



# Scientist Professional Advisory Committee Meeting Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 3, 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](mailto:tracy.macgill@fda.hhs.gov) to register your attendance.
- Please include your rank when noting attendance because many officers have recently been promoted.

## Participants

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

## Non-voting Scientist Participants

Participant	Agency
CAPT Lemyra DeBruyn	CDC
CAPT Pam Ching	CDC
CAPT Bryan Jones	OS
CAPT Michael McLaughlin	FDA
CAPT Rick Troiano	NIH
CDR Michael Murry	BOP
CDR Doug Thoroughman	CDC
LCDR Karon Abe	CDC
LCDR Chekesha Clingman	NIH
LCDR Maleeka Glover	CDC
LCDR John Stansberry	NIH
LCDR Fei Xu	FDA
LT Tajah Blackburn	EPA
LT Adrienne Goodrich-Doctor	OS
LT Paul Seo	FDA

### II. Report from the PAC Chair

**CDR Martin Sanders**

- The PAC Chair report will be given prior to the CPO Report because RADM Mishoe will be a bit delayed in joining the call.
- a) Minutes
- Please send comments/corrections to the recently distributed June PAC minutes to CDR MacGill by COB July 6, 2007.
- b) New SciPAC membership report
- There were more applicants than openings making this a highly competitive year for membership selection.
  - One new member was selected, but cannot be announced because the list is still pending approval by the OSG.
  - LCDR Avchen noted that there were five openings, but four of them went to returning members.
  - CDR Sanders reminded the group that officers are allowed to serve up to two terms as a voting member of the PAC.
- c) Call for elections
- CDR Newman, the current Vice Chair, will be the incoming Chair for the 2007-2008.
  - Elections also need to be held for the remaining Executive positions (Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary).
  - The call for nominations sent out over the listserv and packages are due to CDR Sanders by COB July 12.
  - Interested individuals are reminded that only voting members of the PAC are eligible to serve in one of these positions.

d) August meeting update

- The August meeting has been rescheduled to August 14, 2007 because CDR Sanders will be out on travel.
- This will be the final meeting of the 2006-2007 PAC sessions.

e) Update on matching officers with deployment teams

- Following the discussion from the June PAC meeting about facilitating Scientist officer placement on deployment teams (IRCT, Tier 1 and 2) with vacancies, CDR Sanders worked with the Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee to compose an email to the Regional Emergency Coordinators (RECs) expressing Scientist officer interest and availability.
- The RECs from Regions 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington) and 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) have already responded to state that they do have team vacancies and would like officers from those areas to fill these positions.
- These responses have been forwarded through the listserv. Anyone interested in joining either of these teams should contact the REC for that team.
- CDR MacGill encouraged officers to respond to these opportunities because a good response will encourage the RECs to contact the PAC with future vacancies.
- CDR Sanders also asked anyone who joins one of these teams through this solicitation to send him an email because it will be valuable for the PAC to know if this is a productive way to provide greater access to deployment opportunities.
- CDR Sanders noted that by contacting the RECs, the Scientist category is likely being more proactive than some of the other categories.

**III. Report from the CPO**

**RADM Helena Mishoe**

- RADM Mishoe thanked everyone for the kind condolences following the passing of her father.
- RADM Mishoe additionally thanked all those who volunteered for the promotion ceremony. Photos from the ceremony will be submitted for posting to the Scientist website for those who were unable to attend.

a) Surgeon General update

- It is anticipated that there will be a brief overlap period following the confirmation Dr. James Holsinger as the next Surgeon General.
- RADM Moritsugu has announced that he will retire from the Commissioned Corps once the overlap period has ended.
- RADM Moritsugu has served the Corps for 37 years and would now like to spend more time with his family.
- Surgeon General confirmation hearings are tentatively scheduled for mid-July.

b) Health Diplomacy Missions

- Corps officers are currently participating in the President's Advancing the Cause of Social Justice in the Western Hemisphere program aboard USNS Comfort and USS Peleliu.
  - Secretary Leavitt has announced that he will be visiting the Comfort, which will be the first visit by a standing Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.
- c) Flag grade billet review
- The call to begin reviewing billets for flag grade designation will be coming soon. Additionally information about the process can be obtained from your Agency Liaison.
  - Following the review, there will be a call for flag officer promotions.
  - Last year was the first time in three or four years that there had been a call for a flag grade billet review.
- d) Transformation working groups
- At the last CPO-SG meeting, it was noted that the extended participation in the Transformation WGs is taking a toll of the members. These groups have been meeting frequently and will continue to do so through the fall.
  - RADM Moritsugu requests that participating officers preserve given that the unique opportunity to mold the future of the Corps.
  - Officer involvement with the Transformation WGs is critical to ensure that the end product of the Transformation addresses officer needs.
  - RADM Mishoe also encouraged the participants to remain engaged with the process and thanked them for all of their hard work.
- e) Assimilation
- This officer list for the 2006 assimilation cycle is currently being processed by OCCO, OSG, and the ASH.
  - The list should be submitted to the White House this summer with officers notified in the fall.
- f) AMSUS Awards
- The deadline for AMSUS award nominations has been extended to July 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - RADM Mishoe would like to encourage Scientist officers to look at these awards and consider submitting a self-nomination package.
  - The awards and application process are described at the AMSUS website (<http://www.amsus.org/awards>).
  - Representation of Corps officers in the AMSUS award process is very important.
  - Further, RADM Mishoe thanked those officers who had already notified her that they had applied for these awards.
- g) Awards Policy
- CDR Sanders recently distributed the draft Awards policy for comment to the PAC.

