

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-602
JUNE 15, 2011

Operations and Services
Tropical Cyclone Weather Services Program, NWSPD 10-6

TROPICAL CYCLONE COORDINATION AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

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Type of Issuance: Routine

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWS Instruction 10-602, dated July 27, 2009. The following revisions were made to this directive:

- 1 Updates Hurricane Coordination Hotline procedures and the use of 12 Planet
- 1.1 Updates NHC and HPC discussion times
- 1.1.2 Updates NHC coordination with Western Region offices
- 1.6 Updates GFDL/HWRF model information
- 3.1 Updates exercise procedures

Signed

June 1, 2011

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Date

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1. Coordination.

For the purposes of this directive, all references to tropical cyclones are inclusive of subtropical.

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) will use the 12 Planet chat room in 2011 for the purpose of initiating watch/warning coordination with WFOs.

Atlantic basin: The Hurricane Coordination Hotline (HCH) telephone and the electronic worksheet are the primary means of coordination for tropical cyclones. HCH calls will be initiated and conducted by the NHC at 0200, 0800, 1400, 2000 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) for the 0300, 0900, 1500, and 2100 UTC advisories, respectively, on tropical cyclones with analysis or forecast points located within an area south of 20°N and west of 60°W, or anywhere west of 70°W. HCH calls will also be conducted before the first advisory of all tropical cyclones, before the issuance of special advisories, or upon request. Any Hotline participant can initiate calls at any time.

An electronic worksheet, providing draft forecast positions, intensity, and wind radii will normally be available to conference call participants for all tropical cyclones by one hour before the regularly scheduled advisory issuance time. A coordination call is required if the advisory information is not available on the electronic worksheet for any tropical cyclone by the deadline noted above.

Since forecast positions, intensity, wind radii, forecast reasoning, watches and warnings, etc., are discussed approximately one hour before official products are issued, no outside users or the public are permitted to listen to the call or access the electronic worksheet. NWS staff members will not provide tropical cyclone related information discussed or coordinated via the HCH or electronic worksheet to any user or the public prior to the official release of this information by NHC. This provides for the issuance of information to all users at the same time on an equal basis. State and local emergency management officials can be briefed prior to the release of the official products regarding watches and warnings so these officials will be prepared to answer inquiries when the package is officially issued. Eastern North Pacific basin: Telephone and the electronic worksheet are the primary means of coordination. The electronic worksheet will normally be available by one hour before the regularly scheduled issuance time for all tropical cyclones.

NHC will coordinate with Western Region WFOs and River Forecast Centers (RFCs) when any 0-72 hour tropical cyclone forecast point falls within Western Region land, coastal, or offshore boundaries or Ocean Prediction Center (OPC) offshore boundaries. Conference calls will be conducted by conventional telephone and will normally occur 1 hour prior to the scheduled release of the advisory package at 0200, 0800, 1400, and 2000 UTC for the 0300, 0900, 1500, and 2100 UTC advisories. The call times may be adjusted if there are active tropical cyclones in the Atlantic basin. When a call is required, NHC will contact WFO San Diego (or WFO Tuscon

as the backup WFO.) WFOs San Diego or Tucson will notify the remainder of the Western Region offices that are to be included on these calls. The calls should also include, when necessary, the Hydrometeorological Prediction Center (HPC), OPC, and the Storm Prediction Center (SPC). NHC will log-on to these calls as the leader. Additional information on the Western Region conference calls may be found in the Western Region Supplement to NWSI 10-602.

1.1 Tropical Cyclone Forecasts and Advisories.

1.1.1 Atlantic and U.S. Mainland West Coast. NHC will discuss forecast issues on the HCH call prior to the issuance of each advisory. OPC will provide NHC their estimates for the time of extratropical transition, and intensity and wind radii for the anticipated extratropical portion of the track for storms initially north of 25°N.

HPC and NHC will conduct discussions each day at 1700 UTC (1300EDT and 1200EST) to coordinate tropical cyclone positions for days 6 and 7 and positions of disturbances that have a high potential of becoming a tropical cyclone during the 3 to 7 day time period. NHC will provide HPC and OPC with regular 3 hourly map-time positions for use in HPC and OPC surface analysis (0000, 0300, 0600 UTC, etc.). The Central Pacific Hurricane Center (CPHC) will provide OPC with positions of tropical cyclones in the north central, northwest and south Pacific for the area covered by the unified surface analysis.

