

**OTHER PROGRAMMES  
JOINT WMO/IOC TECHNICAL COMMISSION FOR OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE  
METEOROLOGY (JCOMM)**

*(Submitted by WMO and IOC)*

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**Summary and purpose of document**

This document provides an update on the status of the Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM), including its interactions with satellite operators and CBS concerning oceanographic satellites.

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**ACTION PROPOSED**

Note the information given and advise on CGMS/JCOMM interactions, as appropriate

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## Report from JCOMM

1. The first session of the new WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) took place in Akureyri, Iceland, June 2001, and a report on the results of this session was presented to CGMS-XXIX. This document reports on the relevant activities since CGMS-XXIX.
2. The technical work of JCOMM is undertaken largely by the various Expert Teams, Task Teams and specialist rapporteurs within the four Programme Areas (Services, Data Management, Observations and Capacity Building). Within each Programme Area, this work is coordinated by a small Coordination Group, chaired by the respective PA Coordinators, while strategic guidance and oversight for the overall work of JCOMM is provided by the Management Committee, chaired by the co-presidents. In this context, it was clearly important for at least the Management Committee and the four PA Coordination Groups to meet as early as possible in the intersessional period, in order to agree on strategies to address their work plans and properly activate the respective subsidiary teams and rapporteurs. This has been successfully achieved, with all five groups meeting in the first six months of 2002.
3. One of the first tasks for the Management Committee at its session in Geneva in February 2002 was to approve the nomination of Dr Hiroshi Kawamura (Japan) as satellite rapporteur within the Observations PA.
4. In addition to this appointment, and thoroughly reviewing the programme area work strategies, the Management Committee addressed a number of major cross-cutting issues affecting the Commission as a whole. These included relations with external bodies and programmes; identifying adequate resources to support the work of JCOMM; identifying resources to implement capacity building; technical subjects covering more than one programme area (such as waves); integration in general, including observing systems components and data management; and preparation of a small booklet or brochure to describe JCOMM, its objectives and work. With regard to the latter, it is expected that the booklet will shortly be ready for publication. Finally, acting on a decision of the Management Committee, a JCOMM joint circular letter has recently been issued, inviting Members/Member States to identify a single national focal point for JCOMM, preferably from among members of the Commission.
5. As with the Management Committee, the sessions of the four PA Coordination Groups were primarily concerned with ensuring that the work strategies were appropriate to the tasks and that the component expert teams, task teams and rapporteurs were activated. In addition, however, they also began to address more general issues relating to the respective programme areas and JCOMM as a whole. These included:
  - (i) Ensuring the future long-term maintenance and management of the JCOMM Electronic Products Bulletin;
  - (ii) Establishing a variety of *ad hoc* task teams, on issues such as new ocean products, instrument intercomparisons, the JCOMM *in situ* Observing Platform Support Centre (JCOMMOPS), the Marine Pollution Emergency Response Support System (MPERSS), communications costs for ocean data collection, VOS promotion;
  - (iii) Initial planning for major workshops to take place in 2004, on MPERSS and new ocean products;
  - (iv) Devising consolidated metrics for assessing overall observing system performance against requirements;
  - (v) Dealing with non-physical variables under JCOMM;
  - (vi) Initiating a number of pilot projects on integrated ocean data management and new technologies;

- (vii) Initiating planning for a second workshop on the applications of marine climatology (CLIMAR 2), to take place in late 2003 and to include an historical section to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous Brussels conference of 1853;
- (viii) Establishing priorities for JCOMM Capacity Building, based on the results of regional surveys of capacity building requirements.

6. There are now two important new JCOMM web sites. The first is a dedicated JCOMM site, which was agreed by the Management Committee and is now under development: <http://www.jcomm.net>. This site is planned to be a focal point for information exchange among JCOMM members. The second is a component of the WMO marine programme site, which contains, *inter alia*, JCOMM-related meeting documents, meeting and technical reports and a range of operational information, including lists of national focal points and related web sites. The address is: <http://www.wmo.ch/web/aom/marprog/>.

7. The VOS Climate Project (VOSClm), to establish a high-quality subset of VOS data and metadata to support global climate studies and the calibration of satellite-based ocean observations, is now operational. Ship recruitment, metadata collection and data quality assessment are now underway, and both information on the project and also the data themselves are available through the project web site: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/VOSClm.html>. The third project meeting took place in January this year, and a fourth is planned for late-2003, in conjunction with a second international workshop for PMOs and the second Ship Observations Team meeting.

8. The Satellite Rapporteur, Dr Hiroshi Kawamura, has already undertaken a number of tasks on behalf of JCOMM (in addition to his participation in the present meeting). In January 2002, he participated in a session of the CBS Expert Team on Observational Data Requirements and Redesign of the GOS. During the course of this meeting, he and the JCOMMOPS Coordinator, Mr Etienne Charpentier, prepared an incomplete draft Statement of Guidance relating in particular to marine services. This work identified some deficiencies in the observational data requirements for such services as contained in the WMO/CEOS Requirements Database. Consequently, relevant extracts of the data base have been passed to various JCOMM Expert Teams (on Maritime Safety Services, Sea Ice and Waves and Surges) for review and updating. Following this updating, the statement of guidance will be completed, for review by the JCOMM Observations and Services Coordination Groups and the Management Committee before finalizing in 2003.

9. The Satellite Rapporteur participated in and reported to the session of the JCOMM Observations Programme Area Coordination Group, La Jolla, April 2002. The group, *inter alia*, *"...recognized the onus on JCOMM to make clear statements to satellite operators regarding the requirement for long-term continuity of ocean satellite observations of proven quality and operational/research value."* Further action on this regard is being undertaken by the satellite rapporteur with the JCOMM co-presidents and the Secretariat. The group further agreed that *"... as far as the Observations Programme Areas was concerned, the main issue remained to develop in situ observing systems to complement satellite observations as much as possible, including for calibration purposes."*

10. The new JCOMM Ship Observations Team is designed to integrate all operational marine observing systems using ships as an observing platform. As such, it incorporates the existing VOS, SOOP and ASAP Panels. It held its first meeting in Goa, India, February-March 2002, where the participation of and input from a representative of EUMETSAT was very valuable. Among the common issues discussed was that of the costs of observational data collection. At present, most ship-based observations are transmitted via Inmarsat, with only a limited number of ASAP ships using the IDCS. The SOT has set up a small ad hoc Task Team to study the whole question of the costs of data collection, with a view to making recommendations to operators. It is possible that these recommendations will include an increase in the use of DCPs reporting through the IDCS. The task team is expected to report to the second session of the SOT in September 2003, after which it may be possible to quantify future ship DCP requirements.