

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-5
OCTOBER 4, 2011**

**Operations and Services
PUBLIC WEATHER SERVICES**

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

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWSPD 10-5, Public Weather Services, dated May 26, 2009. Changes include: (1) the linkage of public weather requirements to NWS public forecast and warning services (Section 3.1a), (2) the removal of the reference to OST's research and development plan (Section 3.2b), (3) the inclusion of the OCIO's use of A&A (formerly C&A) to ensure security compliance for all federal Information Technology systems (Section 3.3), (4) the transfer of some OCIO responsibilities to OOS due to a March 2010 reorganization (Section 3.4), and (5) the inclusion of the decision support service role of the NWS Weather Forecast Offices (Section 3.6).

1. As the Nation grows, more segments of society are becoming increasingly dependent on information concerning the weather and weather hazards such as tornadoes, high winds, and winter storms. Timely and accurate weather forecasts and warnings are used by the public for critical decision-making and personal planning purposes. This directive governs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service's (NWS) provision of public weather services to its users and partners.
2. The objectives of the Public Weather Services Program are to provide public weather forecasts and warnings for the protection of life and property and to provide weather information for the Nation's economic well-being. Public weather services will be established in accordance with NWS Policy Directive 1-10, *Managing the Provision of Environmental Information* (<http://www.weather.gov/directives/sym/pd00110curr.pdf>).
3. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:
 - 3.1 The Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (OCWWS) will:
 - a. Establish national policies and procedures for the provision of consistent NWS public forecast and warning services, based on public weather requirements.
 - b. Consolidate, analyze, and oversee national performance and effectiveness indicators of public weather services.
 - c. Provide outreach to national users to promote public weather services.

- 3.2 The Office of Science and Technology will plan, develop, demonstrate, and integrate scientific techniques and system capabilities for the Public Weather Services Program.
- 3.3 The Office of the Chief Information Officer will provide management, awareness and oversight for Information Technology (IT) security for systems that support the Public Weather Services Program. This includes compliance through Assessment & Authorization [A&A, formerly Certification & Accreditation (C&A)] security activities.
- 3.4 The Office of Operational Systems will:
 - a. Provide system engineering, facilities engineering, and logistical services to sustain operational weather systems supporting the Public Weather Services Program.
 - b. Manage, operate, and supply software and data support for operational systems essential to the dissemination of public warnings, forecasts, guidance and observational data.
 - c. Procure, operate, administer and maintain communications networks.
 - d. Implement and conduct all IT security tasks, as stipulated in NWSPD 60-7, *Information Technology Security Policy*, in support of the Public Weather Services Program.
- 3.5 National Weather Service regional headquarters offices will:
 - a. Ensure Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) are organized, trained, and equipped to fulfill the Public Weather Services Program.
 - b. Provide technical and operational assistance.
 - c. Provide public weather requirements to OCWWS.
 - d. Develop supplements to procedural directives.
 - e. Ensure WFOs comply with Public Weather Services Program directives and regional supplements.
 - f. Evaluate performance and effectiveness of the public weather services.
 - g. Review WFO geographic areas of responsibility in their region to improve the effectiveness and balance of warning and forecast assignments.
- 3.6 WFOs will:
 - a. Provide decision-makers with detailed, accurate, timely and reliable weather decision support services, particularly in association with high impact events.
 - b. Provide public weather warnings, forecasts, statements, summaries, and related products for local service areas in compliance with Public Weather Services Program directives and regional supplements.
 - c. Ensure public weather products are timely, accurate, and meteorologically consistent with surrounding WFOs.
 - d. Provide outreach to users to promote and assess the success of their Public Weather Services Program.

3.7 The National Centers for Environmental Prediction will produce guidance and outlook and discussion products to support the Public Weather Services Program.

4. The NWS measures the effectiveness of the Public Weather Services Program through a verification process. Verification is accomplished by comparing: (a) routine forecasts to observations, and (b) severe weather (e.g., tornado, severe thunderstorm, winter storm, etc.) watches and warnings to officially certified severe weather events. Additionally, the NWS utilizes assessments of high impact events and customer satisfaction feedback to evaluate program effectiveness. For more information on verification and evaluation processes, refer to policy and procedural directives in the NWS Directives System 10-16 Performance series at <http://www.weather.gov/directives/010/010.htm>.

5. This Policy Directive is supported by the glossary of terms in Attachment 1. Procedural directives will be issued to implement this policy as needed and determined by the Director, Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services.

<u>Laura K. Furgione (for)</u>	<u>September 20, 2011</u>
John L. Hayes	Date
Assistant Administrator for Weather Services	

Attachment 1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Public Weather Services Program - The collective activities undertaken by NWS Headquarters, regional headquarters, and field offices (i.e., WFOs and the NCEP) to support and provide public weather services in the form of warnings, forecasts and associated products for the Nation.