



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service  
Office of the Surgeon General

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**Date:** February 25, 2013  
**To:** The Surgeon General  
Through: Deputy Surgeon General SLA  
**From:** Chief Professional Officer, Engineer Category  
**Subject:** Review/Revision of Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC) Charter

**ISSUE**

Review of proposed revisions of the EPAC Charter.

**DISCUSSION**

The EPAC provides advice and consultation through the Chief Engineer to the Surgeon General on issues related to the professional practice and activities of civil services and Commissioned Corps engineers.

The EPAC Charter was revised at the close of 2012 (TAB A), and is consistent with the Model Charter issued by the Office of the Surgeon General, dated 4 April 2012. The revisions include several editorial and organizational changes to better match the Model Charter, as represented in Draft EPAC Charter (TAB B). Membership on the EPAC will remain a three-year cycle, with an appointment eligibility limit of 6 years.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that you approve the EPAC Charter as reviewed/revise.

**DECISION**

Approve

Disapprove

Date JUL 16 2013

*Ragene M. Benjamin MD*

*S. E. Rodenbeck*

Sven E. Rodenbeck, Sc.D., P.E., DEE  
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Assistant Surgeon General

Attachments

- TAB A Reviewed/Revised EPAC Charter, Dated November 2012 (Final Draft)
- TAB B Red Line Revised EPAC Charter, Dated November 2012 (Draft)
- TAB C Last Approved Charter, Dated 2006

**UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Final Draft) CHARTER  
November 2012**

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II	RELATIONSHIP OF THE ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
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**UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Final Draft) CHARTER**

November 2012

On October 25, 1962, the Surgeon General approved the establishment of an Engineer Career Development Program in the United States Public Health Service (PHS) and authorized the formation of an Engineer Career Development Committee (ECDC), through which the Program operated. The Surgeon General also designated the Chief Engineer as the professional and administrative advisor to the Program. On September 6, 1983, the Surgeon General renamed the PHS Career Development Committees to Professional Advisory Committees (PACs), revised its objectives, and recommended a set of standard operating principles. This Charter is consistent with the standard operating principles of the model PAC Charter, including all subsequent updates through May 2012, and implements them through the Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC).

**(I) MISSION**

The EPAC was created by, and is to advise and serve, the Surgeon General and the Public Health Service (PHS) through the Chief Professional Officer (CPO), on issues relating to the professional practice and the personnel activities, Commissioned Corps (CC) and civil service (CS), of the Engineer Category. Working through the CPO, The EPAC provides similar advisory assistance, upon request, to the Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) or Staff Divisions (STAFFDIVs) of the PHS, and to non-PHS Programs that routinely use PHS personnel.

**(II) RELATIONSHIP OF THE EPAC TO THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (USPHS)**

In carrying out its' responsibilities, the EPAC operates in a staff capacity. It does not substitute for line management or in any way exercise the prerogatives of the respective operating programs. Thus, the EPAC advises the CPO, who in turn advises the Surgeon General. While EPAC members are chosen from the respective PHS OPDIVs and STAFFDIVs (referred to as DIVs herein), they neither represent DIVs' management nor speak for the DIVs. They are knowledgeable professionals who represent a cross section of the interests, concerns, and responsibilities of the professionals in DIVs and organizations staffed by PHS personnel.

**(III) OBJECTIVES**

The EPAC serves in a resource and advisory capacity to assist in the development, coordination, and evaluation of activities related to the professional discipline(s) it represents in the PHS with the specific objectives of:

1. Identifying and facilitating resolution of issues of concern as they relate to the engineer category and related civil service professional disciplines.
2. Assessing PHS personnel needs and assisting in meeting these needs through activities in recruitment, training, utilization, and recognition of officers in the engineer category and related civil service professional disciplines.
3. Developing position papers, statistical reports, and/or guidelines where appropriate, in order to advise and comment on matters relating to the personnel issues and professional practice of the engineer category and related civil service professional disciplines.
4. Promoting the development and utilization of engineers by the PHS and other Government programs.
5. Promoting cooperation and communication among engineers and other health professionals.
6. Promoting all aspects of the engineer category and related civil service professionals throughout the Agencies and Programs of the PHS.
7. Providing liaison among professional disciplines within and among PHS components.
8. Providing advice and consultation to the Agency Heads and operating programs upon request.
9. Advocating for best practices within the profession.
10. Facilitating relationships with professional organizations and academia to promote the linkage between public health and the professions and disciplines of the USPHS.

