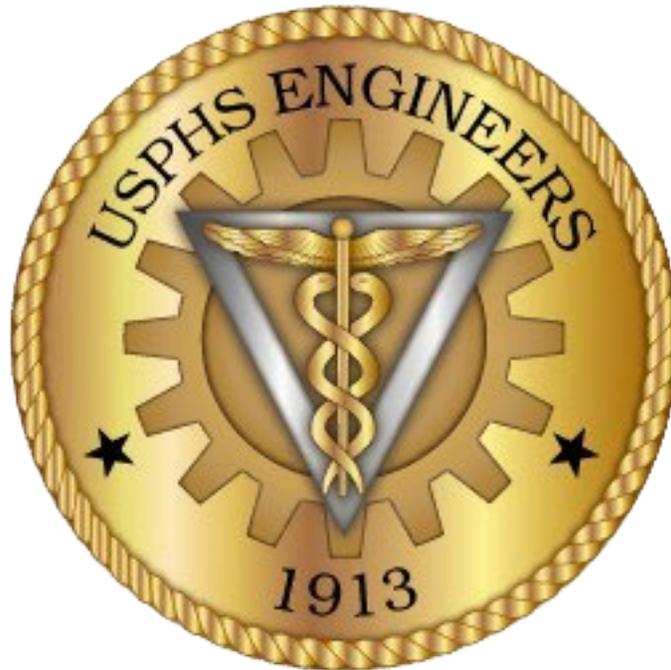


United States Public Health Service

Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC)



Public Health Engineering Practice (PHEP) Subcommittee

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Revision 01, August 21, 2020

Document History Record for
Public Health Engineering Practice Subcommittee
Standard Operating Procedures

Revision Number	Revision Date	Description of Changes
00	2020APR25	Initial Draft
01	2020AUG21	Revised by CDR Stacey Yonce & CDR Andrew Yang

Revision No.: The numeric designation identifying the version of a controlled document. New documents are assigned “Rev. 00”. Subsequent approved revisions of the same document are assigned sequential numbers, “Rev. 01”, “Rev. 02”, etc.

Revision Date: The date that the Chair accepts the document into the Document Control System by applying the final approval signature.

References

[EPAC Home Page](#)

[EPAC Governing Documents](#)

- [Charter \(2013\)](#)
- [Bylaws \(2015\)](#)

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Abbreviations

CC	Commissioned Corps
COB	Close of Business
CPO	Chief Professional Officer
CS	Civil Service
EPAC	Engineering Professional Advisory Committee
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
LOA	Letter of Appreciation
OPDIV	Operating Division
USPHS	United States Public Health Service
PHEP	Public Health Engineering Practice
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SG	Surgeon General
WG	Workgroup

ARTICLE I PURPOSE

The Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC) Public Health Engineering Practice (PHEP) Subcommittee Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides operational and procedural guidance for the EPAC PHEP Subcommittee. This SOP provides guidance on matters not addressed by the EPAC Charter or Bylaws; for the PHEP Subcommittee mission and general responsibilities, refer to the [EPAC Charter](#), Part IV, Functions, and the [EPAC Bylaws](#), Article III, Subcommittees, respectively.

This SOP applies to all documents created that are related to all functions within the EPAC PHEP Subcommittee to establish policies, processes, records, and acceptance criteria under the auspices of EPAC.

ARTICLE II SUBCOMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES & ORGANIZATION

Section 1 Subcommittee Responsibility

The PHEP Subcommittee performs the following core functions:

- A. Maintain up-to-date website on the EPAC PHEP Subcommittee page
- B. Serve as a resource to review articles intended for professional and Corps publication
 - a. Available to all USPHS CC and CS Engineers who request assistance
- C. Organize monthly meetings and maintain documentations/files to evaluate progress on accomplishing work plan goals

Section 2 Workgroup Responsibility

A Workgroup is an established and recurring program within the Subcommittee. Projects are often developed within the Workgroups. A project is defined as a short-term task or assignment that may or may not have a definitive termination date, depending upon the task and any applicable deadlines.

