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RADIOSONDE SECOND RELEASE PROCEDURES**

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Signed _____ 6/7/04
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Acting Regional Director

Radiosonde Second Release Procedures

<u>Table of Contents:</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Introduction	2
2. Procedure	2
2.1 Alaska Region Upper Air Stations	2
2.2 Lead Forecaster	2
2.3 Senior Duty Meteorologist	2
2.4 Station Logs	2
3. Reference	3

1. Introduction. Radiosonde observations support operational analysis and forecasting at local offices and national centers. An upper air observation is successful when data is obtained up to the 400 hPa level. When an upper air observation fails to provide data up to the 400 hPa level, a decision to attempt a second release is needed. Decreasing the number of unnecessary second releases helps conserve both funds and equipment without jeopardizing public safety.

2. Procedure. When a radiosonde fails to provide data up to 400 hPa, the lead forecaster at the Weather Forecast Office (WFO) responsible for the observation, and the senior duty meteorologist of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), will make a decision concerning the need for a second release following the procedures described below. The lead forecaster and senior duty meteorologist will weigh potential meteorological and service value of the observation against the expense of a second release. When a routine radiosonde flight fails to reach 400 hPa, the following will be done:

2.1 Alaska Region Upper Air Stations. Alaska Region upper air station staff will contact the lead forecaster at their associated WFO and ask if they should attempt a second release.

2.2. Lead Forecaster. If the lead forecaster believes the local forecast and warning situation justifies a second release, the lead forecaster will authorize a second release. If the lead forecaster believes the local situation does not warrant a second release, the lead forecaster will call the senior duty meteorologist at the NCEP to let them know the decision not to make a second release.

2.3 Senior Duty Meteorologist. If, upon notification of the decision, the senior duty meteorologist believes they require a second release for national purposes, the lead forecaster will authorize the second release. In this event, the responsible lead forecaster will contact the upper air staff and authorize a second release.

2.4 Station Logs. The lead forecaster and senior duty meteorologist will make entries in their respective station logs documenting the decision and collaboration, if any.

3. Reference. This supplement is based on the memorandum dated August 19, 1999, from John J. Kelly, Jr., Assistant Administrator for Weather Services, Subject: NWS Radiosonde Second Release Policy, that established the National Weather Service policy on radiosonde second releases.