



**Minutes of the Eighth Management Board Meeting
held at Christ's College, Cambridge, courtesy of
Dr Bill Fitzgerald, Department of Engineering
15:00 to 18:30 on Thursday 17 December 1998**

Attendees	:	Simon Jennings	-	Benfield Greig
		David Simmons	-	Benfield Greig
		Dougal Goodman	-	British Antarctic Survey (Chairman)
		David Crichton	-	CGU
		Peter Taylor	-	DP Mann
		Nick Golden	-	Royal & SunAlliance
		Julia Graham	-	Royal & SunAlliance
		Lance Garrard	-	Sedgwick
		James Orr	-	TSUNAMI (Secretary)
		Simon Groves	-	Wren
Apologies	:	Paul Brand	-	Catlin
		Gemma Hawes	-	HM Treasury
		David Stark	-	Sedgwick

1. Introduction of David Crichton and Julia Graham

Dougal Goodman welcomed David Crichton, Environmental Issues Manager for CGU, as deputy for Andrew Dlugolecki. He also welcomed Julia Graham, Risk Manager for the Royal & SunAlliance Group, who would be taking over from Nick Golden as their representative on the Management Board.

2. Confirmation of the Seventh Management Board Minutes

Accepted without amendment.

3. Announcements of Opportunity

Peter Taylor explained that DP Mann's funding of any of the projects under the Announcements of Opportunity (AOs) would have to be ratified by their underwriters. This was accepted by the Board.

a) UK Flood Risks

It was confirmed that the researchers behind the two best proposals should be asked to merge their research, as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

David Crichton agreed to act as the industry representative on this project and to co-ordinate with James Orr in its development.

Action - David Crichton and James Orr



b) Teleconnections

David Simmons and Lance Garrard agreed to develop more explicit statements of requirement for this AO. The three broad themes that were identified as relevant concerned extreme weather in Northern Europe, catastrophe clash risk and teleconnections, as a tool for predicting variations in climate. It was expected that two statements would be created.

Action - David Simmons, Lance Garrard and James Orr

It was confirmed that the researchers whose proposals were not rejected by the TAC should be asked to attend selection interviews with a panel comprising members of the TAC, the Board and independent scientific advisors. If appropriate, these interviews would be followed by an open discussion session to consider how the research might best be progressed.

David Simmons and Lance Garrard also agreed to act as the industry representatives on the project or projects that came out from this AO, and to co-ordinate with James Orr in their development.

Action - David Simmons, Lance Garrard and James Orr

c) Tsunami Risks

It was confirmed that the researchers behind the two best proposals should be asked to merge their research, as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

Julia Graham agreed to act as the industry representative on this project and to co-ordinate with James Orr in its development.

Action - Julia Graham and James Orr

d) Uninsured Losses

The Board, subject to the above proviso from Peter Taylor, accepted the TAC's recommendation that the single proposal relating to this AO should be accepted.

Dougal Goodman explained that, because of the involvement of overseas researchers, he would not be able to provide matching funding from the Sector Challenge for all of the research costs. This was accepted by the Board. The share of costs will be calculated for the next Board meeting.

Action - James Orr



Simon Jennings asked that Hurricane Andrew be added to the project, with an additional suggestion that the 1997/98 Ice Storms in New England and Canada might also be covered.

David Crichton and David Simmons agreed to act as the industry representatives on the project and to co-ordinate with James Orr on its development.

Action - David Crichton, David Simmons and James Orr

4. Project Director's Report

a) Financial Position

James Orr explained that there had been no significant developments in the financial position of the initiative since the previous report in September 1998. He was therefore able to confirm that, ignoring additional VAT costs, some £165,000 remained uncommitted from the initiative's original budget.

He also explained that, in collaboration with the Finance Department of the British Antarctic Survey, he had developed a spreadsheet to record all aspects of the initiative's finances. Single sections of this spreadsheet dealt with each company's position and the Sector Challenge funding. These sections would be made available, separately and under password protection, on the Web Site during January. This proposal was accepted by the Board.

Action - James Orr

b) VAT

Dougal Goodman and James Orr explained that the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) in Swindon had advised that VAT may be payable on the invoices presented by RSA for James Orr's employment costs. Julia Graham agreed to co-ordinate with James Orr in ascertaining RSA's position on VAT.

