

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

Distr.: RESTRICTED  
CBS/TT-GRM/Doc. 6  
(18.X.2001)

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COMMISSION FOR BASIC SYSTEMS

TASK TEAM ON GOS REGULATORY MATERIAL  
(TT-GRM)

ITEMS: 2 and 3

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 26-30 NOVEMBER 2001

Original: ENGLISH

### **CBS guidance related to the GOS regulatory material**

*(Submitted by the Secretariat)*

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#### **Summary and Purpose of Document**

The document contains views and recommendations related to the GOS regulatory material as adopted by CBS and its Management Group.

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#### **ACTION PROPOSED**

The meeting is invited to follow the guidance provided by CBS in making amendments to the Manual on the GOS and WMO Publication No. 9, Vol. A.

- Appendices:**
- A. Draft text for the Manual on the GOS, Volume I (except Part IV).**
  - B. Draft text for the Part IV (Satellites) and amendments to Introduction, Parts II and V of the Manual on the GOS, Volume I.**

## **Manual on the GOS**

1. The first edition of the Manual on the GOS was published in 1980 in accordance with the decisions of Seventh Congress. The last supplement which contained amendments to Volume I, Part III of the Manual as approved by the EC through Resolution 8 (EC-LI) was issued in September 1999.
2. An attempt to update the content of the Manual, which would more adequately describes the basic features of the current observing system, was made by the secretariat in 1999 using consultant's services. It should be noted that amendments to the parts of the Manual related to surface- and space-based observing systems were developed separately. The draft of the updated parts of the Manual are attached to this document.
3. CBS at its twelfth session (CBS-XII, Geneva, 29 November-8 December 2000) reviewed the status of the Manual. The relevant excerpts from the General Summary are reproduced below.

" The Commission recalled that at its extraordinary session in 1998 it had requested OPAG/IOS to review all relevant WMO Manuals, especially that on Codes, as well as the Guide to Meteorological Instruments and Methods of Observation, with a view to identifying all regulations concerning meteorological observing and incorporating them in a revised Manual on the GOS.

The Commission recalled the role and purpose of the relevant publications as followed:

- The *Manual on the GOS* describes **what** is to be measured, **where** and **when**.
- The *Guide on the GOS* provides guidance on **how** to set up and manage observing stations and networks, observing and reporting programmes.
- The *Guide on Meteorological Instruments and Methods of Observation* provides guidance on **how** and **with what** to make the required measurements and observations.
- The *Manual on Codes* gives instructions for **reporting procedures** and **coding**.

The session noted that relatively little duplication between the various Publications had been found. The IMO Guide did obviously contain material relevant to the Manual on the GOS but, with the exception of definitions of elements to be observed and units used, this was mainly guidance material and not regulatory.

The Manual on Codes, did contain regulatory material other than straightforward coding instructions, but that concerned reporting procedures and practices (e.g. how to identify and report intermittent rain and how to select significant levels for upper air reports). It was agreed that these were directly related to coding and would not be appropriate in the Manual on the GOS. It realized that it would in any case be very difficult to completely separate reporting procedures from coding instructions.

It was therefore concluded that no major revisions were required in order to incorporate material presently contained in other manual and guides into the Manual on the GOS. However, the Commission agreed that there is a need to update certain sections of the Manual, to introduce new material on definitions and units and to reorganize its contents to make it more user-friendly. It was noted with appreciation that a first draft of this revised Manual has been prepared in the Secretariat with the help of a consultant. The Commission decided that this draft should be reviewed by a small expert group to be set up within the OPAG/IOS and then submitted to the next session for approval."

4. CBS Management Group at its first meeting (Geneva, 24-27 January 2001) discussed the tasks assigned to the Rapporteur on Regulatory Material in light of proposed changes to the Manual on the GOS that are to be considered by Executive Council, especially concerning the space-based component. The Group felt that, if approved by EC, it would take several years to prepare the new material for the Manual but that there was an urgent need for the Manual to be updated more quickly. It agreed that the updates to the Manual on the GOS should therefore be done in two stages: material now available should be used to develop updates to the Manual in time to be considered by CBS at its next session. Additional updates on the space-based components could also be prepared over the next several years. It decided to clarify the terms of reference of the Rapporteur as follows:

- (i) review and update sections of the Manual on the GOS, and harmonise available material on the conventional (in-situ) and satellite components of the GOS;
- (ii) arrange for the review of the revised draft of the Manual on the GOS by a consultant/small expert group with the aim of submitting the resulting text to the 2002 session of CBS.

***Weather Reporting (WMO-No.9), Volume A***

5. CBS-XII considered possible measures to improve the accuracy of Volume A of WMO Publication No. 9 in order to make the publication more useful to Members. It noted that the updating of Volume A was not always possible in an adequate and timely manner. The Commission recommended that Members should designate focal points in NMSs, who are authorized to inform the WMO Secretariat directly on changes. The Commission also agreed that the following matters should receive attention:

- The re-use of index numbers and the limitation of the index numbering system;
- Changes in coordinates which may be the result of either corrections or station moves;
- History of station changes;
- The need for station elevations.

6. The meeting is invited to take into account the above guidance when discussing amendments to the regulatory material developed by each member of the Task Team and formulating final proposals for submission to CBS.

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