CGMS-XXIX
WMO WP-13
Prepared by WMO
Agenda item: F.2
Plenary

ASAP STATUS REPORT

(Submitted by WMO)

Summary and purpose of document

The purpose of this document is to inform CGMS Members of the current status of the ASAP Programme

ACTION PROPOSED

CGMS Members are invited to note the report.

DISCUSSION

The Automated Shipboard Aerological Programme
Annual Report 2000

1. The number of radiosoundings taken within the framework of the Automated Shipboard Aerological Programme (ASAP) averaged around 5300 soundings annually in the period 1994 to 2000, c.f. Table 1 and Figure 1. There were fairly large fluctuations from year to year, mainly through the influence of enhanced activities in specific observational programmes such as FASTEX in 1997. Year 2000 showed a decrease of 22% in the number of soundings compared to 1999, and it was the lowest number of soundings in the last 7 years. This decrease can largely be ascribed to a large decrease in the number of soundings carried out by the United States, but a slight decrease in the German ASAP activity also played a part. The total number of ASAP units operated in 2000 was 21; the operators were: Denmark (2 units), EUMETNET (1 unit), France (4 units), Germany (2 units), Japan (7 units), Russia (1 unit), Spain (1 unit), Sweden-Iceland (1 unit), United Kingdom (1 unit) and the United States (1 unit). This report includes the individual national reports as well as monitoring reports provided by ECMWF, EUMETSAT and Météo-France.

2. The operational statistics provided by the operators for 2000 is summarised in Table 2. The performance is quite stable with respect to the terminal height reached by the balloon and the communication efficiency.

3. The ASAP Panel (ASAPP), formerly called the ASAP Co-ordinating Committee (ACC), consists of a group of national operators along with ECMWF and EUMETSAT. It held its annual meeting, ASAPP-XII, in Reading, United Kingdom, 27-29 September 2000. The session was attended by seven countries, Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, United Kingdom and the United States. ECMWF and EUMETSAT participated in the meeting as well as the EUCOS Programme Manager. The meeting was also attended by representatives of radiosonde manufacturers (Vaisala and GEOLINK).

4. The total number of ASAP soundings in 2000 corresponds approximately to the number of soundings which could be performed annually by a little more than 6 ocean weather ships. Their geographical distribution is presented in Figure 2 (courtesy of Météo-France). It displays the location of all the TEMP SHIP messages that were received in Toulouse, France, during 2000. Clearly, most of the soundings were taken in the northern Atlantic Ocean.

5. EUMETNET, which is a network grouping of 18 European National Meteorological Services, has started a programme on ASAP, called E-ASAP. In 2000 an ASAP on a route within the Mediterranean was established. In 2001 another one on a route between the English Channel and the Southeastern Seaboard of the United States is expected to become operational. E-ASAP is jointly funded by the EUMETNET Members, taking into account existing activities providing upper-air profile data over the oceans.

6. In order to expand ASAP globally, the work programme of the ASAP Panel includes support to selected countries in the Southern Hemisphere to encourage and assist implementation of ASAP in these data sparse ocean areas. Considerable progress in this area took place in 2000 with preparation of WRAP (Worldwide Recurring ASAP Project) with an ASAP on a route passing both the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn, calling at ports in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and Western Europe. Australia is the major contributor concerning the operating costs while the US (NOAA OGP) has made the sounding and launching equipment available and the UK assisted with the equipment installation and crew training. The first WRAP unit started operations in April 2001. The ASAP Panel will work actively to find more sponsoring countries to cover the running costs for WRAP, and this should include Southern Hemisphere as well as European countries (EUMETNET).

ver. 08.05.2001								
	1994	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**	**2000**	**Average**
Denmark	806	772	772	954	701	752	768	789
EUMETNET							27	27
France	1389	1336	1249	1383	1364	1421	1360	1357
Germany	1925	2147	2061	1439	1139	1210	956	1654
Japan	530	630	707	747	956	1098	871	778
Russia			109	84	209	138	69	108
Spain	77	174	130	175	0	0	3	80
Sweden-Iceland		35	259	331	265	174	117	197
United Kingdom	287	110	145	53	0	151	220	138
United States		366	277	418	167	752	25	334
Total	5014	5570	5709	5584	4801	5696	4416	5256
Change to previous year		11%	2%	-2%	-14%	19%	-22%	

