

## RPES Advisory Committee Conference Call

FY 16 – Q4, August 30, 2016

Meeting Minutes

### Membership:

- Chair – Brian Wienhold, PA
- Christi Swaggerty, PA
- Ann Callahan, NEA (absent)
- Jim Harnly, NEA
- Jungmin Lee, PWA
- Peter Follett, PWA
- Cynthia Henson, MWA (absent)
- Claire Baffaut, MWA
- Kyoung Ro, SEA
- Arthur Hinton, Jr., SEA
- Amy Hegarty, RPES
- Dana Lamberti, RPES (absent)

### Agenda:

- Call to order and welcome Brian
- Status report of old business Amy
- New business Brian/Amy
- Next meeting and adjournment Brian

### Old Business:

#### Status of RPES Team Activities:

- FY 17 schedule has been finalized; panelists are getting notified
- Each Area co-hosted a case writeup session with those who have cases due in FY 17
  - Being posted on each Area AXON site and RPES site
  - Feedback is being consolidated
- Planning goals and objectives for FY 17
- Status of Action Items from June meeting
  - Many have been completed
  - A few are still pending
  - The Supergrade spotlight idea was well received by the Supergrade community although there was one or two requests to change the name to something like, “Want to Meet a Distinguished ARS Scientist?” ACTION ITEM: Amy will develop a template for the participants so we can glean a common theme of information from them.

**Year of the RL (Brian and Amy):** Status update on most recent summit, Role of the RL: This Summit was held in July in Ames, Iowa with about 30 RLs in attendance with a few members from AFM. Attendees developed action proposals that were then presented to RLs who could attend the webinar held August 17. Proposals were outlined and cohort groups were given an opportunity to comment on the proposals. In addition, a comment period for all RLs was provided. Proposals were edited and submitted for ACs consideration during the week of September 7. As of now, there are no implications for RPE System – except for the proposal to allow RLs to move to Cat 4 and the proposal to establish a new category code for RLs. But those only impact numbers of people in the RPE System, not the function or process of the system. There will be another summit in November to discuss business processes and after that, the RLAC will take over these initiatives.

**Next Supergrade Panel** will be held December 14 – five cases being reviewed.

- Two remain in queue from November 2015 panel waiting on an ST slot to open.

**GS-15 Subcommittee (Ann was absent so other subcommittee members briefed us):** Status update on any actions taken since June meeting. The group went through the comments received from the last survey and synthesized them. There is no compelling reason to issue another survey; a lot of concerns that were raised are trying to be addressed. The RPES Advisory Committee has multiple initiatives to inform, engage, and reach stakeholders. There is no further pending action on this committee at this time although there is still some work to do.

**Revisit the topic of Database contributions:** Doug Karlen emailed Brian and expressed a need for more clarity or guidance so they could better manage panel discussions for these type of accomplishments. Sentiment in the field is that the current policy does not adequately cover the concerns that were raised. A few Panel Chairs on their committee would like more clarity to consider database contributions and how to document the impact. Do we add an example to the Manual? Doug already sent in a recommendation on draft language. **ACTION ITEM:** Amy will send this draft email out to the Committee. We are to consider how to wrap this request into the Manual or through ChairNet bulletin or through the website's Frequently Asked Questions, and/or during the new quarterly panelist meeting.

## **New Business:**

**Feedback from SEA Case Writeup Session:** concerns raised by another RL (attached); is it time to solicit some kind of review of RPES from a larger group (e.g., Year of RPES)? If not, which ones can we tackle?

- We recognize that there is usually a bell curve of “acceptability” by users and there will always be outlying opinions and perspectives. However, are some of those outlying opinions symptoms of a larger problem?
- A few on our committee support the idea of considering an outside group to evaluate the system, to see if there are biases in the system (well, subjectivity is dependent on the humans on every panel so bias can exist).
- The RPE System doesn't have to be “broke” to look at it.
- Variations do exist from field to field
- A few specifics were tossed around that we might be able to tackle ourselves:

- Might more IDR training or accountability take care of many of these concerns?
- The minimum of 5 contacts seems too few; it can be difficult for the IDR to distinguish sufficient information with really only four contacts (since one is the supervisor)
- Number of citations do not always equate to impact
- Some of the concerns raised are based on misconception, or possibly a single, unique situation that has been assumed to be applicable to all. None of the committee members ever served on a panel where some of the concerns were raised.
- How to tackle the misconceptions that are out there?
- **ACTION ITEM:** Amy will reach out to a few people to start to investigate the IDEA of hiring a contractor, and if we pursue, how this might be paid for.

**Turnover on this Committee:** Northeast Area replacement – Supergrade nominee. **ACTION ITEM:** Amy will prepare the nomination for the Area Director’s concurrence, then to Dr. Liu for final approval.

**Next Meeting:**

FY 17 Q1 – December 5, 2016 at 4:00 pm ET