

**National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program
Advisory Committee on Earthquake Hazards Reduction
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Gaithersburg, Maryland
April 25, 2011**

Conference Call Meeting Summary

Advisory Committee Members:

Chris Poland, Chair	Degenkolb Engineers
Walter Arabasz	University of Utah
James Beavers	University of Tennessee
Jonathan Bray	University of California, Berkeley
Richard Eisner	Fritz Institute
James Harris	J. R. Harris and Company
John Hooper	Magnusson Klemencic Associates
Michael Lindell	Texas A&M University
Jack Moehle	University of California, Berkeley
Thomas O'Rourke	Cornell University
Susan Tubbesing	Earthquake Engineering Research Institute
Anne vonWeller	Chief Building Official, Murray City, Utah
Yumei Wang	Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries
Brent Woodworth	Global Crisis Services, Inc.

NEHRP ICC Member-Agency Representatives and NIST Support:

Shyam Sunder	NIST, Engineering Laboratory Director, <i>ACEHR Designated Federal Official</i>
William Grosshandler	NIST, Engineering Laboratory Deputy Director for Building and Fire Research
Jack Hayes, Jr.	NIST, NEHRP Director
Ed Laatsch	FEMA
Joy Pauschke	NSF
Tammy Dickinson	OSTP
Mike Blanpied	USGS
Tina Faecke	NIST, NEHRP Secretariat
John Filson	USGS, NEHRP Secretariat
Brian Garrett	BRI Consulting Group

Summary of Discussions:

I. Call to Order

Chris Poland, chair of the Advisory Committee on Earthquake Hazards Reduction (ACEHR), welcomed attendees to the conference call meeting. He stated that the purpose of this session was to review, edit, and finalize the draft letter that the committee had prepared for submission to the Director of the National

Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). This letter was intended to serve as the committee's 2011 annual report on the effectiveness of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). Prior to the meeting, committee members had received the latest version of the letter for review. They had also received a second document containing several alternative versions of the second paragraph of the letter that had been proposed by various ACEHR members. During the meeting, these documents were displayed for the committee via WebEx online conferencing technology, and the letter was edited in real time by Tina Faecke in accordance with the committee's instructions.

II. Committee Review of Draft ACEHR Annual Report on NEHRP Effectiveness

Poland asked whether everyone was ready to begin a paragraph-by-paragraph review of the letter, or whether anyone would first like to discuss general issues regarding the report. A member recommended that the committee first decide on which version of the second paragraph would be used in the letter, and then proceed to review the remaining paragraphs. Another member noted President Obama's recent issuance of Presidential Policy Directive/PPD-8, *National Preparedness*, and said that during the review he would suggest a few places in the letter where it might be beneficial to cite this directive.

The committee discussed the second paragraph in detail. Aside from minor editorial changes, the discussion focused on the final sentence of the paragraph, which addressed the uncertainties that accompany and are confronted in efforts to reduce earthquake risks. Members debated whether uncertainties should be mentioned, and if so, how they should be characterized. Recent events in Japan were cited repeatedly, serving as a backdrop for this wide-ranging conversation. The discussion included suggestions about acknowledging (a) the distinction between scientific probabilities and possibilities, (b) the cost-versus-risk tradeoffs involved in mitigating for low-probability, high-consequence events, and (c) the bottom-line imperative to either mitigate for possibilities or prepare to respond to the consequences of not doing so. Ultimately, the committee decided to retain a statement about "uncertainties in our state of knowledge," but to move it into the third paragraph of the letter.

There followed some additional discussion about the tone and wording of the third paragraph, which was adjusted by the committee. The attendees then proceeded to review the remaining paragraphs in succession, making relatively minor changes. At the conclusion of this process, a member commented that the report now covered all of the points that the committee had recommended be included in it at the last ACEHR meeting in March. The committee agreed that the report was ready to be issued as amended at this meeting, and several members thanked Poland for his instrumental role in drafting the document.

III. Adjournment

One member (Walter Arabasz) noted he was resigning from ACEHR on April 30, 2011 (two years short of his term expiration). Two other members (Jonathan Bray and James Harris) noted that their terms on ACEHR were about to expire; they expressed their appreciation for the opportunity they have had to work with their colleagues on the committee. Poland and others thanked these members for their outstanding contributions to the committee.

In response to an attendee's question, Poland reported that he would be speaking to the NEHRP Interagency Coordinating Committee (ICC) about the contents of this report at its meeting planned for April 27, 2011. He said that in his remarks, he would link the major themes of this report with the

committee's 2010 report, and that his overarching message would concern the need to accelerate the pace of implementing the NEHRP Strategic Plan. A member remarked about how the destruction caused by the recent earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, which he had seen firsthand, has underlined the urgency and importance of this message.

Poland asked the NIST representatives in attendance whether the report would be able to be formatted, signed, and issued to the ICC before its meeting. They replied that the report would be finalized for Poland's signature and distributed to the NIST Director and the ICC principals, via their ICC member agency representative, later that day. Poland thanked the attendees for a productive session and adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).