

# Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

3 March 2016, 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)  
Jack Meszaros (OSTP)

## Designated Representatives

**BLM** *Ron McCormick*  
**CDC** Mollie Mahany  
**DHS** Mary Ellen Hynes (T)  
**DHS/FEMA** *Roy Wright*  
**DHS/USCG** *Robert Thomas*  
**DOD** *Al Johnson*  
**DOE** *Patricia Hoffman*  
**DOT** Sheila Duwadi  
**EOP/OMB** *Michael Clark*  
**EOP/OSTP** Jack Meszaros  
**EPA** Greg Sayles (T)

**FERC** *Marsha Palazzi*  
**HUD** Dana Bres (T)  
**NASA** *Craig Dobson*  
**NGA** *TBD*  
**NGB** *TBD*  
**NIH** Aubrey Miller  
**NIST** *Steve Cauffman*  
**NOAA** Margaret Davidson (T)  
*Laura Furgione*  
**NPS** Marcy Rockman  
**NSF** Greg Anderson

**OPHS** *Estella Jones*  
**State** Fernando Echavarria  
**USACE** Tony Niles  
**USAID** *Sezin Tokar*  
**USDA** *TBD*  
**USFS** Matt Rollins  
*Carlos Rodriguez-Franco*  
**USGS** David Applegate  
**USNRC** *Steven West*

## Other Attendees

**DHS** Mitch Erickson (T)  
Dan Marasco  
Erin Walsh (T)  
**DHS/FEMA** Doug Ham  
Jacob Vawter  
Ashley Zohn  
**EOP/CEQ** Tommy Caggiano  
**EOP/NSC** Steph Morrison  
**EOP/OMB** Sam Medlock (T)  
**EOP/OSTP** Bill Murtagh  
Richard Pouyat  
Bruce Rodan

**EPA** Brendan Doyle  
**NASA** Gerald Bawden  
**NOAA** John Murphy (T)  
Kerry Sawyer (T)  
Adam Smith  
**OPHS** Tracy MacGill  
**State** Michael Hamburger  
**USACE** Alex Renaud  
**USGS** Jonathan Godt (T)  
Kris Ludwig (T)  
Charlie Mandeville (T)  
Teresa Stoepler (T)

**USNRC** John Nakoski  
**USPS** Flori McClung  
**Munich Re** Carl Hedde (T)  
**STPI** Chris Clavin  
**SDR Secretariat**  
Bret Schothorst  
Barbara Haines Parmele

## Agenda

10:00 Welcome, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes  
10:05 Co-chairs Report  
10:10 Update: Zika Virus Outbreak  
10:25 Roundtable Discussion: President's FY 2017 Budget Request  
10:45 Briefings: Tracking Domestic Disaster Losses  
11:55 Close and Next Actions

## Handouts

- March Meeting Agenda
- Draft February Meeting Minutes
- Handout from UNISDR on Sendai Framework

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction (SDR) Co-chair David Applegate (USGS) called the March meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room, and participants introduced themselves.

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

The February monthly meeting minutes draft was approved with no changes.

Applegate noted that several disaster-related documents are working their way through agency clearance. The interagency Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MitFLG) is currently seeking agency concurrence on the report "Indicators of Federal Programmatic Linkages to Community Resilience: Assessing Potential Measures and Applicability of Federal Datasets." The report addresses the need for common indicators of community resilience to better inform and prioritize resilience policy, capacity-building strategies, and outcomes. Applegate included that if SDR members are interested in commenting on the report and don't know who their agency's MitFLG representative is, contact the SDR Secretariat ([bret.schothorst@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)) to find out.

The National Security Council (NSC) has recently spun up a sub interagency policy committee (IPC) to look into extreme heat, similar in scope to what the NSC has undertaken with regards to the recent multi-year drought and the current El Niño season. Stephanie Morrison (NSC) reported that the effort has partnered with FEMA's *America's PrepareAthon!* campaign to coordinate an upcoming "Extreme Heat" week during the month of May. To support this effort from the S&T perspective, SDR agencies involved in the production of the SDR *Grand Challenges Heat Wave Implementation Plan* ([http://www.sdr.gov/docs/185820\\_Heatwave\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.sdr.gov/docs/185820_Heatwave_FINAL.pdf)) were asked to review areas of progress with respect to the Plan's strategic actions. NOAA has kindly provided a straw man assessment for evaluation from its perspective, which has been circulated to CDC and EPA colleagues for additional input in the coming weeks. SDR leadership hopes to share this document at the SDR April meeting. If other agencies would like to be a part of this effort, please reach out to the SDR Secretariat ([bret.schothorst@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)) to participate in the small *ad hoc* working group.

