

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC
COMMISSION (OF UNESCO)**

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

SOT-V/Doc. III-3
(25.02.2009)

SHIP OBSERVATIONS TEAM

ITEM III-3

FIFTH SESSION

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 18-22 MAY 2009

Original: ENGLISH

MONITORING AND DATA MANAGEMENT

(Submitted by Colin Parrett, RSMC Exeter and VOSClm RTMC)

Summary and purpose of the document

This document provides information on the data quality monitoring conducted by the Met Office (RSMC Exeter, UK). The document also provides a status report on the progress made by the the VOSClm Real Time Monitoring Centre (RTMC) since SOT-IV and requests the meeting to take decisions on monitoring issues (the Met Office (UK) agreed to act as the RTMC at VOSClm-II).

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.

-
- Appendices:**
- A. Met Office on-line monthly VOS suspect list for Jan 2009
 - B. Criteria for monthly monitoring of marine surface observations
 - C. Timeliness of VOS observations received at the Met Office, Jan 2009
 - D. Met Office on-line time of receipt statistics for individual ships, Jan 2009
 - E. Scheme for ranking VOS ships by quantity and quality of reports
 - F. Monitoring criteria for VOSClm suspect ships

- A - DRAFT TEXT FOR INCLUSION IN THE FINAL REPORT**III-3.1 - Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre (RSMC), Exeter, VOS monitoring report**

III-3.1.1 Ms Sarah North reported on the activities of the Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre (RSMC), Exeter, acting as CBS Lead Centre for monitoring the quality of surface marine observations. It routinely produces biannual quality reports as well as providing essential feedback to VOS operators regarding the quality of the data delivered by VOS ships. The Met Office (RSMC Exeter) continues to compile lists of ships that have produced suspect observations each month, which are sent to the WMO Secretariat. Since 2005, they have also been made available via the Met Office web site at

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/nwp/observations/monitoring/index.html>

III-3.1.2 The Panel noted that the Met Office had recently introduced password protection to its observation monitoring web site, but that, it was straightforward to obtain a login and password to gain access by following the online instructions. The Panel agreed that the monitoring criteria are set at the correct levels as shown in Appendix B.

III-3.1.3 The Met Office also produces monthly lists of monitoring statistics for all VOS. To maintain an up to date list of ships, the Met Office advised that it was now using the latest Pub47 meta-data for European and Australasian fleets downloaded from the online E-SURFMAR metadata database. Recognising the need for metadata lists to be maintained up to date, the Panel agreed that the RSMC should continue to use the downloaded E- SURFMAR metadata, and requested E-SURFMAR to make sure that the required metadata for all VOS fleets are made available for download from this site (**action, ESURFMAR, ASAP**).

III-3.1.4 It was noted that the lists of VOS monitoring statistics available on the Met Office monitoring web-site had been modified to remove the country identifier for those ships with unique masked call-signs (the ship name is also omitted). The Panel agreed that the unique masked call-sign should be replaced in the VOS monitoring statistics with the original call-sign (and the ship name also reinstated). It was noted that a facility had been added to the monitoring website to enable the download of VOS statistics as an MS Excel file.

III-3.1.5 Timeliness information for VOS reports received at the Met Office is also made available from the observation-monitoring web site in graphical format at:

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/nwp/observations/monitoring/marine/TOR/index.html>

III-3.1.6 This information showed that the majority of ship reports continue to be received promptly, with over 60% received within 30 minutes and 90% within 90 minutes of the observation time. Timeliness information for individual ships is also available from the website.

III-3.1.7 It was noted with concern that the SHIP masking scheme implemented in December 2007 was preventing the Met Office from monitoring data from individual Japanese and some US ships. Although the Met Office had established a method for collecting data with real call signs from JMA's FTP server, the Met Office was not able to route the data to its meteorological database (due to resource issues and problems with guaranteeing its security). The Panel urged JMA to negotiate with the shipping companies in order to minimize the number of VOS reports using the generic SHIP masking (**action, JMA, ASAP**).