- The final version is now being reviewed by the ASH.
- RADM Mishoe was pleased with the last version seen as it contained many welcome improvements to the process. For example:
  - If an award is not signed in a timely manner, the nomination can go forward without the signature.
  - More awards will now be able to be approved “downstream” by the Agencies and possibly the CPOs.
- The suggested changes to the awards process should make the awards process more efficient and expedite the process and shorten the time between award nomination and receipt by the officer.
- Agencies will now be able to decide whether to have an awards board or coordinator. The larger agencies will likely keep their current system, but they now have the flexibility to decide.
- CDR Sanders asked if the final draft retained the provision limiting individual awards to one per year. In other words, there would no longer be a limit to individual awards.
- RADM Mishoe stated that this provision was supported by the CPOs and was in the last version she reviewed.

h) New SciPAC membership selection

- CDR Sanders confirmed that the new voting member could not be announced because the SG had not approved the list.
- RADM Mishoe noted that while changes are rare, that the list needed to receive approval by the OSG before any announcements could be made.

**IV. Treasure’s Report**

**CDR Jon Daugherty**

- Current balance is essentially the same as last month and is \$2127.51.

**V. Functional Advisory Committee Reports (as needed)**

- There were no FAC reports.

**VI. Transformation Reports (as needed)**

a) Billets Officer Profile and Collection System

**CAPT Pamela Ching**

- The new billet format is being beta tested with an original goal of releasing it at the end of this month.
- Initial feedback indicates that some modifications may be needed and as a result the roll out date may be delayed.

- A policy to address billets that are reclassified as a result of the new billet rating system is being developed.
- The current suggestion would be to give any officers affected by the policy (e.g. their current billet is reclassified at a lower grade) two years to find another position.
- CDR MacGill asked if assets would be provided to assist these officers in finding new positions.
- CAPT Ching responded that members of the WG expressed a similar concern, but that it appears that officers will need to find their own positions using the current system.
- A grievance process is also being discussing to allow officers who find that their billet has been down graded to appeal the new grade.
- CDR Sanders noted that the Recruitment and Retention WPDG had expressed similar concerns during their discussion of the development of a career management system.
- CAPT Troiano noted that a new IT system has been proposed and could possibly assist with some of these issues. However, no updated on the status of this system was available.
- The WG is also reviewing a piece of the Officer Profile System that would describe the officer.
- The intention is for the Officer Profile System to be made available to hiring officials to provide information to allow them to fill vacancies with Corps officers.
- An as yet to be addressed issue is how the hiring officials will access these profiles to realistically use them to match officers with positions. This is especially important given the multiple avenues (from USAJOBS to networking) through which officers ultimately find jobs.
- Finally, the group is reviewing the KSAs associated with common positions for which Corps officers apply.
- CAPT Ching noted that there are many issues to be considered, but there are also underlying concerns about the feasibility of these policies.
- CAPT Troiano added that NIH has expressed an interest making the process of bringing officers onboard more efficient to facilitate increased hiring. However without a means of identifying candidates, it will be difficult to meet this goal.

b) Discipline and Retention

**CDR Doug Thoroughman**

- CDR Thoroughman noted that the group has experienced attrition of members over time.

