



Scientist Professional Advisory Subcommittee Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, October 7th, 2008

1100 – 1300 (Eastern Time)

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

Participant Passcode: 1081160 Leader: CDR Rachel Avchen

Participants

SciPAC Executive Subcommittee 2008/9 Voting Members

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

Non-voting Scientist Participants

Participant	Agency
CAPT Bryan Jones	OSG
CDR Laura J Draski	FDA
LT Ashleigh L. May	CDC
LCDR Eduardo Gomez	CDC
LT Jeremy Wally	FDA
CAPT David J. McIntyre	IHS
LCDR Tegan K Boehmer	CDC
LCDR Adrienne J. Goodrich-Doctor	HHS
LT Trajah Blackburn	EPA
CDR Mark Seaton	FDA
LCDR Rona LeBlanc	FDA
CAPT Nelson Adekoya	CDC
LCDR Mike Smith	FDA
CAPT Doug Thoroughman	CDC
CDR Danisha Robbins	DIHS
CAPT Francois Lalonde	NIH
CAPT C. Dexter Kimsey	CDC
LCDR Dianna Densmore	CDC
LCDR Jacqueline Sram	FDA
LCDR John Stansberry	NIH
LCDR Henraya McGruder	CDC

I. Call to Order and Welcome

CDR Rachel Avchen

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

II. Report from the CPO

RADM Helena Mishoe

- a) RADM Mishoe made a request to all Scientist officers for feedback regarding the qualifications to be used as criteria for the selection of the next Scientist Category CPO. A formal request is being made via the SciPAC Listserve. Six CPOs are ending their terms this year including her. She expressed that it is their desire to have some overlap with the new CPOs.
- b) RADM Mishoe also stated the interest of the CPOs in having a billet created to reflect their responsibilities.
- c) Status of the formation of Retention Boards: A first conference call will take place in mid-October to discuss the process to be used by the Boards and to decide in which criteria the decisions of the Retention Boards will be based. These developments are moving forward.
- d) RADM Mishoe acknowledged and expressed concern with the current situation of the assimilation process. The current ceiling set at 2,800 Regular Corps officers represents a challenge. There is a current proposal in Congress to increase this ceiling to 4,000 officers. Since OCCO has a disproportionate number of applications for assimilation compared to the open slots, RADM Furman is at the present time considering the possibility of suspending the assimilation process for 2008. This situation affects the kind of job opportunities available to officers.

CAPT Bryan Jones also expressed his concern stating that this situation may impact scientist officers disproportionately. He described that since our Category tends to bring onboard officers at a later point

in their careers, and since assimilation is directly related to job security, this situation has the potential to affect recruitments and retention. CAPT Jones acknowledged that this issue will be difficult to resolve without raising the ceiling number of Regular Corps officers. CAPT Doug Thoroughman concurred with this notion and suggested that raising the ceiling of assimilated officers could be used as a recruitment incentive for clinical officers.

To questions raised on whether an application for assimilation will be considered for more than one year, CAPT Jones recommended that since administrative changes have been taking place, officers should be familiar with the assimilation policies and follow-up their applications.

- e) RADM Mishoe stated that additional changes will be made to the COER which will be pilot- tested by 2009. The desire of the CPOs is to have a high quality COER system.
- f) RADM Mishoe stated that a design is being developed for a CPO badge to be issued.

III. Report from the PAC Chair

CDR Rachel Avchen

- a) The minutes for the months of August and September were approved.
- b) CDR Avchen announced that the nominations of candidates for CPO are due Nov 14.
- c) Latest Corps census showing more than 6,200 officers.
- d) CDR Avchen thanked those officers who have been deployed during this hurricane season. The Corps deployed over 1,000 officers in response to hurricanes Gustav, Hannah and Ike.
- e) The work of the Assimilation Board for 2009 is under review at the present time in order to determine whether to proceed given limited vacancies and anticipation of large number of applications. CDR Avchen recommended to officers to continue to apply to the Regular Corps, and to follow-up their applications.
 - i) There is a ceiling of 2,800 for the Regular Corps.
 - ii) There are 2,641 Regular Corps officers currently on active duty.
 - iii) There are 96 officers on the 2008 presidential nomination list.
 - iv) There are 730 applications in pool for the next assimilation cycle.

IV. COA Report

CDR Daphne Moffet

No report.

