

# Guidelines for Statements and Best Practices of the American Meteorological Society

Approved by Council: 09/21/2017 (In force for at most ten years)

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## **1. Introduction**

The American Meteorological Society (AMS) promotes the development and dissemination of information and education on the atmospheric and related oceanic and hydrologic sciences and the advancement of their professional applications. As a service to its members, and in fulfillment of its larger responsibilities to human society, the AMS periodically issues statements on topics that fall within the scope of AMS expertise. It also alerts the weather, water, and climate enterprise and, in some cases, the general public to best practices in performing our science, its applications, and the dissemination of its results.

Statements are the institutional voice of AMS and speak for the organization as a whole. As the representative governing body for the institution, the AMS Council has responsibility for AMS statements. These guidelines are developed by Council to facilitate the statement process. Council may modify these guidelines as needed in order to facilitate the creation of any individual statement.

There are three types of AMS statements that are differentiated according to purpose and intended audience; these are described in Section 2. The roles and responsibilities of Council and others involved in writing statements are outlined. Thorough yet expedient processes are established for the assessment, initiation, preparation, review, revision and approval of each type, and methods of communication are suggested. Guidelines are given for determining statements' time in force and for updating statements. A procedure is established for preparing joint statements with other professional societies and organizations, and for endorsing statements by other organizations. Procedures for developing a best practice document are described in Section 11.

## **2. Types of statements**

The Council of the AMS is responsible for issuing statements on behalf of the Society. In doing so it depends on the contributions of many AMS members in the development, preparation, and review of statements. New statements can be proposed by submitting a written statement proposal (see section 4A) to the AMS Executive Director. The AMS issues three types of statements, distinguished mainly on the basis of their purposes and intended audience, as articulated in this section. The basic steps leading to completion of a statement are described in Sections 4 and 5 and include assessment, initiation, appointment of a drafting committee, drafting of the statement by the drafting committee, review, revision, and AMS Council approval. Responsibilities of those involved in creating statements are discussed in Section 3.

### *A. Professional guidance statements*

The purpose of professional guidance statements is to alert AMS members to urgent or important AMS, professional or scientific matters. Because the intended audience is the membership of the AMS, professional guidance statements may include technical and scientific language generally familiar to AMS members but perhaps not familiar to nonprofessionals or the general public. Professional guidance statements are typically no longer than 1000 words.

## *B. Information statements*

Information statements are intended to provide a trustworthy, objective and scientifically up-to-date explanation of scientific issues of concern to the public at large. They are informational only and do not make recommendations or take positions on issues. Information Statements should use language easily understood by a lay reader and avoid technical terminology and jargon. Information statements are typically no longer than 2000 words.

## *C. Policy statements*

Policy statements are aimed at representatives of local, state, or Federal government, officials of international bodies, and related policy professionals. Policy statements may be prepared in response to requests from government officials or initiated by AMS personnel or members. The purpose(s) of a Policy statement may be one or more of the following:

- To advocate a position on science and technology issues of concern to AMS members
- To provide analysis, articulate the state of scientific understanding, or express the concern of the scientific community about issues pertinent to a current public policy issue
- To raise awareness of a scientific issue with potential future policy implications
- To make policy recommendations based on the professional and scientific expertise and perspectives of the AMS

Policy Statements may form the basis for AMS testimony and briefings to government officials. The language of Policy statements should be understandable to an educated reader and should avoid technical and scientific jargon. Policy statements are typically no longer than 750 words.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities of those involved in statement creation and revision**

Council determines whether a proposed new statement or statement revision should move forward. At times, Council may deem it appropriate and helpful to conduct an informal assessment before deciding whether to proceed with a statement. Council may delegate this informal assessment to one or more Councilors, the relevant Commissioner(s), a member(s) of the AMS staff, or an outside expert(s).

When Council decides to move forward with a proposed statement Council selects a drafting committee Chair, approves a précis, assembles a drafting committee, contributes to and oversees the drafting process, and votes on whether to approve the statement. The details of these tasks, and the timelines involved are presented in later sections of this document; the current section discusses the roles and responsibilities of those involved in statement creation and revision.

