MEETING OF
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WATER INFORMATION'S (ACWI'S)
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HYDROLOGY (SOH)

March 31, 2006
9:30 – Noon (PST)
(12:30 – 3:00pm EST)

Silver Room, Silver Legacy Hotel, Reno, Nevada

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Review and Approval of Agenda

3. Update on Satellite Telemetry Interagency Work Group

4. Approval of Minutes from January 12, 2006 Meeting

5. Status of Action Items from January 12, 2006 Meeting

6. Update of Roster and Subcommittee Membership

7. Update on Hydrologic Frequency Analysis Work Group

8. Update on Hydrologic Modeling Work Group and Joint FIHMC- FISC Conference

9. Current Events within Hydrologic Communities
   (1) NRC "Committee on Hydrologic Science" meeting of 3/20

10. Announcements and Business Reports from Member Organizations

11. Other Business

12. Plans for Next Meeting

Adjournment

SUMMARY OF MEETING
(Prepared by Stephen Blanchard)

PARTICIPATING
Will Thomas, Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)
Don Frevert, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)
Martin Becker, Defenders of Property Rights (DPR) (*by phone*)
David Wells, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (*by phone*)
Sam Lin, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
Joe Krolak, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (*by phone*)
Gene Stallings, National Hydrologic Warning Council (NHWC) (*by phone*)
Tom Nicholson, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) (*by phone*)
Tom Donaldson, National Weather Service (NWS)
Steve Blanchard, US Geological Survey (USGS) (*by phone*)
Doug Glysson, US Geological Survey (USGS)
Douglas James, National Science Foundation (NSF)
Mary Greene, Office of Surface Mining (OSM) (*by phone*)
Claudia Scheer, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Jeff Harris, US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) *(by phone)*
Charles Kazimer, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Kolleen Shelley, US Forest Service (USFS)

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Sam Lin called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. PST.

1. Welcome and Introductions

A total of 17 participated – 9 in person and 8 by conference call. A total of 16 active member organizations were represented.

Sam Lin opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2. Review and Approval of Agenda

The meeting agenda was approved as listed above.

3. Update on Satellite Telemetry Interagency Work Group (STIWG)
(This agenda item was presented first during the meeting to accommodate scheduling conflicts with the presenters.)

Charles Kazimir (Kaz), current chair of STIWG reported on recent activities of the group to include:

- Emergency Data Distribution Network (EDDN) – USGS has secured the funding for the hardware. NOAA has indicated that they may also contribute funding to the effort but authorization/approval has not been confirmed.

- GOES R User Conference – Several STIWG members planning to attend. There may be a presentation on the various uses of the DCS data by a STIWG member.
- STIWG Agencies Collaboration – STIWG agencies continue to work closely to solve problems that affect all GOES DCS users. Specifically the concerns over the GOES DCS system were addressed in detail (*See power point presentation and Issue Paper attachments to minutes).*

After the GOES DCS powerpoint presentation and issue paper were presented, several SOH members offered suggestions.

- Tom Donaldson told the group that one of the four NOAA budget goal teams specifically addresses water and weather issues. Some of the concerns might be better solved if addressed proactively through the budget process. He will visit more with George Smith.
- Jerry Webb presented many of the STIWG concerns to ACWI during their last meeting. Time was limited and therefore the detail of the situation was not fully discussed. Will Thomas suggested that a face-to-face meeting might be more effective. Kaz agreed that STIWG would welcome such an opportunity.
- Doug James asked how they might be able to help with 2015 needs for technology. He suggested that we might also learn something from the European Union on how their system operates.
- Kolleen and Kaz both mentioned that the NESDIS support personnel at Wallops (DCS Operations) and in Suitland (DCS Program Manager) provide some of the finest customers support and assistance to our agencies. In spite of the challenges we've shared today, the creative and dedicated technicians have managed to keep the system operational. This is very much appreciated and our report is not intended in any way to cast a shadow on their efforts.
- Sam Lin and Don Frevert indicated that they are very much in support of our Issue Paper. However, after proper distribution to the entire SOH membership, a vote will be taken at the next meeting regarding the committee's official support of the document.
- Several members of SOH will share these issues through their own contacts. Some of this has already been elevated as a result of the previous presentation to SOH and solutions may be in the works. Any new developments will be reported to the STIWG as a result.

