along with the TR Subgroup drafted a memo addressing many of the issues surrounding clinical hours and the unique challenges for MLS officer in qualifying for deployment roles both clinical and non-clinical. We haven't received guidance on the clinical hours part yet and I am hoping when the updated guidance, CCI 241.02, is released in September, it will provide more in-depth information on it. CAPT Willis Marsh is aware of the clinical hours issue and if time allows may bring it up to DSG during their meeting later today.
    4. I have received the revised HSPAC Roster. The new roster resolved discrepancies for our retirees. The roster has been sent to the Admin Subgroup Chair CDR Mitchell and to MLS PAG Leadership.
    5. The Uniform Bylaw edits/updates are complete. This will be sent to PAG Chairs in the next couple of weeks for a quick review before the document is finalized. I will notify the appropriate subgroup Chairs once I have received the new version.
    6. The CPO is working on a Stakeholder Engagement Guidance Document. For PAGs with ongoing engagements that have not been notified to place the activity "on hold" you may continue with your plans. For those with activities on hold this hold remains in effect. For those planning new engagements please place these activities on pause until the guidance is received.
    7. Fundraising Guidance has not yet been received. HSPAC suggests that PAGs managing funds have the funds management centralized through a single POC/Treasurer for now and maintain your usual operations until further information is received.
    8. PAGs with new officers at OBCs are encouraged to identify a volunteer from the PAG to support the Pinning/ Graduation ceremony. Since our category is "open" at this time, Recruitment and Retention Chair has been notified about this initiative. Look for more information and volunteer opportunities in the future.
    9. Please view the Uniform Wear Video for the ODU and to review the updated Deployment Guide as we move into hurricane season. The Deployment



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Guide and information on how to access the video have been sent out through the listserv.

10. The PAG Subgroup SOP Documents are due to Policy on August 23. Final draft to PAC between September 3rd and 9th. Update Pending: Policy Subgroup is currently working on SOP Documents
11. Advanced Readiness Enrollment opens on August 15th and will close September 15th. The new cohort will begin October 1st. An email will go out via the Listserv with details on how to apply.
12. Challenge Coins – Although we are awaiting official fundraising guidance, the PAG does not currently have fundraising activities ongoing. Historically we have raised funds through the sale of PAG challenge coins. A new design initiative is being dusted off and we may deploy a survey to assess you level of interest in procuring coins. The profits would help to pay for the Junior and Senior officer of the year plaques.

#### IV. Subgroup Reports:

##### A) Communications Chair: CDR Toni Bledsoe; Co-Chair: CDR Cara Nichols

###### Updates:

1. Summer/ Fall MLSPAG Newsletter final draft sent to editors for review; Newsletter will be released 8/28- 8/30.
2. The Communications Subgroup welcomes new member LCDR Jacqueline Kouadio
3. Up-coming activities:
  - a. Drafting Communications Subgroup's SOP into new HSPAC format
  - b. Communications Subgroup will draft a "Welcome Letter" to new MLS Officers; the welcome letter will include instructions for joining the MLSPAG ListServ and will be sent to the new Officer upon their graduation from OBC.
  - c. One final newsletter to be released in December, Newsletter will focus on Wrap up of 2019 MLSPAG activities and accomplishments and goals for 2020.

##### B) Awards Chair: LCDR Richard Bashay; Co-Chair: LT Yen B. Phan

###### Updates:

1. The Awards subgroup had a meeting last week
2. Submitted two articles for the newsletter: (1) Information on MLS Junior and Senior Officer of the Year; and (2) Basic Award Knowledge – A simple one-pager providing information about awards
3. Working on an awards template (about 30+ pages long). Waiting to hear back from HSPAC to see if it's something they'd like to upload on their website



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and if not, the subgroup can explore uploading it to the MLSPAG Max.gov site.

4. Working on Awards SOP revision

**C) Stakeholder and Community Engagement Chair: CDR Babatunde Oloyede;  
Co-Chair: LCDR Emmanuel Ndenga**

**Updates:**

1. The information packet to schools was sent to all members of the Stakeholder and Community Engagement Subcommittee regarding the Excellence in Medical Laboratory Science Award to a deserving student in the colleges and Universities locally and in nearby States.
2. Officers should be proactive with the guidance concerning the CMP program and RedDOG verification of ASCP certification. Officer should get all the requirement done ahead of time to allow adequate window before the certification lapses. Very important CMP need to be completed before the lapse month.
3. The Stakeholder and Community engagement Subcommittee will be working on the new SOP guidelines received this morning.

