

## PROCEDURES FOR AMENDING THE *MANUAL ON CODES*

### 1. General validation and implementation procedures

#### 1.1 Proposal of amendments

Amendments to the *Manual on Codes* shall be proposed in writing to the WMO Secretariat. The proposal shall specify the needs, purposes and requirements for the proposed amendment. A contact point for technical matters shall be identified to facilitate collaboration for validation and drafting recommendation.

#### 1.2 Drafting recommendation

The Inter-Programme Expert Team on Data Representation and Codes (IPET-DRC),<sup>1</sup> supported by the Secretariat, shall validate the stated requirements (unless it is consequential to an amendment to the WMO Technical Regulations) and develop a draft recommendation to respond to the requirements, as appropriate.

#### 1.3 Date of implementation

The IPET-DRC should define a date of implementation in order to give sufficient time to the WMO Members to implement the amendments after the date of notification; the IPET-DRC should document the reasons to propose a time span of less than six months except for the fast-track procedure.

#### 1.4 Procedures for approval

After a draft recommendation of the IPET-DRC is validated in accordance with the procedure given in section 6 below, depending on the type of amendments, the IPET-DRC may select one of the following procedures for the approval of the amendments:

- Fast-track procedure (see section 2 below);
- Procedure for the adoption of amendments between CBS sessions (see section 3 below);
- Procedure for the adoption of amendments during CBS sessions (see section 4 below).

#### 1.5 Urgent introduction

Regardless of above procedures, as an exceptional measure, the following procedure accommodates urgent user needs to introduce new entries in BUFR/CREX tables A, B and D, code and flag tables of BUFR, CREX and GRIB edition 2 and Common Code tables.

- (a) A draft recommendation developed by IPET-DRC shall be validated according to 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 below.
- (b) The draft recommendation for pre-operational use, which can be used in operational data and products, shall be approved by the chairpersons of IPET-DRC and OPAG-ISS, and the president of CBS. The list of pre-operational entries is kept on-line on the WMO web server;
- (c) Pre-operational entries need to be approved by one of the procedures in 1.4 for operational use.

#### 1.6 Version number

The version number of the master table will be incremented.

#### 1.7 Issuing updated version

Once amendments to the *Manual on Codes* are adopted, an updated version of the relevant part of the Manual shall be issued in the four languages: English, French, Russian and Spanish. The Secretariat will inform all WMO Members of the availability of a new updated version of that part at the date of notification mentioned in 1.3.

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<sup>1</sup> The IPET-DRC, the ICT-ISS and the OPAG-ISS are the current bodies dealing with data representation and codes within CBS. If they were replaced by other bodies performing the same function, the same rules would apply, by replacing the names of the entities appropriately.

## 2. Fast-track procedure

### 2.1 Scope

The fast-track procedure can be used for additions to BUFR or CREX Tables A, B, and D with associated code tables or flag tables, to code or flag tables or templates in GRIB and to common tables C.

### 2.2 Endorsement

Draft recommendations developed by the IPET-DRC, including a date of implementation of the amendments, must be endorsed by the chairperson of OPAG-ISS.

### 2.3 Approval

#### 2.3.1 Minor adjustments

The filling of reserved and unused entries in the existing code and flag tables, and Common Code tables is considered as minor adjustments, and will be done by the Secretary-General in consultation with the president of CBS.

#### 2.3.2 Other types of amendments

For other types of amendments, the English version of the draft recommendation, including a date of implementation, should be distributed to the focal points for codes and data representation matters for comments, with a deadline of two months for the reply. It should then be submitted to the president of CBS for adoption on behalf of the Executive Council (EC).

### 2.4 Frequency

The implementation of amendments approved through the fast-track procedure can be twice a year in May and November.

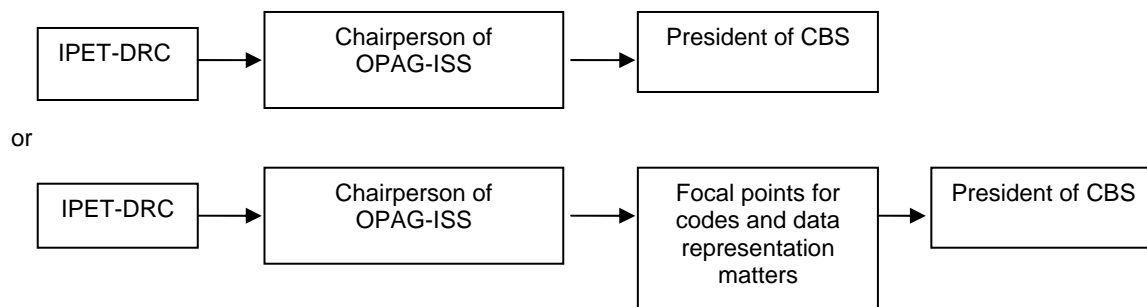


Figure 1 - Adoption of amendments by fast-track procedure

## 3. Procedure for the adoption of amendments between CBS sessions

### 3.1 Approval of draft recommendation

For the direct adoption of amendments between CBS sessions, the draft recommendation developed by the IPET-DRC, including a date of implementation of the amendments, shall be submitted to the chairperson of OPAG-ISS and president and vice-president of CBS for approval.

