CAPABILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS DECISION SUPPORT PROCESS

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**Certified by:** W/AFS1 (M. Tew)

**Type of Issuance:** Routine


This instruction has been retitled and fully rewritten to implement the Capabilities and Requirements Decision Support (CaRDS) process stated in Policy Directive 10-1, NWS Requirements and Operations and Services Improvements. This instruction explains the CaRDS process and activities performed for addressing the NWS “Field Requirements Process” in Governance process document “National Weather Service Governance Overview” and related chapters.

Signed ___________________________ 3/23/2018
Andrew D. Stern  Date
Director
Analyze, Forecast and Support Office
Capabilities and Requirements Decision Support Process

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1 Introduction

This instruction defines the organizational, management and procedural framework for the National Weather Service (NWS) field requirements process, Capabilities and Requirements Decision Support (CaRDS). CaRDS is the implementation of the NWS Field Requirements Process under NWS Governance 2.0 (and later versions) and is the corporate NWS requirements-based process for evaluating needs and opportunities for improved operations and services, leading to a validation decision for the related field requirements.

2 Purpose and Scope

This instruction describes the processes, activities, and deliverables in CaRDS from the identification of a new need, request, or opportunity, to the validation of the requirement, assignment of priority and resources in support of the validated field requirement. The CaRDS process applies to new NWS field requirements and supports the ten NWS Governance Tenets from NWS Governance Overview Document, as listed below.

NWS Leadership Commitments:

- Be Transparent – CaRDS supports decision-making across the organization with respect to new mission needs and requirements. All requests in CaRDS, along with their status and documentation are visible to the entire organization.
- Be inclusive in decision making – CaRDS requests are reviewed by all applicable organizational units including regional representatives, Analyze, Forecast, and Support (AFS) National Service Programs (NSP), Service Program Teams (SPT) and Corporate Project Teams (CPT), Service Delivery Portfolios (SDP) and other stakeholders, and involve the decision-making councils to debate and analyze corporate decisions, ensuring opinions from across the organization are heard.
- Be accountable – The Mission Delivery Council (MDC) is assigned responsibility to make requirements validation and prioritization decisions.
- Commit to consistency – CaRDS ensures coordination and communications of proposed requirements with the NWS decision-making councils to promote consistency and reduce or eliminate redundant efforts throughout the organization.
- Align resources with strategies – CaRDS supports linking new requirements to strategic goals and the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) process.
- Promote Integration - CaRDS provides deliberate coordination between the Chief Operations Officer (COO) via the MDC and the Office of Planning and Programming for Service Delivery (OPPSD) via the Portfolio Integration Council (PIC).
- Execute within appropriated budget – CaRDS prioritized and validated requirements support the development of program and budget plans, maximizing the efficacy of NWS’s resources in executing the NWS mission.
- Meet labor management obligations – The CaRDS process includes labor management representation to identify potential changes in working conditions or other obligations.
and fosters pre-decisional involvement required under the collective bargaining Agreement.

- Be engaged – CaRDS supports field input and management’s knowledge and contribution to requirements-related decisions across the entire organization.
- Follow through – CaRDS tracks and provides status on decisions and execution of validated requirements.

3 CaRDS Execution and Management

The Analyze, Forecast and Support (AFS) Office manages the CaRDS process. CaRDS was approved by the NWS MDC as the process for documenting, reviewing, adjudicating, prioritizing, and validating NWS field requirements. The CaRDS process, from initial documentation of a need or potential requirement to validation of the requirement, involves four decision tiers as depicted in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. High level CaRDS and PSCM (NWSI 10-102) paths and common elements.](image)

CaRDS also provides for the entry and evaluation of proposed products and services that are ready to undergo experimental comment and review under the process described in the NWS Instruction (NWSI) 10-102: *Products and Services Change Management* (PSCM). PSCM submissions also start in CaRDS Tier 1 and proceed with PSCM review, signature, notification, and posting process defined by NWSI 10-102. Section 6 of this document provides additional guidance on CaRDS and PSCM linkage.

