

USPS Commissioned Corps Transformation Project Statement of Work

The Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Public Health and Science has a need for the following work to be performed related to the administration and management of the United States Public Health Service's (PHS) Commissioned Corps:

A. Recruitment of Officers

The following task assignments are designed, when completed, to provide a new approach for recruiting officers both generically to the Corps and specifically to individual positions:

1. In relation to strengthening public awareness of the Corps (using as a resource document the January 4, 2002, Commissioned Corps Communication Plan) and internal awareness of the utility of the Corps -

a) Develop a strategy for increasing the awareness of all potential users and the public about the PHS Commissioned Corps which will include an analysis of the target audiences and messages that would be necessary to develop an effective information program;

b) Research and recommend the most effective media outlets for messages specifically designed to inform the public about the Corps;

c) Develop the themes, slogans and messages that can be used in informing target audiences about the Corps, its activities and its career opportunities for the media outlets identified above and approved by the project officer;

d) Using these themes, slogans and messages, develop prototype posters and displays, brochures and pamphlets, print and radio advertisements, CD-ROMs and videos for approval by the Project Officer that can be used for informing the public about the role, capabilities and activities of the Corps.

2. In relation to the recruitment of officers to the Corps' active duty force, its reserve components, and its COSTEP and other programs -

a) Develop a system for converting short and long term requirement projections for officers into specific recruitment goals, strategies, and needs, by professional category on an annual basis and for identifying the most effective means for meeting specific recruitment objectives;

b) Develop a recruitment program aimed at health professional school applicants and students, clinical trainees and residents, and other graduates and post-graduates in health care fields. The program must be designed to meet annual and projected recruitment needs, special recruitment requirements (for example, to meet specially identified health care requirements of the Indian Health Service or other under-served populations), and urgent staffing and deployment needs. It should include the use of informational material, advertisements, recruitment personnel

(including speakers at target audience meetings), professional association and organization promoters, and health professional school advisors.

c) Develop prototype recruitment materials, including posters and displays, brochures/pamphlets and individual information packets, print and radio advertisements, CD-ROMs and videos, for approval by the Project Officer that are ready for mass production; and

d) Recommend a system for evaluating the effectiveness of the various recruitment tools that may be used by the Corps to meet its routine, special and urgent needs.

3. In relation to the development of a web-site as an effective tool for the recruitment of personnel for the Corps -

a) Evaluate the existing design of the PHS Commissioned Corps web site;

b) Design a web site to portray an attractive image of the Corps to enhance the public's understanding of the mission and value of the Corps;

c) Develop a web-site design and content that i) would provide full information to health professional students about careers in the Corps; ii) describe specific job opportunities and billet vacancies for entry level, junior and senior officers; iii) provide on-line access to application processes for a student, a graduate or a practicing health professional to apply to become a COSTEP, commissioned or warrant officer; including to confirm academic, experience and physical qualifications and to apply for a specific billet; and iv) provide on-line access to information about, and application for, various financial support sources that might be available to those health professional students willing to undertake a service commitment; and

d) Develop a system to collect and utilize information gathered from the on-line application process for the development of statistical reports, the assessment of the effectiveness of public awareness and recruitment strategies, and the evaluation of the information and the presentation of the web site.

B. Force Management

To assist the Corps in developing or strengthening the systems for managing the force, the Contractor shall perform the following work:

1. Review and recommend revisions to the current billet system. The revised system must include the following:

a) A set of standards for preparing, categorizing, and grading billets, including a means for describing and assessing the nature of the duties assigned and the level of responsibilities that they reflect. These standards must characterize, at a minimum i) the nature of clinical and non-clinical functions, ii) the level of functional independence of the incumbent, iii) the educational

preparation required of the officer, iv) the degree of hardship, v) the nature of the location (the extent to which a clinical shortage exists), and vi) the impact of the position in order to determine the extent to which filling the billet is critical to meeting the transformation goals for the Corps and the need to have a mobile force capable of addressing critical primary care needs;

b) A detailed, subject-specific and time-specific plan for training both HHS and non-HHS agencies who employ members of the Corps in the development of new billets and the revision of existing billets according to the revised system;

c) A system for the centralized review and approval of proposed billets for characterization and grading; and

d) A plan for the periodic review of billets of each agency that employs Corps officers to assess the level of consistency of duties with the billet and with billet standards.

2. Develop a centralized force management planning and execution system which includes the following components:

a) A means for projecting the short and long term needs of the Corps for officers, by category, agency, location and level of criticality for meeting urgent needs of the Department and the Corps, emphasizing particularly the Indian Health Service and the need for providers to address shortage area requirements;

b) A system for publicizing billets for which new and current officers are being sought. The web-based system must reflect Corps hiring preferences for filling clinical vacancies to meet critical needs and be accessible by all applicants. It should include, at a minimum, all Department vacancies for clinical positions, indicating a preference for filling by the Corps;

c) A system for characterizing applicants' and officers' skills and matching them to potential billets, so that the full range of opportunities are known by Corps personnel seeking new duty stations and the Corps has a means for assigning officers to critical vacancies;

d) A new, streamlined application process to replace the current systems for the accession of new officers and for effecting permanent changes of station; and

e) A system for providing directed assignments, if necessary, to meet critical needs and to permit officers to move to a new assignment at least three to five times during a career, particularly if assigned to a hardship post.

3. Design a comprehensive training program for agency hiring officials and human resource personnel that are engaged in employing Corps officers that will -

- Inform them about developments in the Corps' billet standards, assessment and employment systems; and
- Assist them in providing technical assistance to their agency clients in translating

civilian job descriptions into Corps billet requirements.

C. Training

To assist the Corps in meeting its training requirements, the contractor will perform the following tasks:

1. In relation to the Basic Officer Training Course (BOTC)

a) After consulting with the leaders of the current program and the Director of the Commissioned Corps Readiness Force (CCRF), research and recommend methods to expand the current BOTC into a one-week to a two-week training program that will include a) an orientation of the officer to the Public Health Service and the Department of Health and Human Services; b) information about requirements related to being an officer, e.g. uniforms and military courtesy, c) Commissioned Corps personnel policies, including career mobility and effectiveness reporting requirements, d) physical fitness requirements, e) a one-week module on the CCRF and emergency deployments, and f) information about clinical assignment opportunities in areas of high need.

b) Analyze the resource requirements (staffing, space, equipment) required to operate an expanded BOTC; and

c) Propose an implementation plan for offering the course both in the Washington metropolitan area and at other U.S. locations where there are a concentration of officers.

2. Develop an advanced distributive learning (ADL) framework that pursues emerging practices and technology and facilitates the development of common standards that will enable PHS officers to have access to high-quality, relevant education and training materials that can be tailored to individual learner needs and made available whenever and wherever they are required.

3. Develop, in consultation with the leaders of the Commissioned Corps, the essential elements of a professional development system for Corps officers that will identify and characterize career benchmarks, by category, required for progressing from entry level ranks to the highest career ranks of the Service.