

**World Meteorological Organization**

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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

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**SECRETARY-GENERAL'S COMMENTS ON  
JIU REPORT "REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION  
IN THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO)"  
(JIU/REP/2007/11)**

## General Comments

1. The WMO Secretariat provided comments to the draft JIU Report “Review of Management and Administration in the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)” in a letter from the Secretary-General to the JIU Executive Secretary dated 12 November 2007. The Secretariat subsequently received the final version of the Report on 18 December 2007.

2. According to Paragraph 3 of the Report “*comments from WMO on the draft report have been sought and taken into account in finalizing the report*”. Although the Secretariat acknowledges that some of its comments have been taken into consideration, it is felt that a number of important issues have not been adequately reflected in the final version of the Report. The Secretariat therefore wishes to reiterate such issues below.

## Specific Comments

3. Considering the fact that the JIU report was issued in December 2007, the Secretariat is of the view that the outcomes of the Fifteenth WMO Congress and the fifty-ninth session of the Executive Council (EC) which took place in May 2007, as well as subsequent WMO Secretariat initiatives, should have been better reflected by the Inspector in the Report. This pertains, in particular but not exclusively, to the section of the report dealing with the implementation of Results-based Management (RBM).

4. Concerning the staff perception survey conducted by the JIU, the Secretariat is of the view that the overall response rate to the staff survey may not be statistically representative and that some questions, as well known from polling entities, usually attract more critical than positive answers. The Secretariat maintains that a more thorough analysis of the responses in terms of answers per category of staff (i.e., D, P, and G, FT and ST) would have been desirable. Such in-depth analysis would have added additional insights for the interpretation of the findings and would therefore have been useful for the Secretariat to further identify a suitable action plan for addressing perceived shortcomings, as appropriate.

5. As regards governance issues and the composition of the EC and the responsibilities of its members, the Secretariat will convey Recommendation 1 to the governing bodies as appropriate. It should however be noted that Congress and the Council have addressed on several occasions the issue of greater involvement of the Governments of Member States and Territories on governance issues, strategic planning, programme and budget, without putting into question the current composition and structure of WMO governance. In particular, Fifteenth Congress adopted Resolutions 33 and 39, concerning respectively Increased Transparency and Involvement of Members in Governance issues of WMO between Congresses and the composition and terms of reference of the Financial Advisory Committee.

6. Within the context of “Governance of the Planning Cycle”, the Secretariat is of the view that the JIU observation that WMO’s basic documents do not refer *expressis verbis* to the Strategic Plan or the Operational Plan is insufficient to conclude that WMO’s regulatory framework is silent on the subject matter. In fact, Article 8 of the Convention, General Regulation 135 (10) and Article 3 of the Financial Regulations confer on Congress responsibility for the determination of WMO’s long-term planning. Similarly, Article 14 of the Convention, General Regulation 155 and Article 6 of the Financial Regulations define in general terms the responsibility of the EC concerning the programme and budget of the Organization. Legal texts at the top of the normative hierarchy, such as the Convention and the General Regulations, are meant to be stable but flexible enough to adapt to the evolving context of the Organization, thus minimizing the need for amendments. The Secretariat will convey Recommendation 2 to the governing bodies as appropriate.

7. The budget process as described in the section on “Governance of the Planning Cycle” does not pose a problem for the approval of the budget, and WMO does therefore not agree with

the “inconsistencies” highlighted in the Report. In fact, a detailed budget proposal for the four-year period, including description of expected results, deliverables and activities, is submitted to Congress in support of the overall budget estimates on the clear understanding that the details are to be approved by the EC. An approval by Congress of the four-year programme and budget details would be unrealistic.

8. The Secretariat takes note of Recommendations 3 and 4. Approval of a budget outline by Congress (a much smaller document as compared with the budget) and approval of a biennial budget by the EC could provide for the submission of more realistic programme and budget proposals. The Recommendations will be conveyed to the EC.

9. The Secretariat will convey Recommendation 5 to the EC with an outline of possible options.

10. Concerning the implementation of RBM, the Secretariat is of the view that the assumed results of the staff perception survey are playing a too preponderant role in the Inspector’s conclusion. Although it is acknowledged that efforts will have to be maintained in order to continue strengthening the implementation of RBM at WMO, significant progress has already been made, and is being made. Hence, the Inspector’s call “*to expedite the transition to a result-based structure and culture*” appears not fully justified. It should in this context also be noted that the further strengthening of the implementation of RBM at WMO is not cost-neutral. Nonetheless, the Secretariat will convey Recommendation 6 to the appropriate governing body.

11. The Secretariat does not agree that the WMO Secretariat Operating Plan (SOP) for 2008-2011 is “*programme and activity based*” and that it is “*not in line with RBM*”. The SOP is programme based but clearly identifies the contribution of each programme to the Top Level Objectives and Expected Results in the WMO Strategic Plan (see document Cg-XV/Doc. 6.2(2) Annex 1: tables of planned programme implementation based on zero-nominal growth (ZNG) budget). In addition, the SOP identifies Deliverables and Key Performance Targets for each programme. Deliverables are either defined in terms of outcomes or outputs and although WMO acknowledges that the measurability of the Expected Results and Deliverables can be further improved, it wishes to point out that this process was begun immediately after Cg-XV, in close cooperation with the EC (see Cg-XV/PINK 6.2).

