

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-24
APRIL 9, 2019

Operations and Services
IMPACT-BASED DECISION SUPPORT SERVICES

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This is a new directive.

1. Introduction. The National Weather Service (NWS) provides decision-makers and the public with essential environmental data, information¹, forecasts, and warnings to make better decisions, protect lives and property, and enhance the economy. In aiming toward achieving the vision of a Weather-Ready Nation (WRN), the agency has developed concepts and plans to address the need for the evolution of NWS services. Informational services provided by the NWS have expanded beyond the focus of discrete messages, to also include interpretative services to enhance Core Partner understanding of NWS information and aid in their decision making. Through interpretive services, Core Partners should gain an enhanced understanding of the spectrum of information and uncertainty in our forecasts to inform their decisions.

Impact-based Decision Support Services (IDSS) is defined as the provision of relevant information and interpretative services to enable Core Partners' decisions when weather², water, or climate has a direct impact on the protection of lives and livelihoods. NWS Core Partners are defined as government and non-government entities which are directly involved in the preparation, dissemination, and discussions involving weather, water, or climate related National Weather Service information that supports decision making for routine or episodic high impact³ events. 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.

¹ This "information" may pertain to any service areas which the NWS supports, including space weather, tsunamis, aviation, fire weather, marine, etc.)

² In this document, "weather" is used generally to mean all service areas which the NWS supports, including space weather, tsunamis, aviation, fire, marine, etc.

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

The purpose of this directive is to specify the nature, scope, and bounds associated with NWS IDSS to support decision-making for routine or episodic high impact events, as well as recovery from these events, as distinguished from standard NWS forecast and warning services. Specifically, this policy defines the role and responsibilities of various entities within the NWS during IDSS efforts. Policies for the provision of standard NWS products/services available to the general public, as well as standard products meeting the needs of a particular sector of the U.S. economy or a specific organization, are addressed in other NWS directives.

2. Policy/Legal Context. The [Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017, U.S. Code Title 15, Chapter 111, section 8545](#) codifies the NWS provision of IDSS, making public safety top priority. It describes the primary role of NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologists (WCM) in providing IDSS, which is “to help ensure that users of products of the National Weather Service can respond effectively to improve the outcomes of weather events.”⁴ The Act directs the WCMs to “work closely with state, local, and tribal emergency management agencies, and other agencies related to disaster management, to ensure a planned, coordinated, and effective preparedness and response effort,”⁵ and it encourages the NWS to “assign other staff as the [NWS] Director considers appropriate to carry out such responsibility.”⁶

Additionally, through the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), the Department of Commerce/National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has statutory authority to support the emergency management community (see Section 4, below, for details of who will receive these services) at the federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local levels. Likewise, the National Preparedness System, mandated by Presidential Policy Directive (PPD)-8: National Preparedness, includes a series of National Planning Frameworks, one for each of the five mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. The NWS plays a key federal role in ensuring national preparedness related to weather, water, and climate conditions.

3. Enterprise⁷ Context. The above public laws and statutes provide direction to the NWS to directly support emergency and disaster management. However the NWS acknowledges this is not the exclusive domain of the government. The NWS recognizes the growing capacity of America’s Weather and Climate Industry⁸ (AWCI) to provide support not only to private

⁴ 15 U.S.C. § 8545 (c) 1(A)

⁵ 15 U.S.C. § 8545 (c) 1(E)

⁶ 15 U.S.C. § 8545 (c) 1(c)(2)

⁷ Enterprise - The Weather, Water, and Climate Enterprise (WWCE) is defined herein as entities within the government, private, and academic sectors who provide environmental information services to customers.