SDR Co-chair Jack Meszaros (OSTP) highlighted that the work of the Hazard Review Teams within SDR's National Preparedness S&T (NPST) Task Force is well underway on S&T program crosswalks within the five PPD-8 mission areas. Over the next few weeks, the teams will look to finalize draft executive summary reports on their assessments and methodologies as well as begin undertaking the task of developing recommendations on a formal protocol to conduct joint, interagency post-event S&T evaluation as part of the third function laid out in the group's charter. The protocol will leverage recent event experiences and lessons learned to identify critical science needs and inform the prioritization of future national preparedness S&T investments. Also of note, the NPST is engaged in a collaborative effort with FEMA and the NSC to incorporate S&T language into the recent update of the Federal Interagency Operational Plans (FIOPs). As part of this activity, the NPST plans to lead a writing team to draft a broader "S&T Annex" document for the FIOPs, which will begin ramping up later this month.

Meszaros also shared that members of the SDR Technology and Innovation for Disaster Preparedness (TIDP) Working Group participated in a White House-led workshop on innovation that aimed to encourage a variety of executive branch fellows to include technology and innovation projects in their fellowship activities (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/02/09/announcing-fellows-innovation-coalition-contributing-fresh-ideas-national-priorities>). The TIDP's new leadership has suggested a shift to monthly meetings in future, aiming for few but more informative calls. Stay tuned for an updated calendar invite, including new call-in phone number.

Bill Murtagh (OSTP) reported that the NSTC Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Sustainability (CENRS) has decided to turn the SDR Space Weather Operations, Research, and Mitigation (SWORM) Task Force into its own Subcommittee under the CENRS umbrella, following the release of its *National Space Weather Strategy* ([https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/final\\_nationalspaceweatherstrategy\\_20151028.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/final_nationalspaceweatherstrategy_20151028.pdf)) and the *National Space Weather Action Plan* ([https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/final\\_nationalspaceweatheractionplan\\_20151028.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/final_nationalspaceweatheractionplan_20151028.pdf)) last October. The group will focus on implementation aspects of the two documents to enhance national space-weather preparedness.

Aubrey Miller (NIH) invited SDR members (attached) to attend NIH's third annual Federal interagency discussion to explore Federal efforts for enhancing research capabilities in response to disasters, which has been rescheduled for Friday, March 11. The NIH Disaster Research Response (DR2) Program, developed in collaboration with the National Library of Medicine, was created just over two years ago to help improve the agency's collective ability to conduct timely health research in response to disasters and other time-critical situations. More information is available at <http://dr2.nlm.nih.gov/> and please direct any questions and RSVP to Betsy Eagin Galluzzo ([betsy.eagin@nih.gov](mailto:betsy.eagin@nih.gov)).

Marcy Rockman (NPS) passed along an invitation to attend a workshop on Wednesday, March 9 on "Disaster Risk Management and Protecting Our Cultural Heritage: Understanding Disaster Risk Management and the U.S. Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030." She also invited SDR members to join an associated expert roundtable on "U.S. Engagement in the Development of the Cultural Heritage Theme in the Sendai Framework" on Thursday, March 10. The roundtable will include UNISDR, international experts, including NGOs that played key roles in the development of the cultural heritage theme of SDFRR, as well as those playing leadership roles in the development of the Cultural Heritage Words to Action Guidance. The Roundtable will also incorporate members of the SDR, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and representative leaders from national, state, and local levels working at the intersection of cultural heritage and disaster risk reduction. If any SDR members are interested in attending, they are welcome to RSVP to Marcy Rockman ([marcy\\_rockman@nps.gov](mailto:marcy_rockman@nps.gov)).

### **III. Update: Zika Virus Outbreak**

Meszaros introduced colleague Bruce Rodan (OSTP), Assistant Director for Environmental Health in the Environment & Energy Division at OSTP, who briefed SDR members on the ongoing Zika virus outbreak occurring in Central and South America as well as the Caribbean.

