

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-2203

December 31, 2008

Operations and Services

Readiness 10-22

CRITICAL WEATHER DAY

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

OPR: W/OPS1 (Al Mongeon)

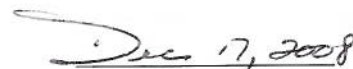
Certified by: W/OPS1 (Mark Paese)

Type of Issuance: Routine

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: Reformatted; expanded definitions.



John McNulty
Director, Office of Operational Systems



Date

1 Purpose.

This instruction establishes policy and procedures to ensure all NWS resources are directed toward production and delivery of essential NWS products when there is an actual or threatened occurrence of a critical weather event or National Special Security Event (NSSE) near or within the United States, its territories, possessions, or their coastlines; or, when there is a significant event requiring an increased awareness or availability of meteorological information. The declaration of a Critical Weather Day (CWD) will make certain all possible steps be taken to ensure the timely production and distribution of NWS products and guidance necessary to protect life and property..

2 Definitions.

- a. **Critical Weather Day event.** A CWD event may be any of the following occurring within the United States, on/near the coast of the United States and its territories or possessions (including Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam):
 - A widespread tornado or severe weather outbreak;
 - A storm system causing a major precipitation event;
 - A severe cold-season storm affecting a large area with widespread heavy snow, freezing rain, or blizzard conditions;
 - A tropical cyclone threatening the United States and its territories or possessions (including Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam) or producing excessive rainfall after moving inland; or
 - A significant non-weather related event, e.g., wildfire, large-scale disaster, National Special Security Event (NSSE), etc.
- b. **National Special Security Event (NSSE).** An NSSE is any event which the Department of Homeland Security believes could be an attractive target for terrorists. A number of factors are taken into consideration when designating an event as a National Special Security Event including a few outlined below:
 - **Anticipated attendance by dignitaries** - Events which are attended by officials of the United States Government and/or foreign dignitaries also may create an independent federal interest in ensuring that the event transpires without incident and that sufficient resources are brought to bear in the event of an incident.
 - **Size of the event** - A large number of attendees and participants generally increases the security requirements. In addition, larger events are more likely to draw the attention of terrorists or other criminals, particularly those interested in employing weapons of mass destruction.
 - **Significance of the event** - Some events have historical, political and/or symbolic significance that may heighten concern about possible terrorist acts or other criminal activity.

3 Systems, Services, and Activities Affected.

The following systems, services, and activities are examples that of systems, services, and activities that may be postponed:

- a. Operational implementations;
- b. Systems tests and changes involving the computers, workstations, servers, networking and/or communications systems, components or facilities if they have a potential for adversely affecting operations; and,
- c. National Weather Service Telecommunications Operations Center (TOC) and Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) tests and changes to systems or supporting facilities.

4 Levels.

The following CWD levels are established to lessen the impact of CWD declarations. The lowest CWD level will be used:

- a. Level 1. National level declaration.
 - All NWS systems and services will be suspended for the duration of the CWD.
 - May be declared by the NWS/AA or DAA or the NWS Homeland Security Activity Director.
 - Exceptions maybe granted ONLY by the NWS/AA or DAA and/or the NWS Homeland Security Activity Director.
- b. Level 2. Regional level declaration.
 - Only specific services and systems are affected.
 - May be requested by National Centers, Specialized Centers, Regional Director, NWS Homeland Security Activity Director;
 - May be declared by NWS/AA or DAA; NWS Homeland Security Activity Director; Directors of the National Centers; or, Regional Directors.
- c. Level 3. Local level declaration.
 - Only specific services and systems are affected.
 - May be requested by National Centers, Specialized Centers, regional Director, Local Forecast Offices, NWS Homeland Security Activity Director;
 - May be declared by NWS/AA or DAA; NWS Homeland Security Activity Director; Directors of the National Centers; or, Regional Directors.

5 Procedures.

- a. Requests for a CWD will include - reason for the request, period of the request, area affected, and systems affected.
- b. The NWS Homeland Security Activity Director or their designee will forward the request to the NWS/AA or DAA with supporting information. Supporting information will include reason for the request and the requested period.
- c. The NWS Homeland Security Activity Director; NCEP NCO Director or Deputy; NWS Regional Directors; or, designatees; and, Chief Information Officer

(NWS/CIO) will determine which systems or services will be curtailed to meet the operational requirements when requesting a CWD

- d. The SDM will coordinate requests for a CWD declaration as described below:
 1. For weather related CWD's, the requestor will forward the request and the supporting information to the NWS/AA or DAA; NCEP NCO Director or Deputy; NWS Regional Director, or designates; and the SDM.
 - For weather related CWD's, the NWS/AA or DAA; NCEP NCO Director or Deputy; NWS Regional Directors, or designates; or NCEP Senior Duty Meteorologist (SDM) will have the authority to permit changes, tests, and outages, on a case-by-case basis, if a greater risk is created by not completing these.
 2. Non-weather related CWD's,
 - The NWS Homeland Security Activities Director, in consultation with the NWS/AA or DAA, and NWS/CIO will have the authority to permit changes, tests, and outages, on a case-by-case basis, if a greater risk is created by not completing these.
 - Will be declared by the NWS/AA or DAA or the NWS Homeland Security Activity Director.
 - Will be coordinated by the SDM with the appropriate NCEP Centers and other NWS regions which may be affected.
- e. The SDM will notify by telephone (except where and when noted) and e-mail (see Section 8 for addressees) and place on NCEP's web-site (<http://www.nco.ncep.noaa.gov/pmb/cwd/>). When a CWD is updated, extended, or terminated, the same group will be contacted.
 - At a minimum, CWD status messages will include start-time and end-time and duration of event; and, when possible, the reason for the CWD.
 - CWD status messages will be posted whenever the event is updated, extended, or terminated.
 - All CWD status messages will be posted on NCEP's web-site, added to the SDM administrative status message (NOUS42 KWBC) and e-mailed to all parties on the CWD emailification listing (Paragraph 6 below).

6 Required CWD Notification List

- a. Deputy NWS Regional Directors
- b. Chief, NWS Homeland Security Activities
- c. NCEP Director or Chief Operations Officer or designate (Administrative hours only);
- d. NCO Director of Deputy or designate (Administrative hours only);
- e. NCO SOS and/or NCO Operator (24x7);
- f. NCO SPA and/or on call (24x7);
- g. NCO SISB Helpdesk or on call (24x7);
- h. NCO SISB Networking or on call (24x7);

- i. NCEP HPC and OPC Duty Forecasters (24x7);
- j. NWS Chief Information Officer (24X7)
- k. NWS Telecommunication Gateway (NWSTG) operator (24x7);
- l. NWS AWIPS NCF supervisor @ SSMC2 (24x7);
- m. NESDIS SAB Duty Forecaster (24x7);
- n. NWS Major Programs Program Managers
 - AWIPS (Administrative hours only)
 - NEXRAD (Administrative hours only)