HS PAC Chair Chat

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CDR John Cardarelli II

We are one month from the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. CAPT Dan Kavanaugh and CDR Richard Kennedy have done a great job organizing our Category day. Check out the website and agendas for details.

ADM Agwunobi was successful in obtaining approval to **fund** 250 HHS attendees! This is a positive step in that it is five times the HHS "Rule of 50" travel policy. The memo was signed on April 19 and 11 HHS Agencies were allocated slots based on several factors. Many officers are concerned about this limitation and how it seems to contradict the transformation process, but there is more than meets the eye. The travel policy and waiver process were not implemented to adversely impact the Corps. Our leadership must support policies within the Agency and support the transformation process. This is one example where the two objectives seemingly conflict. In situations like this I believe we must keep focused on the bigger picture and seek to understand rather than be understood – this is an excellent opportunity to exercise the leadership skill of empathy. I look forward to another successful symposium and sharing more news about our transformation process in my home town of Cincinnati!

Assimilation and Promotion News

The PHS Congressionally mandated assimilation ceiling of 2,800 officers may be reached after this next class of officers. OCCFM is considering a request to raise this limit. About 100-200 slots open up each year due to attrition.

Promotion rates have been approved but will not be released for another month!

The promotion precepts weights are:

40% Performance Rating and Reviewing Officer Statement
15% Education, training, and professional development
25% Career progression and potential
15% Officership
5% Response Readiness

Promotion benchmarks for PY08 will be released very soon. Please note that **no officer is expected to meet all of the benchmarks and that the benchmarks should not be considered a checklist that must be completed in order to be promoted.** Quality of service is more important than quantity.

It is your responsibility to ensure you provide the best possible package to the promotion boards. Get your OPF in order now and make your goals commensurate with your promotion year(s).

Do you know your Liaison Officer?

The transformation process has increased the workload on just about every officer, especially your Liaison Officer. PHS Liaison "Officer" positions vary from civil servant GS-7 positions to commission corps O-7 ranks. The services you receive may be limited by the influence and authority of your Liaison Officer when representing your agency's interests to the Corps. Further, the human resource community is less engaged in the transformation process, a factor that complicates the implementation phase of the transformation process. A workgroup is being developed to look at the roles, responsibilities, and authority of the Liaison Officer as well as the human resource issues to improve overall service to our officers. This is expected to be a short-term workgroup so look for results in the next few months.

Ready for Retirement?

The Retired Pay Changes policy provides for a pay table that extends to 40 years. Does this mean you can work beyond the 30 year limit without approval? I don't know. A new Workgroup Interdisciplinary Planning Team (WIPT) is being convened to address how the 40 year pay policy should be reconciled with the traditional 30 year work limit.

Always be ready!

OFRD is going to a quarterly reporting frequency for officer readiness status. The exact dates have not been released. Be prepared. Do NOT fall out of readiness status. Promotions, awards, and other opportunities may be denied if you are not BASIC Qualified. Strive for Level two qualifications and you'll meet one criterion for the FMRB – which is automatically awarded on a quarterly basis.