III-3.1.8 The Panel noted with interest that the Met Office had recently set up a scheme for ranking the performance of VOS ships in terms of the timeliness, quantity and quality of their reports. This system was already being used to assess the annual performance of UK VOS and for determining which individual ships should be presented with awards. Details of the scheme are shown in *Appendix*

E. The panel requested the Met Office to make these rankings available on their website on an annual basis for all VOS (**action, UK MetOffice, ASAP**). VOS operators were invited to consider the value of the proposed performance ranking system and to advise the Met Office if they considered that the parameters used were appropriate (**action, VOS operators, end 2009**). VOS operators were also invited to consider performance rankings when issuing awards to their individual VOS fleets (**action, VOS operators, ongoing**).

III-3.1.9 The full report by the RSMC, Exeter, is provided in *Annex VIII*.

III-3.2 - Real-Time Monitoring Centre (RTMC) for the VOSClim project monitoring report

III-3.2.1 Ms Sarah North reported on the activities of the Real-Time Monitoring Centre (RTMC) for the VOSClim project, which is operated by the Met Office, United Kingdom. The RTMC continues to produce monthly suspect lists and monitoring statistics for all project ships using the ship lists maintained on the VOSClim website and the criteria shown at *Appendix F*. The Panel agreed that these values were set at the appropriate level.

III-3.2.2 The Panel noted that the Met Office continued to transfer VOSClim ships' observations and the associated co-located model data to the VOSClim Data Assembly Center (DAC). The Panel noted that since SOT-IV the Met Office has started putting a backup copy of the daily VOSClim BUFR data onto the Met Office's operational external FTP server so that it is available for the DAC to access in case of problems with the GTS data.

III-3.2.3 The full report by the RTMC VOSClim is provided in *Annex IX*.

- B - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre (RSMC), Exeter, VOS monitoring report

1.1 The Met Office (RSMC Exeter) Continues to produce monitoring lists of suspect ship observations each month, which are sent to the WMO Secretariat. Since 2005, they have also been available via the Met Office web site at

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/nwp/observations/monitoring/index.html>

1.2 A recent example of the on-line VOS suspect list for January 2009 is shown in Appendix A. (N.B. During 2008, the Met Office introduced password protection to its web site, but it is straightforward to obtain a login and password to gain access to the site by following the online instructions.) The current monthly monitoring criteria are shown in Appendix B and the Team is invited to confirm that they continue to be set at the correct levels.

1.3 The Met Office also produces monthly lists of monitoring statistics for all VOS. To maintain up to date lists of ships, the Met Office has recently started to download the latest Pub47 meta-data for European and Australasian fleets from the E-SURFMAR metadata database web site. The Team is asked to note that it would be helpful to the Met Office if the latest Pub47 metadata for all country's VOS fleets were available for download from this site, considering the rather late updates to the WMO Pub 47 meta-data (at the time of writing the WMO Pub47 list was 11 months out of date).

1.4 The lists of VOS monitoring statistics available on the Met Office web site have been modified since SOT-IV to remove the country identifier for those ships with unique masked call signs (the ship name is also omitted). The Team is invited to consider whether these lists are satisfactory or whether the unique masked call sign should perhaps be replaced with the original call sign (and the ship name reinstated?). The Team is invited to note that since SOT-IV a facility has been added to download the VOS statistics as

an MS Excel file.

1.5 Timeliness information for VOS reports received at the Met Office is also available from the web site at:

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/nwp/observations/monitoring/marine/TOR/index.html>

1.6 An example for January 2009 is also shown in Appendix C where the upper graph shows that the majority of ship reports continue to be received promptly, with over 60% received within 30 minutes and 90% within 90 minutes of the observation time (an early data cut-off time for operational NWP is 90 minutes after analysis time). Timeliness information for individual ships is also available from the website and an extract is shown at Appendix D.

