DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Institute of Standards and Technology
[Docket No.: 110701366–1365–01]

Establishment of a Team Under the National Construction Safety Team Act

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology, United States Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), United States Department of Commerce, announces the establishment of a National Construction Safety Team pursuant to the National Construction Safety Team Act. The Team was established to study the effects of the tornado that touched down in Joplin, MO, on May 22, 2011.

DATES: The National Construction Safety Team was established on June 29, 2011.

ADDRESS: Tina Faecke, Engineering Laboratory, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Mail Stop 8604, Gaithersburg, MD 20899–8604, telephone number (301) 975–5911.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eric Letvin, Director, Disaster Failure and Studies Program, Engineering Laboratory, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Mail Stop 8611, Gaithersburg, MD 20899–8611, telephone number (301) 975–5412.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:


Background

The National Construction Safety Team Act (Act), 15 U.S.C. 7301 et seq., authorizes the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to establish investigative teams (Teams) to assess building performance and emergency response and evacuation procedures in the wake of any building failure that has resulted in substantial loss of life or that posed significant potential of substantial loss of life. The purpose of investigations by Teams is to improve the safety and structural integrity of buildings in the United States. As stated in the statute, a Team

will (1) establish the likely technical cause or causes of the building failure; (2) evaluate the technical aspects of evacuation and emergency response procedures; (3) recommend, as necessary, specific improvements to building standards, codes, and practices based on the findings made pursuant to (1) and (2); and (4) recommend any research and other appropriate actions needed to improve the structural safety of buildings, and improve evacuation and emergency response procedures, based on the findings of the investigation. NIST has promulgated regulations implementing the Act, which are found at 15 CFR Part 270.

NIST sent a preliminary reconnaissance team to collect information and data related to the tornado that touched down in Joplin, MO, on May 22, 2011. Based on the recommendations of the preliminary reconnaissance team and evaluation of the criteria listed in the regulations implementing the Act, specifically in 15 CFR 270.102, on June 29, 2011, the Director of the NIST, United States Department of Commerce, established a Team to study the effects of the tornado that touched down in Joplin, MO, on May 22. The NIST Director will appoint the members of the Team. The Team may include members who are Federal employees and members who are not Federal employees. Team members who are Federal employees are governed by the Federal conflict of interest laws. Team members who are not Federal employees will be Federal government contractors, and conflicts of interest related to their service on the Team will be governed by FAR Subpart 9.5, Organizational and Consultant Conflicts of Interest, which will be incorporated by reference into all such contracts.

Members of the public are encouraged to submit to the Team non-privileged data and artifacts that are relevant to the subject matter of the NIST investigation described in this notice. Such data and artifacts may be submitted to the address contained in the ADDRESSES section of this notice. Confidential information will only be accepted pursuant to an appropriate nondisclosure agreement.

Dated: July 12, 2011.
Charles H. Romine,
Acting Associate Director for Laboratory Programs.

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