



Scientist Professional Advisory Committee Meeting Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

1100 – 1300

USA Toll Free Number: 866-705-4165

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PASSCODE: 1220522

Leader: Martin Sanders

I. Call to Order and Welcome

CDR Martin Sanders

- Send an email to tracy.macgill@fda.hhs.gov to register your attendance.

Participants

PAC Members	Agency	Discipline	X, if Present
CAPT Bill Burkhardt III	FDA	Microbiology	X
CDR Christine J. Benally	IHS	Epidemiology	X
CDR Jon R. Daugherty	FDA	Microbiology	
CDR Mehran Massoudi	CDC	Epidemiology	X
CDR David McIntyre	IHS	Clinical Psychology	
CDR Daphne B. Moffett	ATSDR	Env. Health/Tox	X
CDR John Mosely Hayes	IHS	Epidemiology	
CDR Martin Sanders	CDC	Microbiology	X
CDR Mark Seaton	FDA	Pharmacology	
LCDR Rachel Avchen	CDC	Epidemiology	X
LCDR Marco Bennett	FDA	Medicinal Chemistry	X
LCDR Diana Bensyl	CDC	Epidemiology	X
LCDR Wei Guo	FDA	Pharmacology/Biochemistry	
LCDR Rona LeBlanc	FDA	Microbiology	X
LCDR Tracy MacGill	FDA	Microbiology	X
LCDR Mark Methner	CDC/NIOSH	Env. Science/Indus. Hygiene	X
LCDR Matthew Newland	HRSA	Epidemiology	X
LCDR Sara Newman	OS/OPHEP	Epidemiology	X
LCDR D. Ross Spears	CDC	Chemistry	X
Dr. Dalton Paxman	OS/OPHS	Environmental Health/Tox	
CPO- RADM Helena Mishoe	NIH	Microbiology	

Non-voting Scientist Participants

Participant	Agency
CAPT Kate Brett	CDC
CAPT Pam Ching	CDC
CAPT Omar Hottenstein	DOD
CAPT Francois Lalonde	NIH
CDR Heidi Blanck	CDC
CDR Laura Draski	FDA
CDR John Eckert	OS
CDR Michael Murry	BOP
CDR Timothy Nelle	FDA
LCDR Danice Eaton	CDC
LCDR Judy Facey	EPA
LCDR Maleeka Glover	CDC
LCDR Hannah Gould	CDC
LCDR Lisa Pealer	CDC
LCDR Andrea Sharma	CDC
LCDR Jacqueline Sram	FDA
LCDR John Stansberry	NIH
LCDR Lauren Zapata	CDC
LCDR Andrew Voetsch	CDC
LT Cheska Clingman	NIH
LT Sally Hu	NIH
LT Paul Seo	CDC

II. Report from the CPO

RADM Mishoe

- RADM was unable to join the call.
- CDR Sanders will review issues from the SG-PAC meeting in the PAC Chair Report.

III. Report from the PAC Chair

CDR Martin Sanders

a) SG-CPO meeting update

- The issue of greatest concern was the recently announced limit of 250 HHS-funded attendees to the upcoming USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. Each Agency has been allotted a predetermined number (of the 250 total).
- This is an absolute ceiling, which means that regardless of how many officers have the offer of support from their program, each Agency will be limited to the predetermined number of attendees.
- The issue was discussed extensively at the SG-CPO meeting and the limits are fixed.
- Even if the program is only covering a portion of the costs, this will be counted as a funded slot or equivalent to those for which all expenses are being covered.
- Some Agencies have asked senior officers to volunteer to pay their own way to the conference to reserve support for junior officers.

- The Agency selection process is being administered through the Agency Liaison. Some Agencies have already issued their list of approved attendees while others are in the selection process.
- Those officers, who have not received information from their Agencies about the selection process, should contact their Agency Liaison. The CAPT Hayes (aeh4@cdc.gov) is the CDC Liaison and CAPT Green is the FDA Liaison (russell.green@fda.hhs.gov).
- It was noted that NIH and CDC requested information regarding which officers were scheduled to speak at the conference. This information was likely used to select officers for Agency-funded slots.
- The CDC list was released last week. The question was asked if this list was final or needed to be approved by HHS. CDR Sanders responded that it was indicated at the SG-PAC meeting that those on the Agency list would receive an Agency slot.
- No guidance was given at the SG-CPO meeting for officers who are scheduled to give presentations, but are not selected for Agency funding. CDR Sanders suggested contacting the Agency Liaison to ask whether presentations were considered in the selection process.
- One officer stated that in not being selected, they would ask someone else to post their presentation. It was also mentioned that many Category Day Co-Chairs had also not been approved for attendance.
- In the case of CDC, there was approximately three times the number of officers with program sponsorship than HHS-allocated spaces. It is possible that there were actually more speakers than allocated spaces.
- The remaining option for those who do not receive an Agency slot is attend on their own time and at their own expense. These officers will need to use administrative or annual leave to do so.
- It was noted that some Agencies may not allow officers to give work-related presentations unless they are on official travel. Presenters who are considering attending on their own should clarify the appropriate policies for their particular Agency.

b) Agenda format

- The agenda format will return to the original format next month.
- The work of some of the FACs, and Transformation WGs is winding down and there is upcoming PAC business.
- The process for selecting new PAC members will begin next month and will be administered through the Rules Subcommittee. Anyone interested in assisting with this important activity should contact LCDR Rachel Avchen (rja5@cdc.gov).
- Additionally, service awards and call for elections for the SciPAC executive need to be discussed next month.

