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Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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FROM: Craig Hodan
Chief, Dissemination Systems Branch

SUBJECT: Replacing OPSNET Circuits With an Internet-Based
Secure Socket Layer (SSL) Virtual Private Network
(VPN) Service Effective March 31, 2012

The International Satellite Communications System (ISCS) program office is initiating a new service for transmitting meteorological data to the Regional Telecommunications Hub (RTH)-Washington in support of the Regional Association (RA)-IV member states and international community of end users.

The new service will use SSL VPN technology to allow RA-IV national and regional centers to securely transmit files to the RTH using File Transfer Protocol (FTP). Transition to the new service will begin in January 2012 and is planned to be completed by March 31, 2012. All existing OPSNET service used for ISCS FTP will be terminated after the successful transition of the RA-IV member states to the SSL VPN service. Member states may continue to use the RTH-Washington Email Data Input System (EDIS) as a backup service during the transition.

RTH-Washington will provide to RA-IV member states, at no cost, client software required for the transmission interface to the RTH SSL VPN server. Member states will have responsibility for all costs associated with maintaining a local VPN-capable Internet service to permit the SSL VPN connection.

The transition to the SSL VPN connection will be a cost effective and efficient communication service, with an acceptable level of service, reliability, and security. Member states requiring higher levels of service than afforded by the SSL VPN service, should notify the ISCS program manager identified below. One possible alternative to the SSL VPN service would, at a minimum, require the member states to individually contract and pay for an international private line connection to the United States.

Coordinating information and status updates on the SSL VPN service implementation and transition will be provided on the ISCS Webpage:

<http://www.weather.gov/iscs/countdown.php>

This Website will be continually updated to keep you informed of progress and status of this transition.

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

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National Public Information Notices are online at:

<http://weather.gov/os/notif.htm>

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