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## Report to the EMS General Assembly September 2006

Accreditation Committee

Chair: Howard Lyne (United Kingdom)

### Mission/goals of the Committee

The terms of reference of the Committee at the time of its inception are listed in Annexe A. From these the following goals may be identified:

- to make recommendations to Member Societies of good practice in running Accreditation Schemes and how they may be introduced;
- to make recommendations to Member Societies on Codes of Good Practice and Ethical Behaviour of professional meteorologists;
- to recommend how such Accreditation Schemes and Codes of Good Practice followed by meteorologists of any Member Society, or Associate Member with its headquarters in Europe, may be recognised in any or all European countries.

### Actions

A meeting of the Committee was held on 15 September at EMS5 in Utrecht. A copy of the minutes is attached at Annexe B. In summary this concluded that there was no unified position with regard to accreditation and any developments will take time. The Royal Meteorological Society of the United Kingdom has a Chartered Meteorologist scheme which is now recognised in all member states of the EU through the appropriate European Directive. The German Meteorological Society has a scheme which certifies companies rather than individuals.

David Axford retired as Chairman in February 2006. He was replaced in this capacity by Howard Lyne.

### Action points planned, according to the vision

Currently there is much discussion within the meteorological community on the accreditation or certification of forecasters for civil aviation. This arises from two sources: the adoption of the guidelines in WMO 258 by ICAO as the required standard for forecasters for international civil aviation, and the implementation of the regulations concerning the Single European Sky (SES) within the European Union. Papers connected with this will be presented at EMS6 and the topic is likely to be the main focus of the Accreditation Committee in the coming year.

### Membership of Committee

Sergio Barbosa (Portugal)  
Christophe Billard (France)  
Howard Lyne (United Kingdom)  
Magne Lystad (Norway)  
Marcello Pagliari (Italy)  
Manuel Palomares (Spain)  
Heleen ter Pelkwijk (Netherlands)  
Dragan Radovanovic (Serbia)  
Peter Rauh (Switzerland)  
Clemens Simmer (Germany)  
Sonja Vidic (Croatia)

## Annexe A

This Committee shall

(i) carry out a comparison of schemes of accreditation of professional meteorologists in European, and other, countries, and make recommendations to Member Societies of EMS, within eighteen months of being set up, on what constitutes good practice in running schemes of accreditation, and how such good practice may be introduced, particularly with a view to ensuring that meteorologists of any Member Society, or Associate Member with its headquarters in Europe, may operate in any or all European countries;

(ii) carry out a comparison of accepted Codes of Practice or ethical codes of behaviour of professional meteorologists in European, and other countries, and make recommendations to Member Societies of EMS, within eighteen months of being set up, on what constitutes an appropriate code, and how such a code or codes may be introduced, particularly with a view to ensuring that meteorologists of any Member Society, or Associate Member with its headquarters in Europe, may operate in any or all European countries;

(iii) carry out a review of how other professions control themselves in countries of Member Societies, and elsewhere,

(iv) make recommendations, within a period of three years from the setting up of the Committee, on methods other than accreditation and codes of practice, which Member Societies might introduce, particularly with a view to ensuring that meteorologists of any Member Society, or Associate Member with its headquarters in Europe, may operate in any or all European countries

## Annexe B

Location: Jaarbeurs Conference Centre, Utrecht, The Netherlands

Participants: David Axford (RMS, Bracknell, Chair of the Accreditation Committee), Ludo van der Auwera (RMI, Belgium), Alica Bajić (HMD, Croatia), Roxana Bojariu (ANM, Romania), Tanja Cegnar (SMD, Slovenia), Gerald Fleming (Met Eireann, Ireland), Tomas Halenka (CeMS, Czech Republic), Lovro Kalin (DMHZ, Croatia), Dominique Lapeyre de Chaverdès (Météo France, France), René Morin (SMF, France), Heleen ter Pelkwijk (NVBM, Netherlands), Fulvio Stel (UMVFG, Italy), Jay Trobec (AMS, USA), Visnja Vučetić (DMHZ, Croatia), Werner Wehry (DMG, Germany), Jon Wieringa (NVBM, Netherlands)

In attendance: Arne Spekat (EMS, Berlin)

Beginning: 17:00 End: 18:10

### 1. Introduction

The meeting was called by the Chair of the EMS Accreditation Committee and announced in the Programme of the EMS Annual Meeting. There was no specific agenda set out beforehand.

