



State Of California

# ALFRED E. ALQUIST SEISMIC SAFETY COMMISSION

*Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor*

Chief Don Parker  
*Fire Protection*  
Chairman

Hon. Mark Church  
*Local Government*  
Vice Chair

Gary McGavin, AIA  
*Architectural Planning*

Dennis Mileti  
*Social Services*

Hon. Elaine Alquist  
*State Senate*

James Schwab  
*Senate Representative*

Hon. Sam Blakeslee  
*State Assembly*

Dr. Lucy Jones  
*Seismology*

Arul Arulmoli  
*Soils Engineer*

Andrew Adelman  
*City Building Official*

Henry Renteria  
*Office of Emergency Services*

Grace Koch  
*OES Representative*

David Thorman  
*State Architect*

Dave Walls  
*Building Standards*  
*Commission*

Hon. Ken Cooley  
*Cities Government*

Bill Chubb  
*Utilities*

Sharron Leon  
*Emergency Services*

Bradley Mitzelfelt  
*County Government*

Ali Sadre  
*Structural Engineering*

Michael Stevens  
*Insurance*

John Littrell  
*Mechanical Engineer*

Richard McCarthy  
Executive Director

Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission  
Minutes of Meeting

April 10, 2008

Wallis Annenberg Building, Muses Room, Exposition Park  
700 State Drive, Los Angeles, California

## Members Participating

Don Parker, Chair  
Andrew Adelman (arrived at 9:30 a.m.)  
Kandiah (Arul) Arulmoli  
Jonathan Changus  
William Chubb  
Ken Cooley  
Christina Curry (arrived at 9:35 a.m.)  
Lucy Jones  
Sharon Leao (arrived at 9:35 a.m.)  
John Littrell (arrived at 10:00 a.m.)  
Elizabeth Mathieson  
Gary McGavin  
Dennis Mileti  
Brad Mitzelfelt (arrived at 9:10 a.m.)  
Ali Sadre  
Michael Stevens  
David Thorman  
David Walls

## Members Absent

Mark Church, Vice Chair  
James Schwab

## Staff Participating

Richard McCarthy, Executive Director  
Karen Cogan, Executive Assistant  
Robert Anderson, Staff Geologist  
Henry Reyes, Staff Structural Engineer  
Fred Turner, Senior Structural Engineer

## I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commission Chairman Don Parker called the meeting of the Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission to order at 9:03 a.m. Executive Assistant Karen Cogan called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

## II. WELCOME: CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Mr. Jeffrey N. Rudolph, President and CEO, California Science Center, welcomed the Seismic Safety Commission. He explained that the California Science Center, the most attended museum in Southern California, is a state-funded and nonprofit organization with

a mission of making science fun, especially for children. He said the Science Center hosts a number of permanent displays and exhibits as well as special events. He noted that the building housing the meeting also contains a charter elementary school, learning classrooms, and educational programming for children and teachers.

Mr. Rudolph talked about the history of the Annenberg Building and described the retrofit work done using Proposition 122 funds and a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Chairman Parker thanked Mr. Rudolph for his introductory remarks. He invited commissioners, staff, and members of the audience to take a guided tour of the earthquake exhibits in the Creative World section of the Science Center.

The Commission recessed for a tour and reconvened at 10:00 a.m.

### **III. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Chairman Parker recommended adjusting the agenda to take the report on the Japan earthquake investigation before the Executive Director's Report.

#### **Blue Ribbon Committee - Fire Following Earthquake**

Chairman Parker reported that since the last meeting, he, Commissioner Michael Stevens, and Mr. McCarthy had met with Insurance Association representatives to discuss the issue of fire following earthquake. He noted there is a possibility that a large earthquake could trigger more fires than responders can handle, creating the potential for a huge conflagration disaster. He pointed out that 28,000 buildings on about 5,000 blocks were lost to fire following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

Chairman Parker said California has certain advantages, including a state-of-the-art mutual aid system and eight resident Urban Search and Rescue teams, as well as certain vulnerabilities and needs. He proposed establishing a special blue ribbon panel to consider insurance issues and infrastructure needs for dealing with fire following earthquake. He asked Commissioner Stevens and former Commissioner Don Manning to co-chair the panel, and recommended inviting participation from the California Fire Chiefs Association and other groups.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 14, 2008 MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Elizabeth Mathieson pointed out an error in the first paragraph under Item VI on Page 6; she noted the last sentence should read: "He indicated that in the three years of experimental operations, there have been 30 false alarms in 1,713 activations."

