

NATIONAL WEATHER ASSOCIATION

Advocacy Program and Guidelines

The mission of the National Weather Association is “to support and promote excellence in operational meteorology and related activities.” This includes, but is not limited to an objective of providing a forum for the “publishing of letters, pamphlets, periodicals, papers, and Web pages” in meteorology and associated fields. The NWA also acts on behalf of its membership to raise awareness of important issues relevant to the mission of the organization.

The 2006 NWA Council formalized a set of advocacy guidelines directing an organizational response to unsolicited comments, positions, or opinions on a wide variety of issues, including but not limited to the mission of the NWA. Requests for advocacy may originate from outside the meteorological community or within the membership of the NWA. For example, the NWA was recently asked to endorse and approve for distribution a statement in support of the GPS-Meteorology network. The letter of support was developed by the NWA Remote Sensing Committee, approved by the NWA Council and distributed by the Executive Director. It can be viewed on the NWA Remote Sensing Committee Web page: <http://www.nwas.org/committees/rs/rs.html>. The NWA’s advocacy in this regard was acknowledged by several high ranking officials within NOAA adding significant weight to what many in our discipline feel is a critical and necessary improvement to the remote sensing of the atmospheric column.

The advocacy protocol determines whether: 1) a response from the NWA is warranted, 2) who should issue the response, and 3) in what form that response should be disseminated. The process of preparing a response would also consider its purpose (e.g., raising public awareness, issuing a position statement, etc.). The protocol also provides an avenue for the NWA to issue a statement of its own in service to the operational community or within the context of the general public. For example, the NWA may decide to raise lightning awareness in conjunction with an NWS severe weather awareness week, advocate a position or policy concerning an issue of public or professional interest or issue a seasonal reminder of a safety guideline.

The necessity for a formal set of advocacy guidelines has never been more pertinent than at present with climate change at the forefront of both scientific and public policy debate. The NWA President and Council will utilize this protocol to issue position statements or respond to inquiries which are in the best interest of its membership and which conform to the ideals of its mission. The advocacy guidelines are posted below. **NWA members and nonmembers are most welcome to submit statements to be considered to the President@nwas.org, exdir@nwas.org or other NWA Council and Committee members.**

National Weather Association Advocacy Program

Developing guidelines within the context of an operational community

Background

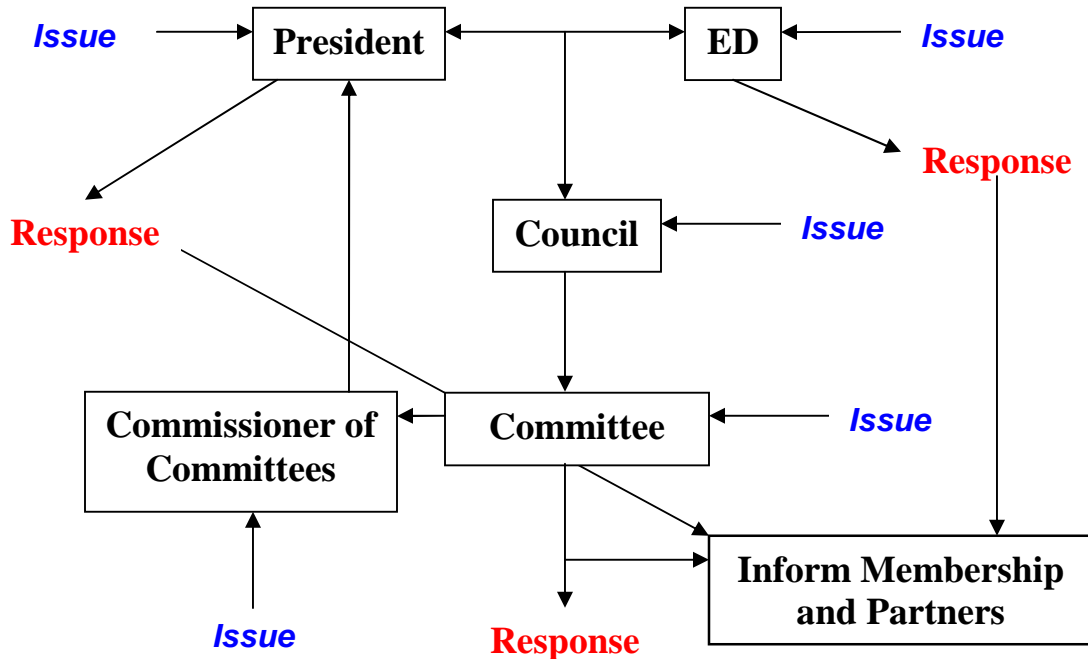
The existence of an advocacy guideline enables the National Weather Association to respond in a timely and consistent manner to unsolicited comments, positions, or opinions on a wide variety of issues, including but not limited to the mission of the NWA. These inquiries may originate from outside the meteorological community or within the membership of the NWA. The guidelines and/or statements of protocol would be followed to determine if: 1) a response from the NWA is warranted, 2) who should issue the response, and 3) in what form that response should be disseminated. The process of preparing a response would also consider its purpose (e.g., raising public awareness, issuing a position statement, etc).