The PHEP Subcommittee consists of the following Workgroups:

- A. Access to Reference Materials Workgroup: Collect, develop, and recommend mechanisms for USPHS CC Engineers to access engineering standards and/or reference materials, which can aid in deployment and cross-agency collateral assignments.
- B. Deployer and OPDIV Skills and Needs Workgroup: Define core competencies among various roles USPHS CC Engineers serve and to develop procedures to track USPHS CC Engineers' acquired competencies.
- C. Special Topic Projects Workgroup: Research and develop guidelines to resolve identified issues USPHS Engineers face in their OPDIVS and deployments.

- D. Surgeon General or National Priority Topics Workgroup: Identify projects that align with the Surgeon General's priorities that show how USPHS Engineer involvement can have a direct impact on the future health and safety of the nation.
- E. Publication Review Workgroup: Serve as a resource to review peer- and non-peer reviewed articles for publication.

Section 3 Leadership Roles

A. Chair and Vice Chair

1. Responsibilities

- a. Organizes and approves meeting agendas in advance for all meetings.
- b. Develops action plans for projects for the year and submits to EPAC Chair for review at the beginning of each operational year.
- c. Ensures Subcommittee participants understand expectations in order to qualify for a letter of appreciation (LOA) at the end of the operational year.
- d. Assigns action items to Subcommittee Workgroup Leads and other leadership positions and ensures milestones are met.
- e. Coordinates and communicates to EPAC Chair regarding progress, goals, reviews and initiatives of the Subcommittee in which CPO involvement is required.
- f. Reports Subcommittee accomplishments and other noteworthy news to EPAC.
- g. Provides orientation to new Subcommittee participants.
- h. Sends email soliciting members for the Subcommittee.
- i. Selects members for Workgroup Lead roles.
- j. Summarizes accomplishments for the operational year to submit to EPAC Chair.
- k. Drafts PHEP work plans for upcoming and current EPAC operational year.
- l. Tracks progress for article reviews and catalog published articles.

B. Workgroup Leads

1. Responsibilities

- a. Assign specific tasks and responsibilities to individual Workgroup members as needed.

- b. Hold meetings, as necessary, ensuring effective communication among Workgroup members and setting project timelines to meet the overall expectations as set forth by the Subcommittee Chair.
- c. Submit regular updates on Workgroup progress to Subcommittee Chair.
- d. Transition off any one Workgroup Lead position after a maximum of two years of service to allow others an opportunity to lead the Workgroup. Transitioning should also include outgoing Lead debriefing incoming Lead on Workgroup responsibilities and procedures.
- e. Update and maintain SOPs.

C. EPAC Chair

1. Responsibilities

- a. Provide feedback or promote a work product on Special Topic Projects and Surgeon General or National Priority Topics to the EPAC.

D. Chief Professional Officer (CPO)

1. Responsibilities

- a. Create a Special Topic Project and Surgeon General or National Priority Topics.
- b. Provide feedback or promote a work product on Special Topic Projects and Surgeon General or National Priority Topics to the EPAC.

Section 4 Subcommittee Involvement

Subcommittee members who wish to be involved as participants will fulfill the following expected roles and responsibilities:

A. Maintain minimum standards for participants:

- 1. Attend at least half of the eligible meetings since joining the Subcommittee.
- 2. Actively participate in at least one project annually.
- 3. Actively participate in meeting discussions and provide input to Subcommittee Chair solicitations.

B. Accept and follow through on assignments.

C. Think in terms of the welfare of the group rather than personal interests.

D. Be willing to listen to and respect others' viewpoints.

Section 5 Letters of Appreciation (LOA)

The Subcommittee Chair/Vice Chair shall disseminate Letters of Appreciation to Subcommittee members who meet the minimum standards for participation described in Section 4. The LOA should be issued on an annual basis using the template provided by the Rules Subcommittee. Only one LOA per officer per subcommittee will be awarded. Other types of recognition may be warranted in addition or instead of a LOA as deemed appropriate.