12. As the Secretariat pointed out in its comments on the draft Report, the WMO programme structure has been closely aligned with the Strategic Thrusts and Expected Results in the WMO Strategic Plan 2008-2011 following the endorsement of the EC and Congress, as well as a comprehensive internal management review. This review was deemed more cost-efficient as compared to an external review. Recommendation 7 has therefore already been implemented and the relevant governing bodies will be informed accordingly.

13. As to Recommendation 8, the technical commissions will be invited to consider whether their internal working structures and mechanisms are still appropriate and to establish new structures, if necessary. This will be undertaken in connection with the development of the expanded WMO Operating Plan.

14. The Secretariat considers Recommendation 9 useful and will convey it to the appropriate governing bodies.

15. As regard the issues highlighted in Recommendations 10, 11 and 12, these will be addressed during implementation of the WMO results-based monitoring and evaluation system, and the WMO Resource Mobilization Strategy, both currently under development.

16. The section of the Report pertaining to the mobilization of extrabudgetary resources is considered useful. It should be noted that a resource mobilization strategy is currently under preparation (Recommendation 13); Recommendation 14 will also be addressed within this context.

17. Regarding the section and related Recommendations dealing with the WMO regulatory framework, internal procedures and instructions (Recommendations 15 and 16), the Secretariat wishes to reiterate its view that the WMO regulatory framework has evolved considerably over the past years. It acknowledges however the need to ensure that the regulatory framework, internal procedures and instructions remain up to date, are consistent and easily accessible to all staff. However, whether this would be best achieved by compiling rules and regulations, processes, procedures, guidelines, etc. of all aspects of WMO operations in a single document would require further analysis (Recommendation 16). As to inter-departmental coordination and cooperation (Recommendation 17), a number of internal mechanisms are already in place and the Secretariat therefore does not agree with the need to establish an additional task force to that end. Moreover, the recent restructuring, in effect since 1 January 2008, has, in fact, enhanced inter-departmental coordination.

18. The section of the report pertaining to meetings is considered useful. The Secretariat will convey Recommendation 18 to the governing bodies as appropriate but wish to underscore that all eventual measures to reduce the cost of meetings should be based on effectiveness considerations.

19. Regarding the Inspector's call for a restriction in the current budget flexibility (Recommendations 19 and 20), the Secretariat wishes to reiterate its view that the current flexibility of up to a total of 3 per cent of maximum expenditure authorized for the financial period is essential in order to ensure that new key priorities emerging during a financial period can be properly addressed. The Secretariat therefore disagrees with Recommendations 19 and 20.

20. Recommendation 21 on the need to introduce a lapse factor for the budgeting of posts appears to conflict with the WMO budget approach. Contrary to a number of other UN organizations, neither the number of posts nor the level of posts is determined in the context of the approval of the result-based budget by Congress and the Executive Council. Indeed, the Secretary-General has the authority to redeploy resources between object of expenditures, including post resources. In this context, the introduction of lapse factors appears irrelevant and the Secretariat therefore disagrees with Recommendation 21.

21. Concerning information technology (IT) systems in general and the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system Oracle in particular, the Secretariat wishes to reiterate, as pointed out in its previous comments on the draft JIU Report, that guidance on the use of Oracle has been made available to staff, and that a training programme in the use of the Oracle system has taken place. The Secretariat however acknowledges that efforts in this area will be maintained and, in future, in connection with introduction of new system features and/or procedures. Recommendations 22 and 23 are considered partly implemented.

22. WMO finds the Inspector's conclusions regarding human resources strategy, policies and practices unbalanced since they have been strictly based on the assumed outcome of the staff survey results.

23. WMO is committed to actively pursue gender balance in the Secretariat, and therefore generally supports Recommendation 24. However, WMO is of the view that the second issue, pertaining to enhancing the participation of women in fellowship and training programmes, has already been adequately included in the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (Cg-XV/Doc. 7.5).

24. Geographical distribution is *de facto* a criterion in the WMO recruitment process. WMO however supports the Inspector's proposal to formalize this existing practice (Recommendation 25) without compromising on the quality of recruitment and with priority given to recruitment of candidates from countries or regions that are under represented, given equivalent qualification of candidates.

25. On the subject of servicing the WMO Audit Committee (AC), the current arrangements in the Secretariat, whereby the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General is responsible for providing support to the AC, were reviewed by the eight session of the AC. However, the Secretariat will convey Recommendation 26 to the AC for further consideration.

26. As regards Recommendation 27, it should be noted that mechanisms for overseeing the implementation of the WMO Code of Ethics are in place. The Secretariat is of the view that the establishment of a full-time dedicated ethics function is not justified considering the small size of the Secretariat. The possibility for eventually resorting to outside expertise in this particular area (other UN entities) will however be explored.

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