Commissioner Mathieson recommended correcting the spelling of Dr. Tom Brocher's name on Page 5.

Commissioner Kandiah Arulmoli questioned the vote tally for Item III on Page 2. Staff indicated the vote tally would be verified and corrected as necessary.

ACTION: A motion was made and seconded that:

*The Commission approve the minutes of the February 14, 2008 meeting as amended.*

\* Motion carried, 17 - 0 (Commissioner John Littrell absent during voting).

**VII. REVIEW AND ADOPT REPORT ON NIIGATA EARTHQUAKE (Out of Order)**

Mr. McCarthy invited comments regarding the draft report about the visit of the Commission-sponsored investigation team to Japan last fall. He welcomed guidance as to whether the recommendations should be prioritized and whether to include a recommendation regarding retrofit codes.

Chairman Parker recommended using bulleted points rather than numbers for the recommendations.

Commissioner Mathieson proposed moving Recommendation 1 farther down on the list, and other commissioners agreed.

Mr. McCarthy advised that the staff sent a draft copy of the report to the Governor's Office. He said the Agency Secretary was pleased with the document and would be adding an introductory comment by Secretary Marin.

Mr. McCarthy referred to the email from Director of Legislation Larry Rillera with some proposed revisions and a new recommendation, and he asked if the Commission wanted to include that language. Commissioners expressed support for the additions drafted by the staff.

Mr. McCarthy recommended that the Commission approve the report, with the understanding that Commissioners Arulmoli and Wall will work with the staff to incorporate the new language.

ACTION: Commissioner Ken Cooley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stevens, that:

*The Commission approve the report with the revisions proposed.*

Commissioner Mathieson pointed out a technical error in the last paragraph on Page 7 of the report. She recommended inserting "similar to JMA" after the reference to the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale in the third sentence and changing "and" to "an" in the last line. Mr. McCarthy said the staff would make the appropriate changes.

Commissioner Arulmoli questioned the accuracy of the yen amounts. Mr. McCarthy indicated that the staff would verify all the calculations.

\* Motion carried, 18 - 0.

## **V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **Budget Update**

Mr. McCarthy suggested having a brief budget update at this meeting and a more detailed discussion about budgeting strategy at the June meeting. He reported that the Commission's proposed 2008-09 budget was approved by both the Assembly and Senate, and that legislators particularly liked the research projects and the leveraging of outside funding.

Mr. McCarthy said the staff's budget projections are close and consistent with those of Contracted Fiscal Management. He recommended spending any extra year-end funds on new office computers.

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) De-obligation Update**

Mr. McCarthy noted that the Commission is planning to repay the remaining \$73,000 of its FEMA obligation in June.

### **10%-12% Budget Reduction Drill for FY 08/09**

Mr. McCarthy drew attention to the worksheets provided in the meeting packet showing possible expenditure cuts in response to a 10 percent and a 12 percent mandated budget reduction. He recommended that the Commission start planning options now and take action at the June meeting.

Mr. McCarthy informed the Commission that the second investigative trip to Japan was cancelled because of the state freeze on travel, so a \$50,000 balance remains in the Commission's Earthquake Investigations Account.

Mr. McCarthy cautioned that there could be reductions in budgets for special funds as well as for agencies funded by the general fund, which could affect the Commission's research program. He said the funds are protected by the gift agreement developed by the Attorney General. He noted it might be prudent for the Commission to forego billing for overhead and staff time, and perhaps require grant recipients to pay a share of the Commission's administrative costs to support the program.

