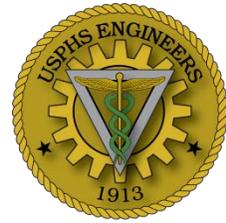




**Meeting Minutes of the
Engineer Professional Advisory Committee
Wednesday, November 18, 2015**



The Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC) welcomes your input and participation. Meetings are open to all Public Health Service Engineers and Architects, both Commissioned Officers and Civilians.

Next Meeting Date:

The next EPAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 from 1400-1530 EST.

Conference Line Information:

Toll-free: 1-855-828-1770

Passcode: 25005215

Webinar: <https://collaboration.fda.gov/usphs-engineers/>

I. CALL TO ORDER

CDR Hammond called the meeting to order at 1401 EST. Attendance was taken and a quorum of EPAC members was present. Section VIII below shows the EPAC meeting attendance this year to date.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Two members supported the approval of the October meeting minutes.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Officer's Brief: Dr. Paul Meehan – "Engineering Concerns and Ebola" – Associate Director of the Office of Safety, Security and Asset Management, CDC - iww9@cdc.gov

- Dr. Paul Meehan presented on a comparison of the Ebola treatment units in West Africa (low tech) to those in the United States (high tech).
- He compared the practices used in West Africa to those used in the U.S. Surprisingly, the latter seemed ill-equipped to handle Ebola cases whereas treatment units in West Africa developed safe and effective practices.
- U.S. hospitals failed due to flawed risk assessment assumptions. PPE was a good case in point.

- There are also regulatory issues with Ebola being a Select Agent requiring Bio Safety Level 4 containment. There are a limited number of settings and none are set-up as medical facilities. A middle ground might be functionally equivalent to requiring Bio Safety Level 3 containment (e.g., “no skin showing”, use of PAPR or respirator).
- Ebola must be handled as Category A infectious substance, which restricts the amounts of waste produced. The average patient generates 80 ft³ of waste per day (20 boxes/d at 4 ft³ per box)
- There was an emergency exemption to the regulation for waste disposal; Engineers need to come up with a solution to the waste problem.
- Need a solution on the liquid waste too. EPA allowed it to go down the sewer untreated. Most treatment facilities mixed concentrated disinfectants with the liquid waste (e.g., at Emory 250mL of concentrated “quat” was mixed with the liquid waste (vomit, diarrhea)).
- Where is the sweet spot for engineered controls? Is the laboratory/research setting too restrictive or the clinical/treatment setting too liberal? Creative engineering solutions are needed to balance cost, efficiency, regulatory pressure and political/social realities.

B. Office of the Chief Engineer: RADM Randall Gardner (Randall.Gardner@ihs.gov)

- RADM Gardner encouraged everyone to watch the changes occurring within DCCPR. This includes:
 - Direct Access (information migration)
 - Revised APFT for 2016
- Those up for promotion are encouraged to get their files in order as soon as possible.
- RADM Gardner attended a recent SAME scholarship dinner, with over 500 guests in attendance. He talked about the recent Presidential Unit Citation for the PHS response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. He also spoke to many scholarship students during the event. PHS Engineers are encouraged to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and promote professional licensure. On a side note, RADM Gardner was seated next to an Admiral (civilian) for the Merchant Marines and learned more about their service.
- The leadership group for the Surgeon General’s office will not have a December meeting. Looking forward to hearing about the awards submitted.
- RADM Gardner’s office is currently moving location to the Parklawn Building in Rockville, MD.
- RADM Gardner appreciated Dr. Meechan’s presentation, especially the 25 engineering officers deployed for the Ebola response and the significance of our role.

C. EPAC Chair: CDR Jill Hammond (Jill.Hammond@fda.hhs.gov)

- CDR Hammond encourages officers to get engaged with the Leadership Open Forum; should be advertised soon through email: Wednesday, December 9th at 1400 hrs.
- Direct Access will be shut down from December 18th to January 4th. There are no changes in deadlines for administrative items such as promotion documents.
- JRCOSTEP applications are due December 18th.
- EPAC Subcommittees Volunteer Opportunities:
 - Career Development: Contact CDR Jonathon Rash
 - Career Development Handbook Lead
 - Information: Contact LCDR Jim Kohler
 - Copy Editor to assist with putting newsletter submissions into MS Publisher
 - Contributors to submit/solicit articles for the newsletter
 - If any voting members are interested in being the Events Subcommittee Chair, please contact CDR Kurt Kesteloot.

