

MINUTES, 1-28-10 FINAL  
Meeting via Teleconference

## CALL TO ORDER

CDR Tejashri Purohit-Sheth called the meeting to order at 1305  
CDR Lyss welcomed all new Voting and Affiliate PPAC Members  
CDR Purohit-Sheth expressed thanks to all and extended an invitation to join PPAC committees

## ATTENDEES (MEMBERS) & EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

See attached Attendance Roster

## PARTICIPANTS

See attached Attendance Roster.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 18, 2009 meeting were approved with request to email any corrections or edits to CAPT Stinson.

## CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER REPORT (CAPT CLARE HELMINIAK)

- CAPT Helminiak spoke about the new “Say yes to PHS” campaign. This is an effort to coordinate recruitment and assignment. In the past, OCCO has managed recruitment and assignment to include applicant screening. The other PACs have ideas on how to implement this program and have been more successful at recruiting officers than has the medical category. Medical category will seek the best practices of these categories and adapt them to the category. It is necessary to have a position prior to commissioning. Some officers work initially as civil servants and then convert to Corps but this is not optimal. Among the strategies discussed were early commissioning, Costep recruitment, and using the eCAT process to approach applicants sooner. For example, all applicants are required to have a Medical Board prior to commissioning. It might be possible for medical category officers to assist with this process. Revisions to the assignment process are also needed. Only one agency (FDA) has a detailer to look to fill jobs. Physician to physician contact is important in filling positions and the medical category pay structure may be better explained by physicians. It was noted that the welcome packet might explain the pay structure in greater detail than at present.
- A question was raised about the function of the OCCFM Associate Recruiter program and how this would work with the medical category. It was noted that this program is geographic and that we need to target physician recruitment. It was suggested that targeted recruiting within agencies and for

special projects might help. That eCAT and Direct Access should help but that these systems require more work, and that changes to pay structure are again being considered in a White Paper.

## **SG-PAC MEETING UPDATE & PAC CHAIR REPORT (CDR TEJASHRI PUROHIT-SHETH)**

- Volunteers for OBC graduation are still needed. CDR Daisy Eng is the point of contact for this.
- The PPAC newsletter will provide information on obtaining forms for long term training.
- The category coin is available on line and may be purchased with a credit card.
- There is a call out for quarterly award nominations.
- The meeting day for PPAC meetings has been revised to Thursday, time 1300-1500 to be maintained.
- SG PAC Chair report was presented noting the following:
  - Admiral Regina Benjamin was sworn in as Surgeon General. This afternoon, she will release “Vision for a Healthy and Fit Nation.”
  - Deployments to Haiti are ongoing. Smaller numbers (60 currently) of officers are being deployed but deployment time is longer than for Hurricane Katrina with time dependent on the provision of US Government aid to Haiti. On call rosters are being utilized for officers. It was noted that pediatricians are still needed and that some deployments are to the USNS Comfort. Washington Post newspaper has publicized USPHS efforts.
  - The DCP Assignment Branch (DCPA) has a pilot program, (electronic call to active duty), that is undergoing evaluation as a means to hasten the call to duty process. This program will be evaluated in February.
  - It was noted that Marines who deploy to Iraq are not getting basic needs. It was proposed that we help support this.
  - 89.3% of Assignment Incentive Pay applications have received approval.
  - Readiness for the entire Corps is at 93.7%. It is 87% for the Medical category. OFRD has planned upcoming field training for RDF teams.

## **COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP UPDATES**

### ***AMSUS (CDR Linda Ulrich & CDR Gerald Taylor)***

- No report at this meeting.

### ***Awards (CDR Paul Jung)***

- No report at this meeting. Email CDR Jung with any concerns for this committee.

### ***Billets, Officer Profiles and Selection Systems (CDR Rochelle Nolte)***

- No report at this meeting.

### ***Career Development and Training (CAPT Barbara Stinson and LCDR Milton Irizarry)***

- The committee is working to formalize the mentoring program. The intent is to match all new officers with a mentor at the time of commissioning. In addition, there may be extension of the mentoring program to involve officers up for promotion.
- The next committee meeting will be on 2-4-10.

### ***Category Coin (LCDR Joshua Schier)***

- No report at this meeting.

### ***COF/COA Report (LCDR Sylvie Cohen)***

- 2010 Category Day preparations are completed. . The 2010 COF/COA meeting will be held in San Diego 5-24-10 to 5-27-10 with Category Day to be held on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Communications Committee (CDR Susan Lukacs)***

- CDR Lukacs noted that the transition from the PPAC website to a new server has occurred. The website address (URL) is usphs-ppac.net. There is also a link to this site on the dcp website.
- The communications needs survey is being collated.

### ***Compensation Committee (CDR Chineta Eure-Miller and CDR Kevin Cain)***

- The committee has been working on a White Paper. No further details are available at this time.
- Medical Special Pay rates are unchanged for 2010. Only one form is required for these pays but if an officer is still working under an older contract, the additional documentation will be necessary.

### ***Membership (CDR Sheryl Lyss)***

- The committee announced the selection of 2010 members.
- New Voting Members are as follows: LCDR Sylvie Cohen, CDR Paul Jung, CDR Susan Lukacs, CDR Narayan Nair, and CDR Marc Osborn.
- New Ex-Officio (non voting members who have served 3 years) are as follows: RADM James Galloway, CAPT Rosemarie Hirsch, CAPT Susan Wang, CAPT Darius Yorichi, and CDR Alicia Vantran.
- New Affiliate Members are as follows: CDR Jeffrey Schulden, CAPT Theresa Smith, CDR Thomas White, and CAPT Lydia Soto-Torres.

