



Scientist Professional Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, April 7th, 2009.

1100 – 1300 (Eastern Time)

Toll Free Numbers: USA 1- 866-724-8991

Participant Passcode: 1081160 Leader: CDR Rachel Avchen

Participants

SciPAC Executive Sub-committee 2008/9 Voting Members

Rank	Name	Role	X, if present
RADM	Helena Mishoe	CPO	excused
CDR	Rachel Avchen	Chair	X
CDR	Diana Bensyl	Vice Chair/ Rules and Membership	X
LCDR	Boris Aponte	Secretary	X
LCDR	Wei Guo	COF Liaison	X
CDR	Sara Newman	Ex-Officio	X
CDR	Daphne Moffett	Historian COA Board	
CDR	Martin Sanders	Awards	
LCDR	Karon Abe	Career Development	X
LCDR	Maleeka Glover	Category Day/ JOAG	
LCDR	Paul Seo	Category Day	X
CDR	Mark Methner	Mentoring	X
CDR	Timothy Nelle	Policy Review	excused
LCDR	Marco Bennett	Readiness and Response	X
CDR	Michael Murry	Recruitment and Retention/ PSYPAG	X
CAPT	David McIntyre	Recruitment and Retention	
LCDR	Yi Zhang	Science	X
LCDR	Sally Hu	Visibility	X
CDR	Danice Eaton	Website	
LCDR	Mathew Newland	Billet Transformation	X
CDR	D. Ross Spears	Career Development	excused
CAPT	Christine Benally	Policy Review	excused
Dr.	Monique Mansoura	Civil Service Liaison	

Non-voting Scientist Participants

Participant	Agency
CAPT Pamela Ching	CDC
CAPT Richard Troiano	NIH
CAPT Nelson Adekoya	CDC
CDR Stacey Williams	DOD
CDR James Osterhout	FDA
CDR Lisa Pealer	CDC
CDR William Albrecht	EPA
LCDR Tegan Boehmer	CDC
LCDR Judy Facey	EPA
LCDR Mike Smith	FDA
LCDR Chekesha Clingman	FDA
LCDR Anne C. Dobmeyer	DOD
LCDR Tajah L. Blackburn	EPA
LCDR David Thompson	DOD
LCDR Jacqueline Sram	FDA
LCDR Jacqueline Tate	CDC
LCDR Mathew Murphy	CDC
LT Robin Toblin	CDC
LT Heather Silvio	DOD
LT James Kenney	FDA
LT Jeremy L. Wally	FDA
LT Deborah Dee	CDC

1) Call to Order and Welcome

CDR Rachel Avchen

EMAIL LCDR Boris Aponte Boris.Aponte@ahrq.hhs.gov for roll call.

2) Report from the CPO

RADM Helena Mishoe

- a) CDR Avchen stated that there is no news on the CPO selection.

3) Report from the PAC Chair

CDR Rachel Avchen

- a) The Officer Profile Database is up and running. CDR Avchen asked officers to contact CAPT Dean Coppola, Transformation Team Leader, at 240-453-6086 or dean.coppola@hhs.gov for questions.
- b) The PAC Chairs group has developed a proposal to have representation of all categories at the Officers Basic Course (OBC). The proposal is pending approval at next PAC chair meeting.
- c) CDR Avchen requested feedback on the question of whether to use the SciPAC listserv to disseminate announcements.

Discussion:

CAPT Rick Troiano stated that if the meetings are of interest to most scientist officers then it would be appropriate to include those on the listserv.

CAPT Adekoya stated that with so many different areas of specialty in the Scientist Category it is very difficult to address the interest needs of most officers.

CDR Sara Newman stated that it would be possible to include a meeting notice on a calendar on our website. CDR Avchen will consult with the website committee before a decision is made.