#### **(IV) FUNCTIONS**

In carrying out its' broad mission and objectives, the functions of the EPAC shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Provide general professional advice and recommendations:
  - a. Review and comment on issues referred to the EPAC by the Surgeon General, Chief Professional Officer, and DIV Heads.
  - b. Deliberate issues, develop findings, and present recommendations to/through the Chief Engineer to the Surgeon General.

- c. Provide advice on the professional aspects of the engineering category, i.e., new technologies, regulations, curricula, roles, etc.
  - d. Provide advice on ethical and professional standards issues.
  - e. Review and provide recommendations concerning proposed or needed changes to appointment standards and Professional requirements, e.g., licensure required to maintain high quality staff.
2. Act as primary resource for career development:
- a. Advise on CC and CS practices concerning career development.
  - b. Advise on operating practices concerning the appropriate/optimum use of personnel designed to best meet PHS needs and the needs of the individual.
  - c. Advise on issues related to PHS promotion practices for the engineer category.
  - d. Formulate criteria for the selection of candidates for training and/or other career development options.
  - e. Identify both continuing and long-term intramural/extramural education needs of the engineering category, and identify and recommend training and/or experience opportunities designed to meet these needs.
  - f. Maintain and evaluate the PHS Engineer Mentor Program.
3. Provide advice and assistance on engineer staffing issues:
- a. Assess and project need for the engineer category staffing levels, both CC and CS, throughout the PHS.
  - b. Provide advice on the goals, objectives, and procedures designed to meet the PHS staffing needs and assist in category retention initiatives.
  - c. Provide guidance for recruitment to the short-term student affiliation programs (COSTEP, summer students, etc.).
  - d. Develop, and/or review and critique, engineer category-specific PHS recruitment materials, procedures, and programs.
  - e. Help establish networks of current, as well as former, PHS professionals, who can assist and facilitate recruitment activities.

- f. Provide guidance to approved PHS recruiters concerning the recruitment of qualified candidates to the engineering category and related civil service professional disciplines.
  - g. Assist in the development of orientation materials for newly-hired engineer category professionals and provide advice/recommendations concerning orientation programs.
4. Communicate and encourage appropriate use of awards and recognition systems:
- a. Identify, establish, and help administer special professional engineer category specific awards.
  - b. Maintain cognizance of the existing CS and CC award programs and opportunities, and encourage the nomination of qualified individuals for such awards.
5. Serve as a communication link and information resource for the category:
- a. Communicate to the CC/CS engineer category staff important information concerning professional, ethical, and technical issues.
  - b. Encourage individual membership and involvement with professional organizations and societies in order to promote open communication with non-federal colleagues.
  - c. Ensure the distribution of minutes and/or other EPAC-developed materials to the extent possible and appropriate to CC and CS staff.
  - d. Ensure the availability of EPAC minutes to other PACs and the Office of the Surgeon General through the EPAC website.
6. This list of functions is not inclusive. The EPAC has the responsibility to identify and add functions as necessary to carry out their responsibilities for PHS engineers. Such functions shall be in concert with the overall mission and purpose for the EPAC.

## **(V) MEMBERSHIP**

1. **Basic Eligibility Requirements:** Members must be full-time CC or CS personnel, at the time they are nominated and appointed to the EPAC, and meet the eligibility requirements for initial appointment to the engineer category and personnel systems. In addition, all CC personnel must meet basic readiness standards at the time they are nominated and appointed to the EPAC, and throughout their term on EPAC.

