

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-2401
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Operations and Services
Impact-Based Decision Support Services, NWSPD 10-24
NWS CORE PARTNER IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT

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

OPR: W/AFS12 (D. Bieger)

Certified by: W/AFS1 (M. Tew)

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This is a new directive. The purpose of this procedural directive is to define a common framework of terminology and methodologies for a minimum baseline of consistent IDSS management and delivery already practiced today. This instruction documents consistent planning and operational procedures observed and collected across the field for NWS Core Partners.

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December 19, 2023

Allison Allen
Director
Analyze, Forecast and Support Office

Date

NWS Core Partner Identification and Management

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1 Introduction

This instruction defines National Weather Service (NWS) Core Partners and provides necessary details toward NWS Core Partner identification and management. While a degree of oversight is required at the regional and national level, on the whole, the office official-in-charge will be directly responsible for identifying whether an entity should be considered an NWS Core Partner, thereby qualifying them to receive Impact-based Decision Support Services (IDSS) when needed. This will require professional judgment, given that external entity title nomenclature, association with other qualifying entities, and many other considerations may need to be examined. Further guidance may be obtained from the regional IDSS program, the National IDSS Program Manager, and Office of the Chief Operating Officer (OCCO) Policy staff.

2 Core Partner Identification and Guidance

The NWS has defined a classification of its users which it terms “Core Partners.” This class of users is defined as:

“Government and non-government entities that are directly involved in the preparation, dissemination and discussions involving weather¹, water, or climate related National Weather Service information², that support decision making for routine or episodic, high impact³ events.

¹ In this document, “weather” is used generally to mean all service areas which the NWS supports, including space weather, tsunamis, aviation, fire, marine, etc.

² This information may pertain to any service areas which the NWS supports, including space weather, tsunamis, aviation, fire weather, marine, etc.

³ Any weather-dependent event that significantly impacts safety, health, the environment, economic productivity, or homeland security is considered “high impact”. No standard, nationwide criteria define a high

These entities have a unique need for increased interaction with NWS personnel for provision of IDSS or to facilitate their role in supporting the NWS mission.”

NWS recognizes that there are a large number of additional entities that contribute to the overall services provided by NWS or that provide quality services to the public as critical Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise⁴ Partners in building a Weather-Ready Nation. However, this “Core Partner” designation is meant to identify those entities that have a unique need for direct access to NWS information and/or that require direct interaction with the NWS because of either the level of critical public services they provide or the need to facilitate their role in supporting the NWS mission.

Core Partners support NWS’ inherently governmental public safety mission via message amplification (force multipliers). General criteria for Core Partners are:

- Direct involvement in the preparation, dissemination, or discussion involving hazardous weather, water, climate, or other emergency information
- Possessing a unique need for increased interaction with NWS for IDSS
- Having an operational linkage of an allied mission of public safety or critical interdependency on each other’s data or actions which impact the missions of both organizations

NWS Core Partners consist of the following four categories:

- a. Members of the emergency management (EM) community⁵. Public safety officials who serve as employees or contract agents of a government agency at the federal⁶, state, local, tribal, or territorial level, and are charged with protecting the public from hazards that are influenced by weather¹ or weather-related events.

In select cases, with approval of the NWS office official-in-charge and as resources allow, the NWS may provide similar support for organizations which are not formally government agencies but employ personnel who routinely exercise authority equivalent to the public safety officials described above, particularly those who serve vulnerable populations. Examples include the emergency management function of primary/secondary schools,

impact event. It may impact millions of people or one sector, and it may vary in timing or location. (WRN Roadmap 2.0, p. 11)

⁴ The Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise (<https://www.weather.gov/about/weather-enterprise>) includes all entities in the public, private, nonprofit, research, and academic sectors that provide information, services, and infrastructure in the areas of weather, water, and climate. The private sector component includes all elements of the private sector (including media, consultants, equipment providers, etc.) which provide services to the public in the areas of weather, water and climate, broadly defined (e.g., includes all NWS service program areas). The term does not exclude foreign-owned companies which provide services to the American public.

⁵ NWS IDSS for the EM communities include support to government emergency operations at the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial levels (e.g., Incident Command Posts, Emergency Operations Centers, etc.), including support to government operations of Emergency Support Functions (ESF), described in the National Response Framework, for which NOAA has been identified as playing a federal support role.