⁸ America’s Weather and Climate Industry (AWCI) includes all elements of the private sector (including media, consultants, equipment providers, etc.) which provide services to the public in the areas of climate, water, and weather, broadly defined (e.g., includes space weather). The term does not exclude foreign-owned companies which provide services to the American public.

businesses and the public, but to NWS Core Partners as well. The NWS aims to provide greater clarity in the type of IDSS provided and will be flexible in how it is provided to Core Partners who are also working with other AWCI service providers. NWS employees providing IDSS have a responsibility to recognize that coordination with other providers of weather and water services supporting Core Partners is important to ensure consistent messaging. NWS Core Partners, in conjunction with their service providers, will determine what IDSS is needed from the NWS, as well as any procedures for coordination and interaction between the NWS and those providers. NWS will consider the request and intends to provide service only per mutual agreement of NWS and the requestor.

4. Guiding Principles. Given the context provided above, NWS provision of IDSS will be guided by the following principles:

- NWS' primary focus is on supporting government partners who share similar mission objectives.⁹
- NWS will focus on ensuring the safety of the public and particularly vulnerable populations. (Examples provided within the Emergency Management Community Core Partner definition, Section 6.a.)
- NWS will support disaster management efforts of federal,¹⁰ state, local, tribal, and territorial governments.
- NWS will interact with our partners at the highest level, reaching as many as possible who are potentially in harm's way.
- NWS will be flexible in how we provide IDSS to our partners, keeping in mind that they may also be receiving support from others in the Weather, Water, and Climate Enterprise.

5. IDSS Definition. The NWS defines IDSS as the provision of relevant information and interpretative services to enable Core Partners' decisions when weather, water, or climate has a direct impact on the protection of lives and livelihoods.¹¹ IDSS may be characterized as either episodic or recurring:

- Episodic IDSS - Provision of information and interpretative services to directly support an event¹² or incident where weather, water, or climate has a direct impact on the

⁹ Non-government entities may also be supported as described within this document. Further detail will be outlined in forthcoming IDSS instructional directives.

¹⁰ To honor agreements with countries and territories and the terms of other international agreements, the term "federal" within this document encompasses international governments and organizations supported by NWS.

¹¹ IDSS is a specialized service for Core Partners, however not all Core Partners are the recipient of IDSS. For example, members of the 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.

¹² "Event" refers to actual hazardous weather events of impact to the public (e.g. hurricane), incidents that are impacted in some way by weather conditions (e.g. environmental hazards such as chemical release) and large gatherings of people at a venue where public safety is often impacted by hazardous weather conditions.

protection of lives/livelihoods. Examples include: event-related webinars, NWSChat, iNWS, and on-site or remote interaction.

- Recurring IDSS – Provision of ongoing support to a subset of Core Partners throughout the year to improve partner mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery efforts related to events/incidents where weather, water, or climate has a direct impact on the protection of lives/livelihoods; or to support routine-high value decisions. Examples include joint training, Integrated Warning Team interactions, pre-event/scenario planning, water use/contingency forecasts and planning, table-top exercises used to plan actions, and procedures addressing these events or incidents, after-action reviews, and daily coordination regarding routine high-value decisions such as aviation operations or reservoir releases.

6. NWS Core Partner Definition. 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 which are directly involved in the preparation, dissemination and discussions involving weather,² water, or climate related National Weather Service information,¹ that supports decision making for routine or episodic, high impact³ events. 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.”

While there are a large number of individuals who contribute to the overall services provided by the NWS or who are critical in building a Weather-Ready Nation by providing quality services to the public, this Core Partner designation is meant to identify those entities that have a unique need for direct access to NWS information and/or increased interaction with NWS personnel because of the level of critical public services they provide or to facilitate their role in supporting the NWS mission.