- d) CDR Avchen asked if officers have received instructions from their respective OPDIVS regarding their participation at the USPHS Training Symposium. The responses indicated that most agencies have not

addressed this issue yet. Officers stationed at CDC shared the instructions that they have received which were communicated by the following message:

*This email will serve to clarify the current state of the upcoming **2009 Commissioned Officer Association USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium, June 1-4, 2009**. This conference and the approving mechanism is somewhat different from other public health conferences requiring the multiple traveler approval memo. To date, the Acting Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) has submitted a memo requesting an allotment of 600 attendees be approved to attend this conference, to the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management. The 600 attendees requested represents Commissioned Corps wide, if approved, CDC/ATSDR will be granted a proportional number of people to attend.*

The Commissioned Corps Personnel Office, CDC, will coordinate soliciting attendees and will grant authorization based on the officers role at the conference. Any travel solicitations received outside of this office should be ignored! Officers are advised, use of government resources (i.e. Individual Learning Accounts, travel orders, etc.) should not be obligated without prior approval by this office, granting your attendance. We will work closely with FMO, to ensure strict adherence to the attendee list is acknowledged. Approval to attend includes officers stationed in metro Atlanta and out.

Any questions should be forwarded to your local management first and then via email to OD/Office of Commissioned Corps Personnel (CDC)

Commissioned Corps Personnel Office

4) Sub-committee reports.

a) Awards

No report.

CDR Martin Sanders

b) Career Development

LCDR Karon Abe

i) The link to the 2010 Scientist Benchmarks with attachments are posted on the USPHS Scientist website. There were two revisions in the 2010 Benchmarks that are different from the 2009 Benchmarks.

(1) Under Benchmark 3, Career Progression and Potential (bullet point 4 on “Assimilation”):

(a) There was no change for T-04/P-03.

(b) For T-O5/P-04, the 2009 Benchmarks read “Applied and/or Assimilated (if eligible)” and currently in the 2010 Benchmarks it reads “Assimilation or awaiting Congressional confirmation”.

(c) For T-O-6/P-O5/P-O6, the 2009 Benchmarks read “Assimilated or applied at earliest possible date (if eligible)” and currently in the 2010 Benchmarks it reads “Regular Corps”

(2) Under Benchmark 5, Readiness:

a. The intent has not changed, but the language has been reduced to “Officer meets and maintains OFRD Basic Readiness Standards”.

c) Category Day

LCDR Paul Seo

i) Meeting details with regards to Category Day are nearly finalized. Plans are moving forward.

ii) The uniform of the day will be service khaki; however deviations from this are being considered for the participants of category day (i.e. SDB). Please refer to

<http://www.phscofevents.org/related/Uniform.cfm>.

iii) The Epidemiology interest group session is reviewing abstracts now. Acceptance will be announced the week of April 13th. The poster presentation is open to all. For further details contact: CDR Sara Newman (Sara_Newman@nps.gov).

d) Mentoring

CDR Mark Methner

- i) No report

e) Policy Review

CDR Tim Nelle

During the previous month, the Policy Subcommittee was asked to review the following documents:

- i) Personnel Policy Memorandum (PPM) for “Flag Officer Selection and Assignment”. The current policy states that officers serve 3 years in an 0-7 flag grade billet before he/she can be considered for promotion to the 0-8 flag grade. It also requires them to serve for 3 years following promotion to the 0-8 flag grade. The revised PPM requires only 1 year of service as an 0-7 prior to promotion to 0-8 and that flag officers must agree to serve on active duty a cumulative total of 3 years at either the 0-7 or 0-8 flag grade.
- ii) A revised "Background Investigation Requirement" CCI. There are three major changes in this document:
 - (1) Interim background-checks will no longer be issued by OCCO. Instead, the revised policy states “Effectively immediately, all candidates being appointed in the Corps must fully complete and submit all required investigative documents, have a favorable fingerprint check, and scheduled investigation with OPM prior to being appointed to the Corps. All officers must obtain a favorably adjudicated investigation to be retained on active duty.”
 - (2) Second is that Background reevaluations will be conducted every FIVE years instead of 10 (as currently required). It is questionable whether or not OCCO can actually support such a requirement given their difficulty in keeping up with current demands for BI checks.
 - (3) Third, the starting date for requiring completed background investigations for assimilation has been delayed from 2008 to 2012.
- iii) Proposed Commissioned Corps Directive (CCD) for implementing special bonus and incentive pay for officers in health professions, as directed under Section 661 of the Fiscal Year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act. Four categories of special pay created/modified are:
 - (1) An accession bonus of up to \$30,000 for each 12-month period of obligated service, or up to \$100,000 for each 12-month period of obligated service if designated as a critically short wartime specialty;
 - (2) Retention pay of up to \$75,000 for each 12-month period of obligated service;
 - (3) Incentive pay of up to \$100,000 for medical officers and dental surgeons or \$15,000 for officers in other health professions; and
 - (4) Board certification pay of up to \$6,000.(No additional details about these bonus pays were provided)

