**Meeting Minutes** **of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction**

7 December 2017, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., White House Conference Center Lincoln Room

Italics indicate absent members. “T” indicate members participating via teleconference.

**Co-chairs**

David Applegate (USGS)

Jack Meszaros (OSTP)

**Designated Representatives**

# ASPR *Darrin Donato*

# BLM *Georgette Fogle*

# CDC *Mollie Mahany*

# DHS Erin Walsh (T)

# DHS/FEMA *Roy Wright*

# DHS/USCG *Jim Small*

**DOD** *Al Johnson*

**DOE** *Patricia Hoffman*

**DOT** Sheila Duwadi

**EOP/OMB** *Michael Clark*

**EOP/OSTP** Jack Meszaros

**EPA** *Greg Sayles*

**FERC** *Marsha Palazzi*

# HUD *Dana Bres*

# NASA *Craig Dobson*

**NGA** *Kerri Dugan*

# NGB Steve Mason

# NIH *Aubrey Miller*

**NIST**Steve Cauffman

**NOAA***Mary Erickson*

**NPS** Marcy Rockman

# NSF *Greg Anderson*

**State** *Fernando Echavarria*

**USACE** Tony Niles

*Dimitra Syriopoulou*

**USAID** Sezin Tokar

**USCB** *Laura Furgione*

**USDA** *TBD*

**USFS** *Monica Lear*

*Carlos Rodriguez-Franco*

**USGS** David Applegate

**USNRC** *Edwin Hackett*

**USPHS** *Estella Jones*

**Other Attendees**

**AMS** Bill Hooke  
**Census** Rob Sieukiewicz **DHS/FEMA** Jackie Snelling Mitchell Erickson (T)

**EPA** Keely Maxwell  
Ed Washburn

**NASA** Shanna McClain  
Victoria Thompson

**NASEM** Laurie Geller

Amanda Staudt

**NOAA** John Murphy (T)  
Adam Smith (T)  
**NGA** Christina Roy

**NIH** April Bennett

**STPI** Robert Rozansky  
**USFS** Denise Blankenship  
Colin Hardy (T)

**USGS** Paul Steblein   
Jonathan Godt (T)  
Kristin Ludwig (T)  
Michael Blanpied (T)

**USNRC** John Berghe (T)  
**UW** Ann Bostrom (T)

**SDR Secretariat**

Aleeza Wilkins

**Handouts**

* December Meeting Agenda
* Draft November Meeting Minutes
* Consensus Study Report Highlights: *Integrating Social and Behavioral Sciences Within the Weather Enterprise*

**Agenda**

10:00 Welcome, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes

10:05 Co-chairs Report

10:15 Briefing: 2017 Wildfire Season

10:55 Discussion: Data Coordination Hot Wash

11:15 Briefing: Social and Behavioral Science and the Weather Enterprise

11:55 Close and Next Actions

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

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

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

The draft of the minutes for the November monthly meeting was approved with no changes.

Applegate reported on his November 30th testimony before the House Subcommittee on Energy & Mineral Resources regarding several bills that would authorize hazards-related activities at the USGS, including a national landslide hazards program and 3-D elevation program, a national volcano early warning system, and reauthorization of the National Geologic Mapping Act. The bills and topics were bipartisan, and the open tone of the hearing served as a reminder that disasters bring people from all political backgrounds together and that disaster reduction has bipartisan support and interest.

SDR Co-Chair Jack Meszaros (OSTP) announced that the National Security Council has a PCC Sub-group working on a refresh for the national preparedness policy doctrines. The Sub-group will identify high priority topics to address, based partly on lessons learned from recent hurricane events. One priority will be ensuring continuous improvement built into the doctrine, which is important to SDR, as our science is aimed at improving response and preparedness in disasters. If you want to see if your agency is participating in this Sub-group, please contact Meszaros ([Jacqueline\_R\_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov](mailto:Jacqueline_R_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov" \t "_blank)).

Meszaros also shared that the NSTC Subcommittee on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience is planning to meet in January to hear about S&T in agencies and with university partners regarding interdependencies of infrastructure, cascading failures, and lessons from Puerto Rico on these topics. If you have interest or if you have relevant programs developing, please contact Meszaros about attending ([Jacqueline\_R\_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov](mailto:Jacqueline_R_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov" \t "_blank)).

The SDR International Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group was to meet right after the main SDR session with the agenda including a briefing from NOAA on the recent Global Forum on Science and Technology for Disaster Resilience held in Tokyo in November. The group also was set to discuss the upcoming State Department Summit of the Americas, which will take place April 13-14 in Lima, Peru. The working group’s next meeting will take place on Thursday, February 1, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Room of the White House Conference Center.

Meszaros reported that The Technology and Innovation for Disaster Preparedness Working Group December meeting was delayed and the group is working with agencies and NGOs about a potential event related to their call-to-action plan. The plan covers three important concepts: 1) “no wrong door”: we must aggregate information across platforms, share it, and keep it updated so that response efforts are not duplicated unnecessarily; 2) we need more intuitive decision-support products; 3) a federal team needs to own those products and deploy them in disasters.

