

**Meeting notes:** MES summer meeting in Portland, Oregon, July 31, 2023.

### **Lightning Briefs-**

The following MES partners provided briefs on their accomplishments as well as challenges and gaps since the last summer NTHMP meeting: International Tsunami Information Center, Washington State, U.S. Virgin Islands, TsunamiZone, Puerto Rico, Oregon, East Coast Region, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, State of California, and American Samoa.

*Presentation slides will be provided as an Appendix to these meeting minutes.*

### **Work Plan 2022/23 Briefs and Work Plan 2023/24-**

MES Work Plan activity leads presented on the state of the activity. The following questions were considered:

Are Action Steps/Milestones complete?

Is the Activity complete?

Are there any documents/products that MES need to get from the Work Plan leads to distribute or put on the NTHMP website?

Any actions needed from MES Partners or Co-chairs?

If the Activity is not complete, should it remain on the Work Plan for 2023/24?

#### **Activity #1: Exercise Support for NTWC, PTWC, and WCS in annual exercises (CaribeWave, Lantex, Pacifex). (Lead: NTWC, WCS, PTWC)**

Surveys were sent out after each exercise. Only 15 responses received at this time. Links will be re-shared again, in one last attempt and push for feedback. More information is needed to produce results to refine the exercise process. This activity should remain on next year's wWrk Plan

#### **Activity #2: Expansion of TsunamiReady to support and/or encourage recognition for maritime communities such as ports and harbors. (Lead: CA)**

This activity is complete. California provided an overview of the work plan activity with NTHMP members for discussion at the 2023 NTHMP Winter Meeting during the MES sessions. Discussion and input from NTHMP partners indicated that there was not a need to develop a new Tier or Category of TsunamiReady® specifically for maritime, but that more could be done to work with the "Maritime Communities" within the existing TsunamiReady® Communities where the ports or harbors are located and to also consider using the TsunamiReady Supporter® category.

#### **Activity #3: Hazus Tsunami Expansion (Lead: NESEC, WA, CA)**

On May 16, 2023, MES had a successful first meeting with FEMA regarding Hazus tsunami expansion. FEMA understands our concerns and will work with the NTHMP to address them over the next several years. Possible updates to the Hazus 6.1 release (scheduled for November 2023) may include new mapping schemes, International Building Code (IBC) data and updating

the USACE public National Structure Inventory (NSI). If these updates occur as scheduled, building data development work will not be required to enable tsunami nationally, making it relatively easy to add additional states. I will follow up on these possible new and positive developments and encourage MES continued support and participation. Activity #3 is ongoing and should remain on the MES Work Plan for 2023-24.

**Activity #4: Method for Identifying Potentially Tsunami Vulnerable Populations (Lead: NESEC, WA, CA)**

The Guide has been updated incorporating comments and recommendations from MES Co-Chairs. The Guide was further discussed at the April NTHMP Sub-Committee Chair Meeting and subsequently distributed to the NTHMP and FEMA for their review and feedback. The Guide is now complete and should be considered for possible inclusion on NTHMP website. Activity #4 is ongoing as it needs adjustment of concept and identification of methods through FEMA Risk Assessment.

**Activity #5: Tsunami Debris Guidebook (Lead: OR)**

Draft nearly complete. Currently considering how the current work of MMS feeds into the guidance. Two level approach: Level 1 – Debris confined to water; Level 2 – Debris on land and in water. Provides information for debris planning, doesn't duplicate existing docs Provides information on tsunami debris unique properties. Activity #5 is ongoing and should remain on the MES Work Plan for 2023-24.

**Activity #6: Tsunami Vertical Evacuation Guidebook (Lead: OR)**

First draft review scheduled for Spring 2024. Publication ready document scheduled for August 2024. Activity #6 is ongoing and should remain on the MES Work Plan for 2023-24.

**Activity #7: TsuInfo Alert newsletter (Lead: WA)**

Work continues and contributions encouraged. Activity #7 is ongoing. Partners encouraged to submit article of 150-500 words (700 max) with 1-2 images to Stephanie Earls, stephanie.earls@dnr.wa.gov

**Activity #8: Tsunami canned messaging (Lead: WA)**

Initial deliverables: Graphics for each tsunami alert level; Closure graphics for beaches, harbors, etc.; Tsunami "101" graphics; Pre-written alt text for all graphics; Pre-written "post-ready" canned text •Social media checklist for stakeholder use; Translations for some graphics (Spanish, Korean, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese (simp)); Future/ongoing deliverables; Additional translations; Social media training for stakeholders. PNG/JPEG graphics, PDF text, and editable versions available on the Washington State Preparedness Basecamp.

<https://3.basecamp.com/3363842/projects/3191024>

**Activity #9: Hazard simplification project "deep dive" (Lead: WA, WCS)**

**Activity #10: Evacuation route wayfinding project (Lead: WA)**

All locations with current or new pedestrian evacuation walk maps will be completed by summer 2023. Data cleanup and import to Google MyMaps currently ongoing, completion in

fall 2023. Data included in Google MyMaps products: Locations and conditions of currently existing signs; Locations where new signs are recommended; Pictures and GPS coordinates for each existing or new sign; Markers organized into priority tiers to simplify funding requests and installation projects.

