

# Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

10 January 2013, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., White House Conference Center Lincoln Room

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

## Co-chairs

David Applegate (USGS)  
Margaret Davidson (NOAA)  
Dennis Wenger (NSF)

## OSTP Liaison

Tamara Dickinson (OSTP)

## Designated Representatives

**BLM** *Edwin Roberson*

**CDC** *Mark Keim*

**DHS** Bruce Davis (T)

**DHS/FEMA** *TBD*

**DHS/USCG** *Austin Gould*

**DOD** *Al Johnson*

**DOE** *Patricia Hoffman*

**DOT** Sheila Duwadi

**EOP/OMB** Grace Hu

**EOP/OSTP** Tamara Dickinson

**EPA** *Peter Jutro*

*Stephen Clark*

**FERC** Pamela Romano (T)

**HUD** *Dana Bres*

**NASA** Craig Dobson

**NGA** *Paul Lewis*

**NGB** *TBD*

**NIH** *Allen Dearry*

**NIST** Marc Levitan (T)

**NOAA** Margaret Davidson (T)

*Christopher Strager*

**NPS** Marcy Rockman

**NSF** Dennis Wenger

**OPHS** Estella Jones (T)

**State** *Fernando Echavarria*

**USACE** *Steven Cary*

*Dimitra Syriopoulou*

**USAID** *Sezin Tokar*

**USDA** *TBD*

**USFS** *Elizabeth Reinhardt*

*Carlos Rodriguez-Franco*

**USGS** David Applegate

**USNRC** *Jennifer Uhle*

## Other Attendees

**BLM** Nancy Dean

Ronald McCormick

**EOP/CEQ** Kevin Bush

Anne Marie Pippin

**EOP/OSTP** Allan Manuel

**EPA** Paul Kudarauskas

**NASA** Michael Goodman

Francis Lindsay

**NSF** Morris Cohen

**State** Rajan Sen

**USCG** Tung Ly (T)

**USGS** Kristin Ludwig

**USNRC** Ken Armstrong (T)

**Secretariat** Bret Schothorst

Barbara Haines-Parmele

## Agenda

10:00 Welcome and Introductions

10:05 Report from the Co-chairs and Approval of Minutes

10:10 Report from the OSTP Liaison

10:20 Working Session on SDR Policy Priorities for the Next  
Administration

11:55 Close and Next Actions

## Handouts

- January Meeting Agenda
- Draft December Meeting Minutes
- SDR Policy Discussion Slides
- SDR Charter

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction (SDR) Co-chair David Applegate (USGS) called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m., and participants introduced themselves.

## **II. Report from the Co-chairs and Approval of Minutes**

The December meeting minutes were approved with one minor change proposed by Sheila Duwadi (DOT/FHWA), who stated that DOT Deputy Secretary John Porcari submitted only written testimony to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation regarding the damage that was done to the transportation system during Hurricane Sandy – he did not actually testify at the hearing.

Co-chair Dennis Wenger (NSF) reminded members that the SDR's International Working Group (IWG) will continue to meet in 2013 on the first Thursday of every month from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the WHCC's Lincoln Room. At the working group's January meeting, the IWG will: 1) discuss issues and challenges associated with U.S./Russia bilateral disaster risk reduction activities; and 2) continue discussing options for restructuring the U.S. National Platform for the United Nations (UN) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

## **III. Report from the OSTP Liaison**

Tammy Dickinson (OSTP) briefly mentioned that brainstorming activities of the ad hoc SDR working group focused on S&T lessons learned during Hurricane Sandy are now underway, and she encouraged all Subcommittee members to participate in the effort, if possible. The working group agencies are currently developing information to flesh out the below draft outline for a document based on five broad categories and associated bullet items that were discussed at the meeting:

- 1) Geospatial data availability and interoperability (*key agencies FEMA, USGS, NASA, DHS S&T, and NOAA*):
  - Utilize geospatial data for staging logistics and supplies and issuing advanced evacuation warnings;
  - Assess the effectiveness of available geospatial data with first responders on the ground;
  - Make geospatial data available and interoperable in a public cloud platform for dynamic sharing;
  - Allow geospatial data to be a public-facing information source to empower survivors; and
  - Create a more proactive vs. reactive environment for processing geospatial data.
- 2) Public risk communication and warning information processing (*key agencies NOAA, USGS, FEMA, USACE, and EOP/NSS*):
  - Improve understanding of specific language, such as watches, advisories, and warnings;
  - Study the psychological and societal factors that affect information processing;
  - Assess effectiveness of mobile alerting systems and related technologies; and
  - Examine the impacts of cultural factors and social networks on evacuation practices.
- 3) Information needs for understanding and forecasting risk and vulnerability (*key agencies NOAA, NIST, USGS, EPA, and FEMA*):
  - Analyze operational effectiveness of risk and vulnerability forecasts to enhance future planning in light of changing climate;
  - Determine how to accurately forecast risk and vulnerability from coastal storm surge and inland flooding; and
  - Project storm surge data modeling and explore impact results to recovery and rebuild stronger and smarter.