ACTION: A vote will be taken at the next SOH meeting regarding official support of the STIWG issue paper document, "STIWG concerns and recommendations for the continued operation and support of the GOES DCS to the ACWI."

4. Review and Approval of Minutes from January 12, 2006 meeting

Tom Nicholson (NRC) submitted a revised agency report for NRC for the January 12, 2006 meeting minutes. The revision was accepted and the minutes of the meeting were revised accordingly. The minutes of the January 12, 2006 meeting were approved and have been posted on the subcommittee's website below.
http://acwi.gov/hydrology/index.html

5. Action Items from January 12, 2006 Meeting

ACTION: *HFAWG will send a write up of possible future work that should be done related to B17B to the members of the SOH.* – The HFAWG sent out a write-up describing work to be done for the restudy of B17B

ACTION: *HFAWG will send a copy of House Document 465 to the members of the SOH.* - Will Thomas sent out to the subcommittee a copy of "House Document 46" and "A Unified National Program for Flood Hydrology". The documents are attached to these minutes.

ACTION*: Subcommittee on Hydrology will present a status report to ACWI at their January 18-19, 2006 meeting*. - Sam Lin, Will Thomas, and Jerry Webb made the presentation.

6. Update of Roster and Subcommittee Membership

Mary Greene (OSM) reported that they are still interested in becoming a member of the subcommittee but are in the process of determining who the agency representatives will be.

An organization may become a member of SOH by submitting a letter requesting membership two weeks before a meeting and then the SOH votes on the request. (See III B of the SOH' Terms of Reference)

An updated roster is attached

7. Update of Hydrologic Frequency Analysis Work Group (HFAWG)

Will Thomas provided this summary of discussion report of the HFAWG conference call of March 8, 2006

John England with the Bureau of Reclamation in Denver, Colorado arranged for a 2-hour conference call on March 8, 2006 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm Mountain Time. The following persons participated on the conference call:

Beth Faber – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gary Estes -
Jerry Coffey – Citizen Activist
John England – Bureau of Reclamation
Ken Bullard – Bureau of Reclamation
Don Woodward – American Forests
Jery Stedinger – Cornell University
Claudia Sheer – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Don Moore - Natural Resources Conservation Service
Martin Becker – Defenders of Property Rights
Kenny Eng – U.S. Geological Survey
Zhida Song-James – Michael Baker, Jr.
Will Thomas – Michael Baker, Jr.
Geoff Bonnin – National Weather Service

Scope of our evaluations
Geoff Bonnin began the discussion with the question – Why limit our evaluations to the Expected Moments Algorithm (EMA)? Geoff asked if we could state that we have done a review of all procedures and that EMA and the Pearson Type III distribution was the best approach.

Jery Stedinger thinks that we can state that the Pearson Type III distribution is as good as any distribution based on recent papers and investigations. Also recent papers indicate that EMA performs about as well as Maximum Likelihood procedures.

The general consensus was that we should not give the impression that the Federal government could not muster enough funds to test the best procedures. That is, we should not indicate that we are testing EMA and making other limited revisions because of lack of resources. We should demonstrate that EMA and the other revisions are reasonable and needed changes in Bulletin 17B. Zhida Song-James commented that we should stress that we are in Phase I of our evaluations and will do additional and more detailed research later.

Geoff Bonnin described the independent review process that National Weather Service (NWS) has been using for the precipitation frequency reports like NOAA Atlas 14 whereby a number of persons outside of NWS are asked to provide review comments. This process does not include the more formal process of announcing the release of the precipitation frequency reports in the Federal Register and asking for comments.

Detailed evaluation (testing) plan
John England described the detailed scope of work that was distributed to the HFAWG members on March 6, 2006. John's proposal for comparing EMA and Bulletin 17B procedures centered on Monte Carlo simulations and he described several ways to compare the two approaches using mean square error and bias statistics. He also recommended data-based comparisons for 30 to 60 actual data sets to demonstrate that EMA works in practice.

Beth Faber suggested an approach for making the Monte Carlo simulations more robust and that was to generate data from other distributions and then fit the log-Pearson Type III distribution to these data. She also suggested generating high and low outliers and adding to the simulated data sets. She thought that the true (population) T-year flood discharge could be determined in this process and that mean square error and bias statistics could be used to evaluate EMA and Bulletin 17B.

