

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 1-404***

***April 12, 2012***

***Administration and Management  
Human Capital NWSPD 1-4***

***Internal (Employee) Communications***

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

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***SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:*** Supersedes NWSI 1-404 dated January 5, 2010. Provides submission procedures for articles, photos, and employee milestones to **NWSNews**. Also changes references from the former *NWS Focus* to the current *NWSNews*.

/signed/

04-12-12

Curtis D. Carey

Date

Director, Communications and Executive Affairs Office

Internal (Employee) Communications

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1. Objective. The objective of the national internal communications program is to communicate news to help employees, contractors, and managers stay aware of information relevant to their jobs and help the agency meet performance goals. The program helps employees understand and clearly communicate the NWS mission, vision, goals, policies, and priorities. Through this program employees can voice issues and share information.
2. Overview. Keeping communication lines open between employees and managers is an important function of any successful organization. The National Weather Service’s national internal communications program shares news and information within the organization, encourages cross-fertilization of ideas and best practices, and encourages information flow between all levels of the organization and with NOAA Headquarters.
- 2.1 Roles of Communications and Executive Affairs Office. The Communications and Executive Affairs Office provides writing/editorial assistance, management, and employee counsel on communication strategies (including use of the Internet and new media) and message development.

Social media and social networking Web sites and other emerging technologies offer new ways for employees to interact as never before possible. General social media technology includes blogs, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The Communications and Executive Affairs Office will use these and other new technologies as appropriate for internal communications purposes.

The Communications and Executive Affairs Office will develop and manage employee communications vehicles, including the online news and information Web site

*NWSNews*, to help employees and management communicate better with each other and with external audiences. The Communications and Executive Affairs Office will determine information content, and will establish, maintain, and measure the effectiveness of the national internal communications program. The NWS Headquarters offices, Regional Headquarters offices, national centers, and field offices will share information and topics of interest with their employees, and will identify information and topics of interest to an NWS-wide audience and share this information and story suggestions with W/CFO4. Appendix, *NWSNews* Submission Guidelines, provide guidelines for submitting information, articles, story ideas, and photographs to *NWSNews*.

3. Measurement. The NWS Communications and Executive Affairs Office will use a variety of research methods, including feedback from offices and centers, surveys, Internet “hit” statistics, and employee comments to gather and analyze the effectiveness of *NWSNews* and other internal communications methods. Research findings will be shared with employees and management.

**Appendix - NWSNews Guidelines for Submitting Articles, Photos and Employee Milestones**

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1. Introduction: *NWSNews* is an interactive online publication available at <http://www.weather.gov/news> which delivers news and information of interest to NWS employees and contractors.

2. Submitting articles and story ideas: The NWS Communications and Executive Affairs Office encourages employees to submit story ideas and articles for *NWSNews*. Obtain clearance from your Regional Headquarters, Center, or Office management when preparing potential *NWSNews* articles.

2.1. Length: Articles should be no longer than one single-spaced page or two double-spaced pages (approximately 500-1,000 words).

2.2. Topic: Story topics should be of interest to NWS employees at large, as well as the general public, and be written for a non-technical audience.

2.3. Style: Writers should study the content and format of past stories published on *NWSNews* and match the style of writing. The most important consideration for organizing a news story is to put the most important information up front. Articles should be written in a journalistic style, with a summary introductory sentence which covers the who, what, when, where, why, and how of an issue that is of interest to NWS employees, followed in succeeding sentences with more detail. When possible, please include quotes from relevant people, both within NWS and outside of it and avoid unnecessary jargon and spell out

acronyms or abbreviations not easily recognizable to people outside of the agency (e.g., “Weather Forecast Office” instead of WFO, “meteorologist-in-charge” instead of MIC). (A good reference for this style of writing can be found in the government Communicators Guide, available at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/toolkit/toolkit.htm>). The Communications and Executive Affairs Office staff will work with contributors to help them put together a story. NWSN follows AP style, which differs from GPO style in several regards, including:

- State abbreviations (for a complete list of AP style state abbreviations, see <http://apstylebook.blogspot.com/2009/06/state-names.html>)
- Only proper nouns are capitalized (i.e., “nation” and “federal” are not capitalized, unless they’re part of an official title, such as “the Federal Register”)
- Titles are only capitalized when they immediately precede a person’s name (e.g., Meteorologist-in-Charge John Smith, but John Smith, meteorologist-in-charge)

2.4. How to Submit: Send submissions by e-mail to [NWSN@noaa.gov](mailto:NWSN@noaa.gov). For tracking purposes, reference the content of your submission in your e-mail subject line (for example, instead of using "NWSN Article" as your e-mail subject line, use "NWSN Article on Denver Airshow").