### *A. Council Members*

AMS statements are the responsibility of the AMS Council. Council oversight and the active participation of Council members are critical components of the statement process.

### *i. Council Liaison for Statement*

As new statements are proposed, or current statements are reviewed, a Council member will be chosen by Council to be the liaison between the drafting committee and the Council. This Council member has a number of responsibilities, including

- communicating Council expectations to the drafting committee
- helping Council select a drafting committee Chair and membership
- being an active member of the drafting committee
- helping to maintain the integrity of the statement process
- reporting status to Council
- presenting drafting committee recommendations to Council for approval, including recommendations on how to best communicate the statement

The Council liaison should continue to serve on the drafting committee through completion of the statement, even if his/her Council term expires, to maintain the continuity of Council representation and input to the process.

### *ii. Other Council members*

Those members of Council not directly assigned to a statement also have a number of responsibilities, including

- carefully reviewing all statement proposals
- selecting the Council liaison for each statement
- determining the individuals needed to conduct an informal assessment of the statement
- determining drafting committee Chair and membership
- providing clear expectations to the drafting committee
- participating throughout the statement process via voting and providing comments to the drafting committee
- providing thoughtful input and guidance
- granting extensions when needed
- giving final statement approval

### *B. Commissioner(s)*

When deemed appropriate and helpful by Council, the relevant AMS commissioner(s) shall be consulted on AMS statements. This consultation may include assisting in an informal assessment (if needed), determining which boards or committees possess the needed disciplinary expertise, consideration of the drafting committee Chair and drafting committee membership for statements that need to be rewritten or created, and providing other input throughout the process as requested.

### *C. Drafting committee*

A drafting committee will be appointed by Council and composed of four to twelve individuals following the committee membership guidelines in Section 4. Contributing to the development of AMS

statements represents a serious commitment, and the Society greatly appreciates those members willing to help develop statements that inform, explain, or advocate professional or scientific matters of importance to our members and society at large. Members of the drafting committees are expected to work with the drafting committee Chair and Council liaison to adhere to the statement's purpose and timeline, and to maintain the integrity of the statement process.

In addition, the drafting committee Chair's responsibilities are:

- helping Council establish the drafting committee membership following the guidelines in section 4
- working with the Council and AMS staff to develop a précis for the statement
- leading drafting committee efforts, including scheduling of meetings and assigning responsibilities
- making sure all voices are heard
- organizing writing efforts and responses to comments by the drafting committee
- maintaining the integrity of the statement process
- working with the Council liaison to overcome any difficulties that may arise
- adhering to the statement timeline
- combining contributions of committee members to produce a coherently integrated statement, balanced in content and style, and fully understandable to the targeted audience

#### *D. AMS Staff*

The Executive Director moderates and guides the interactions among the drafting committee, AMS staff, and Council to help ensure the timeline is met. There also are times during the statement process when AMS staff will edit the statements to improve their readability for the chosen audience. Owing to the importance of statements and the short timeline, this editing process should be done in a timely manner and with a high degree of professionalism.

### **4. The statement process**

The basic steps leading to a statement's revision or creation are as follows: Proposal, assessment, initiation, appointment of a drafting committee, drafting of the statement by the drafting committee, review, revision, and Council approval. To ensure the efficiency of the process and the timeliness of the resulting statement, these steps must occur within a specified period of time (see Section 10).

#### *A. Statement proposal*

New AMS statements may begin with a brief written statement proposal submitted to the AMS Executive Director by an AMS member. This written proposal is required to help Council make an informed decision on whether or not to proceed with creating a statement. The proposal should include the name and contact information of the proposer, the type of statement desired (professional guidance, information, or policy), the topics the statement would cover, how it is different from current AMS statements, and why the statement would benefit the public and AMS members. The written proposal should be no longer than 500 words.

### *B. Statement assessment*

When new proposals for statements are received, or as current statements approach the end of their time-in-force, an informal assessment of statement relevance and appropriateness is needed. A small group is selected by Council to conduct the assessment and led by the Council liaison for the statement. The Council liaison will present the group's written recommendation to Council. Council will then determine whether or not the statement moves forward and a drafting committee is formed.

