

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - Geological Survey
Policy for the Collection of
Hydrologic Data When Satellite Telemetry Is Used

Purpose

To define the areas of cooperation and responsibility for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in the collection via satellite telemetry of data for hydrological purposes.

Scope

This policy applies when satellite telemetry is used for the collection of hydrologic data. The policy statement pertains only to the telemetry activities associated with the installation, operation, and maintenance of the telemetry equipment associated with hydrologic data collection. It does not cover spacecraft operations or assignments; remote sensing from the spacecraft; direct-readout ground stations (DRGS); and facilities or operations involving data handling, analysis, publication, and archiving..

Background

Satellite telemetry has proven to be a reliable and cost-effective system for providing hydrologic data needed to meet the requirements of agencies charged with operating water-control facilities or making hydrologic forecasts.

Because numerous Federal agencies are involved in satellite telemetry of hydrologic data, it is the policy of the NOAA and the USGS to ensure that operations are coordinated and cost effective.

The policy is intended to assure agency mission accomplishment as well as to provide for cost and personnel savings to the Government, improved data-collection reliability, and enhanced data quality.

Responsibilities

The agency receiving the funds for the data-collection telemetry equipment shall be responsible for its acquisition, installation, operation and maintenance. When the funding agency is not the primary data-collection station operator, delegation of appropriate responsibilities to the station operator will be made when the operator has the resources to assume one or more of the telemetry responsibilities and can demonstrate cost and manpower savings to the Government.

Cooperative Efforts

When several agencies are involved at one site, a detailed agreement to cover the services, reimbursements, and responsibilities required for support of satellite telemetry operations will be developed at the regional level.

Regional Authority

Implementation of the specific aspects of this policy will be by agreement and will be the responsibility of the respective regional offices of NOAA's National Weather Service and the USGS's Water Resources Division. Regional agreements should include maintenance responsiveness, costs, and responsibility, both scheduled and unscheduled, for new and existing systems

Agreements

The definition of operating parameters, identification of data types, data accuracy, and location of telemetry equipment will be specified by joint agreement to meet the needs of NOAA and the USGS. Site agreements for telemetry support with other agencies and/or contracts with the private sector may be utilized if it will ensure the cost effectiveness of satellite telemetry equipment operation and maintenance, and will not interfere with station operations.

The USGS will permit interface of telemetry equipment to USGS sensors/recorders if that interface and the subsequent telemetry operations will not interfere with basic USGS data-collection responsibilities. The USGS will use the telemetered data as the primary data source when the USGS participates in the installation, operation, and maintenance of the telemetry to the degree that the USGS can ensure data quality and integrity. The level of participation will be negotiated at the regional level, and as a minimum will include an agreement on sampling frequency, sensor/telemetry calibration, and data redundancy in transmitted messages.

Since the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite is a broadcast system, data from the satellite telemetry will be available to all users that have access to a DRGS. Both agencies participating in this agreement will share, upon request, information on transmission formats, data types, telemetry locations, and data-processing characteristics.

Sites where data from multiple sensors (such as stage, precipitation, and wind speed) are transmitted through a single data-collection platform may require close coordination with other agencies to ensure the effective operation of these sensors. Where this is the case, NOAA and the USGS will work with other agencies to develop methods to operate, transmit, and receive data from all sensors that are a part of the telemetry system.

Oversight

Oversight of this policy will be the responsibility of the Director, Office of Hydrology of the National Weather Service, and the Chief Hydrologist of the U.S. Geological Survey.

Effective Date

This policy will become effective when signed by both parties and will only be modified after agreement by both agencies.

(Signed Original on File)

(Signed Original on File)

Administrator
National Ocean and Atmospheric
Administration

Director
U.S. Geological Survey

Date: 7/18/86

Date: June 16, 1986