Partnership Plan  
FEMA Tri-Center Project on Developing Research and Experience-Based Guidance for Seismic Safety Advocates  

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This discussion paper attempts to flesh out key aspects of a partnership plan for the guidance for advocates. The general approach is a “partner model” where FEMA, based on materials that we develop, provides content to partner organizations. Those partner organizations provide their value-added to the content and develop and carry-out appropriate communication plans for delivering that content to relevant members. As discussed in this paper, two levels of partner organizations are envisioned: Lead partners and communication partners.  

Role of Partners  
Partners are more than simple disseminators of information. They help both to shape content and to mobilize interest among key audiences.  

- What organizations are appropriate partners? Appropriate partners are those organizations:  
  - for which membership constitutes a critical mass of potential seismic safety advocates;  
  - for which there is a track record of providing educational outreach to members (e.g., through workshops or other forums); and  
  - for which there is an expressed interest in undertaking advocacy training.  
- To date, we have identified a number of potential partner organizations:  
  - EERI – Earthquake Engineering Research Institute, core potential audience of earthquake engineering professionals  
  - SCEC – Southern California Earthquake Center, outreach program to potential advocates in southern California  
  - Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado, Boulder – extensive network of state and local practitioners concerned with hazard mitigation and publisher of the Natural Hazards Informer publication series  
  - American Geological Institute / Seismological Society of America – organizations involving a broad constituency of seismologists and earth scientists  
  - State earthquake program managers – a key network of advocates that can be used to identify state-level organizations
Multi-state earthquake consortia (i.e., CREW, CUSEC, NESEC, and WSSPC) – potentially reaching core group of advocates within each of their regions

International Code Council (or one of the subsidiary organizations) – core potential audience of building officials,

National Emergency Management Association and International Association of Emergency Managers – core potential audience of state (NEMA) and local (IAEM) emergency managers (for which it might be better to focus on earthquake managers as part of FEMA earthquake program)

Public Entity Risk Institute – risk managers

What would partners do? We envision two tiers of partners:

- **Tier 1 – Lead Partners.** (We have identified EERI, SCEC, and the Natural Hazards Center, Boulder as potential lead partners.) These partners would be responsible for:
  - Establishing a communication plan for disseminating information about advocacy for seismic safety. This includes attention to audiences, potential forums (e.g., workshops, training sessions, use of organizational web sites), and multiple means of communication.
  - Modifying content of advocacy materials to reflect specialized needs and pertinent examples for the membership of the organization or audiences the organization plans to reach. Partners could put their logos on the guidance materials and disseminate the materials in ways that make sense for their members. Partners could add content to the materials that might include vignettes specific to the organization, first-person testimony (via video or actual presence), or greater substantive content in areas of particular relevance to the audience.
  - Design and conduct of workshops or other training forums on use of the advocacy materials.
  - Recruitment of participants.
  - Working with Tier 2 partners. Lead partners will also have potentially important roles in working with Tier 2 partners.

- **Tier 2 – Communication Partners.** (The remaining organizations on the above list.) These are organizations with which FEMA or one of the lead partners work toward:
  - Making appropriately modified materials available to these memberships through their organization’s websites, printed materials, or other means.
  - Holding workshops, as appropriate, as part of annual meetings or other scheduled events.
Role of FEMA

FEMA’s role is to initiate and monitor the partnerships. This entails:

- Selection of and negotiation with lead partner organizations. We have discussed a couple of different types of arrangements:
  1. Single Lead Partner organization – FEMA developing an agreement with one organization that may be a partner organization or independent contractor. The lead entity would work with its own organization and other partners to carry out the program. This arrangement would require many of the administrative issues involved in carrying out the program to the lead organization. A determination of appropriate funding for the lead organization would need to be made.
  2. Multiple Lead Partner organizations – FEMA would develop agreements with several organizations each of which would serve as a partner on more-or-less equal status. This entails a stronger administrative burden for FEMA but potentially allows for greater adaptation of materials to fit partner needs.

Regardless of the organizational arrangements, it is reasonable to think about a phased approach for which the partner strategy is tried with one or two initial organizations. This will have the obvious benefits of working through administrative and substantive issues in carrying out the program. It will also have a demonstration effect, hopefully, in showing the benefits of the program to potential partners and their members.

- Provision of content in electronic and print form for use and modification by partner organizations;
- Technical assistance and review of partner-developed materials.
- Funding for initiation by Lead Partners and their Communication Partners of workshops, other forums, or other means of disseminating advocacy materials.
- Evaluation of the success of the advocacy training and the partnership approach with attention to monitoring of the extent of outreach among lead and communication partners.

Next Steps

- FEMA establishes commitments from appropriate lead organizations and work with them for developing communication plans.
- Solicit feedback about the guidance materials from lead organizations and modify as appropriate.
Other Issues

There are, of course, many administrative issues involved in identifying, selecting, and working with partner organizations. Separate from these are consideration of:

- FEMA’s direct efforts to promote the advocacy skills. The advocacy materials could be placed on the (revamped) FEMA website or made available in other forms. In addition, the materials could be incorporated into some form of training as part of the FEMA Emergency Management Institute and other program-specific training programs.

- Additional materials to be developed. A variety of supplementary materials could be developed that include videotaped interviews and/or other background materials for the illustrative seismic safety advocates.

- Training of partner workshop leaders. Consideration should be given to the extent that workshop (or other forum) leaders in partner organizations would themselves need assistance in fleshing out details of various advocacy tips.

- Ownership of materials. This relates to both the legal question of ownership and the extent to which FEMA officially endorses the content and pedagogy of training activities by partner organizations.