Statements can be put either on the Council schedule timeline (which starts in the fall) or the off-cycle timeline as discussed in Section 10. In general, statements being revised will be put on the Council schedule and new statements will be put off-cycle.

### *C. Initiation and appointment of a drafting committee*

The following guidelines are used to form a statement drafting committee that is appointed by Council.

#### Professional guidance statements

Professional guidance statements are initiated by the AMS Executive Committee or Council, possibly as a result of a proposal from other AMS members. The drafting committee of four to six individuals is appointed by the Council, and includes:

- At least one chair (or chair's designee) of an AMS Board or Committee. The Board or Committee is selected by the relevant Commissioner for its disciplinary expertise;
- At least one Council member, one of whom shall be the Council liaison;
- Two to four other subject-matter experts, at least two of whom are AMS members.

No call for volunteers is needed for these statements.

#### Information statements

Information statements are initiated by the Executive Committee or Council, possibly as a result of a proposal from other AMS members. A drafting committee of six to ten individuals is appointed by the Council and includes:

- At least one chair (or chair's designee) of an AMS Board or Committee. The Board or Committee is selected by the relevant AMS Commissioner for its disciplinary expertise;
- At least one Council member, one of whom shall be the Council liaison;
- Three to eight other subject-matter experts, at least three of whom are AMS members.

Before the membership of the drafting committee is finalized, AMS members are notified that the statement is being undertaken so that individuals may volunteer to participate.

#### Policy statements

Policy statements are initiated by the Executive Committee or Council, possibly as a result of a proposal from other AMS members. When deemed appropriate and helpful by Council, the AMS Policy Program, which may possess relevant expertise or knowledge, may be consulted on policy statements. This may include, for example, helping Council determine the appropriate scope for a particular statement, discussion of potential members of the drafting committee and potential content, or identifying opportunities to communicate with key policy officials. A drafting committee of eight to twelve individuals is appointed by the Council and includes:

- At least two chairs (or their designees) of AMS Boards or Committees, selected by the relevant AMS Commissioner for their disciplinary expertise;
- At least one Council member, one of whom shall be the Council liaison;
- Four to eight other subject-matter experts, at least four of whom are AMS members.

Before the drafting committee is finalized, AMS members are notified that the statement is being undertaken so that individuals may volunteer to participate.

#### *D. Writing a draft statement*

The Chair of the drafting committee will convene meetings and lead e-mail discussions as needed to create a written draft of the statement. Council expectations for the statement will help to guide the writing, while these guidelines will inform the drafting committee on the intended audience, statement format and writing style, approximate length of the statement, and the statement timeline. It is stressed that the ultimate audience for the statement must be kept in mind during the writing process to ensure the statement has the desired result and impact. The drafting committee should also discuss ways to communicate the statement most effectively and is encouraged to provide such recommendations to Council. In general, it is expected that a written draft statement of high quality will be completed within 2-3 months of the initiation of the drafting committee.

If and when it is apparent to the drafting committee that a consensus cannot be reached among drafting committee members, the drafting committee may decide to include language in the statement reflecting the existence of the minority viewpoint within the community. No separate minority statements are to be issued.

#### *E. Review, Revision, and Approval*

Professional guidance, information, and policy statements all undergo the same multi-stage review process following the completion of the initial draft. An overview of the major decision points in the process is provided here, but see Section 10 for a detailed timeline that includes all steps. Throughout the statement creation process, the Council liaison works with the drafting committee, providing feedback and guidance at various stages to help ensure the draft statement reflects the position of the Society. The Executive Director moderates this interaction.

The Council reviews the first draft and, by simple majority of those Councilors eligible to vote on an e-mail ballot, either approves the statement as sufficiently ready to solicit comments from AMS members, or returns the statement to the drafting committee with suggestions for changes that should be made before it is ready for comment. In the latter case, the revised draft is again submitted to the Council for

approval, using the same e-mail ballot procedure. AMS staff will ensure that the draft versions are edited prior to review by Council, prior to review by the general membership, and prior to final voting on the statement by Council.

If the Council does not approve the revised draft, the drafting committee prepares a second revision. If the Council does not approve the second revision, the drafting committee is disbanded, and the Council may appoint a new drafting committee and the process begins anew. This option should be exercised only as a last resort.

