

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC
COMMISSION (OF UNESCO)**

JOINT WMO / IOC TECHNICAL COMMISSION FOR
OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE METEOROLOGY
(JCOMM)

SOT-V/Doc. I-2.3
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SHIP OBSERVATIONS TEAM

ITEM I-2.3

FIFTH SESSION

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 18-22 MAY 2009

Original: ENGLISH

REPORT BY THE SOT CHAIRPERSON

(Submitted by Graeme Ball, SOT Chairperson)

Summary and purpose of the document

This document contains a brief report by Mr Graeme Ball, Chairperson of the SOT, regarding his activities in support of the SOT during the past intersessional period. The document also provides a status on action items requiring attention by the Chairperson of the SOT.

ACTION PROPOSED

The Team will review the information contained in this report, and comment and make decisions or recommendations as appropriate. See part A for the details of recommended actions.

Appendix: None

- A - DRAFT TEXT FOR INCLUSION IN THE FINAL REPORT

I-2.3.1 Mr. G. Ball provided his report as the SOT Chairperson.

I-2.3.2 Mr Ball reported that only one action item was assigned to the SOT Chair at SOT-IV and this had been completed in collaboration with the VOSP Chair. Under SOT-IV item I-6.3.5 *To review the list of JCOMM Publications for those of interest to the SOT or its sub-Panels*, the (1) the VOS Framework document, and (2) WMO No.8, Chapter 4, Marine Observations, has been updated.

I-2.3.3 Mr Ball briefly outlined the meetings he had attended, either officially or unofficially as SOT Chair. These included the Second Session of the JCOMM Observations Coordination Group (OCG, Geneva, Switzerland, 23-25 April 2007), the third Session of the OCG (Paris, France, 9-11 March 2009), the seventh Session of the JCOMM Management Committee (MAN, Melbourne, Australia, 8-12 December 2008), the twenty-third Session of the Data Buoy Cooperation Panel (DBCP, Jeju, Republic of Korea, 15-19 October 2007), and the twenty-fourth Session of the DBCP (Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, 13-16 October 2008).

I-2.3.4 Mr Ball detailed the SOT Task Teams he had participated in and specifically the tasks in which he had an active role. These included the Task Teams on Metadata for WMO No. 47, Callsign Masking and Encoding, VOS Recruitment and Programme Promotion, and Instrument Standards.

I-2.3.5 Mr Ball described his involvement in the JCOMM cross-cutting issues, including: META-T, the DMPA cross-cutting Task Team on Delayed-mode VOS Data, and proposals from the third Session of the Data Management Coordination Group (DMCG, Ostend, Belgium, 26-28 March 2008) that impacted on the SOT. The issues included: callsign masking; WMO No. 47; a proposal to establish a JCOMM Task Team on Table Driven Codes; and a discussion about ODAS vs. WMO No. 47 metadata.

I-2.3.6 Mr Ball also outlined a range of other activities including: four documents he had reviewed and or contributed to; involvement in the JCOMM OPSC review, involvement in the preparation for the fifth Session of the SOT; organising through WMO for SOT participation on two external panels; testing and commenting on the development of the E-SURFMAR VOS database; and his continuing role as webmaster of the JCOMM VOS website.

- B - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. The inter-sessional period leading to SOT-V has been a very busy period with good progress made in many areas. During the inter-sessional period I was actively involved in many SOT Task Team activities, participated in cross-cutting Task Teams and cross-cutting discussions, as well as a range of ad-hoc activities.

2. The following is a summary of my activities since SOT-IV.

3. Review of Action Items from SOT-IV

I-6.3.5: To review the list of JCOMM Publications for those of interest to the SOT or its sub-Panels.

Status

I worked in collaboration with the Chair of VOSP to revise the following JCOMM documents:

1. VOS Framework Document.
2. WMO No.8, Chapter 4, Marine Observations.

4. Meetings Attended

4.1 As Chair of the SOT I attended the following JCOMM Observations Programme Area Coordination (OCG) meetings:

- (a) OCG-II, Geneva, Switzerland, 23-25 April 2007.
- (b) OCG-III, Paris, France, 9-11 March 2009.

4.2 Part of the focus of OCG-II was to finalise JCOMM's requirements for the potential hosting/relocation of an expanded JCOMMOPS as the JCOMM OPSC. Part of the focus of OCG-III was preparing for OceanObs09, and in particular a review of the Community White Paper prepared by the JCOMM Observations Programme Area (OPA).

4.3 I attended selected session of the JCOMM Management Committee Meeting (MAN-7), held in Melbourne, 8-12 December 2008.

4.4 I also attended the following meetings, and represented the SOT as necessary:

- (a) DBCP-23, Jeju, Republic of Korea, 15-19 October 2007.
- (b) DBCP-24, Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, 13-16 October 2008.

4.5 In consultation with the Chair of the VOS Panel (also in attendance at DBCP-23), I supported a proposal from the DBCP/SOT TC to reallocate the SOT TC duties to the Argo TC as part of the expanded support role provided by JCOMMOPS. The proposed re-assignment of duties would build on existing synergies between the observing programs that each TC would support under the re-organisation.

4.6 The re-assignment of duties however posed one difficulty with regards to funding that was discussed at DBCP-24. Presently, contributions to the SOT TC are made via the DBCP Trust Fund operated by WMO, whereas IOC manages the Trust Fund for Argo contributions. It was resolved that contributions for the SOT TC would continue to be made to the DBCP, but such contributions would be re-recorded as a separate line item and not considered as income for DBCP purposes.