4 CaRDS Tiers – High Level Description

The overall execution and management responsibilities for CaRDS are listed below for each tier. Detailed process steps are listed in Appendix A.

The CaRDS process status and tracking are conducted by AFS-designated CaRDS analysts. The analysts are responsible for: (a) ensuring documentation is complete at each tier and ready for the next tier; (b) documenting status and decisions; (c) sending out notifications when required; (d) providing training to SPT and CPT members, and; (e) assisting the SPTs/CPTs.
The CaRDS process starts with the preparation and submission of a “New Mission Need or Requirement Request” (request). The request originator may be internal (anyone in NWS) or external (Executive / Legislative Branch, International, NWS Partner, other organization or agency). Originators are expected to follow their requests through the CaRDS process as a Subject Matter Expert (SME). As appropriate, external originators present their requests via their NWS contact.

After every Tier decision, CaRDS analysts ensure the originator is notified and updates status, decision dates, documentation, and information on the CaRDS site.

A CaRDS website is available to provide transparency, documentation, status, and access to CaRDS information. The website (https://nws.weather.gov/products/CARDS/) includes forms, reference materials, and a listing of all CaRDS entries and their status. CaRDS is an internal NWS process, therefore access to the site requires login using NOAA email account credentials (username and password).

4.1 Tier 1: Request Submission

The request originator completes the New Mission Need or Requirement Request Form available on the CaRDS website and sends it to their manager for review and approval. The request is to address the need or NWS mission gap in such a manner that a requirement is captured, or may be readily elicited; the request should not focus on a specific solution (solution analysis is done later). The manager addresses any questions or potential issues with the originator. If approved by the manager, the request is sent to their Designated Submitter for further processing.

Each NWS Financial Management Center (FMC) will name a “Designated Submitter(s)” The Designated Submitter reviews requests to (a) ensure appropriateness and concurrence with policy, (b) consider known similar capabilities, and (c) clear the CaRDS request with their FMC director in the manner specified by that FMC director. The Designated Submitter enters requests that they approve into the CaRDS process via the website. The Designated Submitter approved request entry into the CaRDS site completes Tier 1.

4.2 Tier 2: SPT Review and Decision

Each AFS NSP has a corresponding SPT responsible for capturing, vetting, and championing proposed field requirements. The SPT provides programmatic input into the AOP process, reviewing and making approval decisions for CaRDS requests. In coordination with the PSCM team, all requests undergo policy review. The SPTs (and CPTs) are also responsible for reviewing and making approval decisions for PSCM requests and forwarding their decision and comment to the PSCM manager.

The SPTs coordinate input and address issues regarding the request under review with their team members, including representatives from the NWS Regions, National Centers, and Service Delivery Portfolios. Requests approved by the SPT are forwarded by the analyst to the AFS Director for Tier 3 review and decision. The SPT Charter is available on the CaRDS website.

1 The Designated Submitters List can be found on the CaRDS website under the “Submit New Request” menu
4.3 **Tier 3: AFS Director Review and Decision**

The AFS Director reviews proposed requirements in the request for appropriateness and applicability to the NWS mission, adherence to policy, benefit to the organization or weather enterprise, and linkages to existing NSP, SPT, and CPT service requirements and AOP milestones. Requests approved at Tier 3 are scheduled for Tier 4 evaluation.

4.4 **Tier 4: MDC Validation Decision**

The MDC addresses requests and transparently validates and prioritizes field requirements. Validated requirements that require solution space analysis and/or resource allocations are addressed by the PIC for planning and execution. Note: All requirements passed to PIC for development, which result in the external dissemination of products or services, must reengage with PSCM for public comment/review prior to going operational.

5 **Appeals Process**

Disapproved requests may be appealed by the Originator, Designated Submitter, or other stakeholder. Appeals are made at the next Tier level. For example, a request that is not approved at Tier 2 may be appealed at the AFS Director level (Tier 3).