Once a draft statement has been approved by the Council, comments are solicited from AMS members, including the Council, during a 30-day period. After consideration of AMS member comments, the drafting committee prepares a new draft for Council consideration along with a point-by-point response to all comments. The Council considers this draft and, by simple majority vote through a deliberative process, approves it as written or with minor edits, suggests substantive changes, or rejects the draft. If substantive changes are requested, the resulting draft is passed back to the drafting committee for action, and a revised draft is returned to the Council for reconsideration. The Council considers the drafting committee's revisions and, by simple majority vote through a deliberative process, approves the final form of the statement with any additional corrections that are deemed necessary. The period of time from appointment of the drafting committee to approval by the Council is typically eight months.

## **5. Communication of statements**

Communication of AMS statements should be an integral part of the initiating, writing, and review process. The ultimate audience for the statement must be kept in mind during the entire process to ensure the statement has the desired result and impact. The following general guidelines for the dissemination of the AMS statements may be adjusted for each statement. Each drafting committee should work with the AMS Director of Communications to develop a specific communication plan to ensure the statement reaches all targeted audiences. Recommendations from the drafting committee on ways to communicate the statement should be provided to Council by the liaison.

Professional Guidance Statements typically will be published on the AMS Web site, appear in the *Bulletin of the AMS*, and be sent to members via list serves, email, letters or other such means. Occasionally, professional guidance statements might be of interest to the general public, the media, and government officials and should be released as appropriate, in coordination with the AMS Director of Communications.

Information statements by nature have a wider distribution to reach the general public. They typically will be published on the AMS Web site, appear in the *Bulletin of the AMS*, and will be sent to members via list serves, emails, letters and other communication vehicles. Depending on their timeliness and content, information statements may be distributed to the media through press releases and press events and to Federal, state and local government representatives through visits, meetings, programs sponsored by the AMS, and direct mail. The statements may also be made available to the general public through the AMS partnership with *Weatherwise* magazine and other partner organizations.



Policy statements are specifically aimed at representatives of local, state and Federal government, officials of international organizations and related policy professionals. Therefore the communication plan for policy statements will typically be developed in consultation with the AMS Policy Program. The approaches used to reach the target audience may include email, list serves, journal publication, direct mail, visits and meetings, programs sponsored by AMS, and testimony. These statements may also be of interest to the general public and media, which will be determined during the writing and review process.

## **6. Time-in-force and update procedures**

When a statement of the AMS is approved, it must contain language specifying the maximum time period for which it will remain in force.

Professional guidance statements and information statements may remain in force for at most five years. At any point during the period in force, the Council may decide that a statement should lapse, be reissued, or be revised. If the statement is to be revised, the revision should follow the Council timeline. If no such decision has been taken by the end of the five-year period, the statement automatically lapses and should be removed from the list of active statements on the AMS web site. Statements that have expired will be archived by the AMS. A regular cycle of statement review provides a mechanism by which statements are evaluated as they approach the end of the period in force, allowing Council the opportunity to proactively determine whether not a given statement should expire, be reissued, or be revised.

Policy statements may remain in force for at most five years, with time in force to be determined by the Council when the statement is issued. There is no provision for continuation or revision. At the end of the time in force, the statement automatically lapses and should be removed from the list of active statements on the AMS web site. Statements that have expired will be archived by the AMS.

## **7. Statement formats and writing style**

Statements should be written so as to maximize their clarity, brevity, and likelihood to make an impact. All statements should use language suitable to the intended audience, as noted above in Section 2 (Types of Statements), and should be edited before issuance by an AMS editor for proper spelling, grammar, and usage.

All statements should be as concise as possible. Recommended word limits are as follows: Professional guidance statements should not exceed 1000 words; information statements should not exceed 2000 words; and policy statements should not exceed 750 words. A statement should begin with a summary paragraph if its total length is more than two-thirds of the maximum word count.

Statements may be issued with an accompanying “white paper” providing detailed or technical background supporting a position taken in a statement. Statements of the AMS are issued by the Council and therefore do not name authors, but white papers may be issued with authors’ names. White papers may contain scientific and technical references, which should generally be avoided in statements.