- 4) Effective crowdsourcing and information verification (*key agencies FEMA, NOAA, USGS, NSF, and EOP/NSS*):
  - Align Federal resources with resources of the private sector online to effectively coordinate information needs; and
  - Update information policies to coincide with current practice and recent S&T advancements.
- 5) Resilience of natural and human systems (*key agencies NIST, USACE, USGS, NOAA, EPA, EOP/NSS, and NPS*):
  - Assess durability of the built environment, including buildings, structures, and transportation systems;
  - Determine how to improve the resiliency of the electric power grid as well as other energy sectors; and
  - Evaluate performance of additional environmental, social, and cultural systems.

Participating agencies (highlighted in parentheses above) self-identified as key information contributors in each of the five categories. Over the next several weeks, SDR leaders are requesting that each agency listed under a category review the bullets and begin fleshing out a short paragraph or two for each as appropriate, focusing primarily on: 1) S&T lessons learned; and 2) future research opportunities. The goal is that one (or more) of the agencies listed are able to volunteer to serve as the lead for that category to help coordinate the information after it is submitted. If you have any questions or would like to participate in the effort, please don't hesitate to contact the SDR Secretariat (Bret.Schothorst@mantech.com) or our OSTP Liaison Tammy Dickinson (Tamara\_L\_Dickinson@ostp.eop.gov). Based on the information agencies are able to provide, the SDR hopes to circulate a draft document in advance of the February 7 SDR meeting.

#### **IV. Discussion of SDR Policy Priorities for the Next Administration**

Building on the topic of the post-Sandy impacts, response activities, and interagency S&T coordination opportunities, the SDR focused its January meeting on discussions to identify overarching disaster risk reduction policy priorities as well as specific Subcommittee goals, objectives, and outcomes that can feed into the OSTP roadmap for the new term. Applegate set the stage for the conversation by looking back at several of the topics covered at 2012 meetings that established collaborative opportunities between the SDR and other organizations, which segued nicely into priorities for the Subcommittee in 2013.

Those topics covered in 2012 included, among others: emergent use of social media and crowdsourcing for disaster management; nexus of Earth observations data and disaster risk reduction and measuring its societal benefits; linkage between climate change adaptation and reducing disaster risks; public alerting protocol issues for communicating warnings; grand challenge incentive prizes and soliciting private sector resources for disaster mitigation R&D; campaign to build and sustain national preparedness; integration of science during environmental crises for decision-making; increasing national resilience to hazards; and cross-cut assessment of Federal interagency S&T planning.

Discussions then centered on six items that will be the most pressing for the SDR to address (or continue addressing, for those items that are already in progress) as the Subcommittee moves forward this year:

- Coordinate with the National Research Council regarding the recommendations contained in their national resilience study ([http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=13457](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13457)), specifically related to the development of a national interagency database of disaster-related loss information and the creation of a national resilience scorecard in conjunction with DHS and their existing built environment assessment tools (<http://www.dhs.gov/building-and-infrastructure-protection-series-tools-0>);
- Collaborate with other NSTC bodies such as the Infrastructure Subcommittee and with the National Security Staff within the Executive Office of the President on promoting resilience of

the built environment as well as within the PPD-8 campaign to build and sustain national preparedness, including the disaster recovery and mitigation frameworks;

- Explore concepts for a Federal interagency framework to provide S&T guidance during disaster response and recovery through real-time assessment of data and information, rapid research to inform decision makers, and immediate mobilization of Federal S&T resources;
- Consider advisability of implementing OSTP and SDR taskings related to multi-agency and multi-hazard coordination laid out in pending Congressional legislation, such as the Strengthening The Resiliency of Our Nation on the Ground (STRONG) Act (<http://www.kerry.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/STRONG%20Act%20Legislative%20Text.pdf>) and the reauthorizations of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program (NWIRP), and the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP);
- Continue ongoing efforts to draft a post-Sandy white paper focused on S&T lessons learned as well as future research opportunities for the coordination of interagency Federal S&T planning and investment; and
- Continue ongoing coordination of Federal activities in the role of U.S. National Platform for the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), including working with the State Department on logistics for the upcoming UNISDR 4<sup>th</sup> Global Platform Meeting in Geneva, Switzerland in May.