ARTICLE III SUBCOMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Section 1 Meetings

The Subcommittee shall hold at least monthly meetings where all Subcommittee members and Workgroups shall report their various activities. The meetings are scheduled at the discretion of the Subcommittee Chair.

Section 2 Access to Reference Materials Workgroup Procedures

Purpose

The following document outlines the file hierarchy, and a description of files that are stored within the folder path

File Hierarchy

The following describes the file hierarchy and types of files contained within each directory. These files are read-only, except for PHEP Committee members.

- Facilities
 - Electrical-Facility – distribution of power within a facility and considerations for a facility’s emergency standby generator
 - Generational Operational Assessment (Health Care Facilities) – facility considerations pertaining to health care facilities
 - Mechanical – design, operation, and maintenance considerations for facility mechanical systems
 - Auxiliaries – pumps, pipes, and heat exchanger design criteria
 - Boilers – operations and inspecting facility boilers
 - Chillers – operations and inspecting facility chillers
 - Cooling Towers – operations and inspecting facility cooling towers
 - Heat Pumps – operations for heat pumps

- HVAC – operations and background for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
- Water Chemistry – importance and background for water chemistry for operating facility mechanical systems
- Infrastructure – Basic physical and organizational structure and facilities needed for the operation of a society
 - Electricity Generation – generating and distributing power to a facility
 - Potable Water – treating and distributing potable water
 - Roads/Bridges – evaluating the structural elements associated with roads and bridges
 - Wastewater – treating and discharging wastewater
- Safety-Disaster Response – ensuring life safety during a disaster response
 - Hazard Identification – process used to evaluate if any particular situation and/or item may have the potential to cause harm.
 - Hazmat Containment – containing hazardous waste that resulted in an accidental release that can compromise environmental and public health
 - Rapid Structural Assessment – reviewing the integrity of structures immediately after a natural disaster and design guidance to mitigate the risk of prior to a natural disaster.

Curating Procedures

1. New files are filed in accordance to appropriate file directory based on the descriptions
2. A two- to three-sentence is drafted for each file to describe the contents of the file so that an individual can get an idea of whether the file can meet the individual’s interest.
3. Prior to uploading files to the directory, ensure there are no duplicate files

Section 3 Deployer and OPDIV Skills and Needs Workgroup Procedures

Purpose

This SOP describes the procedures for the Deployer and OPDIV Skill and Needs Workgroup to catalog all approved certifiable skills by the PHEP subcommittee for engineers in the USPHS CC for value-added contributions to the USPHS CC or their respective agencies.

Responsible Persons

1. The PHEP Subcommittee Chair or designee shall maintain and update the PHEP Certifiable Skills list, Standard Certifiable Skills Form, and manage the Deployer and OPDIV Skills Workgroup file archive.
2. Chief Engineer shall annually approve additions or removal of certifiable skills to the PHEP Certifiable Skills List.

Procedure for Retrieving and Storing Files:

1. The SOP, fillable MS Word version of the Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form, and MS Excel version of the PHEP Certifiable Skills List shall be stored on the PHEP Subcommittee page of the EPAC website.
2. All archived and active files of the MS Word SOP, MS Excel PHEP Certifiable Skills List, MS Word fillable word Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form, and completed Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form shall be archived by a designee in the PHEP Subcommittee Deployer and OPDIV and Skills Workgroup.
3. All active files and archived files shall be saved with the updated date.
4. The PHEP Subcommittee chair can determine what archived files can be deleted.
5. No Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form can be deleted. Duplications may be deleted.