## 8. Partnering with other professional societies and organizations

To maximize the impact of AMS statements, AMS should strive to partner whenever possible with other professional societies and organizations in issuing joint statements on topics of mutual interest. To do so, however, the writing, review and approval processes described herein should not be compromised, so that all jointly issued statements meet the same standards as statements issued solely by the AMS.

AMS should also seek to endorse suitable statements from other societies and organizations and to obtain endorsement for AMS statements. Endorsements by AMS of statements issued by other organizations are subject to the approval of the AMS Council, by a three-quarters majority vote by e-mail ballot.

## 9. Summary of Statement Types and Attributes

The following table summarizes basic information about each type of AMS Statement, as described in previous sections.

<b>Statement Type</b>	<b>Primary Audience</b>	<b>Drafting committee and Chair</b>	<b>Maximum Length</b>	<b>Time from start of drafting committee to final Council approval</b>	<b>Maximum Time in Force</b>
Professional Guidance Statements	AMS members	Total: 4–6: 1+ Chair of an AMS Board or Committee; 1+ Council member; 2–4 Other experts	1000 words	8 months	5 years
Information Statements	Public	Total: 6–10: 1+ Chair of an AMS Board or Committee; 1+ Council member; 3–8 Other experts	2000 words	8 months	5 years
Policy Statements	Government officials; policy professionals	Total: 8–12: 2+ Chairs of AMS Boards or	750 words	8 months	5 years

		Committees; 1+ Council member; 4-8 Other experts			
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## 10. Timelines

### A. Regular Process Aligned with Council Meeting Schedule

The Council schedule timeline describes a regular process by which current AMS statements are reviewed and evaluated using a timeline tied to the Council meeting schedule. New statements can enter this timeline or can be put off-cycle if desired. Council may extend statement timelines as needed; typically extensions are granted until the next regular Council meeting. Throughout the statement process, the Executive Director moderates and guides the interactions among the drafting committee, AMS staff, and Council to help ensure the timeline is met.

#### **Fall Council meeting**

For statements that are ready for final consideration:

- Council considers drafting committee comments, makes minor revisions as necessary, and approves the final draft. Council can modify the statement up until the final vote, although at this late stage it is hoped that only minor changes are needed. If Council determines that substantial changes are still needed, then the statement should be returned to the drafting committee and an extension granted.
- Drafting committee recommendations for communication of the statement are also considered.

For new statement proposals that have been received:

- Council assigns a Council member (the Council liaison) and (if desired) AMS Commissioner(s) to the proposed statement
- Council determines who should be part of the small, informal assessment group for the proposed statement

For statements due to expire at the end of the following year:

- AMS staff present summary of statements set to expire at the end of the following year
- Council assigns a Council member (the Council liaison) and (if desired) AMS Commissioner(s) to each of the statements up for consideration in the following year
- Council determines who should be part of the small informal assessment group for each statement

For new statement proposals and for statements due to expire at the end of the following year:

Within 4 weeks after the fall Council meeting, the Council liaison will discuss the statement with the informal assessment group and bring a written recommendation back to Council on how to proceed. For new statements, the recommendation is whether or not the proposed statement should be created. For statements due to expire, the recommendation is whether the statement should be reaffirmed, revised, or allowed to expire. If the recommendation is for the statement to be revised or created, the assessment group recommendation will include a short list (with brief biographies) of potential chairs or co-chairs of the drafting committee. A justification for each potential chair must consider not just the scientific expertise of the individual, but also their ability to write to the broad audience intended for statements. In addition, the potential chairs' experience in similar efforts should be mentioned. Council provides feedback on the recommendation, either accepting it or modifying it as needed via email. Statement reaffirmation requires a simple majority vote of Council, including a determination of time in force for the reaffirmed statement.