**D) Training, Education & Mentorship Chair: LCDR Lundy Patrick; Co-Chair:  
CDR Julie Holifield**

**Updates:**

1. Subgroup met in June and July. Clinical competency maintenance for non-clinical officers was discussed in the June meeting. It was shared that video trainings were available on the Max.gov site.
2. CDR Hollifield worked on an article for the Summer/Fall newsletter

**E) Technical Readiness: Chair: LCDR Jessica Damon; Co-Chair: CAPT Daisy Mitchell**

**Updates:**

1. Meetings
  - a. Met June 21st
  - b. Cancelled July meeting due to leadership being on TDYs
  - c. Next Meeting Scheduled for August 16<sup>th</sup>
2. Clinical Hours
  - a. Decision Memo requested by CDR Simleen Kaur was compiled in June from historical meeting documents and works summarizing areas of concern reported through the MLSPAG and then suggesting actions to resolve barriers.





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- b. Decision Memo was submitted to CDR Kaur on August 5<sup>th</sup>
3. Newsletter Articles
  - a. Summer Newsletter Articles: (1) Technical Readiness Work, A History (2) Advanced Readiness Program Overview (3) April 22 Technical Readiness Training
  - b. Upcoming Fall Articles: (1) Pine Ridge Deployment Summary (2) Deployment Lessons Learned
4. TDYs
  - a. Pine Ridge Service Unit – We had a TR Subgroup Member do a recent TDY to Pine Ridge and are gathering notes on his experiences
  - b. We continue to dialogue with IHS Area Directors on need sin their service units and evaluate each opportunity that arises. As we identify appropriate opportunities, we will continue to disseminate these via the List Serv
  - c. We have identified some challenges with a few sites and their detailed needs and have reported this back to IHS Chief of Staff
5. Advanced Readiness Program
  - a. ARTI's Revision – ARTI revision is complete. New cohort will have more free trainings to select from than prior year. Will share these as alternatives to current enrollees.
  - b. Training Update – Final cache video is complete. Developing an assessment for use with training and a completion certificate. Hope to launch with Oct 1 cohort. Have drafted an invitation to send via list serv to all other MLSPAG officers to also access and take the trainings.
  - c. Increased Flexibility in the Field Readiness Requirements:
    - i. As we are aware, the requirement to have earned the FMRB in order to enroll in ARP has formed a significant barrier to many officers. In part this is due to limited deployment opportunities and also to the delay in award of the FMRB after requirements have been met. So as anticipated this criterion is changing.
    - ii. Now, it is a requirement that applicants without an awarded FMRB be able to demonstrate one of the following:
      - Meet all requirement for FMRB as verified by screen captures but are pending award
      - Have completed all FMR coursework or,
      - Have deployment (agency or RedDOG) experience
  - d. Changing general applicant requirements: These are becoming stricter to focus the type of applicant pursuing Advanced Readiness certification



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- i. All applicants must have a TIS as evidenced in their PIR of 5 years active service
- ii. In addition to the requirement to demonstrate a full year prior to enrollment of maintained Basic Readiness status, enrollees will also have to demonstrate a maintenance of this status throughout the duration of the program
- e. Increased Program Progress Monitoring by TR Subgroups
  - i. At the conclusion of year 1 for each ARP cohort, TR Subgroups must contact their enrollees and request that they submit their 1-year packets for review. Packets should demonstrate that basic readiness was maintained by the officer, 25 credit hours of training (combination between deployment and technical readiness courses) was achieved based upon the Excel tracker AND certificates of completion, and signed Clinical Hours Tracking form for the 1-year period. If an officer is at risk for not achieving the milestone then they are to contact the TR Subgroup Chair and request a 30-day extension to complete the requirement. If the requirement cannot be completed in this time they will have to reapply to a restart the program. Once verified, TR Subgroups will notify HS Advanced readiness of who has met the requirement and can continue into year two of the program.
  - ii. At the end of the second year, TR Subgroups will review the same information and then will forward the entire packet to the HS Advanced Readiness stating that the officer successfully completed the program
- f. ARP Added as a Promotion 2020 Benchmark: As expected this program has made its way into the next set of benchmarks under the Officership precept. Good or bad, it is now something officers may need to consider to demonstrate officership and thus it is anticipated that many more officers will be applying moving forward.
- g. Training: Category wide training on the program revision will occur on the week of August 13th so be watching for this opportunity

**F) Data & Evaluation: Chair: LT Danielle Baquero; Co-Chair: LT Danielle Terrett**

**Updates:**

1. The survey that the Data and Evaluation Subgroup had out has now closed. The subgroup will be analyzing the collected data during our next scheduled subgroup meeting which is in September. We plan to format this information into a report along with some comparisons and share the data gathered from the survey with everyone. We have the goal of displaying this information in



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the Holiday Newsletter. We had roughly a 62% participation rate from the MLS officers and would like to thank those officers who took the time to participate with the survey.