Action - Julia Graham and James Orr

NERC would also seek to confirm the VAT position, on charging and reclaiming, for research grants, commissioned research and other activities of TSUNAMI. A paper would be issued confirming the VAT position once all these issues were resolved.

Action - Dougal Goodman and James Orr



c) Industry Questionnaire

James Orr confirmed that, to date, some seventy questionnaires had been returned by consortium company contacts. He thanked those companies that had responded for their efforts and confirmed that a deadline of 13 January 1999 would be set for the receipt of all other questionnaires.

A report which summarised the results of the questionnaires would be distributed and would be used to inform the development of the Second Business Plan.

Action - James Orr

d) Second Business Plan

James Orr distributed an analysis of the original Business Plan and asked the Board to participate in the development of the Second Business Plan. It was agreed that the Second Business Plan should be finalised at the next Board Meeting, planned for February 1999.

Action - Board and James Orr

e) Development of Web Site

The Board accepted the proposal that the Web Site should be developed to support the activities of the initiative and, particularly, to include sections on each research project. It was confirmed that the research sections would be partly supported by the industry representatives on each project.

It was agreed that investment in a TSUNAMI domain name for the Web Site should be investigated, with the possibility of placing the public elements of the Web Site with an external service provider.

Action - Dougal Goodman and James Orr

Simon Jennings suggested that all future material relating to TSUNAMI should include the address of the Web Site.

Action - James Orr



5. Tropical Cyclones Forecasting Project

a) First Experimental Forecast

The Board were presented with forecasts for US Landfalling Tropical Cyclones in 1999. These forecasts were presented by Lance Garrard, from a forecast developed by Dr Mark Saunders and Dr Chris Merchant, of University College London.

The Board expressed its gratitude to Lance, Dr Saunders, Dr Merchant and the Met.Office, for delivering the original forecasts within a tight time-scale.

Action - James Orr

The Board also expressed its approval of the format and form of the forecasts. Some additional amendments to the forecasts were discussed and it was agreed that suggested amendments should be passed to Lance Garrard, for incorporation, by Wednesday 23 December.

Action - Board and Lance Garrard

Once the format was finalised, a copy of the forecast would be placed on the Web Site.

Action - Lance Garrard and James Orr

b) Public Promotion

The Board were informed that Dr Saunders was participating in a Carlton TV programme on the Benfield Greig Hazard Research Centre and that he had mentioned TSUNAMI and the Tropical Cyclones Forecasting Project. The Board welcomed this publicity opportunity.

Dr Saunders also offered to give an “exclusive” to Carlton TV, of the results of the first forecast. This offer was greeted by the Board, but it was not accepted as a more appropriate means of promotion would be through a Press Release.

It was agreed that the Met.Office would be asked to draft a Press Release for the first experimental forecast.

Action - James Orr

Royal & SunAlliance would investigate the possibility of fronting the Press Release. They would also seek to co-ordinate with the press officers of the other consortium companies, Met.Office and the British Antarctic Survey to maximise the coverage for the Press Release.

Action - Julia Graham, Board and James Orr



6. Other Projects

- a) Non-stationary time-series and Extreme Value Statistics Programme

Not discussed at meeting.

- b) Y2K Workshop

Not discussed at meeting.

- c) Foundation for Science and Technology

Dougal Goodman explained the arrangements for the evening event at the Royal Society on 13 April 1999. Three speakers would each be given five minutes to present. They would represent policy-makers (the offices of Lord Sainsbury and John Battle MP had already been approached), scientific researchers (the chief executive of NERC had been approached) and the insurance industry.

Nick Golden agreed to speak on behalf of the consortium companies. He will co-ordinate with Dougal Goodman and James Orr on the content of his speech.

Action - Nick Golden, Dougal Goodman and James Orr

The consortium companies agreed to each submit twenty names of contacts they should like to invite to the evening event. A description of the evening and a pro-forma for companies to submit names for the event will be distributed by James Orr.

Action - James Orr and the Board

- d) Shape of Uncertainty

Copies of an interim report from Mojdeh Keykhah were distributed and structured interviews with underwriting staff from all of the consortium companies were requested and accepted. Royal & SunAlliance explained that they already supported a number of similar projects on their own behalf and would be happy to grant access. Peter Taylor asked that a more definite statement of the purpose and findings of the research should be presented.