1. **Presentation on the 2017 Wildfire Season**

Paul Steblein (USGS) and Colin Hardy (USFS) presented on the 2017 Wildfire Season. Steblein reported that the 2017 fire season saw 56,000 large fires, 9 million acres burned, and 43 fatalities. The fire season outlook is based on past weather and drought, weather and climate outlooks, and fuel conditions. The December outlook potential for fire in Southern California is above normal, and there is increased fire potential in Texas in February and March. Steblein also discussed the current state of wildfires in Ventura, CA, which are spreading quickly due to Santa Ana winds. Key technology used during wildfires includes UAVs for reconnaissance when smoke conditions prevent manned flights, infrared imagery for viewing hotspots, and LiDAR for mapping fuel sources and detailed terrain models.

Hardy discussed Forest Service activities in support of the 2017 Wildfire Season, noting that fire danger in 2017 met or exceeded the average trends for July through September in Montana. A new product from the Wildland Fire Assessment System predicts large fire growth potential for the next week using moisture information and NWS forecasts, and the tool proved to be an accurate predictor of the extent of the Santa Rosa fires in October. Hardy also discussed the value of embedding scientists within incident management teams (IMTs) in order to leverage state of the art science without spending years of training for IMT staff.

1. **Discussion on Data Coordination Hot Wash**

Meszaros thanked FEMA for facilitating a hot wash session focused on Data and Information Sharing across Agencies during Hurricane Season. The Nov. 27 session at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building brought together representatives from FEMA, National Security Council, NASA, USDA, HHS, HUD, NIST, Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorology, USGS, NOAA, Civil Applications Committee, US Army Corps, Census Bureau, and OSTP. Due to time constraints, the discussion was cut from the meeting and preliminary notes from the session were distributed to members.

1. **Briefing on Social and Behavioral Science and the Weather Enterprise**

Bill Hooke (AMS) and Ann Bostrom (University of Washington) delivered a presentation on the recently published National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) report entitled *Integrating Social and Behavioral Sciences within the Weather Enterprise*. The study focuses specifically on road weather because it often leaves drivers terrified, away from home, and caught between two dangerous options that affect their own lives and the lives of others-- to stop driving or to continue on their route. The study found that Social and Behavioral Science (SBS) offers great potential for improving preparedness, mitigation, monitoring, communication, and emergency management response. Innovative research has already begun in the field of meteorology, and a variety of federal, academic, and private institutions are motivated to increase the integration of SBS within the weather enterprise.

The study recommends a three-pronged approach to overcome existing challenges and knowledge gaps:

1) Invest in leadership to build awareness of the need to incorporate SBS into the weather enterprise;

2) Build capacity throughout the weather enterprise to support and utilize SBS weather research, particularly with leadership from NOAA, National Science Foundation, Federal Highway Administration, and FEMA; and

3) Focus on current knowledge gaps in weather enterprise system-focused research; risk assessments and responses; and message design, delivery, interpretation, and use.

The full report may be found at: [http://dels.nas.edu/Report/Integrating-Social-Behavioral-Sciences-Within/24865?bname=basc](http://dels.nas.edu/Report/Integrating-Social-Behavioral-Sciences-Within/24865?bname=basc" \t "_blank). A related new NASEM report entitled “Emergency Alert and Warning Systems: current knowledge and future research directions” may be found at [http://nap.edu/24935](http://nap.edu/24935" \t "_blank).

1. **Adjournment**

Applegate adjourned the SDR November meeting at 12:04 p.m. and noted that the Subcommittee’s next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 4, in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room.

1. **SDR 2018 Meeting Calendar**

SDR meetings in 2018 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:

**2018**

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

\* July meeting subject to change to avoid proximity to the Independence Day Federal holiday.

\*\* August meeting subject to cancellation.

1. **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 ([SDR@usgs.gov](mailto:SDR@usgs.gov)).

1. **Contact Information**

**SDR Leadership**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| David Applegate | Co-chair | 703-648-6600 | applegate@usgs.gov |
| Jack Meszaros | Co-chair | 202-456-6020 | Jacqueline\_R\_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov |

**Executive Secretariat**

SDR@usgs.gov

1. **Summary of December Actions**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Lead** | **By When** |
| The next SDR meeting will be held on Thursday, January 4, in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room. | SDR Members | For Information |
| If you want to know if your agency will be participating in the NSC Sub-group on national preparedness policy doctrines, contact Jack Meszaros ([Jacqueline\_R\_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov](mailto:Jacqueline_R_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov" \t "_blank)). | SDR Members | ASAP |
| If you have interest in attending the NSC sub-group on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience meeting in January or if you have relevant programs developing, contact Jack Meszaros ([Jacqueline\_R\_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov](mailto:Jacqueline_R_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov" \t "_blank)). | SDR Members | ASAP |
| Send additional disaster-related priorities from your agency for consideration in the new Administration to the SDR Secretariat (SDR@usgs.gov) on a rolling basis. | SDR Members | Standing |
| Send Dave Applegate an email (applegate@usgs.gov) if you are interested in contributing to the work of the SDR and would like additional documentation or an agency-specific letter. | SDR Members | Standing |
| Email the SDR Secretariat (SDR@usgs.gov) 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 |