

Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plans

Written by: CMAA's PD Sustainability Subcommittee and John M. Palatiello, COFPAES Administrator

Take a look at the world around us today. The world's seven warmest years on record have occurred since 2014 and 10 of the warmest years have been since 2005. More importantly to the temperatures rising, for resilience purposes, the warming world creates a sharp increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events. Wicked storms are prevalent across the country. The climate is changing. What was the norm is now not. The only thing constant is change.

Resiliency has been a topic the last few years for CMAA's PD Sustainability Subcommittee. For those involved in Federal sector projects, the Biden Administration released a Fact Sheet on "Agency Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plans from Across Federal Government" on October 7, 2021.

The Subcommittee felt that this Fact Sheet should be distributed to the CMAA membership so that you are in the know. John M. Palatiello, COFPAES Administrator, prepared an excellent summary of the Fact Sheet and that follows. We have also provided a link to the [full Fact Sheet](#).

This memo includes 20 federal agencies that outline the steps each agency will take to ensure their facilities and operations adapt to and are increasingly resilient to climate change impacts. The plans reflect President Biden's whole-



of-government approach to confronting the climate crisis as agencies integrate climate-readiness across their missions and programs and strengthen the resilience of federal assets from the accelerating impacts of climate change.

The climate adaptation and resilience plans were previously submitted to and reviewed by the National Climate Task Force, White House Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Federal Chief Sustainability Officer, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in response to President Biden's Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Safeguarding federal investments. Agencies identified which

programs and missions are most at risk from climate change. This first step is critical to ensuring the best use of taxpayer dollars in response to changing climatic conditions. For example, the Department of Transportation will incorporate resilience criteria into transportation discretionary grant and loan programs wherever appropriate. The Department of Justice will incorporate resilience into the design and construction specifications for new construction and modernization projects and the solicitation of future leases. Additionally, the Department of Defense (DOD) has committed to using climate intelligence, including from its recently-released DoD Climate Assessment Tool, to inform and educate military planners and other key decision makers on where and how military installations are at risk from climate change hazards.

Identifying leadership and accountability. For the first time, agencies identified senior leadership and created new accountability structures so that adaptation and resilience is led from the top. For example, several agencies, including the Department of Education, have now identified their Deputy Secretaries as Chief Resilience Officers.

Developing a more resilient supply chain. Agencies are revamping supply chain policies and operations to create a more climate-resilient system. For example, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will modify use of an existing tool to screen its top mission-critical supplies of goods and services to identify those at risk due to disruption by acute extreme weather events or long-term climate change.

Enhancing protections for workers and communities. The greatest asset to our country and federal government is our people. Agencies recognize the need to better support America's workers from the impacts of climate change. For example, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) developed a tool that provides real-time heat data paired with local vulnerability data for state and local emergency and public health planners to better prepare for and respond to extreme heat events.

Building a more equitable future. Climate change and its impacts may exacerbate existing health and socioeconomic inequities, placing certain populations at particular risk. To

tackle this challenge, agencies outlined their actions. For example, the Department of Transportation will advance climate equity by committing to consider the impacts of heat, poor air quality, vector-borne disease, and other hazards more likely to affect environmental justice communities when siting and designing projects.

THE 23 AGENCIES RELEASING CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE PLANS ARE:

- » Department of Agriculture
- » Department of Commerce
- » Department of Defense
- » Department of Education
- » Department of Energy
- » Department of Health and Human Services
- » Department of Homeland Security
- » Department of Housing and Urban Development
- » Department of the Interior
- » Department of Justice
- » Department of Labor
- » Department of State
- » Department of the Treasury
- » Department of Transportation
- » Department of Veterans Affairs
- » U.S. International Development Finance Corporation
- » Environmental Protection Agency
- » General Services Administration
- » National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- » Office of Personal Management
- » Smithsonian Institution
- » U.S. Agency for International Development
- » U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

All plans are available at www.sustainability.gov/adaptation. 



About the Article

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The CMAA Sustainability Subcommittee is an ad-hoc subcommittee of the Professional Development Committee. The subcommittee's primary responsibility is to keep the Professional Development Committee apprised of the evolution of sustainability and how it may impact the industry.

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