- One of the first charges to the group was to outline the discipline process and this has been completed.
- The group is now reviewing a number of force management issuances and has identified some issues that need to be addressed.
- An important topic that the group is discussing is the implementation of the trigger for when an officer will be referred to a retention board.
- The suggested policy is for any officer was not Basic qualified or not recommended for promotion or was in the bottom decile for three consecutive years to be go to the board.
- The current recommendation is for this to include officers from this past promotion cycle (e.g. this last cycle would have been the third year in the bottom decile).
- CDR Thoroughman argued in a lengthy email that this should not be implemented at this time because the affected officers will not have had the opportunity to be counseled and make improvements, per the suggestions of the group. This is especially important because officers in future years will have an opportunity for remediation.
- CAPT Jones clarified that these triggers were independent rather than cumulative. CDR Thoroughman noted that under the proposed policy any promotion-eligible officer not Basic qualified on December 31<sup>st</sup> would be boarded.
- CDR Seaton noted that the Readiness WIPT recommended readiness checks three months apart to give the officer advance notice that there was an issue.
- It was noted that CAPT Weld mentioned an expedited review process where the officer would have a pre-board administrative review to determine if it was a simple issue (e.g. one Basic readiness requirement such as BLS that simply needed to be renewed).
- CDR Daugherty expressed concern that policies are being implemented before they are fully developed and that in a sense these policies are being applied retroactively.
- CDR Thoroughman understood the concern and noted that when this was raised by the group, they were told that the ASH had issued previous memos over the last few years outlining these policies.

## **VII. Subcommittee Reports (As Needed)**

**CDR Martin Sanders**

- CDR Sanders asked each of the subcommittee chairs to submit their subcommittee rosters to CDR Newman to assist with generating letters of appreciation at the end of the year.

- CDR Sanders also noted that with the start of the new year, subcommittee leadership and membership would be transitioning.
- All voting members are expected to hold a subcommittee leadership position.
- If you are currently a subcommittee chair and you would like to serve in the same role next year, please notify CDR Newman.

**a. Rules Subcommittee**

**LCDR Rachel Avchen**

- The Rules Subcommittee received five applications for new voting membership and recommended four members be renewed and one new person selected.
- The list has been submitted to the OSG for approval.
- Confirmation of the membership is anticipated in August.

**b. Awards Subcommittee**

**LCDR Matt Newland**

- The committee is now accepting applications for the Scientist Responder of the Year Award. The period of inclusion for the award will be August 1, 2006 to September 1, 2007.
- The nomination announcement for this award will be distributed soon.
- Nominations will be due to LCDRs Newland and Zapata by COB on October 31<sup>st</sup>

**c. Visibility Subcommittee**

**LCDR Wei Guo**

- LCDR Guo was unable to attend the meeting.

**d. Science Subcommittee**

**CDR Daphne Moffett**

- The subcommittee has been drafting an article for the COA Frontline about the work that Scientist officers do.
- The article has been submitted to RADM Mishoe for her to review.
- It was noted that the Frontline will be highlighting each category in an article penned by the CPO. One category will be featured in each issue.
- RADM Mishoe noted that the Scientist category will be featured in the Dec/Jan 08 issue. As a result the article must be submitted to COA by November 15, 2007.
- RADM Mishoe thanked the committee for their efforts in drafting the article. She also stated that consideration needs to be given about specific areas that should be highlighted in the article.
- CDR Moffett also noted that she is the incoming Chair of the Board of Directors for the national COA and will have an opportunity to write articles for the Frontline.

- If officers have ideas for Frontline articles, please send them to CDR Moffett (Moffett, Daphne (zzc0@CDC.GOV). RADM Mishoe suggested this be the subject of a listserv message.

**e. JOAG Report**

**LCDR Rona LeBlanc**

- JOAG recently elected two new voting members. One of these members is the new Scientist category representative, LCDR Glover.
- Additionally, LCDR Glover was also the recipient of the JOAG Excellence Award. Congratulations to her on this achievement.
- A Leadership Development Seminar is going to be held August 7 – 9, 2007 in Charleston, SC. Registration and lodging information can be found at <http://leadership2007.eventbrite.com/>. There are currently 30 – 40 slots open.
- OCCO is now accepting applications for the Associate Recruiter Program. Instructions and application documents can be found at the CCMIS website ([http://dcp.psc.gov/ARP\\_Materials.asp](http://dcp.psc.gov/ARP_Materials.asp)).
- Two Officer Basic Training Courses (3 day) are scheduled. Officers can register at the CCMIS website :([http://dcp.psc.gov/TrainingAcademy/rpt\\_course\\_schedule.aspx?CourseInfo=126&PID=0&DISC=1689](http://dcp.psc.gov/TrainingAcademy/rpt_course_schedule.aspx?CourseInfo=126&PID=0&DISC=1689))
  - BOTC, July 6 -8, 2007, New London, CT
  - BOTC, August 8 – 10, 2007, Rockville, MD
- Discussions are ongoing at OCCO with respect to offering an extended Officer Basic Training Course (2 weeks) in July with two additional courses to follow in August. Since no details are available at the present time, officers are encouraged to periodically check the CCMIS website for updates.

**f. Career Development Subcommittee**

**CAPT Bill Burkhardt**

- Review and revision of the Scientist Handbook is ongoing.

