

Netherlands US Water Crisis Research Network



Who we are

A number of lessons learned from the floods after hurricane Katrina as well as other insights from research and practice in the United States were deemed applicable to flood risks in the Netherlands. At the request of the Dutch government, a collaborative network of Dutch and American universities and institutes was formed, the 'Netherlands US Water Crisis Research Network' (NUWCRen). The network is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management and is operational from 2009 until April 2012. NUWCRen has as its vision to:

1. establish a network of individuals and institutions to generate and share knowledge in support of Dutch crisis and disaster management issues;
 2. identify areas for additional research;
 3. initiate innovative collaborative research with a focus on operational implementation together with stakeholders.
- NUWCRen outcomes are expected to help the Dutch government prepare for, respond to and recover from water-related crisis situations. The network is focused on efforts to reduce damage, casualties and social disruption.

Partners

- **George Washington University** (Institute for Crisis, Disaster and Risk Management) in collaboration with **Virginia Tech** (Center for Technology, Security and Policy)
- **University of Delaware** (Disaster Research Center)
- **University of Colorado** (Natural Hazards Center)
- **COT** Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management (ICSS)
- **TNO** (Dutch organization for applied scientific research) in collaboration with **HCSS** (The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies)
- **Wageningen University** (Disaster Studies)
- **Deltares** in collaboration with **HKV consultants** (coordination and liaison with the Ministry)

Contact Information

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What we do

Aim

All activities aim at knowledge creation and transfer, and can be grouped into three broad categories:

1. **Network development activities**
A key goal is to facilitate the creation of a sustainable network of experts. Interactions, communications, coordination and meetings are all considered key deliverables.
2. **Tangible research products**
The network is expected to compile, integrate and transfer relevant knowledge among others through the production of working papers, publishing articles in relevant journals, conference proceedings, proposals and innovative research projects.
3. **Meetings and activities**
All institutions participate in progress meetings and thematic workshops twice a year and, host one progress meeting or thematic workshop during the three year period. In addition, as opportunities present themselves, partners are expected to share experiences gained from observations of actual events and exercises.

Primary Fields of Interest

- Planning, preparing, exercising, learning
- Managing the response to disasters and catastrophic events
- Human behavioural response to disasters and catastrophic events
- Community vulnerability and resilience
- Response capacity and capability
- Public communication / information

Research

Current Research initiatives

- Vertical Evacuation
- Disaster Preparedness Among Community-based Organizations
- Learning for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness: Exercises and Evaluations
- Mitigating and Managing the Health Impacts for a Catastrophic Coastal Flooding Scenario in the Netherlands
- Managing the Response: Improving the Coordination of Regional Operation Teams
- Local-level Resilience in the US, Europe and Developing Countries
- Community Involvement in Disaster Management

Publications

2010

- [Magazine Nationale Veiligheid en Crisisbeheersing: september/oktober 2010](#) (PDF, 1.3MB)

2012

- [Book "Flood preparedness in The Netherlands: a US perspective"](#)

Workshops

As part of the network every institution hosts a thematic workshop during the three year (April 2009-2012) period of the network. The following workshops took place:

- COT, 16 February 2012
- TNO, 25 May 2011
- Deltares, 25 June 2010
- Wageningen University, 23 June 2010
- George Washington University, 4 November 2010
- University of Delaware, December 2009
- University of Colorado, July 2009 (kick-off meeting)

Conference: post-(flood)disaster response, reconstruction and recovery, 16 February 2012

A flood disaster isn't over when the flood water has subsided or the water has been pumped out of an affected region. Experience reveals that the impact of any disaster will be felt for weeks, months and sometimes even years to come. An appropriate response to the immediate disaster is therefore not just eliminating the cause, but rather ensuring the mitigation of medium and long term adverse effects.

Post-disaster recovery therefore invariably presents a number of challenges and dilemmas, and understanding these issues in advance can assist decision-makers and professionals to better navigate the recovery process. Depending on the nature and scope of the adverse event at hand, the post-disaster phase can be very intensive and complex. A coastal flood in the Netherlands would be a very extensive and complex event. There's a multitude of issues that need to be dealt with and the recovery time will take years. *The goal of the symposium was to exchange knowledge on this subject with different parties (internally as well as externally).*

A brief recapitulation of the symposium and in particular of the workshops that were held can be found [here](#). The presentations of the keynote and workshops can be found in the attachments of this page.

