

WSSPC-CUSEC-CREW-NESEC Joint Consortia Meeting Report

**June 22, 2001
Fairmont Hot Springs, Montana**

The meeting was initiated by WSSPC to further discussions begun at a meeting of the consortia in Washington, DC, February 24, 2000 and continued at the National Earthquake Risk Management Conference in Seattle, WA, September 19, 2000. Jon Price, Chairman of WSSPC's Board of Directors chaired the meeting. Present at the meeting were from WSSPC: Jon Price, Jim Davis, Jim Greene, Dave Leibersbach, Glen Woodbury, John Beaulieu, Monique Lay, and Patti Sutch; from CUSEC: Ronn Padgett, Bud Harper, Cecil Whaley, John Kiefer, Dave Smith, Bob Bauer, Norm Hester (p.m.), and Jim Wilkinson; from CREW: Bob Freitag. Ed Fratto of NESEC participated by telephone. Miriam Keegan and Ted Litty represented FEMA.

Jon Price opened the meeting and asked Ted Litty to talk about FEMA's expectations for the meeting. FEMA's expectations are that the meeting will conclude with some objectives and action items that will lead to regular interaction among the consortia. The basic purpose of the consortia is to support or augment the States' earthquake risk reduction programs. The consortia do this within their respective regions pretty well. But each group has developed its own strengths and we would like to see these shared. For example, CUSEC's work with hospitals and CREW's work with the business community are worth sharing in States outside of their respective regions. In addition, we are still interested in having collaboration between the consortia and the university based earthquake centers (PEER, MCEER, MAE), and with EERI.

With new senior management at FEMA, and the recent realignment, it is an opportune time for the consortia to gather and discuss how they can most effectively support the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program.

Each of the consortia gave an overview of its organizational strengths, opportunities for cooperation, and goals for the meeting.

NESEC

(Written submittal, conference call was not successful)

"NESEC's strengths are derived primarily from the excellent working relationship and camaraderie that exists among the Northeast States. This is further enhanced by the excellent working relationship that exists with the FEMA Regions and Headquarters.

"Additionally, the multi-hazard approach that the Board of Directors implemented in 1995 has proven to be successful in involving NESEC in all aspects of emergency management and making NESEC a respected and valued entity in the Northeast.

"Finally, NESEC is a product and results oriented organization that has been in the forefront of demonstrating how to align minimal resources in the most cost-effective and focused manner to attain organization goals and objectives."

NESEC believes there are many opportunities for the consortia to cooperate, and the consortia should focus on those that are product oriented and feasible within existing budgets. NESEC suggested the following: Design and develop a National Earthquake Contact Information Website; Establish an Inventory and Clearinghouse for State Earthquake Program Products; Develop a Directory of State Mandated Seismic Building Codes.

NESEC's goal for the meeting is to further develop the partnership that already exists among the consortia. They suggest selecting a single feasible, practical, highly visible, cost-effective, product oriented project.

CUSEC

CUSEC's strengths are derived from its focus on a single hazard, while at the same time recognizing that "selling" the earthquake program requires not ignoring other hazards. CUSEC has attracted non-FEMA funding. Operationally, its focus is on supporting State and local implementation. CUSEC, along with the CUSEC State Geologists, has formed a Transportation Task Force and partnerships with State DOTs and State Insurance Departments.

CUSEC sees opportunities for cooperation in developing public awareness and education activities such as a mutual aid agreement for workshops, etc. An example would be cooperation on a Post-disaster Clearinghouse workshop. CUSEC also believes the consortia can provide valuable guidance to the National Earthquake Program office. CUSEC also suggested that the consortia could work together to define their role in the NEHRP.

CUSEC's goals for the meeting are to learn about how WSSPC develops and disseminates policy recommendations.

CREW

CREW's strength in promoting earthquake risk reduction to businesses rests in its membership. Its business members primarily govern CREW, though its membership is drawn from business, scientific, and government disciplines. CREW's principle hazard concern is the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

CREW has initiated a business-government dialogue in which the advantages of partnerships to both groups are clearly discernable.

WSSPC

WSSPC is a consortium of the 16 western States and territories, plus the Canadian Provinces of British Columbia and the Yukon. WSSPC was created in 1979 to facilitate information exchange among the State earthquake risk reduction programs. It has evolved to an organization dedicated to discussing matters of seismic risk reduction public policy. WSSPC mission is to provide a forum for policy discussion and develop consensus policy recommendations.

Even though the geographic area of WSSPC overlaps with CREW, the two organizations have different missions.

WSSPC's strength is in providing well thought out policy options, recognizing excellence in seismic risk reduction through its awards, and in sponsoring its annual conference.

Common Ground

The group discussed a variety of topics of common interest such as their organizational decision making processes, means of implementing work plans given how each consortium is differently managed and staffed, and organizational priorities. There was a consensus that the consortia should use each other's strengths. The consortia view themselves as contributing to a common overall national effort. There was also a recognition that there is presently no system, or habit, for interaction. The habit to interact needs to be developed.

The group engaged in an exercise to identify activities in which they can collaborate. The following is a list (some were missed) of suggested activities:

- Improve connections to State Seismic Safety Advisory Boards
- Develop a better common informational website
- Standard operating procedures for a post-disaster clearinghouse

- See that coordinated resolutions are the rule rather than the exception
- Re-evaluate the consortia
- Emphasize EMAC
- Inter-consortia liaisons
- Share Board meeting minutes
- Advocate reinitiating EPAC (?)
- A place to post minutes/reports of regional meetings
- Ideas to bring other Federal agencies and other State agencies into the process
- Emphasis on expanded implementation of research
- Share training and outreach materials
- Get Federal agencies to support the consortia
- Person at FEMA to promote earthquakes to higher education
- Outreach to new associations
- Use consortia to guide grant making (?)
- Discuss issues of forecast and warning
- Have input to Art Frankel, USGS, on technical map issues
- Advocate creation of State Seismic Safety Advisory Boards
- National Earthquake preparedness and mitigation awards
- Coordinate National Earthquake month
- Share lessons learned from partnerships and successes

From this list the group identified and prioritized actions that can be taken in the coming year.

1. Designate liaisons. Action Item: The Executive Directors and Chairs are to work together to create and maintain better liaisons. Discussions of possible ways to do this included posting a calendar of events on each website and exchange meeting schedules and meetings minutes. Individual Boards need to take action on this.
2. Hold a joint meeting of the Boards annually. The meeting date and venue will need to be negotiated, or perhaps a rotating host can be set up. Likely meeting times discussed were in March in Washington, DC. Individual Boards need to take action on this.
3. Design and develop a website. The consensus is to take advantage of the EQNet, which all of the Executive Directors are involved in. Jim Wilkinson to take lead with Elizabeth Lemersal.
4. Hold a National Earthquake Conference every 3 years. Requirements are private support and reasonable registration. Ted Litty and Elizabeth Lemersal will explore the feasibility for this and report back to the Boards.
5. Partners. Use each other's expertise more and collaborate on mutual interests. Enhance/expand implementation of seismic hazards reduction research.