6 **Organizational Context**

CaRDS is used to address and validate field requirements. New field requirements (and requests that translate to a new requirement) are entered and addressed in CaRDS.

Field Requirements are defined as:

- Any requirement affecting or providing data, applications, or tools to forecast operations and forecasters.
- Any requirement affecting or providing data, applications, or tools related to NWS issued forecasts, watches, and warnings to the general public and NWS partners.

Requirements and resource needs within NWS Portfolios, FMCs, Program Management Office (PMO), Evolve NWS, and Weather Ready Nation initiatives follow the established NWS Governance process. If an initiative or need maps to a new field requirement, the CaRDS process is to be used for validation of the requirement and resource allocation decisions.

CaRDS is also the entry point for proposals for enhancements, termination, or modification to products and services (see NWSI 10-102, *Products and Service Change Management*, for additional information and details). PSCM proposals are entered in CaRDS (Tier 1) and undergo evaluation to ensure that there is a requirement supporting the proposal. If the proposal maps to an existing requirement, it is processed per NWSI 10-102 and does not progress through the remaining CaRDS Tiers. If the proposal is not mapped to an existing requirement, it will continue through CaRDS Tier 2-4 for requirement validation and PIC evaluation as necessary.
7 Operations to Research and Research to Operations

7.1 Operations to Research (O2R)

Requirements validated via CaRDS may engage O2R activities during solution space analysis or when the science, methodology or technology required is not available.

As part of the O2R process, forecasters and users provide the research/development organization (e.g., STI or other service delivery portfolio) information and details on the use and outcomes of existing products, models, tools or capabilities. Such information helps the research or development organization to address the gaps in current operational capabilities.

7.2 Research to Operations (R2O)

For fiscal/resource efficiency and high return on investment, R2O activities should be carried out in support of a requirement. There are exceptions such as “pure science” and new science, technologies, or methodologies that may improve ways to meet existing requirements (e.g., speed, costs, accuracy).

Those involved in, or planning R2O activities are encouraged to address their R2O plans and goals with the SPTs/CPTs to identify or address the requirement(s), which may be satisfied as a result of the research. If the research outcome is expected to fulfill a new (previously unidentified) field requirement, it is suggested that the new requirement be entered in CaRDS for Validation. Identification of concrete requirements bolsters the justification for the research and sets the stage for planning and resourcing on the development and operations side once research is completed.
Appendix A - Detailed CaRDS Process Description

The Capabilities and Requirements Decision Support (CaRDS) process starts with the preparation and submission of a “New Mission Need or Requirement Request” (Request). The request originator may be internal (anyone in NWS) or external (Executive / Legislative Branch, International, NWS Partner, other organization or agency). Originators are expected to follow their requests through the CaRDS process as Subject Matter Expert (SME). As appropriate, external originators present their requests via their NWS contact.

The CaRDS process, from initial documentation of a need or potential requirement to validation of the requirement, involves four decision tiers. After every tier decision, CaRDS analysts ensure that the originator is notified and updates status, decision dates, documentation, and information on the CaRDS site.

CaRDS information, documentation, and status of every request are available at the following URL: https://nws.weather.gov/products/CARDS/. Note that CaRDS is an internal NWS process, therefore access to the site requires authentication using NOAA email user-name and password.

Detailed steps and activities for each of the CaRDS Tiers are described below:

Tier 1

The CaRDS process starts with the preparation and entry of a “New Mission Need or Requirement Request” available from the CaRDS website. The request form is completed by the Originator (internal to NWS), or on behalf of an External originator by the applicable NWS contact.

The request is to address the need or NWS mission gap in such a manner that a requirement is captured or may be readily elicited; the request should not focus on a specific solution (solution analysis is done later). The originator is encouraged to reach out to their regional program leads/focal points, and the applicable AFS Service Program Team (SPT) during the development of the request for coordination of details and as an early check to identify similar efforts.

The originator should clearly state if the request is for an Experimental product for which there is already an existing requirement. Experimental products that do not need requirement validation may be redirected from CaRDS Tier 1 onto the Products and Services Change Management (PSCM) process (NWSI 10-102).

