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***Significant Event Report, NWSI 10-1603***

***ALASKA REGION SIGNIFICANT EVENT NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES***

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

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//Signed//

November 12, 2009

Frank P. Kelly

Date

Regional Director

## Significant Event Notification Procedures to Alaska Region Headquarters

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1. Purpose. Establish procedures to be used by Alaska Region offices for reporting significant weather and other specified events.

2. Background. Whenever a significant event impacts the Area of Responsibility of a Weather Forecast Office (WFO), the Alaska Pacific River Forecast Center (APRFC), the Alaska Aviation Weather Unit (AAWU), or the West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Center (WC/ATWC), or a significant event occurs at any National Weather Service (NWS) office, it is important that notification be passed to the Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (OCWWS) as soon as possible. This information will be used to brief officials at various levels of government, including NWS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Department of Commerce. Although the information is very important, an office will not compromise warning operations during an ongoing event to submit this information.

3. Events to Report. Events should be reported when considered significant. Regardless of the cause, events resulting in any of the following are always considered significant:

- One or more fatalities involving on-duty NWS employees;
- Any injury that requires professional medical attention to one or more on-duty NWS employees;
- Major damage to a NWS facility;
- Any civil disturbance impacting on-duty NWS employees or facilities; or
- Any event that results in extended non-routine decision support services (e.g. HAZMAT or support of recovery or clean-up operations, etc.)
- National media attention.

3.1. Hydrometeorological Events. Hydrometeorological events in order to be considered significant for reporting purposes, must satisfy one or more of the following criteria, as specified below.

- **Temperature related events** resulting in two or more fatalities.
- **Lightning events** resulting in any injury or fatality.

Otherwise, hydrometeorological events suspected of resulting in any of the following are considered significant:

- One or more fatality;
- Significant or numerous injuries;
- Extensive evacuations;
- Extensive property damage;
- Extensive travel, infrastructure, or other societal impact; or
- National media attention.

3.2. Accident Resulting from a Hydrometeorological Event. Accidents, where weather is the suspected cause, in order to be considered significant for reporting purposes, must satisfy one or more of the following criteria, as specified below.

- **Marine accidents** involving any of the following:
  - One or more fatality;
  - Loss of a vessel that is more than 40 feet in length and/or 100 gross tons in weight;
  - Property damage to the vessel and/or its cargo estimated to equal or exceed \$500,000;
  - Widespread marine pollution from a hazardous substance;
  - Injuries or fatalities of widely known public figures; or
  - National media attention.
- **Aircraft accidents** involving any of the following:
  - One or more fatality;
  - Injuries or fatalities of widely known public figures; or
  - National media attention.

3.3. Non-Hydrometeorological Events. Wildfires, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, avalanches, hazardous substance accidents, and other non-hydrometeorological events are considered significant if they result in any of the following:

- One or more fatality;
- Significant or numerous injuries;
- Extensive evacuations or sheltering in place;
- Extensive property damage; or
- National media attention.

4. Procedure. WFOs, the AAWU, and the WC/ATWC are responsible for making notification calls and issuing notification reports. Weather Service Offices (WSOs), the APRFC

and the Center Weather Service Unit (CWSU) shall provide support during their normal operating hours.

Time is of the essence for initial notification to OCWWS. Offices are to report the event as soon as possible by telephone and written report, making every attempt to do so immediately (within the first hour following the event). For events that occur after normal business hours OCWWS requires notification no later than 1200 UTC.

4.1. Notification Call. Report the event to the Alaska Region Environmental and Scientific Services Division (ESSD) by calling the ESSD Hotline **(907) 271-6540**. This phone number is monitored 24/7 by an ESSD staff member. Be prepared to provide the following details when you call:

- Event description (Location of Event and Date/Time of Event)
- Number of fatalities and/or injuries (provide estimates if exact numbers unknown)
- Extent of damage
- Point of contact and phone number

4.2. Notification Reports. For major aviation and marine accidents, prepare a notification report using the format found in NWSI 10-2004, Accident Notification and Response. For other types of events, use the format found in the parent directive, 10-1603, Significant Event Reporting. Since time is of the essence, use “UNKN” or “N/A” when necessary so that the report will be timely, but impact to operations will be minimized.

Email the notification report to the Chief and Deputy Chief of ESSD. The Chief and/or Deputy Chief will then notify the appropriate program manager.

As the situation unfolds and more information becomes available, submit an updated notification report to the Chief and Deputy Chief of ESSD via email.