2. Staff from the Office of the Secretary (OS) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) may serve on a PAC providing that they excuse themselves from voting on issues and decisions that may that may have the appearance of a conflict of interest with respect to their duty assignments.
3. Size of the PAC: The EPAC shall have no fewer than 7 and no more than 30 voting members.
4. Organizational Representation: In order to provide the range of experiences and perspectives necessary for addressing issues before the EPAC, every effort must be made to have the broadest representation possible among all agencies that are routinely staffed by Commissioned Corps Officers of the engineer category.
5. Geographic Considerations: The EPAC will have at least two voting members whose regular duty station is geographically removed by a minimum distance of 75 miles from the Washington Metropolitan Area.
6. Gender and Minority Representation: The EPAC will make a concerted effort to include both men and women, and racial and ethnic minorities in the composition of its membership.
7. Personnel System: The EPAC will make a concerted effort to include civil service personnel in the composition of its membership.
8. Professional Seniority: The EPAC will have as a voting member a minimum of one individual who at the time of appointment to the EPAC has less than 5 years of professional experience.
9. Professional Discipline Composition: Cognizant of the fact that the EPAC is structured around the PHS Commissioned Corps defined professional categories which encompass more than one major professional discipline, to the extent possible the EPAC should contain at least one voting member who possesses the requisite credentials for each of the respective sub-disciplines that make up the category, i.e., at least one engineer and one architect. Diversity among the engineering disciplines representing the EPAC is also desired. Upon request by the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), or recommendation by the Chief Engineer or the EPAC, the EPAC may provide information and/or representation to related professional disciplines which are not specifically represented by other PACs. This may be done through voting or ex-officio membership for a member of that related profession, or by other means selected by the EPAC.
10. Ex-Officio Members (non-voting): The Chief Engineer is an ex-officio member of the EPAC [see IX (1)]. The former chair may serve 1 additional year as an ex-officio member of the EPAC [see VIII (3)]. The EPAC may identify other individuals and request that they serve as ex-officio members.

11. Liaison Members (non-voting): The EPAC may identify individuals to serve in a liaison capacity to provide information or assist with activities, e.g. staff from the OS or OASH.

## **(VI) NOMINATION PROCESS**

1. Annually, the EPAC will solicit, through newsletters and other appropriate means, nominations for vacancies on the EPAC from all individuals in the engineer category and represented civil service professional disciplines. Self-nominations will be solicited. The names will be transmitted by the CPO to the nominee's respective OPDIV and STAFFDIV Head who may endorse the nominee(s) or provide alternate or additional nominations meeting the general representation requirements demonstrated by the original nominees. The OPDIV and STAFFDIV Head's response will be reviewed by the EPAC and CPO who will identify, by name, those highly qualified to fill anticipated vacancies. A final list of nominees will be sent by the CPO to the Surgeon General for selection and approval.
2. This nomination process shall be conducted so that the final nomination package is available for the Surgeon General's consideration no less than 60 calendar days prior to the expiration of the regular term of the member.
3. Should the need arise to fill an unexpired term of a voting member, the vacancy shall be filled through the annual nomination process.

## **(VII) TERM OF APPOINTMENT**

1. EPAC Members will be selected to serve 3 year terms (2 or 4 year terms are also authorized by the SG). Terms will be staggered to ensure rotational balance; or approximately one-third of the members' terms will expire annually.
2. Once a member has accumulated a lifetime total of 6 years of service on the EPAC, they are not eligible for reappointment. Terms of office may be served consecutively at the discretion of the EPAC.
3. Alternates: Cognizant of the demands of the member's primary work responsibilities and the EPAC's need to conduct business, the EPAC has the option of establishing procedures to allow each voting member to appoint, and inform the Chairperson, a single individual from the same DIV who can serve as his/her alternate. The Chief Engineer must concur with the selection of the alternate. Such alternates shall have voting privileges when serving in the place of the primary member. It is the responsibility of the primary EPAC member to keep the alternate fully informed and knowledgeable of the EPAC's activities. Any DIV clearance or approval requirements for travel/per diem will have to be handled within the OPDIV by the primary EPAC member. All alternates must meet basic readiness standards.