Procedure for Evaluating Certifiable Skills:

1. The evaluation of certifiable skills shall be triggered by either actions:
 - a. Determination by the Chief Engineer of the USPHS
 - b. USPHS CC Engineer officer's request for addition of a certifiable skill
2. The PHEP subcommittee chair, or designee(s) shall evaluate each Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form as described in the instructions on the Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form.
3. The request shall be evaluated based on the caliber of the certifiable skill referenced in the PHEP Certifiable Skill Sheet

Procedure for Updating the Certifiable Skills List:

1. Any changes to the Certifiable Skills worksheet in the PHEP Certifiable Skills List workbook shall be documented in the Certifiable Skills worksheet and in a separate worksheet labeled as the year in four-digit format followed by Certifiable Skills Update.
2. The new worksheet shall have all the information in the Certifiable Skills columns including the date of the approval.

3. Each separate worksheet with the year as a label shall be based on the calendar year that the Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form was approved or removed.
4. All values required in each column shall be filled out. In the event a value is not applicable, the cell shall have “N/A”.
5. The information to be completed in each column is summarized in the table below.

Attribute	Description
Date of Last Change	The most recent date shall be entered.
Administrative/ Technical Skill	This should be identified as accurate as possible.
Type of Engineer	<p>The designation is meant for meant to provide officers a better search tool to find applicable certifiable skills. The categories shall include civil, mechanical, electrical, chemical, computer, nuclear, biomedical or bioengineering, materials science, or other specialties such as environmental or facility.</p> <p>The multiple designation shall be used when two or more engineer categories are pertinent.</p>
Tier Level of Certification	<p>Each certifiable skill shall be designed as a Benchmark or Non-benchmark.</p> <p>Benchmark certifiable skills are ones that meet the Engineer Category Promotion Benchmarks under the Education, Training & Professional Development benchmark.</p> <p>Non-benchmark certifiable skills are ones that do not meet the Engineer Category Promotion Benchmarks under the Education, Training & Professional Development benchmark. These skills are considered value added to the USPHS, OPDIV(s), and/or officer’s growth. An example of this skill would be a Certified Design Drafter.</p>
Certifying Company/Agency	The certifying company or agency shall be listed. In the event that a certifiable skill is certified by multiple bodies, each body shall have a separate line designated for that company or agency.

Attribute	Description
Certifying Company/Agency Acronym	The acronym for the company or agency.
Certifiable Skill	This is the certifiable skill that is obtained by the officer. If an acronym exists, then the acronym shall be listed in this column. The full name shall be listed in the note(s) column.
Subcategory	This is the certifiable skill subcategory, if any, that is obtained by the officer. If an acronym exists, the acronym shall be listed in this column. The full name shall be listed in the note(s) column.
Engineer Focus	This is the focus impact to the officer, USPHS, and OPDIV.
Link(s)	Any pertinent links, including the link that the training can be found.
Note(s)	This column allows for clarification of entries, which can include the name of the certification, additional certifying bodies, and/or reasons for approval or removal.

Procedure for Skill Association

1. USPHS CC Engineer acquires a certification and submits it to PHEP Deployer and OPDIV Skills Workgroup
2. PHEP Deployer and OPDIV Skills workgroup vets USPHS Engineer skill based on the following criteria:
 - a. Currently listed on PHEP Certifiable Skills page
 - b. Certification date is not expired
 - c. Approved skills shall benefit USPHS and/or a OPDIV.
3. If skill is not on PHEP Certifiable Skills page, then the following information needs to be provided to recognize the skill:
 - a. Training Title

- b. Certification Authority
 - c. How does the training meet the public health mission?
 - d. Continuous learning requirements
 - e. Certification renewal period
 - f. Links or references for certification
4. Deployer and OPDIV Skills workgroup will review certifiable skill to determine whether it should be recognized within the EPAC as an advantageous baseline skill for USPHS Engineers to acquire.

Section 4 Special Topics Projects Workgroup & Surgeon General or National Priority Topics Workgroup Procedures

Purpose

The following describes how a project group can be created for the Special Topic Project and SG or National Priority workgroups within PHEP.

