



REPORT ON AUGUST NWS CORPORATE BOARD MEETING

During the week of August 22, 2005, I attended a meeting of the NWS Corporate Board in Washington, D.C., to provide input on the process by which the NWS will review the manner in which it is providing services to the public. My participation was at the invitation of NWS Director D.L. Johnson and pursuant to NWSEO's contractual right to provide pre-decisional input on changes in NWS operations.

As Director Johnson explained in his email of August 25, the Corporate Board appointed three teams to develop specific plans in three areas: a new "concept of operations," aviation services and IT consolidation. NWSEO has been invited to name a representative to each of these teams. I will be announcing our representatives within the next week.

NWSEO intends to work collaboratively with the NWS to find and support ways to enhance NWS services. However, we disagree with some of the fundamental precepts which are driving the proposals to consolidate certain operations. While the NWS has been under significant budget pressure this year, we are not as pessimistic as the agency's leadership is about the future. Members of Congress who are personally responsible for deciding on NWS appropriations have assured us that they intend to increase the funding level for the NWS above that which was requested by the Bush Administration for the coming fiscal year. Further, we are convinced that Congress will support whatever funding levels that the NWS indicates is necessary to provide at least the current level of services. The only problem is getting NOAA and OMB to ask Congress for the necessary amounts.

Further, while NWSEO will support enhanced services, we will not support any restructuring of NWS field operations that jeopardize the job security of NWS employees and the safety of the American people. This includes centralizing or consolidating forecasting operations, or limiting the hours of operations at any of the 122 WFOs. We will protect employees' legal right to secure work scheduling and oppose any operations concept, (such as the "firehouse" scenario which has been proposed) that will result in employees not knowing in advance what their work schedule will be from week to week or day to day. In short, we will continue to hold the welfare of our members, and our standards of excellence to the American public, as our highest priorities.

By President Paul T. Greaves