IV. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Awards: LCDR Jitendra Virani (Jitendra.Virani@fda.hhs.gov)

- They did not receive very many applicants for Responder of the Year, which is disappointing.
- The subcommittee is soliciting for new members. If anyone is interested in joining please contact LCDR Virani.

B. Career Development: CDR Jonathan Rash (Jonathan.Rash@ihs.gov)

- The CV Review webinars have been completed and referred to the Information Subcommittee for posting on the Webinars/Training section of the USPHS Engineers website. A notification will be sent, once they are all posted.
- The new Template and Guidance Document for the Engineer CV are still under review. These will not be ready for the 2016 promotion season, and we are planning to have these completed well in advance of the 2017 promotion season.
- A new workgroup to update the PHS Engineer's Handbook is being formed, aiming for completion next year.
 - ***ACTION ITEM:*** *All interested parties are encouraged to contact CDR Rash if interested in leading/volunteering for this effort.*
- Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of every month at 1530 EST. The next meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2015, one week earlier than normal.

C. Deployment Preparedness: LCDR(sel) Shane Deckert (shane.deckert@ihs.gov)

- Initiatives Report:
 - Engineer Assessment Guide

- Obtained files from previous guide.
- CDR Bingley had meeting to discuss way forward.
- Engineer Category Survey
 - No update, currently working.
- Develop Strategies to address engineer-wide readiness issues
 - Received responses from most engineers on President's Challenge list
 - General responses:
 - 1) Will/have already complied with APFT standards
 - 2) Retiring and will not comply
- Update EPAC DPS Website
 - Frequently updating and adding new, helpful links.
- Creating list of Engineering Core Competencies (from RedDOG) and Training
 - List currently under review by RADM Gardner.
- Meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of every month at 1400 EST. The next meeting is scheduled for December 2nd.

D. Events: CDR Kurt Kesteloot (kurt_kesteloot@nps.gov)

- Soliciting for Events Subcommittee Chair, if any Voting Members are interested, please contact CDR Kesteloot.
- Last EPAC Events meeting was November 5th at 1400 EST.
- AMSUS is scheduled for December 1-4 in Texas (<http://www.amsus.org/>). Thank you to LCDR Schoppert and CDR Bush for attending planning calls.
- The E-week awards ceremony will be hosted by IHS in 2016. Thank you to CDR Alex Dailey for leading the on-site planning.
- USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Oklahoma City, May 16-19, 2016, see more details at: <http://symposium.phscof.org/>
Thank you to LCDR (sel) Diana Wong and LT Monica Murie for stepping up to lead in 2016.
 - ***ACTION ITEM: Please submit an abstract!***
- SAME JETC 2015 May 24-26, 2016, Phoenix Convention Center, Phoenix, AZ, see more details at: <http://www.same.org/index.php/events/calendar-of-events/2015-events/730-2016-jetc#sthash.3aMr3CzC.dpuf>.
Thank you to CDR Kathol for stepping up again to help lead JETC efforts in 2016 for SAME.
 - ***ACTION ITEM: Please submit an abstract!***
 - Next meeting is November 19th. Contact CDR Kesteloot, if anyone is interested.

E. Information: LCDR Jim Kohler (Kohler.James@epa.gov)

- Content management: Website is up to date.

- ***ACTION ITEM:*** Please send photos and any new requests for other postings or revisions to postings@usphsengineers.org.
- EPAC Newsletter: Fall newsletter published! Available at: <http://www.usphsengineers.org/>
- ***ACTION ITEM:*** Please send article ideas for Spring Issue to postings@usphsengineers.org.
- Combined Category Newsletter: Final draft prepared; publication imminent.
- Social Media:
 - [Yelp](#) now has Federal Terms of Service (Agencies can launch their own Yelp pages or claim existing ones that users have created).
 - NIH has been utilizing [Flickr](#) to share photos with public.
- Meetings are held the second Monday of every month at 1100 EST. Please send LCDR Kohler an email (kohler.james@epa.gov) if you would like to attend.