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

- Directly involved in the preparation, dissemination, or discussion involving hazardous weather, water, climate, or other emergency information
- Possess a unique need for increased interaction with the NWS for IDSS
- Have an operational nexus necessitating mutual exchange of data/information to support each other’s operations

NWS Core Partners consist of the following four categories:

- a. Members of the emergency management (EM) community¹³. Public safety officials who serve as employees or contract agents of a government agency at the federal,¹⁰ state, local,

¹³ 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

tribal, or territorial level, and are charged with protecting the public from hazards that are influenced by weather² or weather-related events. In select cases, the NWS may provide similar support for organizations which are not formally government agencies, but which employ personnel who routinely exercise authorities equivalent to the public safety officials described above, particularly those who serve vulnerable populations. Examples include the emergency management function of primary/secondary schools, colleges/universities, and hospitals/long-term care facilities. With approval of the NWS management, NWS offices providing IDSS may extend support to these organizations. Other members of this community include local SKYWARN® Coordinators and Net Control Operators, such as Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES).

b. Members of the water resources management community. Public officials who serve as employees or contract agents of a government agency at the federal,¹⁰ 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, the NWS may provide similar support to quasi-government and private organizations which are not formally government agencies but which employ personnel who routinely exercise authorities similar to the public officials described above, as the actions of these organizations impact NWS forecasts. With approval of NWS management, NWS offices providing IDSS may extend support to these organizations.

c. Government partners. Federal,¹⁰ state, local, tribal, or territorial government partners who have missions that require close coordination with the NWS to support the nexus of an allied mission or critical interdependency on each other's data or actions which impact the missions of both organizations. Government partners include (but are not limited to) the Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency, state Departments Of Transportation, Department of Defense, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, and other water and land management officials.

d. Members of the electronic media. Members of the electronic 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. Electronic media includes providers of weather content through electronic information distribution such as radio, television, internet, cellular, and other wireless means. Members of the electronic media are not included in the subset of Core Partners receiving IDSS, but may be active participants in some NWS IDSS activities because of the unique role they play (in

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.

coordination with NWS) in communicating critical public safety information. The NWS does not provide decision-making support to the media.

Note: Individuals, companies, or other entities involved in ‘chasing’ weather events and posting or streaming video or pictures of the event, which do not otherwise have a need to communicate with the NWS, do not meet the Core Partner definition. In addition, individual weather 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 details on interpreting which entities are, or are not considered a Core Partner under this definition is provided in Appendix B.

7. Service Levels. NWS IDSS support for partners varies based on the depth of the relationship that the NWS has with various partners. Three levels of relationships have been identified: (1) deep relationship Core Partners, (2) Core Partners, (3) general partners/public.¹⁴

Partner service levels and examples of services provided are described in Figure 1.