Data issues
After some discussion of John England's proposal, it was agreed that we would first test EMA and Bulletin 17B on actual data sets and see what differences may exist. John indicated that he was in agreement with this idea and indicated the statistics from the actual data could be used later in a Monte Carlo simulation.

Jerry Coffey raised concerns about using historic data together with more current data in the frequency analysis because of possible time trends and heterogeneity of the data. He was particularly concerned the use of paleoflood data. Zhida Song-James also had concerns about using paleoflood data.

Martin Becker suggested using some of the gaging station data that was used in the low-outlier testing for Bulletin 17B that was done in the 1977-81 timeframe. Jery Stedinger suggested that we do split-sampling testing using the actual data sets like Bob Hirsch and he did in some papers in the mid 1980s. Jery suggested that we use very long observed data records like the Red River of the North in order to do meaningful split-sample testing. Kenny Eng suggested that we used stations from the USGS HydroClimatic Data Network (HCDN) because these stations represented unregulated records free of significant land-use changes.

Action item – Will Thomas will compile data for 50-60 gaging stations that meet the criteria discussed above. At this time, we will not include any paleoflood data in the actual data sets. The compilation of this data set will be coordinated with Martin Becker, Don Woodward and Jerry Coffey. Will Thomas agreed to compile this data set by March 30.

Software issues
Martin Becker asked if we had acceptable EMA software available for testing. John England indicated that he had been using his EMA software for several years but that it was not the same as that currently being used by Tim Cohn. Beth Faber indicated USACE also was developing EMA software that would be in the new Windows version of HEC-FFA. Kenny Eng indicated that the new Windows version of the USGS Peakfq program was about ready for release and would also include EMA software. Obviously different versions of EMA software exist.

Action item – John England, Tim Cohn, Beth Faber and Jery Stedinger will determine the attributes of acceptable code for implementing EMA. The objective is to make sure that EMA code used for testing will have all the capabilities so that EMA is given a fair evaluation. The EMA code should be finalized in April so that testing of the actual data sets can begin at that time.

The conference call ended on a positive note that we were moving forward with a testing plan and making progress toward a possible revision of Bulletin 17B.

Will Thomas
HFAWG Chair
March 19, 2006

8. Update on Hydrologic Modeling Work Group and Joint FIHMC-FISC Conference
Doug Glysson, Don Frevert and Tom Donaldson provided an update on the upcoming Federal Interagency Hydrologic Modeling Conference. This is the third in a series of such conferences and the first to be held in conjunction with the Federal Interagency Sedimentation Conference. There were a total of six concurrent tracks, about 260 oral presentations, more than 40 posters and demonstrations and 35 to 40 exhibits. Additionally 10 short courses and three technical field trips were held in conjunction with the conference. More than 550 participants from government, the private sector and the academic community attended.

9. Current Events within Hydrologic Communities – NRC "Committee on Hydrologic Science" meeting March 20, 2006

Gene Stallings attended the March 20, 2006 National Research Council's Water Science and

Technology Board's Committee on Hydrologic Science at the Keck Center in Washington, D.C. and provided this report of the meeting.

There were approximately forty participants from academia, government and consulting firms and other entities with knowledge and interest in water management skills. SOH members Doug James, Bill Merkle, and Tom Nicholson were among the attendees.

The program consisted of:

- Scope of the water management program and the needed skills of the managers;
- Water management for the 21st Century and possible research solutions;
- Needs of the federal and state agencies and private sector and a vision for the future.

After each presentation, there was a period of intense questions and answers. The one-day meeting met its expectations. There has been a shift away from applied topics like hydrologic extremes. There has been a decline of academic research and education in water management and planning. Employers working in the water management area often report difficulties in finding employees with the appropriate background. For example, many modern day planners and managers are confronted with reservoir re-regulation in the face of changing uses and priorities, environmental and ecological needs, even possible dam removal. The needs of the employer need to be met and the academic environment must be adjusted to meet these needs.