1.7 The (Japanese) SHIP masking scheme implemented in December 2007 prevents the Met Office from monitoring individual Japanese and some US ships. Since SOT-IV, the Met Office has set up special collection of the data with real call-signs from JMA's FTP server, but currently this data is not available for monitoring purposes as it has not been routed into the Meteorological database due to staff shortage and issues concerning its security. Consequently, the Team is invited to note that to ensure, that the monitoring of VOS does not suffer further, the Met Office (RSMC Exeter) would prefer countries adopting a masking scheme to choose one that assigns a unique identifier for each ship,

1.8 The Met Office has recently set up a scheme for ranking the UK VOS fleet in terms of quantity, timeliness and quality of reports from each ship, to assist in presenting awards to the best performing ships. The scheme is detailed in Appendix E and the Team is invited to consider whether it would be suitable for wider use amongst other VOS fleets and, if so, whether the parameters used are set at appropriate values. [If the team is supportive of this proposal, the VOS performance rankings could also be made available via the website.]

2. Real-Time Monitoring Centre (RTMC) for the VOSClim project monitoring report

2.1 The Met Office, as the VOSClim RTMC, continues to produce monthly suspect lists and monitoring statistics for all project ships. At SOT-IV, it was agreed to increase the bias limit for suspect relative humidity from 10% to 12%, which the RTMC implemented in June 2007. The full monitoring criteria are given in Appendix F and the Team is invited to confirm that these values are set correctly. Since SOT-IV, the RTMC has continued to update its list of ships from that maintained on the VOSClim website.

2.2 The Met Office RTMC continues to transfer VOSClim ships' observations and the associated co-located model data to the DAC. Since SOT-IV, the RTMC has started putting a backup copy of the daily VOSClim BUFR data onto the Met Office's operational external FTP server so that it is available for the DAC to access, in case of problems with the GTS data.

APPENDIX A

MET OFFICE ON-LINE VOS SUSPECT LISTS FOR JAN 2009
(first page)

SEARCH Met Office

[Home](#) | [Research](#) | [NWP](#) | [Observations](#) | [Observation Monitoring](#) | [Surface Marine Monitoring](#) | [VOS MMR](#) | [Pub47 Suspects](#)
[NWP](#) | [Climate](#) | [Seasonal forecasting](#) | [Atmospheric processes](#) | [Oceanography](#) | [Projects](#) | [The stratosphere](#)

Pub47 VOS Suspects for Jan 2009

To view the suspect threshold for each variable and statistic, hover your cursor over the relevant column. Please note that the bias and standard deviation statistics listed below exclude observations having gross errors.

