

16 DECEMBER 2002



Weather

**WEATHER COMMUNICATIONS AND
SENSING EQUIPMENT OUTAGE REPORTING**

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OPR: HQ PACAF/DOWO
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Supersedes PACAFI 15-103, 22 September 2000

Certified by: HQ PACAF/DOW
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Pages: 5
Distribution: F

This instruction implements AFD 15-1, *Atmospheric and Space Environmental Support*. It prescribes responsibilities and procedures for reporting weather communications and weather sensing equipment outages. It applies to all PACAF organizations operating and maintaining fixed or tactical weather communications equipment and fixed or tactical weather sensing equipment. This instruction does not apply to the Air National Guard or US Air Force Reserve units and members.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

This instruction has been revised to update equipment changes as a result of recently fielded systems. Several other clarifications were made to activities involving significant equipment outages. A bar (|) indicates revision from the previous edition.

1. General. Weather and communications organizations share the responsibility of ensuring all assigned weather circuits and equipment are maintained satisfactorily. The communications unit schedules, performs, or arranges for all maintenance support to keep standard communications and sensing systems operational. The weather unit is responsible for providing or arranging for maintenance on locally procured, non-standard, and any other equipment that does not have programmed maintenance. The weather unit will monitor the operational status of all assigned circuits and equipment and will log out systems that do not perform at established operational standards.

2. Terms Explained:

2.1. Outage. Any deficiency that causes the circuit or equipment to be less than fully operational. When an outage occurs the weather unit will notify the communication unit's point of contact (POC) and provide details on the outage. The weather unit will also provide the POC with a specific impact the outage has imposed upon the weather unit's support capabilities.

2.2. Mission Impact Statement. A statement that assesses what impact the outage may have upon the weather unit's specific mission support capabilities or the impact on the mission being supported. The weather unit, as the circuit or equipment user, will provide the mission impact statement to the communication unit's POC in one of the following terms:

2.2.1. Minimal: an outage, impairment, or disruption that imposes no operational limitations on the weather unit or the mission supported. When back-up capabilities that impose no operational limitations on the weather unit or the mission supported exist, outages will normally be defined as minimal.

2.2.2. Significant: an outage, impairment, or disruption that imposes an operational restriction on the weather unit or the mission supported. When no back-up capability exists or if back-up capability imposes an operational restriction on the weather unit or the mission supported, equipment or system will be logged out as a significant outage. See paragraph 3.3.1.2.2. for a list of equipment that should always be considered a significant outage. All Operations Plan (OPLAN) tasked tactical system outages will be logged as significant. Coordinate with the maintainers to ensure parts are ordered using the highest priority possible. At a minimum, the weather unit should request and log daily status updates to ensure equipment or circuit downtime is minimized.

3. Responsibilities:

3.1. IAW AFPD 15-1, HQ Air Force Weather Agency (AFWA) is the standard system manager for weather communications and sensing systems which are fielded to meet the fixed and tactical support requirements of the US Air Force and US Army. AFWA works with appropriate Air Force Logistics Centers to monitor, identify, and resolve problems that cannot be resolved at lower levels.

3.2. HQ PACAF Logistics Supply Division (LGS), Communications-Computer Systems Management Division (SCM), and Weather Division (DOW) will assist units in resolving problems related to replacement parts or spares, maintenance of the circuits or equipment, and operation of standard communications and weather sensing systems, respectively.

3.3. Weather Squadrons and Base/Post weather units will:

3.3.1. Work with the local communications and logistics units to:

3.3.1.1. Resolve maintenance or supply problems through active involvement of parent organizations (Operations Group, Operations Support Squadron, Air Support Operations Squadrons, etc.) with the appropriate base/post agency.

3.3.1.2. Ensure maintenance support procedures are in the local weather support instruction or a letter of agreement, as appropriate. When developing the support concept and procedures, ensure the following are included: a POC for logging circuits and equipment in/out, acceptable maintenance response times, and equipment restoral priorities. Equipment and communications used to directly support flight operations should be given the highest restoral priority and the shortest response time, followed by OPLAN tasked tactical equipment, and then all other weather equipment.

3.3.1.2.1. The restoral priority section should contain at least three categories. These categories should include: fixed communications circuits and equipment, tactical equipment, and a combined category. You will also need to ensure your equipment is included on the base/post comm-electronics restoral priority list (i.e., when all power/comm is lost on the

base, where is your weather radar ranked for restoral to service?). For units on Army installations, coordinate with your AF maintenance support unit and the post signal office.

3.3.1.2.2. The following list contains equipment which will always be considered significant outages when inoperative, regardless of backup capability: FMQ-13 or equivalent airfield wind sensing equipment, GMQ-34 or equivalent airfield cloud height equipment, GMQ-32 or equivalent airfield runway visual range equipment, FMQ-19 or equivalent airfield observation sensors (TMQ-53 when set-up as primary weather instrumentation), WSR-88D or equivalent weather radar equipment, Pilot-to-Metro-Service (PMSV) radio, OPS II data systems/servers, and N-TFS or equivalent weather data receiving and dissemination equipment. Since these systems may directly impact flight safety, they should be logged out immediately as a significant outage (do not defer maintenance), and should receive top priority from maintenance and logistics support personnel.

