

Department of Commerce • National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration • National Weather Service

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-2
May 11, 2004***

Operations and Services

MARINE OBSERVATION PROGRAM

NOTICE: This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>.

OPR: W/OPS5 (P. Moersdorf)

Certified by: W/OPS (J. McNulty)

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supercedes National Weather Service Directive System Policy Directive 10-2, dated November 27, 2002.

Signed by John E. Jones, Jr. for _____ April 27, 2004

Brigadier General David L. Johnson, USAF (Ret.) Date

Assistant Administrator for Weather Services

1. Information on the state of the atmosphere, including the land and ocean, is an essential element of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) mission. To meet this mission, the NWS requires timely atmospheric and oceanographic observations to provide accurate advisories, warnings, and forecasts, and to verify its products. This directive establishes NWS marine observing policy and governs activities to provide uninterrupted marine observations to support NOAA operations and research.

2. The NWS will provide timely, original, high quality observations from the marine environment to support the NOAA mission. Original observations are defined as data collected according to documented procedures or in a manner that reflects standard practices accepted by the relevant scientific and technical communities. These observations support requirements of the NWS forecast and warning missions; any NOAA Line Offices who have marine observation requirements; and other Government activities and customers with observing or technical requirements that benefit NOAA, as specified in formal agreements.

3. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:

3.1 NOAA and NWS Headquarters (WSH) provide guidance and direction to this policy by developing requirements for operational marine observing programs.

3.2 The Director, Office of Operational Systems (W/OPS), is responsible for the implementation of this policy and will issue Procedural Directives as required to effectively implement it.

3.3 NWS Regional Headquarters implement this policy as it relates to the Voluntary Observing Ship (VOS) and Marine Reporting Stations (MARS) programs.

3.4 Specialized centers of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) are delegated responsibility for quality control (QC) of manual Voluntary Observing Ships (VOS) observations. The Ocean Prediction Center and Tropical Prediction Center perform QC of VOS data used for operational purposes prior to the model ingest.

3.5 The National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) provides guidance and direction, and implements this policy. To carry out this responsibility, NDBC:

1. Responds to NOAA and WSH for original atmospheric and oceanographic observations in Great Lakes, coastal zone, and deep ocean.
2. Manages the NWS operational marine observing program including buoys, fixed stations, and volunteer ships and other in-situ systems.
3. Coordinates and negotiates with other NWS Offices, other NOAA and other Government agencies and non-government organizations on national and international matters pertaining to marine observations.

4. Establishes operating standards and carries out procedures for the U. S. operational marine observing programs.
5. Procures, tests, and deploys instruments for nationally supported programs.
6. Prepares and distributes documentation and forms for use in marine observing programs.
7. Drafts and coordinates approval of documents and written agreements on matters pertaining to marine observing.
8. Performs QC of marine observations except as noted in item 3.4.
9. Coordinates and monitors timely dissemination of marine observations.
10. Arranges for archival of marine observations.

4. The NWS will measure the effectiveness of the marine observation program policy using the performance measure of increasing the availability of observations from the Marine Observation Network (e.g. increasing spatial density, frequency of observations per station, measurement types, or other measures), in response to requirements.

5. This policy directive is supported by the references and glossary of terms listed in Attachment 1.

Attachment 1

REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Instructions

10-201 Voluntary Observing Ship Program

10-202 Marine Reporting Stations

10-203 Complementary Data Sources and Networks