

MINUTES OF THE ALASKA SEISMIC HAZARD SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING
HELD April 30 & May 1, 2008



I. OPENING BUSINESS

1. Call to order: Chairman Aho called the meeting to order at 10:45am
2. Roll Call-Commission members John Aho, Gary Carver, David Cole, Rod Combellick, Linda Freed, Roger Hansen, Robert Hicks, Kathy Hosford, Laura Kelly, Dean Maxwell, and Mark Roberts were present for meetings on both April 30th and May 1st, 2008. April Woolery, Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGS) was also present.
3. Agenda approved with changes.
4. Guests: Sarah McNair-Grove attended the ASHSC Meeting on April 30th and May 1st. Robert Forgit of FEMA and John Madden were present on April 30th. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Commissioner Tom Irwin addressed the Commission on April 30th. Katteryna Stiles, Acting Director of the Anchorage Office of Emergency Management (AEOC) was present on May 1.
5. Commission member Hicks MOVED seconded by Commission member Maxwell to approve the minutes from January 31, 2008 with changes. Commission member Carver MOVED seconded by Commission member Kelly to approve the minutes from March 4, 2008 with no changes.

II. BRIEFINGS

1. Robert Forgit of FEMA briefed the Commission on the new FEMA Region 10 (Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska) office in Anchorage. He discussed what FEMA does and what it does not do in a disaster situation. FEMA's mission is to save lives, protect property, and supply basic necessities. FEMA does this by organizing federal agencies to assist affected communities. Mr. Forgit stressed that FEMA does not come in and save the day with cash. They work on rebuilding basic infrastructure to supply water, power, food, and medicine. He covered rapid needs assessment after emergencies, emergency preparedness, and the responsibility of local governments and individuals in emergencies.
2. Alaska Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Tom Irwin addressed the Commission with a statement of support and appreciation for the work that the ASHSC does.
3. John Madden, Director of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and Security Advisor to Governor Palin, discussed what his division does. He pointed out that, like about half of the states, Alaska aligns Homeland Security with Emergency Management in order to most efficiently deal with all hazards. His division is able to work closely with the National Guard in emergencies to organize response efforts. They work to stabilize the effects of a disaster by providing food, water, shelter, energy and medicine as well as transportation, communication and public safety.

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4. Sarah McNair-Grove, Property/Casualty Actuary for the Alaska Division of Insurance, briefed the commission on earthquake insurance in Alaska. Ms. McNair-Grove reviews the rate filings: the premiums that insurance companies want to charge in Alaska. She pointed out that while over the last 20 years the number of insurance companies offering earthquake insurance has remained stable, the premium amounts have grown by about 560%. In contrast, homeowners insurance has grown by only 250% over the same time period. Property/commercial premiums have grown by about 84% during that time. Insurance companies determine rates by using catastrophe modeling to predict damage from earthquakes. There is no industry standard for these models, and many are considered trade secrets and so are not available for public review. Commission members Aho, Cole, Carver and Roberts offered assistance in review of these models to determine whether the assumptions are correct for Alaska. Commission member Combellick has assisted in reviewing rate models in the past.

Committee meetings were held for the balance of the day.

5. Recent Seismic Activity of Interest: Commission member Hansen discussed Alaska seismicity in general with an overview of the major fault systems in the state. In March of 2008 there were 2,176 events. The week of April 14-20 there were 951 events in Alaska. During that week, there were several quakes in the Andreanof Islands: a magnitude 6.4 event on the 15th, followed by a 6.6 event on the 16th. There is a need for more recording stations on the North Slope as well as identification and mapping of potentially active faults. More seismic information is needed to build a seismic activity database for oil and gas development planning. Pump stations two and three and Kaktovik are potential sites for new recording stations. Possible funding sources include ANSS, the University of Alaska, and the State Pipeline Coordinator's Office.
6. Health of the Alaska Seismic Networks and ShakeMap: Commission member Hansen gave an overview of the statewide networks. Commission member Carver asked whether the seismic stations are able to record information if communications fail during an earthquake. Commission member Hansen affirmed that the stations will continue recording and storing data, which can then be retrieved by workers going to the stations sites, if needed.
7. Katteryna Stiles of the AEOC discussed their Damage Assessment Program. This program is designed to be implemented following a disaster in Anchorage. They will first gather data from assigned observers on where the hardest hit areas are and what is needed (fire control, debris removal, triage, etc.). They will then respond accordingly. The AEOC has developed a Post-Disaster Damage Assessment training program to certify people to perform emergency damage assessment. There are plans to expand the program to other communities and have "train the trainer" programs.
8. Commission member Cole discussed ground failure susceptibility hazard maps for Anchorage. He compared the old (1979) and new (draft) maps, pointing out that the new map is based on slope stability analyses and

