



## **White Paper**

### **2010 DePAC Readiness and Deployment Work Group**

#### **Members:**

**CAPT Bob Smith, Co-Chair**  
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The mission of the Readiness and Deployment Workgroup is to serve as an advocate for officers of the dental category on policy issues concerning readiness status and deployments. The primary function of this workgroup is to maintain contact with the officers in the dental category and give a subtle prompt via email about readiness status. These prompts are sent prior to the quarterly deadlines and are constructed and utilized by leadership to continually have the field personnel cognizant of time frames for reviewing their readiness status and correcting any deficiencies.

Officers in the dental category have operated in many ways during national disasters. Not only have their skills as dental providers been used in treatment of survivors, but also in forensic capacities during many of the disaster deployments. In addition to serving as dental providers, our officers have served in command and control situations, and worked as educators, in many instances.

One's level of training with OFRD in the dental category depends on the officer's level of involvement with the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) or one of the other organized Teams within the OFRD Response Team Rosters. Most of the OFRD training is designed for teams tasked initially with staging and preparing for deployment of personnel to the impending catastrophes.

## **DEPLOYMENTS**

There have been many ship-based deployments with the US Navy over the past few years. The first was in 2007 on the USNS Comfort and the USS Peleliu (LHA 5).

**Partnership for the Americas** – From June – Oct. 2007, USNS COMFORT (T-AH 20) conducted a four-month humanitarian assistance mission to Latin America and the Caribbean that treated more than 98,000 people in 12 countries. For this unique mission, the ship's hospital was staffed by medical professionals from the U.S. Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and US Public Health Service as well as Canadian troops and civilian volunteers from a number of nonprofit organizations.

**Dental:** Dental care was also a major mission priority during Partnership for the Americas. Dentists and staff treated more than 25,000 patients, providing:

3,968 teeth extractions

3,931 fillings

7,042 sealants

20,561 fluoride applications

**Pacific Partnership** – The USS Peleliu (LHA 5) mission ran from 23 May – 20 September 2007. The mission included medical, dental, construction, and other humanitarian assistance programs ashore and afloat in the Philippines, Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the Marshall Islands. Medical personnel onboard Peleliu included medical teams from the U.S. Navy, US Public Health Service and ten partner nations, and three Non-Governmental Organizations, including "Project Handclasp".

Other ship board missions have been on the USNS Mercy (T-AH 19), USS Boxer (LHD 4), and the USS Kearsarge (LHD 3).

Our officers have been involved not only in actual missions, but pre-deployment assessments as well. They have also been tasked during the deployments to fill command positions. Many have been requested to share “past lessons learned” since they had deployed on similar missions before with the U.S. Navy. We are uniquely qualified for these types of missions due to the fact it is similar to the work we provide on a daily basis in our various duty stations across the nation.

Dental Officers have also been called on to deploy for other various training deployments such as Remote Access Medical (RAM), for example.

## **NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCIES**

Commissioned Officers have been involved in responses to natural disasters, ranging from flooding in the Red River Valley in North Dakota to Hurricanes in the Gulf Region, earthquakes in Haiti and the latest oil spill to involve the Gulf Coast area.

The Corps has standing groups of Rapid Deployments Forces throughout the US. These teams are called upon to pre-deploy in anticipation of a natural disaster. After entering the area, the teams either set up a Field Medical Station, or remain in the area to do so after the storm has passed. Our USPHS dental officers usually are tasked to provide other services, or they are

placed in command positions during many of these disasters. Overall, we are able to fill in gaps in the field or command structure and, as a result, have gained a high level of respect from those in line authority; that officers in the dental category can get the job done, no matter what the job.

This is a partial list of Hurricanes to which we have been deployed:

<b>Hurricane Name</b>	<b>Year</b>
Ivan	2004
Dennis	2004
Rita	2005
Katrina	2005
Wilma	2005

At various times in the past, dental officers have been pre-deployed, but subsequently returned to their duty stations after it was determined that certain hurricanes came ashore without inflicting the severity of destruction forecasted.

The **World Trade Center (WTC)** was attacked on September 11, 2001 in New York by terrorists commandeering commercial U.S. airliners into the twin towers. The WTC was a complex of seven buildings in Lower Manhattan in New York City. The site is currently being rebuilt with six new skyscrapers and a memorial to the casualties of the attacks. Commissioned Corps officers were onsite within hours of this disaster. Most of the Officers in the dental category were detailed to provide forensic duties.

Officers have also been deployed to assist staffing at the Political National Conventions, Super Bowls and the World Series.

## **AWARDS IN RECOGNITION OF DENTAL DEPLOYMENT**

*The Dental Responder of the Year* award was established in 2006 by the USPHS Chief Dental Officer to recognize a dentist's impact on emergency preparedness, disaster response and contributions to local, national or international public health threats.

Below is a list of the past recipients of the *Dental Responder of the Year*:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Award Recipient(s)</b>	<b>Agency</b>
2010	CAPT Angel Rodriguez-Espada and CAPT Arturo Bravo	HRSA/USPHS
2009	CAPT Bob Smith	IHS
2008	None Selected	
2007	CAPT Dean Coppola	OSG/OCCO
2006	CDR Renee Joskow	NIH

The USPHS *Responder of the Year* is a broader, all-category award presented annually. In 2010, the award was presented to a dental officer, CAPT Dean Coppola.

## **RECENT CHANGES**

The process by which officers report their medical data to the Medical Affairs Branch (MAB) was recently changed. Presently, all Commissioned officers must fax immunization records to 301-594-3299 or 800-535-7691 for entry by the MAB. Officers must login to Direct Access to update their contact information and verify their billet and licensure information.

Most if not all of the other categories have similar workgroups that have been formed, relative to readiness and deployment. Contacts for those groups are available at the PAC website, as shown below.

## **ADDITIONAL CONTACTS**

### **Pan-American Health Organization**

Dr. Saskia Estupiñán-Day

## DePAC 2010 Readiness and Deployment Workgroup White Paper

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