2. The subgroup submitted an article for the Fall Newsletter describing different demographics and numbers of our MLS officers.
3. The subgroup will be gathering information to determine all schools nationwide that have medical technologist programs. This will allow us to maintain a current document of this information.
4. The subgroup will be working on the draft SOP for our subgroup and will have it completed by the indicated deadline.

### **G) Policy: Chair: LCDR Thomas Maruna; Co-Chair: CAPT Todd Alspach**

#### **Updates:**

1. ASCP Recertification
  - a. CDR Kaur's meeting with the DSG concerning ASCP recertification was moved to the afternoon of 12-Aug-2019. Further updates are forthcoming. Currently, to ensure you are compliant, the advised recourse remains to 1) notify CDR Oloyede within 60 days of your ASCP expiration date, and 2) notify RedDOG via the self-service portal and dedicated email box once your letter has been received.
2. MLSPAG SOP Template
  - a. The HSPAC Policy and Procedures Subcommittee has released the PAG-Specific SOP templates
  - b. MLSPAG Subgroup Chairs should complete the information template distributed by CDR Lisa Flores and LCDR Thomas Maruna on 12-Aug-2019. Completed templates should be returned no-later-than 23-Aug-2019 to CDR Camille Mitchell, LCDR Jessica Damon, and LCDR Thomas Maruna.
  - c. The Policy Subgroup will collate the individual subgroup sections into a primary MLSPAG SOP and perform an initial cursory review. Once complete, The Administrative Management Subgroup will conduct a bylaw review, including any associated appendices. Upon completion, the SOP will receive final review from the MLSPAG Chair and Chair-Elect, CDR Lisa Flores and LCDR Jessica Damon respectively. The final, complete version will be submitted to the HSPAC Policy and Procedures Subcommittee no-later-than 09-Sep-2019.

### **H) Administrative Management: Chair: LCDR Camille Mitchell; Co-Chair: LCDR Charles Boison**

#### **Updates:**

Important dates and reminders:

1. August 14th: Extended Chair Elect Nomination period closes



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2. Please complete the survey monkey previously sent ASAP for information to complete voting membership database
3. August 15th: Each VM will receive the rubric for the chair elect nomination and the nomination packages of the nominees. Please complete and return the Chair Elect Selection form NLT 9/3/19. At the end of the rubric there is a section that you do not complete.
4. August 23rd: PAG SOP needs to be given to LCDR Maruna who will work with his team to compile all subgroups into one SOP; which will then be reviewed by Administrative Management.
5. September 30th: Please submit the names of your active participants and which projects they completed. Also send your subgroup meeting attendance to the executive secretary. Please cc Administrative Management.
6. Oct 1: The current VM members will receive the VM rubric form to select the 2020 VM. This needs to be returned to Admin Management NLT 10/15/19

**D) Ad Hoc Recruitment & Retention: Lead: LCDR Katrina Redman; Co-Lead: LT Angela Hatzenbuhler; Implementation Lead: LCDR Renee Smith**

**Updates:**

1. No updates reported.

**Open Floor:**

- CDR Bledsoe requested that LCDR Damon send her the update for Advanced Readiness so she can add it to the article for the Fall Newsletter.
- LCDR Kouadio asked whether officers could join multiple subgroups. CDR Flores advised that while no policies may preclude officers from joining multiple subgroups at the same time, we have to be careful not to volunteer for too many activities and be unable to commit adequately to any.
- CDR Mitchell mentioned that there will be a webinar (on August 15 1400-1500 EST) for the active participant database and encouraged MLSPAG officers to tune in. She highlighted the recent emphasis on active participation because those are the only officers that should be awarded certificates. The webinar will provide additional information.
- CDR Flores closed out:
  - thanked the PAG for all its effort this year in being very engaging internally as well as responsive externally to the numerous tasks we've worked on.
  - Will meet with CDR Bledsoe to discuss survey or other way to gauge officer interest in challenge coin.
  - Subgroup chairs should submit SOP information to Commanders Flores, Bledsoe, Mitchell or LCDR Maruna.





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Meeting was adjourned at approx. 1543

**Next Meeting Date: 10/21/2019 @ 1500 EST**

