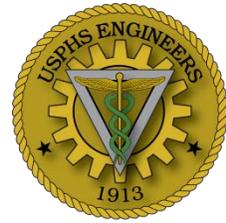




**Meeting Minutes of the
Engineer Professional Advisory Committee
Wednesday, October 21, 2015**



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, November 18, 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 1530 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 September meeting minutes.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

- RADM Gardner visited WEAC a few weeks ago and commented that the work being done there is outstanding. Mentoring is important, especially for researchers to seek opportunities where leadership can be broadened both within and outside of their technical field.
- The discussion about professional registration is ongoing. RADM Gardner is not sure that requiring the EIT for new applicants is necessary for professional boarding.
- The Order of the Engineer is one way Engineers can show our professionalism.
- There is ongoing discussion with Deputy Surgeon General, RADM Trent-Adams to engage with PAC efforts.

- The Army 10-Miler was a success and a great way to support the physical fitness efforts of the Corps. It was a great experience to have other Uniformed Services recognize the PHS.
- Current Engineer readiness numbers are excellent with ~96% qualifying. Officers are being contacted about their Readiness status and are diligent and working hard on other things besides being physically ready. RADM Gardner is a little concerned if we were pushing too hard on the Readiness requirements, although the goal is to achieve 100% Readiness. RADM Gardner is also concerned about the new APFT as it is going to be a struggle for some of us.
- Reminder: The Surgeon General put out a Call to Action regarding walking communities. Hosting walking meetings is one suggestion to support this initiative.
- Thank you to CAPT Longstaff, CAPT Nachod, and CAPT Harvey for all of their work in supporting the EPAC over the years.

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

- The Regalement is today after the EPAC meeting, at Matchbox in Rockville, MD.
- If there are any updates to the EPAC website, please contact LCDR Kohler. All web content will be moved over to a new HHS web address within the next few months.
- Direct Access will be shut down from December 18th-January 4th.
- Remember to certify your leave with your leave maintenance clerk. Leave will be accrued until September 30, 2016 and any remaining leave over 60 days will be truncated.
- The JRCOSTEP application deadline is Friday, December 18th.
- A Step it Up campaign possibly involving FitBit is being developed.
- A Call to Action regarding opioid abuse is planned for release in 2016.
- The Surgeon General will appear on a future episode of the Dr. Oz show.
- A Mid-Level course is scheduled for November. A new OBC class will be held in December. CDR Hammond encourages us to attend the pinning ceremony and graduation for the December OBC class.
- Service interruptions are planned as a result of Direct Access migration. Stay tuned for more information.
- CAPT Beck: New vacancies or short-term TDY assignments with DCCPR are expected, in addition to the currently-posted assignments.
- CAPT Shih: Plans for creating a unified help desk are in the works.
- CAPT Woo introduced a Leadership Doctrine at the PAC chairs meeting. He hopes to develop a cross-category collaboration regarding leadership. CDR Hammond plans to invite CAPT Woo to present the leadership doctrine at a future EPAC meeting.
- Social Media guidelines are being reviewed by LCDR Kohler and the Information Subcommittee.

- An overhaul of the CC Awards process is underway.
- New guidelines may be forthcoming regarding wear of the combination cover and beret for female officers.
- RADM Trent-Adams' Promotion ceremony is scheduled for October 26th.

