

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OPTOMETRY OFFICER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (OPAG)
Teleconference Report – 11:10am to 12:45pm, Wednesday January 05, 2005– Page 1 of 4

1. Attendees:

- 1.1. CAPT Greg Ketcher
- 1.2. CAPT Richard Hatch
- 1.3. CAPT Frank Behan
- 1.4. CDR Carmen Palma
- 1.5. CDR Mike Candreva
- 1.6. CDR Nancy Nichols (HSO PAC member)
- 1.7. LCDR Kim Lewandowski-Walker (secretary)
- 1.8. Absent: LCDR Barbara Massey

1.9. Meeting called to order at 11:10am

- 1.9.1. Motion made by CAPT Ketcher for OPAG members to approve minutes by e-mail prior to distribution – all in favor.
- 1.9.2. Approval of minutes from November 22, 2004 OPAG meeting

2. Old Business

2.1. Retention pay (ORSP)

- 2.1.1. Implemented for most O.D.s
- 2.1.2. TSP Tax issues discussed. If entire amount of the ORSP is deposited into TSP, no tax should be withheld. Several O.D.s who had the entire ORSP deposited into their TSP accounts had tax withheld. Compensation Branch is aware of the issue and is supposed to fix the issue by the next pay period.
- 2.1.3. Issue regarding prohibition of receiving ORSP while on loan repayment. Optometry is currently the only discipline that cannot receive retention pay concurrently with a loan repayment obligation.

2.2. Optometry credentials summary for promotion boards.

- 2.2.1. Discussion held among attendees regarding submitting an “additional credential” summary sheet for the promotion board. Definitions of required credentials already submitted to promotion board. Decision made to not provide promotion board with a list of “additional credentials” because it may appear to be a benchmark to the promotion board. Each O.D. up for promotion should list any additional credentials and their significance in their c.v.

2.3. HSO PAC

- 2.3.1. CDR Nancy Nichols was nominated to the HSO PAC.

3. New Business

3.1. AFOS “O.D. of the Year” Judge

- 3.1.1. CAPT Terry Schleisman is OPAG’s nominee. CAPT Schleisman accepted the nomination.

3.2. Communications

- 3.2.1. CAPT Ketcher is currently distributing information to Commissioned Corps O.D.s via an address list on Outlook. Discussion as to whether the OPAG and Commissioned Corps optometry should use a listserv. Issue is under consideration. For now, if you change your e-mail or your IT people change it for you, let CAPT Ketcher or CAPT Hatch know so your e-mail address can be added to CAPT Ketcher’s Outlook list.
- 3.2.2. Discussion regarding whether someone from the OPAG should report to the HSO PAC meeting. Since CDR Nichols is already on the HSO PAC, the OPAG will let her know of any issues that should be presented to the HSO PAC.

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OPTOMETRY OFFICER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (OPAG)
Teleconference Report – 11:10am to 12:45pm, Wednesday January 05, 2005– Page 2 of 4**

3.3 Staffing/Recruitment/Retention

- 3.3.1 CAPT Brian Hudson and LCDR David Bellware were appointed to the HSO PAC Recruitment Subcommittee for two-year terms as Discipline Liaisons. The subcommittee is meeting on 01/18 and 01/19/2005. OPAG will invite CAPT Hudson and LCDR Bellware to speak about these activities at the next OPAG meeting.
- 3.3.2 LCDR Barbara Massey is working on recruitment CD-ROM with CAPT Hatch. Discussion to coordinate this effort with HSO PAC Recruitment Subcommittee. Recommendation made to include CAPT Hudson, CDR Cespon, and LCDR Bellware on this project committee.

3.4 Career Development/Promotions/Awards

3.4.1 Optometry Mentoring

- 3.4.1.1 Discussion regarding whether there should be an Optometry Mentoring Program. There currently is none as it is rolled into the HSO mentoring program. CDR Nichols will obtain a list of O.D.s from the HSO PAC mentoring subcommittee to see if there are any O.D.s without a mentor who would like one.

3.4.2 Optometry Service Organizations

- 3.4.2.1 LCDR Massey has requested a list of service organizations relating to optometry. This list may be helpful for those O.D. coming up for promotion. A list of service organizations includes the following:

AMSUS <http://www.amsus.org/>
AFOS <http://www.afos2020.org/>
COA <http://www.coausphs.org/>
ROA <http://www.roa.org/>
MOAA <http://www.moaa.org/> (TROA)
NMFA <http://www.nmfa.org/>
State Optometric Associations
AAO <http://www.aaopt.org/>
AOA <http://www.aoanet.org/>
APHA <http://www.apha.org/>
APHA vision care section <http://spectacle.berkeley.edu/apha-vcs/>
Optometric Glaucoma Society
<http://www.optomglaucomasociety.org/index.html>
Optometric Retina Society
COVD <http://www.covd.org/>
ARVO <http://www.arvo.org/>
HSO-PAC <http://www.usphs-hso.org/>

3.4.3 Uniform Policies

- 3.4.3.1 Reminder that FDA and I.H.S. have instituted policies of daily uniform wear for Commissioned Officers unless specifically prohibited by the service unit or in FDA situations (such as undercover operations) where uniform wear would result in mission failure or personal danger.
- 3.4.3.2 Navy is considering phasing out the working khaki, summer white, winter blue, and tropical white for enlisted personnel and changing to an all-purpose service uniform. The woodland BDUs may also be changing to either a grey or blue color. This is currently a pilot program with the Navy and it is unknown how this will affect PHS uniform authority or CCRF/ORFD uniform policy.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OPTOMETRY OFFICER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (OPAG)
Teleconference Report – 11:10am to 12:45pm, Wednesday January 05, 2005– Page 3 of 4

3.4.4 Billets

3.4.4.1 CDR Palma is investigating the issue of updating the optometry clinical billets. The billets were rewritten to focus on experience. CDR Palma will telephone the billet officer at OCCO to determine whether the billets can be updated and if I.H.S. Headquarters has approved them.