⁶ To honor agreements with contiguous countries and territories and the terms of other international agreements, the term “federal” within this document encompasses international governments and organizations supported by NWS.

colleges/universities, and hospitals/long-term care facilities⁷.

b. Members of the water resources management (WRM) community. Public officials who serve as employees or contract agents of a government agency at the federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial level and are charged with managing the nation's water resources for the public good, including infrastructure (e.g., dams, levees, reservoirs, etc.) supporting these management activities. In addition, in select cases with approval of the NWS office official-in-charge and as resources allow, the NWS may provide similar support to quasi-government⁸ and private organizations which are not formally government agencies but which employ personnel who routinely exercise authority similar to the public officials described above, and whose actions impact NWS operations/forecasts.

c. Government partners. Federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial government partners who have missions that require close coordination with the NWS to support the operational linkages of an allied mission of public safety or critical interdependency on each other's data or actions which impact the missions of both organizations. This includes governmental officials with responsibility over public safety and decision-making authority regarding evacuation and other critical decisions, whether elected or by positional authority.

d. Members of the Real-time Media. Members of the Real-time Media are entities and contract agents of entities that have a need to actively participate in discussions with NWS forecast offices on imminent weather or other hazards. These entities operate systems that routinely and rapidly relay weather and water watches, advisories, warnings, and forecast information to a significant part of the population served by an NWS office. Real-time Media includes providers of weather content through electronic information distribution such as radio, television, internet, cellular, and other wireless means. Members of the Real-time Media may be an active participant in some NWS IDSS activities because of the unique role they play (in coordination with NWS) in communicating critical public safety information; however, NWS does not provide decision making support to the media related to the conduct of their operations.

Outside of the categories above, should the NWS find instances where critical service needs are unmet, the local official-in-charge and regional IDSS Program Managers should escalate to NWSHQ, who will evaluate these in collaboration with our Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise partners as they arise.

⁷ Support for health, education, infrastructure/utilities is not broad, as services provided by Enterprise partners, but limited in most cases to provision of hazardous weather information in conjunction with ongoing response efforts related to hazardous weather events.

⁸ Quasi-government organizations have characteristics of both public/government and private entities. Some are incorporated as a private, nonprofit organization but are run by a board of directors that is composed of government officials or directors appointed by a unit of traditional government (but who otherwise are associated with non-government organizations). In general, they are regarded by national laws and regulations as being under the guidance of the government but also separate from the government. While they may receive some revenue from charging customers for services, these organizations are often at least partially funded by the government. Quasi-government organizations may receive core level service if the organization's primary mission responsibility is related to public safety. Examples include Water Commissions, Avalanche Warning Center, and Port Authorities.

Note regarding weather observers: Individuals, companies, or other entities that are involved in ‘chasing’ weather events and posting or streaming video or pictures of the event, but do not otherwise have a need to communicate with NWS, do not meet the Core Partner definition. In addition, individual NWS spotters, who play a key role in providing information to our forecast offices but who do not routinely require direct access to NWS information to fulfill their function as a spotter, are not included in the Core Partner definition.

Additional informational Core Partner references can be found in Appendix A and on the [NWS IDSS Portal](#).

3 Core Partner Management

The NWS office official-in-charge is responsible for the initial approval of Core Partner designation and will ensure that onboarding and initial relationship building activities take place prior to IDSS delivery. Once an entity has been approved as a Core Partner for IDSS, the office will work with the Core Partner to develop a plan based on IDSS needs/requirements, available resources and prioritization considerations. (See IDSS Operations Instruction for details on managing this planning effort.)

Any Core Partner may receive any level of IDSS (Reference Instruction 10-2402, Continuum of Impact-based Messaging section) as the situation and local NWS office resources allow. All Core Partners should receive Baseline IDSS when their constituencies and operations are impacted. Levels of IDSS (e.g. Baseline IDSS) are described in the Impact-based Decision Support Operations Instruction 10-2402.

3.1 Core Partner Approval Process

This section relates to considering and approving an organization/entity as a Core Partner. As NWS continues its efforts to improve IDSS, there is a reasonable expectation that additional organizations will request these services on a routine basis, and therefore become an NWS Core Partner. These requests to be a Core Partner will be processed in the following manner:

1. Any organization may request IDSS from their local/regional/national NWS office. The office will document all requests. (Note: This is a one-time request to be included as an organization receiving IDSS from NWS when conditions warrant in the future. This type of approval is not needed for actual support for a particular event.)
2. Based on information provided by the requestor and the definition of NWS Core Partner provided in this instruction, the local NWS office will determine whether they have a need for mission-critical IDSS services. Local offices are encouraged to confer with regional staff (or OWP/Center office official-in-charge for NWC and NCEP Centers) for guidance in making these decisions, as needed. Regional/Center staff may confer with NWSHQ (IDSS program or OCOO Policy Lead) for additional guidance.
3. After an internal NWS review/validation, the office will notify the requester of the decision to either accept or deny their Core Partner services request. NWS should provide a response within 7 days upon receipt of user request. In cases where additional review is needed, a provisional acceptance may be provided, with a final decision within 30 days of original request. Note: IDSS may be provided to the requesting entity during the provisional period.

4. If Core Partner designation is denied, the office will provide an explanation to the requestor, typically in the form of an email. The NWS office will offer publicly available support information to the requestor, as well as the NWS list of Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise resources available, as applicable, (see section 4 below) for guidance on supporting and responding to requests from General Partners (partners who NWS interacts with but who don't meet the definition of Core Partner) and the Public.
5. Denied requests may be appealed through the offices identified in Table 1. All appeals will be coordinated with the originating office, the office of first appeal (for final appeals), and the requesting organization prior to reaching a decision. NWS processing of each appeal should not exceed 45 days from the date of appeal.

