

**National Construction Safety Team (NCST)
Advisory Committee (Committee) Meeting
National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
Gaithersburg, Maryland (via teleconference)
January 11, 2013**

Meeting Summary

Committee Member Attendees:

Jeremy Isenberg, Chair	AECOM
Ronald J. Coleman	Fireforceone
Paul A. Croce	FM Global (retired)
Susan L. Cutter	University of South Carolina
Carlos Fernandez-Pello*	University of California, Berkeley
Jeffrey L. Garrett	CTLGroup
Anne S. Kiremidjian*	Stanford University
R. Shankar Nair	exp US Services Inc.
James R. Quiter	Arup
Sarah A. Rice	The Preview Group, Inc.

* not in attendance

NIST Representatives and Contractor Support:

Howard Harary	Deputy Director, Engineering Laboratory (EL), NIST and Alternate Designated Federal Officer
Eric Letvin	Director, Disaster and Failure Studies Program, EL, NIST
Jack Hayes	Director, National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), EL, NIST
Steve McCabe	Deputy Director, NEHRP
Jason Averill	NIST Program Coordination Office
Tina Faecke	Management and Program Analyst
Michelle Harman	Administrative Assistant
Brian Garrett	BRI Consulting Group

Summary of Discussions

I. Call to Order

Jeremy Isenberg, Chair of the National Construction Safety Team (NCST) Advisory Committee, welcomed the attendees to the conference call meeting to review and finalize the draft Committee recommendations that will be incorporated into a letter and submitted to Congress as the Committee's 2013 annual report. NIST distributed the draft recommendations to all Committee members in advance of the meeting, and attendees were able to view any edits to this

document online through a WebEx teleconferencing site during the meeting discussion.

II. Committee Review of Draft Recommendations

Introductory Paragraphs

The Committee discussed whether and how to strengthen the tone of the second paragraph, which called on Congress to expand (and fund an expansion of) the size and scope of NIST's activities under the NCST Act. Several changes were ultimately made to the paragraph. (Throughout the meeting, Tina Faecke implemented all text changes called for by the Committee by editing the recommendations displayed online via WebEx.)

Recommendation 1—Accelerate Development of the Database

The Committee accepted this draft recommendation without change.

Recommendation 2—Disclose Modeling Approximations and Uncertainties

The Committee accepted this draft recommendation without change.

Recommendation 3—Gather Data on Infrastructure

The Committee focused on the first part of this recommendation, which stated that NCST data collection responsibilities should be expanded to encompass infrastructure as well as buildings because data collection should be designed to lead to improvements in public welfare, life safety, and community resilience. Members discussed the relationships between and definitions of public welfare, life safety, and resilience. The definition of resilience, in particular, has been evolving, and the Committee decided to reference the definition used in a recent study report issued by the National Research Council (“Disaster Resilience: A National Imperative”).

Recommendation 4—Strengthen the Study of How Human Behavior Relates to Casualties

Committee members made several edits to this recommendation to better define the behavior that should be studied and the events in which behavior should be studied. A sentence that concerned the effectiveness of sheltering and designated shelters was deleted, because the Joplin tornado investigation is currently examining that issue. After the Joplin findings are reported, the Committee can discuss (perhaps at its next meeting) whether additional investigative work on sheltering is warranted in relation to Joplin or other events.

Recommendation 5—Investigate More Events

This recommendation expressed support for the scoring criteria that NIST uses to determine which events must be investigated, but indicated that to avoid overlooking valuable data, NIST should also study some events that score below the investigation-triggering threshold. Eric Letvin clarified that currently, investigative personnel are normally deployed for any event scoring higher than 4, while events scoring between 3 and 4 may or may not be investigated depending on factors such as the availability of personnel and funding and whether other agencies are investigating the event. The Committee edited the recommendation to emphasize that resource limitations are preventing NIST from capturing valuable data. These data could be obtained if the agency were able to study more of the events that score below the threshold.

Recommendation 6—Continue to Provide Science-Based Information for Code Development

The Committee edited this recommendation to clarify its intent, which is to call upon Congress to continue its support for NIST's work in providing science-based information for the ongoing development of model building codes and standards. The Chair suggested, and the Committee agreed, to move this recommendation to the top of the list, so that it became recommendation 1.

Recommendation 7—Collect Data on Post-Event Fires

Ronald Coleman, who drafted this recommendation, explained that although there are fire reporting mechanisms in use, such as the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), these systems do not capture all of the data that should be collected for fires that are triggered by disasters. He recommended that NIST personnel collect this missing data to enhance the usefulness of NFIRS. The Committee accepted this recommendation after making several edits, one of which clarified that the recommendation pertains to disasters that are driven by natural events.

III. Public Input

Eric Letvin informed the Committee that NIST had not received any requests from members of the public to speak during the public input period of this meeting.

IV. Final Remarks and Adjournment

The Chair stated that he would prepare the Committee's letter to Congress, and that the Committee's list of recommendations, as amended at this meeting, will form the substance of that letter. Once the letter has been completed, signed, formally cleared, and delivered to Congress, Tina Faecke will e-mail a final copy to each member of the Committee before posting it on the NCST website. The Chair asked that in the interim, Faecke clean up and distribute the edited recommendations to the Committee, and reminded them that no further revisions would be considered or discussed between the members.

The Chair thanked the Committee for its work in enhancing the recommendations, and thanked NIST for its assistance in arranging this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.