3. Submitting Photos: Photos that show NWS employees at work or interacting with partners, users, or their communities add an element of interest to *NWSNews*. Photos of employees at work are used in a variety of other communications tools, from exhibits and displays to publications.

To increase your chances of getting one great photo, take many more photos than you think you could need. Move around with the camera to vary the angles and point of view. Posed photos are acceptable, but try to take candid, unposed photos of people doing their jobs and not staring at the camera.

Save the electronic images in JPEG format, and attach them to an e-mail with information about who is pictured, what action is taking place, the location, when it was taken and who took the photo. Send submissions to [NWSN@noaa.gov](mailto:NWSN@noaa.gov). Reference the content of your submission in your e-mail subject line.

4. Submitting Employee Milestones: *NWSNews* publishes a monthly *Employee Milestones* section that recognizes promotions, transfers, departures, and retirements.

4.1. Objective: The objective of the *Employee Milestones* section is to keep the NWS family apprised of career changes among colleagues and foster a sense of community within the agency.

Each Regional Director, Office Director, National Center Director, and Assistant Administrator Staff Office Director (or their appointed representative) submits a list of employee transitions for the previous calendar month. Refer to Examples 1 and 2 for the correct format for submissions.

The NWS Communications and Executive Affairs Office compiles milestones information submitted by participating offices and formats it for online publication in *NWSNews*.

4.2. How and When to Submit: Employee milestone lists should be sent by e-mail to the Communications and Executive Affairs Office by close of business on the 15th of the month. Lists summarizing the previous month’s activity (promotions/transfers and retirements/departures, with effective dates occurring that month) should be submitted as an Excel file attachment to [NWSN@noaa.gov](mailto:NWSN@noaa.gov) as presented in the examples below.

4.3. Details to Submit: New Appointments/Transfers: In the list of promotions/transfers (Example 1), provide the employee's full name (last name first, including “nickname” or first name the person commonly uses if different from the full name), effective start date (month, day, year), new job title and duty location, Weather Forecast Office (WFO) or River Forecast Center (RFC) name or Office/Center name/city/state, and also provide the former job title and former duty location (again the WFO or RFC name or Office/Center name/city/state). If the person is coming from outside government, you may provide the name and location of previous employer, or, if a recent college graduate, the school name and degree earned.

**Example 1**

**NEW APPOINTMENTS/TRANSFERS**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>NOTE*</b>
Smith, Guy O.	WFO Omaha, NE	Meteorologist-in-Charge	7/17/2011	Outside hire
Kramer, Molly A.	NCEP SPC, Norman, OK	Warning Coordination Meteorologist	7/17/2011	Former WCM of WFO Albany, NY

\* Indicate whether employee came from another NWS office or was hired from outside.

4.4. Details to Submit: Retirements/Departures: Identify these individuals by full name (last name first, including “nickname” or first name the person commonly uses if different from the full name), job title, duty location (WFO or RFC name or Office/Center name, city, state), and, if applicable, effective retirement date (month, day, year). If available, please also include the total years of federal service for the retirees. NOTE: Before submitting years of federal service, get permission from the individual concerned.

**Example 2**  
**RETIREMENTS/DEPARTURES**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>NOTE**</b>
Katz, Tom D. "Harry"	WFO Charleston, SC	Meteorologist- in-Charge	7/17/2011	Retirement, over 32 years of Government service
Mouse, Jerry B.	W/CFO, Silver Spring, MD	Office Director	7/17/2011	Retirement, over 35 years of Government service
Smith, Johnson K. "Johnny"	WFO Fort Worth, TX	Electronics Technician	7/31/2011	Retirement, over 28 years of Government service
Stream, Jedediah T. "Jet"	Middle Atlantic RFC, State College, PA	Administrative Assistant	7/31/2011	Resigned

\*\* For retirements, if available, include total years of federal service.

4.5. Details to Submit: Employee Educational Degrees/Recognitions Earned: Please provide the person's full name (last name first, including "nickname" or first name the person commonly uses if different from the full name), job title, duty location (WFO or RFC name or Office/Center name, city, state), name/description of the degree and name of the school where the degree was earned, and date (month/year) the degree was received. For community recognitions, include the name of the award or recognition, and name of the organization bestowing the recognition.

**Example 3**  
**EMPLOYEE EDUCATIONAL DEGREES/RECOGNITIONS EARNED**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>NOTE**</b>
Katz, Tom D. "Harry"	WFO Anchorage, AK	Meteorologist- in-Charge	7/17/2011	Length of Service Award, 15 Years
Mouse, Jerry B.	W/CFO4, Silver Spring, MD	Office Director	7/17/2011	Received a Master's of Arts in Geography from Arizona State University

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Smith, Johnson K. "Johnny"	WFO Fort Worth, TX	Electronics Technician	7/31/2011	Named Faculty Member of the Year, Texas Community College
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