3.4.5 CCRF/ORFD

3.4.5.1 ORFD is supposedly monitoring those signed up for the President's Challenge. CAPT Behan will investigate further as to how it is being monitored. Currently officers may perform the yearly fitness test or President's Challenge.

3.4.5.2 Discussion regarding body mass index measurements option on ORFD page. Not currently required. It is required to enter height and weight on officer summary page

3.5 Permanent Promotions

3.5.1 Permanent promotions are now available on the CCMIS (formerly DCP) web site

3.5.2 A draft policy regarding the 6th promotion precept involving promotion credit for officers serving in ISO HAR or hard-to-fill locations has been developed.

3.6 Transformation – nothing to report. The Lewin Group submitted a Draft Report to HQE in June 2004; final document is pending.

3.7 Pay – Active Duty/Retired

3.7.1 New BAH rates for 2005 and base pay are available at the CCMIS website. Look under "links", then "other links of interest", then "current military pay rates"

3.8 Meetings and Recruitment Activities

3.8.1 **AOA Federal Services Chiefs** – 01/23/2005. CAPT Ketcher will be attending.

3.8.2 **SECO** - 02/23 – 02/27/2005. CDR Keith Cespon will be attending. Funding has been made available for a recruitment booth.

3.8.3 **AFOS** –CDR Cespon will be attending. AFOS held in conjunction with SECO.

3.8.4 **AOA Convention** – 06/22 – 06/25/2005. Tentative attendees include CAPT Ketcher, CDR Keith Cespon, and Dr. William Pierre. Funding has been made available for a recruitment booth.

3.8.5 **IHS Eye Care Biennial 2006 Meeting** – The next meeting is scheduled May 8-12, 2006 at the Southern California College of Optometry Fullerton campus. CAPT John Garber will again organize and conduct the continuing education program.

3.8.6 **COA** – 06/06 – 06/10/2005 – CDR Palma is planning to attend.

3.8.7 **FSO** – PHS may be requested to sponsor the FSO meeting in 2008

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OPTOMETRY OFFICER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (OPAG)
Teleconference Report – 11:10am to 12:45pm, Wednesday January 05, 2005– Page 4 of 4**

4 Action Items

- 4.1 CAPT Hatch suggested the OPAG raise the issue of the concurrent receipt of loan repayment and ORSP in the summer. Optometry is the only discipline prohibited from receiving both concurrently
- 4.2 CDR Palma will investigate the implementation of upgrading the clinical billets for optometry
- 4.3 CDR Nichols will present items from the OPAG meeting as needed to the HSO-PAC.
 - 4.3.1 **Next HSO-PAC Meeting Feb 4th, 2005.** OPAG Members should submit items to bring before HSO-PAC to CAPT Ketcher by **January 26th, 2005.** CAPT Ketcher will write the report and CDR Nichols will submit the report on his behalf.
- 4.4 CAPT Schleisman will be one of the AFOS "O.D. of the Year" Judges
- 4.5 CAPT Behan will continue to investigate ORFD (CCRF) issues. As of now:
 - 4.5.1 President's Challenge - do it at least every 12 months, not tied to calendar year or fiscal year, thus you do not have to do it constantly
 - 4.5.2 height/weight - only change it as needed
 - 4.5.3 body fat - not monitored currently, a non-issue
 - 4.5.4 BDU color/pattern - things are changing with the Navy, nothing about our future known
- 4.6 CAPT Hatch will be working on updating the civil service optometry classification and investigating a special salary rate for civil service O.D.s
- 4.7 Invite CDR Cespon to the next OPAG meeting since he is a representative for AFOS. OPAG hopes to have him report on his recruitment activities at the various meetings.
- 4.8 Invite CAPT Hudson and LCDR Bellware to the next OPAG meeting to speak about the HSO PAC Recruitment Subcommittee.
- 4.9 CAPT Ketcher requests that Commissioned Corps optometrists let him know the kind of issues we would like to see addressed or supported by the AOA in 2005. Issues include:
 - 4.9.1 Licensure by endorsement
 - 4.9.2 More loan repayment contracts for O.D.s through I.H.S.
 - 4.9.3 Civil service GS reclassification of PHS optometry positions
 - 4.9.4 Title 38 pay for PHS optometrists
 - 4.9.5 Residency accreditation issues
 - 4.9.6 Federal Service vs. private sector pay disparity
 - 4.9.7 "What is the AOA doing for employed optometrists now?"
 - 4.9.8 Increase PHS optometrists at other agencies and headquarters
 - 4.9.9 VA laser issues

5 OPAG Meetings

5.1 Next meeting scheduled for February 02, 2005 at 11:00 CST.

- 5.1.1 CAPT Richard Hatch, CAPT Brian Hudson, CDR Keith Cespon, CDR Nancy Nichols, and LCDR David Bellware will be invited as guests at the next meeting.
- 5.2 OPAG members should use the same conference call number and password
- 5.3 Meeting adjourned at 12:45pm

Minutes prepared by LCDR Kimberly Lewandowski-Walker, FDA Representative to the OPAG

Minutes approved via email 1-14-05.

Distribution: HSO CPO, HSO PAC, PHS Optometry Officers.