5. Participation in SOT Task Teams

5.1 I actively participated in the following Task Teams, and specifically on the tasks listed below:

1. Callsign Masking and Encoding
 - a. Contributed to a WMO letter to all PRs on callsign masking.
 - b. Contributed to a WMO letter to the PRs of Japan and USA regarding the SHIP callsign masking scheme.
 - c. Developed the draft instructions for implementing a MASK scheme by members.
 - d. Developed the draft criteria for accessing the MASK v REAL callsign database at JCOMMOPS.
 - e. Created a log of MASK and MASK-like (E-Surfmar, E-ASAP, SeaKeepers) callsigns.
2. Metadata for WMO No. 47
 - a. Updated Code Table 1801, Recruiting Country and Country of registration, to

- maintain consistency with the official ISO list of 2 letter country codes.
 - b. Proposed the following changes to metadata requirements:
 - i. Combine sling and whirling psychrometer.
 - ii. Create a new VOS class for VOS Climate Reference Ship (VOSCLim).
 - iii. Create a new sub class of AWS within each of the VOS classes.
 - iv Permit multiple entries from a ship with multiple and independent observing systems.
 - c. Compiled a log of contributing countries to WMO No. 47 and the format submitted.
 - d. Developed the Pub47 XML Generator.
3. VOS Recruitment and Programme Promotion
- a. Updated the SOT Recruitment presentation.
 - b. Developed the VOS Form VOSP002, metadata collection form.
4. Instrument Standards
- a. Participated in the electronic logbook comparison.
 - b. Proposed the revised swell input screens in TurboWin, as seen in TurboWin 4.5 beta.
 - c. Proposed the consistent coding of swell by the 3 e-logbook manufacturers.

6. Cross-cutting Issues

6.1 ETMC / TT-DMVOS

I participated by email in several discussions, particularly related to the SHIP callsign masking scheme. This culminated in a WMO letter to the PRs of Japan and USA, with input from the Task Team on Callsign Masking and Encoding,

6.2 META-T

I participated by email in several discussions, particularly related to WMO No. 47 matters.

6.3 DMCG-III

6.3.1 I participated by email in a discussion with the Chair of the DMPA, regarding BUFR coding matters, and supported the establishment of a cross-cutting JCOMM Task Team on Table Driven Codes (TDC).

6.3.2 In response to an official request from the Chair DMPA regarding the Task Team on TDC, I contacted the Chair of the SOT Task Team on Coding, Mr C. Donlon, with the following recommendations:

- (a) That SOT should be represented on the cross-cutting JCOMM Task Team on TDC.
- (b) That SOT should be represented by Mr F. Koek, because of: (a) his involvement in an operational SOT programme (VOS), and (b) his interest in TDC.

6.3.3 Mr Donlon responded positively to these proposals and I followed-up with an email to the WMO Secretariat and Mr Koek outlining the recommendations above, as well as the following recommendation:

- (a) The existing SOT Task Team on Coding (if they wish to continue), plus the Chairs of VOSP, SOOPIP and TT-ASAP, to form an advisory group on coding to the SOT representative.

6.3.4 I also participated in a lively discussion about ODAS (Ocean Data Acquisition System) metadata and WMO No. 47 in response to a proposal from DMCG-III that oil rigs with automated observing systems should be classed as ODAS, but manual reporting oil rigs be classed as ships.

6.3.5 I responded in part as follows:

- (a) To comply with the decision of the WMO Expert Team on Marine Climatology, only mobile platforms, including ships either temporarily or semi-permanently at anchor, shall be reported in WMO-No. 47. Fixed platforms shall be reported under the JCOMM ODAS metadata scheme. [extracted from WMO No. 47, Metadata Format Version 03].
- (b) A rig is a rig, i.e. a fixed platform regardless of the observing system, and should therefore be reported under the ODAS metadata scheme as agreed at ETMC-I. [personal opinion]

6.2.6 Discussion has stalled on resolving this impasse.

7. Review and Contribution to Other Documents

7.1 I reviewed and or contributed to the following documents:

- (a) *MSC Circular 1017*, in collaboration with the Chair of VOSP.
- (b) *Vision for the GOS in 2025*, ET/AWS-V, Geneva, May 2008.
- (c) *The Case for Maintaining Surface Meteorological Data Collection from Voluntary Observing Ships*, AOPC-XXIV, Geneva, April 2008.
- (d) *The in situ Global Ocean Observing System*, Liz Kent, OceanObs09 Community White Paper.

8. JCOMMOPS / JCOMM OPSC Review

I participated by email in the review of the submissions to select a host for the JCOMM OPSC.

9. Preparation for SOT-V

9.1 I convened a side-meeting at DBCP-24 with the WMO Secretariat to consider the agenda and timetable for SOT-V.

9.2 In consultation with the WMO Secretariat and sub-panel chairs as appropriate, I:

- (a) Set the meeting dates and timetable.
- (b) Finalised the letters of invitation.
- (c) Finalised the provisional agenda and annotated provisional agenda.
- (d) Finalised the document plan.
- (e) Organised Mr M. Myrsilidis, Greece, to Chair the Technical Workshop.
- (f) Organised Mrs G. Lavigne, Canada, to Chair the National Reports.

10. Other Activities

10.1 I worked with WMO to ensure that:

(a) SOT participated on the IMO Correspondence Group on AIS binary messages.

(b) CIMO/SOT contributed to the ISO *Marine wind vane and anemometers* document.

10.2 I provided comments during the development of the E-SURFMAR VOS database, and continued as webmaster of the JCOMM VOS website.

Appendix: None