F. Mentoring: CDR Duane Hammond (ahz0@cdc.gov)

- The EPAC Mentoring Subcommittee held a mentoring/promotion webinar in October that was a success. If you would like to view a recording of the webinar visit <https://collaboration.fda.gov/usphs-engineers/>
 - The purpose of the webinar was to encourage USPHS engineers to find a mentor or become a mentor.
 - ***ACTION ITEM:*** *If you would like to become a mentor or need assistance finding a mentor, do not hesitate to contact CDR Duane Hammond to ask for assistance or reach out to any of the Mentoring Subcommittee members listed on the Mentoring Subcommittee website.*
- The deadline to submit calendar year 2015 IDPs to the Mentoring Subcommittee has been extended to December 1st.
 - If you have not already done so, please submit your IDP to CAPT Jim Simpson of the Mentoring Subcommittee before Dec 1st.
 - A certificate will be faxed to your e-OPF to document your participation in mentoring if you submit your IDP to the mentoring subcommittee before the deadline.
- Meetings are held the 3rd Friday of every month that EPAC meets at 1500 EST. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 18th.

G. Public Health Engineering Practices: CDR Tanya Davis (Tanya.Davis@ihs.gov)

- Engineering Standards Workgroup is working on presenting results.
- Publishing Workgroup progressing on the USPHS Engineer Publication Guidelines.
- CDR Epling sent an email to start a Health Communities Work Group and will try to start it in the New Year.

- PHEP Meetings are held on the Thursday before the monthly EPAC meeting at 1400 EST.

H. Recruitment and Retention: CDR Robert Hemberger (CAPT Harvey presented)

(robert_hemberger@partner.nps.gov)

- The Civil Service Conversion Report for the July 2015 Cohort:
 - Total Recommended for Civil Service Conversion (5/2015) 29
 - Applications received by DCCPR 18
 - Recommended for Appointment 11
 - Disqualified (Time in Civil Service) 1
 - Disqualified (Medical) 2
 - Status Unknown 1
 - 1662's Received by DCCPR 5
 - 1662's in Process by OPDIV/Agency 6
- 8 Connectors are engaged with Candidates.
- Non-responsive candidates were placed with a Retention Connector who will try to reengage the Candidate and/or find out the reason for withdrawing from the process for tracking purposes.
- Candidates provided different reasons for withdrawing their applications including:
 - Mobility requirements
 - Fitness requirements
 - Medical requirements
 - Deployment requirements
- Overall the total number of PHS Officers in the Engineer Category are down:
 - FY13 = 418
 - FY14 = 400
 - FY15 = 392

I. Rules: LCDR Kimberly Piermatteo (Kimberly.Piermatteo@fda.hhs.gov)

- 2016 New EPAC Membership
 - New EPAC members for 2016 have received their appointment letters from the Surgeon General.
 - New members, if they are not already involved, should reach out to existing Subcommittee Chairs to express interest in becoming more involved next year.
- Review and Update EPAC Charter and By Laws
 - The Rules Subcommittee met on November 9th to discuss proposed changes and updates to the EPAC Charter (last approved February 25, 2013) and Bylaws (last approved December 19, 2012). Any changes to the Charter must receive final approval from the Surgeon General whereas the Bylaws may be amended by just an EPAC vote.

- EPAC members should have received the proposed changes to both the Charter and Bylaws via email from CDR Hammond. EPAC voting members should let LCDR Piermatteo (kimberly.piermatteo@fda.hhs.gov) know by Wednesday, November 25th, if they have any concerns with the proposed changes. Concerns will be compiled as needed and a final draft will be emailed to EPAC voting members for a vote of approval or disapproval of the proposed changes during the December General meeting.
- Meetings are held on an as needed basis.

V. Liaison Reports:

Reports were received from the following liaisons:

A. **JOAG Liaison: LCDR QuynhNhu Nguyen** (quynhnhu.nguyen@fda.hhs.gov)

- The SG plans to release a report next year on [“Substance Abuse, Addiction and Health” and launch a national campaign to tackle the prescription drug crisis](#). One of JOAG's priority areas for the year is to support the SG's initiatives, JOAG wants to hear from everyone on how JOAG should best strategize to support this new focus area.

Action Item: Please send your thoughts on this to Quynht.Nguyen@fda.hhs.gov before January 8, 2015.

