

**HMSC Management Committee Meeting
January 31, 2008, 10:00 AM
NOAA Barry Fisher Building Rm. 101**

Attending: Michael Banks (CIMRS), George Boehlert (HMSC), Rick Brown (NOAA-NWFSC), Mark Camara (USDA-ARS), Bill Chadwick (NOAA-PMEL), Faith Cole (EPA), Joel Colvin (HMSC Business Office), Michael Davis (NOAA-AFSC), Ken Hall (HMSC); Nancee Hunter (Oregon Sea Grant), Mattias Johansson (Hatfield Students Organization), Jane Hodgkins (OCCC), Gil Sylvia (COMES), Ellen Veile-Smuts (ODFW), Janet Webster (Guin Library), Sheri Woods (MMI), Randy Walker (HMSC Facilities), Pete Zerr (Ship Operations)

Not represented: US Fish & Wildlife Service

Introductions

New Business

Emergency Closures and Planning at HMSC

Re-cap of December 3 Weather Closure:

George Boehlert reviewed the sequence of events during the December 3 storm that caused loss of electricity and phone service at HMSC and highlighted faults in the system for getting word out to staff and students about the decision to close HMSC that day.

Randy Walker reported on the Facilities department's actions during the storm, which focused on maintaining back-up power and dealing with contingencies as they arose. Facilities crew used portable diesel/gasoline-powered generators to keep ultra cold refrigeration systems and walk-in coolers running.

Janet Webster suggested that HMSC central phone system should be hooked up to emergency back-up power system, to ensure that primary line of communication remains operational. Faith Cole mentioned that EPA has an 866 number that people can call in on during emergencies.

Gil Sylvia asked "what degree of emergency and duration of power outage do we need to plan for, and how frequently can we expect such events to occur?" Several people compared the December 3 storm to other storms over the past few decades, suggesting that our planning should assume a storm of such intensity and impact at least once every ten years, and perhaps more frequently in the years to come.

George Boehlert shared some comments he had received after the most recent storm relevant to planning for such emergencies in the future, including the need to secure outdoor equipment, storage containers, and other light items that could easily blow away and pose unexpected hazards. Several comments centered on the difficulties experienced by people not knowing whether they should come in, including students and staff who normally commute from Corvallis, and the lack of clarity in decision-making chain of command.

Rick Brown commented about potential safety hazards and liability concerns that arise when dealing with emergency situations (e.g. electrical extension cords on wet pavement) and the importance of communicating to non-essential personnel that they should not come in when the facility is closed due to such emergencies. Mark Camara noted that some scientists are always going to want to come in to check on systems that support certain critical research investments. Discussion on this issue led to the recommendation that there should be posted on the door of every freezer and specialized lab a “red sleeve packet” containing emergency contact phone numbers, a description of what the room contains, and instructions of what specific systems need to be maintained during power outages.

Other comments related to emergency preparedness included the recommendation of a “punch list” for essential services personnel to refer to, and a reminder to make sure that we have enough fuel supplies to run all of the generators for an extended period of time. Janet Webster noted there is also a security issue presented when all of the automatic doors unlock during a power outage, and that we need a procedure for re-setting those locks.

Action:

- Check on feasibility of having emergency power for phone switch to assure open switchboards in the event of a power outage.
- Develop procedures for checking all automatic door locks during emergency closures.

Nancee Hunter noted that the Visitor Center presents a unique situation, since it serves the general public and is also open during hours when the rest of HMSC is closed. It was agreed that the authority to close the VC due to weather emergencies should remain a local decision, made by the designated lead staff person on duty.

Also discussed were the differences in leave policy for federal and state employees.

Review and discussion of draft procedures document:

Janet Webster suggested that additional details was needed in the decision-making section of the policy and procedure document, to clarify what would happen in cases where the Director or his designee was incommunicado. It was suggested that a list of information contacts for Central Lincoln PUD and ODOT be assembled so that the decision-maker would have that information if needed. It was suggested that the policy clarify that “closure” of the facility means that it is closed for normal business. Pete Zerr suggested that the policy should specifically state who is considered “essential personnel”. Regarding notification procedures, it was suggested that a Corvallis radio station and the Resident Assistant in HMSC housing be added to the notification list.

Action: Modify the emergency procedures document with input received at the meeting, distribute for further comments with 2 week deadline for comment, and then post on the web.

Links to and communication with agencies:

Michael Davis noted that the current de-facto communication procedure between AFSC and HMSC facilities management personnel is working well. It was suggested that the policy delineate the communication procedures for essential personnel in the agencies to maintain contact with HMSC facilities essential personnel. Randy Walker noted that his cell phone numbers are 541-270-0100 and 270-0101.

Action: see above action item.

Re-instituting HMSC Phone Trees:

George Boehlert commented on the need for maintaining a current list of information contacts for each agency and organizational unit at HMSC, for effective dissemination of important information. For phones that are part of the OSU telecommunications system, it is possible to pre-program a list of extensions for sending a broadcast message to a designated “group”.

Two-way radios were also suggested as another means of communication, particularly for essential personnel to be in contact with Randy’s crew. These cost about \$250 apiece. They have two channels so users can have them set to the “emergency only” channel and avoid having them squawk all day with routine maintenance communications.

It was decided that two phone tree lists will be developed. The first will be the group leaders, with office, home, and cell phone contact information, to be shared only with other group leaders. The second will be for normal working hours and will focus on on-campus administrative personnel who are the key contacts for disseminating information to the various groups in time-critical ways.

Action: Candace Rogers in the HMSC Director’s Office will be requesting updates from unit directors on appropriate administrative and emergency information contacts, along with a back-up. This list will be compiled, distributed, and updated on a yearly basis.

SeaFest 2008 Update:

Ken Hall reported that the date for this year’s SeaFest is set for Saturday, June 28th, 2008. The first planning meeting was held on Jan. 22 and suggestions are being solicited for a theme for this year’s event. Based on feedback from previous years, the committee is considering films or multimedia presentations in the auditorium in place of traditional scientific talks. An AmeriCorps volunteer has been selected to fill the position of SeaFest outreach/event coordinator, to work under the direction of Ken Hall and Nancee Hunter.

A request will be going out to all agencies and OSU units at HMSC for financial contributions to the SeaFest budget. Last year’s budget was approximately \$17,000.

Roundtable updates

(none)