U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

National Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council
Charter

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The official designation of the committee is the National Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council (Council).

2. **Authority.** The Council is established under the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Authorization Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. § 7701), as amended, and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. Appendix 2.

3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities.** The Council provides advice and recommendations to the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) on earthquake predictions and related scientific research, in support of the Director's delegated responsibility under the Stafford Act (Public Law 93-288) to issue timely warnings of potential geologic disasters.

4. **Description of Duties.** The Council's duties and responsibilities are solely advisory in support of the Director's delegated responsibility to issue timely warnings of potential geologic disasters.

5. **Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports.** The Council reports to the Director of the USGS through the Designated Federal Officer (DFO).

6. **Support.** Administrative, technical, and funding support for the Council will be provided by the USGS Earthquake Hazards Program.

7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years.** The annual operating costs associated with supporting the Council's functions are estimated to be $50,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and .20 Federal staff years support.

8. **Designated Federal Officer.** The DFO is the Associate Coordinator for the Earthquake Hazards Program who is a full-time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will approve or call all Council and subcommittee meetings, prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all Council and subcommittee meetings, adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and chair meetings when directed to do so by the Director.

9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The Council will meet approximately one time annually, and at such other times as designated by the DFO. The Council may be required to meet on short notice to address an urgent situation regarding an earthquake prediction or other earthquake emergency. As stated in Public Law 101-614, the Council shall be exempt from the notification requirement of the FACA when meeting on an urgent matter.

10. **Duration.** Continuing.

11. **Termination.** The Council will become inactive 2 years from the date the Charter is filed, unless, prior to that date, it is renewed in accordance with the provisions of Section 14 of the FACA. The Council will not meet or take any action without a valid current Charter.

12. **Membership and Designation.** The Director of the USGS shall appoint all members of the Council. All members shall be experts in the scientific disciplines that bear on earthquake prediction or other relevant disciplines involved in forecasting natural hazards or public response to such forecasts.

    All members serve at the discretion of the Director and shall, with the exception of travel and per diem for official travel, serve without compensation. The Council shall comprise not fewer than 8 or more than 12 members. The members may be Federal employees, but this number must comprise less than one-half of the total number of members of the Council. Non-Federal members shall serve as Special Government Employees. The term for each member of the Council shall be 3 years, except for the ex officio member.

    The Director shall appoint a Chair from among the members of the Council. The Chair shall not be a USGS employee and shall also serve ex officio as a member of the Scientific Earthquake Studies Advisory Committee.

    The USGS Coordinator for the Earthquake Hazards Program shall serve ex officio as Vice Chair of the Council.

13. **Ethics Responsibilities.** A Council (or subcommittee, workgroup or subgroup) member may not participate in any specific party matter that could affect their personal financial interests or the financial interests of their spouse, minor child(ren), employer, business partner, organizations in which they are officers or board members, or entities with whom a member is seeking employment. The definition of a specific party matter includes a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement, or related litigation with the USGS or the Department of the Interior. The USGS Ethics Office will provide ethics training materials to Council members appointed as Special Government Employees and will provide them information on when and how confidential financial disclosure reports must be submitted. Consistent with the ethics requirements, members will endeavor to avoid any actions that would cause the public to question the integrity of the Council's operations, activities, or advice. The provisions of this section do not affect any other statutory or regulatory ethical obligations to which a member may be subject.

14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purposes of compiling information or conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the full Committee for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the USGS. The Committee Chair, with the approval of the DFO, will appoint subcommittee members. Subcommittees will meet

as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.

15. **Recordkeeping.** The records of the Council, and formally or informally established subcommittees of the Council, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26, Item 2 and other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

Suzette M. Kimball
Director, U.S. Geological Survey

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Date

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