

DEHS Director's Meeting, Oklahoma City Area Office
January 9 & 10, 2002
Minutes and Notes

Wednesday, January 9, 2002

Personnel Issues

Randy Grinnell, Chief Professional Officer

Awards

- ◆ Award presentation to Bobby Villines
- ◆ Award presentation to Fan Robinson for Facilities Appropriation Board work.

Oklahoma City Area Topics

- ◆ Extended a welcome on behalf of Dr. Grim, Area Director who is escorting Loretta Beaumont and Gary Hartz in the Area.
- ◆ Discussed work done in Oklahoma City Area on reorganization and dealing with stakeholders—focus on communication, encouraged Areas to seek feed-back from their Tribes.

Environmental Health Officer, Chief Professional Officer Topics

- ◆ CPO— CAPT Grinnell, still learning the role.
- ◆ Dr. Satcher departing February 14th.
- ◆ Office of Emergency Preparedness—Disaster response issues, better planning is needed for response efforts.
- ◆ CCRF—databases need to be up-dated.
- ◆ CPO's to meet again soon. New changes effective January 1st (standards and requirements).
- ◆ Darren Buchanan is working with Randy to send out an EHO skills survey. Information will be used to improve disaster.
- ◆ Surgeon General has staff looking at inactive reserve officer deployment. Reserve Corps officer system being looked at. Utilization of EHO's justification letter to be copied for Branch Chiefs.
- ◆ Recruitment of EH graduates is a problem. Areas need to make recruiting efforts. Need to get more EHO's into other agencies (BOP, EPA, CDC, ATSDR). We need to work to retain our younger officers.
- ◆ We may see CO's detailed to States and regional health departments. Directives to agencies are needed to make sure national interests are addressed. Also, we need to revisit reasons for departure of junior officers; I.P., self-governance, etc.

Agency Promotion Recommendation Policy Discussion, Alan Dellapenna

We had a lengthy discussion of the agency promotion recommendation process that happened in December 2001, highlights of the discussion include:

- ◆ Agency ranking process to continue until S.G. office does away with it.
- ◆ A board was convened at HQE to review the promotion eligible officers, the board was changed with ranking officers per our criteria; developing criteria to address issues and circumstances not covered in existing policy; and proposing changes to criteria to reduce ambiguity in the future.

- ◆ We read and discussed the recommendations the board made in their December 10th memo.
- ◆ Of the 30 IHS-EHO's up for promotion, only 4 had scores unchanged changed by the board.
- ◆ Chiefs need to know what the average range of scores of ranked officers was so they can share with future officers up for promotion.

Rank:	<u>0-4</u>	<u>0-5</u>	<u>0-6</u>
Score Range:	38-54	35-77	35-82

Recommendations to change the policy were discussed, final decision on changing the policy was deferred to a monthly conference call to allow Directors time to study and make further comment on the recommended changes.

Environmental Health Officer of the Year

Scoring was conducted throughout the meeting.

Molly Patton, Environmental Health Specialist with the Tanana Chiefs Conference in Fairbanks, Alaska was select as the IHS Environmental Health Officer of the Year.

Revisions to the DEHS Policy/Criteria?

We reviewed and discussed the current nomination and scoring criteria.

- ◆ Questions arise about the Community Activity score: the recommendation was clarify the criteria or drop the element.
- ◆ A recommendation was made that in the future DEHS Directors should score the nominee officer from their Area.
- ◆ Area nominees write-ups should be forwarded for PHS honor awards.
- ◆ **We will decide on adopting the recommendations on a monthly conference call.**

Loan Repayment Criteria

Do we need to revise the DEHS Criteria?

We did not discuss this topic at length at the meeting. A copy of the current criteria was provided to DEHS Director's and the document is posted on www.dehs.ihs.gov.

DEHS Directors are to review the document and send comments to Alan Dellapenna.

A committee was discussed but not formed to revise the document.

Preparation for Promotion/Career Counseling Presentation

The presentation was not made at the meeting, copies were provided in the reference notebook.

437 Scholarship Discussion

E.H. scholarship funding did not happen this year. We will try next year. OPH to ask for request for re-establishment. 103 - two years/104 - four year with pay back obligation. Alan is working with the 437 program to address the plethora of problems experienced in the past.

Recruitment and Retention Issues

A copy of the Associate Director's plans and proposals on Recruitment and Retention were included in the reference notebook. DEHS Director's are to review and comment on the proposal.

