



World Meteorological Organization
Organisation météorologique mondiale

Secrétariat

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Weather • Climate • Water
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Our ref.: OBS/OSD/IMO/Quest-ObsoleteInstruments

GENEVA, 8 August 2013

Annex: 1 (available in English only)

Subject: Survey on alternatives to dangerous and obsolete instruments used in National Meteorological and Hydrological Services

Action required: To submit the completed questionnaire to the WMO Secretariat as soon as possible, preferably **not later than 2 September 2013**

Dear Sir/Madam,

In order to improve the quality of data, automation in instrumentation technologies has been envisaged and implemented by the majority of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in the world. The objective of every initiative has been to promote data accuracy, compatibility and long-term stability in meteorological observing systems. New challenges in weather forecasting pose demands on the reliability and accuracy of the existing instrumentation technology. During the transition phase from manual to automated observations, it is vital to ensure that obsolete instruments are phased out, while aligning our needs with available modern measurement technology.

The fifteenth session of the Commission for Instruments and Methods of Observation (CIMO) called for new, simple and inexpensive instruments and associated calibration facilities to replace instruments containing mercury, which are hazardous to health, and obsolete instrumentation still used in numerous National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in developing countries. The Commission encouraged manufacturers to develop and promote such instruments that would also help improve traceability to the International System of Units (SI).

For more than a century, mercury barometers and thermometers have been used in meteorological observatories worldwide for measurement of atmospheric pressure and temperature, respectively. The Commission for Instruments and Methods of Observation deems that cooperation between Members would enable gradual phasing out and elimination of mercury, a dangerous chemical. In this context, the CIMO Expert Team on Regional Instrument Centres, Calibration and Traceability has developed a questionnaire to assess the situation in Member countries and to identify areas in which Members would need additional guidance and support from CIMO. The Commission could help coordinate efforts to phase out mercury, while ensuring data compatibility and continuity.

To: Permanent Representatives (or Directors of Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services) of WMO Members (PR-6712)

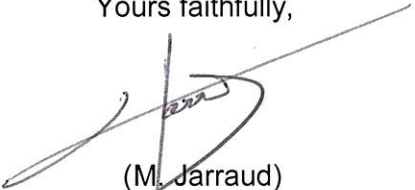
cc: Hydrological Advisers to Permanent Representatives,
HMEI Executive Secretary

In this regard, I kindly invite you to complete the attached questionnaire and return it to the WMO Secretariat as soon as possible, preferably not later than 2 September 2013. An electronic copy of the questionnaire is available on the following website: www.wmo.int/pages/prog/www/Questionnaires.html under: "Alternatives to dangerous and obsolete instruments used in NMHSs".

To ease the evaluation of the questionnaire, I should appreciate it if your Service could send a copy of the completed questionnaire (MS-Word document) as an e-mail attachment to Dr Isabelle Rüedi (iruedi@wmo.int).

Your collaboration in this matter is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,



(M. Jarraud)
Secretary-General