**g. Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee**

**CDR Tracy MacGill**

- At the June SciPAC meeting, CDR Sanders requested for the names and contact information for the RECs. CDR MacGill provided this list. As discussed in the PAC Chair report, CDR Sanders contacted the RECs about matching Scientist officers with team vacancies.
- In response to a general concern about the level of general preparedness of the category (i.e. guidelines for supplies and emergency plan), a reminder email with attached resources (Red Cross shopping list and emergency plan template) was distributed through the listserv.

- The EP subcommittee had a t-con last week to review and kick off the inventory and survey efforts described at the last SciPAC meeting.
- LCDR Dominic Frasca will be leading the inventory effort. While the committee is fortunate to have broad representation across a number of deployment teams, additional information will be needed from the category.
- If anyone is willing to assist in obtaining information regarding multidisciplinary positions and categories of officers filling these positions, please contact LCDR Frasca ([Dominic.Frasca@hhs.gov](mailto:Dominic.Frasca@hhs.gov)) or CDR MacGill ([tracy.macgill@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:tracy.macgill@fda.hhs.gov)).
- CDR Aaron Fleischauer will be organizing the survey project. The survey will ask questions about participation in deployment teams, activities, and training.
- The EP subcommittee will also coordinate with the OFRD subcommittee to incorporate Basic readiness questions into the survey.

**h. Mentoring Subcommittee**

**CDR Mark Methner**

- The Mentoring Subcommittee is currently matching mentors with those officers who have recently requested a mentor.
- CAPT Ching provided the mentoring manual used by the Dietician category. The subcommittee will work to revise the manual to make it specific to the needs of Scientist officers.

**i. OFRD Subcommittee**

**CDR Mark Seaton**

- The OFRD Subcommittee will be coordinating the Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee to include questions pertaining to Basic readiness requirements and perceived barriers in meeting these requirements into an officer survey that is being developed.

**j. Policy Review Subcommittee**

**CDR Christine Benally**

- There was nothing new to report.

**k. Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee**

**CDR Diana Bensyl**

- CDR Bensyl was unable to attend.

**l. Website Subcommittee**

**CAPT John Mosely Hayes**

- CAPT Hayes again thanked his committee for their efforts in maintaining the website.

**VIII. Other Business**

- CAPT Jones asked if anyone has looked at the way Scientist officers are portrayed by the new recruiting website ([www.usphs.gov](http://www.usphs.gov) or [www.comcorps.fhs.net](http://www.comcorps.fhs.net)). If not, he suggests that folks look at it.
- It was noted that there are biographies of some of the PAC members posted at this site. CDR Thoroughman added that even though his biography is one of those posted, he received no prior notification.
- CAPT Hayes stated that the Website Subcommittee did provide some advance feedback.
- CAPT Jones noted that some of the terminology was confusing (e.g. “profession” instead of “category”).
- CDR Moffett added that she is a member of the group coordinating with the contractor for the website. She noted that the focus of this group is recruitment and is chaired by RADMs Knause and Williams.
- It was noted that the ultimate goal is to have category websites with a uniform format. The categories will contribute the content and the contractor will be responsible for the format.
- Currently, this website links to the existing category website.
- CAPT Hayes suggested the contractor create a distribution list with the contacts for each category website so that the appropriate people are apprised of issues.
- CDR Moffett noted that representation for the recruitment group which oversaw the development of the website was selected according to agency vs. category.
- CAPT Troiano pointed out there are two parts to the website pertaining to discipline
  - Active duty-categories-links to the individual category websites
  - Professions- original descriptions and officer biographies
- CDR Moffett clarified that the launch date of the site was dictated by the ability to meet the application deadline for the first phase of the recruiting campaign.
- In support of this recruiting campaign, OCCO must have a person available to staff the 800 number listed on the website.
- Ultimately, the responsibility for maintaining the website will shift from the contractor to OCCO.
- CDR Sanders noted that this year has seen a dramatic push to implement new policies under short deadlines as the result of the Transformation (e.g. recruitment program and website). Hopefully, the next phase of the Transformation will allow for these new programs to be adjusted as needed.
- RADM Mishoe noted that the CPOs asked that responsibility for maintaining this website be identified because it will be important to update the posted information updated on a regular basis to ensure that it is correct.
- CDR Moffett volunteered to obtain additional contact information for the website contractor and to open a dialog with the Website Subcommittee on this issue.

## **XI. Closing Remarks**

- Thanks again to everyone who joined today. Announcements regarding the confirmation of new voting members and elections for the Executive Board will be coming soon.
- Again, everyone is reminded that the next PAC call will be the second Tuesday in August.

**August SciPAC Call**

August 14, 2007, 1100-1300 (EST)

USA Toll Free Number: 866-705-4165

USA Toll Number: +1-517-244-7622

PASSCODE: 1220522

Leader: CDR Martin Sanders