HPC and OPC will place on its prognostic surface charts NHC's and CPHC's tropical cyclone forecast position out to 120 hours. Unnamed systems forecast to attain tropical storm or hurricane/typhoon strength during the forecast period will have their prognostic positions labeled as a tropical cyclone. For day 3 through 7 charts, HPC will use appropriate tropical cyclone symbols on charts for days 3-5, and depict the cyclone as a low using the symbol "L" for days 6 through 7. OPC will also depict the cyclone with the appropriate tropical cyclone symbol on their 96-hour surface chart.

NHC, HPC, and WFOs will coordinate the issuance and discontinuance of watches and warnings, storm surge, and other storm parameters. NHC will include HPC's National Precipitation Prediction Unit (NPPU) in coordination calls whenever NHC plans to include quantitative precipitations forecast amounts (with the issuance of a warning, usually 36-hour forecasts or less) for the United States mainland in tropical cyclone advisories. NHC will make final coordination calls 1 hour before advisory time. NHC will involve all impacted regional offices, Weather Forecast Offices (WFO), and marine offshore and high seas forecast offices (OPC, Tropical Analysis Forecast Branch [TAFB]) in the coordination call with HPC. NHC will make every effort to coordinate with these offices prior to the conference call, resources permitting, if issuing or canceling watches or warnings.

1.1.2 Central Pacific coordination. NHC and CPHC will coordinate whenever a tropical cyclone is between 137°W and approaching 140°W. In addition, NHC will coordinate with

CPHC prior to issuing a forecast/advisory when a system to the east of 140°W is expected to influence/impact Hawaii within the 120 hour forecast period. In the event of a disagreement, the Center issuing the next advisory will make the final decision.

1.2 Other Advisories. NHC and HPC will coordinate on the downgrade (to depression status) of a tropical or subtropical cyclone centered over land. HPC will also coordinate with NHC if there is a reasonable possibility advisories may again be needed. This coordination will take place no later than 90 minutes before HPC's public advisory release time. HPC will coordinate with appropriate River Forecast Centers (RFC) and critical flood support office(s) regarding inland flooding threats.

1.3 Flooding. Tropical Cyclone Centers (NHC and CPHC) will include rainfall information in their advisories and initiate coordination calls. RFCs and local NWS forecast offices will provide input to their tropical cyclone center regarding flood potential. NPPU products will be consistent with advisory issuing offices. The National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Satellite Analysis Branch will provide satellite estimates of rainfall to NWS offices and the NHC.

1.4 Tornadoes. Storm Prediction Center (SPC) will, for CONUS areas, be the single coordinated voice of the NWS regarding tornado threats and will issue tornado watches as required for areas affected by tropical and subtropical cyclones. SPC should coordinate with NHC and WFOs before issuing a tornado watch. To assist NHC, this coordination should be done about 2 hours before the next scheduled tropical cyclone advisory issuance time if possible. Hurricane Local Statements (HLS) will convey the level of tornadic threat forecast by SPC based upon SPC products. Tropical Cyclone Centers will include appropriate information about tornadoes in their advisories.

1.5 Military Services. The NWS is the basic source of tropical cyclone forecasts for all Department of Defense (DOD) interests in the North Pacific east of 180° longitude and for the North Atlantic as provided by interdepartmental agreements in the National Hurricane Operations Plan (NHOP). If the DOD wishes to discuss special problems concerning warnings and forecasts for the Atlantic area, they should contact the NHC Director or the NHC hurricane specialist on duty by telephone. In the Pacific, the NHC Director or the CPHC Director will provide similar services to the military. WFO Guam generally bases its tropical cyclone products on the tropical cyclone bulletins of the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC).

1.6 Requesting Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL)/ Hurricane Weather Research and Forecasting System (HWRF) Model Guidance. NHC will make the decision to run the GFDL/HWRF hurricane model for any tropical/ subtropical cyclone or tropical disturbance in the Atlantic or eastern Pacific Ocean. NHC will forward its requests to the NCEP Central Operations Senior Duty Meteorologist (SDM), and the SDM executes the job run. CPHC makes requests for running the GFDL/HWRF hurricane models in coordination with NHC. A maximum of five GFDL/HWRF pairs, combined between NHC and CPHC, can be run on any systems in the Atlantic, eastern North Pacific, or central North Pacific hurricane basins.