PRESSURE (hPa)							
CTRY CODE	SHIP NAME	CALL SIGN	TOTAL	GE (%)	BIAS	SD	Graph
CA	SAMUEL RISLEY	OG2960	216	100	0.0	0.0	QC pbt
DE	CAP SAN MARCO	ELZA9	23	0	4.2	1.6	QC pbt
DE	CMA CGM OCEANO	A8IT6	39	0	5.9	1.3	QC pbt
DE	CONTI GERMANY	A8MQ3	75	0	5.0	1.5	QC pbt
DE	LARCH ARROW	V2BR5	31	0	-6.4	1.1	QC pbt
DE	MONTE AZUL	DFTH2	45	0	-6.4	1.9	QC pbt
DE	MSC GEMMA	DBUT	26	8	5.5	2.3	QC pbt
DE	RIO DE JANEIRO	DDID2	54	0	-4.8	2.2	QC pbt
MY	TENAGA DUA	9MSM	36	6	-4.6	3.2	QC pbt
RU	IVAN SUSANIN	UCJL	27	0	-5.6	2.5	QC pbt
US	ALBEMARLE ISLAND	C6LU3	35	0	5.5	1.5	QC pbt
US	HUGO N	HPNV	130	48	-8.7	5.2	QC pbt
US	LNG ARIES	V7BW7	44	0	4.4	1.2	QC pbt
US	LNG CAPRICORN	V7BW8	47	0	4.5	2.0	QC pbt
US	NORWEGIAN JEWEL	C6TX6	22	0	-6.8	1.8	QC pbt
US	POLAR STAR	8PPK	45	24	7.7	3.9	QC pbt
US	TALISMAN	LAOW5	22	32	4.0	3.1	QC pbt
US	TYCO DURABLE	V7D18	32	0	7.1	1.2	QC pbt
TEMPERATURE (deg C)							
CTRY CODE	SHIP NAME	CALL SIGN	TOTAL	GE (%)	BIAS	SD	Graph
DE	COSCO LONG BEACH	A8HG2	32	0	5.1	2.3	QC pbt
SE	ATL CONVEYOR	SCKM	39	0	-4.5	5.2	QC pbt
US	BRUCE	WWU8	103	32	3.6	3.4	QC pbt
US	NORWEGIAN JEWEL	C6TX6	22	9	-10.7	2.1	QC pbt
WIND SPEED (m s-1)							
CTRY CODE	SHIP NAME	CALL SIGN	TOTAL	GE (%)	BIAS	SD	Graph
AU	NORTHWEST SANDERLING	VNVZ	49	0	-5.7	3.3	QC pbt
DE	HANJIN YANTIAN	DDY22	95	1	5.6	3.7	QC pbt
DE	HEINCKE	DBCK	344	0	-5.2	2.2	QC pbt
DE	LILY OLDENDORFF	A8AY3	49	14	8.3	3.5	QC pbt

Links

[Observation Processing](#)

[Observation Types](#)

[Quality Control](#)

[Observation Monitoring](#)

News

[News releases](#)

Contact

[Contact us](#)

APPENDIX B

MONITORING CRITERIA FOR PRODUCING MONTHLY MARINE SUSPECT LISTS

Monitoring procedures

Period	:One calendar month.
Data monitored	:Reports from each unique identifier for ships, fixed buoys and platforms.
Standard of comparison	:Background field from Exeter global model.
Observation times	:All hours
Elements monitored	:Mean sea level pressure (hPa). :Wind speed (ms^{-1}). :Wind direction (degrees). :Air temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$). :Relative Humidity (%). :Sea surface temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$).
Parameters monitored	
NOBS	:Number of observations received, excluding duplicates.
%GE	:Percentage of observations with gross errors.
%REJ	:Percentage of observations flagged, excluding those with gross errors.
SD	:Standard Deviation of difference of observation from background values, excluding those with gross errors.
BIAS	:Mean difference of observations from background values, excluding those with gross errors (N.B. a positive direction bias indicates the wind observation is veered to the background).
RMS	:Root Mean Square difference of observations from background values, excluding those with gross errors.
GROSS ERROR LIMIT	:15 hPa (pressure) :25 ms^{-1} (vector wind) :15 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (air temperature) :50% (relative humidity) :10 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (sea surface temperature)

SELECTION CRITERIA	:NOBS \geq 20 , and one or more of the following:
1.Bias	\geq 4 hPa (pressure) \geq 5 ms^{-1} (wind speed) \geq 30 degrees (direction) \geq 4 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (air temperature) \geq 15% (relative humidity) \geq 3 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (SST)
2.SD	\geq 6 hPa (pressure) \geq 80 degrees (direction) \geq 6 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (air temperature) \geq 25% (relative humidity) \geq 5 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (SST)
3.PGE	\geq 25

N.B. Observations of wind direction are only included in the wind direction statistics if the observed OR background wind speed $>$ 5 ms^{-1} ...