C. Officer's Brief "Importance of Flexibility in Your Career": CDR Angela Mtungwa (angela.mtungwa@ihs.gov)

- RADM Gardner: There was a point in my career where I felt I was the right person for a position and did not get the job. What do you do if your plan does not work out? The best opportunities I have had were the ones that were not planned. Looking back, those unplanned moves are opportunities. Sometimes, it is important to step outside of your comfort zone and try new things. Things seemed bleak at certain times because I did not get the job, but I knew I needed to keep working at it.
- RADM Gardner's advice: Figure out what is important to you and figure out how to handle things in your life. Mentoring is extremely important. Being able to speak to someone about your career, to understand other perspectives, and bounce ideas off of is helpful. RADM Gardner's son is applying for college and wants to find a mentor.
- CDR Mtungwa: She is a Chemical Engineer by training and has never been a practicing Engineer. She did research regarding medical device implants for eight years at the FDA. Then, she went to BOP as a manager for COSTEPS. She served as the DCCPR Promotion Coordinator and held numerous positions at DCCPR. She now works at IHS as the Director of Division of Commissioned Personnel Support.
- General attributes of Engineers: critical thinking, logical, process-driven, can see big picture and break it into small pieces (project management), detail-oriented, inquisitive, creative. We ask questions and improve upon things. Example: CAPT Dean Coppola was one of the commanders of the MMU in Liberia and CDR Mtungwa caught something that he did not. She attributed this finding to her training as an Engineer.
- Within Commissioned Corps Headquarters, there are many Engineers within Senior leadership.
- Preparation for Leadership: assess strengths and weaknesses (communication and social skills). Address weaknesses through toast masters, writing and communication and leadership/mgmt. courses, and supervisory training.
- Advice when interviewing for leadership positions: be prepared with research, be on time, dress well, do not get too personal, do not be too familiar, be informative, but succinct.
- Other advice: anticipate questions and practice answering them, get feedback from the previous position holder, be careful with comments about current processes/decision-making, tailor CV to the position, follow instructions, proofread documents.

IV. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- The Award Subcommittee is calling for nominations to be sent to epacawards@gmail.com for the following awards:
 - [PHS Engineer of Year](#) - (PDF) deadline **October 28 (Should come via NSPE)**
 - http://www.usphsengineers.org/attachments/awards/PHS_EOY_v2.pdf
 - [PHS Engineer Responder of Year](#) - (PDF) deadline **October 28**
 - http://www.usphsengineers.org/attachments/awards/PHS_EROY.pdf
 - [RADM Jerrold M. Michael Engineer](#) - (PDF) deadline **October 28**
 - http://www.usphsengineers.org/attachments/awards/RADM_Jerrold_M_Michael_Award.pdf
- The Awards Subcommittee had a teleconference on September 17th and discussed the following issues:
 - Awards Review Process
 - Remove comments section from the awards score sheet
 - Ways to increase awareness of EPAC awards and increase nominations
 - We designed a survey to assess the level of awareness about EPAC awards and it has been sent forward for review by RADM Gardner.
 - Update award requirements
 - Remove one nomination per OPDIV
 - Change our plan to have a minimum threshold score for awards, since the threshold would be arbitrary and we do not have reliable variable controlled data to use to develop a threshold. The subcommittee believes that we need to continue to focus on obtaining more nominations and having an arbitrary threshold may discourage officers from submitting nominations.
- RADM Gardner: We need more marketing for EPAC awards.

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

- The new Template and Guidance Document for the Engineer CV is currently being reviewed. The plan is to have this released for use ASAP, hopefully by early November. Expect to see a draft soon for EPAC approval.
- The CV Review webinar and all the Category Day presentations are recorded. They have been edited and need a final review. Some have been posted on the EPAC website, while others are coming soon.
- The subcommittee is reconsidering how to handle an update of the PHS Engineer's Handbook. A new workgroup will be formed soon to get this underway.
- On short notice, we were able to provide CV review for five engineers who requested assistance from an effort led by BCOAG, HSOPAC, and HITPAG. Many thanks to the engineers who volunteered for this effort!
- Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of every month at 1530 EST. The next meeting is scheduled for November 18th.

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

- Develop strategies to address engineer-wide Readiness issues.
 - Received list of President’s Challenge Engineers.
 - Working on plan to transition engineers to new APFT standards.
- Promote Physical Fitness.
 - Developing plan for President’s Challenge Engineer transition to new APFT standards.
 - Added an APFT section to the website under the DPS resources page.
- Update EPAC DPS Website.
 - Frequently updating and adding new, helpful links.
- Creating list of Engineering Core Competencies (from RedDOG) and Training.
 - List has been created and reviewed by the DPS. Request EPAC to review.
- Meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of every month at 1400 EST.

