
INTRODUCTION

Mr. Samuel P. Williamson
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Welcome

After welcoming participants to the workshop, Mr. Williamson provided background information on the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorology (OFCM). The mission of OFCM is as follows:

To ensure the effective use of federal meteorological resources by leading the systematic coordination of operational weather requirements and services, and supporting research, among the federal agencies.

OFCM works through a suite of program councils, standing committees and working groups, and short-term joint action groups to facilitate cooperation among the agencies* that are involved in meteorological activities.

Moving on to the workshop, Mr. Williamson provided a recent history of OFCM activities relating to atmospheric transport and diffusion. In June 2000 OFCM hosted the Workshop on Multiscale Atmospheric Dispersion Modeling within the Federal Community. Since that time the OFCM Joint Action Group on Atmospheric Transport and Diffusion has met three times. In October, in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11th, OFCM formed the Working Group on Environmental Support to Homeland Security, which has been meeting regularly in October and November 2001. The issue of atmospheric transport and diffusion has figured prominently in these meetings. Also in November the Federal Committee for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research met and endorsed this workshop.

The overarching goal for this workshop is to **define a framework for supporting the objective determination of the most appropriate dispersion model to be used in a given situation.**

To achieve this goal, the following objectives will be pursued:

- Select categories to be used for screening dispersion models for application in a given scenario.
- Develop appropriate criteria within the selected categories to be used for objective screening of models.
- Introduce processes and discuss critical issues relating to model evaluation.

* Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Interior, State, and Transportation; EPA; FEMA; NASA; NRC; NSF; NTSB; OMB; and OSTP.

Several additional considerations were cited. Depending on the source of information, the number of federal atmospheric transport and diffusion models can range as high as 150 to 200. These fall into several categories, including response models, air quality and regulatory models, and research and development models. A number of different processes are used across the federal government to evaluate the fitness of atmospheric transport and diffusion models for their intended use. Recent events dictate the application of an aggressive timeline in addressing these issues.