

COMMISSION FOR BASIC SYSTEMS
OPEN PROGRAMME AREA GROUP
ON INTEGRATED OBSERVING SYSTEMS

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EXPERT TEAM ON AIRCRAFT-BASED OBSERVING SYSTEMS
FIRST SESSION

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Report of the Chair

(Submitted by Frank Grooters)

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document contains a brief report of the Chairperson of the ET-ABO on his activities since AMDAR Panel 15.

ACTION PROPOSED

The Meeting will be invited to note the report of the Chairperson of the ET-ABO and express its appreciation on the way the Chairperson discharged his duties since AMDAR Panel 15. It will further be invited to discuss any element of the Chairperson's report that is not dealt with under other agenda items, as necessary.

References

1. ET-ABO Work Plan 2013-2014
 2. ET-ABO Terms of Reference
 3. ET-ABO membership
 4. ABO Focal Points
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DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

1.1 Having been unable to physically attend the 15th and final meeting of the WMO AMDAR Panel (6-9 November 2012, Boulder, Co, USA) the Chair expresses his appreciation and thanks to the vice-Chair of the Panel, Mr Carl Weiss, for the excellent way he has guided the meeting through the sometimes difficult agenda items.

1.2 He also likes to thank the members of the Panel for their devotion and support to the WMO Global AMDAR Programme over the last 16 years.

1.3 He also expresses his gratitude to the WMO Secretariat for its continuous support to the AMDAR observing system and the work of the AMDAR Panel.

1.4 At AMDAR Panel-15 the meeting decided to adopt the proposal to transfer the AMDAR observing system to a new governance and programmatic structure under the World Weather Watch Programme (WWW) and that the Panel should cease operation at the conclusion of Panel-15.

1.5 The governance and programmatic structure (including the management of the AMDAR Trust Fund) would be handed over to the CBS and CIMO Technical Commissions, to be managed jointly by the CBS Expert Team on Aircraft-Based Observing Systems (ET-ABO) and the CIMO Task Team on Aircraft-based Observations (TT-AO). Together, these two teams and their work programmes will be referred to as the Aircraft-Based Observations Programme (ABOP).

1.6 CBS-15 (September 2012) agreed with the Terms of Reference, the initial Work Plan (incl. the financial allocation) and the membership of the ET-ABO. The Terms of Reference, the Work Plan (incl. the financial allocation) and the membership of the TT-AO was agreed by the CIMO Management Group in 2013.

1.7 During the period between Panel-15 and the first meeting of the ET-ABO, the Chair and the vice-Chair of the ET-ABO, the Chair of the TT-AO and the Scientific Officer on Aircraft-based and Remotely-sensed Observations (SO/ARO) in the Secretariat have reviewed, further detailed and worked out the ET-ABO Programmatic Structure, the Terms of Reference, the Work Plan (incl. the financial allocation), the ET-ABO membership, the list of ABO Focal Points and have prepared the first meeting of the ET-ABO.

1.8 This work was carried out by correspondence (E-mail) and by Web Conferencing (WebEx).

1.9 A comprehensive description of the ABOP structure and work programme, including the work plan for ET-ABO are available from the WMO website at: http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/www/GOS/ABO/ABO_Work_Program.html.

2. CBS ET-ABO Programmatic Structure

2.1 ET-ABO is placed under the CBS Open Programme Area Group on Integrated Observing Systems (OPAG-IOS) and is expected to meet every 2 years. The Work Plan and the financial implications will be updated every year and presented for approval to the Chair of the OPAG-IOS.

2.2 If required, the ToR and the ET-ABO membership will also be reviewed regularly, but updates and new membership will have to be presented for agreement by CBS every 4 years.

2.3 The ET-ABO Work Plan was harmonized with the TT-AO Work Plan as far as possible in accordance with the respective Terms of Reference, identifying the main responsibilities of the ET-ABO (ABO Programmatic, Training & Outreach and Strategy) and the TT-AO (ABO science and technology).

2.4 A major obligation to ET-ABO would be to see that the implementation of ABOP is following the requirements as agreed for the WMO Integration of the Global Observing System (WIGOS) and detailed in the IGOS Implementation Plan.

3. Operation of the AMDAR Trust Fund

3.1 At its 16th meeting, Congress invited the WMO Member States to continue to contribute to the AMDAR Trust Fund in order to support AMDAR related activities still being needed in the future.

3.2 After the transition of the AMDAR Programme into the GOS of the WWW, the Trust Fund is jointly managed by CBS and CIMO. WMO has circulated the annual letter to the members requesting contribution to the Trust Fund. The result of this request will be presented at the meeting (Agenda Item 5.1.2).

3.3 SO/ARO, ET-ABO Chair and vice-Chair and TT-AO Chair proposed the expenditure of the funds in line with the agreed action items in the respective Work Plans 2013-2014.

4. Work Program

4.1 The ET-ABO work program 2013-2014 was reviewed, edited where needed, and expected expenditures were revised in accordance with the budget in the AMDAR Trust Fund. In May 2013 the updated work plan was approved by the Chair of the CBS OPAG-IOS. The meeting will be informed about the status of the tasks and activities in the work plan under appropriate agenda items.

5. Studies

5.1 In the work plan, some tasks do relate to studies for which contracts are or will be concluded with external consultants. The study on Data Coverage and Airline Capabilities was completed and published. The study on the Impact of AMDAR Data is still ongoing. The Chair, vice-Chair and the SO/ARO have reviewed proposals for the study on AMDAR Impacts and Benefits for Aviation for which WMO will prepare a contract soon. The meeting will be informed about the status of the studies under Agenda Item 5.

6. AMDAR Development Officer

6.1 One of the important tasks in the work plan is the employment of an AMDAR Development Officer (ADO). WMO had distributed a request for an Expression of Interest (EoI), together with the requirements for an ADO. The Chair, vice-Chair and the SO/ARO have evaluated the application of three possible candidates.

6.2 The ET-ABO might be pleased to see that Mr Stig Carlberg, former E-AMDAR Programme Manager, was offered a contract for the position of AMDAR Develop Officer. Initially this contract will cover 1 year for 50% of Mr Carlberg's time.

6.3 A work plan for the ADO was drafted and agreed upon, which includes the development of a Strategy for the ABOP (see also Agenda Item 5.2.3).

7. ABO Data Centre

7.1 One of the main tasks of ET-ABO is to maintain and develop the Quality Management System (QMS) for global aircraft-based observations, including Data Management, Metadata management, Quality Control and Data Monitoring, based on WMO standards.

7.2 As part of the QMS for ABO, the ABOP has the aim of establishing and maintaining the Aircraft-based Observations Global Data Centre.

7.3 Requirements for the performance of a Data Centre were drafted and sent to four international data centres and organisations (CMC, EUMETNET, NCDC, NCEP) with the request to respond through an Expression of Interest (EoI) by 1 October 2013.

8. CIMO Task Team on Aircraft-based Observations

8.1 Since this is the first ABOP meeting after the cessation of the AMDAR panel, some overlap with the TT-AO responsibilities cannot be avoided. The meeting will be informed about the TT-AO and its Work Plan under Agenda Item 5.2.2.
