

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-14

February 11, 2014

Operations and Services

UPPER AIR PROGRAM

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWSPD 10-14, Upper Air Program, dated October 15, 2009. Changes: Added the word upper-air to first and last lines of Section 4; Added reference to modifications to existing systems to Section 3.3; Replaced term ‘customer’ with term ‘user’; Updated signing authority; Deleted references to MicroART documents and VIZ 9000 User’s Manual in Attachment 1.

1. The National Weather Service (NWS) is responsible for providing forecasts and warnings. Weather observation assimilation is the first step in the forecast and warning process. This directive governs NWS activities involved with providing upper air observations in support of the NWS forecasts and warnings.
2. The NWS upper-air program provides policy and standards for observing, monitoring, acquisition, and dissemination of data to support the NWS and its users.
3. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:
 - 3.1 The Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (OCWWS):
 - a. prepares policy and procedural directives;
 - b. coordinates, evaluates, analyzes, and oversees national performance indicators;
 - c. promotes observation and monitoring programs with national users and partners.
 - 3.2 The Office of Science and Technology (OST):
 - a. plans, develops, demonstrates, and integrates scientific techniques and system capabilities for the observing services program;
 - b. formulates and maintains a comprehensive research and development plan in support of observation services;
 - c. oversees associated applied research and development.

3.3 The Office of Operational Systems (OOS):

- a. provides system engineering and software management;
- b. ensures accurate and timely data communications;
- c. provides logistical/facilities support and safety/environmental oversight;
- d. tests and implements new observing systems into the field;
- e. tests and implements modifications or engineering changes to existing systems;
- f. provides analysis of upper-air site performance.

3.4 NWS Regional Headquarters:

- a. ensures Weather Service Offices and upper-air contract offices within their region are organized, trained, equipped, and compliant with policies and procedures;
- b. develops supplements to procedural directives;
- c. provides technical assistance to the field offices;
- d. evaluates site and network performance and effectiveness indicators;
- e. coordinates with OCWWS/OST/OOS on matters related to the upper air program.

3.5 Weather Service Offices:

- a. provides accurate and timely observing services in compliance with NWS policies;
- b. performs user outreach within their area of responsibility to promote and to assess the success of their upper-air observation and monitoring services;
- c. provides oversight to upper-air contract offices.

3.6 The National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP):

- a. creates a monthly quality assurance report on U.S. upper-air observations;
- b. provides input for upper-air observational accuracy, frequency, and information to meet numerical forecast data assimilation requirements.

4. The NWS measures the effectiveness of the upper-air observing program using the following mission-critical performance measures: timely delivery of accurate data to users within the NWS; timely transmission of processed information; and delivery of the final product to the user. At the national and regional level, these metrics highlight efforts to develop and enhance policy for supporting systems, training, technology, and science to enable continued improvement at the field office level. These metrics will provide improved site effectiveness through focused training, techniques and procedures. The goal of this policy is to improve the operational effectiveness of upper-air observation services to the NWS and its users.

5. This Policy Directive is supported by references and supporting information listed in Attachment 1.

<u> signed </u>	<u> 1/28/14 </u>
Louis W. Uccellini	Date
Assistant Administrator	
for Weather Services	

Attachment 1

REFERENCES

Procedural Directives

NWSM 10-1401, Rawinsonde Observations

NWSM50-5116, Environmental Management Manual

NWSM50-1115, Occupational Safety and Health Manual

Radiosonde Replacement System (RRS) Workstation User Guide