3.3.1.2.2.1. Since the New Tactical Forecast System (N-TFS) is maintained under Contract Logistics Support (CLS) maintenance, outages will be coordinated with the Air Force Weather Agency (AFWA) Trouble Desk (DSN 312-271-3244/3245). Local communications personnel should evaluate suspected communications problems and attempt corrections prior to contacting AFWA. Log all N-TFS outages on the PACAF Form 416 or local substitute. When the CLS maintainer completes the required maintenance, log the corrective action on the outage log and provide this information to the responsible Air Force quality assurance agency as requested/required.

3.3.1.2.2.2. The OPS II system is maintained under CLS maintenance. Coordinate all outages with the AFWA Trouble Desk after local communications personnel have evaluated suspected local communications problems. Log all OPS II outages on the PACAF Form 416 or local substitute.

3.3.1.2.2.3. The Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) systems are also maintained under CLS maintenance, and follow the same procedures as Para [3.3.1.2.2.2](#) above.

3.3.2. Determine mission impact statements for weather circuit and equipment outages. All weather circuits and equipment used to directly support flight operations and OPLAN tasked tactical equipment should contain a significant mission impact statement.

3.3.3. Report outages and mission impact statements to the communication unit's POC. Once the circuit or equipment is restored to service, notify the POC to log the system in. See paragraph [3.3.1.2.2.1](#) for N-TFS outage reporting procedures.

3.3.4. Maintain equipment and circuit outage logs. The PACAF Form 416 or a locally developed form will be used to record and monitor outages. At a minimum, the weather unit should request and log daily status updates to ensure equipment or circuit downtime is minimized.

3.3.5. Perform general operator maintenance. These maintenance tasks are normally restricted to the replacement of expendable items and preventative maintenance as described in the appropriate operator's manual, Technical Order, or Army Technical Manual.

3.3.6. Report all long-term or expected long-term significant outages of more than 48 hours to HQ PACAF/DOWO. Equipment and circuit outages that should be reported include fixed airfield meteorological sensors used to support flying operations, weather radar, Air Force standard

weather data receiving equipment/circuits, and all tactical equipment. Additionally, units should report any other outages that merit higher headquarters involvement.

3.3.6.1. Provide sufficient information about the outage so that MAJCOM staff personnel can adequately assist in the resolution of the outage, if required. This information should include the following: name, rank, e-mail address, unit, equipment or circuit description, date/time of outage, type of outage (minimal or significant), parts required/ordered, parts ordered MICAP (Y/N), estimated return to service date, and any other pertinent information.

3.3.6.2. Provide an initial report and follow-up reports when there is a change in operational status, when new information about the outage is available, or when requested by PACAF/DOW. The final report should be sent when the outage has been successfully corrected and should include the corrective action taken.

3.3.6.3. Reports can be made telephonically, via e-mail, or using the on-line report form available on the HQ PACAF/DOWO web page (<http://www.cidss.af.mil/dow/dowo/outage.taf>).

3.4. Base Communication units will:

3.4.1. Maintain, or arrange for maintenance of all assigned standard fixed communications and weather sensing systems, excluding those systems that are user maintained or that are covered under CLS. For geographically separated units, fund for travel to perform maintenance on weather systems.

3.4.2. Provide a 24-hour POC for the weather unit to log systems in and out and troubleshoot communication problems.

3.4.3. Work with the weather or logistic unit to resolve operational, maintenance or replacement parts problems.

3.4.4. Ensure outage data for weather systems are correctly entered into the Equipment Status Reporting (ESR) system.

3.4.5. Upon request, provide details on systems which did not meet established ESR standards.

3.5. Army signal units will provide garrison and tactical communications as outlined in Joint Army Regulation 115-10/AFJI 15-157.

4. Outage Log.

4.1. Log equipment in and out on PACAF Form 416, Weather Equipment/Communications Service Record. The instructions for completing the form are provided on the form. A locally developed form that satisfies all pertinent outage information (similar to Form 416) may be used in lieu of the PACAF outage Form 416. For fixed weather sensing equipment outages, also log the time out and time in on the AF Form 3803/AF Form 3813, Surface Weather Observations, Column 90.

4.2. Computing Outage Times. Outage times will be computed using the instructions printed on PACAF Form 416 or applicable local form instructions.

4.3. The remarks section of the outage form will be used to briefly describe the reason or cause of the outage. Follow-up actions must also be noted in the remarks section to provide documentation if historical data or contractor response information is needed to resolve unique problems. At a minimum, daily updates should be logged on the outage log and briefed during morning METCON.

4.4. Use separate PACAF Forms 416 or local outage forms for each piece of weather or communications equipment. The separate forms are required because administrative rules regulating file plans and disposition instructions are based on the type of system.

4.5. Local reproduction of the PACAF Form 416 is authorized. This form is also available electronically.

4.6. Limited duty weather units will develop procedures to ensure a weather representative is available when maintenance responds to service calls.

5. Form Prescribed. PACAF Form 416, Weather Equipment/Communications Service Record (Para 4.). The purpose of this form is to record and monitor outages.

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