Injury Prevention Program Update, Kelly Taylor

Kelly made a presentation highlighting current issues in the Injury Prevention Program, highlights include:

- ◆ **Tribal Steering Committee** - Solely tribal/application process deadline is March 1st/five vacancies/not working well/objectives/roles.
- ◆ **Sleep Safe** - On IP website; Reduce Fire/Burn injury in 0-5 years purpose of the program; program provide sites detectors, curriculum, technical assistance; Harold Cully, Diana Kuklinski, Chris Allen are the program coordinators; 24+ sites; funding, \$150,000 from US Fire Administration.
- ◆ **GPRA** - Adjusting 2002-2003 indicator/Problems with numbers- data (RPMS not complete).
- ◆ **Program Evaluation** – status report provided
- ◆ **Course Revisions** - major burnout of committee members happening, changes made to the planned workgroups, timeline, new course presentations.
- ◆ **Fellowship** – changes made in selection factors, Academic Director appointed, revisions will continue; new class selected 9 members from: AB, BE, BI, CA, NV (2), OK, Phx (2)--letters coming.
- ◆ **2002 GPRA** - Maintain 2001 death rates. Tribal org with injury prevention programs (25).
- ◆ **2003 GPRA** - Decrease injury death rate 2 percent below 2002. Increase programs to 30.
- ◆ **For Area SES report** - use GPRA Plus software where available. Use local data—show trends. Can't use national GPRA indicator.

ATSDR Tribal Program – Dean Seneca, ATSDR Office of Tribal Affairs

Dean provided an overview of his program, highlights of his presentation include:

- ◆ Four people on staff
- ◆ Overview of ATSDR was given
- ◆ Need Tribal specific health outcome data to initiate Health Hazard Assessment—**To request an assessment**, send letter to ATSDR Director, "cc" Dean S. and regional offices.

- ◆ Dr. Trujillo met with Dr. Koplan on issues regarding response to terrorism on Native lands (policy comm).
- ◆ Alan Crawford works with Dean at ATSDR.
- ◆ Would like to set up assessment/consultation training for IHS folks.
- ◆ **Tribal Projects**—Gila River, Alaska Dietary Project, 40 sites on or near tribal lands.
- ◆ I.E.N.s Tom Goldtooth is on Tribal Workgroup.
- ◆ IHS should consider inviting ATSDR to Area workshops.

EIS Coordinator's Wrap-up Discussion, Darren Buchanan, Ralph Fulgham
Darren reviewed topics covered with Area EIS Coordinators in training meeting.

Action Items for Area's

1. Data from all Head Starts needs to be entered into EIS and sent to Darren by **June 1st, 2002**.
2. Enter the most recent survey data for each facility.
3. Area's have a range of choices for using EIS: minimum is to just enter code violations, max is to use EIS to do whole survey.
4. For 638 Tribes that do not want to do EIS entry, notify Ralph and he will request AIPB have them do self-assessment.
5. Area EIS Coordinator needs support to provide training and take other steps to June 1st deadline.

EHSC Training Issues – Bobby Villines, Environmental Health Support Center

- ◆ Discussed staff activities
- ◆ OEH Orientation course content reviewed (insight into culture and ways of life on reservation is lacking in course, so may be obtained locally).
- ◆ New courses held—Infection control course was good course.
- ◆ Need suggestions for courses, feedback, etc.
- ◆ EHSC can arrange for CEUs for Area-sponsored classes.

Thursday, January 10, 2002

DEHS Web page Development Review/Content Discussion

Current DEHS Web page development was reviewed for www.dehs.ihs.gov

- ◆ Used for recruiting tool, consider putting on business cards, e-mail signature lines
- ◆ An alternate site is available for internal use; dehs.hqe.ihs.gov, used for downloads, post presentations for meetings, EIS files, Kelly's slides for field/area, etc.
- ◆ Discussed proposed content of site, template is in workshop binder.
- ◆ 508 is an Act regarding site accessibility for government websites, compliance for site has been done

We have taken the development of the site as far as we can without additional involvement from the Areas.

We need input from Area's and other DEHS staff to develop the site further, specific input is needed on these items:

- There is a place for each Area's to have a site, Each Area's personality to be reflected on own site, we need a contact to help develop Area specific content.
- Some program reference documents are posted on the site, we need additional documents and reference items submitted
- Recruitment info, visits, etc.
- Photos of staff in action

◆ www.ehopac.org has photos and descriptions of activities, other resources.

Facility Code Definitions Discussion – Mike Welch, Al Knapp, Kevin Meeks

This session was a presentation and group discussion on the revision of facility code definitions. With the implementation of WebEHRS we have changed how the FDS list and definitions are used. It is timely to revisit how DEHS managers and staff understand and use the codes. We want to develop a consistent interpretation of facility codes with the goal: **Everyone codes everything the same way.**

A workgroup met prior to the meeting to go over the current definitions and make recommendations to the definitions. The workgroup summarized their recommendations in a document; we spent most of the session reviewing the document and discussing recommendations.