Note: Pre-existing IDSS relationships with Core Partners should be documented by the NWS office providing the support. Existing Core Partners do not require a new request to remain a Core Partner and should be documented in a Core Partner Profile (reference Section 3.3).

Office Receiving Request	First Appeal	Final Appeal
Weather Forecast Office, Weather Service Office, Data Collection Office, River Forecast Center, Center Weather Service Unit, Regional Operations Center, Tsunami Warning Center	Regional Headquarters	Office of Chief Operating Officer (OCOO) or designee
NCEP Centers	NCEP Headquarters	OCOO or designee
Office of Water Prediction, NWS Operations Center	OCOO/Operations Division	OCOO or designee

Table 1. Appeals for IDSS Request

3.2 Core Partner Onboarding

Building strong relationships and trust with our Core Partners is the foundation of effective IDSS and begins well in advance of an actual event through routine interactions with Core Partners. This is a critical activity in the Relationship Building Phase of the IDSS Cycle (see NWSI 10-2402 IDSS Operations)

NWS offices should proactively recruit, and engage with, Core Partners. This provides a number of benefits including:

- Cultivating partnership to better serve communities
- Ensure equitable services to Core Partner peers (Avoid serving one county but not another)

- Increasing community awareness of NWS services
- Facilitating mutual understanding of vulnerable populations
- Core Partners becoming force multipliers of NWS messages and advocate for weather safety in their communities

The initial meeting and ongoing engagement with prospective Core Partners can take different forms. A primary goal in establishing a Core Partner relationship is the development of the Core Partner Profile. The following areas of discussion should be included during the onboarding process:

- Contact information
- Level of support needed
- Weather or impact thresholds and decision points (time needed to take action for the expected impact)
- Vulnerable populations Core Partners serve
- Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise provider support
- Support needed that NWS can't provide - Referral to Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise Partners (weather.gov/enterprise)
- Identification of any existing Core Partners under their jurisdiction and identification of the level of support NWS should provide to NWS Core Partners (some partners may not want NWS to directly interact with those under their jurisdiction)
- Guidance for Core Partners we cannot serve - NWS is not able to serve everyone. Determine if there are General Partners that NWS must provide IDSS in order to support the partner's operations (see section 3.4) or if the Core Partner can act as a force multiplier to inform those entities.

Some Core Partners may be served by multiple offices (e.g., State-level partners). In these cases, one office should be identified as the primary office for onboarding and relationship building, and NWS offices should coordinate on how this will be carried out.

For more detail regarding partner engagement activities see IDSS Operations Instruction (10-2402). Additional informational references and templates can be found on the [NWS IDSS Portal](#).

3.3 Core Partner Organization Profiles

Core Partner Profiles will be created by NWS offices that manage the relationship for their Core Partners. The Core Partner Organization Profile should contain the following:

1. Organization Name
2. Core Partner category/justification
3. Primary and Secondary points of contact, at a minimum
4. Alert notification preferences
5. Website and social media information
6. Core Partner scope and responsibility
7. Assessment of partner episodic and recurring IDSS needs
 - a. Partner based weather/water/climate community risks, and vulnerabilities
 - b. Weather or impact thresholds and decision points (time needed to take action for the expected impact)

8. Identification of concurrent support by Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise Partners
9. Identification of General Partners for whom the Core Partner has requested NWS support, either (1) on an ongoing basis or (2) in conjunction with support to the Core Partner.

Local/regional offices should review their NWS Core Partner Profiles at least bi-annually to ensure policy and instruction adherence, consistency, and the need for modifications to best practices/guidance. To build out a Core Partner Profile please use the [IDSS Partner Onboarding Form](#), on the IDSS Portal.

3.4 Core Partner Requests for Support to Associated General Partners

Occasionally, Core Partners may request that their associated contacts, who do not fall within the definition of NWS Core Partner, but who routinely perform public safety duties on behalf the Core Partner, be included in IDSS activities of the requesting Core Partner. These entities will retain their General Partner status and do not qualify for IDSS beyond the specific support requested by the Core Partner.

The Core Partner should provide documentation of their request indicating:

- (1) Justification based on NWS mission responsibilities and the critical nature of supporting the Core Partner's operations
- (2) The role of the requested entity in supporting public safety
- (3) The length of time the support is needed

Local offices are encouraged to confer with regional staff (or OWP/Center office official-in-charge for NWC and NCEP Centers) for guidance in making these decisions, as needed. Regional/Center staff may confer with NWSHQ (IDSS program or OCOO Policy Lead) for additional guidance. Upon review/approval by the office official-in-charge these General Partners will be provided the support requested by the Core Partner.