## **VI. PRESENTATION BY THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (SFPUC) ON THE WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Ms. Julie Labonte, Director, Water System Improvement Program, SFPUC, explained that the SFPUC recently issued a change notice report to the Seismic Safety Commission advising the status of the improvement program and explaining proposed changes. She said she would provide an overview of the SFPUC system, and then Mr. Brian Sadden, Manager, Earthquake

Design Bureau would describe the capital improvement program, discuss the program's status and changes, and talk about key seismic efforts and projects.

Ms. Labonte showed a map of the SFPUC service area and facilities. She noted the Hetch Hetchy, a 167-mile gravity-driven distribution system, is known for its efficiency and superior water quality. She explained that the system crosses three major earthquake faults, and any outages in water service would affect customers in seven counties. She stated that SFPUC embarked on a major capital improvement program approved by the voters in 2002, and a number of refinements have been made since then. Ms. Labonte reviewed the SFPUC's level of service objectives in terms of seismic reliability, water quality, delivery reliability, and water supply. She said the SFPUC is required by its enabling legislation to make annual reports to the Seismic Safety Commission and provide notice of any changes resulting in delays, additions, or deletions in the work or scheduling.

Mr. Sadden discussed the SFPUC's process of establishing criteria to meet seismic level of service goals. He noted the Seismic Safety Commission's review of the capital improvement program in 2006 included six recommendations regarding public outreach, establishment of task forces, site-specific hazard analysis, a seismic research program, an environmental review schedule, and coordination with water retailers to address risks to their distribution systems, because those systems also affect the ability of end users to receive water. Mr. Sadden said the SFPUC's seismic efforts have been based on conservative design factors, developed in cooperation with the U.S. Geological Survey and based on fault offset studies. He reported that SFPUC plans to enter into a cooperative agreement with Caltrans to coordinate projects crossing the Hayward fault and major highway systems.

Chairman Parker thanked Ms. Labonte and Mr. Sadden for the presentation.

## **VIII. UPDATE ON EARTHQUAKE RESEARCH PROGRAM PROJECTS/ CONTRACTS**

### **Update on Current Projects**

Mr. McCarthy informed the Commission that the household mitigation survey, tsunami project, and Art Center College of Design projects were underway, the Department of General Services was reviewing the tall buildings research proposal, and the PG&E project was pending review at the Energy Commission. He said the Field Act contract had just been finalized.

### **Science Center**

Dr. David Bibas, California Science Center, described the proposed earthquake exhibits and renovations for the Structures Gallery within the Creative World section of the Science Center. He said the purpose of the project is to upgrade the exhibits, reorganize displays in clusters, stress preparedness, and motivate action. He showed slides of the exhibits and talked about the improvements proposed.

Chairman Parker thanked Dr. Bibas for the earlier tour of the gallery. He asked the staff whether this project would qualify as the kind of research eligible for grant funding. Mr. McCarthy responded that the agreement refers to “projects.” He noted that all projects funded by the Commission should have some research component. He proposed including an evaluation survey of visitors to the exhibits to measure the effectiveness of what they learned.

Chairman Parker said the Commission looks forward to working with the Science Center. Mr. McCarthy noted that Commissioners Mileti and Jones will review the proposal. He added that this project may provide a leveraging opportunity for the Commission. Commissioner Jones advocated making use of existing social science research in designing the exhibits.

### **Western States Seismic Policy Council**

Mr. McCarthy said that as an active member of the Western States Seismic Policy Council (WSSPC), the Commission would like to develop a Web page to better communicate with seismic boards and commissions in other states, possibly making use of the Commission’s existing Website, currently being maintained by San Diego State University. He asked Senior Engineering Geologist Robert Anderson to discuss the proposal in more detail.

Mr. Anderson explained that the proposal calls for the Commission to co-host a Web discussion center with Internet links to clearinghouses in Utah, Nevada, and other states. He advised that a major challenge will be providing access through the San Diego State firewall system to multiple entities. He noted that another option would be to have WSSPC take the lead in creating a Web page on another server; he said he believed this would be a better solution.

### **Hospital Nonstructural Earthquake and Fire Performance Project**

Senior Structural Engineer Fred Turner proposed that the Commission consider a \$200,000 grant for designing a test structure for studying the post-earthquake fire resistance of damaged buildings. He said the proposal calls for replicating an acute-care hospital setting on one floor. He indicated he would have more details on this project at the June meeting.

