Board for Operational Government Meteorologists Pursues Goals through Partnerships

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Chair, AMS Board for Operational Government Meteorologists

About 10 years ago, the AMS created the Board for Operational Government Meteorologists to serve an important constituency and a national asset—the operational forecasters and meteorologists of the National Weather Service (NWS) and Department of Defense (DoD). Our board's continuing vision is to leverage the broad constituency of the AMS to help you—all operational government meteorologists, to include those with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state and local government—do your jobs better. Over the last couple of years we've broadened our scope to promote operations in related fields such as hydrology and other environmental sciences consistent with the Society's objectives.

We've focused our efforts in six areas.

- a. *Raise the visibility of forecast techniques employed by operational government meteorologists and enhance their forecasting abilities to best serve our nation*

Since the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) is the centerpiece of the NWS modernization, we're showcasing the current and future operational capabilities of AWIPS at the AMS Annual Meeting in Orlando in 2002. Plans are well underway for an AWIPS symposium, which we are cosponsoring with the AMS's Interactive Information and Processing System Committee, the Weather Analysis and Forecasting Committee, the National Weather Association (NWA), and NWS. This symposium is intended to be a hands-on demonstration and collaboration between and among operational users and developers of AWIPS. We have already

identified session topics and chairs and have successfully lobbied to feature AWIPS during the morning weather briefings at the conference.

To provide a service for our operational, research, public, and private sector professionals, our chapter is hosting a regional weather conference planned in November 2002 on "Mid-Atlantic Winter Storms." This will also enhance local chapter, AMS, and National Weather Association collaboration.

- b. *Build rapport between public and private sector operational meteorologists*

We need to foster trust, understand the respective roles of public and private sector meteorologists, and together, provide the best possible weather services for our nation. Therefore, our board is collaborating with the AMS Private Sector Board to identify issues on which we can work together. Our first initiative is to jointly convene a town hall-style meeting at the 2002 AMS Annual Meeting at the 2002 AMS Annual Meeting to discuss private and public operational meteorologists perspectives on products and services.

- c. *Maintain dialogue between our board and operational government meteorologists*

One way we intend to initiate dialogue is to submit articles, which we will either author ourselves or solicit, to the *Bulletin* or other appropriate publications about important operational issues. One of the first planned articles in the *Bulletin* will focus on the benefits of AMS membership, including an explanation of how membership dues are used. We will also continue to participate in operational forums such as the NWS SOOTALK.

Another place for this dialogue is our board Web site (<http://www.ametsoc.org/AMS/boardpges/bogm/index.html>), which is continually improving to get quality information into the hands of our constituency.

We've established a feedback section site so that operational government meteorologists can help us leverage the vast resources of the AMS to make their jobs easier. We also post our mission, initiatives, and meeting minutes so that you can easily find out what we're doing.

One of our board members is investigating the need for a new publication, produced by either AMS or NWA, that would benefit operational government meteorologists. In general, our board feels that current AMS and NWA publications serve most needs of operational meteorologists and forecasters. Therefore we are pursuing a new initiative to have short operational-focused articles published in the *Bulletin* and other appropriate publications.

We also want to continue our partnership with the NWA Weather Analysis and Forecasting Committee on their initiative to produce an electronic journal. We will spread the word, encourage input, and help evaluate submissions to this new journal.

d. As much as possible, partner with other boards, committees, and organizations

As the above initiatives show, we will continue to pursue partnerships with organizations that have similar customers, such as the NWA, that benefit operational government meteorologists. These partnerships help us leverage expertise and efforts while building relationships that we hope will foster teamwork and trust.

e. Provide visibility for and support initiatives that facilitate training of operational government meteorologists

We want U.S. operational meteorologists to be the best trained in the world. Therefore, we're aggressively pursuing opportunities to leverage appropriate education and training initiatives. The focus should be on improving expertise on state-of-the-art tools and techniques that will generate high-quality products and services to civilian, military, and other customers. Two of our board members are seeking ways to identify education and training shortfalls. This effort will include working with the AMS Continuing Education Board and, as appropriate, NWS training centers and NWA Training Committee, to generate ideas on how to enhance the education and training of operational government meteorologists.

f. Identify and support efforts to publicize the critical responsibility for center, region, and forecast office hydrologists to work closely together

Although both meteorology and hydrology are closely related, they are considered distinct careers. One way to promote integration of the two is to encourage universities and other learning institutions to offer a hydrometeorological program. Weather obviously has a hydrological impact, and meteorologists should be aware of this. We could propose educational changes such as recommending that meteorologists take hydrology classes. To publicize the integration of both disciplines, media outlets like the Weather Channel should be involved, providing more river status information based on current, past, or future precipitation. We intend on fostering a discussion on the impact of precipitation and tides on rivers and the effect of storm surges on coastal areas.

Furthermore, we need to support initiatives that promote the integration of meteorological and hydrological technological applications. We know that hydrologists need meteorological input. It would be valuable if hydrologists would define what their needs are for meteorological data and then guide the meteorological community to orient research toward contributing that data.

For more information about the Board for Operational Government Meteorologists and our objectives please visit our Web site. These initiatives are the result of the hard work of our board members—NWS and DoD employees who have willingly volunteered their time to serve operational government meteorologists: Dan McCarthy, Storm Prediction Center, Norman, Oklahoma; Dan Nietfeld, NWS, Hastings, Nebraska; Neil Stuart, NWS, Wakefield, Virginia; Paul Duval, NWS, Tallahassee, Florida; Andy Edman, NWS Western Regional Headquarters, Salt Lake City, Utah; Cmdr. Chris Abbott, Naval Training Meteorology and Oceanography Facility, Pensacola, Florida; and Reggina Garza, Southeast River Forecast Center, Peachtree City, Georgia.

If there are issues on which you would like to work jointly, or if you would like to discuss the board's activities in more detail, contact Ken Carey at Kenneth.Carey@pentagon.af.mil or 703-588-8628.