Once completed, the request is forwarded to the originator’s local manager. The manager reviews the request with consideration for its applicability, appropriateness for the NWS mission, similar capability (under development or existing), adherence to policy, and benefit to the organization or weather enterprise. The manager addresses questions or issues with the originator as needed.

If approved by the manager, the request is sent to their Designated Submitter. If the manager does not approve the request, the originator is provided the rationale for not approving. Managers should make timely (within seven calendar days) approval decisions.

The Designated Submitter reviews requests to ensure appropriateness, concurrence with policy, consider known similar capabilities, and makes the request ‘visible’ to the FMC director in the manner specified by their FMC director. The Designated Submitter enters requests that they approve into the CaRDS process using the “SUBMIT NEW REQUEST” link on the CaRDS website. If the Designated Submitter does not approve the request, the rationale is to be provided...
to the local manager and the Originator. Designated Submitters should make timely (within seven calendar days) approval decisions.

Entering the request into the CaRDS website by the Designated Submitter completes Tier 1. Specific instructions for submitting the request and a list of Designated Submitters are available on the CaRDS site.

Once a request has been submitted, a CaRDS analyst performs initial quality check on the submission, updates status and documentation on the CaRDS site, and prepares documentation for Tier 2 review (if new requirement) or PSCM review (if experimental product or service change). The analyst informs the appropriate Tier 2 Service Program Team (SPT) and PSCM Lead(s) when a new request is ready for their review.

PSCM submissions (e.g., experimental products), which support an existing requirement and do not require solution analysis and new resources, proceed with the PSCM process and do not require additional CaRDS Tier review. If the request is submitted as an experimental product but is not related to a valid requirement or needs solution development/resources, it is evaluated through the CaRDS process as applicable.

**Tier 2**

Requests are addressed at Tier 2 by one or more SPTs. The analyst determines SPT selection based on the AFS Service Area which maps to the nature of the request (e.g., a request for a new aviation product is addressed by the Aviation Services SPT). The SPTs are listed below:

- Aviation Weather
- Space Weather
- Climate Services
- Fire Weather
- Marine Weather
- Public Weather
- Severe Weather
- Tropical Weather
- Tsunami
- Water Resources
- Winter Weather

In addition to the SPTs, there are four AFS Analysis and Mission Support Division (AFS/1) Corporate Project Teams (CPTs) that address areas not under the purview of any one SPT. The CPTs may take the lead on reviewing a request or assist and provide input to the SPT for requests involving their area of expertise. The CPTs are:

- Ecological Forecasting
- Impact-based Decision Support Services (IDSS)
- Impacts Catalog
- National Blend of Models

Each SPT/CPT has member(s) from the corresponding service area/National Service Program, field units (Regions and Centers), advisors from the National Weather Service Employees Organization and the Service Delivery Portfolios as appropriate, and other stakeholders including NWS Program Management Office (PMO) Objective Leads when applicable. The SPT Charter (available on the CaRDS website) includes additional SPT information such as the team governance and roles and responsibilities. The CaRDS website contains a list of all SPT and CPT members.

In addition to the SPT(s)/CPT(s), the Products and Services Change Management (PSCM) team is engaged for policy review and a determination if the request being addressed will require PSCM (NWSI 10-102) processing and coordination after prototyped or developed.
The SPT/CPT leads are responsible for:

- conducting the review and analysis by all their team members and other SPT/CPTs;
- addressing and resolving issues;
- ensuring the request addresses a requirement that is appropriate for the NWS;
- seeking policy review via PSCM, and;
- obtaining a team decision on approval for the request.

The team shall address and attempt to resolve issues.

In cases where review or concurrence is required by more than one team, the analyst sends the notification to all the applicable team leads. A team will be designated as the “Lead” team working on the request to coordinate the final decision.

The analyst provides a Validation Decision Information document (VDI, see Appendix B) to the team members for each request. The VDI is used to document issues/resolutions, team member comments and votes, and the approval decision.