10. Announcements and Business Reports from Member Organizations

<u>Army Corps of Engineers – Jeff Harris</u>
The Corps continues to work on the Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force (IPET) evaluation of the New Orleans flood protection system following Katrina

<u>EPA – David Wells</u>
EPA and the USGS have been working on the release of the newest version of the National Hydrography Database (NHDPlus). In February, the USGS hosted a Technical Workshop in Denver to introduce NHDPlus. The Workshop was heavily attended with more than 120 people from a number of Federal Agencies and Industry.

NHDPlus integrates the medium resolution (1:100,000 scale) NHD with other geospatial data such as the National Elevation Dataset (NED), and the National Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD). One of the new features of NHDPlus are "value added" attributes such as detailed elevation derived catchments. Other attributes include annual average precipitation, average temperature, land use, and stream flow, by watershed. This will be especially useful for water quality modeling.

A radical new feature of NHDPlus is that it tries to realistically represent stream networks. Many earlier models or stream networks assumed that all streams were dentritic and could not accommodate multiple channels. The USGS and EPA are also working on a suite of tools to work with NHDPlus. One of the tools allows the user to navigate up and down the stream network and accumulate attributes from the upstream areas. This means that the user can point and click anywhere in the watershed and calculate attributes such as the total upstream flow or all the land use types upstream.

NHDPlus for the entire Mississippi watershed and will be publicly released soon, and other areas of the US will be completed later this year.

FERC –Sam Lin

FERC has recently made advancements in the following two arenas.

Risk Assessment Method

FERC has practiced a qualitative risk assessment method through a potential failure mode analysis (PFMA) for its regulated dams over the past three years. A quantitative risk assessment approach addressing improvements to the safety of two tandem dams in Indiana has recently been filed with FERC. This probabilistic approach is contrary to the agency's conventional (deterministic) engineering stance; therefore prior to initiation of the study FERC agreed it would review the results as a "pilot study." No assurance is thus made to the owner that additional studies or justifications would not be necessary following FERC's review.

These two dams have the deficiency of an inadequate spillway capacity. The project is subject to an extensive number of low-lying downstream developments. Wide scale evacuations occur annually from flood levels because of massive downstream inundation at flows less than spillway capacity. A risk mitigation plan based on a calculated risk including short/long term risk reduction alternatives will be recommended. Both PFMA and associated baseline risk assessment methods are being performed in a teamwork-style format for the project.

GIS-Based H&H Analysis

This fiscal year D2SI has designated funds to initiate development of its GIS program in all five regional offices. Logistics associated with networking and availability of the product on each engineer's workstation still have yet to be resolved. Three-to-five concurrent licenses of ArcView 9.1 are expected to be available in the first year with addition seats added as dictated by usage. Both Spatial Analyst and 3D Analyst extensions will also accompany ArcView concurrently.

Office of Surface Mining - Mary Greene

Nothing to report

Bureau of Reclamation – Don Frevert

Don Frevert reported that Commissioner John Keys announced his retirement effective April 14, 2006.

The Bureau of Reclamation is in the process of developing an action plan for the 21st Century. The initiative is entitled "Managing for Excellence" and may have ramifications for Reclamation's organizational structure and business practices.

National Hydrologic Warning Council – Gene Stallings

The National Hydrologic Warning Council (NHWC) requested the David Ford Consulting Engineers, Inc. to perform an evaluation of the benefits of the U.S. Geological Survey streamgaging program. Phase 1 of this evaluation called for a report that identifies the user and uses of streamgaging data. This was completed and sent to the NHWC Review Team. Phase 2 calls for a second report that presents probable economic benefits of selected uses.

Phase 1 has been drafted by the Ford Company and has been transmitted to the NHWC Review Team. I have been selected to draft that portion of the Phase 2 report on flood activities only. My first draft report has been reviewed by the Ford Company. A revised version was submitted back to the Ford Company on March 23, 2006. In my last discussion with the Ford Company, the total first draft of the Phase 2 report is almost ready to be sent to the NHWC Review Team.

The Twenty-First Conference and Exposition of the ALERT Users Group will be held at the Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite Fish Camp, California from May 9 – 12, 2006.

National Science Foundation – Doug James
Monday May 22 the American Institute of Hydrology is having a symposium on the aging of water resources workforce as part of its meeting in Baton Rouge, LA.

US Geological Survey – Steve Blanchard
The USGS received $5.3 M supplemental funds for Hurricanes Katrina/Rita. The funds will be used to flood harden approximately 120 streamgages within 100 miles of the gulf coast area.

