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WEATHER BUREAU
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Section Centers, Hydroclimatic Inspectors, Field Aides,
WRPC's, and River District Offices.
(With copies to Regional Offices for Information.)

FROM: Climatological Branch, C&HS Division

SUBJECT: Climatological Service Memorandum No. 22.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. DISCONTINUANCE OF FORM 5201 (MACHINE FORM 1009) (REFERENCE: CSM NO. ITEM 1): The replies received to the referenced CSM item indicate that, although in some areas of the country Form 5201 is considered necessary, the sentiment in other areas is overwhelmingly in favor of discontinuance. Since the Section Centers in the Chattanooga WRPC area voted 15 to 2 in favor of discontinuing this form we plan to test the effect of its discontinuance in that area. If the results of this pilot project in the Chattanooga area are satisfactory, consideration will then be given to its discontinuance in the other WRPC areas.

Discontinuance of machine Form 1009 should result in a more efficient processing operation and should permit Climatological Data to be printed from 4 to 6 days earlier.

The WRPC's will add to the general data table (Form 5204) now furnished Section Centers, the average maximum and average minimum, the number of days maximum 32 or less, and number of days minimum 0 or lower. It is quite likely that these data can also be included in Table 2 when it is next revised.

Discontinuance of Form 5201 in the Chattanooga WRPC area will be effective with the August 1951 data. A letter similar to the following should be sent to all those observers now receiving the pink copy, so that they may make an extra carbon copy of their Form 1009. This instruction applies only to the Chattanooga WRPC area. Other areas will be kept informed of the results of this pilot test.

TO ALL CLIMATOLOGICAL SUBSTATIONS:

Subject: Discontinuance of WB Form 5201

Dear Sir:

The Weather Bureau has, during the past years, made continued progress in the advancement of machine techniques for processing

and checking as well as for the publication of "Climatological Data".

Quite recently the Weather Bureau added a new and more advanced type of data processing machine to each of its Processing Centers. This machine makes it possible to do more operations faster than ever before. The fact that more operations can be accomplished simultaneously has in some measure advanced our techniques to the place where the machine listing of Monthly Climatological Data, WB Form 5201, is no longer necessary as a checking tool.

Previously, the WB Form 5201 was an integral part of our processing procedure and a copy of this form was distributed to any observer who expressed a desire to receive it. It should be understood that each observer who wishes to have a copy of the data observed at his particular station may make an extra carbon copy of his original observational form and also may receive the published data, but that the machine copy of WB Form 5201 will be discontinued with the month of August 1951.

The elimination of WB Form 5201 represents an important short-cut in processing time and will speed up publication of Climatological Data by several days.

2. CLIMATOLOGICAL DATA MAPS. (This CSM item makes CSM No. 18, Item 2 and previous CSM items concerning Climatological Data Maps obsolete. Revision and printing of all Sectional Climatological Data maps will henceforth be the responsibility of the Processing Centers. This will assure that the maps agree with the index since they will be revised each time the index is retyped.

Each Section Director should inform his Processing Center of the number of 8 1/2 x 11 inch or 16 x 21 inch separates required by his section. This should be based upon a six month supply, since it is expected that the maps will be revised approximately every six months.

Files of the latest negatives for preparation of both large and small maps will be maintained at the Processing Centers.

3. ZERO ELEVATION GRAPH IN FORM 4004-B. Page 4 of printed blank Form 4004-B (river station description) provides space for listing one to five zero elevations of the river gage. This space should be used to list actual changes in the gage datum. If the gage zero remains constant for the entire period of record, only one line need be used.

Changes in the mean sea level elevation of the gage zero, caused by adjustments of the general level network, do not affect the record of river stages. Such adjustments of the msl elevation should not be listed on page 4, but on page 5 (history of the gages).

4. DISTRIBUTION OF MACHINE COPIES OF WB FORM 1009 TO FIRST-ORDER STATIONS: A recent employee suggestion has pointed out that first-order stations have no need for a copy of WB Form 5201 because WB Form 1001C contains the same data.

It is therefore requested that each Section Center destroy these copies at the time the pink copies are distributed to the cooperative observers.

GENERAL

5. PREFERRED ARRANGEMENT OF MATERIAL IN WEEKLY WEATHER AND CROP BULLETINS: In order that the weather and crop stories cover the same period, and also that weather conditions between the close of the period and publication dates may be noted, the following arrangement of the bulletin is suggested:

- (a) A story on weather for the week ending Friday (or day of BAE survey).
- (b) A story on crops for the same period. (These two stories may be interchanged, with the crop story first, if desirable.)
- (c) A paragraph on weather since Friday (or day of BAE survey).
- (d) The five day weather outlook, interpreted for the section (departures from normal, etc.).
- (e) Any desired maps or tabular data.

In order that our file of these bulletins may be brought up to date each Section Center issuing such a bulletin is asked to send 2 copies of a recent issue to C&HS Division, marked for Field Services Section. This is in addition to the single copy of each issue that is furnished to the Central Office Library.

6. SUBSTATION VISITS: It is generally accepted that there is no satisfactory substitute for personal visits to substation observers. This item is to encourage all Section Directors (or their principal assistants) to plan to visit each substation at least once every two years.
7. SFERICS EVALUATION PROJECT: The Weather Bureau was asked by the Air Force (and agreed) to request cooperative observers in a number of sections to report daily on lightning and thunderstorms during the month of July 1951 in connection with a sferics evaluation project conducted by the Air Force.