The NWS office may turn down the request for support (e.g., due to resource limitations or if it is not within the scope of NWS mission) and instead offer publicly available NWS information or make a referral to Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise Partners (weather.gov/enterprise) (See section 4 on support to General Partners and the Public.)

If the request is approved, it will be documented and stored. Requests for support of a General Partner, including all details of the associated Core Partner's documentation, will be reviewed annually at a minimum as part of the review of the Core Partner Profile.

Note: For support to General Partners within the Incident Command System (ICS) structure who are associated with a Core Partner, see Appendix A, "Support within an ICS Operations Structure." For support to General Partners in emergency situations, see section 4.2.

4 Supporting and Responding to Requests from General Partners and the Public

The request to be a Core Partner may come from entities that do not qualify to be a Core Partner and therefore do not qualify for IDSS. However, maintaining healthy relationships with general partners and the Public is still vital to NWS. General Partners and the Public still have access to

NWS products and services, as well as standard outreach/education, and science/research collaborations.

In National Incident Management System (NIMS) Context: General Partners and the Public (e.g. critical infrastructure facilities, private sector utility partners, etc.) may receive IDSS-based information from NWS within the context of an emergency management coordination structure, (e.g., Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command Post). Within these structures, a General Partner may indirectly receive IDSS-based information as NWS informs Core Partner operations, but NWS should not provide tailored information directly to General Partners and the Public. These coordinating structures may also include representatives of and participation by organizations that are not covered under the definitions of NWS core partners (e.g., critical infrastructure facilities, private sector utility partners).

When NWS provides IDSS within these coordinating structures to support the aggregate life-safety preparation and response, NWS recognizes that information of value and use in operational efforts is indirectly provided to all response participants. NWS will not, however, provide tailored advice to General Partners and the Public on impacts of weather in areas such as how to expedite restoration activities or how to mitigate hazardous weather in the future. In responding to requests for specific weather guidance and information beyond that provided to Core Partners, NWS personnel will inform the requester that tailored support, including customized and highly localized forecasts and warnings, may be provided through our Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise Partners. For more detail, please reference the Core Partner Clarification table in Appendix A.

Outside NIMS Context: Requests to NWS for support to individuals or organizations outside the Core Partner definition must be addressed at the request of a Core Partner for purposes that are critical to public safety (see section 3.4). If General Partners/Public request IDSS from an operational NWS office without any association to a previously determined NWS Core Partner, the local office should provide services identified for general partners/public using the response approaches presented below.

Potential approaches when receiving a request to be a Core Partner from General Partners and the Public are summarized in the [Engagement Guide for General Partners](#) on the IDSS Portal, with key elements listed below:

- Direct the requester to a standard suite of NWS Products/services, ensuring the general partner has an understanding of the types of general NWS products/services that are available publicly and how they can be accessed and interpreted.
- Develop a strategy to direct General Partner and the Public requests to the appropriate Core Partner that will serve as that interface.
- Offer education/outreach activities and opportunities designed to help ensure the safety of the public, including but not limited to NOAA WRN Ambassador, StormReady, and/or TsunamiReady programs.
- Promote sharing of information about the Weather, Water and Climate Enterprise (including NWS and the private sector) resources available.
 - [Weather, Water, Climate Enterprise resources](#)
 - See [IDSS FAQs For External Use](#) hand out that may be used to communicate

- NWS and Enterprise Partner roles to customers.
- Directory of [Commercial Weather Providers](#) - This webpage includes links to NWS listings, AMS listings, NWA listings of private sector providers

General services, such as responding to questions related to forecasts which an office has issued (e.g., on the NWS office's public phone line) are still a priority. When an employee receives a call related to forecast information that has been issued, the employee is encouraged to answer the question using publicly available NWS information. If the office receives a call for services exceeding those identified for general partners/public and/or additional guidance is needed to determine a partner's status, then it should ask for assistance through its office official-in-charge.

4.1 Managing Expectations for General Partners and the Public

Managing General Partner and the Public expectations is key. Regardless of the approach, try to meet with those General Partners and the Public entities who were previously determined to have received IDSS and are likely expecting it in the future. Help identify ways general partners can still receive needed information from NWS, via public services. Local offices are encouraged to coordinate with regional or national center IDSS Program Lead, for support and guidance as needed. If the local office has been providing IDSS to partners that do not fall within the scope of the NWS Core Partner IDSS Policy definition, we recommend two ways forward:

- **Approach 1:** The local office may help connect General Partners and the Public to the broader NIMS network (i.e., Emergency Managers and other public safety officials) to gain access to IDSS if applicable.
 - General Partners and the Public may receive IDSS by request of a NWS Core Partner if it is critical to public safety.
 - Note: All General Partner and the Public requests are subject to approval by the NWS office official-in-charge to ensure resource availability and consistency with NWS established guidelines.
 - NWS may be able to provide IDSS to the NWS Core Partner that is supporting the General Partner's event/activity.
 - If the General Partner and the public are not supported by the broader NIMS network, follow Approach 2 below.
- **Approach 2:** The local office may switch to services that are appropriate for General Partner and the Public.
 - Contact General Partners and the Public to explain the change in service due to a new national policy.
 - Offer services appropriate for General Partners and the Public (as listed above in recommended activities in How to Handle New General Partners and the Public IDSS Requests section).

