

ASAP STATUS REPORT

(Submitted by WMO)

Summary and purpose of document

The purpose of this document is to inform CGMS Members of the current status of the ASAP Programme.

ACTION PROPOSED

CGMS Members are invited to note the report.

DISCUSSION

The Automated Shipboard Meteorological Programme

1. For the first time, the number of radiosoundings taken in the frame of the Automated Shipboard Aerological Programme (ASAP) has dramatically decreased in 1998, by approximately 20%. The total number of ASAP units operated dropped from 24 in 1997 to 19; the operators are: Denmark (2 units), France (4 units), Germany (4 units), Japan (6 units), Russia (1 unit), Sweden-Iceland (1 unit) and the United States (1 unit).
2. The operational statistics provided by the operators for 1998 and the previous years are summarised in Table 1 and Figure 1. This report consists of the individual national reports and of reports provided by ECMWF and EUMETSAT.
3. The ASAP Co-ordinating Committee (ACC), which consists of a group of national operators along with ECMWF and EUMETSAT, held its annual meeting, ACC-X, in Copenhagen, Denmark, 30 September-2 October 1998. The operators were represented by five countries, Denmark, France, Iceland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Both ECMWF and EUMETSAT participated in the meeting.
4. The total number of ASAP soundings in 1998 corresponds approximately to the number of soundings which could be performed annually by 6 ocean weather ships. Their geographical distribution is presented in Figure 2. It displays the location of all the TEMP SHIP messages which were received in Toulouse, France, last year. Clearly, most of the soundings were taken in the northern Atlantic Ocean.
5. Within the North Atlantic a further expansion is expected in the coming years. The United Kingdom will start operating an ASAP on a route between London and Montreal. Under EUMETNET, which is a network grouping of 18 European national meteorological services, it is planned to start an optional pilot programme on ASAP, called E-ASAP. Its purpose is to establish two ASAPs, one on a route within the Mediterranean, the other on a route between the English Channel or the Irish Sea and the Eastern Seaboard of North America. E-ASAP will be funded by the EUMETNET members taking into account existing activities providing upper-air profile data from the oceans.
6. In order to expand the ASAP globally, the future work programme of the ACC includes promotional visits to selected countries in the Southern Hemisphere to encourage and assist implementation of ASAP in these data sparse ocean areas, possibly under some sort of joint funding scheme.

Table 1
Statistics on ASAP units operated during 1998

Operator	ASAP units	Number of soundings	Average terminal sounding height (gpkm)	Percentage of data on the GTS
Denmark	2	701	19.9	98%
France	4	1364	22.4	99%
Germany	4	1139	20.2	72% ¹⁾
Japan	6	956	22.0	100%
Russia	2	209	24.1	89%
Spain	1	⁴⁾		
Sweden-Iceland	1	265	20.9	84%
United Kingdom	1	⁴⁾		
United States	1	167	21.6	³⁾
Total or average	22	4801	21.4	91%

1. Data only partially available
 2. Based upon reports received at ECMWF as published in the monthly ECMWF report (only those also reaching 100 hPa)
 3. Information not available as of May 1999
- No activity reported

(2nd final version, KH/DMI, 3 June 1999)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Denmark	806	772	772	954	701
France	1389	1336	1249	1383	1364
Germany	1925	2147	2061	1439	1139
Japan	530	630	707	747	956
Russia			109	84	209
Spain	77	174	130	78	0
Sweden-Iceland		35	259	331	265
United Kingdom	287	110	145	53	0
United States		366	277	418	167
Total	5014	5570	5709	5487	4801
Change to previous year		11%	2%	-4%	-13%

