

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-23  
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023***

***Operations and Services***

***MARINE OBSERVATION PROGRAM***

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

**OPR:** W/NDBC (W. Burnett)

**Certified by:** W/OBS (A. Mehta)

**Type of Issuance:** Routine

***SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:*** This directive supersedes NWSPD 10-23, “*Marine Observation Program*”, dated May 27, 2019. This is a routine quadrennial review and update to keep this document current. Minor editorial changes were made to ensure clear and concise policy guidance and to improve readability.

A reference to the rescinded Instruction 10-2302 – “*Marine Reporting Stations*” was deleted from Appendix A. No other content changes were made.

1. Information on the state of the atmosphere, including the land and ocean environments, is an essential element of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) mission. To meet this mission, the NWS requires marine observations, both climate atmospheric and oceanographic, to provide quality advisories, warnings, forecasts, and forecast verification. This directive governs activities to provide uninterrupted marine observations and establishes NWS marine observing policy.
2. The NWS provides timely, accurate, and relevant, real-time marine, deep-ocean and coastal, climate, atmospheric, and oceanographic quality-controlled observations to support the NWS forecast and warning missions, other NOAA line offices that have requirements for such data, and other Government agencies and users, as required.
3. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:
  - 3.1 NWS Headquarters (NWSHQ) provides guidance and direction to this policy by developing requirements for operational marine observing programs.
  - 3.2 The Director, Office of Observations (W/OBS), is responsible for the implementation of this policy and will issue Procedural Directives as required to effectively implement this policy.

3.3 Regional Headquarters implement this policy as it relates to the Voluntary Observing Ship (VOS) program.

4. This policy directive is supported by the references and supporting information listed in Appendix A.

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Kenneth E. Graham  
Assistant Administrator  
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Date

**APPENDIX A**

REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING  
INFORMATION

**Instructions:**

- *NWSI 10-2301- Voluntary Observing Ship Program*