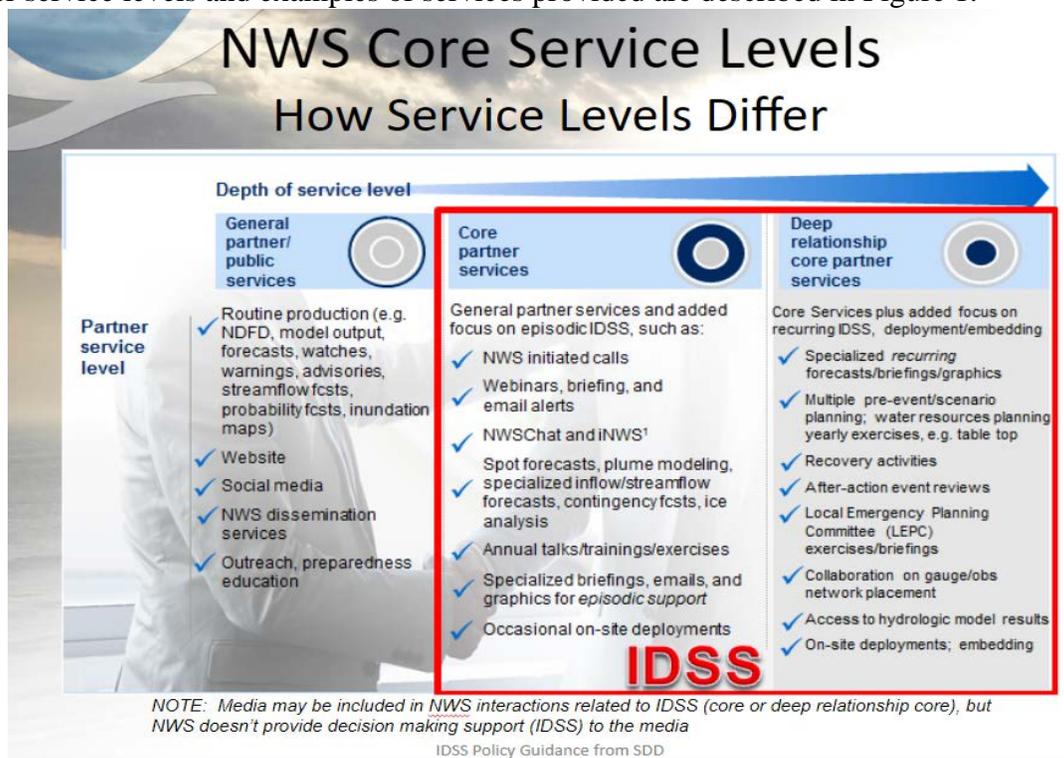


Figure 1. Partner Service Levels and examples of services (Note: Not a complete list.)

¹⁴ General partners/public constitutes all users of NWS products/services who are not classified as Core Partners. General partners are other entities that NWS has some relationship with, but who don't otherwise meet the definition of "Core Partner."

The NWS may provide episodic IDSS to an NWS Core Partner by providing direct, interactive support for a weather-related event or for a planned event or incident that may be impacted by hazardous weather. While the NWS will rely on currently existing products/services to provide information to Core Partners, the NWS may use whatever technologies and display formats are necessary (e.g., use of GIS) to communicate critical weather information and meet the immediate operational needs of our Core Partners, within the bounds of NWS policy.

Once identified as a Core Partner for IDSS, individual NWS offices assess Core Partners' needs based on standard criteria (referenced in Appendix C) to determine if they are a deep relationship Core Partner. Deep relationship Core Partners have an additional focus of support with recurring IDSS. Details about proper categorization of deep relationship Core Partners is referenced in Appendix C.

NWS general partners (e.g. other entities that we have some relationship with, but who do not otherwise meet the definition of Core Partner) and the public will always have access to our standard products and services to support their decision-making needs, but will not receive direct IDSS support. This includes but is not limited to general forecasts/warnings, education/outreach, interaction with the NWS as part of NWS StormReady®/TsunamiReady® programs or NOAA WRN Ambassador initiative. These products and services are also available to NWS Core Partners.

8. Staff Support for IDSS. The NWS trains all operational personnel to develop the skills needed to effectively communicate consistent, timely, and accurate NWS IDSS information to Core Partners. All operational field staff are expected to complete the first three units of the IDSS Professional Development Series, which will enable them to provide IDSS from their offices by addressing external inquiries for NWS information from Core Partners. Non-operational staff (e.g. Administrative Support Assistant, Information Technology Officer, Electronic Systems Analysts, and Electronics Technician) may, with management approval, develop proficiency to assist with remote IDSS during high impact events. In addition to the direct provision of IDSS, administrative support behind these operations is critical to timely and efficient service delivery for our Core Partners.

The NWS intends to maintain a cadre of Deployment-Ready staff with the training and knowledge to effectively deliver mission specific weather, water, or climate services while deployed remotely or on-site to Core Partner locations, such as an Emergency Operations Centers or Incident Command Posts. By leveraging training of hazard-specific expertise and local on-site experience, Deployment-Ready staff can provide support to a government partner's emergency planning and incident response team by request and as available. An operational employee will be considered Deployment-Ready upon completion of the IDSS Professional Development Series units 1 through 7, including local office training, on-site experience, completion of the IDSS Deployment-Ready Task Book, and local expertise. Training

requirements will be addressed in the 10-24 instructional directive series, once developed. Deployment-Ready staff will receive advanced training in communication techniques, briefings to Core Partners, on-site support, and the Incident Command System.

9. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:

- 9.1 The Office of the Chief Operating Officer (OCCO):
- a. Through the NWS Operations Center (NWSOC), coordinates national and regional IDSS activities, for situational awareness.
 - b. Through NWSOC, identify IDSS product consistency issues, and collaborate with impacted regions (ROCs), and centers, to coordinate a resolution.
 - c. Through the NWSOC, coordinates IDSS activities of the NOAA/NWS Liaisons to federal partner agencies; provides significant event predictions to support Congressional liaisons.
 - d. Coordinates the surge capability for on site and remote deployments of Deployment-Ready staff (except IMETs), through the NWSOC, in cases where regions request mutual aid assistance when the regional capability to support an incident is exceeded.
 - e. In coordination with the Analyze, Forecast, and Support Office (AFSO), identifies issues and coordinates resolution of consistency of IDSS products and services from the national, regional and local levels, in coordination with the appropriate chain of command.
 - f. Consolidates, analyzes, and oversees national performance and effectiveness indicators of IDSS, socio-economic benefits of NWS services, in coordination with AFSO.
 - g. Responds to requests from national level organizations seeking Core Partner status for IDSS, and maintain a record of national organizations approved for IDSS. (See IDSS SDDv1 for *IDSS for NWS Core Partners* and associated instruction or implementation guidance.)
 - h. When appropriate, ensures an IDSS review is conducted via national service assessment activities following major events.
 - i. In coordination with AFSO, provides policy guidance/assistance on interpretation of Core Partner definition.
- 9.2 The Analyze, Forecast, and Support Office (AFSO):
- a. Establishes national NWS policies, procedures, and requirements for the provision of consistent NWS IDSS based on public and partner needs, in coordination with applicable portfolios.
 - b. Identifies issues and coordinate resolution of consistency of IDSS products and services from the national to regional levels, in coordination with Office of the Chief Operating Officer (OCCO).
 - c. Establishes and manages NWS IDSS training and outreach/education requirements.

- d. Issues Service Description Documents (SDDs) to the public and partners to provide clarity to the NWS' role in providing IDSS to Core Partners, in conjunction with OCOO.
- e. Addresses policy questions from National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), the Office of Water Prediction, and NWS regions related to IDSS, and provides clarity and guidance in coordination with the OCOO through its Operations Division and OCOO strategic policy staff.
- f. Responds to external requests for information regarding NWS IDSS Core Partners, in coordination with OCOO.
- g. Measures the effectiveness of the IDSS Program via coordination with OCOO and field offices. Creates and implements an IDSS evidence-based learning strategy.
- h. Develops and oversees fiscal year funding plans supporting field operations and training in support of IDSS activities.
- i. Develops NWS Annual Operating Plan milestones to support and evolve IDSS capabilities, in coordination with the field and OCOO.

9.3 The Office of the Chief Learning Officer:

- a. Coordinates IDSS training and funding requirements with AFSSO and delivers these requirements to NWS Mission Delivery Council for prioritization and approval.
- b. Develops and delivers training materials to meet IDSS requirements.
- c. Assesses and evaluates IDSS training effectiveness.

9.4 The Office of Science and Technology Integration:

- a. Plans, develops, demonstrates, and integrates scientific techniques and system capabilities in overall support of NWS weather, water, and climate IDSS efforts.
- b. Analyzes MDC-approved requirements for IDSS improvements in close coordination with AFSSO, and develops potential scientific and technological solutions to address these requirements through coordination with entities within NOAA, other federal agencies, and the external research community.
- c. Supports testbeds and proving grounds for transition testing and evaluation of advanced IDSS capabilities and practices.