### 3.2 Circulation to Members

Upon approval of the president of CBS, the Secretariat sends the recommendation in the four languages (English, French, Russian and Spanish), including a date of implementation of the amendments, to all WMO Members for comments to be submitted within two months following the dispatch of the amendments.

### 3.3 Agreement

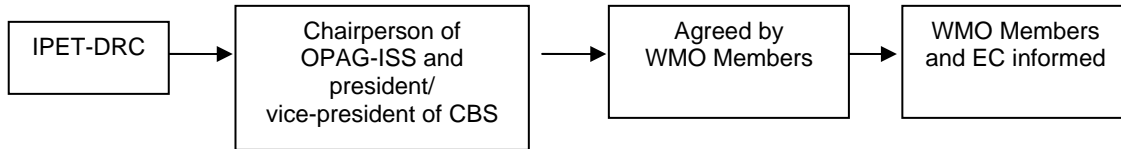
Those WMO Members not having replied within the two months following the dispatch of the amendments are implicitly considered as having agreed with the amendments.

### 3.4 Coordination

WMO Members are invited to designate a focal point responsible to discuss any comments/disagreements with the IPET-DRC. If the discussion between the IPET-DRC and the focal point cannot result in an agreement on a specific amendment by a WMO Member, this amendment will be reconsidered by the IPET-DRC.

### 3.5 Notification

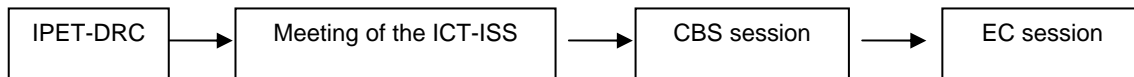
Once amendments are agreed by WMO Members, and after consultation with the chairperson of the OPAG-ISS and the president and vice-president of CBS, the Secretariat notifies at the same time the WMO Members and the members of the Executive Council of the approved amendments and of the date of their implementation.



**Figure 2. Adoption of amendments between CBS sessions**

### 4. Procedure for the adoption of amendments during CBS sessions

For the adoption of amendments during CBS sessions, the IPET-DRC submits its recommendation, including a date of implementation of the amendments, to the Implementation/Coordination Team on Information Systems and Services (ICT-ISS) of the Open Programme Area Group on Information Systems and Services (OPAG-ISS). The recommendation is then submitted to a CBS session and then to an EC session.



**Figure 3. Adoption of the amendments during a CBS session**

### 5. Procedure for the correction of existing entries in the BUFR and CREX tables

#### 5.1 Introducing a new descriptor

If an erroneous specification of an entry is found in an operational BUFR or CREX element descriptor or sequence descriptor, a new descriptor should preferably be added to the appropriate table through the fast-track procedure or the procedure for adoption of amendments between CBS sessions. The new descriptor should be used instead of the old one for encoding (especially if it concerns data width). An appropriate explanation shall be added to the notes of the table to clarify the practice along with the date of the change. This situation is considered a minor adjustment according to 2.3.1 above.

#### 5.2 Correcting erroneous specification

As an exceptional measure for erroneous entries in Table B, if it is found absolutely necessary to correct an erroneous specification of an existing entry by changing its specification, the following rules shall apply:

5.2.1 The name and unit of an element descriptor shall remain unchanged except for minor clarifications.

5.2.2 Scale, reference value and bit width may be corrected to required values.

5.2.3 Such a change will be submitted through the fast-track procedure.

### 6. Validation procedure

#### 6.1 Documentation of need and purpose

The need for, and the purpose of, the proposal for changes should be documented.

#### 6.2 Documentation of result

This documentation must include the results of validation testing of the proposal as described below.

#### 6.3 Testing with encoder/decoder

For new or modified WMO code and data representation forms, proposed changes should be tested by at least two centres, using two independently developed encoders and two independently developed decoders

which incorporated the proposed change. Where the data originated from a necessarily unique source (for example, the data stream from an experimental satellite), the successful testing of a single encoder with at least two independent decoders would be considered adequate. Results should be made available to the IPET-DRC with a view to verifying the technical specifications.