



Update on UCAR COMET Program

The latest COMET accomplishments are provided including metrics from MetEd website. Latest information includes the significant reduction in funding to UCAR/COMET program from NOAA NWS. This reduction in NWS funds is the direct result of the large reduction in training funds of over 780% in 1 year and forced the elimination of funds provided for COMET infrastructure costs.

ACTION PROPOSED

- (a) Recommend WMO assess best approach to provide funds for COMET program. In the short term, funds can be from WMO programs but longer term funding needs support from the many countries using the MetEd online library.

Update on UCAR COMET Program

1 INTRODUCTION

A status update is provided of the UCAR Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education and Training (COMET) ®.

First, the latest COMET accomplishments are provided including update on MetEd website (meted.ucar.edu).

Second, latest information on the significant reduction in funding to UCAR/COMET program from NOAA NWS is included.

2. COMET Accomplishments through May 2013

The UCAR/COMET MetEd library website is a free collection of learning resources for the geoscience community. Whether you're an experienced meteorologist honing existing skills or a student looking for new topics of interest, there are many valuable training materials available. The following metrics for UCAR/COMET highlight the program's accomplishments.

- Over 700 hours of training materials available via MetEd site (meted.ucar.edu).
- Over 285,000 registered MetEd users including over 96,000 from International Community.
- Registration for access to MetEd library is still free to users.
- Completed 2nd edition of Tropical Textbook with new chapter and full Spanish translation.
- Published Volcanic Ash: Science, Impacts, and Forecasting Course (many satellite products).
 - Recently Published satellite modules:
 - GOES-R ABI: Next Generation Satellite Imaging, Satellite Feature Id: Atmos Rivers, Advances in Space-Based Nighttime Visible Observation (from VIIRS), Satellite Monitoring of Atmospheric Composition.
 - 58 Satellite related modules provide over 100 hours of training (several in Spanish).
- Environmental Satellite Resource Center (ESRC) provides easy access to a wide range of useful information, education, and training about low-earth orbit and geostationary satellites from trusted sources with almost 600 links included.

3. Reduction in Funds from NOAA/NWS for UCAR/COMET

The following items provide the latest update on the situation with funding and changes in leadership at UCAR/COMET and at NOAA/NWS.

- Dr. Tim Spangler (Director) retired 31 January 2013 (director for over 20 years).
- Dr. Rich Jeffries is new Director as of 1 March 2013 (former Navy training director).
- NWS Training Budget reduced by 78% in one year.
- COMET funding model was 100% from government funding
 - 60% NOAA (NWS and NESDIS)
 - 40% Other (State Department, Canada, Navy, EUMETSAT, WMO)
 - New Funding Model will rely more on Private Sector, Donations, and More International!
- NWS had funded all COMET administration, budget, and IT costs since inception in 1990
 - Peaked at nearly \$2M/year in FY 2009, dropping rapidly.
 - Other programs and sponsors must now help with these costs.
 - Additional shortfall in resources due to Fiscal Year 2012 WMO Voluntary Cooperation Program funds that were delayed due to legal review and audit. These VCP funds are expected to be released soon. However, the NWS will have to prepare a new contract vehicle with UCAR to allocate the funds.
- WMO Education and Training Program did provide some funds in short term.
- New Funding Model will rely more on Private Sector, Donations, and International.
- U.S. Congress mandated National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) report on the NWS released in April. NAPA report recommends the NWS Training Program budget be restored to previous levels. The new NWS Director is supportive of these recommendations.

4. Summary

The seventh session of the Expert Team is invited to:

- Note continued success of COMET MetEd online library with over 700 hours of training materials available to over 285,000 registered users;
- Note the large reduction in NWS Training Program funds (over 78% in 1 year) that results in elimination of funds for COMET Infrastructure (administration and IT);
- Recommend WMO assess best approach to provide funds for COMET program. In the short term, funds can be from WMO programs but longer term funding needs support from the many countries using the MetEd online library.