

Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

3 November 2005, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., White House Conference Center, Eisenhower Room

Italics indicate absent members. "T" indicates members participating via teleconference.

Officers

Helen Wood (NOAA), Chair
David Applegate (USGS), Vice-Chair

NSTC Liaison

Gene Whitney (OSTP)

Working Group Chairs

International Working Group

Dennis Wenger (NSF), Co-Chair

Grand Challenges Task Group

Noel Raufaste (NIST)

Earth Observations Working Group

Steve Ambrose (NASA), Co-Chair
Peter Rinkleff (NGA), Co-Chair
Jay Feuquay (USGS), Co-Chair

WindHRP Task Group

John Gaynor (NOAA), Chair

Drought Task Group

Pai-Yei Whung (USDA), Co-Chair
Jay Lawrimore (NOAA), Co-Chair

Designated Representatives

CDC Dan Sosin
DHS Bruce Davis
DHS/FEMA Mike Buckley
John Gambel (T)
DOD Earnest Paylor
DOE Alex de Alvarez
DOI Larry Braun
DOT K. T. Thirumalai
EOP / OSTP Gene Whitney
EPA Peter Jutro
Ed Washburn

HUD John Kennedy
NASA Steve Ambrose
NGA Monica Gaughan
Peter Rinkleff
NGB Peter M. Aylward
Stephen Davis
NIST Jim St. Pierre
Noel Raufaste
NOAA Helen Wood
Margaret Davidson (T)
NSF Dennis Wenger

OPHS John Babb
Boris Lushniak
State Fernando Echavarria
Larry Roeder, Jr.
USACE Michael O'Connor
USAID Peter Morris
USDA Allen Dedrick
USDA / USFS Susan Conard
USGS David Applegate

Other Attendees

DHS Chris Doyle
DHS/FEMA Fred Sharrocks
NASA Craig Dobson
NSF Jacqueline Meszaros
Bob O'Connor

NOAA John Gaynor
Beck Chako
Doug Harper
Mararet McCalla
Kay Weston

NGB Robert Barber-Delach
Secretariat Dori Akerman
Will Hottel (T)
Emily Wallace

Agenda

10:00 Welcome and Introductions
10:05 Approval of October Meeting Minutes
10:10 Report from the Chair
10:18 Report from the NSTC Liaison
10:25 Briefing and Discussion - CDC
11:00 Discussion of the Proposed Waiver of
the 24-Hour-Delay
11:35 Working Group Reports
11:55 Close and Next Actions

Handouts

- Agenda
- October Meeting Minutes
- CENR Membership List
- SDR Charter/Annual Operating Plan
- National Journal Article "Gaps remain in government strategy for natural disasters"
- EOWG 20 October Meeting Minutes
- SDR EOWG Terms of Reference

I. Call to Order

SDR Chair Helen Wood called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

II. Approval of Minutes and Review of Actions

Members approved the September meeting minutes.

III. Summary of Discussion

A. Report from the Chair

Ms. Helen Wood began by announcing that SDR re-vetting letters were faxed to the heads of Department and Agencies Wednesday afternoon. SDR members received a copy of their agency's letter at the meeting and may request copies by contacting the Secretariat (dori@grs-solutions.com). A list of current CENR members was included in the meeting packets; they will also be receiving copies of the re-vetting letter. Ms. Wood emphasized that the re-vetting process is important for raising awareness of the SDR and our activities within agencies and throughout the Federal Government.

The SDR Annual Operating Plan was discussed at Friday's Grand Challenges Offsite and is included in the meeting packets. A version will be circulated electronically after the meeting. Members are invited to comment on the Annual Operating Plan and should send their comments to the Secretariat (dori@grs-solutions.com) by 5:00 p.m. EST on Friday, November 11th. The Plan will be discussed and approved at the December SDR meeting and circulated to CENR for approval in January.

A recent National Journal article entitled "Gaps Remain in Government Strategy for Handling Natural Disasters" (online at http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=32687&dcn=todaysnews) was distributed to the members and discussed. The article quotes former SDR member and Co-Chair of the Grand Challenges Task Group, Dr. Priscilla Nelson, as well as Dennis Mileti. Dr. Gene Whitney was interviewed for the article, though not quoted. The article stresses the low level of preparation for major disasters among federal agencies, and mentions the SDR and the Grand Challenges as one of the very few exceptions.

B. Report from the NSTC Liaison

Dr. Gene Whitney discussed the SDR Grand Challenges Offsite and preparation of the four-page follow-on documents. He reminded members that this is not simply an "exercise" for the SDR. The goal is to take these documents forward and use them to inform the agency budget processes.

Dr. Whitney also announced that he, Helen Wood and John Gaynor would be meeting with members of the National Science Board to discuss Hurricane Science and Engineering. The NSB is interested in doing a report on Hurricane S&E and contacted the SDR because many of the issues may have already been addressed in the formulation of the Windstorm Impact Reduction Implementation Plan. This represents a strengthening of the working relationship between OSTP and NSB.

C. Briefing and Discussion – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dr. Dan Sosin of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) presented CDC's functions related to terrorism and emergency preparedness. In many cases the emergency plans for acts of terrorism and disasters are one in the same, with resources for one function easily applied to another.

When discussing CDC's work with state and local authorities Dr. Sosin stressed that CDC is a support agency, not a regulatory body, and does not put its resources to work unless invited by state and local governments. He also said that CDC enjoys good relationships and a state or local

government has never denied their assistance. When CDC recognizes a significant threat that may spread across several states, CDC will seek involvement.

Dr. Sosin also described a variety of other CDC functions and capabilities including the importance of mobile collections units, support of public health education, and efforts to develop networks of autonomous bio-hazard sensor networks. A potential outbreak of Avian Flu is a major concern of the agency, with planning underway for several outbreak scenarios.