- Save the date for the 2016 Symposium: May 16-19, 2015 in Oklahoma City, great opportunity to connect with the Corps and talk directly to our SG and CPOs at our JOAG meeting. Take advantage of the JOAG room share and COA Junior Officer Scholarship.
- JOAG is looking for nominations for the JOAG Senior Advisor (an Ex-Officio member) that demonstrates willingness and the ability to serve along with providing guidance, as needed, to best address the interests of the JOAG. The JOAG Senior Advisor would start on 1 January, 2016 and serve a 3 year term concluding on 30 September, 2019. The Senior Advisor serves as a liaison between the JOAG and the OSG, speaking and advocating on behalf of the JOAG. The Senior Advisor must be an officer ranked T-O6 or above, meet basic readiness standards, and have supervisory approval. The officer may be from any agency/OPDIV.

Action Item: Please email complete nomination package to LCDR Elizabeth Garza at egarza@cdc.gov. Nominations are due no later than close of business, **Tuesday, December 1, 2015**. For questions, please contact LCDR Elizabeth Garza, 2015-2016 JOAG Chair at egarza@cdc.gov or LCDR Samantha Spindel, 2015-2016 JOAG Chair-elect/2016-2017 JOAG Chair at Samantha.Spindel@fda.hhs.gov.

B. SAME Liaison: LCDR Leo Gumapas (leoangelo.gumapas@nih.gov)

- March/April 2016 is the Water Issue of “The Military Engineer” (SAME publication). Article submission abstracts are due by December 14th, but the deadline is may be flexible, so contact LCDR Gumapas.
- The Golden Eagle Dinner for SAME on March 10, 2016 in Alexandria, VA at the Hilton. Early-bird registration is \$25. The price increases to \$50 in January and \$75 in February. LCDR Gumapas has communicated with LCDR Setwyn to include this in the next month’s Announcements from the Office of the Chief Engineer.

C. COA Liaison: CAPT James Simpson (James.Simpson@fda.hhs.gov)

- Overview of COA: Organization includes various committees. Numerous activities within each of those committees. CAPT Simpson provided some highlights:
 - An example is the Health leader of the Year award nomination.
 - Education Committee includes some upcoming webinars.
 - Benefits Committee – agenda on the COA website. Top priority is for a line item for the Surgeon General’s office.

D. Commissioned Corps Women’s Issues Advisory Board (CCWIAB): CDR Tara Bizjak (Tara.Gooen@fda.hhs.gov)

- CCWIAB is currently soliciting volunteers to support subcommittees in our ongoing projects. If any officers are interested in volunteering to support the board, please contact CDR Bizjak.
- More information on CCWIAB can also be found online at <https://dcp.psc.gov/osg.ccwiab/>

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Engineer Readiness Improvement

- The projected readiness percentage for the engineer category on January 1st is 27.82%.
- Many officers have submitted their flu immunization records to MAB, but their records have not been updated; Officers are still receiving notification that they are out of compliance even after faxing their records.
- Officers need to input Readiness data prior to **December 17th** due to Direct Access going offline.
- REMINDER: the revised APFT is effective January 1, 2016.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. EPAC Charter and Bylaws Review

- LCDR Kim Piermatteo provided an overview of the changes.

- EPAC voting members should be prepared to vote on approval/disapproval at the December meeting.
- For specific questions, contact LCDR Piermatteo, kimberly.piermatteo@fda.hhs.gov

B. EPAC Member Introductions

- CDR Kevin Bingley, Indian Health Service, Anchorage, AK
- CDR Jill Hammond, FDA, EPAC Chair

C. Upcoming Events

- Engineer Leadership Open Forum, Wednesday, December 9th.
- Last 2015 EPAC Meeting is Wednesday, December 16th.

D. CAPT Harvey noted that a new policy was invoked in October 22, 2015 outlining 17 ways that Corps Officers with <20 years can be involuntarily separated from the USPHS. It is on the front page of the CCMIS website. He asked whether EPAC should seek clarification from DCCPR on this policy. CDR Hammond asked that engineering officers send her questions or concerns, prior to the Open Forum.

VI. GOOD OF THE WHOLE

- Last 2015 EPAC Meeting is Wednesday, December 16th.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

CDR Hammond adjourned the meeting at 1540 EST.

