

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
WEATHER BUREAU  
Washington 25, D. C.

0-2.13  
File: 080

September 26, 1949

MEMORANDUM

TO: Section Centers, WRPC's, and River Centers  
(With Copies to Regional Offices for Information)

FROM: Chief, C&ES Division

SUBJECT: Climatological Service Memorandum No. 6.

1. RELIABILITY OF DATA PUBLISHED BY WRPC: In Climatological Operations Memorandum No. 27 issued to all WRPC's, the item appearing in the following paragraphs was carried. Since the subject covered is of equal interest and importance to Section Directors it is quoted in full. We believe that paragraphs 3 and 4 of the quoted item will be of especial interest.

"In recent months, a number of instances have been brought to our attention of dissatisfaction among Section Directors (and others) with the work done by WRPC's, because of a high incidence of errors in machine summaries and in the published Climatological Data tables. Not all WRPC's have been subject to this criticism; but the comments have been sufficiently widespread to cause concern. If continued, they could seriously impair the WRPC program.

"A large part of the responsibility for this situation rests squarely on our own shoulders, here in the Central Office. We have emphasized, many times, the justifiable importance of meeting deadlines, avoiding backlogs, and keeping current. It is quite possible we have failed to emphasize sufficiently the even greater importance of keeping final summaries and publications free from at least the obvious and unreasonable inconsistencies which stick out like "sore thumbs".

"No one can expect that mistakes will never be made, or that differences of opinion will never occur. Furthermore, we should have no interest in hair-splitting; we do not believe that time and money should be spent in locating the minute, trivial discrepancies that do not significantly affect the statistics; nor do we believe that spurious accuracy, beyond the degree of accuracy inherent in the data, should be our goal. This viewpoint can be explained and defended on the irreproachable basis of maximum value to the taxpayer for each tax dollar spent. However, there is no adequate explanation or defense for the "sore thumb" error (which, incidentally, ruins the statistics by casting suspicion on the entire summary).

"It is true that some of the specific "errors" noted by Section

Directors are of the hair-splitting type; many others are due either to misinterpretations or to honest differences of opinion. We believe that closer liaison between WRPC and Section Center should clear up these differences. Mutual understanding, close cooperation, and sympathy with the other fellow's problems and viewpoints are necessary prerequisites to the overall success of our climatological program. To this end, we are making provision for exchange visits between the Official in Charge at each WRPC and Section Center Officials, thus providing the means for full discussion of mutual Section Center-WRPC problems.

"The occurrence of self-evident "sore thumb" errors in final summaries and publications can and should be prevented at the WRPC through a vigilant editing of all final data before release. We must not permit the pressure of work to side-track such editing. In extremes, it is far better to be a few days late than to publish impossible statistics. Fight to meet deadlines? Yes - after we have made certain that our presentation of the data is as reasonable and reliable as we can make it."

2. POLICY ON PUBLISHING SUBSTATION DATA: It was our original intention to publish in Climatological Data all available data, including the records from all stations in the various networks of unusual density throughout the country. This was the plan when the combined bulletin was started. The policy was based on the requirement of accessibility of data, since experience has taught us that all data are likely to be called for at one time or another, and that hand transcription is expensive as compared to printing. Unfortunately, however, funds available to meet the cost of processing and publishing data are so limited that it is not practical to admit all data, indiscriminately, for printing. Under this limitation the policy will be modified to include processing and publishing of as much data as funds will permit. However, in the future, in order to "hold the line" the criteria for selection of stations to be published will be based on a reasonable density throughout the country, including only one or two stations from those networks where station density is substantially greater than the average for the area.

There are two exceptions to this policy, listed in order of priority as follows:

- (a) Where funds have been transferred from a government agency for the specific purpose of publishing data.
- (b) Metropolitan network stations.

If there are other networks where the Section Director believes the policy should not be applied, this should be explained to the Central Office.

