

WSSPC Annual Conference 1999

September 6-9, 1999

Santa Fe, New Mexico

ANNUAL CONFERENCE POLICY SESSIONS

To further the mission of WSSPC, we have structured the conference sessions around the development of seismic policy. What is seismic policy? First perhaps we need to define "policy" or "government policy." The dictionary defines it as a principle, plan, or course of action as pursued by government. Following the dictionary definition using the word "principle," government policy could be defined as the philosophical basis for laws and regulations adopted by government. Seismic policy would then be such government policy that relates to earthquake hazards and mitigation. Each policy session will have brief presentations by the speakers and extensive time for participants to discuss and attempt to develop policy alternatives that address these issues.

CONFERENCE POLICY SESSION PAPERS

In an effort to add value to the conference, WSSPC will be issuing a *Policy Session Papers* volume before the event. The papers from the session speakers will be compiled and distributed to all attendees (before the conference). This volume will serve to prepare participants and will be an excellent addition to your library.

FIELD EXCURSION

WSSPC will be hosting a visit to interesting seismic sites in the Northern New Mexico area. The tour will take conference attendees to geologically interesting sites. Lunch will be provided during the field excursion. Space is limited and will be assigned on a first-come first-served basis.

PROGRAM

Monday, September 6

- 11:00am Conference Registration Begins
- 11:30pm Field Excursion
- 5:30pm Evening Meet and Greet and Exhibitor Fair

Tuesday, September 7

- 7:00am Breakfast
- 8:00am Conference Opening and featured Speaker
- 9:00am Policy Session #1: **Economic Impacts of Natural Disasters**
 - What are the principal economic impacts facing communities from a major earthquake event?
 - What steps can be taken from a public policy perspective to minimize these impacts?
 - Suggest policy options to address these issues

Session Goal: Significant impacts occur as a result of natural disasters. With a new understanding of mitigation, communities are attempting to minimize these impacts. In addition to presenting the possible economic impacts, the panelist should focus on how these concepts can be implemented and what steps can be made in the public policy arena to see these succeed.

Background

The Board on Natural Disasters of the National Research Council has appointed a new Committee on Assessing the Costs of Natural Disasters. The committee will hold its first meeting later this fall in Washington, DC. The losses from natural disasters are far reaching, including direct damage to buildings, infrastructure elements, inventory, and natural resources and indirect costs from lost productivity and wages. While there is a general appreciation for the severity of these losses and a broad interest in mitigating these impacts, there is a need to understand the scope and magnitude of the costs before action can begin. To support this effort, a multidisciplinary group of experts will identify the cost components that will be most useful for accurate characterization of disaster events. The committee's report, to be published in two years, will help FEMA in its efforts to develop successful mitigation policies for natural disasters.

- 12:00pm Buffet Lunch and Exhibitor Fair
- 1:15pm Featured Speaker
- 2:00pm Awards in Excellence Program and Information Sharing (part 1)
- 3:00pm Policy Session #2: **Successful Mitigation Efforts: A Focus on Local Community Action**
- What are the principal issues facing local communities when attempting to implement mitigation strategies?
 - What has been your experience with the issue of development of comprehensive disaster resistant communities from a public policy perspective?
 - Suggest policy options to address these issues
- Session Goal: Tremendous success has been achieved in cultivating a new mind-set that includes disaster planning and mitigation in the development of many cities throughout the nation. However, this effort is still in its embryonic stage and needs significant development. What methods and policies can be implemented that will encourage the development and success of this new planning system? How can we learn from successful models?
- 5:30pm Evening Social and Poster Session

Wednesday, September 8

- 7:00am Breakfast
- 8:00am Keynote Speaker
- 9:00am Policy Session #3: **Annualized Earthquake Loss Assessments**
- What are the principal issues facing the development of national or regional Annual Earthquake Loss Assessment?
 - What do you see are the public policy implications of national or regional Annual Earthquake Loss Assessment?
 - Suggest policy options to optimize the usefulness of national or regional Annual Earthquake Loss Assessment.

Session Goal: The federal government is currently undertaking a monumental task of developing a national annual earthquake loss assessment. This project will provide invaluable information to a multitude of organizations and individuals regarding the threats facing the United States due to seismic hazards. However, the priorities and assumptions used in this assessment will have a significant impact in the outcomes of the study. This session should focus on policies regarding the implementation of the national annual earthquake loss assessment and other regional risk assessments, including its use in decision making, as well as preparedness and mitigation activities.

Background

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is currently in the process of preparing an Annualized Earthquake Loss Estimate. This annualized estimate is being done in partnership with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and will portray expected annual losses due to earthquakes for each county in the continental United States.

In order to develop a methodology that incorporates the best and newest technologies and that meets the needs of the states, a process must be put into place that allows input and comment from all parties. By understanding the potential risk and loss, we can better determine priorities for other related concerns such as hazard insurance policy, building code development, and critical facility and infrastructure preparedness.

- 12:00pm Buffet Lunch
- 1:15pm Featured Speaker
- 2:00pm Awards in Excellence Program and Information Sharing (part 1)
- 3:00pm Policy Session #4: **Post-Disaster Technical Clearinghouses**
- What are the principal issues facing emergency managers, scientists and researchers in obtaining information about earthquakes immediately following an event?
 - What has been your experience with the capacities of individual states to coordinate the collection of this information?
 - What are your professional and institutional plans for the future regarding clearinghouses?
 - Suggest policy options to address these issues.
- 6:00pm Conference Banquet and WSSPC Awards in Excellence Ceremony

Thursday, September 9

- 7:00am Breakfast
- 8:00am WSSPC Committee Meetings
- 9:30am WSSPC Business Meeting
- 12:30am Conference Adjourns