

The Federal Plan for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research

FISCAL YEAR 2004

FEDERAL COORDINATOR
FOR
METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES AND SUPPORTING RESEARCH

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PREFACE

Since 1965, the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research (OFCM) has developed a federal plan that articulates the provision of meteorological services and the support for meteorological and related research by agencies of the federal government. OFCM's 2004 Federal Plan provides Congress and the Executive Branch with a comprehensive compilation of proposed programs for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and a review of agency programs in FY 2003. The Federal Plan's narratives, timelines, and schedules are current as of June 2003.

The Federal Plan consists of an Executive Summary, three sections, and Appendices. The Executive Summary, which is written as a concise, stand-alone report, provides a high-level view of the federal resources dedicated to meteorological programs and the achievements of those programs. This year's feature article (Section 1) describes the growing needs in our urban communities for current, geographically precise weather observations and near-term predictions, as well as longer-term forecasts based on climate trends. Two out of every three Americans live in an urban community. Hazardous weather, plus other environmental conditions affected by the weather, interact with the built environment of these communities to produce threats to public safety and health and to property. As Hurricane Isabel recently reminded us, severe weather can flood an intersection, a neighborhood, or an entire community. It can disrupt the energy supply and transportation systems on which urban life and well-being depend. Because of the population density in urban communities, dispersion by air or water of hazardous materials, whether released accidentally or deliberately, represents a public safety risk of concern at all levels of government. Our feature article, *Weather and the Urban Environment: Meeting the Needs of Urban Communities*, describes five major categories of environmental concerns for which improved weather or climate information could aid community service providers and our public safety and health officials. These focus areas for urban meteorology are severe weather, disaster response and homeland security, air quality, water quality, and climate. The article highlights research and development that can provide the tools needed to make improvements. It also notes the key players in delivering the benefits of improved weather information to those responsible for community planning, information dissemination, and response to environmental events.

Section 2 of the Federal Plan summarizes the resources requested in the President's FY 2004 Budget, compared with the resources appropriated by Congress for FY 2003. Section 3 contains departmental and agency narratives on programs for providing meteorological services and supporting research and development. It also describes relevant research funded by the National Science Foundation.

Appendix A describes the OFCM's coordination, program, and planning activities. Appendix B summarizes the World Meteorological Organization's World Weather Program. Appendix C lists the feature articles published in previous federal plans. The acronyms and abbreviations used throughout this year's Federal Plan are defined in Appendix D. The inside front cover lists the current members of the Federal and Interdepartmental Committees for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research, which provide guidance and support for OFCM activities. The inside back cover diagrams the infrastructure through which the OFCM performs its coordinating mission.



Samuel P. Williamson
Federal Coordinator for Meteorological
Services and Supporting Research

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