

**Physician Assistant Professional Advisory Group  
U.S. Public Health Service  
Thursday, February 25, 2010  
2015 – 2142 EST**

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>OPDIV</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>Cole</b>	<b>Gary</b>	<b>IHS</b>
<b>Absent</b>	<b>LCDR</b>	<b>Taylor</b>	<b>Shawn</b>	<b>NOAA</b>
<b>Absent</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>Amaya</b>	<b>Lisa</b>	<b>IHS</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>Ruiz</b>	<b>Melinda</b>	<b>DIHS</b>
<b>Absent</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>Bonfiglio</b>	<b>Susan</b>	<b>NIH</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>Wickard</b>	<b>Paul</b>	<b>BOP</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>Sluss</b>	<b>Rodney</b>	<b>DHS</b>
<b>Excused</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>Buckser</b>	<b>Jeffrey</b>	<b>DIHS</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>LCDR</b>	<b>Fideli</b>	<b>Ulgen</b>	<b>AMEDD</b>
<b>Absent</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>Futch</b>	<b>Mike</b>	<b>DIHS</b>
<b>Excused</b>	<b>LCDR</b>	<b>Russell</b>	<b>Karen</b>	<b>FDA</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>Bowens</b>	<b>Karla</b>	<b>BOP</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>Walsh</b>	<b>Christopher</b>	<b>DOD</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>LCDR</b>	<b>Cooper</b>	<b>William</b>	<b>DIHS</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>Witter</b>	<b>Lee</b>	<b>BOP</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>Van Horn</b>	<b>Pieter</b>	<b>DIHS</b>
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>Hunter-Buskey</b>	<b>Robin</b>	<b>BOP</b>
	<b>LT</b>	<b>Brooks</b>	<b>Lori</b>	<b>BOP</b>
	<b>LTJG</b>	<b>Newkirk</b>	<b>Ketoya</b>	<b>BOP</b>

**Call to order**

Meeting called to order at 2015. Roll call taken by LT Ruiz.

**Approval of Minutes**

January minutes approved via email.

**Chair Report /CDR Cole**

The standard \$6,000 Board Certification Pay (versus our current years of experience, incremental) is most likely to be expected among the additional pay increases. It is part of the consolidated pay package that is being looked at to assist with the recruiting and retention efforts of PHS.

RADM Milner will be meeting with the Special Pay Advisory Group next week and should have some new information then.

USCG is working on their implementation now which may be different than DOD or us.

RADM Milner just briefed RADM Canton (OCFAM) about the fact that our DOD PA colleagues are being paid along with the SW, Psychologist, and Vets. RADM Canton knows we are falling farther behind and commented the Assistant Secretary for Health was also aware from information outside of CC-probably COA or DOD partners.

**OFRD**

Humanitarian Missions are now being actively worked on and rostered by LCDR Nabakowski . OFRD

is refocusing on the OFRD missions and summer training following Haiti. You still have some time to apply if you hurry. The next roster is being run on 3/31/10. Please ensure your file is current as much depends on it. It is now accessed through direct access.

## **SOCIAL**

Robin Hunter-Buskey and Company met in Scottsdale for dinner on February 9<sup>th</sup>. George Majus, Jim Portt, Susan Bonfiglio, Robin, Will Cooper, Julie Clement, and Mark Niehaus and I dined, talked, and spoke about the Billeting revisions and many other issues. It was a good time had by all.

CAPT Frances Placide and LCDR Todd Baughman will meet with Indian Health PA's on 3/23/10 at PIMC and will dine and brief Indian Health Service PA's about relevant Agency News and information released during the NC4 Leadership Conference being held in Phoenix during the same timeframe.

## **CONFERENCES**

**COF in San Diego.** We have four PA category day speakers scheduled to speak. CDR Cole, CDR Hunter-Buskey, CDR Walsh, and LT Amaya will be each speaking on a topic which further leads to a roundtable discussion by participants. This is a new format for this year's symposium.

The COF Symposium Planning Committee consists of LCDR Fideli and LT Amaya. They are meeting regularly with the National Planning Committee on PA activities, speakers and forums.

**AAPA in Atlanta-** Survey Monkey will go out soon from PHSAPA that will seek to capture who we have going to conferences this year. We will need Aides for AAPA with both RADM Milner and RADM Elizondo in attendance. We anticipate Dr Moritsugu will need an Aide for the Memorial Day Service for that hour. We have some volunteers that we are starting to line up. It is an honor to be with these three gentlemen besides being a truly fun experience and worthwhile experience. You will receive a personal coin from the Admiral for this experience and a letter of appreciation for your eOPF. The PHSAPA Chapter meeting is June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1500 to 1600 at Atlanta Marriot. Refreshments are being provided by the Chapter. We will also have a conference line for those wanting to login distantly.

**AMSUS in Phoenix update-** The importance of this CME meeting to be held in Phoenix this year is that it cuts across all services to include the PHS, VA, DOD and is a place for all disciplines to come together. It is a high profile meeting with Active Duty, Reserves, and Retirees networking with leaders of our military medical community.