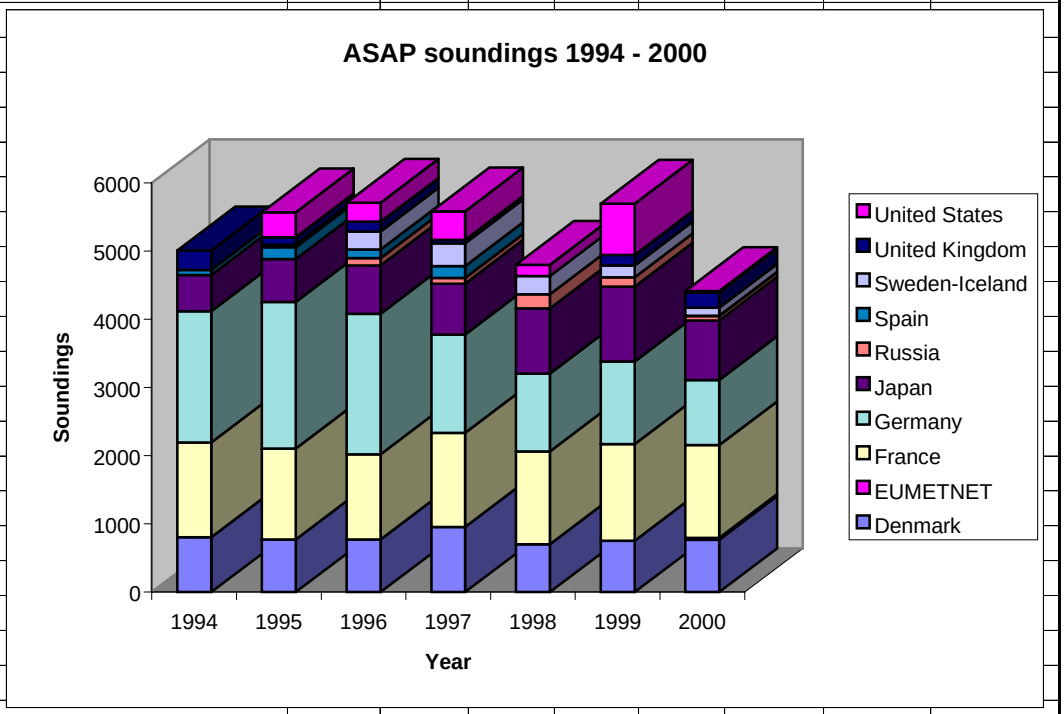

Table 1 and Figure 1

Table 2

Statistics on ASAP units operated during 2000

Operator	ASAP units	Number of soundings	Average terminal sounding height (gpkm)	Percentage of data on the GTS
Denmark	2	768	18.5	99.2%
EUMETNET	1	27	21.7	100%
France	4	1360	22.0	98.7%
Germany	2	956	20	63.4%
Japan	7	871	19.3	100%
Russia	1	69[1)]	[2)]	[2)]
Spain	1	3[1)]	[2)]	[2)]
Sweden-Iceland	1	117	22.3	78.6%
United Kingdom	1	220	24.8	97.5%
United States	1	25[1)]	[2)]	[2)]
Total or average	**21**	**4416**	**20.5**	**90.6%**

1. Based upon reports received at ECMWF as published in the monthly ECMWF report (only those also reaching 100 hPa)
2. Information not available as of May 2001

(KH/DMI, 8 May 2001)

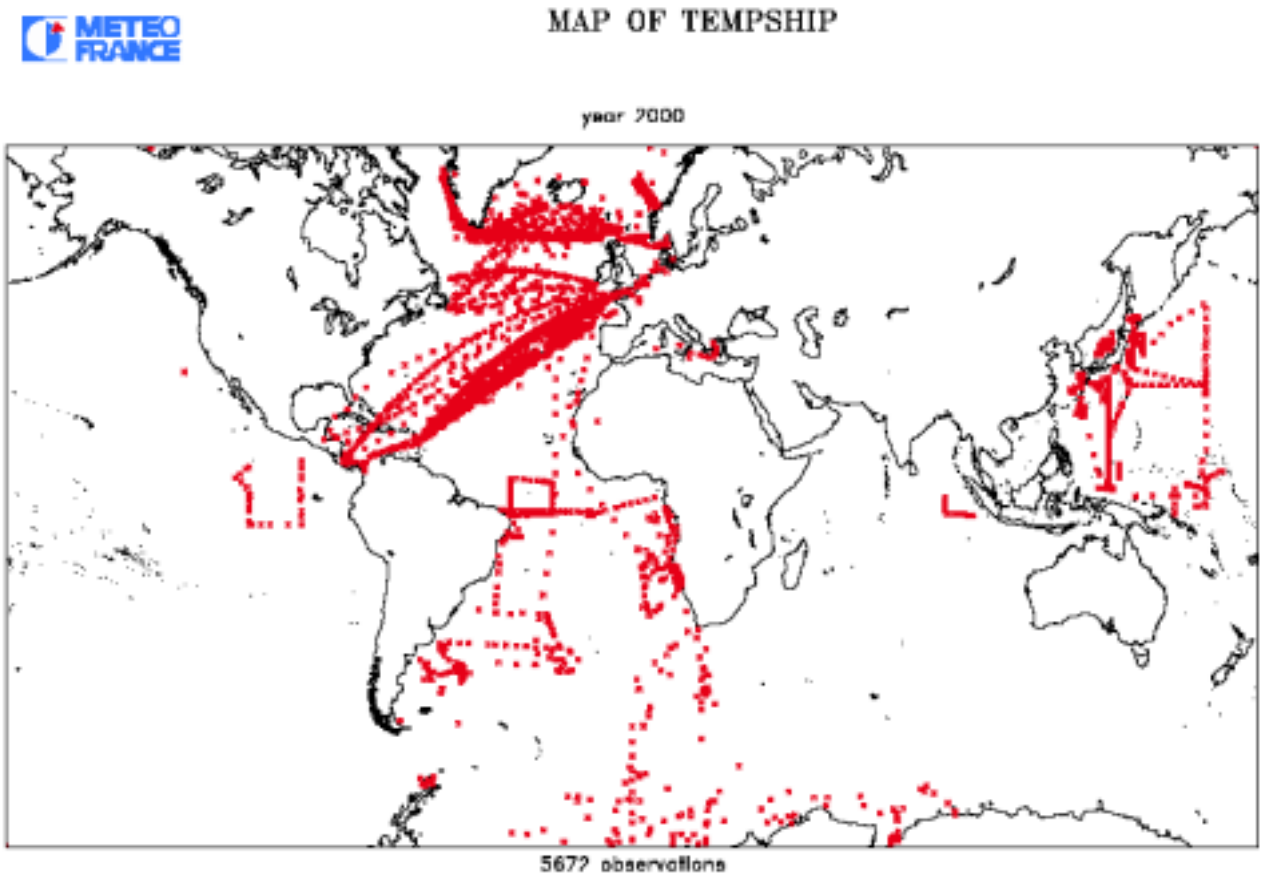

Fig. 2 Geographical Distribution of ASAP soundings