Presentations

- [Keynote Kathleen Tierney](#)
- [Workshop Creating a process to learn from disasters, presentation Jack Harrauld](#)
- [Workshop Creating a process to learn from disasters, presentation Greg Shaw](#)
- [Workshop Creating a process to learn from disasters, presentation Liesel Ritchie](#)
- [Workshop Whole community approach, presentation Lucia Velotti](#)
- [Workshop Community disaster recovery: Dimensions, domains and critical issues, presentation Kathleen Tierney](#)

International Work Conference: Managing Response and Recovery, 25 May 2011

Disasters, like those most recently affecting Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Haiti, and New Orleans - or even the event in Moerdijk - remind the Netherlands that effective strategies for preparedness and response are crucial to reducing loss of life and property. This requires the successful coordination, collaboration and communication of a variety of public, private and non-profit organizations, volunteers and citizens. In consideration of the rise of social media and innovative communication technologies, new opportunities and challenges to share situational awareness and unite efforts are emerging. This international conference addresses the following questions:

How can responders improve coordination, communication and collaboration across organizational boundaries?

How do we apply lessons learned from disasters elsewhere?

At the request of the Dutch government, the 'Netherlands US Water Crisis Research Network' (NUWCRen) explores issues related to planning, preparing, exercising, and learning; human behavioral responses to disasters and catastrophic events; community vulnerability, and resilience; response capacity and capability; public communication and information dissemination, and managing responses to disasters and catastrophic events. American institutes participating in these collaborative efforts include George Washington University, Virginia Tech, the University of Delaware's Disaster Research Center, and the University of Colorado's Natural Hazards Center. The network also consists of Dutch representatives from TNO, HCSS, Deltares, COT, HKV Consultants and Wageningen University. The goal of the NUWCRen network is to exchange knowledge, to learn from each other's experiences, and to formulate new insights pertaining to disasters. On 25 May 2011, an international work conference was held at Rijkswaterstaat, The Hague.

The conference participants were welcomed by Henk Geveke (TNO Defense, Safety and Security), Gerrit Dubbeld (director of DG Water) and Gerard Laanen (head of DCC). A key note on Community resilience was held by Jack Harrauld (Virginia Tech). The following workshops were held at the work conference:

1. Crisis communication and social media - Joe Trainor (Disaster Research Centre, University of Delaware) & Hester Stubbe (TNO)
2. Community resilience - John Harrauld (Virginia Tech) & Georg Frerks/Jeroen Warner (Wageningen University)
3. Public-private partnerships: asset or liability? - Greg Shaw (George Washington University) & Karen Engel (COT)
4. How safe is safe enough? - Joe Trainor (Disaster Research Centre, University of Delaware), Bas Kolen (HKV) & Kees van Ruiten (Deltares)
5. Decision making and coordination of regional policy teams - Kathleen Tierney (Natural Hazards Centre, University of Colorado) & Josine van de Ven (TNO)
6. Community involvement - Liesel Ritchie (Natural Hazards Centre, University of Colorado) & Georg Frerks/Jeroen Warner (Wageningen University)

A report on the conference can be found [here](#). The presentations of the keynote and workshops can be found in the attachments of this page.

Presentations

- [Keynote Jack Harrauld: Community resilience](#)
- [Workshop Crisis communication and social media - presentation University of Delaware](#)
- [Workshop Crisis communication and social media - presentation TNO](#)
- [Workshop Public-private partnerships: asset or liability?](#)
- [Workshop How safe is safe enough?](#)
- [Workshop Decision making and coordination of regional policy teams - presentation TNO](#)
- [Workshop Decision making and coordination of regional policy teams - presentation University of Colorado](#)
- [Workshop Community involvement - presentation WUR](#)
- [Workshop Community involvement - presentation University of Colorado](#)

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