9.5 The Office of the NOAA Assistant Chief Information Officer:

- a. Provides management, awareness, and oversight for information technology (IT) security for systems that support NWS IDSS. This includes compliance through Assessment & Authorization (A&A, formerly Certification & Accreditation (C&A)) security activities.
- b. In support of NWS IDSS, implements and conducts all IT security tasks, as stipulated in NWS Policy Directive 60-7, *Information Technology Security Policy*.

- 9.6 The Offices of Dissemination and Central Processing:
- a. Provides system engineering, facilities engineering, and logistical services to sustain operational systems supporting NWS IDSS.
 - b. Manages, operates, and supplies software and data support for operational systems essential to the provision of IDSS.
 - c. Procures, operates, administers, and maintains hardware and communications networks that host or support operational systems essential to the provision of IDSS.
- 9.7 The National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), The Office of Water Prediction (OWP), and the Tsunami Warning Centers.
- a. Produces regional, national and international products, as necessary, to support NWS IDSS, in collaboration with NWS regional and local offices as appropriate.
 - b. Provides Core Partners with detailed, accurate, timely, and reliable IDSS, particularly in association with high impact events. Assists with IDSS to regional, state, and federal partners.
 - c. Ensures regional, national and international IDSS products and service updates are timely, accurate, and consistent.
 - d. Provides input for national IDSS requirements to AFSO.
 - e. Identifies the resources needed for any of the individual centers to be organized, trained, and equipped to fulfill IDSS program requirements.
 - f. Responds to requests from national level organizations seeking Core Partner status for IDSS, and maintains a record of national organizations approved for IDSS. (See IDSS SDDv1 for *IDSS for NWS Core Partners* and associated instruction or implementation guidance.)
 - g. As appropriate, maintain a cadre of Deployment-Ready staff to support national level IDSS requirements in-person and remotely.
- 9.8 NWS regional offices:
- a. Manage and oversee a Regional Operations Center (ROC).
 - b. Provide IDSS to regional Core Partners, federal partner agencies in coordination with the appropriate national center(s), regional and local office(s). The region may also assist with IDSS for local partners when requested by an NWS local office.
 - c. Identify the resources needed for their offices to be organized, trained, and equipped to fulfill IDSS program requirements.
 - d. Coordinate the IDSS surge capability for deployments of Deployment-Ready staff (except IMETs), in cases where local offices request mutual aid assistance when the local capability to support an incident is exceeded.
 - e. Provide technical and operational assistance to NWS local offices in support of IDSS

- activities.
- f. Provide input to AFSSO for national IDSS requirements.
 - g. Develop supplements to procedural directives as appropriate.
 - h. Ensure offices comply with IDSS program directives, and regional supplements.
 - i. Respond to requests from regional level organizations seeking Core Partner status for IDSS, and maintain a record of regional organizations approved for IDSS. (See IDSS SDDv1 for *IDSS for NWS Core Partners* and associated instruction or implementation guidance.)
 - j. Work with NWS local offices to maintain a regional cadre of qualified Deployment-Ready staff to meet the majority of incidents and events likely to occur within the region.
 - k. Maintain situational awareness of regional operations, including the deployment of staff on-site to provide IDSS, and provide pertinent information to the NWSOC.
 - l. Maintain awareness of deployed personnel for on-site IDSS and provide pertinent information to the NWSOC.
 - m. Complete travel vouchers and necessary reimbursement procedures for IDSS deployments in a timely manner.
 - n. Identify IDSS product consistency issues, and collaborate with impacted offices, regions, and centers, to coordinate a resolution.