4. Attendance: Any member of the EPAC who frequently misses meetings (e.g., two consecutive meetings or four meetings in a year) without just cause can, at the discretion of the EPAC Chair in consultation with the Chief Engineer, be asked to voluntarily resign from the EPAC, or the EPAC Chair in consultation with the Chief Engineer can initiate a request to the Surgeon General to terminate said membership and so inform the DIV Head. Provision of an alternate by an EPAC member does not solely constitute just cause in fulfilling the attendance requirements.

#### **(VIII) CHAIRPERSON AND CHAIR-ELECT**

1. Appointments: The Chairperson and Chair-Elect will be elected by the voting membership of the EPAC.
2. Term of the Chairperson: The Chairperson will serve a 1-year term
3. Term of Appointment : If the term of the Chairperson coincides with expiration of that individual's membership on the EPAC, the former Chair may serve one additional year as an ex-officio member of the EPAC provided the DIV Head is informed and concurs with the extension, unless reappointed as a regular member per the provisions of Section (VI).
4. Term of the Chair-Elect: The Chair-Elect will serve a one year term as Chair-Elect followed by a one year term as Chairperson.

#### **(IX) CHIEF PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (CPO)**

1. EPAC Membership: The Chief Engineer shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of the EPAC.
2. Relationship with the EPAC: All output of the EPAC, be it correspondence, reports, minutes of its proceedings, or other, must be transmitted through the CPO who, as he/she may deem appropriate, may provide concurring or non-concurring comments but may not stop or unduly delay such transmittals.

#### **(X) OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

1. The EPAC shall develop its own internal operations and procedures (e.g. bylaws). These shall include, at the minimum provisions covering the following:
  - a. Operational year: Determine the day and month chosen as the beginning of its operational year.
  - b. Frequency of meeting: Meetings will be held once per quarter at a minimum.
  - c. Agenda: A meeting agenda and appropriate background material is to be made

available to the members.

2. Records and Reporting:
  - a. Minutes of each EPAC meeting will be developed by the Executive Secretary and approved by the EPAC members.
  - b. Minutes and reports of the EPAC will be distributed in accord with Item IV (5) (cC) FUNCTIONS.
  - c. The EPAC must establish a system to maintain a permanent file of the official minutes and reports of the EPAC.
3. Executive Secretary: The Executive Secretary must be a member of the category but is not required to be a voting EPAC member. The Executive Secretary is appointed by the Chairperson. If the Executive Secretary is not a member of the EPAC, he or she will be considered an ex-officio member.
4. Quorum: A Quorum consists of at least 50 percent of the EPAC voting membership. An alternate attending in lieu of the member shall be counted in determining the quorum requirement.
5. Voting: Where voting is required or appropriate (e.g., election of the Chairperson), action will be determined by the simple majority of those voting members present.
6. Subcommittees: Where the EPAC elects to establish standing or ad hoc subcommittee, said membership may include non-EPAC members provided that the chair of the subcommittee is a voting member of the EPAC.

## **(XI) CHARTER UPDATE AND APPROVAL**

1. The EPAC's charter must be reviewed and approved by the Surgeon General.
2. Subsequent modifications also require the review and approval of the Surgeon General.
3. The EPAC is required to review and, if required, update its charter at least every three years.

The initial charter was recommended February 12, 1963, by the ECDC. This is the tenth update of the charter (2012) recommended by either the ECDC or its successor, the EPAC. Recommended updates were previously made in:

March 1977  
October 1983  
May 1986

March 1988  
August 1988  
October 1991  
May 1994  
October 1997  
December 2006