As the Accreditation Committee Chair underlined that a the scheme introduced by the U.K. which has been recognized Europe-wide is available for about a year and presented as an introduction a slide with the Directive 89/48/EEC in which the qualification requirements are summarized. He reported that, since its national introduction in 1993, about 60 meteorologists have been accredited.

Following the accreditation meeting during the 4<sup>th</sup> EMS Annual Meeting a letter was sent to EMS Members and Associates, describing. There were not many replies, although there is a lot of interest in accreditation matters, e.g., with the employers of professional meteorologists.

Werner Wehry from the German Meteorological Society then explained its accreditation scheme. He pointed out that it is different from the one in the U.K. because it does not certify individuals, but companies. The German Meteorological Society identified problems in the certification of individuals because they consider it necessary that a constant updating of the certified meteorologists is necessary, for which it is too difficult to organize the necessary courses. Yet, a reconsideration of the structures in Germany might be possible, although results cannot be expected before a year's time.

### 2. Discussion

#### 2.1 Academic qualification requirements

In practise there are potential accreditation applicants, e.g., from the field of forecasting. Forecasters have widely different educational backgrounds. It became clear that the UK/EU scheme has been extended in its requirements and now includes the need for a degree. WMO, for example, in its definition of a meteorologists mentions "third degree qualification". It should be added that, unless a post of a specialist for a certain scientific field needs to be filled, degrees are incomplete indicators for qualification.

#### 2.2 Accreditation for Media Meteorologists

In co-operation with IABM, WMO and AMS, a possibility for a worldwide accreditation scheme for media meteorologists is emerging. Soon, the WMO objectives are to be made public – Gerald Fleming is a liaison with the ongoing activities. In Europe there are activities in France and Croatia with respect to the quality of weather presentations in the media. The crucial factor is that the standards need to be raised. The mixed professional background of those presenting weather information in the media needs to be taken into account. The different nationalities and languages of the presenters might be posing a problem but that is not considered a major obstacle. Overall, there is optimism that in Europe a "TV Seal of Approval" or a similar scheme is very helpful. EMS might be playing an important role in this development, particularly since there is a WMO-EMS agreement to build on. The open question remains, how EMS should address its Members to advance this process.

#### 2.3 Acceptance of accreditation

As of today an accreditation scheme is not obligatory. There is a lack of motivation against the need to self-educate among the professional meteorologists who are often asking themselves what the real advantages are. Hiring of meteorologists at Weather Services is often more subjectively done, i.e., without a great deal of consideration for accreditation. Yet, one might answer that it is the definition of

an accepted standard and might be an improving factor for the careers, as it is, e.g., with certified electrical engineers in the U.K. It might indirectly serve as a benchmark for ISO9000 certification of companies how many certified meteorologists are employed.

### 2.4 Sources of qualification

In many countries it is not possible to study meteorology as a stand-alone subject, which brings people into the profession of meteorologists who have degrees from a rather wide range of subjects. In some countries, the National Meteorological Services offer qualification but this is in most cases not mutually accepted by other Services. Most national Meteorological Societies are too small to run their own accreditation schemes – some make it clear that the task of assigning qualifications is not theirs but belongs to the Weather Service – and those who run them (RmetS, DMG, SMF) focus on different approaches.

### 3. Conclusions and Actions to be taken

It was concluded that currently there is no unified situation and that any development will take time.

It was proposed that the Chair of the Accreditation Committee officially informs WMO, by sending a letter to Gerald Fleming, about the activities of the EMS Accreditation Committee.