To begin his briefing, Rodan covered several background aspects on Zika, which he noted is an emerging, mosquito-borne Flavivirus that was first identified in Uganda in 1947 and is related to the dengue, yellow fever, and West Nile viruses. The first human cases of Zika virus disease were detected in 1952, and the virus is historically known to circulate in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Pacific. Zika virus disease is caused by transmission through the *Aedes* genus of mosquitoes, such as *Aedes aegypti*, and in some cases, sexual transmission. In May 2015, the Pan American Health Organization issued an alert regarding the first confirmed Zika virus infection in Brazil, and in February 2016, the World Health Organization declared Zika virus a public health emergency of international concern. Local transmission has since been reported in many other countries and territories.

According to Rodan, symptoms of Zika virus infection usually last for 2-7 days and include mild fever, skin rashes, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, and malaise. Rodan noted that since there is no specific treatment or vaccine currently available, the best form of prevention is protection against mosquito bites and vector-control. He added that the need for rapid diagnostics for Zika infection has been critical during the outbreak. There is recent evidence that Zika virus infection in pregnant women is associated

with abnormal brain development in their fetuses through mother-to-child transmission of the virus, which may result in miscarriage or microcephaly. A link has also been established with neurologic conditions in infected adults, including Guillain–Barré syndrome.

Rodan included that OSTP’s primary involvement with the outbreak has been contributions in vector-control research and development. Related to this discussion, Miller noted the release of a report from a recent Zika virus workshop held by the National Academies. The workshop summary report can be viewed at: <http://iom.nationalacademies.org/Reports/2016/Zika-Research-WIB.aspx>. Please contact Rodan ([brodan@ostp.eop.gov](mailto:brodan@ostp.eop.gov)) with any follow-up questions on his briefing.

#### **IV. Roundtable Discussion: President’s FY 2017 Budget Request**

Due to time constraints, Applegate postponed the agency roundtable discussion on challenges and opportunities for disaster reduction S&T in the President’s FY 2017 budget request until the SDR April 7 meeting. As the Subcommittee has done in previous years, the budget roundtable will be a chance for SDR agencies to provide OSTP and your fellow agencies with a very quick overview of any major changes in hazards-related S&T spending, both concerning programs within your agency and interagency work. For those that wish to participate next month, we will just be looking for 2-3 minutes apiece.

#### **V. Briefings: Tracking Domestic Disaster Losses**

In its role convening the U.S. National Platform for the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), SDR held a discussion on tracking domestic disaster losses. UNISDR is in the process of setting indicators for nations to voluntarily measure their progress toward the disaster risk reduction targets to be set forth in the Sendai Framework. Applegate introduced Adam Smith (NOAA), Ashley Zohn (FEMA), and Carl Hedde (Munich Re America), who all made excellent presentations on what U.S. domestic disaster losses and other hazards-related statistics are collected by the Federal government and other entities.

Smith noted that NOAA seeks to account for total, direct losses (i.e., insured and uninsured) for assets in its calculations, including:

- Physical damage to residential, commercial and government buildings;
- Material assets (content) within a building;
- Time element losses (i.e., time-cost for businesses, hotel-costs for loss of living quarters);
- Vehicles, boats, offshore energy platforms;
- Public infrastructure (i.e., roads, bridges, buildings); and
- Agricultural assets (i.e., crops, livestock, timber).

Smith added the caveat that it does not take into account natural capital losses, healthcare-related costs, or the monetary value associated with loss of life. Smith underlined that through these assessments of public and private data, NOAA found that from 1980-2015, the U.S. has experienced 188 distinct billion-dollar weather and climate events – each causing at least \$1 billion in direct losses. Zohn stated that following a disaster, states/tribes and FEMA conduct a preliminary damage assessment (PDA) to determine if the state or tribe is eligible for a disaster declaration from the President. These are estimates of damage that would be eligible for grant funding under FEMA’s Individual and Public Assistance Programs. According to Zohn, PDAs may only be diligently conducted until the state or tribe has reached the minimum threshold for a declaration. They may underestimate the overall damage and are not conducted on disasters that are too small to warrant consideration for Presidential disaster declaration.

Hedde offered some insights into Munich Re’s NatCatSERVICE, which is one of the world’s largest databases on natural catastrophes. The database contains information on all loss events from 1980 until today, and for the U.S. and selected countries in Europe, all loss events since 1970. It also includes, retrospectively, all great disasters since 1950 and all major historical events starting from 79 AD –

including the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius (3,000 historical data sets). Hedde estimated that it currently contains 36,000 data sets in all. Regarding economic loss information, Hedde stated that NatCatSERVICE incorporates five levels of information quality, with economic loss estimation based on insured loss data (first category) being of the best quality and easiest way to scale up:

- Information on insured losses in industrial countries compiled by institutions;
- Partial information on insured losses in developing markets and countries;
- Information on total economic losses, often from governments (no information on insured losses);
- Partial information on economic losses (e.g., impact on agriculture, infrastructure, etc.); and
- Only description of event (e.g., number of houses damaged or destroyed by flood, storm, earthquake, etc.).