Dr. Sosin's slides will be posted to the SDR website following the meeting.

D. Discussion of the Proposed Waiver of the 24-Hour-Delay

Ms. Wood introduced Kevin O'Connell, Chairman of NOAA's Advisory Committee for Commercial Remote Sensing (ACCRES), which advises NOAA about the regulation of commercial satellite industry. Mr. O'Connell explained that due to potential national security concerns, currently there is a 24-hour waiting period before U.S. commercial satellite imagery with sub-1 meter resolution is made available to non-federal users. ACCRES is recommending to NOAA that this waiting period be waived because:

1. The waiting period places a severe restriction on the U.S. satellite industry to make imagery available to users.
2. No such limits exist on foreign commercial systems capable of providing equivalent information.
3. In the event of a major disaster there is a critical need to make imagery available as quickly as possible for analysis and response.

In order to support the third argument, ACCRES has sought the expertise and experience of the SDR. The Subcommittee can leverage its experience with the U.S. Group on Earth Observations, the international Global Earth Observation System of Systems and the International Charter: Space and Major Disasters to provide definitions for what constitutes a disaster event, and when and where high resolution imagery will be needed.

Ms. Wood stressed that it is important that FEMA and DHS remain connected to this effort so any definitions developed by SDR do not need to be re-drafted to meet their requirements.

This topic will be discussed again in greater detail at the Earth Observations Working Group meeting on Monday, November 7 at 3:00 p.m. in the Eisenhower Room of the White House Conference Center.

IV. Working Group Reports

Grand Challenges Task Group. Noel Raufaste discussed the results of the Grand Challenges Offsite on October 28th. The group had productive discussions about the developing four-page documents. The formatted documents were sent back to the Hazard Team Leaders on Tuesday, November 1st along with a reminder about the due date.

LTC. Stephen Davis announced that the group responsible for the Technological Disaster/Industrial Accident four-page document will meet on Wednesday, November 9th at 9:00 a.m. at the National Guard Bureau. More detailed meeting information will be circulated.

WindHRP Working Group. The Windstorm Impact Reduction Implementation Plan will complete the clearance process this month. The document must be cleared by the participating agencies, and

then by OSTP before being presented to Congress. This document is seen as an OSTP deliverable with SDR support, and thus does not have to be published or cleared by CENR.

Dennis Wenger announced that NSF awarded 73 research grants following Hurricane Katrina. Those awards have been announced and members should be aware that some of the research is already being presented. For instance, there was a hearing about the New Orleans levees yesterday on Capitol Hill featuring the research of an NSF grantee. There may be a grantee workshop this spring wherein all of the research findings will be made public as a part of the proceedings.

Earth Observations Working Group. Mr. Steven Ambrose discussed the October 20th meeting of the Working Group and reiterated the call for participation in Monday's EOWG meeting. Additionally, he said that the DRAFT Terms of Reference are ready to be presented to the SDR and Ms. Wood said she looks forward to their approval during the December meeting.

International Working Group. Dennis Wenger is leaving NSF at the end of the month and will not be able to participate in IWG any longer. Melba Crawford may replace Larry Roeder as the representative for the State Department and, if she does, will take charge of the working group.

Ms. Wood mentioned that the SDR is currently in discussion with the State Department on how to realign the U.S. National Platform for Disasters. Under the mechanism being discussed the SDR would serve as the central contact point for the ISDR and engage with the National Academy of Sciences Disasters Roundtable when input from all stakeholders is needed.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m. EDT.

VI. Future Meetings

The SDR meets on the first or second Thursday of every month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET in the Eisenhower Room of the White House Conference Center:

December 1, 2005	May 4, 2006	October 5, 2006
January 12, 2006	June 8, 2006	November 2, 2006
February 2, 2006	July 13, 2006	December 7, 2006
March 2, 2006	August 3, 2006	
April 6, 2006	September 14, 2006	

VII. Agenda Items and Other Communications with the Subcommittee

Please send proposed agenda items and any other items intended for distribution to the full Subcommittee to Dori Akerman (dori@grs-solutions.com).

VIII. Contact Information SDR Leadership

Helen Wood, Chair, 301-713-1140, helen.wood@noaa.gov
David Applegate, Vice-Chair, 703-648-6715, applegate@usgs.gov
Gene Whitney, NSTC Liaison, 202-456-6081, gwhitney@ostp.eop.gov

International Working Group

Fernando Echavarria, Co-Chair, 202-663-2395, echavarriafr@state.gov

Earth Observations Working Group

Steve Ambrose, Co-Chair, 202-358-1513, sambrose@nasa.gov

Jay Feuquay, Co-Chair, 703-648-5057, feuquay@usgs.gov
Margaret Davidson, Chair, 843-740-1220, Margaret.davidson@noaa.gov

Grand Challenges Task Group

Noel Raufaste, Chair, 301-975-6062, noel.raufaste@nist.gov

WindHRP Task Group

John Gaynor, Chair, 301-713-0460 x117, john.gaynor@noaa.gov

Secretariat

Dori Akerman, 703-560-7448, dori@grs-solutions.com

IX. Summary of Actions

NOVEMBER MEETING ACTIONS

Action	Lead	By When
LTC. Davis will distribute information on the 9 November meeting of group preparing the Technological Disaster/Industrial Accident four-page document	LTC. Davis/Secretariat	Complete
The Secretariat will distribute the draft version of the SDR Annual Operating plan via email.	Secretariat	Complete
Members will review and send comments on the SDR Annual Operating to the Secretariat (dori@grs-solutions.com)	Members	11 November