4.2 How to Serve General Partner/Public in Emergency Situations

In rare cases, if NWS staff are concerned that lives and property are at imminent risk, IDSS may be provided to individuals/organizations outside the scope of existing policy or without a previous request/approval being in place. If IDSS is provided to General Partners/Public in emergency situations, recommended follow up activities include:

- Notifying the NWS office official-in-charge for awareness within 12 hours
- Document actions made in shift log or other shift documentation system

Following the above activities, after the event/incident has ended, the senior official in charge of the office should:

- Review actions taken after the incident to determine impacts, if any, and if IDSS for the individual/organization is warranted on an ongoing basis.
 - If there is a reasonable expectation of providing IDSS to the General Partner in the future, then work with an approved NWS Core Partner to formally request the General Partners/Public support or to act as a force multiplier in passing along critical NWS information.
 - Provide notification to the office with next level IDSS management responsibility (see table below) as appropriate for awareness.

Office Providing IDSS	Office with IDSS Management Responsibility to be informed
Weather Forecast Office, River Forecast Center, Center Weather Service Unit, Regional Operations Center, Tsunami Warning Center, Weather Service Office, Data Collection Office	Regional Management and Regional Operations Center
NCEP Centers	NCEP Office of the Director, Regional/local Offices impacted
National Water Center	Office of Water Prediction, Regional/local Offices impacted
NWS Operations Center	OCCO/Operations Division, Regional/local Offices impacted

Table 2: IDSS Coordination Roles and Responsibilities

APPENDIX A - Clarifications and Guidelines for Applying the Core Partner Definition

The table below provides detailed information on clarifications and guidelines for interpreting the Core Partner definitions. The table should be used as a resource for local staff to recognize who may or may not be considered Core Partners.

This table does not include references to all NWS partners, but serves to provide guidance on who is included in the Core Partner definition for specific sectors where additional clarification is needed. The clarifications serve as a means for NWS to help standardize its level of service across NWS offices and, in some cases, may indicate where NWS may need to scale back and refer contacts to Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise⁴ as an alternative source of services in the future.

Note: Any Core Partner example provided may also receive services from Enterprise partners. If this is the case, NWS should be flexible in the level of support provided. NWS services should be adjusted based on Core Partner direction.

NWS may occasionally review the group of organizations supported and/or refine the definition of Core Partners provided in this section. Based on experience and external input, review will take place, both informally and in the context of post-event evaluations of IDSS services (see NWSPD 10-1606, Service Assessment), to recognize and address any impacts to Enterprise partner services as NWS is made aware of them.

<p>Core Partner Category</p>	<p>Descriptions, Considerations, and Clarifications in Determining Core Partner Status</p> <p><i>Note: Contract Agents of a Core Partner are considered Core Partners.</i></p>
<p>Emergency Management Community⁵</p>	<p>Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Government Emergency Managers or Public Safety Officials</p> <p>Public safety officials who serve as employees or contract agents of a government agency at the federal⁶, state, local, tribal, or territorial level, and are charged with protecting the public from hazards that are influenced by weather¹ or weather-related events.</p> <p>In select cases below, (e.g., education, health, infrastructure) the NWS may provide similar support for organizations which are not formally government agencies, but which employ personnel who routinely exercise authority equivalent to government public safety officials, particularly those who serve vulnerable populations. With approval of the NWS office official-in-charge, and as resources allow, NWS offices providing IDSS may extend support to these organizations. Support for health, education, infrastructure/utilities, is not</p>

broad, as services provided by Enterprise partners, but limited in most cases to provision of hazardous weather information in conjunction with ongoing response efforts related to hazardous weather events.

Examples Included:

- Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) entities at National and Regional levels
- National/State Park Emergency Management or Equivalent
- Federal/State Fire Management Officials, Town, City, County, State and Tribal Emergency Managers
- State Emergency Response Commission
- State/local gov't Beach Patrol/Rescue
- Avalanche Warning Centers (Public/Quasi-governmental⁷/Private)
- Fire/Police Department Leadership, Dispatch Centers (e.g., 911 Centers)
- Leaders of Critical Law Enforcement lifesaving missions such as Search and Rescue (SAR), Hazmat, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and high yield Explosives (CBRNE), Terrorist, and other critical public safety events
- Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC)
- EM function of Port Authorities/harbormasters (Public/Quasi-governmental⁷/Private)
- EM function/Operations Management of an Airport or the Airport Authority. Focus on support of safe air travel operations based on existing FAA mandates. (Public/Quasi-governmental⁷/Private)

Examples NOT Included:

- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters/Community Organizations Active in Disasters/Non-Government Organizations (VOAD/COAD/NGOs⁹) including Non-profit Groups (unless within ICS coordination structure, or as a non-profit entity with a specific MOU in place to provide support).
- Weather-Ready Nation Ambassadors (Without other qualifying factors noted in this table.)
- Any Private Sector Emergency Management Function (specific exceptions noted elsewhere in this table.) This includes Professional Sports and other Event Organizers/Venue Operators.
- Individual Airlines, Railways, Bus, Shipping Companies
- Individual River Pilots

⁹Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters/Community Organizations Active in Disasters/Non-Government Organizations

Education Sector Emergency Management/Public Safety Officials

Emergency management (EM) function for a school district or college/university – exercise broad decision-making authority to protect staff and students during weather-related emergencies (functional, not title-specific (e.g., school district superintendent)). There is no distinction between public and private educational institutions for consideration as a Core Partner.

Examples Included:

- School Superintendent
- Designated Emergency management function (e.g., school closure official)

Examples NOT Included:

Other personnel within a school/school district or college/university who request support that does not qualify or fall under the umbrella of protection of life/property as a public safety function. Note: If the individuals below are acting in a public safety role (exercising broad decision-making authority to protect staff and students during weather-related emergencies), they may be included as a Core Partner.

- Individual teachers/professors,
- School Transportation Managers/depot
- Grounds Maintenance Operations
- Sports/Event organizers
- Venue operators

Health Sector Emergency Management/Public Safety Officials

Most of the health sector emergency management function *does not qualify on its own* as being a Core Partner. An exception would be if an NWS Core Partner made a specific request to provide support (see section 3.4). The majority of support for the health sector is intended to be through (1) the larger governmental emergency management construct including the EM agencies and 911 call dispatch centers, and (2) the EM function of hospital/long term care facilities (e.g., hospice facilities/nursing homes).

See the Government Partners section of the table for government partners related to public health/healthcare.

Examples Included as Core Partner on Their Own:

- Government emergency dispatch centers (e.g., ambulance dispatch via 911 Call Center)
- Life Flight Dispatch

Typically APPROPRIATE at the Request of Core Partner Examples

<p>COULD Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EM Function of Hospitals ● EM Function of Long-term care (e.g., nursing home, Hospice) Facilities ● Emergency Mass Care Facilities ● Pandemic Testing/Vaccination Locations <p>Note: There is no distinction between public and private institutions for consideration of those included by request of a Core Partner.</p> <p>Typically, NOT APPROPRIATE Core Partner Request Examples <i>WOULD</i> Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EMS/ambulance/paramedic personnel ● All other care facilities (urgent care, clinics, surgery centers, etc.) ● Private health care insurance companies <p>Note: Preparedness/Outreach activities not related to IDSS may be provided.</p> <hr/> <p>Infrastructure/Utilities (Non-Water Resource Management) Emergency Management/Public Safety Sector</p> <p>The majority of the Infrastructure/Utilities sector emergency management function <i>does not qualify on its own</i> as being a Core Partner. Ultimately, the goal is for important utilities to work with their EMA to support mitigation efforts.</p> <p>See the Water Resource Management section of the table for those utilities that qualify as Core Partners in that context.</p> <p>Note: Any entity operating in the ICS Structure for public safety response as part of Core Partner Operations may receive the same IDSS information provided to Core Partners in that setting. See Situational Support for General Partners, below.</p> <p>Examples Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nuclear Power Facilities ● For Space Weather Prediction Center, critical infrastructure of power generation vulnerable to Space Weather events <p>Examples NOT Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communications Infrastructure Operations (Phone/Cellular/Wireless) ● Cable/Internet Providers Infrastructure Operations ● Power Generation/Distribution: Most Coal, Natural Gas, Wind, and Solar Electricity
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	<p>SKYWARN® Coordinators and Net Control Operators</p> <p>Local Office SKYWARN Coordinators and Net Controllers, and others serving in those capacities, such as Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) should be considered Core Partners.</p> <p>Examples Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SKYWARN Coordinator ● SKYWARN Net Controllers (and Net leadership/management) such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) <p>Examples NOT Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual SKYWARN Spotters ● Individual HAM Operators
<p>Government Partners</p>	<p>Federal, State, Local, Tribal, or Territorial Government Officials with Operational Linkages to Allied Mission of Public Safety or Critical Interdependency</p> <p>Partners who have missions that require close coordination with the NWS to support the operational linkages of an allied mission of public safety or critical interdependency on each other’s data or actions which impact the missions of both organizations. These include governmental officials with responsibility over public safety and decision-making authority regarding evacuation and other critical decisions, whether elected or by positional authority. Quasi-government⁶ (quasi private) organizations - may receive core level service if the organization’s primary mission responsibility is related to public safety.</p> <p>Examples Include:</p> <p>Federal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Office of the President ● Congressional Members and Staffers ● NOAA Offices ● Federal Emergency Management Agency ● Federal Aviation Administration ● Federal Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration ● Department of Defense ● U.S. Geological Survey ● U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ● U.S. Coast Guard ● Department of Health and Human Services/Centers for Disease