V. Subcommittee reports

a) Awards

CDR Martin Sanders

No report.

b) Career Development

LCDR Karon Abe

- i) There has been a great response from senior officers as CV review volunteers.
- ii) The annual CV review deadline extended until Friday, Oct 17, 2008 for officers up for promotion in 2009.
- iii) The Career Development subcommittee conference call is planned for Oct 31, 2008, from 3:00 - 3:30 pm. An email with the agenda will be sent shortly.
- iv) The Reviewing Official Statement (ROS) is included as part of the COER activities this year. LCDR Abe clarified that the ROS is due at the time that the Reviewing Official (RO) signs-off on the COER.

c) Category Day

LCDR Maleeka Glover

- i) There has been a great response to the request for volunteers for this sub-committee.

- ii) LCDR Glover will be representing SciPAC at the next conference call for the COA workgroup planning the Annual Meeting. This conference call is scheduled for October 8th.
- iii) LCDR Glover solicited recommendations for speakers for the Category Day event. A call for abstract will be sent out via the Listserve within a week.

d) Mentoring

CDR Mark Methner

No report

e) Policy Review

LCDR Tim Nelle

- i) The Policy Subcommittee had a great response to the call for volunteers and currently has 15 members.
- ii) During the past month, the subcommittee was asked to review three proposed Commissioned Corps Instructions, which were entitled “Substance Abuse”, “Absence Without Leave”, and “Alternative Workplace”.

f) Readiness and Response

CDR Rachel Avchen

- i) SciPAC is merging the Emergency Preparedness and the OFRD Sub-committees.
- ii) An invitation has been sent for the first conference call.

g) Recruitment and Retention

CDR Michael Murry

- i) The subcommittee co-chairs met to consider priority issues for the coming year. A key on-going issue is the DOD Mental Health Initiative. The agreement set a target to provide the DOD with 200 mental health professionals to meet the needs of personnel returning from combat area deployments. This initiative poses a recruitment challenge for the Corps. The primary impact for the Scientist Category is recruitment of psychologists.
- ii) A related issue is the proposal to change the appointment standards for psychologists. The current appointment standards require psychologists to be state licensed. The license requirement is a recruitment obstacle and has not always been a requirement. The committee plans to follow-up on the progress of that proposal.

h) Rules and Membership

CDR Diana Bensyl

- i) There is a new CAD: LCDR Ann Dubmeyer.
- ii) The Scientist Category is 266 strong.

i) Science

LCDR Yi Zhang

- i) Completed the recruitment of eleven new members
- ii) Interested officers can e-mail LCDR Zhang.

j) Visibility

LCDR Sally Hu

- i) The visibility subcommittee has ten members and plans to organize three visibility activities for SciPAC in this term.
- ii) In the process of collecting ideas and suggestions among subcommittee members on any subcommittee related activities such as any upcoming events
- iii) The sub-committee also welcomes ideas and suggestions from all SciPAC members now and any time in the future.

k) Website

CDR Danice Eaton

- i) The subcommittee 1st call will be on Oct 15.
- ii) No report on website transition.

VI. Liaison Reports

a) Billet Transformation Review

No report.

LCDR Mathew Newland

b) COF Liaison

i) The actual SciPAC balance is \$2,500.

ii) Purchasing of Category tee-shirts and coins, which are still available, was encouraged. Contact LCDR Guo if interested

iii) Ideas to raise SciPAC funds are welcomed.

LCDR Wei Guo

c) JOAG

i) Operational year has just started.

ii) The new members will be announced soon.

LCDR Maleeka Glover

d) PSYPAG

No report.

CDR Michael Murry

e) Officer Health Program

No report.

LT Robin Toblin

f) Civilian Service

No report.

Dr. Monique Mansoura

VII. Other Business

a) Disaster Data Tools Workgroup

CAPT Thoroughman

i) CAPT Thoroughman formed this workgroup across federal agencies and response teams in order to attempt to come to consensus about what data collection tools are used across all federal response teams for specific purposes (like surveillance of medical needs in a shelter, or assessing environmental conditions in a disaster setting).

ii) Subcommittees have been formed to look at data collection tools for these purposes: Clinical Management, Shelter Surveillance (including Special Medical Needs Shelters), Community Surveillance, Syndromic Surveillance, Hospital Surveillance, Epi Investigation, Environmental Health Community Assessment, Environmental Health Shelter Assessment, Mental Health, Community Needs Assessment, Pharmacy, Veterinary, and Data Transfer/Technology Tools.

iii) CAPT Thoroughman invited anyone who wants to participate in one of the workgroups to email him. Time commitment will be no more than 1-2 hours weekly for 6 months or less. He is especially interested in officers who recently deployed for Gustav or Ike and did data collection activities as they will have fresh insights in mind

VIII. Closing Remarks

CDR Rachel Avchen

a) The SciPAC Chair welcomed back CAPT Bryan Jones.

b) The next SciPAC meeting was announced.

**NOTE Next meeting: Tuesday, November 4th, 2008; 1100-1300 EST
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