Action - Board and James Orr

- e) Newton Institute Risk Management Workshop

Not discussed at meeting.



f) Satellites

Copies of a response document from the UK Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) were distributed to Simon Groves, David Simmons and Lance Garrard. A satellite research project will continue to be developed with Wren.

Action - Simon Groves and James Orr

g) Windstorms Vulnerability

Copies of an update from Professor Stephen Mobbs of Leeds University were distributed to the Board. This explained that progress was being made in developing a research project to look at the effect of hill gradients on gusting. The Board will be kept informed of developments.

h) Ships' Logs

David Crichton described a project, that had attracted his interest, to translate, capture and organise meteorological data from the ships' logs of the British Navy, Spanish Navy, Portuguese Navy and Dutch merchant vessels, over the last 400-500 years. As well as presenting an interesting public relations opportunity, this project could feed into analysis of teleconnections and other climate study issues of potential interest to the insurance industry.

Dougal Goodman explained that, due to the non-traditional nature of the proposal, he would not be able to allocate Sector Challenge funding to the project.

The Board expressed its interest in the proposal and asked David Crichton to develop an outline research proposal.

Action - David Crichton

7. Facilitation Meetings

Dougal Goodman explained that there had been limited progress in arranging facilitation sessions. A number of alternatives were discussed for the coming year.

a) Executive Lunches

The consortium companies agreed to provide dates for lunch meetings with their executive staff, at which senior members of the research community would be entertained. Details of suitable dates, hosts and venues will be sent to James Orr by the consortium companies.

Action - Board and James Orr



b) Academic Education Seminar

Lance Garrard proposed that a seminar should be organised for an academic audience, to explain the working and information requirements of the insurance industry. The development of this concept was supported and Lance Garrard and Julia Graham agreed to undertake this task.

Action - Lance Garrard, Julia Graham and James Orr

c) Mixing Session

An open forum was proposed at which underwriters would meet with scientists to discuss the issues that face TSUNAMI in developing research projects that meet the needs of the insurance industry. The Board supported this suggestion and agreed to put forward fourteen representatives (two from each consortium company). These would meet with six selected members from the science community.

Action - Board and James Orr

d) Influencing Education

Julia Graham suggested that members of the consortium companies might meet with influential members of the Chartered Institute of Insurers. These meetings might allow members to influence education policy in line with the aims of TSUNAMI.

Action - Julia Graham and James Orr

8. Any Other Business.

a) Thomas Miller & Co Ltd

The Board was informed that Mr Francis Frost, a partner with Thomas Miller & Co (TMC) had recently contacted James Orr. He had responded to the Board's earlier confirmation of the, in principle, acceptance of an application to join TSUNAMI by TMC.

Francis Frost wished to thank the Board for supporting their application. However, the Board of TMC had decided to decline the offer at the present time. This was due to a change in their research needs, from general to more specialised issues.

Francis Frost had asked that James Orr contact him in the Spring. They could then discuss the progress of TSUNAMI in addressing specialised risk assessment issues, at which time he would like to reconsider the potential participation of TMC. Paul Brand of Catlin, who has close working links with TMC, would be informed of these developments.

Action - James Orr



b) Impact of Volcanic Eruptions on Climate

David Crichton suggested that research might be supported into understanding the likely consequences of a major volcanic eruption. It was agreed that this suggestion should be added to the list of potential research projects for the initiative.

Action - James Orr

A similar suggestion was also made by David Crichton to assess the likely impact of a nuclear incident.

Action - James Orr

c) Psychological Profiles

Peter Taylor asked whether a psychologist might be tasked with determining the typical profiles of scientific researchers and insurance industry personnel. These profiles would be used to identify the means by which a common language, motivation and understanding might be found to help meet the aims of TSUNAMI.

Action - James Orr

d) Peace Studies Group

Julia Graham described a "Peace Studies" group that she had worked with recently, in assessing political and terrorist risks. The Board expressed its interest and Julia Graham agreed to send a profile of the group to the Board.

Action - Julia Graham and James Orr

9. Date of Next Meeting

Although it was agreed that the Board should meet again in February 1999, a specific date was not discussed at meeting.