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estimated displacement. The old map had been based mostly on the damage that occurred in the 1964 Good Friday earthquake.

9. Commission members Roberts and Combellick discussed the WSSPC meeting in Seattle. At the business meeting there, they passed a new tsunami policy resolution. It highlights Alaska, including the need for public education for local tsunami readiness. People must realize that the earthquake itself is a tsunami warning, and that if it is strong or sustained, they should move out of the inundation zone.
10. The National Earthquake Conference: Commission members Roberts and Hansen talked about the “slow earthquake” tsunami threat. If a fault is big enough, it can move slowly and not be felt, yet still generate a dangerous tsunami. In that case, there would not be an earthquake to warn people that a tsunami may be imminent.
11. National Tsunami Hazards Mitigation Program controversy: Commission member Hansen discussed how NOAA appropriated money to use for the national tsunami program, of which they have allegedly kept more than authorized for their own programs. Much of the funds that were intended to go to the state programs have not been forthcoming. Congress has taken notice and has pushed NOAA to disburse the funds as intended. Commission members Hansen and Roberts are prepared to write a letter to support keeping the funding if NOAA moves ahead with this plan.
12. Commission member Hansen reviewed the California Office of Emergency Management’s real-time event exercise. It was an extensive (\$3 million), multi-agency exercise based on what would happen if the 1906 San Francisco earthquake occurred today.
13. Commission member Aho shared two publications: “Design Guide for Improving School Safety in Earthquakes, Floods, and High Winds” (FEMA Pub. 424) and “Design Guide for Earthquakes-A Manual for Architects” (FEMA Pub. 454).

III. OLD BUSINESS

1. Action items: Many were covered in the course of the meeting. Item number 5: the presentation to Commissioner Tom Irwin was very beneficial to ASHSC, as Commissioner Irwin is very supportive of the work done by the commission.
2. Budget: Commissioner Irwin is likely to support the commission’s budget increment request of \$30,000, should we try to get it passed for the next fiscal year. If passed, the increment would bring our budget up to \$40,000.
3. FY09 Report to Legislature: Commission member Aho will aim to have the draft done by December, 2008.

IV. MEETINGS OF INTEREST

1. SERC/LEPC meeting in Fairbanks, September 2008
2. ANSS Implementation Committee meeting, May 17, 2008?

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3. Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC) annual meeting in Anchorage, January 2009
4. EERI Earthquake Scenario workshop in San Francisco, September 17 and 18, 2008
5. IRIS meeting in Stevenson, Washington, June 4 through 6, 2008
6. EERI/WSSPC meeting in Salt Lake City, February, 2009
7. Alaska Council of School Administrators in Anchorage, October 2008
8. Alaska Association of Secondary Schools in Anchorage, October 2008
9. 2014 National Earthquake Conference

V. CRITICAL DEADLINES

1. FY09 Budget to Legislature (Discussed earlier)
2. Draft Report to the legislature 12/01/2008
3. FY08 Final Report to Legislature January, 2009

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation of certificate to outgoing Commission member Linda Freed.
2. Budget strategies and the report to the Legislature were discussed earlier.
3. Presentation to SERC: Commission member Aho will not be able to be there, so Commission member Cole will give the presentation for him.
4. Presentation to School Administrators: their schedule is not final yet, and it costs \$400 for five minutes to present information to this group. Commission member Kelly suggested that we might pursue other routes to get our information to school administrators, Larry LeDoux (new Commissioner of Education) being a great resource.
5. Standard meeting date: ASHSC meetings will now plan to have meetings on the first Thursday of every month. The next face-to-face is scheduled for October 1 and 2, 2008 in Anchorage.
6. Future Briefings:

Commission member Carver suggested that the commission should sponsor Chris Poland (EERI) to give a lecture in Anchorage. The commission might seek a partnership with the University of Alaska and/or corporate entities in support of this lecture. Commission member Aho will call Mr. Poland to see if he is interested.