2. Transfer of Responsibility for Issuing Advisories. When a tropical or subtropical cyclone approaches the line of division between centers responsible for issuing advisories, the forecaster who is currently handling the storm will:

- a. Contact the center into whose area the storm is moving to plan for transferring responsibility after the issuance of the next advisory. When a tropical cyclone is approaching 180° longitude, CPHC will coordinate with both Regional Specialized Meteorological Center (RSMC) Tokyo (the World Meteorological Organization [WMO] designated tropical cyclone center) and JTWC (the United States designated center for US Department of Defense (DOD) interests in the western Pacific) for transferring responsibilities, and
- b. Add a statement to the final advisory as follows:

“THE NEXT ADVISORY ON (storm name) WILL BE ISSUED BY THE (appropriate Tropical Cyclone Forecast Center) AT (time in [UTC]).”

In these situations, the Tropical Cyclone Forecast Center issuing a final advisory will also provide the AWIPS and WMO communications headings for the advisory product to be issued by the gaining Forecast Center.

When NHC and HPC coordinate for a transfer of responsibility to HPC, the following statement will be included in the final TCP from NHC: “THIS IS THE LAST PUBLIC ADVISORY ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER ON THIS SYSTEM. FUTURE INFORMATION ON THIS SYSTEM CAN BE FOUND IN PUBLIC ADVISORIES ISSUED BY THE HYDROMETEROLOGICAL CENTER... UNDER AWIPS HEADER TCPAT_n AND WMO HEADER WTNT3_n KWNH... BEGINNING AT HHMM UTC. (where n is 1-5). NHC will coordinate with HPC to determine the time of issuance of the first HPC Public Advisory.

For CPHC when a tropical cyclone is moving east to west across the International Dateline, the following statement will be included in the final TCP from CPHC: THIS IS THE LAST BULLETIN ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL PACIFIC HURRICANE CENTER. THE NEXT BULLETIN WILL BE ISSUED BY THE RSMC TOKYO. FOR US INTERESTS, SEE THE PUBLIC ADVISORIES ISSUED BY US NWS FORECAST OFFICE GUAM AND DOD WARNINGS ISSUED BY THE JOINT TYPHOON WARNING CENTER

3. Emergency Operating Instructions. National Centers and WFOs with primary and backup warning and forecast responsibilities for areas within 300 miles of the Gulf and Atlantic coasts and east or south of the Appalachian ridges, in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Republic of

the Marshall Islands, on the California coast from Point Piedras Blancas southward, and American Samoa in the South Pacific will prepare and keep an up-to-date local Tropical Cyclone Emergency Operations Plan. The Plan should specify actions to be taken. This includes:

- a. What to do before each tropical cyclone season;
- b. What to do when a tropical cyclone constitutes a possible threat to its county warning area (CWA);
- c. What to do when a tropical storm, hurricane or typhoon watch, or inland tropical storm/hurricane wind watch is issued for its CWA;
- d. What to do when a tropical storm, hurricane or typhoon warning, or inland tropical storm/hurricane warning is issued for its CWA; and
- e. What to do immediately after the tropical cyclone has passed.

3.1 Exercises. WFOs requiring test/sample products from NHC to support local exercises with emergency management officials should coordinate in advance through their Region's tropical cyclone program manager. NHC will only provide such support before the official start of the tropical cyclone season. Any test products provided by NHC will be carefully noted with the word "EXERCISE" at the beginning and end of each test product.

3.2 Emergency Action When Warning Not Received or Considered Inadequate. When warnings are not received by WFOs or are inadequate to cover current or imminent conditions, coastal WFOs and their backup WFOs should issue HLSs or warnings as needed. Whenever possible, the WFO should contact the appropriate tropical cyclone center (or its backup, if necessary) and obtain its clearance obtained before such action is taken. However, take immediate action if communications failure prevents clearance or if in the discretion of the forecaster or the forecast office the delay would jeopardize life or property. Notify the appropriate tropical cyclone center (or its backup, if necessary) as soon as possible.