**Activity #11: TsunamiZone.org (Lead: CA)**

Work continues and contributions encouraged. Activity #11 is ongoing.

New Work Plan activity for 2023/24 will be the following activity to be led by MES co-chairs and a Tiger Team: "Recommendation for TsunamiReady program and guidelines". A call for volunteers for the TsunamiReady Tiger Team resulted in 9 volunteers: Elyssa Tappero (WA), Ed Fratto (East Coast), Matt Palmer (CA), Mark Benthien (TsunamiZone), Dave Snider (NWS), Wildaomaris Gonzalez (Puerto Rico), Althea Rizzo (Oregon), Mario Kaipat (CNMI), Ryan Aylward (NWS).

MES Work Plan activities for 2023/24 to be finalized in Fall 2023.

**TsunamiReady**

NWS Task, provided summer 2023, to MES: MES to provide recommendations to improve the TsunamiReady® Guidelines and forms (for Community and Supporter). Co-chairs highlighted the following statement from NWS Directive 10-704: "The NTHMP MES may review existing and proposed guidelines and provide recommendations to the NWS. It may address TsunamiReady challenges, suggest projects, publish guidance, and help prioritize future goals for the program. The NTHMP MES, in collaboration with NWS Regions and WFOs, may provide changes to the listing of NTHMP MES identified TsunamiReady target/tsunami at-risk jurisdictions. Major issues that arise with TsunamiReady may be elevated by the NTHMP MES co-chairs to the NTHMP's Coordinating Committee for subsequent review and final determination by the NWS TsunamiReady Program." As a result, any proposed changes by MES to the TsunamiReady program must be reflected in the TsunamiReady (TR) Guidelines & Forms.

MES co-chairs broke out the members into small groups to discuss the following, (it should be noted some members preferred to have a larger group discussion):

- What TR issue: TsunamiReady Programmatic/Mission/Vision/etc. to address
- Why this TR issue: The concern with current Programmatic/Mission/Vision/etc. issue
- What TR Guideline: TsunamiReady Guideline(s) to address this Programmatic/Mission/Vision/etc. issue
- Connection: Identify where addressing this Programmatic/Mission/Vision/etc. issue links to a concern or outcomes identified in the TSTAP, SAB, or NTHMP Strategic Plan (if applicable)

The break out groups reported on their discussion to the larger MES group.

The following are highlights of the discussion:

- Need reevaluate the goal of tsunami
- Tsunami Ready program needs a pathway and resources to achieve its goal

- Stakeholders should be able to support in achieving Tsunami Ready recognition; for instance, State/Territory could serve roles of the WCM in certain circumstances where WCMs do not have the time
  - leverage current resources to assist program and not change current objectives and goals
- Term should encompass more than awareness and preparedness
- Can we make TsunamiReady Scalable
- Need clear steps to support Maritime Communities.
- Incentives for Tsunami Ready program
  - Hard to apply or renew
  - Lack of ongoing incentives are a barrier
- NO guidelines are problematic but it is truly a capacity issue
  - TsunamiReady county rather than a community who won't have to meet all the guidelines
- Being TR has brought more tsunami awareness to the community in American Samoa
  - American Samoa is one community and has been TR for ~1 year
  - Most tsunamis would be a local tsunami vs distant tsunami
  - Roads to schools are on the coast so schools need to evacuate everyone to a single spot, but have met resistance from families
  - In an earthquake, as soon as safe enough to move, move to safe area vs waiting for it to end No higher ground available for evacuation
  - TR issue: No vertical evacuation
    - TR guidelines do not require vertical evacuation for TR designation - with no vertical evacuation available, TR may give residents a false sense of security
  - Could there be different types of TR - local, distant, no vertical evacuation?
    - People don't understand the differences between local vs distant
    -
- What TR issue: Lack of infrastructure for coastal communities in Alaska
  - What TR issue: No true incentives for the program; consider having a TR county vs community
  - What TR issue: What does it mean to have TR status?
  - TsunamiReady vs TsunamiReady Tier 2
    - Some communities need more work to be prepared and resilient -- Tier 2 needs to include a plan for vertical evacuation for example
    - Does TR drive a communities or territories tsunami program?
      - Mixed response (e.g., WA 'no', Puerto Rico 'yes')

- Recommendation that EM accreditation process should include tsunami

Missing link to address some of the above issues might be local TsunamiReady Board.

**MES co-chair nomination**

MES co-chair nominations encouraged and requested to replace Todd Becker (CA). Todd has finished his 3-year term. No nominations received. Per terms, needs to be State/Territory.

Noted that:

*Chairpersons through January 2024:*

Lead Chair: Nicolás Arcos, NOAA First Vice Chair: Regina Browne, USVI Second Vice Chair: TBD from Fall 2023 elections

*Chairpersons after January 2024:*

Lead Chair: Regina Browne, USVI; First Vice Chair: TBD from Fall 2023 elections; Second Vice Chair: Nicolás Arcos, NOAA

Nicolás Arcos and Regina Browne terms end January 2025.