



CGMS-37, NOAA-WP-08
Prepared by NWS
Agenda Item: G.2
Discussed in WGII

NOAA Support for the CGMS Virtual Laboratory & Focus Groups (Session II)

This report provides a summary of NOAA Support for the CGMS WMO Virtual Laboratory and Focus Groups from September 2008 through June 2009 (Session II).

Action/Recommendation proposed: Action 36.04: The VLMG co-Chairs to set in place the procedure to recruit the technical support officer whose list of duties were presented in the Working Paper and to report to CGMS-37. Deadline: CGMS-37

NOAA Support for the CGMS WMO Virtual Laboratory & Focus Groups

1 INTRODUCTION

NOAA and its partners continue to show leadership and active support in the area of education and training across WMO Regions III and IV. This report provides a summary of the activities conducted by NOAA and its partners in support of the WMO Virtual Laboratory for Satellite Education and Training. NOAA and its partners (CIRA, CIMSS, COMET, VISIT and the Centres of Excellence in Region IV) continued to be very active in 2008 and through June of 2009. Several workshops and Focus Group discussions were conducted over this period.

2 NOAA Support in 2008 and 2009

2.1 NOAA Activities in Support of WMO Virtual Laboratory

NOAA and CIRA were very active in conducting at least 2 Regional Focus Group (RFG) Weather Briefings every month. These sessions are done using Voice over the Internet (VOIP) for audio and the VISITview software package with its dedicated server at CIRA in Ft. Collins. NOAA provides support for the RFG from its International Desk at the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), the NWS Training Division and NESDIS along with the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere (CIRA). The RFG for the Americas and Caribbean has been active since early in 2004 to provide continuous monthly weather briefings for over 5 years. The Virtual Laboratory Management Group (VLMG) has cited the RFG in the Americas as the best practice to follow in other WMO regions around the world. NOAA Staff are leading the efforts to work with other Satellite Providers (EUMETSAT) and Centres of Excellence in these other regions to establish other RFGs. In Europe, EUMETSAT and its partners have conducted several monthly briefings over the past two years. In Brazil, CPTEC has begun its own weather briefings in support of Portuguese speaking countries in Africa.

NOAA has worked with the VLMG and others in the VL community to help establish the new Technical Support Officer (TSO) position to support the many activities monitored by the VLMG. This TSO position is the result of a VLMG request that became CGMS Action 36.04. NOAA is pleased to report that the first person assigned to the TSO position by Brazil (CPTEC) was hosted for one week in June at NWS Training and COMET offices in Boulder and at CIRA in Ft. Collins. This effort helped accelerate several activities within the VL community under the guidance of the VLMG. NOAA is also pleased to report that this position will be funded and maintained by NOAA within its cooperative institute structure beginning in 2010.

2.2 Training Activities Conducted by NOAA

The following table lists the training events and courses conducted by NOAA and its partners from September 2008 through June 2009. These training activities were done by face-to-face (residence) and via distance using various technologies. The table shows the Name of the Event, the hosting organization, the location and the topics presented.

Please list in the below table the training courses held in the reporting period

	Date	Name of training event	Host	Location	Addressed topics	Number of participants	Lecturers
Classroom courses	May 2009	NPOESS/GOES-R Training Resources Development Workshop	UCAR/COMET with support from NOAA	Boulder, Colorado	Workshop is designed primarily to evaluate effectiveness of current GOES/POES satellite training efforts and explore opportunities to leverage related training needs.	40	Staff from NOAA, EUMETSAT, Costa Rica, UCAR and Military
	September 2008	Regional Training Course on the Use of Environmental Satellite Data in Meteorological Applications for RA III and RA IV	Argentina with support from WMO, NOAA, CIRA, COMET	Cordova, Argentina		25	Staff from WMO, NOAA, CIRA, COMET and Argentina
Distant learning courses	Continuous	VISIT Teletraining (Live)	VISIT (CIRA/ CIMSS)	Ft. Collins & Madison	For calendar with links to sessions see: rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/ecal.asp	10 to 90 (Depends on number of sessions)	CIRA & CIMSS with some NOAA
	Continuous	VISIT Teletraining (recorded) and SHyMet Modules	VISIT (CIRA/ CIMSS)	Ft. Collins & Madison	For list of recorded sessions see: rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/topic_sat.html	Approximately 50 to 100 per month	CIRA & CIMSS with some NOAA
	April to June 2009	COMET Modules (English, Spanish and	UCAR/COMET	Meted.ucar.edu	For list of satellite specific modules see: http://www.meted.ucar.edu/topics_satellite.php	1949 user sessions and	COMET with NOAA,