We met today for the plenary planning committee and are meeting with the PA discipline and the overall planning committees as well. I am being mentored through CDR Bonfiglio and there will be an opportunity next year to be mentored. CAPT George Majus is also on the PA planning committee and we are thankful for his leadership and problem-solving skills with obtaining CME Credits for PA's. If at all possible, we would love to see you in PHX on Oct 31<sup>st</sup> to Nov 5<sup>th</sup> for this event.

**Billet Revision** is causing some anxiety amongst the PA ranks. I have reached out to some former colleagues in the Air Force for historical perspective and strategy in navigating this issue along with our own leadership. The USAF revised their rank structure within the Medical, Nursing, and BSC corps in the mid-90's. 180 PA billets were lost at that time. While we don't expect to lose billets, the vaunted pyramid structure is the USAF parallel with fewer ranking CAPTAIN's at the top and Ensigns/JG's at the bottom. To some degree all organizations need to have this pyramidal structure. However, the transition process can be painful as individuals are caught up in this vortex and the need arises to change career paths for advancement purposes, accept fate, or choose a career outside PHS. Without clear guidelines, some PA's are beginning Doctorates to establish future competitive edge (and admittedly for some for other reasons, or both). We saw this degree creep in the USAF in the mid-1990s with Masters Degrees being the acceptable baseline degree in order to make Major. With the grandfather clause of two years and expected rollout here of May 2010-you have until May of 2012 to get promoted under the existing system. We are anticipating a drop in billet by one, maybe two. Some

PA's are postulating or feel that administrators will fair better than clinicians in this mix. The best officer profile appears to be a practicing PA Clinician that works as also as a Supervisor/Educator/ or Administrator and can bring value-added service to their agencies. An example would be a Clinician that actively practices and manages others simultaneously. A Certified Diabetic Educator in Indian Health and Certified Correctional Healthcare Provider in BOP and DIHS would be examples of value-added educational goals to seek. We hope to give some advice as to best navigate and are piecing this together as we get new information. I would like to hear your perspective on this important issue as well.

### **New Initiatives.**

We need volunteers for the PAPAG Coin and PA Oral History project. A few of you have expressed interest in helping with these projects and I appreciate LCDR Will Cooper volunteering for the coin project and Lt Lee Witter with the PA oral history project. They can definitely use assistants in coordinating, planning, and executing these projects.

### **Bylaws change: for Article VI, Section 4 and 5.**

Draft Resolution: Policy and Procedure will be crafting the wording and then we will push it out to our members for review and voting hopefully as early as next month. It will require us to disband the Ad Hoc and establish them under Section 5 as a Standing Committee. Once PAPAG approval occurs, it is forwarded to HSPAC for their review and voting. Many thanks in advance to LCDR Karen Russell and LT Karla Bowen who will be working this resolution amongst many other revisions for this year.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **Awards Subcommittee /CDR Wickard**

PA of the year nomination deadline is March 26, 2010. It is quickly approaching and we have two applicants submitted at this point for the awards committee.

#### **Communications Subcommittee/ LT Rodney Sluss**

Turnover of the committee is finalizing.

Priorities of the communication committee is established

Contacts made with HSO for updates.

We will provide the webmasters updates and relieve the secretary of these duties for continuity.

Roster updated and will be sent to HSO.

Dates and times updated as well with webmaster

PAPAG Newsletter discussed for possibly adding it to the PHSAPA website

#### **Membership Subcommittee/ CDR Buckser, LT Amaya, LT Futch**

We are preparing to send out the Call For Nominations paperwork to begin the new cycle of recruitment of voting members for the PAPAG. It will be appreciated if the current PAPAG members please help recruit new members in their institutions.

#### **Policy and Procedure Subcommittee/ LT Bowens, LCDR Russell**

LT Bowens and LCDR Russell are drafting General Standard Operating Procedures for the PAPAG. These general SOPs will be intended to provide guidance to Officers once they have become PAPAG members and may include information such as general meeting protocol, recordkeeping and reporting procedures, voting procedures, updating of bylaws, roles of voting and non-voting members, etc.

The Policy and Procedure Committee is also working on establishing a draft for a policy to initiate the position of PAPAG "Financial Liaison." The HSO has established a Financial Liaison position and one of the responsibilities of this person is to account for the Group's money and any financial dealings at the Annual COF Symposium and AMSUS conferences. Other responsibilities of the PAPAG Financial Liaison position are yet to be determined. Once a policy is drafted for this position, it will be voted on by PAPAG voting members for approval.

The Policy and Procedure Committee is also going to draft a policy to establish ad hoc COF/AMSUS subcommittees to be voted on and then later added to PAPAG Bylaws once approved.