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

- It has been a couple months since the last EPAC Events Subcommittee meeting. The next meeting will involve planning for E-week, SAME JETC, and the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- ***ACTION ITEM:*** *If you are interested in helping plan the breakfast for E-week during 2016, please contact CDR Kesteloot. (NEED A VOLUNTEER FROM IHS HQ).*
- AMSUS is scheduled for December in Texas. No additional details at this time.
- USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Oklahoma City May 16-19, 2016 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.
 - Overall Symposium Theme “Gimme Five: Building a Better Tomorrow through Prevention Today”
 - ***ACTION ITEMS:*** *Please answer the following questions*
 - What Continuing Education is critical for our category this year?
 - What are any critical needs that should be addressed during category day?
 - Are there any gaps of knowledge or skills that need to be addressed?
 - Are there any needed refreshers that could be addressed?
- SAME JETC 2015 May 24-26, 2016 Phoenix Convention Center; Phoenix, AZ - See more 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.

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

- Content management:
 - Website is up to date.

- Commissioned Corps Engineering Roster posted on front page of website.
- EPAC Website Migration proceeding with assistance from new PAC.
- ***ACTION ITEM: Please send photos and any new requests for other postings or revisions to postings@usphsengineers.org.***
- Newsletter:
 - Fall newsletter almost ready, expected publication end of October.
- 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)

- Report 1: Chief Engineer Mentoring Panel Webinar is scheduled for this Friday October 23, 2015 @ 2:00-3:00PM.
- The topic is: “So You Didn’t Get Promoted, and Mentoring, Making the Connection”
BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!!!
 - The webinar can be viewed at the following link:
<https://collaboration.fda.gov/usphs-engineers/>
 - Participants can type in questions to the chief engineer related to mentoring and promotion.
 - There will be a panel of Senior Engineer Officers representing different PHS agencies that can also answer questions about mentoring and promotions on the call.
- Report 2: The EPAC Mentoring Subcommittee will not meet in October, but encourages all to join the Panel/Webinar featuring the Chief Engineer and a panel of Senior Engineer Officers.
- Meetings are held the third Friday of every month that EPAC meets and at 15:00 EST. The next meeting is scheduled for November 20th.

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

- Engineering Standards workgroup has compiled survey results.
- Publishing Workgroup continues to work on the USPHS Engineer Publication Guidelines document.
- PHEP Meetings are held on the Thursday before the monthly EPAC meeting at 2 EST. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 12th.

H. Recruitment and Retention: CDR Robert Hemberger

(robert_hemberger@partner.nps.gov)

- The vacancy list is currently being used more extensively than in the past due to the current recruiting initiatives. It is very important to pass information to CDR Zoch regarding vacancies.

- There are two current recruiting initiatives: the Civil Service to Commissioned Corps conversion and the applicants from the July open window.
- Civil Service to Commissioned Corps conversion is ongoing. 28 candidates are being tracked, four candidates have been successful. This program is unlikely to continue.
- 58 candidates applied during recent open window. DCCPR is willing to accept 35, RADM Gardner, CDR Hemberger and CAPT Harvey will lead the candidate the assessment.
- LT Devera is leading the program to convert Civil Service applicants to Commissioned Corps. This program will also aid open window applicants in finding Commissioned Corps eligible positions.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** *LT Devera needs assistance with this endeavor and is looking for volunteers.*

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

- Report 1: 2016 New EPAC Membership
 - The new member nomination package has been prepared and will be submitted to the Surgeon General for review and official appointment.
- Report 2: Review and Update EPAC Charter and By Laws
 - Subcommittee members are currently reviewing the EPAC Charter (last approved February 25, 2013) and By Laws (last approved December 19, 2012). Suggestions and revisions, if identified, will be presented to the EPAC and then discussed during the November 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)

- Report 1:
 - JOAG held its first meeting of the operational year on Friday, October 9th. The theme for this year is building public health leadership and advancing deployment readiness. JOAG's three priority areas for the year will be:
 - advocacy (speaking up and representing the unified junior officer voice) at the highest levels of senior leadership,
 - supporting the initiatives of the Surgeon General (starting with supporting the new OSG call to action to #StepItUp) ,
 - connectedness (reaching out to officers at all duty stations and locations to ensure after OBC they stay connected and that we serve as a resource and network for them).

