

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SOUTHERN REGION SUPPLEMENT 02-2003  
APPLICABLE TO NWSI 10-310  
AUGUST 14, 2003***

***Operations and Services  
Marine and Coastal Weather Services, NWSPD 10-3  
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***FAMILIARIZATION FLOAT PROGRAM***

**OPR:** W/SR11x5 (M. Bailey)

**Certified by:** W/SR1 (S.Cooper)

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Signed by

July 30, 2003

Bill Proenza

Date

Director, Southern Region

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1. Introduction:

The intent of the Familiarization (FAM) Float Program is to give participants first-hand experience with life at sea and the critical role weather plays in the marine environment. This Supplement provide guidelines for Southern Region's FAM Float Program.

2. Eligibility:

All meteorologists and hydrometeorological technicians working at offices that issue marine products are eligible to participate in the program. Meteorologist Interns who have completed the training requirements of the Forecaster Development Program (FDP) also are eligible. In addition, Port Meteorologist Officers (PMOs) and supervisors of marine forecasters or the marine program qualify to participate.

3. Familiarization Float Pay Status:

- a. NWS personnel will be on administrative duty status while participating in a FAM float. They are in duty status when, en route to and from the vessel (including both to and from residence and port-of-call lodging) and while onboard the vessel. During other periods, personnel must be on scheduled days off or leave status as authorized by the participant's supervisor. No overtime or compensatory time, holiday pay, or Sunday or night differential will be granted while participating on a FAM float. At the discretion of the participant's supervisor, annual leave may be taken in conjunction with a FAM float, but in no case will the trip exceed 144 hours (from the time of departure of the vessel to its return to the originating harbor).
- b. It is Regional policy to NOT PAY travel or per diem expenses for FAM floats. In addition, the Region will not reimburse any unexpected expenses incurred by the participants while on a FAM float.

4. Requesting Familiarization Floats:

Eligible participants should coordinate requests for FAM floats with their supervisors to ensure there are no conflicts in work schedules and the legitimacy of the trip is confirmed and authorized. After eligibility is confirmed, participants should proceed by:

- a. Contacting the vessel operator, ship line, or nearest PMO to determine the availability and schedule of ships departing the harbor. It is recommended that FAM Floats be taken on ships which will return to the harbor from which they departed.
- b. Participants on FAM Floats need approval from their supervisor and a travel authorization completed and approved by Southern Region Headquarters.

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- c. Upon completion of the FAM Float, the participants will submit a report (preferably through electronic means) summarizing their experiences while aboard ship. This report will be sent to Southern Region Headquarters, Attention: Marine Program Manager.
- d. Upon completion of the FAM Float, the participants should send a note of thanks to the vessel operator and/or their headquarters.

The Regional Headquarters may suspend FAM Float privileges of those individuals who do not adhere to the guidelines given in this Supplement.