#### **Professional Development Subcommittee/ CDR Christopher Walsh**

I only have input regarding all officers being aware of and actively engaged in the upcoming billet transformation process. We each need to be sure our supervisors and chains of command are aware of the multitude of tasks we perform, some of which may be under the radar.

#### **Readiness Subcommittee /LCDR William Cooper**

Readiness notification will be made by email. Previous email drafts will be reviewed to maintain a "helping-hand" feel to the email.

#### **Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee /LCDR Fideli, LT Van Horn**

Our goal is to develop an outline of the number of programs we would like completed by the end of this year. I am currently establishing a preceptorship site at my clinic at three schools: Arcadia, Duke and GWU. I am hoping to model the other programs like these 3.

#### **Welcoming Subcommittee/ LT Lee Witter**

There were two new calls to duty during the month of January and February. Both were contacted. The welcome packet is updated.

#### **Ad Hoc COF Subcommittee/ LT Amaya, LCDR Fideli**

The HSO committee booth board is looking for volunteers to work at the booth. Anyone interested in working for the booth please let me know. We will have a sign in sheet soon.

There will be a raffle for coins at the HSO booth. One dollar each. Also, if anyone is interested in volunteering to co-speak at the conference, please let me know. There are some vacancies for speakers to share in the topics for HSOs.

#### **Ad Hoc AMSUS Subcommittee /CDR Bonfiglio, CDR Cole**

Due to the DC area weather the next AMSUS planning meeting has been postponed until 3/16 and will solely address CME planning/credits. ADM Milner has communicated with the AMSUS Planning committee regarding the issue of PA CME credits which to date have been an issue. It appears it has been difficult to communicate that PAs have the same certifying entities that the MDs have.

#### **Liaison Reports**

##### ***BOP / LCDR John Gibbons***

Nothing to report.

##### ***DIHS / LCDR William Cooper***

-ICE is showing initiative with partnering with DIHS to make quality improvements to the detainee healthcare. This should have eventual improvements to the employment experience of PHS PA's.

Confirmed DIHS site closures are: ICE Charter Flight Aviation Flight Operations Unit Mesa,  
-ICE Charter Flight Aviation Flight Operations Unit San Antonio, Varrick Street Facility, Aguadilla Facility and strong rumors for closure: Port Isabelle and El Centro.  
- DIHS headquarters has informed facility clinical directors and admin leadership that NP's are preferable to PA's.

***DOD/ LCDR Ulgen Fideli***

Nothing new to report.

***FDA/ LCDR Stephen Smith***

Nothing new to report.

***IHS/ LCDR Todd Baughman***

-IHS Chief PA CAPT Frances Placide and I will be attending National Council of Chief Clinical Consultants conference which is taking place in Phoenix March 21-26. We are looking forward to meeting with the PAs/officers at PIMC on Tuesday evening, March 23<sup>rd</sup>.  
-CAPT Placide will be presenting at the Advances in Indian Health conference in Albuquerque which takes place April 27-30. Her topic will be **Joint Injections and OA of the Knee.**  
I will be representing CAPT Placide at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium, San Diego, May 24-27. I also plan to attend the AAPA conference in Atlanta, May 31-June 4.  
-Current number of PAs in Indian Health Service, Corps and Civil Service. **28 CC and 75 CS**  
-Status of PA webpage at IHS: **In the queue. maybe August**  
-Status of PAs on the MORE system: **In the queue. maybe August**  
-Current number of IHS PA vacancies: **72.**

***JOAG/ LT Pieter Van Horn***

Nothing to report at this time.

***NOAA/ CDR Michelle Pelkey***

Fully staffed ships beginning field season. There was discussion of why we had started using nurses. the reason being unfortunately when call went out for mid levels, no one was interested likely secondary to sailing schedule, ie 170 days at sea, albeit intermittently, still long time to be away from family.

***PHSAPA/ LCDR Stephen Smith***

I advised members of our meeting times, and that interested member should visit our website for all the latest and greatest information about the organization. I advised about the upcoming AAPA event and the PHSAPA meeting time and location at this venue. I reviewed that we recently had a teleconference that had the prior HS-PAC chair LCDR Bunnell, the former PAPAG chair CDR Bonfiglio, and our CPO RADM Milner talk to us about the "happenings" and "bullet points" if you will over the prior years and what endeavors the aforementioned organizations were planning for 2010; I also advised of our changing of our Bylaws with the use of Survey Monkey.

**Summary and Status of Action Items:**

**New Business:**

PA-PAG Coin: Initiative was presented to make a PA-PAG coin. It is felt a coin will reinforce esprit-de-corp and remind people to utilize their PA-PAG. LCDR Cooper will draft the design

**Call-in number: 866-619-7571; Pass code number 4274208l**

**Meeting was adjourned at 2142 hours EST.**

**Next teleconference: Thursday, March 25, 2010 @ 2000 hrs EST.**

**Call-in number: 866-619-7571; Pass code number 4274208.**

Minutes drafted by LT Ruiz, Secretary

Finalized and checked by CDR Cole, Chair