9.9 NWS local offices:

- a. Provide Core Partners with detailed, accurate, timely, and reliable IDSS, particularly in association with high impact events.
- b. Assist in the development of IDSS products and services that are consistent with surrounding offices, regional and/or national products and services, when applicable.
- c. Provide outreach and engage external users to promote IDSS and assess such attributes as quality, timeliness, consistency, satisfaction, and overall effectiveness of their IDSS program to make future enhancements.
- d. Identify the resources needed for their office to be organized, trained, and equipped to fulfill IDSS program requirements.
- e. As appropriate, maintain a cadre of personnel as Deployment-Ready staff to meet the anticipated needs of local Core Partners in-person and remotely.
- f. Respond to requests from local organizations seeking Core Partner status for IDSS, and maintain a record of local organizations approved for IDSS. (See IDSS SDDv1 for *IDSS for NWS Core Partners* and associated instruction or implementation guidance.)
- g. While providing enhanced IDSS, identify potential local office operational needs, and coordinate the resolution of these needs with the region when the response exceeds the local office capabilities.
- h. Identify IDSS product consistency issues, and collaborate with impacted offices, regions, and centers to coordinate a resolution.

10. The NWS will measure the effectiveness of the IDSS Program via coordination among AFSO, OCOO, NCEP, OWP, Regions and field offices using:

- a. Stakeholder service satisfaction measures, and
- b. Decision Support operations performance metrics (currently under development).

11. Instructional directives will be issued to implement this policy as needed and determined by the Director of AFSO. In addition, the NWS is clarifying the scope and bounds of IDSS for the wide and growing variety of NWS Core Partners. To do so, the NWS has initiated a series of Service Description Documents to specify scope and bounds for specific categories of Core Partners. Implementation details associated with these SDDs will be incorporated into procedural directives associated with this policy directive.

Signed

Louis W. Uccellini
Assistant Administrator for Weather Services

3/26/2019

Date

APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS AND REFERENCES

Definitions

America’s Weather and Climate Industry (AWCI): Includes all elements of the private sector (including media, consultants, equipment providers, etc.) which provide services to the public in the areas of climate, water, and weather, broadly defined (e.g., includes space weather). The term does not exclude foreign-owned companies which provide services to the American public.

The Weather, Water and Climate Enterprise (WWCE): is defined herein as entities within the government, private and academic sectors who provide environmental information services to customers. Learn more here: <https://www.weather.gov/about/weather-enterprise>

Applicable References

IDSS Service Description Document 1.0 – Impact-Based Decision Support Services for NWS Core Partners

APPENDIX B – CLARIFICATIONS TO CORE PARTNER DEFINITION

(From [NWS IDSS SDDv1](#) Section 3.2)

To better understand which entities are included or not included in the four categories of Core Partners, guidelines for NWS interpretation are provided in Table 1, below:

Sector	Included	Not Included
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● [EM Community] Emergency management function for a school district or college/university (functional, not title-specific (e.g., school district superintendent) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support limited to communication of hazardous weather information and preparedness; not interpretative services such as evacuation decisions or consulting on community resilience ○ Not to be identified as deep relationship Core Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Other personnel within a school/school district or college/university who request support which does not fall under the umbrella of protection life/property as a public safety function (e.g., individual teachers/professors, transportation depot, grounds operations, event organizers, venue operators)
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● [EM Community] Emergency dispatch centers ● [EM Community] EM function of hospital/long term care facilities (e.g., hospice facility/nursing home, upon request ¹⁵of deep relationship Core Partner (see section 4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support limited to communication of hazardous weather information and preparedness; not interpretative services such as evacuation decisions or consulting on hospital resilience ○ Not to be identified as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EMS/ambulance/paramedic personnel ● All other care facilities (urgent care, clinics, surgi-centers, etc.)

¹⁵ NWS will consider the request and may provide service only per mutual agreement of NWS and the requestor.