Control/National Institute of Health (or other agencies addressing public health/healthcare)

- NASA Operational Spaceflight Support
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (including World Agricultural Outlook Board)
- U.S. Department of Energy
- U.S. Department of the Interior
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Federal Executive Board (FEB)
- Public Information Officer role at Federal level.
- U.S. State Department (e.g., Embassy officials serving in a public safety function)

State/Local/Tribal/Territorial:

- Mayor/Mayor's Office
- Town and City Councils
- Governor/Governor's Office
- Public Information Officer's role within Tribal, State, and Local governments.
- County Executive/County Elected Boards
- Tribal Elders/Tribal Mayors/Tribal Governing Boards
- State/City/Town Departments of Transportation, including government run ferry services
- State/Local Departments of Health (or other agencies addressing public health and/or healthcare)
- NOAA Sea Grant Partners focused operationally connected public safety mission activities
- State-level Department of Agriculture
- State Department of Natural Resources
- State Climate Offices and Regional Climate Centers with operational linkages to public safety mission activities.
- State and Local Drought Committees, Drought Enhanced Warning System (DEWS) members
- State Interagency Coordination Centers

Examples NOT Included:

Federal:

- Partners of other NOAA Line Offices and other Federal Agencies (e.g., private marine lab), unless they otherwise meet the Core Partner

	<p>definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Internal Revenue Service ● Social Security Administration ● National Science Foundation ● Those government organizations with no interdependency with NWS related to a mission of public safety. <p>State/Local/Tribal/Territorial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Parks and Recreation Departments ● Tourism Departments ● Chambers of Commerce ● Those government organizations with no interdependency with NWS related to a mission of public safety
	<p>International Governments</p> <p>International Governments and governing bodies (e.g. World Meteorological Organization) that provide a wide range of international weather, water and climate services, which support the U.S. national interests abroad. Existing formal agreements should be in place for NWS to provide a specialized level of support (e.g., under the terms of international agreements).</p> <p>Examples Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Activities that support international treaty obligations. ● Efforts that contribute to developing the capacity of meteorological services around the world to provide foreign governments with IDSS tools and guidance to cope with natural disasters. ● Countries with agreements that call for IDSS to be provided by national centers including NCEP (including but not limited to National Hurricane Center (NHC), Climate Prediction Center (CPC), Ocean Prediction Center (OPC), Aviation Weather Center (AWC), MetWatch Areas of Responsibility, Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC)) ● Countries supported by Volcanic Ash Advisory Center ● Countries supported by Tsunami Warning Centers ● Any international agreements with other countries for localized operational IDSS support from NWS operational units (including but not limited to Canada, Mexico, Micronesia) <p>Examples NOT Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any country without international agreement specifying NOAA/NWS support

Water Resources Management Community

Public officials who serve as employees or contract agents of a government agency at the federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial level and are charged with managing the nation’s water resources for the public good, including infrastructure supporting these management activities (e.g., dams, levees, reservoirs, etc.). In addition, in select cases the NWS may provide similar support to quasi-government⁷ and private organizations that are not formally government agencies but which employ personnel who routinely exercise authorities similar to the public officials described above, , and whose actions impact NWS operations/forecasts. With approval of the NWS office official-in-charge, and as resources allow, NWS offices providing IDSS may extend support to these organizations. These groups may be governmental, quasi-government or private organizations.

Key Infrastructure/Utilities (water supply) Support is critical because actions of these partners have the potential for impacting the quality and timeliness of NWS forecasts/warnings (e.g., river/flow forecasts, flood warnings).

Examples Included:

- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Department of Energy Power Marketing Administrations (This includes Bonneville, Southwestern, Southeastern, and Western Power Administrations.)
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- International Joint Commission (IJC)
- Dam operators
- Levee districts
- Water supply districts
- Reservoir managers
- Floodplain managers
- Hydropower utilities
- U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
- U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
- State water commissions

Examples NOT Included:

- Utilities whose actions do not impact the quality/timeliness of NWS forecasts/warnings.
- Private well drillers
- Water advocacy group