Four additional priorities also were mentioned as important items to tackle in the new Administration:

- Engage with OSTP on Earth observation data interoperability initiatives associated with the National Earth Observations Strategy disasters societal benefit area;
- Collaborate with USGCRP on the role of disaster risk reduction in climate change adaptation policies, including input to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change assessment process and development of a multi-hazard North American risk model in conjunction with the National Research Council;
- Promote research best practices and the real-time application of crowdsourcing and other social media tools for disaster management; and
- Assess progress of the short-, mid-, and long-term goals outlined in the SDR Grand Challenges for Disaster Reduction implementation plans, working with hazard-specific coordination entities such as NEHRP, NWIRP, NTHMP, and the National Space Weather Program.

Allan Manuel (OSTP), who is the OSTP Liaison for the NSTC Infrastructure Subcommittee, noted that his group has been quite active recently and would like to continue collaborating with the SDR on the following issues: 1) drafting a Presidential Executive Order focused on integrating resilience and sustainability standards into Federal building and other critical infrastructure investments; and 2) undertaking an insurance-based data cost analysis of disasters for state and local decision-makers.

The February meeting will begin with a brief review of these priorities, followed by a continued discussion on specific short- and long-term steps that the SDR can take to address the priorities as the Subcommittee moves forward into 2013. If Subcommittee members would like to see these priorities (or any other potential priority that was not discussed) addressed at a specific SDR meeting in the coming months, please contact the SDR Secretariat ([bret.schothorst@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)).

## **V. Adjournment**

Wenger adjourned the SDR December meeting at 11:34 a.m.

## **VI. Future Meetings**

SDR meetings in 2013 will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on the dates listed below in the Lincoln Room of the White House Conference Center:

**2013**

- ✓ Thursday, February 7
- ✓ Thursday, March 7
- ✓ Thursday, April 4
- ✓ Thursday, May 2
- ✓ Thursday, June 6
- ✓ Thursday, July 11 (to avoid proximity to the Independence Day Federal holiday)
- ✓ Thursday, August 1
- ✓ Thursday, September 5
- ✓ Thursday, October 3
- ✓ Thursday, November 7
- ✓ Thursday, December 5

**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 the SDR Secretariat Bret Schothorst ([bret.schothorst@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)).

**VIII. Contact Information****SDR Leadership**

David Applegate	Co-chair	703-648-6600	applegate@usgs.gov
Margaret Davidson	Co-chair	843-740-1220	margaret.davidson@noaa.gov
Dennis Wenger	Co-chair	703-292-8606	dwenger@nsf.gov
Tamara Dickinson	OSTP Liaison	202-456-6105	tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov

**Secretariat**

Bret Schothorst	703-388-0312	bret.schothorst@mantech.com
Barbara Haines-Parmele	703-388-0309	barbara.haines-parmele@mantech.com

**IX. Summary of January Actions**

Action	Lead	By When
Email the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ) copying our OSTP Liaison ( <a href="mailto:tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov">tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov</a> ) to propose policy priorities as well as specific Subcommittee goals, objectives, and outcomes that can promote interagency S&T coordination and can feed into the OSTP roadmap for the new term.	SDR Members	ASAP
Contact the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ) copying Tammy Dickinson ( <a href="mailto:tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov">tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov</a> ) to participate in the ongoing efforts of the ad hoc working group focused on post-Sandy S&T lessons learned and future research opportunities in the aftermath of the disaster.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	ASAP
Contact Tammy Dickinson ( <a href="mailto:tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov">tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov</a> ) copying the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ) to participate in the initiative to incorporate natural hazards data sets to the Safety Data Community.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing

Email Tammy Dickinson (tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov), copying the SDR Secretariat (bret.schothorst@mantech.com) to participate in a small working group or task force to discuss a disaster reduction- or community resilience-focused grand challenge or incentive prize highlighting Federal interagency programs, partnerships, and collaborations.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Please consider supporting the work of the SDR and its Secretariat through a contribution from your agency. Let Dave (aplegate@usgs.gov) know if you need an agency-specific request letter.	SDR Members	Standing
Contact Tammy Dickinson (tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov) if it would be helpful for OSTP to issue a letter to your Department requesting new (or re-affirmed) designation of representatives. Ideas for other entities that should be represented on the SDR are also welcome.	SDR Members	Standing
Contact Dennis Wenger (dwenger@nsf.gov) if your agency is able to provide funding support to the University of Colorado-Boulder's Natural Hazards Center.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Contact the Secretariat (bret.schothorst@mantech.com) if you are interested in participating in the SDR Coastal Inundation Working Group.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Send Sezin Tokar (stokar@usaid.gov) your ".gov" e-mail address to receive USG-only updates from USAID on global disaster response activities.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Contact Bret (bret.schothorst@mantech.com) to receive copies of the Grand Challenges for Disaster Reduction.	SDR Members	Standing