

NTHMP

Warning Coordination Subcommittee

Terms of Reference

November 12, 2019

History

In 2005, the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP) West Coast Tsunami Warning Coordination Subcommittee (WCS) was formed as a mechanism for tsunami warning system participants along the U.S. West Coast, Alaska, and British Columbia coastal regions to provide input on the tsunami warning system, including tsunami alert messaging, tsunami alerting processes and procedures, and tsunami alert dissemination conducted by the National Tsunami Warning Center, known then as the West Coast/Alaska Tsunami Warning Center.

As the NTHMP expanded to all U.S. coastal states, commonwealths and territories, the subcommittee membership expanded to include these areas, and expanded the scope accordingly to include both the National Tsunami Warning Center (NTWC - formerly the West Coast/Alaska Warning Center) located in Palmer, Alaska, and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) located in Ewa Beach, Hawaii. During the November 1, 2007 NTHMP meeting, the subcommittee structure was re-aligned and the WCS was officially broadened to include all coastal states and territories, and international partners serviced by the Warning Centers including the British Virgin Islands and Canada, with the purpose and authority given below.

Purpose

The WCS will help improve US tsunami warning system effectiveness by providing NTHMP partners a means to exchange experiences, provide input, develop recommendations and discuss operational procedures and products. The WCS will execute strategies as assigned in the NTHMP Strategic Plan, and activities as assigned by the NTHMP Coordinating Committee.

Authority

The WCS is the primary mechanism for NTHMP partner input to NOAA's operational tsunami warning system. As such, its actions and recommendations, achieved by consensus of the members, will be considered to represent the collective will of those partners. Major changes proposed through the WCS are vetted through the NTHMP Coordinating

Committee for recommendation to the National Weather Service (NWS). Minor changes proposed and approved through the WCS are implemented by the Tsunami Warning Centers. This authority is established within the context of the *Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017* (PL 115-25) and subject to the provisions of Section 3204 of the Act.

Membership

The WCS is composed of designees from the NTHMP partners who represent the operational tsunami warning program interests of those partners as well as NWS tsunami warning system specialists. The NTHMP Administrator is an ex-officio member.

Membership on the WCS includes:

- Emergency Management representatives appointed to the NTHMP Coordinating Committee
- Tsunami Warning Center Directors and/or designated NTWC & PTWC employees
- NWS Regional Tsunami Program leaders (Eastern, Southern, Western, Pacific, and Alaska Regions)
- International Tsunami Warning Center (ITIC) Director and/or designated ITIC employees
- International Tsunami Information Center - Caribbean Office (ITIC-CAR) Manager and/or designated ITIC-CAR employees
- US Navy – Joint Typhoon Warning Center representative
- US Coast Guard – Atlantic and Pacific Region representatives
- US Coast Guard – Area Command

Outside experts and other stakeholders may be invited to participate in WCS discussions but they will not participate in any consensus recommendations of the WCS. These might include:

- NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologists (WCMs)
- Other NTHMP state/territory Emergency Management representatives
- FEMA Representatives
- USGS Representatives
- NOAA Tsunami Program Leaders
- Canadian Tsunami Program Representatives
- Social Science Experts
- NTHMP Mapping and Modeling Subcommittee Members
- NOAA Office of Response and Restoration

Chairpersons: Chairpersons are approved by a majority of the NTHMP Coordinating

Committee, and shall include both TWC directors (or designated non-bargaining unit TWC employee from each Center) and an Emergency Management representative from one of the member states or territories.

In the event a State/Territory Co-Chair resigns from the position during his/her term of office, the NTHMP Administrator shall make a call from the WCS membership for nominees within 30 days of the vacancy. Up to 10 days is allowed for the nominations period, but may be shorter if the WCS is meeting in person.

A vote among the WCS members will be conducted by the NTHMP Administrator within 30 days of close of nominations. The nominee receiving a majority 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.

In the event a TWC Director vacates his/her position, the Director vacating the position or the supervising NWS Regional Director may designate someone from that TWC to serve as an Interim WCS Co-Chair until someone is hired permanently for the position. Upon permanent appointment, that person will become the WCS Co-Chair representing that TWC or may designate an official alternate selected from among TWC Federal Employees.

There are no term limits for the State/Territory WCS Co-Chair position, although it is desirable to limit the service to two full two-year terms.

Communications

In-person meetings of the WCS are usually held annually in conjunction with the Annual/Bi-Annual NTHMP Meeting(s). Between meetings, communication will take place primarily by email and conference calls.

Notes and Action Items are maintained by the Co-Chairs and posted to the NTHMP web site. Completion of actions is coordinated by the Co-Chairs. Recommendations are forwarded to the appropriate organizations by the Co-Chairs.

Activities

1. The WCS develops an annual work plan that describes WCS activities to be accomplished during the calendar year, and submits it to the Coordinating Committee for approval. The WCS Annual Work Plan contains milestones with metrics to measure progress and be tied to one or more strategies and outcomes in the NTHMP Strategic Plan.

2. The WCS will update progress on measurable milestones identified in the Annual Work Plan during regularly-scheduled meetings throughout the year.
3. When requested by the NTHMP Administrator, the WCS will submit content for the NTHMP Annual Report that summarizes WCS progress for the year.