The president's FY07 budget calls for an increase of $2.8M for the USGS National Streamflow Information Program. $0.9M of that increase is designated to be used for a Hazards Initiative in S. California.

Federal Highway Administration – Joe Krolak
Nothing to report

Nuclear Regulatory Commission – Tom Nicholson
Nothing to report

National Resources Conservation Service – Claudia Scheer
Noted that Reno is where the NRCS snow surveys got started.

Defenders of Public Property – Martin Becker
Nothing to report

National Weather Service – Tom Donaldson
Tom Donaldson reported that the NWS received approximately $500,000 of hurricane supplemental funds. Those funds are to be used to develop flood inundation maps for areas in the five Gulf Coast states. Based on current cost estimates, it is anticipated that 35 river segments will be mapped at one foot gage height intervals. A list of areas with appropriate mapping available is being developed. Also, negotiations are underway with an engineering firm to develop the maps. When the list and the contract are in place, the mapping will begin. It is anticipated that the maps will be in place for the 2007 hurricane season, possibly even some for the 2006 hurricane season.

Association of State Floodplain Managers – Will Thomas
The FEMA sponsored Galloway Levee Policy Review Committee report related to Katrina is due in June.

U. S. Forest Service – Kolleen Shelley

Had to leave meeting early – nothing reported

Bureau of Land Management – Charles Kazimer
Had to leave meeting early – nothing reported

11. Other Business
None

12. Plans for Next Meeting
Thursday July 27, 2006
Rm. 3M-3, FERC Building 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426
9:30 AM to 12 Noon

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 12: 00 p.m. PST.

Attachment

STIWG CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONTINUED OPERATION AND SUPPORT OF THE GOES DCS
March 31, 2006

BACKGROUND – In 1985 the STIWG was chartered to work collaboratively with NOAA/NESDIS to improve and operate the GOES Data Collection System (DCS) Automated Processing System (**DAPS**) to collect real time environmental data from the GOES satellite. STIWG members represent their agencies to assure that their agency needs are considered in the overall operation of the GOES DCS. The environmental data collected are used by the various STIWG agencies to make decisions which directly affect the protection of life and property, commerce, and science. These decisions impact every aspect of the infrastructure that support and protect the citizens of the United States and much of Western Hemisphere.

CURRENT STATUS - There is no known formal commitment to operate the GOES DCS and supporting ground equipment. Additionally there is no known formal strategic plan to demonstrate NOAA's continuing support of the DCS (satellite components and ground components) of the GOES. To the credit of NOAA/NESDIS they have always found the necessary resources to fund operations & maintenance of the DCS ground system. The current ground system is a mix of new and old receivers, demodulators, and old computer hardware. An initiative to rebuild DAPS to current technology was halted due to contract and system performance problems. The DAPS II would not be functional today if delivered according to the existing contract specifications because of a prolonged contract period and improvements in technology. NESDIS does not currently have a backup for DAPS nor does it have a tested documented procedure for the backup of the GOES command and control. Backups of these systems are required for continued use of the satellite resources. The DCS program is defined as an ancillary system, where significant failures in the GOES systems would leave users without data. However, in the event that imagery instruments and their backups fail on GOES, the next serviceable satellite in orbit would be placed into operation, or the launch of a replacement satellite would be expedited. Failure of the command and control of the satellite, or failure of the system at Wallops would render both imagery and DCS inoperable.

The STIWG planned and designed the capability to operate an Emergency Data Distribution Network (EDDN). NOAA/NESDIS and the USGS have a partnership to build this EDDN system at the USGS Sioux Falls, South Dakota facility. The USGS is in the preliminary stages of the procurement activities necessary to develop the system. The STIWG member agencies will contribute to the continued operation and support of the EDDN. The EDDN is a partial solution that will enable users of the GOES DCS to retrieve their environmental data through the internet in the event of a DAPS failure. EDDN sustains yesterday's capability but will not allow for addition or modification of data transmission, will not supply data to DOMSAT, or the NWS telecommunications gateway. However, without command and control of the spacecraft, no GOES tabular or imagery data will be available to support operations.

SUMMARY - STIWG's concerns are based on the following information:

- An RFI was recently issued which solicited the private sector for a new approach to GOES DCS operations for NOAA. While there were no responses from industry, this demonstrates NOAA's ability to directly impact other agency operations.