A few decisions were made during the session; many were deferred to monthly conference calls to give more time to review the document.

Highlights from our discussion follows.

- ◆ DEHS funded safety officer issue was discussed. Staff in comp. healthcare referral facility is usually funded with H&C.
- ◆ Proposed Definitions:
 - Day Care Homes listed under Foster homes will now be under Day Care (23).
 - License can be state or tribe approved
 - 2 years operation required
 - Foster care homes are only for foster kids.
 - School does not include room in building used for something else.
 - Community Water System definition needs update.
 - Code 34 – We are not OSHA-oriented surveyors, mainly look at disease, industrial hygiene issues.
 - Code 44 – Senior citizens centers for ENP's only. Navajo coding both as 44/47.
 - Mike W. has all changes, and will send out an update.
- ◆ Finished facility definitions discussion agreed up changes—Draft of definitions to be prepared in 30 days.
- ◆ Fan asked how we (as Chiefs) set priorities:
 - We look at P.H. significance.
 - We stopped the bean-counting.

- Tribes were asked for input on priorities in Nashville. Bemidji does annual workplans with each Tribe.
- We need to quantify the EH needs on Indian lands to use for asking Congress for more funds.
- Non-recurring funds are used to balance distributions to Tribes, but no Tribe will suffer a decrease.
- Fan's concern is Tribes not being treated equally, financially.
- WebEHRS is a good starting tool for funding determinations.
- 5-year strategic plan needs revisited

ATSDR Proposed Tribal Clinicians Training, Dean & Teresa

- ◆ Issues that need to be discussed regarding hazardous chemicals on Indian lands.
- ◆ Land is life; Environmental issues are a threat to subsistence, cultural practices, environmental compensation
- ◆ Environmental Health issues include: Emotional, Physiological, Physical, and Spiritual (these impact relationship to the land)
- ◆ Clinician is physician, CHR, Admin. EH person and folks that are interested and may be able to arouse suspicion about associations between disease and exposure to contaminants, i.e. look at symptoms.
- ◆ Teresa – R.N. -- Exposure History
 - Assesses relationship of exposures to environmental hazards
 - Three components: Exposure Survey, Environmental History, and Work History.
- ◆ Discussion: Need IHS-HQE person to get behind the effort to encourage persons to be trained.
- ◆ Case study coming on asthma.
- ◆ Community assessment tool (module) is coming

Expanding WebEHRS to Tribal Facilities – Dellapenna/Buchanan

Implementation of Web EHRS by tribal EHS programs is a GPRA measure for DEHS. Darren presented information on how to initiate the process

- ◆ Tribes are outside of IHS system "firewall"
- ◆ Darren has procedures using V.P.N. (Virtual Private Networking) "bore" through the IHS firewall for specific secure applications like WebERHS
- ◆ Tab J – Request form for network access for tribal programs
- ◆ Tribes need to have the will to do this.
 - Some Tribes took their MIS money—have good systems & good technical support in Tribal office. 1-year use with renewal annually.
- ◆ We do not want dial-up networking due to security issues. Tribe needs LAN, DSP, ISP.
- ◆ **Send Darren 2-3 names of tribal EH folks that are interested in using WebEHRS in your Area**

Open Discussion - Tribal Involvement at DEHS Director's Meetings

We had a lengthy discussion about how we should include tribal 638 DEHS programs at these meetings. We did not expect to reach a decision on the topic but reached some direction on the topic:

- We agreed that including tribal programs at meeting would not be meet the intent of tribal consultation.
- We want to include tribal programs.
- We will want to have some portion of the meeting fed program only to discuss internal issues.
- We weren't sure on the logistics of including: open mail/e-mail to programs, active registration for meetings, Area's handle invites and logistics, do passive announcement like SFC, post on the web site and welcome all that chose to attend.

EHS GPRA Measure and Community Assessment – Dellapenna

A presentation was made on the status and direction of this initiative.

- ◆ WebEHRS to be used for Community Assessment GPRA measure.
- ◆ Use to present needs (EH) to Tribes to impact policy, grants, funding, program.
- ◆ Expand data elements to non-RRM community-based data proxy measures, RPMS, GIS, Census.
- ◆ Collect data (optional use) report on Website.
- ◆ Current indicator is WebEHRS
- ◆ Participation by Tribes 2002.
- ◆ For 2003, indicator will be to increase use by Tribes further.
- ◆ Expanded data will come from us or from other sources (EPA, CDC).