The SPT/CPT may suggest modifications to the original request. Such modifications require agreement by the originator in order to be incorporated into the revised request.

The SPTs should complete their coordination and decision within 10 business days, unless significant changes to the request requiring additional review, coordination, and concurrence are necessary.

If the team(s) determine that the request provides benefit, is within the NWS mission, and should be a requirement for the NWS, they should approve the request.

If the team(s) determine that the request does not provide benefit, is not with NWS mission, violates policy, or that similar capability already exists (or is in development), they may not approve the request. Disapproval requires that the team provides and documents the rationale.

Upon completion of the review, analysis, and voting, the team lead is to notify the analyst. The analyst will review and quality-check the VDI and any changes to the request. The review includes ensuring that comments and issues are addressed and resolved. The analyst may: (a) request additional information or clarification; (b) suggest specific coordination with subject matter experts or service delivery portfolio; and/or (c) suggest edits to the documents. The analyst review should be completed within 5 business days.

If the request is approved at Tier 2, the analyst prepares a package for Tier 3 review (AFS Director). The package contains the request, the VDI, and any supplementary documents.

If the request is not approved at Tier 2, the analyst informs the AFS Director and the originator of the decision and rationale. The AFS Director is notified to ensure situational awareness. The request is the closed and identified as “Not Approved.”

**Tier 3**

The AFS Director reviews the package and addresses the proposed requirements for appropriateness and applicability to the NWS mission, adherence to policy, benefit to the organization or weather enterprise, and linkages to AFS NSP service requirements and AOP milestones. The AFS Director should complete the review within 15 business days. Upon completion of the review, the AFS Director may take any of the following actions:
Approve the request: The request is approved and will be scheduled for a subsequent review and validation decision by the Mission Delivery Council (Tier 4). Note: The AFS Director may request that the request originator and/or SPT lead prepare a short presentation for Tier 4 review.

Approve and Validate: The AFS Director may approve and validate the requirement. Such decisions apply to requirements which are contained within the AFS Portfolio and do not require an MDC meeting for resource decisions; they are approved for execution. The AFS Director informs the MDC of AFS Approved and Validated requests for situational awareness.

Not Approve: If the request is not approved, a rationale is provided. The AFS director informs the MDC of AFS Not Approved requests for situational awareness.

Request that the SPT resolve issues. The analyst provides the list of issues to the SPT(s) and the request is re-addressed at Tier 2, and re-submitted to Tier 3 when ready.

The analyst informs the originator and SPT of the Tier 3 decision and updates information and status on the CaRDS website.

Tier 4

The MDC addresses requests approved at Tier 3 and makes a corporate decision on the validation of the requirement(s) proposed in each request. The MDC also makes a priority decision on validated requirements. Materials provided to the MDC for their review and decisions include the request, the VDI, and a short presentation addressing the need and other details for the proposed requirement.

The MDC may address and vote on the request either via email or during an actual meeting (the MDC or AFS Director may request that the originator or SPT lead be present to provide the briefing). The MDC should address requests on a quarterly basis.

The MDC may engage the Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) or the NWS Risk Mitigation Council as needed when addressing a request. The MDC decision may be one of the following:

Validate the requirement. Upon deliberation, if the MDC determines that the request addresses an applicable, valid, and beneficial requirement for the NWS, the MDC will validate the requirement and designate a priority. Validated requirements are scheduled for subsequent addressing by the Portfolio Integration Council (PIC).

Not Approve the request. If the MDC determines that the request is not applicable, not valid or does not provide sufficient benefit to justify expenditure of resources, they may not approve the request and provide the rationale. The decision and rationale is conveyed to the SPT and the Originator.

Request Additional Information. The MDC may request additional information from the originator, the SPT or other subject matter expert.

Elevate the Decision. The decision may be elevated to the NWS Executive Council if adjudication at a higher level is necessary or if the request addresses a transformational change to the NWS.
The analyst informs the originator and SPT of the Tier 4 decision and updates information and status on the CaRDS website.