If Council determines the statement is to be revised or created, then

- Council selects Chair of drafting committee
- Council assigns a committee or board chair to the statement to provide disciplinary expertise (if needed).
- The Council liaison, drafting committee Chair, and disciplinary experts prepare a brief outline, or précis, for the statement. Council is consulted often during this process to ensure that the précis adequately captures the need for the statement and what topics the statement will address. The précis serves as the roadmap for the statement drafting committee and will be used to help obtain volunteers for the drafting committee.
- When the précis is complete, Council approves the précis via e-mail for use in the call for volunteers.
- Once a précis is approved by Council, for Information and Policy Statements a notice is placed on the AMS Web site (and disseminated via listserves) announcing the topic via the précis and the opportunity for AMS members to volunteer to serve on drafting committee. This volunteer opportunity remains open for 4 weeks, with names collected and provided to the drafting committee Chair and Council liaison. No call for volunteers is required for Professional Guidance Statements.

After the volunteer opportunity period has ended, the drafting committee core (Chair, Council liaison, staff member(s), and committee or board chair) prepare a proposed complete drafting committee using volunteers as appropriate but supplementing the committee with individuals who will be asked to serve. The proposal should include a very brief biography of each drafting committee member and indicate which of those proposed volunteered. (Document should also indicate how many individuals volunteered but need not identify volunteers not recommended for service or explain why they were not selected.) The recommended drafting committee membership is presented at the winter Council meeting.

### **Winter Council meeting**

During the winter Council meeting,

- Statement drafting committee membership is presented to Council by Council liaison

- Drafting committee membership is discussed by Council and modified if needed
- Council approves or rejects drafting committee membership

If the drafting committee is approved, then the Council liaison notifies the drafting committee Chair and instructs the Chair to work with the committee to prepare the first draft of the statement. The Council liaison is expected to provide periodic updates to the Council on the progress and content of the statement. This should include sharing early drafts of the statement with Council. It is the responsibility of the Council liaison and Chair to ensure that the statement is moving forward on or ahead of schedule.

The following timeline is followed for each statement in order for it to be ready for final Council consideration at the succeeding fall meeting. (The dates listed assume a Winter Council meeting in mid-January and may be modified by Council if a different meeting schedule pertains.):

- Draft provided to Council in mid-March for informal feedback to drafting committee.
- First draft of statement due at AMS on 1 April.
- AMS Editors edit draft by 15 April and return to drafting committee.
- Drafting committee reviews edits and returns statement to AMS for dissemination to Council on 1 May. Council to provide comments on the statement within one week and in response the statement is reworked by drafting committee. For minor comments, complete editing by 7 May and submit updated statement to Council for vote to approve posting for member comment. More substantive comments may require more time prior to the Council vote.
- Council email votes due back by 15 May.
- Draft statements posted for AMS member comments by 1 June. Comment period lasts for one month, until 30 June. Council members are encouraged to provide comments.
- Comments are provided to the drafting committee on 1 July and the committee provides written responses to these comments and edits the statement as needed until the end of July.
- The modified statement and written responses to the comments are provided to Council by 1 August for informal feedback to drafting committee.
- The final draft statement, recommendations on methods of communication, and written responses to the comments are provided to Council in time for the fall Council meeting. Council can modify the statement up until the final vote, although at this late stage it is hoped that only minor changes are needed. If Council determines that substantial changes are still needed, then the statement should be returned to the drafting committee and an extension granted.

Approved statements are posted on AMS Web site, published in the next available issue of BAMS, and communicated as appropriate given the statement and recommendations by Council. As appropriate, other communication pathways are suggested including briefings, webinars, etc.

## B. Off-cycle Process

Statements that do not follow the regular Council timeline are called off-cycle statements. The same steps of assessment, initiation and appointment of a drafting committee, writing a draft statement, and review and approval by Council are taken, but these steps are not necessarily in sync with the Council meeting schedule.

The various steps needed to create an off-cycle statement are outlined below. The “Time” indication is an approximate point in time relative to the drafting committee approval date for the start of that step. [The time shown in brackets is the expected average time to complete the step.] This timeline allows an assessment for a particular statement as to whether the process is running ahead of, or behind, schedule. Throughout the process, the Executive Director moderates and guides the interactions among the drafting committee, AMS staff, and Council to help ensure the timeline is followed.