CGMS		some in French)				379 completions for 28 modules (English) & 6 Modules (Spanish)	EUMETSAT and Other Subject Matter Experts
	April to June 2009	COMET Modules released:	UCAR/COMET	Meted.ucar.edu	Satellite Feature Identification: Ring of Fire Satellite Feature Identification: Blocking Patterns Jason-2: Using Satellite Altimetry to Monitor the Ocean (Module is part of joint training program between NOAA and EUMETSAT)		COMET with NOAA, EUMETSAT and Other Subject Matter Experts
	Ongoing	COMET Environmental Satellite Resource Library (ESRC)	UCAR/COMET	www.meted.ucar.edu/esrc/	ESRC provides Virtual Resource Library with descriptions and links to environmental satellite sites.	Over 400 sites in several countries and languages	
RFG events	October 2008 thru June 2009	RFG of Americas and Caribbean	NOAA (NESDIS and NWS) and CIRA in Coordination with CoEs (Costa Rica, Barbados, Brazil and Argentina)	CIRA – Ft Collins NOAA/NWS – Boulder plus CoEs RA III/IV	Live weather briefings are done 3 times each month using VISITview to show many GOES and POES products across Western Hemisphere plus some special products (MJO, SSTs anomalies, soundings, etc.) At three RFG events, there were guest lecturers from the Satellite Training Workshop held in Argentina in late September 2009.	Range from 10 to 30 with higher numbers during Tropical Storm Season	Michelle Davison (NWS/NCEP/ International Desk) with help from CIRA and CoEs.

2.3 Planned activities for remainder of 2009 and 2010

	Date	Name of training event	Host	Location	Topics to be addressed	Lecturers
Class SF00						
Distant learning Courses	Continuous	VISIT Teletraining (Live and recorded)	VISIT (CIRA/ CIMSS)	Ft. Collins & Madison	For calendar with links to sessions see: rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/ecal.asp For list of recorded sessions see: rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/topic_sat.html	CIRA & CIMSS with some NOAA
	Continuous	COMET Modules (English, Spanish and some in French)	UCAR/COMET	Boulder	For list of satellite specific modules see: http://www.meted.ucar.edu/topics_satellite.php	COMET with NOAA and Other Subject Experts
	Ongoing	COMET Environmental Satellite Resource Library (ESRC)	UCAR/COMET	www.meted.ucar.edu/esrc/	ESRC (Virtual Resource Library) will continue to be updated with new entries and more language options.	Over 400 sites in several countries and languages
RFG events	Every Month	RFG of Americas and Caribbean	NOAA & CIRA in Coordination with CoEs in RA III & IV	CIRA – Ft Collins NOAA/NWS – Boulder plus CoEs RA III & IV	Live weather briefings using VISITview to show many GOES and POES products across Western Hemisphere plus some special products (MJO, SSTs anomalies, soundings, etc.) – Bilingual (English and Spanish)	Michelle Davison (NWS/NCEP/ International Desk) with help from CIRA



3 CONCLUSIONS

NOAA and its partners continues its active support for the many training and education activities of the Virtual Laboratory Management Group (VLMG) with a special emphasis on distance events especially those done to support the Regional Focus Groups and the enhanced use of distance technologies. Some residence training is planned but this training is limited as funds for travel are scarce.

Thanks to the many training courses and RFG events, the increased coverage provided by NOAA GEO and LEO satellites is now being utilized at an increasing rate across the Americas and Caribbean. NOAA will work with its partners, its International Offices and its user community in Regions III and IV to ensure that the enhanced Geostationary coverage provided by GOES-East, -West and -Atlantic will be maintained in the most continuous manner possible (as allowed by the health and stability of its GOES fleet).