**Portfolio Integration Council (PIC) Review**

Validated Requirements are listed in a “Prioritized Queue of Requirements” on the CaRDS site and prepared for review by the PIC via the Office of Planning and Programming for Service Delivery “OPPSD Adjudication of Validated Requirements” (OaVR) process. The PIC should address requests on a quarterly basis.

The OaVR process steps are outlined as follows:

a. OPPSD and AFS liaisons review requirements and engage applicable Service Delivery Portfolios to obtain rough order of magnitude (ROM) resource estimate.

b. OaVR manager schedules requirements for review by the PIC, providing ROM and MDC priority.

c. Requirements are addressed by the PIC and placed in one of two groups:
   - Group 1: Requirements with solutions that are readily identifiable, are easily implementable within existing resources, and have minimal impact on current OPPSD activities.
   - Group 2: Requirements needing additional information such as developing a range of alternatives and cost estimate are required.

d. Group 1 requirements are assigned to a NWS portfolio for execution.

e. Group 2 requirements are evaluated based the following criteria: MDC priority, feasibility, and benefit versus anticipated costs. Requirements that score sufficiently high are assigned to a lead portfolio for development of an “Investment Justification Request” (IJR). Those not scoring high are “Parked” in the Prioritized Queue of Requirements.

f. The PIC will review IJRs on a quarterly basis and make a GO/NO GO decision based on the information provided in the IJRs and current activities.
   - If a GO decision is made and a solution can be implemented within existing resources, and no other milestones are affected; the solution will be assigned to a lead Portfolio for execution.
   - If a GO decision is made but development will affect current milestones the solution will be considered as part of the AOP process.
   - If a GO decision is made and the solution needs new resources to implement the solution will be considered as part of the NOAA Strategy Execution and Evaluation (SEE) process.
   - If a NO GO decision is made the requirement is placed back into the queue.

Material disagreements between the PIC and MDC over the adjudication of validated requirements may be escalated to the NWS Executive Council for resolution.

Requirements parked in the queue will be evaluated periodically (quarterly) by the MDC and the PIC and re-addressed if there are changes in priority, resources, or other circumstances which warrant re-evaluating scheduling and resource assignment.

The OaVR process manager informs the CaRDS analyst of decisions and outcomes from OaVR/PIC meetings, and provides updates (at least quarterly) on the analysis, planning, and
development of requests addressed by the PIC. The analyst informs the originator and SPT lead of the decision and updates, and enters information and status on the CaRDS website. Once the solution is developed\(^2\), new products or services for the general public or NWS partners will undergo PSCM coordination per NWSI 10-102 to support operational demonstration and ensure necessary notification, comment and feedback prior to going operational.

\(^2\) For large development efforts, seeking public comment/review on the proposed change prior to development may be preferable to waiting until substantial development has been completed, especially where significant and potentially opposing input is expected.
Appendix B – New Mission Need or Requirement Request form

The form used to submit a New Mission Need or Requirement Request in CaRDS is included in the following four pages.
New Mission Need or Requirement Request

Title

[Provide a descriptive title for this request]

Date: mm/dd/yyyy

This template is for individuals requesting consideration of a new mission need or service that is currently not being delivered by the NWS. The document will be used to validate new needs or requests under the Mission Delivery Council (MDC). Once a need or request is validated as a requirement, it may be satisfied through investments by the NWS.

This document is not intended for specific requests for new funding or resources. This template is used to begin the requirement validation process prior to developing investment requests. To request funding for a specific investment to satisfy a validated NWS need or requirement, please use the "Initial Investment Request" template.

Instructions and guidance are provided in blue text. Please delete the instructions when the document is completed.
CONTACT INFORMATION

Please feel free to add additional contacts as necessary.

