

Expert Planning Meeting on Public Weather Services
Nassau, 12-16 May 1997

The Expert Planning Meeting on Public Weather Services was organized in
Nassau, Bahamas from 12-16 May 1997

as a milestone following the decision of CBS-XI (November 1996) to
establish a
Working Group on Public Weather Services.

The objectives of the meeting were to further develop and expand the preliminary Guide to Public Weather Services Practices, to prepare strategic goals for the Programme, to propose a work plan for the Working Group on PWS in anticipation of its launch, and to develop a questionnaire on PWS practices for distribution to Members.

As regards the preliminary Guide, the meeting agreed that it should be left unchanged as a document which was, in its present form, suitable for general reference, as a source of ideas and for promotional purposes to be used by directors of NMHSs with external audiences and other governmental agencies. The meeting further agreed that the audience for an expanded Guide would primarily be NMHS staff and that expansion of the document should, therefore, focus on providing detailed information on techniques, methodologies and related material of direct utility to NMHS staff. The participants agreed that the Scope of the PWS Programme as defined in the Guide, should include a core component common to all NMHSs, focused on the safety of life and property aspect of PWS, along with another component which would encompass unique national or domestic priorities and practices. The meeting then developed a detailed proposal for an expanded Guide including a proposed format and outline of chapters and their contents.

The meeting reviewed the guidance provided by CBS-XI regarding PWS issues which required action and agreed that those issues provided a solid basis for the refinement of strategic goals for the Working Group on PWS and the development of a work plan. The actions which might be taken in implementing a work plan directed towards achieving the strategic goals, were then reviewed by the meeting. Although the early activation of the working group was considered a priority action, the participants considered that undertaking immediate action on items in the work plan would represent a significant step towards addressing CBS and EC directions to the group. One such action was development of a questionnaire on PWS which will be distributed to Members in the near future. Responses to this questionnaire will facilitate the implementation of well-targeted capacity building initiatives.