

Meeting Notes of the International Working Group

Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

26 February 2004, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., National Science Foundation

Attendees

NOAA

Dori Akerman, dori@grs-solutions.com

Jim McGuire, james.mcguire@noaa.gov

Rick Ohlemacher, Richard.ohlemacher@noaa.gov

State Department

Larry Roeder, roederla@state.gov (Co-Chair)

Fernando Echavarria, echavarriafr@state.gov (Co-Chair)

NSF

Larry Weber, lweber@nsf.gov (Co-Chair)

Dennis Wenger, dwenger@nsf.gov

Handouts

Draft "Initial Cable on World Conference on Disaster Reduction"

Meeting Notes

Office of Foreign Assets Control: Special clearances are sometimes required for researchers wanting to travel to countries for which there are foreign policy controls. An example was the delegation organized by the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) to study damage following the recent earthquake in Bam, Iran. The Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) has jurisdiction over such matters. Larry Roeder will ask David Mills, Chief of Licensing at OFAC, to brief IWG members at the next IWG meeting (tentatively scheduled for March 16). The IWG will explore the possibility of general waivers for various kinds of S&T-related activities. The IWG will report on the OFAC briefing at a subsequent SDR meeting and prepare a summary to be placed on the SDR website. The summary will provide hyperlinks to websites of relevant agencies, and highlight the guidelines for research and publication.

Dennis Wenger noted that the EERI team that studied the Bam, Iran earthquake will give a Washington, D.C. briefing on March 8. Wenger will provide an electronic notice of the meeting that Dori Akerman will forward to SDR members.

UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe (January 18-22, 2005): Larry Roeder reported that it has been decided that the United States will not seek to be a member of the Bureau (a five-member body that makes detailed recommendations for the conference), because of the heavy time and financial requirements, and because Bureau members are expected to represent regional rather than specific national interests.

Roeder also reported that he had additional discussions with the Japanese concerning conference financing. The Japanese do not want other nations to co-host the conference, but would welcome financial contributions. Roeder suggests that agencies consider targeted contributions that would advance U.S. interests. As discussed at the previous IWG meeting, U.S. agencies are asked to coordinate voluntary funding for the conference

through the U.S. ISDR Platform, and such funds should be identified as U.S. Government funds instead of being linked to a specific agency.

Roeder distributed a “Draft Initial Cable on World Conference on Disaster Reduction” that is being prepared for the U.S. mission in Geneva. IWG members were asked to provide comments on the draft cable before it is shared with SDR members at the March 4 SDR meeting. The initial cable is intended to begin a dialogue that provides U.S. Government input to shaping the conference agenda. SDR should recommend specific S&T-related agenda items such as earth observations, “grand challenges”, etc.

The U.S. delegation will include U.S. Government people and private sector representatives (advisors and those sworn in as special U.S. Government employees). Roeder is seeking recommendations for delegates.

IWG co-chairs will use the IWG agenda space in the March SDR meeting to discuss the Kobe world conference.

GDIN Conference (March 26-29, 2004): Discussion of conference logistics and agenda. Larry Roeder will provide materials to Akerman to include in packets to be distributed at the March SDR meeting.

GDIN is developing an activity related to information networks on Indian reservations. Roeder will be going with a delegation after the GDIN conference to Indian reservations in New Mexico. Interested agencies are invited to participate in the visits.

White Paper: Larry Roeder to arrange a briefing by Dan Dubno of CBS to the April SDR meeting.