

May 20, 1999 E/SP3:JW

MEMORANDUM FOR: GOES Data Collection System (DCS) Users

FROM: Kay Metcalf
GOES DCS Operations Manager

SUBJECT: Minutes of the 89th GOES DCS Technical Working Group (TWG)
Meeting, May 11, 1999

I. Opening Remarks - Kay Metcalf, DCS Coordinator (NESDIS/DSD)

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Bahia Hotel, San Diego, California, hosted by the National Hydrologic Warning Council (NHWC). The TWG was well attended, and included visitors from the NHWC.

Welcoming remarks were given by Kay Metcalf who is the NOAA/DCS Coordinator. Kay, on behalf of the DCS/TWG thanked Mark Heggli, and the NHWC for their invitation to have the meeting coincidentally with their Third National Conference and Exposition. She then reviewed the minutes from the last TWG. Subsequently, the 88th TWG minutes were approved as written.

II. Satellite Telemetry Interagency Working Group (STIWG) Report - Ernest Dreyer, USGS.

Ernest Dreyer, the chairman of the STIWG, presented a review of the STIWG meeting which was held the preceding day. The primary issue was the DCS High Data Rate Phase II status. The Phase II project is steadily moving toward completion. Vitel has their hardware ready for assembly and testing. The 300 and 1200 bps demodulators should be ready for testing and implementation at the Wallops CDA by mid-summer. Operational testing should be completed within 3 to 6 months, and the high speed system ready for DCP transmissions by the end of this year. The high data rate certification standards have been reviewed by the manufacturers and comments received by NOAA. The standards are to be issued in final form by July 1, 1999.

The DOMSAT contract still has a year and a half to go before renewal. Previously it had been thought that the contract was to be renewed before October 1999, but Marlin Perkins, the DCS Manager determined that there was an additional year left. Marlin is working on the contract renewal for the STIWG. There was also mention of the availability of NOAA Port for data distribution, but the

preferred method of retrieval is currently the DOMSAT. The possibility that another provider (other than GE Americom) could be selected by the Government was discussed since the existing contract has been in place for some years. The concern is that any existing proprietary equipment might not be compatible with another communications satellite. The group asked for a presentation on NOAAPORT receivers at either the next STIWG or TWG Meeting. NOAA agreed to try to arrange for one.

III. System Status

a. Spacecraft - Bob McCoy (NESDIS/SOCC)

Bob reported that the current west spacecraft is GOES-10 (launched in April 1997), and the east spacecraft is GOES-8 (launched in April 1994). Both spacecraft are operating normally, with DCS operation looking good. GOES-9 has remained in a storage mode since July 1998 when it experienced mechanical difficulties, and is parked at 98 degrees longitude. The expected launch of GOES-L was delayed while awaiting the results of a Failure Review Board which was convened after the May 4th Delta III launch failure. The upper stage engine is common to both the GOES and Delta II launch vehicle. It will take about 10 days to ready the GOES-L for launch whenever the hold is lifted.

b. Wallops CDA - George Linvill (Wallops CDA)

George Linvill reported that GE Americom has been more responsive to DCS Domsat problems, and that the number of Domsat anomalies has decreased over the last quarter. George also gave a status report on the new hurricane-proof 16.4 Meter antenna which is nearing completion at the Wallops CDA. George reported that there has been an increase in the number of DCS platform problems and requested that users keep their PDTs current. He also asked that DCS users attend to their platform maintenance to help reduce the number of anomalous transmissions. He noted that there were times over the last quarter that Wallops was operating without a back-up DAPS due to Year 2000 testing.

The Wallops CDA was able to perform their electrical power maintenance without the anticipated power outage and associated DCS data loss. They heard the users' requests to try to do the work without a power interruption at the last TWG, and were able to respond positively. Users lost no data due to the necessary maintenance.

c. DAPS - Al McMath (Wallops CDA)

Al reported that Year 2000 testing has progressed since the last TWG. He is continuing the work, and sometimes must use the DAPS backup system to perform the Y2K tests. Al has successfully performed the test for NMC data, and recently performed the leap year recognition of day 366 for year 2000 (2000 is a leap year). He also indicated that more and more DCS users are going to the CDA's Telnet/internet utility for acquiring their data, especially from outside of the United States where they are out of the Domsat's area of coverage. The dial-in usage has continued to drop since the availability of

the internet downloads became available. Al gave the URL address for Telnet access at the Wallops CDA. It is 128.154.62.173, and anyone who wants to initiate internet down-loads only needs to contact Al at the Wallops facility, or Kay or Carol at the Suitland office.

d. Data Processing and Distribution - Kay Metcalf (NESDIS/DSD GOES DCS Coordinator)

Kay reported that she had seen numerous DCP channel errors, timing errors, and errors due to incomplete PDTs. She suggested that users could check errors by going on-line at the dcs.noaa.gov web page. She also mentioned that she is considering offering training for new users on how to update their PDTs. The group discussed the issue of possible standardization of shef-code descriptors. The variety of formats in which parameters are described in the data stream makes it difficult for users to share data. There was cautious interest in pursuing a working group to investigate the standards topic.

IV New Business

a. DCS Follow on System - Dane Clark (NESDIS/DSD)

Dane briefed the DCS users on the status of the replacement for the current aging DAPS. This procurement is unique in that a procurement officer is assigned to NESDIS/OSD to work closely with the DCS team. This has resulted in the whole process being expedited. Additionally, there is a DCS Procurement web site under construction which will allow any interested company to readily gain DCS background information as well as download the RFP. The site will be interactive in that questions can be posted, and frequently asked questions/answers read from the site.

The procurement was initiated by advertising the NESDIS intent to modernize the DCS computer system in the Commerce Business Daily. Interested companies were advised in the announcement of the opportunity to present their capabilities to DCS staff, and to tour the Wallops CDA facilities. As a result, 13 companies visited the CDA during mid March, making their presentations and learning how the current DCS operations are conducted. Presenters were each given half a day. Since then, DCS operational and management staff have regularly met to determine a set of requirements that will form the basis for a statement of work for the modernized DCS computer system.

b. High Data Rate Implementation - Kay Metcalf (NESDIS/DSD)

Kay led a discussion on user plans for transitioning from the current 100 bps to the new 300 and 1200 bps data rates. Most users seemed to be planning to gradually move to the 300 bps service while awaiting the resolution of the 1200 bps interface problems at the Wallops DAPS. The plans for transition to the high data rate service are still dependent on vendor hardware availability. Kay said she is considering inviting vendors to present their high data rate hardware at the next TWG meeting. Kay stated that she would distribute a finalized high data rate plan in July.

IV User's Comments

Comments and reports from the DCS users are included in the attachments.

V. Data and Time of Next TWG meeting

The next TWG meeting will be held on Thursday, October 28, 1999 in Los Alamos, NM.