### *1. Time: -3.5 months [30 days]*

A proposal (< 500 words) justifying the need for a statement presented to (or possibly generated within) the Executive Committee or Council

- Council assigns a Council member (the Council liaison) and (if desired) AMS Commissioner(s) to the statement
- If statement idea had been generated from within the commission structure, Commissioner identifies appropriate board or committee chair to work with Council and staff member on next steps
- The Executive Committee or Council provides feedback on proposal, either approving proposal to move on to next step or asking for revised proposal that incorporates feedback. Council could also ask the Council liaison to conduct an informal assessment and provide a short list of candidates for drafting committee Chair. A brief biography and justification could be requested for each candidate that considers not just the scientific expertise of the individual, but also their ability to write to the broad audience intended for statements. The potential Chairs' experience in similar efforts should be mentioned.
- Drafting committee Chair selected by Council.

### *2. Time: -2.5 months [45 days]*

The Council liaison, drafting committee Chair and disciplinary experts prepare a brief outline, or précis, for the statement. Council is consulted often during this process to ensure that the précis adequately captures the need for the statement and what topics the statement will address. The précis serves as the roadmap for the statement drafting committee and will be used to help obtain volunteers for the drafting committee.

- Council approves the précis for use in the call for volunteers.

Once the précis is approved by Council, for Information and Policy Statements notice is placed on AMS Web site (and disseminated via listserves) announcing topic via the précis and the opportunity for AMS members to volunteer to serve on drafting committee. This volunteer opportunity remains open for 4 weeks, with names collected and provided to the drafting committee Chair and Council liaison. No call for volunteers is required for Professional Guidance Statements.

### *3. Time: -1 month [14 days]*

Drafting committee core (Council liaison, drafting committee Chair, staff member(s), and committee or board chair) prepare a proposed complete drafting committee using volunteers as appropriate but supplementing committee with individuals who will be asked to serve. Proposal should include very brief biography on each drafting committee member and indicate which of those proposed volunteered. (Document should also indicate how many individuals volunteered but need not identify volunteers not recommended for service or explain why they were not selected.)

*4. Time: -0.5 months [14 days]*

Council is presented with proposed drafting committee membership for approval.

**Marker: Council approves drafting committee -- 8-month clock starts**

*5. Time: 0 months [60 days]*

Council liaison notifies the drafting committee and instructs the Chair to work with the committee to prepare the first draft of the statement. Drafting committee prepares first draft of statement. Council member on the drafting committee is expected to provide periodic updates to the Council on progress and content of the Statement during the 8-month period. This should include sharing early drafts of the Statement with Council. It is the responsibility of the chair or co-chairs to ensure that the statement is moving forward on or ahead of schedule over the next eight months.

*6. Time: 2 months [10 days]*

Draft provided to Council for informal feedback to drafting committee.

*7. Time: 2.3 months [4 days]*

AMS editors edit the draft statement and pass it back to the drafting committee for review before being presented to Council.

*8. Time: 2.5 months [14 days]*

Council sent draft with e-mail ballot to approve posting for AMS member comment

*9. Time: 3 months [30 days]*

Draft posted for review and comment by AMS members (including Council)

*10. Time: 4 months [60 days]*

Drafting committee revises draft in response to comments and prepares report for Council on new draft that shows a point-by-point response to all comments and shows how draft was modified. Conference call or meeting date for Council consideration set with at least 30 days' notice.

*11. Time: 6 months [7 days]*

AMS editors edit the new draft statement and pass it back to the drafting committee for review before being presented to Council.

*12. Time: 6.25 months [21 days]*

Council considers new draft and responses to comments. Carries out some online discussion prior to scheduled conference call or meeting. On conference call or at meeting, the Council approves as written, with revisions as deemed necessary, or rejects draft.

*13. Time: 7 months [10 days]*

If draft is substantively revised by Council, new draft passed back to drafting committee for review and comment. Conference call or meeting date for Council consideration set with at least 30 days' notice.

*14. Time: 7.3 months [21 days]*

On conference call or at meeting, Council considers drafting committee comments, makes minor revisions as necessary, and approves final draft.

**Marker: Council approves statement at 8 months**

*15. Time: 8 months [30 days]*

Statement is posted on AMS Web site, published in next available issue of BAMS, and communicated as appropriate given the statement.