These priority areas are all in line with the JOAG new 5-year Strategic Plan that was developed this past year and we are excited to bring some of this to life.

- Report 2:
 - Interested in submitting an article to the JOAG Journal? The JOAG Communications and Publications Committee is responsible for soliciting articles and developing The JOAG Journal, a publication for Junior Officers, by Junior Officers. The goal is to disseminate relevant and accurate information and allow others an inside view into the Commissioned Corps (CC) from a junior officer's perspective. JOAG Journal Guidelines for Article Submission are attached.

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

- Report 1:
 - 2016 The Military Engineer Calendar
 - March April: Water Issue
 - Article Proposals due 11/13/2015
 - Final Manuscript due 12/14/2015
 - Overcoming impacts of droughts and mitigating impacts of labs
 - Enacting better storm water and wastewater management
 - Reduce water usage on bases and government facilities
 - May – June: Energy and Sustainability
 - Article Proposals 1/29/2016
 - Final Manuscripts 2/22/2016
 - September – October: Health & Safety
 - Article Proposals 6/3/2016
 - Final Manuscripts 6/20/2016
- Report 2:
 - Nominations for the Hollis, Green, and Cumming Award are due by February 10, 2016, to be presented at the SAME JETC May 24 to May 26 in Phoenix, AZ

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

- There will be a Remote Area Medical (RAM) event at the COF conference next year,. This is an excellent opportunity to participate in Readiness training at COF.
- The local branch committee has been doing a fantastic job, especially by LCDR Abraham Marrero, who is developing a PT uniform.
- There is an opportunity to do more webinars and many are being trained in the skills needed to conduct webinars.
- Health Leader of the Year nominations expected to be due by December 1st.

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

- Report 1: The Expectant Parents' Guide was released in April 2015. We are working on a presentation that I will share with everyone when available.
 - Revisions are ongoing (Tricare, weblinks) and will be updated online when available.
- Report 2: October is Domestic Violence Awareness month. We have a CC policy that is currently being drafted/reviewed.
- Report 3: We are working on a Resource Guide for Married Officers, in collaboration with JOAG.
- ***ACTION ITEM: If anyone is interested in helping on our committees, please contact me with your interest.***
- Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 1000 EST.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Engineer Readiness Improvement

- We are at 96.06%, which is the highest it has been in the last two years.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. EPAC Member Introductions

- CDR Nathan Epling
 - Started with PHS in 2002.
 - Prior Peace Corps volunteer.
 - Worked at IHS in Washington state for 3 years.
 - Currently serves in Asheville, NC with NPS. NPS has ~50 officers, mostly EHOs and Engineers.
 - NPS is a rewarding place to work and they truly understand the concept of Readiness.
 - NPS is very friendly to Corps officers.
 - Served as past EPAC Chair.
 - Currently serves as the PAC Chairs group Chair. All 11 PAC Chairs meet once a month and focus on needs that affect all professional categories.
- CDR Mark Jackson
 - Prior service in Army and took a civilian engineering job in N.C.
 - Joined PHS in 2002 and has been stationed at the CDC in Morgantown, WV.
 - Is an Electrical Engineer and works at an inhalation facility.
 - Develops hardware and software for vapor inhalation facilities.
 - He studies the effects of exposure on animals. Big picture: OSHA makes recommendations based on these exposure studies done.

- o Serves on the Career Development Subcommittee. He is currently leading the Agency Panel Roundtable initiative. This roundtable serves as a mechanism to have visibility about other positions. The roundtable may provide a better tool for mentoring, as engineers may be able to get an understanding of a job pathway ahead of time.
- o Interesting fact: he is the co-owner of a white water raft and works hard, plays hard!