VIII. 2015 EPAC VOTING MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Term	Rank	First Name	Last Name	Agency	Role	Alternate	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	7-Jul	22-Jul	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	CPO	RADM	Randall	Gardner	IHS	Chief Engineer		X		X	X					X	X	X	
2013-15	CDR	Nathan	Epling	NPS	Past Chair	LT Kelly Hoeksema	X		X	X		A	A	X		X	X	X	
2013-15	CDR	Robert	Hemberger	NPS	Recruitment & Retention Chair	LCDR Samuel Russell	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	A	N	
2013-15	CDR	Janis	McCarroll	DHS		LT Diana Wong	X		X	X		X	X	A		A	A	X	
2013-15	CDR	Nazmul	Hassan	FDA		LT Theresa Grant	N		X	X		X	N	X		X	X	N	
2013-15	LCDR	Deborah	Hirst	CDC		CAPT Chuck Kardous	A		X	X		X	X	X		X	N	X	
2013-15	LCDR	Kimberly	Piermatteo	FDA	Rules Chair	LCDR George Ngatha	N		N	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	
2014-16	CDR	Tanya	Davis	IHS	Public Health Eng Pract Chair	LCDR Darron Clark	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	N	
2014-16	CDR	Jill	Hammond	FDA	EPAC Chair	LCDR Samantha Spindel	X	N	X	X		X	X	X	N	X	X	X	
2014-16	LCDR	Kevin	Bingley	IHS		CDR Michael O'Shea	X		X	X		X	A	X		X	X	X	
2014-16	LCDR	James	Kohler	EPA	Information Chair	CDR Christopher Vaught	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	
2014-16	LT	Shane	Deckert	NIH	Deployment Readiness Chair	LCDR Corey Cosgrove	X	M	X	N		X	X	X		X	X	N	
2014-16	LT	Matthew	Hunt	NIH		LCDR Leo Gumapas	X		X	N		X	N	N		X	X	X	
2014-16	LT	Praveen	K.C.	IHS		LCDR Benjamin Chadwick	X		X	X		A	X	X		X	X	A	
2015-17	CAPT	David	Harvey	IHS		LTJG Melissa de Vera	X		X	X		X	X	A		X	X	X	
2015-17	CDR	Mark	Jackson	CDC		LCDR Matt Hause	X		X	X		X	X	A		X	X	X	
2015-17	CDR	Jonathan	Rash	IHS	Career Development Chair	LCDR Wes Kenney	X		X	X		X	N	X		X	X	N	
2015-17	CDR	Joshua	Simms	FDA		CDR Sadaf Toor	A		X	A		X	X	X		X	X	X	
2015-17	CDR	Kurt	Kesteloot	NPS	Events Chair	LCDR Bret Nickels	X		X	X		X	X	N		X	X	X	
2015-17	LCDR	Jennifer	Stevenson	FDA		LT Abbas Bandukwala	X		A	X		X	X	X		A	X	X	
2015-17	Dr.	Jim	Harris	CDC		Charles Wolfe	X		X	N		A	X	X		X	X	N	
	CAPT	Dan	Beck	OS	RedDOG Liaison		N		N	N		N	N	X		N	N	N	
	CAPT	Eric	Shih	OS	DSI Liaison		N		N	N		N	N	N		N	N	N	
	CAPT	James	Simpson	FDA	COA Liaison		X		X	X		X	N	X		X	X	X	
	CDR	Angela	Mtungwa	OS	DCCPR Liaison		N		N	N		N	N	N		N	X	N	
	CDR	Tara	Bizjak	FDA	CCWIAB Liaison		X		N	X		X	N	N		N	N	N	
	LCDR	Leo	Gumapas	NIH	SAME Liaison		A		N	A		N	N	X		X	A	X	
	LCDR	QuynhNhu	Nguyen	FDA	JOAG Liaison		X		X	N		N	N	N		X	N	N	
	LCDR	Samantha	Spindel	FDA	Executive Secretary		X		X	N		X	X	X		X	X	A	

IX. ATTACHMENTS

None

AUTHORIZATION

I have recorded the above EPAC meeting minutes:

LCDR Chris Fehrman
EPAC, Executive Secretary (2016 select)

Date

I have read the above minutes, which accurately describe this meeting, and on behalf of the EPAC approve their distribution:

CDR Jill Hammond
EPAC, Chair

Date

I authorize distribution of these minutes:

RADM Randall Gardner, P.E.
Chief Engineer, USPHS

Date