Procedure

1. Project groups are focused on completing established objectives and are usually dissolved upon successful completion of the project.
2. Project groups need to consider the following topics should consider alignment with the following:
 - a. Surgeon General Priorities - <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/index.html>
 - b. CPO Priorities
 - c. Identified issues USPHS Engineers face in their OPDIVS and deployments
3. The SG and CPO has the authority to create a project group without any review from the PHEP and EPAC chairs.
4. For proposed topics to be considered for the following PHEP operational year, the topic needs to be submitted to the PHEP Chair and Vice Chair by October 31 of the current EPAC operational year. Topic ideas need to include the following information:
 - a. Project Group Title
 - b. Purpose – state the reason the project group is to be created
 - c. Objectives – state what the project is attempting to achieve and its end state

- d. Milestones – provide a timeline for completion of project’s key aspects
5. PHEP Chair and Vice Chair draft upcoming PHEP work plan and submit to EPAC Chair by 2nd week of January of the following operational year.
6. EPAC Chair meets with PHEP Chair and Vice Chair to review work plan by no later than 1st week in February of the following operational year.
7. PHEP Chair and Vice Chair make any necessary revisions to work plan.
8. EPAC Chair approves work plan.
9. PHEP Chair works with EPAC Information Technology Subcommittee to add project description onto the PHEP website.

Figure 2- Process map for approving project groups in PHEP on page 15 illustrates the process for creating an approved project group within PHEP:

Section 5 Publication Review Workgroup Procedures

Purpose

The following describes the procedures for how a publication is reviewed within the PHEP Publication Review work group.

Procedure

- a. USPHS Engineer emails PHEP Chair and Vice Chair draft peer or non-peer reviewed article for comment
- b. PHEP Chair and/or Vice Chair assigns article to PHEP Subcommittee member for review. The PHEP Subcommittee member has no more than 14 calendar days from assignment to submit comments to author.
- c. PHEP Chair and/or Vice Chair tracks total number of peer- and non-peer reviewed articles throughout the EPAC Operational Year.

ARTICLE IV APPENDICES

Section 1 PHEP Certifiable Skills List

Coming Soon

Section 2 Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form

TO BE FILLED OUT BY THE REQUESTOR	
Requestor Name:	
1. Do you want to approve <input type="checkbox"/> or remove <input type="checkbox"/> or modify <input type="checkbox"/> a certifiable skill?	
2. Is the skill an administrative <input type="checkbox"/> or a technical <input type="checkbox"/> certifiable skill?	
3. Certifiable Skill and any subgroup:	4. Certifying Company/Agency
5. Certifying Company/Agency Acronym	6. What type of Engineer would benefit? (can put multiple)
7. What type of Engineer focus is this skill?	8. Which OPDIV(s) would benefit?
9. Provide a brief description for your request and pertinent link(s):	

Requestor Signature

Date

TO BE FILLED OUT BY PHEP SUBCOMMITTEE	
This request is approved <input type="checkbox"/> or denied <input type="checkbox"/>	This skill is a Benchmark <input type="checkbox"/> or Non-Benchmark <input type="checkbox"/> skill
Reason for decision:	

Figure 1- Certifiable Skills Request Form

Section 3 Standard Certifiable Skills Request Form Instructions

Question 1: Do you want to approve or remove a certifiable skill?

The requestor should check one box.

Note: If you wish to only modify a certifiable skill, you only need to complete the sections that are pertinent to the requested changes.

Question 2: Is the skill an administrative or technical certifiable skill?

The requestor should check one box.

Question 3: Certifiable Skill and any subgroup

This is the certifiable skill that is obtained by the officer. If an acronym exists, the acronym shall be listed in this question in addition to the full name.

This is the certifiable skill and any subgroup, if any, that is obtained by the officer. If an acronym exists, the acronym shall be listed.

If multiple subgroups exist, this form should be filled out for only one subgroup.

Question 4: Certifying Company/Agency

The certifying company and/or agency shall be listed. In the event that a certifiable skill is certified by multiple bodies, each body that is known shall be listed.

Question 5: Certifying Company/Agency Acronym

The acronym for the company or agency, if any.

