

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PACIFIC REGION SUPPLEMENT 05-2003**  
**APPLICABLE TO NWS Observing Handbook No. 10, Rawinsonde Observations**  
**April 14, 2003**

*Operations and Services*  
*Upper Air Program*

**USE OF PARACHUTES IN RADIOSONDE TRAINS**

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

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**OPR:** W/PR12x2 (D. Lee Loy)  
**Type of Issuance:** Initial

**Certified by:** W/PR12 (K. Turner)

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**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:** This directive supersedes Regional Operations Manual Letter (ROML) P-1-88, dated 2/16/88, filed with B-40.

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_ April 2, 2003  
R. J. LaDouce Date  
Director, Pacific Region

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1. Discussion. National Weather Service (NWS) Observing Handbook No. 10 (Rawinsonde Observations) sets forth policy on using parachutes during radiosonde observations. Waivers may be granted and the use of parachutes optional when:

- a. The risk of injury is virtually non-existent, and;
- b. The risk of property damage is very negligible.

2. Policy. Under certain winds aloft conditions, radiosonde instruments have been known to land on populated areas of island stations. Due to the potential hazard involved, the following stations are required to use parachutes in radiosonde trains:

- Guam
- Hilo
- Lihue
- Pago Pago

The less populated and widely dispersed Micronesian stations (Majuro, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap, and Koror) will use parachutes when the winds aloft pattern from the previous sounding shows that the balloon would be carried back over the vicinity of the main island. Since it's not expected that frequent usage of parachutes will be necessary at these locations, Micronesian stations should keep on hand 12 parachutes, at the most, for contingencies.