Ecosystems/Water Quality

	<p>Includes government and quasi-government entities responsible for ecosystems/water quality (should include most wastewater treatment facilities, for example). Water and natural resources managers, who use information on water quality parameters to execute their water supply and resource management programs. NWS should be working in partnership with other government entities to provide the weather information needed by our partners to inform the services they provide to their customers.</p> <p>Examples Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ● U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resources Conservation Service ● Water authorities ● State/local departments of Environmental Quality/Protection/Natural Resources ● Government Agriculture Departments ● State Fish and Wildlife ● Waste treatment facilities <p>Examples NOT Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual farmers/landowners ● River-keepers ● Water advocacy groups ● Underwater resource associations (e.g., shellfish farms) <p><u>Water Policy/Planning</u></p> <p>Water managers leverage information on a range of hydrologic fields for use in planning, emergency preparation, response, and mitigation to inform critical decisions that save lives and property, and to support natural resources management.</p> <p>Examples Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● River basin commissions ● Water supply districts ● Conservation districts ● National Drought Mitigation Center ● State/local/tribal organizations ● Floodplain Mapping Managers
<p>Real-time Media</p>	<p>Members of the real-time media are entities, and contract agents of entities, that have a need to actively participate in discussions with NWS forecast offices on imminent weather or other hazards. These entities operate systems that routinely and rapidly relay weather and water watches, advisories, warnings and forecast</p>

information to a significant part of the population served by an NWS office. Real-time Media includes providers of weather content through electronic information distribution such as radio, television, internet, cellular, and other wireless means. Real-time Media Core Partners typically are in the private sector. Members of the Real-time Media may be an active participant in some NWS IDSS activities because of the unique role they play (in coordination with NWS) in communicating critical public safety information; however, NWS does not provide decision making support to the media related to the conduct of their operations. Members of the Real-time Media would typically only receive Baseline IDSS.

NOTE: All media entities are force multipliers in communicating valuable Weather, Water and Climate information more broadly to the public. As such, NWS will grant interviews, as resources allow, to all media entities even if they are not deemed Core Partners. Providing media interviews is not considered IDSS.

Examples Include:

- Broadcast News/Weather Media (TV, Cable, Radio, Internet, and other equivalent platforms)
- Wireless/Cellular Content Providers (e.g. Mobile Apps)
- Internet Content Providers (e.g. Anyone providing weather information on the internet, Web pages, or Social Media)

Examples NOT Included:

- Individual Media Reporters
- Independent Social Media Weather Enthusiasts
- Storm Chasers
- Print-only Media

Private Sector

Most private sector entities are not considered Core Partners and therefore do not receive IDSS. These include retail stores (e.g. Walmart); farmers, agriculture organizations; amusement parks, resorts (e.g., lake, mountain, ski, beach), casinos; sporting and other event venues; transportation/shipping, cruise lines; airlines (unless per Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) direction), private vessels, railways, boating organizations, and port operators associations.

Exceptions: Situational Support for General Partners

<p>There are situational instances where General Partners (partners who NWS interacts with but who don't meet the definition of Core Partner) can receive support. Those scenarios are outlined below.</p>	
<i>Operational Environment</i>	<i>Examples of General Partners That May Receive Support</i>
<p>Within ICS Operations Structure</p>	<p>NWS IDSS support for these coordinating structures focuses on informing Core Partners and their supporting government agencies. However, when NWS provides IDSS within these coordinating structures to support the aggregate life/safety preparation and response, NWS recognizes that information of value and use in operational efforts is indirectly provided to all response participants, including critical infrastructure facilities and private sector utility partners.</p> <p>NWS will not, however, provide tailored advice to General Partners that support their operations outside of the ICS structure (e.g. Consulting with a utility company on how to mitigate hazardous weather beyond the event at hand). When responding to requests for specific weather guidance and information beyond that provided to Core Partners, NWS personnel will inform the requester that tailored support, including customized and highly localized forecasts and warnings, may be provided by our Weather/Water/Climate Enterprise Partners.</p> <p>Any entity operating in the ICS Structure for a public safety event or in support of Core Partner Operations may receive IDSS information in that setting (e.g., Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters/Community Organizations Active in Disasters/Non-Government Organizations (VOAD/COAD/NGO⁸)). However, they are not considered Core Partners just by virtue of being part of a response.</p> <p>Typical Examples Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● VOAD/COAD/NGO⁸ ● Utilities and other critical infrastructure support ● Support to government operations of FEMA Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) in the National Response Framework (NRF) for which NOAA has been identified as playing a federal support role. ● Aviation trade groups (Airlines for America (A4A and National Business Aviation Association)) or Airlines supported within the FAA Command Center.
<p>Outside of the ICS Operations Structure</p>	<p>Occasionally, Core Partners may request that their associated contacts, who do not fall within the definition of NWS Core Partner, but who routinely perform public safety duties on behalf of the Core Partner, be included as part of the IDSS activities of the requesting Core Partner*. These entities will retain their General Partner status and do not qualify of IDSS beyond the specific support requested by the Core Partner. In addition, support may be provided to non-profit entities (e.g., VOAD/COAD/NGO⁸) with a specific Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place to provide support.</p>

	<i>*Approval should depend on public safety mission alignment or interdependency on data or actions and resource availability. Reference section 3.1</i>
Core Partner Requested Support	See section 3.4 of this instruction.
Emergency Situations	In rare circumstances, NWS Offices may provide IDSS situationally as deemed appropriate to any entity, public or private, deemed critical in support of a public emergency. (See section 4.2 of this document.)

Table 3: Descriptions, Considerations, and Clarifications in Determining Core Partner Status