After the presentations, the speakers participated in a short discussion. While the U.S. collects much data related to disasters and specific hazard types, key gaps exist in the scope and scale of information being tracked, which will need to be addressed in more depth as the U.S. moves towards implementation aspects of the Sendai Framework. To this end, more comprehensive tracking of U.S. domestic disaster losses would serve several functions, including: accurate accounting across agencies for the total cost to the nation each year of natural and human-made disasters; a consistent basis for measuring resilience; a national resource of disaster-related data that documents injuries, loss of life, property loss, and impacts on economic activity; and support for efforts to develop more quantitative risk models and better understand structural and social vulnerability to disasters.

Stay tuned for further developments from the SDR International Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR) Working Group on this important issue as it relates to marking U.S. progress on the disaster risk reduction targets and indicators to be set forth in the Sendai Framework.

## **VI. Adjournment**

Applegate adjourned the SDR March meeting at 12:02 p.m. and noted that the group's next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 7 in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room.

## **VII. SDR 2016 Meeting Calendar**

SDR meetings in 2016 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 unless otherwise noted:

### **2016**

- ✓ Thursday, January 7\*
- ✓ Thursday, February 4
- ✓ Thursday, March 3
- ✓ Thursday, April 7
- ✓ Thursday, May 5
- ✓ Thursday, June 2
- ✓ Thursday, July 7
- ✓ Thursday, August 4\*\*
- ✓ Thursday, September 8\*\*\*
- ✓ Thursday, October 6
- ✓ Thursday, November 3
- ✓ Thursday, December 1

\* January meeting will be held in Room 430ABC of the White House Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB).

\*\* August meeting subject to cancellation.

\*\*\* September meeting shifted to the second Thursday of the month to avoid proximity to the Labor Day Federal holiday.

**VIII. 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@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)).

**IX. Contact Information**

**SDR Leadership**

David Applegate	Co-chair	703-648-6600	<a href="mailto:applegate@usgs.gov">applegate@usgs.gov</a>
Margaret Davidson	Co-chair	843-740-1220	<a href="mailto:margaret.davidson@noaa.gov">margaret.davidson@noaa.gov</a>
Jack Meszaros	Co-chair	202-456-6020	<a href="mailto:Jacqueline_R_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov">Jacqueline_R_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov</a>

**Executive Secretariat**

Bret Schothorst	703-388-0312	<a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a>
Barbara Haines-Parmele	703-388-0309	<a href="mailto:barbara.haines-parmele@mantech.com">barbara.haines-parmele@mantech.com</a>

**X. Summary of March Actions**

Action	Lead	By When
The next SDR meeting will be held on Thursday, April 7 in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room.	SDR Members	For Information
Email Betsy Eagin Galluzzo ( <a href="mailto:betsy.eagin@nih.gov">betsy.eagin@nih.gov</a> ) to RSVP to the March 11 NIH Disaster Research Response (DR2) Program Federal interagency discussion.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	ASAP
Reach out to Marcy Rockman ( <a href="mailto:marcy_rockman@nps.gov">marcy_rockman@nps.gov</a> ) to RSVP to workshops on March 9 and 10 on “Disaster Risk Management and Protecting Our Cultural Heritage: Understanding Disaster Risk Management and the U.S. Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.”	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	ASAP
Contact the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ) if your agency would like to participate in a small ad hoc working group to look at progress on the short-, medium-, and long-term strategic actions of the SDR Grand Challenges <i>Heat Wave Implementation Plan</i> .	SDR Members	ASAP
Email Bruce Rodan ( <a href="mailto:brodan@ostp.eop.gov">brodan@ostp.eop.gov</a> ) for follow-up questions on the ongoing Zika virus outbreak.	SDR Members	Standing
Stay tuned for further developments from the SDR IDRR Working Group on the issue of how the U.S. tracks domestic disaster losses and other hazards-related statistics.	SDR Members	Standing
Email the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ) to suggest external DRR stakeholder groups to invite to present at quarterly SDR meetings on behalf of the U.S. National Platform for UNISDR.	SDR Members	Standing
Submit additional agency suggestions of SDR plans and priorities for consideration in 2016 to the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ).	SDR Members	Standing