

PREPARATIONS FOR AND CONDUCT OF JCOMM-I

Introduction

1. The first formal session of JCOMM is planned to take place in Akureyri, Iceland, from 19-29 June 2001, hosted by the Icelandic Meteorological Office (IMO). As agreed by the Executive Councils of WMO and IOC, and pending the development of a common set of rules and procedures to apply to JCOMM, this session will be funded by WMO and conducted entirely according to WMO Regulations relating to sessions of technical commissions. WMO will, in addition, be responsible for coordinating preparations for the session and for the immediate follow-up.

Agenda

2. The draft provisional agenda for the session is given in Annex VI. It is clear that, since most of the ongoing work and proposals to be reviewed at the session will be based on that previously agreed under CMM and IGOSS, and the agenda for JCOMM-I must necessarily reflect this fact. Future commission sessions will, however, have agendas which more closely match the integrated structure and work plan to be agreed at JCOMM-I. It should also be noted that several of the items are formally required to be on the agenda of a technical commission session according to the WMO Technical Regulations.

Pre-session documentation

3. A draft documentation plan for the session is given in Annex VII. WMO will coordinate the preparation of the documents on the basis of this plan, and undertake all translation, reproduction and distribution. The documents will be in six languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), and will be made available on the WMO web site. Every effort will be made to conform to the agreed documentation plan, to avoid placing too much stress on the WMO languages and documentation services. It is therefore essential that those responsible for document preparation (including members of the interim Management Committee) should deliver their documents to WMO by the agreed deadlines. It should also be noted that, in line with WMO regulations, documents should, in principle, be available to delegations "...preferably not more than forty-five days prior to the opening of the session...". Also in line with new WMO procedures regarding document structure, the documents will consist largely of draft text for the final report, plus draft recommendations and resolutions as appropriate. Additional commentary and discussion will be included at appropriate places in the draft text, in italics and square brackets, to eventually be removed prior to adoption of the report. Finally, it should be noted that internal WMO policy places a limitation of 80,000 words for the original total pre-session documentation for JCOMM-I.

Conduct of the session

4. Some information relative to the conduct of the session is given in section 2 of the annotated agenda. There will be simultaneous interpretation into six languages, but this interpretation will be available only for one committee or plenary meeting at a time. At the request of the IMO, the session will begin on Tuesday, 19 June 2001. It is hoped that a major part of the substantive agenda can be completed by the end of Friday, 22 June. With the scientific lectures planned tentatively for one half day on the following Monday or Tuesday, this will allow the support services time to prepare the working papers and "pinks" required for the adoption of the final report. Although

the session is scheduled to last until Friday, 29 June, past experience indicates that it can be concluded by the end of Thursday, 28th.

Other preparatory issues

5. The programme area coordinators and officers of JCOMM are clearly critical positions for the success of the new commission. It is therefore essential that the persons nominated by the session to these positions should have technical expertise, be highly motivated, and also have the agreement of their institutions/agencies to devote a relatively significant amount of time to JCOMM work. To assist in the preparation of a list of proposed nominees, members of the committee are therefore requested to assist in the identification of potential candidates, and to inform the co-presidents and Secretariats of these within the next six months. This will allow time for the persons nominated, and their agencies, to be approached prior to the session, and will greatly assist the eventual sessional nominations committee in its work.

6. In addition, most of the working groups and teams (and of course the rapporteurs) will comprise selected experts, to also be nominated at the session. To assist in this process, and following now accepted practice in WMO technical commissions, a letter will be sent to Members/Member States about six months prior to the session. This letter will request them to nominate potential candidates, to attach relevant qualifications and experience, and also to give some assurance of the availability of the persons concerned for JCOMM work. This will then allow the preparation prior to the session of a consolidated list of (hopefully) high quality persons to undertake the expected substantial work plan of the commission.