

Western States Seismic Policy Council 2007 Award in Excellence for Lifetime Achievement in Earthquake Risk Reduction

Richard K. Eisner, FAIA



In 2006 Richard Eisner retired from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) where he had served as Manager for the California Integrated Seismic Network (CISN) and Earthquake Programs and as Coastal Region Administrator. He was responsible, as CISN Manager, for implementing OES funding for the expansion of the TriNet seismic network to northern and central California and the maintenance of the program in southern California. Prior to his appointment as CISN Manager in 2002 he served for eight years as Coastal Region Administrator, responsible for the State's responses to disasters in the San Francisco Bay Region and north coast counties. Prior to that appointment he served as the founding Director of the Bay Area Regional Earthquake Preparedness Project (BAREPP), a FEMA and state funded program, providing planning and technical assistance to promote and support earthquake

preparedness and hazard mitigation by local governments and businesses throughout the San Francisco Bay area.

An architect, urban planner, and urban designer, Eisner, for the last 30 years, focused his career on issues of seismic design and urban earthquake hazard reduction, including serving as program manager on a National Science Foundation funded project to develop model hazard reduction and preparedness techniques based on Japanese practice. A key element of his work at BAREPP was the implementation of these models and integration of knowledge from the earth and social science communities into mitigation and preparedness programs.

Eisner participated in several post-earthquake investigations, including those for El Centro (1979), Coalinga (1983), Morgan Hill (1984), Palm Springs (1986), Whittier (1987) and Cape Mendocino (1992). In addition to his research work, he served on the State's investigative team that visited Mexico City after the devastating earthquake in 1985 and reported on their findings to the State Legislature. In his role as Director of BAREPP, he participated in the state's response to the Loma Prieta (1989), Cape Mendocino and Landers/Big Bear (all in 1992) and Northridge (1994) earthquakes. He implemented the Earthquake Clearinghouse after Northridge to gather information and provide support to researchers visiting the disaster. Since 1993, he has served on the project working group, overseeing the development of FEMA's HAZUS earthquake loss estimation tool.

As a recognized expert in community preparedness, Eisner has presented papers on California's comprehensive approach to earthquake preparedness in the US, Japan, China, Kyrgystan and the Ukraine. He has consulted on issues of hazard mitigation and emergency management including serving on the Global Assessment of Earthquake Countermeasures in Kobe, Japan (1999 and 2000), an international evaluation of the response to the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, sponsored by Hyogo Prefecture. From 1988 until 2003, he Chaired EERI's US -- Japan Urban Earthquake Hazard Mitigation Committee that organized collaborative workshops with the Japanese in 1991, 1995, 1998, 1999 and 2003. He also served as Co-Chair of the 1st International Conference on Urban Disaster Reduction convened in Kobe in 2005 on the 10th anniversary of the Hanshin-Awaji earthquake. He was elected to the Board of Directors of the Northern California Chapter of EERI in 2003 and the Board of Directors of EERI in 2004 and participated on the Steering Committee for the 2006 Centennial Conference of the San Francisco Earthquake.

Richard Eisner was elected in 1996 to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in recognition of his contribution to improving the quality of the built environment and to the architectural profession. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Building Sciences and the California Earthquake Safety Foundation. Rich Eisner is one of 15 distinguished experts named to the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Advisory Committee on Earthquake Hazards Reduction (ACEHR). In 2007 he joined the Fritz Institute as a Senior Consultant on the Bay Area Disaster Preparedness Initiative.