- 10 officers will complete 3 years of service at the end of this year, then 5 officers for each of the subsequent two years. The committee wishes to balance these numbers so that annual attrition rates are comparable.

### ***Mental Health (CAPT Marc Safran)***

- This committee has devised a brief survey to address the mental health environment for officers and for their patients.
- Results of the survey will be presented on Category Day at the COA meeting.

### ***Outreach Committee (CAPT Joannie Shen, presented by CDR Purohit-Sheth)***

- The committee goals were reiterated, i.e. to reach out to officers who otherwise cannot participate in PPAC activities as in instances of duty station location. This meeting is being recorded and is available to all officers. The committee makes an effort to teleconference in all officers who are able to participate in the meeting.

### ***Promotion Guidelines Committee (CAPT David Goldman & CDR Laura St. Martin)***

- CDR John Longstaff held a recent meeting on precepts of promotion. This was attended by representatives of all the PACs, including CAPT Goldman.
- It was noted that there was a discussion about noting training in section 1 of the COER and trying to increase the language in this section to allow comment about why an officer is undergoing training.
- It was noted that although higher level awards are generally associated with career progression, it is still valuable for an officer to receive lower level awards.
- It was recommended to get rid of daily wear of the uniform as part of precept 4 since wearing the uniform is a requirement.
- It was also recommended to move readiness out of precept 5 and into precept 4 (officership). All officers need to account for readiness.
- For the medical category, revision to current benchmark 2 was recommended to include language to acknowledge officers formal training and added degrees, for example if an officer is certified by more than one Board.

### ***Readiness Committee (CDR Kevin Nolan & LCDR Paul Kruszka)***

- LCDR Kruszka reported that this committee has been making quarterly calls to medical officers to update readiness, concentrating on officers who have not been Basic Ready on more than one audit.
- Medical category readiness is 88.7%. 63 of the 105 officers have not been Basic Ready for over a year.
- OMB has readiness as a metric. In the spring, a Commissioned Corps report will go to executives (Drs. Koh and Benjamin) and will be shared with senior leadership.

## **Recruitment (CDR George Ceremuga, CAPT Nancy Sahakian, and CDR Narayan Nair)**

- The Associate Recruiter program will be launched soon.
- The list of recruitment ambassadors has been finalized and is posted on the website.
- The following committee minutes were received and are posted on the PPAC Portal:

### PPAC Recruitment Subcommittee Minutes

Dec 10, 2009  
1100-1130 EST

Present: CDR George Ceremuga, CDR Paul Kitsatani, LCDR Kate Sawyer, CDR Robert Steelman ( IRC), CDR Katie Terra, LCDR Ed Weiss, CDR Wong

1. Discussed MORE recruitment system utilized in the IHS. Applicable to the PHS and will pursue further discussions with DCCR and CPO with future meetings.
2. ARP still on hold. No update as to when new guidelines will be available.
3. PHS physician 2 year pilot recruitment program discussed. Information is on the PPAC web site at [usphs-ppac.net](http://usphs-ppac.net). The link is the 9<sup>th</sup> line down under PPAC Announcement/News. I have an email into the OCCO and CAPT Helminiak regarding the number of physicians placed under this program by specialty and criteria that was used for civilian providers. Also, inquired whether the program will be continued after August 2010.
4. Discussion on combining efforts with the Career Development and Training Subcommittee. Merge the efforts of the Ambassador program, mentor program, and ARP to sponsor new officers. Ideally, sponsor by agency. Sponsors would contact the new officer as they enter active duty as a resource. Plan to be available during Officer Basic Course to answer questions by conference call. A nice orientation packet is available on the PPAC web site.
5. Next meeting is Thursday, February 4, 2010 at 1100 EST.
6. Happy Holidays!!!

## **Retention (CDR Marc Osborn)**

- The first focus group will meet on 2-4-10. The purpose of the focus groups is to elicit retention issues and to find out what motivates officers to remain in the Corps.

***Retention, Medical Officer Liason to OCCO (CAPT Carlos Plasencia)***

- CAPT Plasencia noted that he will manage the focus groups.

***Retirement (CAPT Darius Yorichi)***

- CAPT Yorichi noted that he is stepping down from this position and is looking for a replacement and for additional committee members.
- It was noted that PSC will present a retirement seminar on March 23-24, to be held in the DC area. An additional seminar will be held on March 30-31 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, contact Jeffrey S. Morris, phone 505-248-4994..

***Uniform (CDR Lana Shiu and LCDR Ken Norris)***

- The consideration for category insignias continues to be pursued. CDR Purohit-Sheth will bring this up for discussion by PAC chairs.

***JOAG Report (LCDR Rajal Mody)***

- JOAG is soliciting nominations for three awards, discussed in the current PPAC newsletter.
- JOAG is considering a “Take a Junior Officer to Work” program.

**ADJOURNMENT**

CDR Tejashri Purohit-Sheth adjourned the meeting at 1440.

**FUTURE PPAC MEETINGS**

***The next PPAC meeting will be on 3-18-10. Meetings are held via Teleconference.***

***The next PPAC Forum will be held on 2-25-10.***

Respectfully Submitted,  
CAPT Barbara Stinson  
PPAC Executive Secretary  
[Barbara.Stinson@fda,hhs.gov](mailto:Barbara.Stinson@fda,hhs.gov)