VI. GOOD OF THE WHOLE

- RADM Gardner plans to put together a brief about engineer activities that we are involved with in our agencies. This will provide a nice summary for promotion board members. This will serve as a guidance document about what engineers are doing around the country. The deadline for completion of this document is March 2016.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

CDR Hammond adjourned the meeting at 1728 EST.

VIII. 2015 EPAC VOTING MEMBER ATTENDANCE

2015 EPAC Roll Call							X = Member Present, A = Alternate Present, N = None													
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		N	N	X		X	X		
VOTING MEMBERS	2013-15	CDR	Nathan	Epling	NPS	Past Chair	LT Kelly Hoeksema	X		X	X		A	A	X		X	X		
	2013-15	CDR	Robert	Hemberger	NPS	Recruitment & Retention Chair	LCDR Samuel Russell	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	A		
	2013-15	CDR	Janis	McCarroll	DHS		LT Diana Wong	X		X	X		X	X	A		A	A		
	2013-15	CDR	Nazmul	Hassan	FDA		LT Theresa Grant	N		X	X		X	N	X		X	X		
	2013-15	LCDR	Deborah	Hirst	CDC		CAPT Chuck Kardous	A		X	X		X	X	X		X	N		
	2013-15	LCDR	Kimberly	Piermatteo	FDA	Rules Chair	LCDR George Ngatha	N		N	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		
	2014-16	CDR	Jill	Hammond	FDA	EPAC Chair	LCDR Samantha Spindel	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X		
	2014-16	LCDR	Kevin	Bingley	IHS		LCDR Michael O'Shea	X		X	X		X	A	X		X	X		
	2014-16	LCDR	James	Kohler	EPA	Information Chair	CDR Christopher Vaught	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X		
	2014-16	LT	Shane	Deckert	NIH	Deployment Readiness Chair	LCDR Corey Cosgrove	X		X	N		X	X	X		X	X		
	2014-16	LT	Matthew	Hunt	NIH		LCDR Leo Gumapas	X		X	N		X	N	N		X	X		
	2014-16	LT	Praveen	K.C.	IHS		LCDR Benjamin Chadwick	X		X	X		A	X	X		X	X		
	2015-17	CAPT	David	Harvey	IHS		LTJG Melissa de Vera	X		X	X		X	X	A		X	X		
	2015-17	CDR	Mark	Jackson	CDC		LCDR Matt Hause	X		X	X		X	X	A		X	X		
	2015-17	CDR	Jonathan	Rash	IHS	Career Development Chair	LCDR Wes Kenney	X		X	X		X	N	X		X	X		
	2015-17	CDR	Joshua	Simms	FDA		CDR Sadaf Toor	A		X	A		X	X	X		X	X		
2015-17	CDR	Kurt	Kesteloot	NPS	Events Chair	LCDR Bret Nickels	X		X	X		X	X	N		X	X			
2015-17	LCDR	Jennifer	Stevenson	FDA		LT Abbas Bandukwala	X		A	X		X	X	X		A	X			
2015-17	Dr.	Jim	Harris	CDC		Charles Wolfe	X		X	N		A	X	X		X	X			
Ex-Officio		CAPT	Dan	Beck	OS	RedDOG Liaison		N		N	N	N	N	N	X		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	N	X		X	X		
		CDR	Angela	Mtungwa	OS	DCCPR Liaison		N		N	N	N	N	N	N		N	X		
		CDR	Tara	Bizjak	FDA	CCWIAB Liaison		X		N	X		X	N	N		N	N		
		LCDR	Leo	Gumapas	NIH	SAME Liason		A		N	A		N	N	X		X	A		
		LCDR	QuynhNhu	Nguyen	FDA	JOAG Liaison		X		X	N		N	N	N		X	N		
	LCDR	Samantha	Spindel	FDA	Executive Secretary		X		X	N		X	X	X		X	X			

IX. ATTACHMENTS



The JOAG Journal
Guidelines for Article 5

AUTHORIZATION

I have recorded the above EPAC meeting minutes:

LCDR Samantha Spindel
EPAC, Executive Secretary

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