

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-13

NOVEMBER 19, 2019

Operations of Services

SURFACE OBSERVING PROGRAM

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

OPR: W/OBS (T. Cuff)

Certified by: W/OPPSD (K. Cooley)

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWSPD 10-13, “Surface Observing Program (land)”, dated September 27, 2002. Changes made to reflect the NWS Headquarters reorganization effective April 1, 2015.

- (Land) was removed from directive title
- Deleted rescinded instruction references from attachment

Signed _____

11/05/2019

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Date

Assistant Administrator for
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1. The National Weather Service (NWS) is responsible for providing forecasts and warnings. The first step in the process is the assimilation of weather observations. Observations may be obtained from automated sensors, volunteer observers, and other established surface reporting systems. This directive governs NWS activities providing surface weather observations in support of the NWS forecast and warning process.
2. The objective of the NWS surface observation program is to provide policy and standards for observing and monitoring, and the acquisition and dissemination of data in support of the NWS and its customers.
3. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:
 - 3.1 The Office of Observation (OBS):
 1. establishes national policy and procedures;
 2. consolidates, evaluates, analyzes, and oversees national performance and effectiveness indicators for the surface observation program;
 3. conducts outreach efforts to promote the surface observation program with customers and partners;
 4. plans, develops, demonstrates, and integrates scientific techniques and system capabilities for the observing services program; and
 5. provides system engineering, software management, facilities engineering services, communications, and logistical services for operational weather systems supporting NWS forecast and warning services.
 - 3.2 The Office of Science and Technology Integration Office (STI), in coordination with OBS:
 1. formulates and maintains a comprehensive research and development plan in support of the observation services program; and
 2. oversees associated applied research and development.
 - 3.3 NWS Regional Headquarters offices are responsible for ensuring Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) are organized, staffed, trained, and equipped to provide surface weather observations. The NWS Regional Headquarters are responsible for ensuring WFOs are in compliance with established policies and procedures; coordinating with OBS on meteorological instruments and methods of observation requirements; developing Supplements to Procedural Directives and coordinating them with OBS; ensuring

Supplementals are compatible across regional boundaries; providing technical assistance to WFOs; and evaluating performance and effectiveness indicators of the surface observations program.

- 3.4 WFOs are responsible for providing accurate and timely observation services in compliance with national and regional policies. WFOs will conduct customer outreach within their area of responsibility to promote and assess surface observation and monitoring services.
- 4 The NWS measures the effectiveness of the observing program policy using the following mission-critical performance measure: delivery of accurate surface observation data to the NWS and its customers. The overall goal of this policy is to provide quality, real-time observations to the NWS and its customers.
- 5 This policy directive is supported by references and supporting information listed in Attachment 1.

Attachment 1

REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

NWS Instructions

- 10-1301 Aviation and Synoptic Observations
- 10-1302 Requirements and Standards for NWS Climate Observations
- 10-1305 Observational Quality Control - General
- 10-1307 Cooperative Program Management and Operations
- 10-1310 Claims for On-the-Job Injuries to Contract / Cooperative Observers
- 10-1314 Cooperative Observer Awards
- 10-1315 Cooperative Station Observations