f) Readiness and Response

LCDR Marco Bennett

- i) As of end of March 2009, there are a total of 267 officers in our category, and 224 were listed by OFRD as “basic qualified” which represents a 91% (not including 21 exempt officers). Twenty two (22) officers were listed as “not qualified” (12 CAPTs, 5 CDRs, and 5 LCDRs), and 21 were listed as “exempt”.
- ii) The readiness sub-committee is encouraging all officers who are listed as “not qualified” to check their profiles and act accordingly to improve their status.

Discussion:

The issue of a potential breach of privacy while notifying officers of their “readiness status” was discussed. No opinions were shared regarding this action as a breach of the privacy of officers. LCDR Bennett will continue to send reminder flyers via the listserv in an effort to encourage “not qualified” officers to check their readiness status. CDR Avchen requested ideas on how to best motivate officers to maintain their readiness be sent to her or to LCDR Bennett.

- iii) Officers who need to submit a waiver for a readiness exemption to the Medical affairs Branch can contact: Sally Bentsi- Enchill 301-594-6746 and Shaina Bradish (Assistant Service Point of Contact) 301-594-6743.
- iv) For officers completing the President' Challenge that have questions please contact: 800-258-8146.
- v) For faxing immunization records: 301-594-3299 or 800-535-7691.

g) Recruitment and Retention

CDR Michael Murry

- i) The revision on the Associate Recruiter Program is progressing. Any officer interested in serving as Associate Recruiter should review the information handout, "The Associate Recruiter Program (ARP): A New Vision for 2009 and Beyond". CDR Murry can forward a copy to anyone who needs one.
- ii) CAPT Nelson Adekoya, Scientist Category liaison to the Associate Recruiter Program, stated that the reorganization of the program continues and that it is expected that the new program will be in place by the beginning of June.

h) Rules and Membership

CDR Bensyl

- i) One new call to active duty (CAD): LCDR Mark Clayton from EPA.

i) Science

LCDR Yi Zhang

- i) The Science Subcommittee is currently working on an article on PHS Scientist Officers to be submitted to CDC's Public Health Reports.

j) Visibility

LCDR Sally Hu

- i) The article regarding the NBC4 event was published on the March COA Frontline. In addition, appreciation letters were sent, signed by RADM Mishoe and CDR Avchen, to all volunteers.
- ii) The abstract of SciPAC poster for the COF annual meeting in June has been accepted.
- iii) A table at the NIH Asian food fair has been secured.
 - (1) This event is a good opportunity for SciPAC to increase the visibility of USPHS. It provides a good chance to network with fellow USPHS officers and enjoy Asian foods. The date is May 20th, Wednesday; from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, at the NIH campus. A call for volunteers to work at the table for this activity will be disseminated via the listserv.

k) Website

CDR Danice Eaton

- i) No Report

5) Liaison Reports

a) Billet Transformation Review

LCDR Mathew Newland

- i) The committee is communicating with the PHS agency liaisons to determine if there is variation from agency to agency regarding the implementation of the Corps Officer Billet System revision.
- ii) The committee is following the implementation of the new system and will provide more details on the next SciPAC call.

b) COF Liaison

LCDR Wei Guo

- c) There is a balance of \$2,634 and a large number of coins and tee-shirts available at \$10 and \$12 respectively.

d) COA

CDR Daphne Moffett

- No report

e) JOAG

LCDR Maleeka Glover

No report

f) **PSYPAG**

CDR Michael Murry

- i) A welcome letter for new Psychologists from SciPAC will be sent by the Chair and will include paragraph introducing PsyPAG.

6) **Closing Remarks**

CDR Rachel Avchen

Tuesday, May 5th, 2009; 1100-1300 EST

Call in number is: 1-866-724-8991. Passcode for participants is: 1081160.