APPENDIX D

Pub47 Time of Receipt Statistics by SHIP for January

CTRY	CALLSIGN	NAME	Observations	N<30	N<60	N<120	N>360	Average (R-O) (mins)
	B2M0038		24	3	22	24	0	33.8
	B2M1297		13	0	10	13	0	39.0
	B2M1303		6	0	5	6	0	41.7
AU	VJD2969	ABURRI	5	0	1	3	0	97.4
AU	9KKS	AL KUWAIT	58	2	15	24	10	174.1
AU	9KWH	AL MESSILAH	70	3	22	29	19	210.9
AU	9KWP	AL SHUWAIKH	18	1	10	16	1	66.2
AU	PHIN	AMAZONEBORG	20	1	16	19	0	45.0
AU	2ALD3	ANL WANGARATTA	37	2	37	37	0	32.3
AU	9V7548	ANL WARRAIN	3	0	1	3	0	71.0
AU	2AJU5	ANL WYONG	19	1	11	16	0	59.9
AU	V2BJ5	ANL YARRUNGA	227	17	220	221	0	36.2
AU	IBGF	BECRUX	6	0	4	5	0	52.7
AU	A8OK5	CAP BIANCO	6	2	5	5	1	116.0
AU	C4PN2	CAP BON	44	1	17	30	0	85.8
AU	DCGL2	CAP SARAY	56	43	55	56	0	17.3
AU	V7FN7	CAPE DELFARO	31	4	25	28	0	53.6
AU	V7CZ6	CAPE DELGADO	16	1	16	16	0	31.8
AU	V7IA5	CAPE MORETON	23	2	22	23	0	36.3
AU	J7AV7	CAPITAINE COOK	15	2	15	15	0	31.9
AU	A3BN5	CAPITAINE TASMAN	1	0	1	1	0	31.0
AU	5WDC	FORUM SAMOA II	26	2	25	26	0	33.3
AU	VMGO	GOLIATH	1	0	0	0	0	151.0
AU	ELTS6	GOONYELLA TRADER	112	10	86	110	0	42.4
AU	VROB	HIGHLAND CHIEF	226	16	219	222	0	35.4
AU	VNVR	IRON YANDI	228	17	221	224	0	35.3
AU	3EPI6	KAMAKURA	12	1	12	12	0	32.2
AU	V2OM6	KIMBERLEY ROSE	21	0	18	21	0	42.6
AU	VRRD	KOKOPO CHIEF	35	3	32	35	0	35.1
AU	FHZI	LV'ASTROLABE	674	18	225	441	0	27.8
AU	VMAL	LINDESAY CLARK	40	1	38	39	0	35.8
AU	ONDB	LOWLANDS PROSPERITY	30	0	27	28	0	42.2
AU	V2OW2	MSC FRISIA	37	1	11	24	0	97.2
AU	VNVZ	NORTHWEST SANDERLING	49	6	38	46	0	45.9
AU	VNVG	NORTHWEST SANDPIPER	14	0	13	14	0	35.4
AU	ZCAS2	NORTHWEST SEAEAGLE	23	4	21	21	0	41.7

APPENDIX E

SCHEME FOR RANKING VOS SHIPS BY QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF REPORTS

1. The scheme analyses a year's worth of data for each ship, considering the following variables: pressure (P), wind speed (Spd), wind direction (Dir), air temperature (T), relative humidity (RH), log(visibility) (Vis) and sea surface temperature (SST). It then produces a score for each ship, with the lowest score being the best, based on the number of reports received (NumObsScore), their quality (QualityScore) and their timeliness (TorScore).

2. The numbers of reports received (NumObs) are 'capped' to limit the influence of any of the very high numbers from automatic stations, then the scheme calculates a score for the number of reports. Firstly the NumObs values are inverted to give low (good) scores to ships with high numbers of reports and vice-versa: $\text{NumObsInv} = \text{MAX}(\text{NumObs}) - \text{NumObs}$. Secondly, so that ships with below average numbers have scores greater than 1.0, and vice-versa, we set $\text{NumObsScore} = \text{NumObsInv} / \text{MEAN}(\text{NumObsInv})$.