	<p>deep relationship Core Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Gov't Partners] Federal¹⁰/state/local departments of health (public health and health care related) 	
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [WRM Community] Utilities that fall within Water Resources Management Community (Includes but not limited to hydroelectric power, dam operator, water supply, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Enhanced level of interaction is critical because actions of these partners has direct input on the quality and timeliness of NWS forecasts/warnings (e.g., river/flow forecasts, flood warnings) • [EM Community] The EM function of other utilities may be core in very rural locations, considered "market failures" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone, electric, wind, solar, (and other utilities that do not fall within Water Resources Management Community) Note: NWS may still coordinate with EM function of these utilities as part of government EM response effort (e.g., within EOC, joint exercises) or general education/outreach

Table 1. Clarifications to Core Partner Definition

Sector	Included	Not Included
VOAD/ COAD /NGO¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [EM Community] If/when working within ICS coordination structure or as a non-profit entity with a specific MOU in place to provide support 	All others

¹⁶ Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters/Community Organizations Active in Disasters/Non-Government Organizations

<p>Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● [Gov't Partners] Federal,¹⁰ state, local, tribal, territorial government organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited to organizations with existing nexus of allied mission or critical interdependency on each other's data/actions which impact the missions of both organizations ● [Gov't Partners] Includes international governments and organizations where existing formal agreements are in place for NWS to provide a specialized level of support ● [Gov't Partners] Quasi-government (quasi- private) organizations - may receive core level service if the organization's primary mission responsibility is related to public safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Those government organizations with no mission nexus
<p>Private Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● [Electronic media] -No IDSS provided. May include private weather service providers who routinely and rapidly relay NWS alerts to a large segment of an office's area ● [WRM Community] – see Utilities, (e.g., private dam operator) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Most private sector entities are not considered Core Partners, including retail stores (e.g. Walmart); farmers, agriculture organizations; amusement parks, resorts (e.g., lake, mountain, ski, beach), casinos; sporting and other venues; transportation/shipping, cruise lines; airlines (unless per FAA direction)
<p>NOAA Offices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● [Gov't Partners] Other NOAA Line Offices will be provided IDSS to support our shared NOAA mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NWS will not provide services that are outside the scope of NWS legal authorities, but may relay information on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partners of other NOAA LOs (e.g., private marine lab), unless they otherwise meet the Core Partner definition

	behalf of other NOAA LOs (e.g., inclusion of National Ocean Service forecasts within an NWS Beach Hazards Statement)	
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Table 1. Clarifications to Core Partner Definition

APPENDIX C - CATEGORIZATION OF CORE PARTNERS AS DEEP RELATIONSHIP
CORE PARTNERS

(From [NWS IDSS SDDv1](#) Section 4)

The level of decision support provided by NWS varies according to the IDSS relationship level. For those entities that meet the NWS definition of Core Partner for IDSS,¹¹ each NWS office has the flexibility to identify which of its Core Partners are categorized as deep relationship Core Partners. Categorization is carried out by: (1) Ensuring the partner meets the NWS definition for Core Partner for IDSS;¹¹ (2) Assessing the level of key criteria which warrant a need for a deep relationship; and (3) Identifying the service level appropriate for supporting the particular partner.

Flexibility to make this decision for each particular NWS office ensures that variations in how our partners operate across the country are taken into account in identifying an appropriate level of service. NWS offices should also take into account that AWCI may already be providing services to some Core Partners and adjust the level of service provided to that needed/requested by the partner. In addition, to meet Core Partner service requirements stemming from a particular event or incident, on a temporary basis, the level of service provided may be adjusted to that of a deep relationship Core Partner, per discretion of local office management.

Key Criteria for Designation as a Deep Relationship Core Partner

([NWS IDSS SDDv1](#) Section 4.1)

Core Partners, who relative to others, most strongly exhibit characteristics of the four comparative assessment criteria, below, may be categorized as deep relationship Core Partners by an NWS office.

1. There is a legal mandate to support the Core Partner (e.g., Executive Order, statute) or support is a matter of national security;
2. Exercises a large degree of authority or influence relative to other Core Partners, on public safety or management of the nation's water resources for the public good;
3. Serves a population or entity particularly vulnerable to impacts of weather², water, or climate hazards;
4. Acts as a force multiplier to help amplify NWS messages to other partners.

APPENDIX D - FIGURES REFERENCE

Figure 1: Partner Service Levels and examples of services (Note: Not a complete list.)

