

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-404

May 10, 2012

Operations and Services

Products and Services to Support Fire and Other Incidents, NWSPD 10-4

FIRE WEATHER SERVICES ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN AND REPORT

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

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Type of Issuance: Routine.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWSI 10-404, “Fire Weather Services Annual Operating Plan and Report,” dated April 5, 2010. Changes included:

1. Amended section 1.2 to remove 10-406 reference. This is a retired Directive.
2. Added an Appendix A listing required elements of local Annual Operating Plans, as agreed in the NWS-BLM-USDA Forest Service Interagency Agreement for Meteorological and Other Technical Services.

Mark A Tew Signed for _____ 4-26-2012

Jason P. Tuell Date

Acting Director, Office of Climate, Water
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Fire Weather Services Annual Operating Plan and Report

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1. Fire Weather Annual Operating Plan

1.1 Description and Responsibilities.

Each forecast office with a fire weather program will prepare and keep current a Fire Weather Annual Operating Plan (AOP) for the office's fire weather service area. States or Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC) may coordinate a state or integrated area AOP with several Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) in lieu of individual WFO AOPs. The plan should be developed with the users annually prior to the fire season and revised as necessary. When multiple WFOs are involved in producing a geographic or state AOP, Regional Headquarters will appoint a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) AOP team leader from one of the WFOs or Regional Headquarters to coordinate the NWS effort. This AOP team leader should be at the WFO management or regional program manager level and should be the NWS signatory to the AOP.

WFOs will: (a) reference the location of the AOP in the Station Duty Manual (SDM), (b) date the plan, each revision, and any amended pages, and (c) provide a link to a web-based version of the AOP in the fire weather section of the local WFO web site. Any version accessible to the general public may be edited to remove confidential information (e.g., names, WFO unlisted phone numbers, etc.). WFOs will also either furnish a hard copy or provide a link to a printable web-based version of the AOP, along with any revisions and amendments, to the following:

- a. National Fire Weather Program Manager
- b. Regional Fire Weather Program Manager
- c. Adjacent fire weather offices
- d. All concerned users

WFOs will retain each annual edition and all subsequent amendments of the AOP for 5 years.

WFOs with no public wildlands (federal, state, or local), fire season, or a minimal fire weather program may be exempt from producing an AOP upon approval from Regional Headquarters and the Office of Climate Water and Weather Services (through the National Fire Weather Program Manager).

There are also plans to develop a national-scale Annual Operating Plan (National AOP), addressing over-arching, national operational practices and service procedures. The National AOP content development will involve and include the interagency National Predictive Services Subcommittee, National Weather Service Employees Organization (NWSEO) and all NWS Regional Program Managers. The National AOP will not replace nor inhibit production of local, geographic or state AOPs. Instead, it will serve to clarify national scale operational procedures and compliment localized AOP operational guidance.

1.2 Format and Content

WFOs will ensure AOPs contain the required elements listed in Appendix A below. Elements listed in Appendix A follow required elements found in the Interagency Agreement for Meteorological and Other Technical Services.

2. Annual Report

2.1 Description and Responsibilities

Every WFO that issues non-routine fire weather products during their fire weather season (e.g., spot forecasts, Fire Weather Watches, Red Flag Warnings) will produce an annual report summarizing fire support in their area of responsibility. WFOs should disseminate the Annual Report to the same entities as the AOP. Annual Reports should summarize the calendar year activities. The WFO's Regional Headquarters will determine the due date of the Annual Report, and the regional statistics are due to the National Fire Weather Program Manager no later than March 1st.

WFOs with no public wildlands (federal, state, or local), fire season, or a minimal fire weather program may be exempt from producing an Annual Report upon approval from Regional Headquarters and the Office of Climate Water and Weather Services (through the National Fire Weather Program Manager).

2.2 Format and Content

The following items should be included in the Annual Report:

- a. Number of spot forecasts issued (itemized by wildfires, prescribed burns, and others)
- b. Number of fire or fire weather related courses taught or attended
- c. Red Flag event verification
 - (1) Number of Fire Weather Watches issued
 - (2) Number of Red Flag Warnings issued
 - (3) Probability of Detection (POD), False Alarm Rate (FAR), Critical Success Index (CSI) and Average Lead Time of Red Flag Warnings
- d. Number of Incident Meteorologist (IMET) dispatches
- e. Number of IMET dispatch days

Details on the format and inclusion of other optional data in the Annual Report are left to the discretion of each Regional Headquarters. Details on Fire Weather verification are located in National Weather Service Instruction (NWSI) 10-1601, Verification Procedures.

At the completion of the calendar year, the National Fire Weather Operations Coordinator will release a national annual report. The report provides a national, annual review of fire weather forecast operations, IMET statistics, historical trends and other statistics assessing the previous year's operational activities.

APPENDIX A - Suggested Elements for Inclusion in Regional and Local Annual Operating Plans

1. An explanation of shared responsibilities of all participants including, but not limited to; weather briefings, training, research, and product/service verification.
2. Procedures for documenting, monitoring and evaluating fire weather products, briefings and services delivered.
3. Methods for monitoring and evaluating advances in science and technology.
4. Methods for efficient means for technology transfer.
5. Where appropriate, provision for participation in fire weather research, development and application activities.
6. An explanation of shared meteorological methodologies and procedures.
7. Generalized or specific schedules of weather briefings and conference calls with GACCs, National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), Multi-Agency Coordination Groups, NWS offices and IMETs.
8. A listing of website links to both NWS and Predictive Services products.
9. An outline of participation in Interagency groups.
10. A comprehensive contact list of all who participated in the development of the AOP.