- Shrinking budgets and cost overruns are continually impacting all government programs.
  - A recent CNN news report stated that the deployment of new NOAA/NASA environmental satellites are a program in crisis due to shrinking budgets and cost overruns. A full report can be found at http://www.cnn.com/2006/TECH/space/03/06/flying.blind.ap/index.html. Because NASA launches NOAA's satellites, funding issues at NASA potentially impact NOAA's programs.
  - Recently, there was GAO Testimony Before the Committee on Science, House of Representatives titled *Polar Orbiting Operational Environmental Satellites – Technical Problems, Cost Increases and Schedule Delays Trigger Need for Difficult Trade-off Decisions*. A full report on this testimony is available from the GAO here: http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06249t.pdf. and an article about this issue was published in The Journal of Net-Centric Warfare and is available here: http://www.isrjournal.com/story.php?F=1595638.

- There is no known documented and tested plan to continue command & control of GOES. Without near continuous command and control, the GOES will automatically start a shutdown sequence and go into a slow spin to maintain station keeping orbit. This will result in loss of all DCS data and imagery (all GOES systems) in a very few hours.
- NOAA has a Wallops DCS backup plan but the STIWG believes it is inadequate due to lack of geographic separation of facilities. There is no known plan in place to re-evaluate the backup. The EDDN will function as a backup to sustain current Data Collection Platform (DCP) data distribution operations for users. Even with EDDN, should command/control of spacecraft fail, all data for all users will be lost.
- The Wallops backup outlined in NOAA's COOP plan is not operational. DAPS II is not a deliverable system. Lack of funding prohibits construction of a geographically decentralized backup to command and control. The EDDN is an attempt by GOES DCS users to take whatever responsibility they can for their own continuation of operations.
- STIWG has not seen the DCS COOP Plan that NOAA has developed. However, we have been briefed about it by various members of NESDIS and what we are told is not sufficient in our opinion. The COOP Plan was developed prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks and the recent Hurricane Katrina and Rita disasters.
- Because the GOES DCS is currently identified as an ancillary system on the spacecraft, STIWG member agencies are concerned about the availability of their mission critical data in the event of anything from a simple system failure on the GOES to an environmental or terrorist caused failure.

RECOMMENDATION:

- The STIWG would like to be an involved partner with NOAA in the strategic planning process of the DCS portion of GOES and the DAPS. In fact, this direction comes from the STIWG Terms of Reference.
  - NOAA and STIWG should collaboratively build a strategic plan for the continued operation of GOES DCS including ground support operations.
  - The strategic plan should identify levels of support and the funding mechanism of the support.
  - NOAA and STIWG plans should have measurable results, milestones and an update cycle.

- NOAA must develop a COOP Plan which specifies methods and timelines to validate backup procedures (COOP Plan & Testing). It must take into consideration the National Disasters of September 11, 2001 and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita of 2005. This COOP Plan must be made available for STIWG review and concurrence. Documentation of plan testing and validation must be provided in writing to the STIWG on a semi-annual basis at regularly scheduled STIWG meetings.
- STIWG requests that NOAA elevate the GOES DCS and DAPS system to primary systems.
- The STIWG requests a responsive relationship with NOAA's strategic planning activity. The STIWG routinely works very closely with the GOES DCS Program Manager. This position does not possess the necessary authority to make strategic commitments for NOAA.
- The STIWG requests an official formal response from NOAA's strategic planning activity regarding these recommendations.

BOTTOM LINE
STIWG member agencies and other users of the GOES DCS are accountable to their constituencies for continuous access to the environmental data transmitted via GOES. GOES DCS agencies are responsible for designing and validating COOP plans for continuous operations of their own agency missions, including access to their data. Answers regarding NOAA's plans for operating the GOES DCS are essential for these agencies to effectively design their COOP plans in order to insure sustained operations in support of their agency mission mandates.

We are requesting that ACWI and/or SOH respond with their plans on how to elevate our issue paper and associated concerns. We welcome any member of SOH or ACWI to our next STIWG meeting to be held in Sioux Falls, SD on May 16, 2006.

APPROVED / DENIED
(circle one)

SIGNATURE

SOH Chair **Date**