Question 6: What type of Engineer would benefit? (can put multiple)

The categories can include civil, mechanical, electrical, chemical, computer, nuclear, biomedical or bioengineering, materials science, or other specialties such as environmental or facility.

If multiple categories can benefit from this skill, the question should have “multiple” designation.

Question 7: What type of Engineer focus is this skill?

This is not the typical degree name but rather a focus of work that is done through an OPDIV.

An example is a project manager. This role is for specific set of skills required by many OPDIV.

Question 8: Which OPDIV(s) would benefit?

List any OPDIV(s) that could benefit from the officer having this skill.

Question 9: Provide a brief description for your request and pertinent link(s):

Provide as much information that is required to review the skill for applicability of this form and certifiable skills and a link to the training and any other pertinent links for assistance with review.

Section 4 *Process for approving a project group within PHEP*

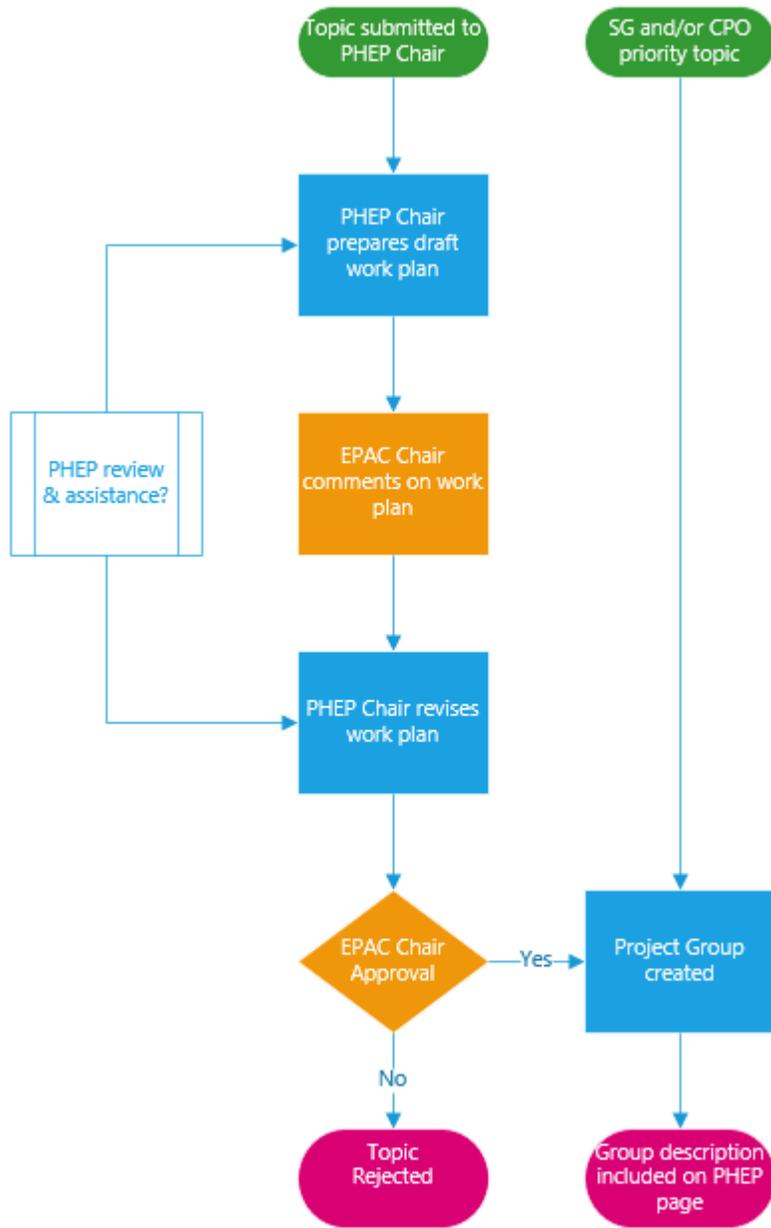


Figure 2- Process map for approving project groups in PHEP