3. The quality scores for each variable are based on observation minus background (O-B) values and the following three statistics:

- (i) $\text{MeanScore} = (\text{Absolute value of mean O-B}) / \text{VariableLimit}$
- (ii) $\text{SDScore} = (\text{Standard Deviation of O-B}) / \text{VariableLimit}$ [where the following VariableLimit values are used, based on Met Office reject list thresholds: P = 2.0hPa, Spd = 3.0m/s, Dir = 40°, T = 3.0 °C, RH = 15.0%, Log(Vis(m)) = 1.0, SST = 3.0°C.]
- (iii) $\text{GEScore} = (\text{Number of Gross Errors}) / (\text{Mean number of Gross Errors})$

(N.B. For ships with 100% gross errors, the Mean and SD scores are set to the worst in the set.)

The above scores are capped at values of 2.0, then the quality score is created for each variable: $\text{QualityScore} = (\text{MeanScore} + \text{SDScore} + \text{GEScore}) / 3$

4. Time of receipt (ToR) scores are produced from yearly totals for the following ToR categories: Reports received within 30 minutes, 30-60 mins, 60-120 mins, 120-360 mins and after 360 mins. Each ship is given a score that is the sum of the following numbers of points multiplied by the numbers of observations in each category:

$\text{points}_{30} = 0.0$, $\text{points}_{60} = 30.0$, $\text{points}_{120} = 75.0$, $\text{points}_{360} = 225.0$, $\text{points}_{\text{after}} = 345.0$.

(These scores are just the values of the mid points of the ranges minus the mid-point of the first range (15 minutes) to make the best score zero. 'points_after' has just been set to 360-15, as the range is unbounded.)

The ToR scores are then divided by the scores the ships would have received had all of their observations been received between 60 and 120 minutes, i.e. we are suggesting that observations should really have been received within two hours and that observations received later than that are less useful to NWP.

The ToR scores are also capped at 2.0.

5. Originally, the NumObsScore, QualityScore and TorScore were combined with weights of 0.5, 0.25 and 0.25, respectively; however, after discussion with some of the UK PMOs it was decided to give less weight to ToR and NumObs and more weight to the Quality score. Consequently, weights of 0.4, 0.4 and 0.2 have now been set for NumObs, Quality and ToR, respectively.

For ships that do not report certain variables the scores are set to the worst score for that variable

(usually 2.0). Then the scheme combines the scores for each variable using the following relative weightings: P = 2.0, Spd = 1.0, Dir = 0.6, T = 1.0, RH = 0.6, Vis = 0.4, SST = 1.0. These weightings are estimates of the relative importance of each variable to the NWP models and their values may require further tuning.

APPENDIX F**MONITORING CRITERIA FOR VOSCLIM SUSPECT SHIPS**

1. For each ship and each variable, there should be at least 20 reports during the period (if there are fewer reports the statistics may be unreliable and no action is needed).
2. Then, either:
 - a) The number of gross errors should exceed 10% of the number of observation reports (where the observation-background (o-b) limits for individual gross errors are shown in column 4 of the following table); or,
 - b) One of the limits shown in columns 2 and 3 in the table should be exceeded for either:
 - (i) the mean value of o-b over the period (absolute value), or
 - (ii) the standard deviation of o-b over the period

(1) Variable	(2) Mean o-b limit	(3) Std. Dev. o-b limit	(4) Gross error limit
Pressure (hPa)	2.5	5.0	15.0
Wind speed (m/s)	5.0	10.0	25.0
Wind direction (degrees)	30.0	60.0	150.0
Air Temperature (⁰ C)	2.0	4.0	10.0
Relative humidity (%)	12.0	20.0	50.0
Sea surface temp. (⁰ C)	2.0	4.0	10.0

3. If either of the limits on o-b statistics in columns 2 and 3 are exceeded the project ship's observations will be considered 'suspect' and corrective action will need to be taken (e.g. by the Port Met Officers). Column 4 contains the o-b limits for each ship observation beyond which the observation will be considered to be a 'gross error'.
-