IV. Treasure's Report

CDR Martin Sanders

- Current balance of \$1577.51 is unchanged from last month.

V. Functional Advisory Committee Reports (as needed)

a) Research FAC

CAPT Drue Barrett

- CAPT Barrett was unable to attend

b) Mental Health FAC

CAPT Kevin McGuiness

- CAPT McGuiness was unavailable for the call.

c) Applied Public Health FAC

CDR Kathleen McDuffie

- CDR McDuffie was unavailable for the call.

d) Clinical FAC

CAPT Francois Lalonde

- There is no new information to report.
- The group will be meeting again in June.

VI. Transformation Reports (as needed)

a) Sizing

CAPT Richard Troiano

- Since CAPT Troiano was unable to attend, the report was given by CDR Benally.
- The group started meeting at the end of March and is scheduled to meet through the end of May.
- The Sizing WPDG has been divided into 4 subgroups
 - Retention- A draft document was circulated among the transformation team due to its early stage of development.
 - Allocation-This group is in the process of requesting an extension
 - Staffing needs-The group will be developing survey instruments for employee satisfaction, exit, and commissioning process.
 - Paper, Model and Non-HHS- The model has been presented to the transformation team and will be presented to the WPDG and then to the IPTG. The activities are on hold pending approval of a new Detail Directive by OS. This template should provide greater opportunities for new officers during the growth of the Corps from 6000 to 6600. These efforts also seek legislative authority to detail officers to the Community Health Centers in lieu of HRSA grants funds.

b) Recruitment

CDR Martin Sanders

- The group has been discussing the roles of officers, ARPs, and ARP Leads in relation to a centralized recruiter/system that will be coming online.
- The functions of officers, ARPs and ARP Leads should remain the same.
- Similar to other uniform services, the centralized system will place new CADs in an initial assignment and assist existing officers in locating positions.
- The intent is that the centralized system will be treated as a service to help officers find new positions when they are looking. There would not be a mandatory system under which someone else is actively managing an officer's career.
- The system will be based on a series of "pass offs". For example, officers and ARPs would get applicants interested in the Corps and then refer them to the centralized system for application processing and job placement assistance.
- These plans are being developed under an "ideal situation" with the understanding that the model will need to be funded and that currently the Agencies control the jobs.
- These recruiting activities will overlap with those of the Three H WG.

c) Discipline and Retention

CDR Daphne Moffett

- The group is working at full force and was tasked by RADM Canton to define retention board composition and processes.
- Writers from the Cornwall Policy Writers are working with a subgroup to draft the policy. The process will begin on May 3rd and will have a rapid turn around time.
- Additionally the group is continuing to examine existing disciplinary policies. The next one to be reviewed deals with AWOL issues.
- There was a good general discussion of the activities of the various Transformation groups that elucidated some recurring themes. These included:
 - The speed of policy development is distressing. The Mental Health group felt that it was moving too fast.
 - Concern that the groups may not have the representation of all the required areas of expertise (e.g. workforce development) and that the groups would benefit from Subject Matter Experts.
- CDC will be forwarding suggestions to the Corps leadership.

d) Readiness

CDR Mark Seaton

- CDR Seaton was unable to attend, but noted by email that there were no updates.

e) Training and Career Development

LCDR Sara Newman

- Since Lcdr Newman was unable to attend, the report was given by Lcdr MacGill.
- The potential mechanisms by which the Agencies would fund officer attendance at the Officer Basic Course are being discussed. The four proposed options are:
 - Establish an IAG with each Agency to reimburse OCCO following training.
 - Agencies would pay quarterly for an estimated number of officers with reconciliation at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarters.
 - The “per officer” administrative fee that each Agency pays would be increased.
 - The Agency would be charged for each Call To Active Duty (CAD) officer by OCCO at the time of CAD.
- The advantages and disadvantages of each of the options were discussed with options 3 and 4 generating the most positive discussion. It was felt that the need to be reimbursed by the Agency to cover the cost of subsequent courses was a significant disadvantage of option 1. Further, there were concerns that the estimation and reconciliation processes of option 2 may create an excessive administrative burden for both OCCO and the Agencies.
- While the “pay as you go” system of option 4 was the most direct and consistent with the way many Agencies currently cover travel and training, some Agencies have funding policies that may make it difficult to utilize this system.
- There was also a concern that under option 4 some Agencies would incur an unfair proportion of training costs because they hire more CAD officers.
- The group favored option 3 because it more fairly distributed the training costs among all of the Agencies and could potentially be used to fund advanced courses. Additionally, spreading out the costs could reduce the “per officer” training costs per Agency and minimize creating a financial incentive to fill positions with GS instead of Corps.
- CDR Sanders noted that as with the work of many of the Transformation groups to develop new policies that consideration should be given to the potential creation of barriers to hiring Corps officers.