Since it is our policy to avoid asking our cooperative observer to assume additional tasks, we would like to be informed by each Section Director participating in this program concerning the number of objections received from observers, (if any were received), and to obtain some typical examples.

8. TRAINING COOPERATIVE OBSERVERS: Some time ago the WRPC called our attention to the fine manner in which Montana cooperative observers have been taught to make entries on Form 1009. We then asked the Montana Section Director, Mr. R. A. Dightman, to prepare a GSM item on the training of cooperative observers in his section, and this item is reproduced below.

TRAINING COOPERATIVE OBSERVERS IN MONTANA

In the Montana Section, cooperative observer training has been based upon the premise that the matter is not necessarily simple, and that each observer requires treatment to some extent as an individual. This is particularly true in cases where observers are a little slow in grasping some phase. Basically, we try to avoid any impression of impatience, criticism, or regimentation. We make an effort to be interested in each observer and his special weather problems. Application of these considerations may be divided into the following phases:

- (a). Field inspection. To the observer, we try to avoid any impression of being inspectors. We take at least as much interest in the equipment as the observer, and the approach always attempted is an offer to help him in any way we can with his station problems. Talking the observer's language helps, too. The inspector generally bears in mind that a few extra minutes of helpful coaching will save much correspondence at a later date. The latter point is important especially when new stations are established. It always helps to gain observer confidence, or attention, if the inspector can find some little thing to fix without being asked. This is generally not difficult, and if the observer asks for something to be adjusted or repaired, the cheerful response is definitely in order. (A reply such as: "I'm sorry, I'm too busy and on too tight a schedule this trip," is a good way to get an observer to answer next month that he is too busy to send in his report on time.) Perhaps this portion can be summarized by saying that our attitude of helpfulness and meeting the observer on an equal level during station visits is one of the most important approaches to cooperative observer training. This phase of the responsibility belongs mostly to hydroclimatic inspectors, but is shared by all who visit substations.
- (b). Correspondence. No observer has a real misunderstanding about observational work which will not eventually lead to a letter, or perhaps several of them. Every question an observer asks should be answered -- none should be passed by on the assumption that an observer should know better. Of primary importance is the tone of a letter. There is no substitute for the friendly approach, and "talking down" is sometimes fatal to securing the cooperation desired. It costs no more to say, "I'm sorry that we didn't make it clear before, but ..." rather than "you misunderstood what we said ...", etc. It never costs much, either, to insert a friendly

comment like "It looks as though it has been pretty wet over your way", or "We hope that before long you will get those rains that everyone is hoping for." Pointing the finger by saying "You made an error in reading the temperature" instill resentment before the problem has been stated. Better is "Can you help us with the temperature reading on the 13th? It looks as though it is about 10 degrees too high as it was reported."

After the friendly approach, of course there is no substitute for saying clearly, in as few words as possible, what the problem may be. A tendency to be avoided is assuming that your correspondent understands your terminology as well as you do. Technical words should be broken up into others of non-technical meaning, but this again depends upon to whom the letter is being written. Obviously, we wouldn't write the same letter to a college professor that we would to a grammar school graduate stockman.

- (c). Newsletter. This is a most effective tool for handling problems of general interest. These problems have been covered very effectively by most of the various newsletters we have seen, and we freely admit to borrowing ideas which look particularly good to us. In fact, this passing on of training ideas via exchange of newsletters between sections is, to us, one of the better new developments in training in the cooperative observer field. We like especially well the efforts towards writing important instructions in an entertaining, or story, manner.

As we see it, though, there can also be negative results from certain newsletter practices. First, if a newsletter is too long, how many observers will read it all? Most of them are busy people who can read two or three interesting pages, but who will not pay much attention to from 6 to 12 pages, parts of which may be pretty dull. Second, it should be interesting, well-written, and cover only items of interest to most of the stations. We have a rule that if it doesn't apply to over half the stations in the section, it belongs in a multiple address letter rather than the newsletter. We would like to achieve a newsletter which is well-balanced; which will entertain (and thereby be more sure of being read while it explains problems.

- (d). Form letters. Referring to Forms 5067 and 5068, we use them from time to time, but only in cases where an observer simply made a slip of the pencil and we feel sure he knew better. However, these are generally few and far between, and most errors or improperly prepared records are the result of genuine misunderstanding or not knowing instructions. Here we feel that the forms are inadequate in that they point out errors without explaining how to avoid them. Hence, in

cases where instruction is needed or indicated, we have found brief letters, with examples, to be very helpful training aids.

We might ask a seemingly unimportant question, "Would a person rather have his attention called to something, or would he prefer to have his attention invited?" To us, who write the letters, this distinction may seem trifling, but placing ourselves in the position of the observer doing this weather work for nothing but the love of it, we think inviting attention much more effective than calling attention.

Summarizing briefly, we feel that our training program has been at least partly successful because of our emphasis on the foregoing thoughts. Each observer is an individual, and likes to be so treated. Patience, understanding, talking on the same level, consideration, tolerance, helpfulness, all have their place, and we don't doubt that cooperative observer work would improve if our application of these considerations was more expert. In any case, we feel that an attempt to apply the Golden Rule in training and working with cooperative observers can have only positive results.

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Acting for Climatology
Climatological and
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GUIDE TO CLIMATOLOGICAL SERVICE MEMORANDUM NO. 22.

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