As new stations are established a statement indicating whether the data should be published or not will be included in the authorization for each station; and accordingly, recommendations of the

Section Director concerning the necessity for publishing the records should also accompany each recommendation for the establishment of a new station.

Since it is not practical to process data at the WRPC without publishing them, the records from stations which are not to be published should not be routed to the WRPCs. Checking of these records should be confined to that believed necessary by the Section Center.

3. PRESSBOARD BINDERS (REFERENCE: C.S.M. No. 5, Item 4): The intention of this item was to provide binders for each of the current Forms 1006 Rev., 1009 Rev., 1009-48 and 1009 machine. One binder size for the present 1024A and the old earlier Forms 1009 and 1005 should be satisfactory. The binder for the Form 1009-48, size 8-1/4 x 10-3/8 should be suitable for binding the earlier small size Form 1006.  

No pressboard binders for the above forms are now in stock for substation forms except a limited supply for Forms 1009-48. After the needs for binders by Section and River Centers have been tabulated for each form size they wish to bind, a supply for each size will be purchased as soon as funds are available. Information about procurement of these binders will be given in future Climatological Service Memoranda.
4. THE SECTION CENTER NEWSLETTER (REFERENCE: C.S.M. No. 2, Item 2): Formograph stencils for use in mimeographing the newsletter have been ordered. A small initial supply of these stencils, carrying "The Cooperative Observer" as a title, will be distributed to Section Centers without requisition. Additional supplies should be obtained through usual channels.
5. POLICY CONCERNING PUBLISHING OF DEATH NOTICE OF COOPERATIVE OBSERVER: The question occasionally comes up regarding publication of the death notice of cooperative observers or Weather Bureau employees in the Climatological Data. Central Office consensus is that such a notice is quite appropriate, but that the proper place for it is not in the Climatological Data but in the Section Center newsletter.
6. COOPERATIVE OBSERVER RETAINED RECORDS: Occasionally for various reasons files of cooperative observers' records become available for disposition. For example, new observers may not desire the custody of old records, or relatives of deceased observers may not wish to retain the past records. In cases of this kind which become known to Section Directors, it is suggested that possibility of depositing them in the local library, Chamber of Commerce, municipal or utility office be considered. Section Centers should, of course, take custody of any portions of such records that add to the period of record not in their files.
7. SNOWFALL AND SNOW ON GROUND (REFERENCE: C.S.M. No. 5, Item 2): Table 7, Snowfall and Snow on Ground, will be carried in Climatological Data for the coming snow season. This table will carry daily snowfall

(to tenths) and daily snow depth (to whole inches).

The stations to be published should be selected by the Section Director from stations published in Table 2, and reported to the WRPC. Ordinarily about half of the number of stations in Table 2 will be published in Table 7.

The criteria for selecting these stations are:

- (1) Quality of the record.
- (2) Approximately uniform areal spacing.
- (3) Usefulness of the data.

The snowfall table will be carried every month during which measurable snowfall occurs or remains on the ground at any of the selected stations. Summer hail storms will not, of course, constitute a reason for publishing this table.

8. W.B. FORM 1009R: A supply of this form, Weekly Precipitation Report, is being printed and will soon be ready for issue on requisition. The form is intended for use at R stations, those equipped with a recording gage only. It is intended to replace various mimeographed and printed forms now in use for entry of precipitation times at hydro stations. It is to be used in working up weighing gage charts and should not be microfilmed or filed permanently but should be destroyed after use.

We believe this form can best be introduced to the observers by personal visits of the hydro inspectors or other employees rather than by mail, even though this method may take several months.

Supervising offices should requisition the desired number of pads of Form 1009R. It is padded with 120 sheets to the pad. Only one copy need be forwarded with the weighing gage charts.

9. DISPOSITION OF MANUSCRIPT CARBON COPIES OF FORM 1009: The Central Office has no need for the manuscript carbon copy of Form 1009 for stations for which the final monthly machine listing of Form 1009 is prepared. The primary function of the carbon copy is that of a temporary record for the Section Center until the original Form 1009 is returned from the WRPC. Section Centers, therefore, need not make routine entries or corrections on the carbon copies of Form 1009. After the processed original has been returned by the WRPC, the carbon copy should be destroyed.