Mr. McCarthy advised that the proposal was sent to the California Hospital Association for its evaluation.

Mr. Turner noted that the total cost of the project is estimated at \$4.6 million to \$4.9 million, with funding coming from a number of partners, including the California Healthcare Foundation. He cautioned that the project’s success depends in part on a \$1.6 funding request to the National Institutes of Standards and Technology, which will likely be decided in August.

Chairman Parker thanked Mr. Turner for the update.

## **IX. UPDATE ON EARTHQUAKE SCENARIOS (SAN ANDREAS/HAYWARD FAULTS)**

Mr. McCarthy noted that after the investigative trip to Japan, Agency Secretary Rosario Marin came back with ideas about ways California could promote public preparedness, including a one-day statewide event. He said groups in Northern and Southern California have been working this year to plan major public exercises next fall, and a statewide event will probably take place in future years. He invited Commissioner Jones to discuss activities in Southern California.

Commissioner Jones said a major public drill will be conducted in Southern California next November, based on a scenario to be released in early May at a Golden Guardian conference. She reported that a couple big issues have already been identified: fire following earthquake, and water distribution. She observed that experts can define the problems fairly well, but finding solutions will be difficult. Commissioner Jones noted that lessons from the November exercise will be incorporated in a final publication next spring.

Commissioner Jones said another part of the November public preparedness activities will be a Mega-Cities conference focusing on public policy. She drew attention to a handout describing the conference program. She noted that FEMA will be providing funding for the conference proceedings.

## **X. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Commissioner Changus recommended that the Commission support AB 2793 (Blakeslee), a bill that would allow engineers and inspectors to report dangerous conditions in unreinforced masonry buildings to local building officials without incurring liability. He said the bill contains specific language clarifying that liability remains with the building owner.

Janet Gunter, San Pedro and Peninsula Homeowners Coalition, said residents of San Pedro face risks from port accidents, storage and transmission of hazardous materials, and tsunamis, and government officials have done little to address these problems. She noted that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state agencies, and local jurisdictions have not paid attention to the concerns of the public. Ms. Gunter stated that Amerigas' 25-million-gallon liquid propane gas storage facility reportedly located on the Palos Verde Fault jeopardizes the safety of people for miles around. She urged the Seismic Safety Commission to do whatever it could to help her neighbors.

Jody James, Coalition and Northwest Neighborhood Council, displayed a map showing potential gas leak sites and liquefaction zones. She emphasized the magnitude of the hazard and asked for the Commission's assistance. She recommended more research and greater protection for the community.

Chuck Hart, San Pedro Peninsula Homeowners United, Inc., said the possibility of a major disaster has been a risk to the area for over thirty years, and little has changed during that time to improve safety. He read excerpts from a newspaper article about a propane explosion resulting from a train derailment, and noted the same conditions are present in San Pedro.

Mr. Hart noted that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency bases its risk management planning standards on worst-case and alternative scenarios, but Tosco's 1999 risk management

plan is inconsistent with Amerigas' risk management plan for the same area. He advocated new and accurate risk management plans that adequately consider seismic impacts.

Chairman Parker explained that the Seismic Safety Commission is a policy advisory body rather than a regulatory agency. He noted a Commission subcommittee on tsunamis met in San Pedro two years ago, and the Commission is considering a partnership with the ports and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to assess tsunami risks.

Mr. McCarthy asked the speakers to provide information on the agencies contacted and their responses. He offered to review the materials and make suggestions. Ms. Gunter expressed her appreciation for the Commission's assistance. She noted there is a dire need for more research regarding risks and mitigation.

Chairman Parker thanked the speakers for their comments.

## **XI. MISCELLANEOUS & GOOD OF MEETING**

Ms. Cogan thanked commissioners and staff for their generous donations to the United Way campaign. She reported that the Commission received a Platinum Award for this effort.

Ms. Cogan said she would have an update at the June meeting about Red Cross preparedness projects in San Francisco and the activities of the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) group.

## **XII. ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

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Sue Celli  
Office Manager

Approved by:

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Richard McCarthy  
Executive Director