Response Methodology

A well-conceived protocol should streamline the screening of inquiries, and enable the preparation of an appropriate response. This protocol would also provide an avenue for the NWA to issue a statement of its own in service to the operational community or within the context of the general public. For example, the NWA may decide to raise lightning awareness in conjunction with an NWS severe weather awareness week, advocate a position or policy concerning an issue of public or professional interest, clarify a policy or position of operational significance like radar sweep scans, or issue a seasonal reminder of a safety guideline.

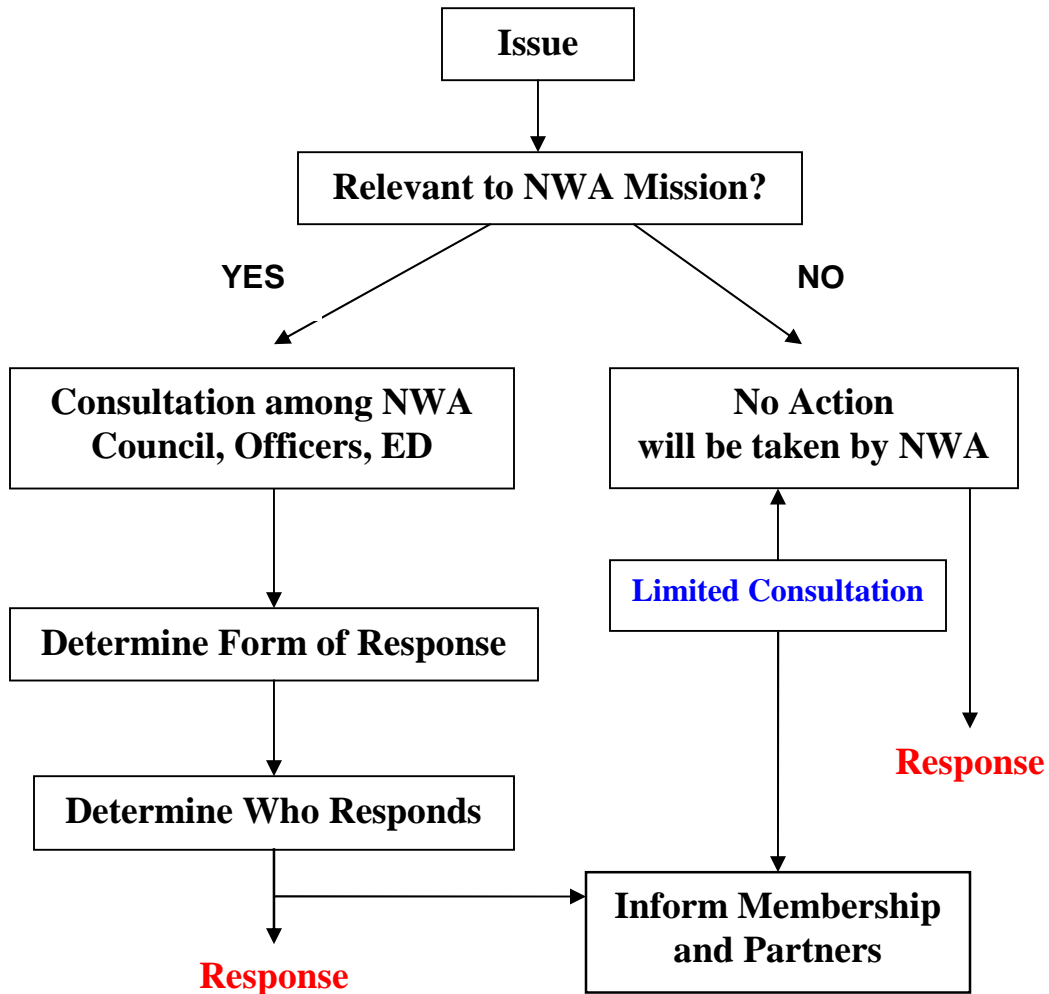
Two approaches to illustrating this protocol are presented in the form of flow charts. The first focuses on the organizational structure of the NWA. The second focuses on the issue as the driver for determining the organizational response. The assumption used in the first model is the final statement is issued by the President, Executive Director (ED) or appropriate committee following discussion with the President, ED, Council, Commissioner of Committees, and specific NWA committees as needed.

Approach I: Decision-Making Flow Chart Based on NWA Organizational Architecture



Inquiries may be initiated within the organization, outside the organization yet within the meteorological community or external to both. The basis of the flow chart is to suggest an inquiry should proceed through the Council, elected officers, the ED and the Commissioner if its initial point of contact is not the President or ED. The President or ED through consultation may elect to formulate a response without input from the Council or officers. The President or ED may also request comment from each of the aforementioned groups pursuant to developing a response on behalf of the NWA. In this design, the response may also originate from the Chair of the committee most directly involved following a period of comment among the Commissioner of Committees, Council members, elected officers, and the ED.

Approach II: Decision-Making Flow Chart Based on Specific Issue



The second approach focuses on the inquiry itself rather than on the organizational structure of the NWA. An agreed upon protocol would utilize the NWA architecture without stating explicitly the specific pathway an inquiry would follow pursuant to a response. The President in brief consultation with the ED or following a limited number of contacts with the Council and/or officers would provide a response that the inquiry is not within the guidelines of the NWA and no action will be taken. Alternatively, an action may be deemed necessary following extensive comment and discussion, and subsequent vote may be required to determine the form of the response and the individual responsible for eliciting the statement on behalf of the NWA. [Posted June 2007]