This disposition does not apply to corrected carbon copies required by the River District Offices.

10. FILING OF SUBSTATION FORMS: In the past, substation Forms 1006, 1009

and 1024 were filed at Section Centers in various ways either loose in file pockets or in pressboard binders. The filing order also varied, e.g., by months alphabetically, by year alphabetically and by stations for period of record.

Filing the forms alphabetically by months and type of form may be desirable now that the forms will be received from the WRPCs in that order. This method would save time at the Section Centers. If this arrangement is desired on an annual basis, the months could be collated all at one time at the end of the year.

This office would like to have a letter from Section Directors commenting on this problem and what system is being followed by them.

Eventually as forms are revised we hope to adopt one uniform size, within 10-1/4 x 12 inches, for all forms, including the 1009-48, suitable for filing and binding. Comments are desired as to the suitability of this size for filing in present files or shelving equipment on hand. It is proposed to punch on the left 10-1/4 inch edge for binding with 4-1/4 inch fasteners.

11. EVAPORATION STATION REFERENCE NOTES: Our instructions to WRPCs provide that whenever the evaporation pan at a station is not the standard 4-foot type, an explanatory note should be attached to the station name in Table 6 of Climatological Data. In some cases this note has been omitted, possibly because the type of pan was not shown on Form 1024A. Section Centers should make sure that the proper note is carried wherever it is required for stations in their section.
12. RECORDING OF EVAPORATION AMOUNTS: Item No. 18 of C.S.M. No. 3 proposed that although evaporation amounts were to be published only to hundredths of an inch, the observers were to continue to record the readings to thousandths. These instructions are hereby revised to allow the observers to make and record evaporation readings on Forms 1024 only to hundredths of an inch. Section Directors are asked to instruct the observers accordingly. This procedure will assist the WRPCs materially in the processing and publishing of the evaporation data.
13. SPECIAL STORM RAINFALL REPORTS: Several years ago a program of "Volunteer Observers" was inaugurated by the Hydrometeorological Section. These observers using their own gages measured and reported unusual rainfall to the section. It is believed that these reports should be filed at the Section Centers where they will:
  1. Be available to the Corps of Engineers or Bureau of Reclamation for special storm studies.
  2. Provide supplementary data for use by the Section Center in special work.

3. Serve as a guide to available cooperative observers if needed in the future.

All reports received at the Central Office will be forwarded to the Section Centers. Future printings of the form will instruct the observers to report to the Section Center rather than the Central Office.

Merrill Bernard, Chief,  
Climatological and  
Hydrologic Services

By:



H. C. S. Thom,  
Acting Asst. Chief  
for Climatology

GUIDE TO CLIMATOLOGICAL SERVICE MEMORANDUM NO. 6.

<u>ITEM NO.</u>		<u>PAGE NO.</u>
1.	RELIABILITY OF DATA PUBLISHED BY WRPC.....	1-2
2.	POLICY ON PUBLISHING SUBSTATION DATA.....	2-3
3.	PRESSBOARD BINDERS.....	3
4.	THE SECTION CENTER NEWSLETTER.....	3
5.	POLICY CONCERNING PUBLISHING OF DEATH NOTICE OF COOPERATIVE OBSERVER.....	3
6.	COOPERATIVE OBSERVER RETAINED RECORDS.....	3
7.	SNOWFALL AND SNOW ON GROUND.....	3-4
8.	W.B. FORM 1009R.....	4
9.	DISPOSITION OF MANUSCRIPT CARBON COPIES OF FORM 1009..	4
10.	FILING OF SUBSTATION FORMS.....	4-5
11.	EVAPORATION STATION REFERENCE NOTES.....	5
12.	RECORDING OF EVAPORATION AMOUNTS.....	5
13.	SPECIAL STORM RAINFALL REPORTS.....	5-6

