

# Mitigation & Recovery Planning Work Group

## Terms of Reference

November 12, 2019

### Introduction

The Mitigation & Recovery Planning Work Group (MRPWG) was formed to improve tsunami mitigation and recovery planning and coastal community resilience nationally. These terms are defined by FEMA and other sources as:

- **Mitigation:** Sustained action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from natural hazards and their effects.
- **Recovery:** The process to restore people or communities to a new normal condition after a harmful event.

Tsunamis can be extremely deadly (e.g. 230,000 fatalities during the 2004 Indonesian event) and have costly, long-term impacts (e.g. 2011 Tohoku event was the costliest natural disaster at more than \$360B). Implementing robust tsunami mitigation and recovery planning strategies will greatly reduce these impacts.

Mitigation and recovery planning work at the NTHMP is reinforced through the recommendations within the *Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017* (P.L. 115-25 §3201 et al) as well as a recommendation in the *2017 NTHMP External Review* report. The *2018-2023 NTHMP Strategic Plan* includes a theme to address tsunami mitigation and recovery issues through the development of guidance and the implementation of products by NTHMP members and communities. A secondary benefit of the MRPWG will be to reduce the workloads of other NTHMP subcommittees so that they can focus on core tsunami activities, such as mapping, modeling, education, outreach, preparedness, exercises, and warning coordination.

### Purpose

The purpose of the MRPWG is to:

- Address NTHMP Strategic Plan goals and strategies with regard to tsunami mitigation and recovery planning by:
  - Leveraging the work of outside experts and organizations, such as FEMA, the American Society of Civil Engineers, land-use planners, and recovery specialists;
  - Focusing on pertinent issues to NTHMP members; and,
  - Creation of and reference to planning guidance and example products.
- Work with the NTHMP Mitigation & Education Subcommittee and Mapping & Modeling Subcommittee to identify partner needs with regard to tsunami mitigation and recovery strategies and help transfer some of the workloads of those subcommittees.
- Develop guidance which addresses tsunami mitigation and recovery issues and covers two levels of needs and capabilities: 1) low-cost, simple products (“recommended” level); and 2) more advanced, site-specific products (“advanced” level).
- At the request of an NTHMP partner, facilitate review of and provide feedback on partner tsunami mitigation and recovery products to ensure the production methods and the products themselves are accurate, consistent, and cost-effective.

- Provide guidance on successfully implemented tsunami mitigation and recovery activities by highlighting application best practices and leveraged funding sources.

## Authority

The National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program's (NTHMP) Mitigation and Recovery Planning Work Group (MRPWG) began on July 25, 2018, when initial authorization was approved by the NTHMP Coordinating Committee. This Work Group was formalized into existence by the Coordinating Committee at its meeting on August 23, 2019. This is a permanently authorized Work Group.

## Membership

The MRPWG membership is composed of designees from the NTHMP partners who represent emergency management, geoscience, engineering, or other professions with tsunami mitigation and recovery expertise. For formal MRPWG decisions or votes, only one designee from each NTHMP State, Territory or Region and FEMA, NOAA, and USGS shall have a vote. The NTHMP Administrator is an ex-officio member.

The current official membership is maintained on the [NTHMP website](#). Outside experts and other stakeholders may be invited to participate in MRPWG discussions but their agreement is not required for any formal consensus. These might include:

- Tsunami experts from universities and private consulting companies
- Land-Use planning experts
- Social science experts
- Civil, structural, and coastal engineers
- Others with community mitigation and recovery expertise

## Co-Chairs

The MRPWG shall have three Co-Chairs selected from the body of the MRPWG and approved by a majority vote of the NTHMP Coordinating Committee at the annual NTHMP meeting. There is no "lead" Co-Chair; each Co-Chair has equal authority and powers to call meetings, preside, and report on MRPWG activities to the Coordinating Committee. Two Co-Chairs must be members of the NTHMP Coordinating Committee, one must be an emergency manager and the other is at-large. One Co-Chair must be from FEMA.

Chairpersons will serve for two years with rotation staggered to maintain continuity in leadership. The Coordinating Committee member-at-large and the FEMA Co-Chair are elected in odd years, and the emergency management Co-Chair is elected in even years.

Initially, the emergency management term expires at the 2020 NTHMP Annual Meeting. The FEMA and Coordinating Committee Co-Chair terms expire at the 2021 NTHMP Annual Meeting.

In the event a Co-Chair resigns from the position during his/her term of office, the NTHMP Administrator shall make a call for nominees from the respective grouping (FEMA, emergency management, or Coordinating Committee at-large) within 30 days of the vacancy to MRPWG

members. Up to 10 days is allowed for the nominations period but may be shorter if the MRPWG is meeting in person.

A vote among the MRPWG members will be conducted by the NTHMP Administrator within 30 days of close of nominations. The winner of the vote total will be recommended to the Coordinating Committee for confirmation at the next Coordinating Committee meeting. The new Co-Chair assumes the position upon Coordinating Committee confirmation to fulfill the remainder of the term of office for the person who vacated the position.

There are no term limits for MRPWG Co-Chair positions, although it is desirable to limit each Co-Chair to two full two-year terms.

## Communications

Meetings shall normally be held as desired by conference call or in-person when possible. Between meetings, communication will take place primarily by email and conference calls, although meetings for task teams are encouraged. MRPWG Meeting notes and actions items will be summarized by the Co-Chairs and provided for posting to the to the NTHMP web site as soon as possible after meetings conclude.

## Activities

The MRPWG shall develop a multi-year vision plan for the period of the current strategic plan. An Annual Work Plan that describes MRPWG task activities to be accomplished during the calendar year will be developed and submitted for approval at the Annual Meeting by the Coordinating Committee.

The MRPWG vision plan and Annual Work Plan will be evaluated annually to measure progress and the tie to one or more strategies and outcomes in the NTHMP Strategic Plan. Strategies for the completion of action items will be coordinated by the Co-Chairs.

Members of the MRPWG may recommend grant-related mitigation and recovery planning activities to help the Work Group complete its tasks. If supported by the MRPWG voting members, a recommendation will be made to NOAA through the NTHMP Coordinating Committee of its support.

## NOAA/NWS Grants duties

There are no grant duties for the MRPWG.