VII. REPORTS

1. Committee Reports:
 - Insurance-Commission member Maxwell: The committee had concerns about the perceived lack of expertise in evaluating the models used by insurance companies to generate premiums. Several Commission members have offered their assistance in evaluating these models. There is also concern about lack of public awareness regarding earthquake safety. People assume that the government will be there to help them and so they don't purchase earthquake insurance. People also equate fair rates with affordable rates and are reluctant to buy if the prices are too high. Commission member Carver pointed out that availability of

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earthquake insurance from a reputable company is often limited.

Committee deliverables:

- Work with Alaska Division of Insurance (ADOI) to assist in developing standards for rate modeling for earthquake insurance premiums
- Partner with ADOI to provide public information and awareness
- Develop a topic paper to inform the public about what assistance is and is not available after an earthquake, including earthquake insurance availability: how to make an informed decision about whether one should get earthquake insurance
- Schools-Commission member Kelly: The School Committee has established their mission statement: “*Ensure the structural stability and functionality of Alaska’s Schools in the event of a major earthquake or tsunami.*” She points out that this is especially important as schools are often designated as shelters in disasters. Commission member Roberts suggested that next spring’s ASHSC meeting be held in Kodiak and that we should try to invite as many top people in the state as we can to celebrate and highlight the success of the school retrofit there. Commission member Hansen volunteered to suggest the Kodiak school seismic retrofit project as a story idea to Ned Rozell, a science writer at UAF.
- Earthquake Scenario-Commission member Combellick gave a PowerPoint presentation on planning and response scenarios. He will e-mail the prioritization matrix to the other Earthquake Scenario Committee members to fill in and return.
- Education & Outreach-Commission member Hosford: Committee deliverables include:
 - Produce a quarterly newsletter with ASHSC review and approval before distribution. Commission member Hicks volunteered to work on this, with the draft of the first newsletter due by May 19, 2008.
 - Develop a directory of speakers for seismic event topics, along with a media package, to be produced by Commission members Hicks and Roberts.
 - Develop educational materials for the public
- Hazards Identification-Commission member Carver discussed active fault mapping and characterization. Current knowledge is poor, so these should have first priority for future work. Commission member Carver will draft a letter to State Geologist Robert Swenson (via Commission member Aho) to encourage DGGs to do more in this area.
- Response, Recovery, & Loss Estimation-Commission member Roberts: This committee is still very new, so there was no report.
- Post-Earthquake Planning-Commission member Carver gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the prioritization of response efforts based on severity of damage, population numbers, and critical infrastructure. He also had a list of information contacts to reach

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immediately after an event to use in coordination of response efforts. In addition, Commission member Carver presented an “internal coordination protocol” for the ASHSC which outlined response to seismic events.

- Partnership-Commission member Aho: Partnership is a project-by-project effort. An example is the Joyner Lecture project with Chris Poland. The committee will be working on developing more partnership projects.

VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Public: None

Commission Members:

Commission member Combellick suggested that for the next ASHSC meeting, members send letters suggesting replacements for outgoing member Freed. Commission member Freed noted that whoever takes her place is not likely to have another entity covering travel costs, as she has with the City of Kodiak. This will impact the Commission’s budget.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. The website was current as of the meeting.
2. The current budget stands at \$5,303.10, but that did not include the travel costs for the current meeting.
3. Next meeting will be a teleconference on June 5, 2008 at 9:00 am.

X. ADJOURNMENT

1. Commission member Hansen MOVED, seconded by Commission member Maxwell to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm on May 1, 2008.