

CHARTER FOR THE COORDINATION GROUP FOR METEOROLOGICAL SATELLITES (CGMS)¹

PREAMBLE

RECALLING that the Coordination on Geostationary Meteorological Satellites (CGMS) has met annually as an informal body since September 1972 when representatives of the United States (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), the European Space Research Organisation (now the European Space Agency), and Japan (Japan Meteorological Agency) met to consider common interests relating to the design, operation and use of these agencies planned meteorological satellites,

RECALLING that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (State Committee for Hydrometeorology), India (India Meteorological Department) and the People's Republic of China (State Meteorological Administration) initiated development of geostationary satellites and joined CGMS in 1973, 1978, and 1986 respectively,

RECOGNISING that the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) as a representative of the meteorological satellite data user community has participated in CGMS since 1974,

NOTING that the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT) has, with effect from January 1987, taken over responsibility from ESA for the METEOSAT satellite system and the current Secretariat of CGMS,

CONSIDERING that CGMS has served as an effective forum through which independent agency plans have been informally harmonised to meet common mission objectives and produce certain compatible data products from geostationary meteorological satellites for users around the world,

RECALLING that the USA, the USSR, China and Europe have launched polar-orbiting meteorological satellites, and that the polar and geostationary meteorological satellite systems together form a basic element of the space based portion of the WMO Global Observing System,

BEING AWARE of the concern expressed by the WMO Executive Council Panel of Experts over the lack of guaranteed continuity in the polar-orbit and its recommendation that there should be greater cooperation between operational meteorological satellite operators world-wide, so that a more effective utilisation of these operational systems, through the coordination and standardisation of many services provided, can be assured,

RECOGNISING the importance of operational meteorological satellites for monitoring and detection of climate change,

¹ This Charter was amended at CGMS-31 to take into account new membership of the R&D agencies ESA, NASA, JAXA and Rosaviakosmos. It was further amended at CGMS-34 to take into account the new membership of CNES (since CGMS-32), KMA (since CGMS-33), and CNSA.

RECOGNISING the expansion of the space-based component of the WMO's World Weather Watch Global Observing System to include Research & Development missions and the commitment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), European Space Agency (ESA), Russian Aviation and Space Agency (Rosaviakosmos) and the National Space Development Agency of Japan (NASDA) to make observations from its missions available to the world community at the 2nd session of the WMO Consultative Meetings on High Level Policy on Satellite matters in February 2002,

NOTING the expansion of CGMS at CGMS-31 to include NASA, ESA, Rosaviakosmos and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) as full members to improve coordination between operational meteorological and R&D satellite operators,

NOTING the further expansion of CGMS at CGMS-32 to include CNES, at CGMS-33 to include KMA, and at CGMS-34 to include CNSA, following to their commitment to make observations from their missions available to the world community in full adherence with the space-based component of the WMO's World Weather Watch Global Observing System,

AND RECOGNISING the need to update the purpose and objectives of CGMS,

AGREE

- I. To change the name of CGMS to the Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites
- II. To adopt a Charter, establishing Terms of Reference for CGMS, as follows:

OBJECTIVES

- a) CGMS provides a forum for the exchange of technical information on geostationary and polar-orbiting meteorological satellite systems and research & development missions, such as reporting on current meteorological satellite status and future plans, telecommunications matters, operations, intercalibration of sensors, processing algorithms, products and their validation, data transmission formats and future data transmission standards.
- b) CGMS harmonises to the extent possible meteorological satellite mission parameters such as orbits, sensors, and data formats and downlink frequencies.
- c) CGMS encourages complementarity, compatibility and possible mutual back-up in the event of system failure through cooperative mission planning, compatible meteorological data products and services and the coordination of space and data related activities, thus complementing the work of other international satellite coordinating mechanisms.

MEMBERSHIP

- d) CGMS Membership is open to all operators of meteorological satellites, to prospective operators having a clear commitment to develop and operate such satellites, and to the WMO, because of its unique role as representative of the world meteorological data user community. Further CGMS Membership is open to space agencies operating R&D satellite systems that have the potential to contribute to WMO and supported programmes.
- e) The status of observer will be open to representatives of international organisations or groups who have declared an intent, supported by detailed system definition studies, to establish a meteorological satellite observing system. Once formal approval of the system is declared, membership of CGMS can be requested by the observer.

Within two years of becoming an observer, observers will report on progress being made towards the feasibility of securing national approval of a system. At that time CGMS Members may review the continued participation by each Observer.

- f) The current Membership of CGMS is listed in Appendix 2 to this charter.
- g) The addition of new Members and Observers will be by consensus of existing CGMS Members.

ORGANISATION

- h) CGMS will meet in plenary session annually. Ad hoc Working Groups to consider specific issues in detail might be convened at the request of any Member provided that written notification is received and approved by the Membership at least 1 month in advance and all Members agree. Such Working Groups will report to the next meeting of CGMS.
- i) One Member, on a voluntary basis, will serve as the Secretariat of CGMS.
- j) Provisional meeting venues, dates and draft agenda for plenary meetings will be distributed by the Secretariat 6 months in advance of the meeting, for approval by the Members. An agreed Agenda will be circulated to each Member 3 months in advance of the meeting.
- k) Plenary Meetings of CGMS will be chaired by each of the Members in turn, the Chairperson being proposed by the host country or organisation.
- l) The Host of any CGMS meeting, assisted by the Secretariat, will be responsible for logistical support required by the meeting. Minutes will be prepared by the Secretariat, which will also serve as the repository of CGMS records. The Secretariat will also track action items adopted at meetings and provide CGMS Members with a status report on these and any other outstanding actions, four months prior to a meeting and again at the meeting itself.

PROCEDURE

- m) The approval of recommendations, findings, plans, reports, minutes of meetings, the establishment of Working Groups will require the consensus of Members. Observers may participate fully in CGMS discussions and have their views included in reports, minutes etc., however, the approval of an observer will not be required to establish consensus.
- n) Recommendations, findings, plans and reports will be non-binding on Members or Observers.
- o) Once consensus has been reached amongst Members on recommendations, findings, plans and reports, minutes of meetings or other such information from CGMS, or its Working Groups, this information may be made publicly available.
- p) Areas of cooperation identified by CGMS will be the subject of agreement between the relevant Members.

COORDINATION

- q) The work of CGMS will be coordinated, as appropriate, with the World Meteorological Organisation and its relevant bodies, and with other international satellite coordination mechanisms, in particular the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) and the Earth Observation International Coordination Working Group (EO-ICWG) and the Space Frequency Coordination Group (SFCG).

Organisations wishing to receive information or advice from the CGMS should contact the Secretariat; which will pass the request on to all Members and coordinate an appropriate response, including documentation or representation by the relevant CGMS Members.

AMENDMENT

- r) These Terms of Reference may be amended or modified by consensus of the Members. Proposals for amendments should be in the hands of the Members at least one month prior to a plenary meeting of CGMS.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND DURATION

- s) These Terms of Reference will become effective upon adoption by consensus of all CGMS Members and will remain in effect unless or until terminated by the consensus of CGMS Members.