

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-17
FEBRUARY 14, 2013**

Operations and Services

DISSEMINATION

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OPR: OS5 (C. Woods)

Certified by: OS (D. Caldwell)

Type of Issuance: Routine

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWS Policy Directive 10-17, “Dissemination,” dated September 30, 2002; recertified March 29, 2010. Changes include:

- (1) Replaced “customers” with “users” throughout the entire document.
 - (2) In Section 1, clarified second sentence to include any entity in the United States.
 - (3) In Section 2, revised language to include all various media including mobile and social media.
 - (4) In Section 2.2, revised for clarity including removing the Paperwork Reduction Act and added mobile devices as a dissemination method.
 - (5) In Section 3, added additional language regarding Office of the Chief Information Officer’s role in emerging technologies and consolidated the Office of the Chief Information Officer’s authorities and responsibilities.
 - (6) In Section 3.4, added language regarding developing new systems.
 - (7) In Section 4, revised for clarity.
 - (8) Updated Attachment 1, References and Glossary of Terms.
 - (9) Various grammatical changes throughout the document. Revised numerous sentences to accurately convey meaning of policy.
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1. The National Weather Service (NWS) produces weather, water, and climate forecasts, warnings and other data. This suite of information forms a national data base and infrastructure that can be used by any entity in the United States and throughout the global community. This policy directive governs dissemination of the NWS information suite and relay of emergency information.

2. NWS delivers critical life- and property-saving products and data directly to users and makes available information through various government-operated systems, our partners in the media and private sector, and through all various types of mobile and social media.

2.1 NWS relays non-weather-related emergency information following the “all hazards” concept. Government authorities external to NWS that provide information to the NWS for

delivery by NWS dissemination systems must, except during unanticipated situations, execute and adhere to stipulations in a Memorandum of Agreement defining the conditions for use of NWS systems in collecting and disseminating non-weather hazard warnings.

2.2 NWS's information suite is disseminated in various formats, in a variety of ways (e.g., satellite broadcast, NOAA Weather Radio, Internet, mobile devices) appropriate to user needs in an equitable and open manner according to the Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 552) and Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-130, "Management of Federal Information Resources" (61 Fed. Reg. 6428, February 20, 1996). As such, the NWS (a) will not establish or agree to permit others to establish on its behalf, exclusive, restricted, or other distribution arrangements interfering with availability to all on a timely and equitable basis; (b) will not establish restrictions or regulations, including the charging of fees or royalties, on the reuse, resale, or re-dissemination of NWS information by private entities; and (c) will only set user charges for information, where appropriate, at a level sufficient to recover the cost of dissemination. All NWS data and products are "essential" within the meaning of the World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) Resolution No. 40 (CgXII).

3. This policy directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:

3.1 The Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (OCWWS) provides policy and instructions on the content and format of NWS information.

3.2 The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) manages dissemination portfolio as a part of enterprise information technology (IT) portfolio management, and is responsible for establishing dissemination portfolio requirements and strategy, tracking dissemination programs, projects, and initiatives, and enabling executive level IT governance, via the Investment Portfolio Review Board. OCIO coordinates with the WMO on data codes, formats and telecommunications policy. The OCIO is also responsible for the evaluation of emerging technologies (e.g. social media) for possible use to support NWS dissemination.

3.3 The Office of Operational Systems (OOS) manages dissemination systems, including engineering, maintenance, logistics, financials management, and user support.

3.4 The Office of Science and Technology (OST) directs research and development for new systems as well as for improving current systems and developing new systems.

3.5 The regional headquarters ensures the field offices are organized, trained, and equipped to fulfill dissemination responsibilities. They recommend requirements to NWS Headquarters (NWSH); ensure dissemination policies are compatible across regional boundaries; provide technical assistance to field offices; oversee regional dissemination outreach efforts; coordinate and address user requests and concerns within their region; manage upgrades or expansions of dissemination systems in coordination with NWSH; ensure dissemination systems are properly maintained and operational; and evaluate performance and effectiveness of dissemination within their region.

3.6 The National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) provides timely, around-the-clock dissemination of regionally- and nationally-scaled NWS information through operational production methods and provides education outreach to users and partners. NCEP recommends

requirements to NWSH; provides technical assistance to its Centers; oversees dissemination outreach efforts; addresses user concerns relating to NCEP products; and evaluates its dissemination performance and effectiveness.

3.7 NWS field offices, including the National Data Buoy Center, provide timely, around-the-clock dissemination of NWS information and appropriate externally-originated emergency messages for their areas. They provide educational outreach to users and partners. They collect information on user needs and send these to NWSH through administrative channels.

4. NWS will determine the effectiveness of the various NWS dissemination systems. The NWS will provide users with performance measures and limitations of these systems. Where standard evaluation tools are available, NWS will determine whether the performance meets NWS expectations.

5. The attached Reference and Glossary of Terms in Attachment 1 provide additional background information.

_____ signed _____	January 31, 2013
Laura K. Furgione	Date
Acting, Assistant Administrator	
for Weather Services	

Attachment 1

REFERENCES AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Procedural Directives

Instruction 10-1701, *Text Product Formats and Codes*

Instruction 10-1702, *Universal Geographic Code*

Instruction 10-1703, *Valid Time Event Code*

Instruction 10-1704, *Complementary Dissemination Services*

Instruction 10-1708, *All-Hazards Emergency Message Collection System (Hazcollect)*

Instruction 10-1710, *NOAA Weather Radio Dissemination*

Instruction 10-1711, *NOAA Weather Radio System Management*

Instruction 10-1712, *Specific Area Message Encoding*

Instruction 10-1715, *NOAA Weather Wire Service Dissemination*

Instruction 10-1716, *NOAA Weather Wire Service System Management*

Instruction 10-1721, *International Satellite Communications System Management*

Instruction 10-1722, *Instant Messaging (IM) Communication*

Terms

All Hazards Concept - The dissemination of non-weather-related emergency messages from external authorities, in addition to NWS information. These emergency messages include both natural events, such as earthquakes and volcanic activity, and technological events such as chemical or biological releases, oil spills, or nuclear incidents.

User - An individual, government agency, or other entity which obtains and applies NWS water, weather, and climate information and services.

Partner - Company, corporation, vendor, agency, university, etc., that collaborates with the NWS in the collection or distribution of weather information and services.

Public - The people of a parish, county, state, commonwealth, territory, region or nation.