f) Billets Officer Profile and Collection System

CAPT Ching

- RADM Mishoe and CAPT Ching have been working to create 16 standard Scientist billets (e.g. clinical scientist, research management officer).

- This was done utilizing 20 standard elements to specify the positions.
- The target groups for these standard billets are officers in BOP, Indian Health Service, and NIH.
- In the next phase, multidisciplinary billets will be created. It was noted that there are also Agency-specific billets.
- Eventually every officer will be given a template containing the standard elements and be asked to fill in position-specific information.
- A White Paper is under development.
- Ultimately, the hope is to have a system that staffing officers will be able to utilize to match officers with specific skills to positions requiring those skills.
- The group is continuing to have weekly meetings.

g) Three H

CDR Doug Thoroughman

- Since CDR Thouroughman is unavailable, CDR Benally will give the report.
- The incentive pay proposal has been approved by the group and will be sent to the IPTG for review.
- The family support program needs to be discussed further as the issue was raised as to whether it was appropriate for Corps officers to develop their own program in lieu of utilizing existing resources.

h) Uniforms
Identified

Representative to be

- This group has just recently been formed and the Scientist representatives yet to be contacted.
- CDR Benally was able to give the group an update.
- There will be a transition phase to retire several uniforms, including the salt and pepper, working khakis, winter blues and army sweaters.
- The plan is to utilize the new Navy uniform regulations. It was noted that the Navy is in the process of phasing out a number of uniforms, including the summer whites. Additionally, the existing woodland BDUs will be replaced with either woodland or blue (ship duty) BDUs. The Corps will likely transition to the same BDUs as the Navy.
- It was also noted that the 100% poly khaki uniform has been replaced with the poly-wool

khaki uniform.

- The only uniform that doesn't seem to be changing is the service dress blue.

VII. Subcommittee Reports (As Needed)

CDR Martin Sanders

a. JOAG Report

LCDR Rona LeBlanc

- JOAG will have a general member meeting on Sunday, June 3rd at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. All junior officers are invited. An informal meet & greet will follow. Time/Room location TBD.
- JOAG will sponsor a uniform inspection area during the week of the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. Room location TBD.

b. Career Development

CAPT Bill Burkhardt

- Two officers have volunteered to review the Scientist Handbook.
- Revisions should be finished by the end of the month.

c. Mentoring

LCDR Mark Methner

- While there are currently enough officers to serve as mentors, more may be needed in the future.
- If you are an officer who would like a mentor, please email the request (including your discipline) to LCDR Methner (Methner, Mark M. (mmm5@cdc.gov)).

d. Policy

CDR Christine Benally

- Thank you to everyone who is serving on the FACs, WPDGs, and WIPTs.
- The work of these groups has been moving so quickly, that there has not been time for the Policy Subcommittee to review the documents.

e. Recruitment and Retention

CDR Diana Bensyl

- The subcommittee met and discussed some issues that need further input. As such meeting notes will be forwarded to CDR Sanders and RADM Mishoe.

f. Website

CAPT Francois Lalonde

- OCCO is rolling out a new global website that will include all the categories websites under it.
- A uniform format will be used and each category asked to provide specific content information.
- This will take the control of the category websites away from the categories. Additionally, the significant efforts to establish the current webpage will not be preserved.
- CDR Sanders stated that this concern was put forward and that no feedback has been received.
- The suggestion was made that the new unified website could link to existing category websites rather than replacing them.
- It was noted that the Scientist Coin ordering information is still available at the website under the “Announcements” link.

VI. Other Business

- Associate Recruiter Program Update:
 - CDR Adekoya compiled a list of existing ARs are in good standing and those who have been bumped for not completing the training and/or activity requirements.
 - Those officers in the later category will need to reapply to the program.
 - This list will be sent out over the listserv.
 - Please be sure to review and verify that your status is correct. The ARP leadership is becoming more stringent about completing two activities per year.

VII. Closing Remarks

- The next meeting has been scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month (June 12th) to accommodate the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. Hope to see you all there.

June SciPAC Call

June 12, 2007, 1100-1300 (EST)

USA Toll Free Number: 866-705-4165

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PASSCODE: 1220522

Leader: CDR Martin Sanders