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<th>REQUEST ORIGINATOR</th>
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<td>[Name]</td>
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<td>Office:</td>
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<td>Date:</td>
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<tr>
<th>LOCAL OFFICE / MANAGEMENT CONCURRENCE (CARDS TIER 1 CLEARANCE)</th>
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<td>[Name]</td>
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<td>Office:</td>
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<td>Date:</td>
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1 Statement of Mission Need or Requirement

Mission Need or Requirement

Provide a brief description of the request. Address the mission related gap and the proposed requirement. Do not address the solution in this section (you may indicate a proposed solution in section 4).

Time Sensitivity

If time sensitive, state when the request would need to be addressed and why.

Existing Operational Gaps

Describe the operational gaps, shortcomings, or challenges that will be addressed.

2 Justification and Benefits to the NWS

Strategic Drivers and Mandates

If available, link the request to a specific initiative, mandate, law, stakeholder need or other justification.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.1: Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the requirement address a mandate by NOAA, DOC, OMB, Executive Order, or Law?</td>
<td>Y / N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the requirement needed to satisfy a specific external organization’s needs?</td>
<td>Y / N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the requirement address a specific DOC, NOAA, or NWS strategic initiative?</td>
<td>Y / N</td>
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Explanation of justification:

[Provide explanations to “yes” answers above. If the requirement addresses a strategic initiative, indicate which one and where (i.e., the NWS Phasing Diagram, NWS Planning Guidance Memo, NWS Weather-Ready Nation Roadmap 2.0, NWS Weather-Ready Nation Implementation Plan, or other (please specify). Be specific with any stated justification, ensuring strong linkage where applicable ]
Benefits

Identify how satisfying the request will benefit the NWS, partners, the public, or other stakeholders.

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<tr>
<th>Table 2.2: Benefit to the NWS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how the request will benefit NWS’ mission to protect life and property.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how the request will help the NWS better serve our partners and the public.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how the request will improve how NWS operates.</td>
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<td>Describe how the request will help NWS be a better steward of government resources (e.g., time or money).</td>
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**Explanation of benefits to NWS:**

[Provide the benefits in implementing this request addressing the above statements as applicable]

3 National Service Program

Identify the most appropriate Analyze, Forecast and Support Office National Service Program to vet and address this request.

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<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
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<td>Aviation</td>
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<td>Severe Weather</td>
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<td>Water Resources</td>
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<td>Overarching (broad cross-cutting)</td>
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4 Estimated Resource Needs

Provide an estimate of resource needs associated with the request. Note - This is an opportunity to provide a general idea of resources needed.

You may include a proposed solution; however it is not to be considered as the 'only solution'. Validation of the requirement for this request does not imply approval of proposed solution. Solution analysis will take place after requirement is validated.
Appendix C - CaRDS Validation Decision Information (VDI) Document

The VDI form is included in the following five pages.
**Service Program Team Validation Decision Information**

**Request Title**
Request Number: 
Service Program Team: 
SPT POC: 
CaRDS Analyst:

Answer the following and include details for any “NO” answers.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1: Is the request Title, SCOPE, and applicability well defined in the request form?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>Q2: Is request appropriate for the NWS?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q3: Have all necessary stakeholders been engaged and are they in agreement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q4: Is there a clear benefit to the NWS by providing this capability?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</table>
Answer the following and **include details for any “YES” answers.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q5: Are there any potential conflicts or issues with policy that should be discussed and addressed?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q6: Is there any change in working conditions or other issue requiring NWSEO review?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q7: Is this request a duplicate or of such nature that it should be merged with an existing request/requirement or capability? Alternatively, is something like this already being done in another region?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q8: If implemented, will this request result in a New (or a substantial change) product or service available to the general public or NWS “Partners”?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</table>

Detail any other issues or coordination required that were not captured in the previous questions.
Table 1: Stakeholders. Please indicate all of the SPT members, Subject Matter Experts and other stakeholders involved in addressing this request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office or Organization</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>For every SPT member indicate: Approve, Neutral or Not approve (with rationale). For other stakeholders and advisors, indicate role and comments as appropriate.</th>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

