

**JOINT WMO-IOC TECHNICAL COMMISSION
FOR OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE
METEOROLOGY (JCOMM)**

JCOMM-III/BM. 6.4

WMO Secretary-General
and UNESCO/IOC
Executive Secretary

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Agenda Item:

6.4

IN SITE AND SATELLITE OBSERVING SYSTEMS

OBSERVING PROGRAMME SUPPORT CENTRE

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

SUMMARY

Reference: JCOMM-III/Doc. 6.4

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Appendix:

- Background Material

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

1. At its session in September 2005, Halifax, Canada, the JCOMM-II recommended a review of the JCOMM *in situ* Observing Platform Support Centre (JCOMMOPS). Hence, the OCG initiated a process to review usefulness and effectiveness of JCOMMOPS. Since then substantial discussions have taken place, not only with those Panels presently supporting JCOMMOPS (for example the Data Buoy Cooperation Panel (DBCP), the Ship Observations Team (SOT), and the Argo profiling float programme), but also with the JCOMM Management Committee, the JCOMM Observations Coordination Group, and the Observing Panels that could potentially benefit from the support and services of JCOMMOPS. These also include the Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans (POGO), the UNESCO/IOC International Ocean Carbon Coordination Project (IOCCP), the Global Sea-level Observing System (GLOSS), and the Ocean Sustained Interdisciplinary Timeseries Environment observation System (OceanSITES). Meeting reports of the OCG and its Observing Panels are available at <http://www.jcomm.info/Publications>.

2. These discussions confirmed the value of JCOMMOPS, leading to a general agreement that JCOMMOPS was very useful in providing effective support towards the implementation of *in situ* ocean observing systems under its responsibility, and that there was an urgent need for an expanded Observing Programme Support Centre (OPSC). The extended JCOMMOPS activities should include system performance monitoring, system design evaluation, and authority to recommend deployments to improve system efficiency and effectiveness. This could provide synergies for functions that are now distributed, and make available a more integrated framework for the deployment and further development of ocean observing networks.

3. A joint WMO-IOC circular letter was issued in September 2007 to call for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOI) to host a JCOMM Observing Programme Support Centre (OPSC). Fifteen Letters of Intent had been received by the Secretariat and objectively evaluated by a committee led by the JCOMM co-presidents. Evaluation was made in two steps. In the first step, a short list of five candidates was proposed for undergoing further evaluation. In the second step, the Evaluation Committee was extended by the JCOMM Management Committee to include representatives from the Argo Steering Team, the DBCP, the SOT, OceanSITES, the IOCCP, GLOSS, WIGOS, the OOPC and the WMO and the UNESCO/IOC Secretariats. The Evaluation Committee then engaged in a negotiation with the top-ranking institution resulting in a final decision made by the Executive Secretary of UNESCO/IOC and the Secretary-General of WMO to select the proposal from [*decision still to be taken at the time of the submission of this report*].
