

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-15
JANUARY 20, 2012**

Administration and Management

VOLCANIC ASH

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

OPR: OS23 (C. Miner)

Certified by: W/OS (David B. Caldwell)

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: None. This is the initial issuance.

1. The National Weather Service (NWS) Volcanic Ash Services Program (VASP) provides timely, accurate and effective volcanic ash forecasts, warnings and services to aviation, marine, and public communities for the protection of life and property. This directive governs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NWS provision to provide Volcanic Ash services to its partners and other users.
2. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:
 - 2.1 The Assistant Administrator for Weather Services is responsible for policy, resource advocacy, and allocation of volcanic ash services.
 - 2.2 Office of Climate, Water and Weather Services (OCWWS) is responsible for:
 - Preparing policy and procedure directives
 - Managing standard system programs
 - Consolidating and analyzing performance and effectiveness indicators
 - Program and budgetary support to the National Volcanic Ash Program Manager
 - 2.3 Regional Headquarters Offices:
 - Ensure field offices are equipped and trained to fulfill VASP obligations
 - Provide technical assistance to field offices
 - Oversee regional Interagency Volcanic Ash Response Plans
 - Oversee regional volcanic ash services outreach efforts
 - Evaluate performance and effectiveness of the VASP within their region

- 2.4** National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) Central Operations issues volcanic ash dispersion model output. The VASP will ensure volcanic ash services and products are standardized and consistent.
- 2.4.1** The Ocean Prediction Center (OPC) and National Hurricane Center (NHC) Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch (TAFB):
- Provide volcanic ash information and services for appropriate marine operations in their area of responsibility
 - Prepare and maintain volcanic ash response procedures describing how the center works with other agencies and organizations to protect lives and property in the event of volcanic ash fall over the ocean
 - Provide and prepare outreach
- 2.5** The Volcanic Ash Advisory Centers (VAACs) in Anchorage and Washington are two of the nine international VAACs and are responsible for:
- Issuance of volcanic ash advisories for Alaska and CONUS, Hawaii, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands, respectively.
 - Coordinating with other state and federal agencies and organizations International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and International Airways Volcano Watch Operations Group (IAVWO) through the United States Volcanic Ash Advisory Centers (VAACs) and Meteorological Watch Offices (MWOs)
 - Subject matter experts and members of the Office of the Federal Coordinator on Meteorology Working Group on Volcanic Ash and Services Team
 - Serves as technical leads for NOAA Volcanic Ash Working Group
 - VAAC Wellington is responsible for the issuance of volcanic ash advisories for American Samoa.
- 2.6** Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) and WSO Pago Pago and American Samoa
- Provide volcanic ash information and services for appropriate aviation, marine and public operations in their area of responsibility
 - Prepare and maintaining volcanic ash response procedures describing how the office works with other agencies and organizations to protect lives and property in the event of volcanic ash fall
 - Provide and preparing outreach

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- 2.7** Center Weather Service Units (CWSU) provide meteorological information and services consistent with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) agreements and NWS aviation services procedural directives referencing volcanic ash.

- 2.8** The three United States Meteorological Watch Offices (MWOs): Aviation Weather Center (AWC), Alaska Aviation Weather Unit (AAWU), WFO Honolulu issue volcanic ash SIGMETs within their areas of responsibility, consistent with relevant international and FAA agreements. SIGMET responsibility for American Samoa falls under MWO Wellington, New Zealand.

- 2.9** This policy directive is supported by references and supporting information listed in attachment 1.

(Signed) January 6th, 2012
John L. Hayes Date
Assistant Administrator for Weather Services

ATTACHMENT 1 - Procedural Directives and Supporting Information

Procedural Directives

- NWS Instruction 10-811, International Aviation Products
- NWS Instruction 10-501, WFO Statements, Summaries, Tables Products Specification
- NWS Instruction 10-503, WFO Public Weather Forecast Products Specification
- NWS Instruction 10-515, WFO Non-Precipitation Weather Products Specification
- NWS Instruction 10-310, Coastal Marine Forecast Services
- NWS Instruction 10-311, Offshore, NAVTEX, and High Seas Marine Forecast Services
- NWS Instruction 10-314, Marine Weather Statements

Supporting Information

- International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 3 Meteorological Service for International Air Navigation
- Handbook on the International Airways Volcano Watch (IAVW) Operational Procedures and Contact List
- Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorology (OFCM) National Volcanic Ash Operations Plan for Aviation
- Alaska Interagency Operating Plan for Volcanic Ash Episodes
- Interagency Operating Plan for Volcanic Ash Hazards to Aviation in the Pacific Region of the Northern Marianas Islands
- NOAA Volcanic Ash Working Group (VAWG) Services Plan
- NWS Mount Redoubt Service Assessment