← List Service Delivery Portfolio(s), POC, and their feedback. →

← List other SPT/CPTs engaged and their comments/concurrence. →
SPT DECISION and RECOMMENDATION

SPT Decision on this request is:
  o Approved by SPT
  o NOT Approved by SPT
  o Approved with one or more Dissent
  o NOT Approved with one or more Dissent
  o Cannot reach decision: Defer to AFSO

The SPT recommends that this request be:
  o Approved by AFSO
  o Approved & VALIDATED by AFSO
  o Approved and complete NWSI 10-102 process.
  o For Situational Awareness: NOT Approved by SPT

If Not Approved, provide specific details and rationale

Date completed and Forwarded to AFS:

AFS Director Disposition: Date:
Guidance for Completing the VDI.

The goal of the SPT/CPT review and processing of requests is to ensure that sufficient information is available in order to determine if the request represents an NWS requirement.

**Affirm their Team is most appropriate to address assigned request**
Confirm that the subject area for the request is under the purview of this SPT/CPT. If another team is more appropriate for dealing with the request, notify the CaRDS analyst.

**Ensure request clearly identifies what is needed**
Determine whether or not there is sufficient information to properly identify what is needed and the nature of the request. If necessary, contact the Originator for clarification. Provide details in Q1 (if applicable),

**Ensure ‘applicability’ and appropriateness for the NWS**
The team is to look at the appropriateness and applicability of the request, taking into consideration potential policy conflicts or issues. If necessary, the originator and other SME’s are to be engaged in making a determination. If the request is not appropriate or applicable for the NWS, provide details in Q2 and in the SPT DECISION and RECOMMENDATION Sections.

**Consider scope and impact**
Scope and impact are to be addressed. Answering questions like:
- Does this apply to one functional area or region only? Should it apply nationally?
- If it benefits one stakeholder class (e.g. Emergency Managers), should it be developed for broader audience who may also benefit (e.g. media or general public)?
- How will this impact the NWS? What NWS units will be impacted? What user classes are impacted?
- If the request is for one type of product, should other products be considered? Provide necessary details in Q1 and Q3 (if applicable).

**Ensure the Request is ‘beneficial’ to the NWS and other intended users**
The team is to consider how satisfying the request would be beneficial to the NWS or other intended users/recipient. Consideration should be given to other similar efforts either in process or already in place. Provide details in Q3 and Q4 (if applicable).

**Addressing Issues**

Issues raised by team members are to be addressed and resolved whenever possible. If members from the same office/region/center do not all agree, they should resolve their differences either amongst themselves or with their management—up to their director level if needed.

Upon completion of the analysis and this template, please delete this instruction section and notify the Analyst that the team has completed their review and decision. If the request is Not Approved, provide rationale. The Analyst will forward the request, VDI, and any supplemental documents to the AFS Director for Tier 3.
## Appendix D - List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFS</td>
<td>Analyze, Forecast, and Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOP</td>
<td>Annual Operating Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaRDS</td>
<td>Capabilities and Requirements Decision Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COO</td>
<td>Chief Operations Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPT</td>
<td>Corporate Project Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOC</td>
<td>Department of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMC</td>
<td>Financial Management Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDSS</td>
<td>Impact-based Decision Support Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IJR</td>
<td>Investment Justification Request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Mission Delivery Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOOA</td>
<td>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSP</td>
<td>National Service Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWS</td>
<td>National Weather Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWSI</td>
<td>National Weather Service Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OaVR</td>
<td>OPPSD Adjudication of Validated Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCFO</td>
<td>Office of Chief Financial Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPPSD</td>
<td>Office of Planning and Programming for Service Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O2R</td>
<td>Operations to Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIC</td>
<td>Portfolio Integration Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMO</td>
<td>Program Management Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POC</td>
<td>Point of Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSCM</td>
<td>Products and Services Change Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROM</td>
<td>Rough Order of Magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2O</td>
<td>Research to Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDP</td>
<td>Service Delivery Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE</td>
<td>Strategy Execution and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Subject Matter Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPT</td>
<td>Service Program Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDI</td>
<td>Validation Decision Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>