**11. Best Practices**

**A. Purpose**

The purpose of a Best Practice is to alert the AMS membership, governmental and private sector organizations, and, in some cases, the general public about AMS endorsed best practices across sectors of the weather, water, and climate enterprise and to promote statements of scientifically-based standards and practices from third parties deemed worthy of the credibility and reputation of the Society.

**B. Roles and responsibilities of those involved in creating a Best Practice**

A Best Practice may be initiated by the AMS Board on Best Practices, AMS Council, or through a proposal by any AMS member, committee, or board. A Best Practice drafting committee is formed by the Board on Best Practices in consultation with the Commissioner of Professional Affairs and AMS Council. The drafting committee shall include:

- at least one member of the Board on Best Practices, who may serve as chair
- at least one member of the AMS Council, who will serve as liaison to Council
- at least one member of another AMS committee or board, if that committee or board has proposed the Best Practice under consideration
- an appropriate number of experts in the subject area, such that at least one-half of the committee are AMS members
- a committee chair, who will be appointed by the Chair of the Board on Best Practices

A call for volunteers to serve on the drafting committee is not required, although such a call may be made.

**C. The Best Practice process**

Each Best Practice will begin with a proposal to the Board on Best Practices that will include:

- A statement describing the need for the Best Practice and why AMS is the appropriate organization to issue the Best Practice



- The intended audience for the Best Practice
- The scientific basis for the Best Practice, if appropriate. In particular, indicate if a new scientific finding suggests a change in routine approaches is warranted.
- A preliminary charge to drafting committee
- A list of other AMS boards or committees that should be engaged, if any

The proposal will be submitted to the Board on Best Practices, who will review it and determine if a Best Practice should be developed. If the proposal is accepted, the Board will appoint a drafting committee and seek a liaison from the AMS Council. Thereafter, the process will largely follow that detailed in section 10B for off-cycle Statements (beginning with step 5). Major steps are:

- The committee will produce a draft Best Practice and submit it to the Board for review.
- The Board will work with the committee to produce a revised draft of sufficient quality to submit to Council for review.
- Council will recommend possible revisions and approve a version to be published for comment by the AMS membership.
- Upon consideration of member comments, the drafting committee will produce a final version to be reviewed by the Board and Council.
- If approved by Council, the Best Practice will be published in the *Bulletin* and disseminated elsewhere as appropriate.

Each Best Practice will be reviewed by the Board at least every five years for its relevance and continued applicability. The Board may choose to retain the Best Practice as is or to withdraw it. If the Board determines the Best Practice should be revised, the Board may appoint a drafting committee to develop a revised Best Practice for consideration and approval by Council.

## **12. Term in force of Guidelines and amendments thereto**

The purpose of the Guidelines for Statements and Best Practices of the American Meteorological Society (the present document) is to provide clear and complete guidance on the types, purposes, preparation, and dissemination of AMS Statements and Best Practices. There will be only one set of Guidelines for Statements and Best Practices of the AMS in force at any given time. The audience for these Guidelines is AMS officials and members, especially those involved in preparing AMS Statements and Best Practices, although they may also be informative to individuals outside AMS seeking an understanding of the process by which Statements and Best Practices come into force. The Guidelines for Statements and Best Practices of the AMS should be written in nontechnical, nonlegalistic language, and provide instructions that are unambiguous. The Executive Committee or Council can initiate alterations to this document.

The Guidelines for Statements and Best Practices of the AMS remains in force for at most ten years. At any point during this period, the Council may decide the Guidelines should be revised. If the Guidelines are about to lapse, then plans must be made for re-issuance or revision, so that there is always a set of Guidelines for Statements and Best Practices of the AMS in force.

The review process for the Guidelines for Statements and Best Practices of the AMS differs from that of the Statements themselves. Council reviews the first draft of the Guidelines and may either approve that draft without revision or approve it as a first draft and provide comments to guide a revision by a

drafting committee. In either case, the approval is by simple majority vote. If revisions are requested, the drafting committee responds with a final version for Council approval by simple majority vote. There is no provision for review of the Guidelines by AMS members. It is hoped that the period of time from appointment of drafting committee to final approval by the Council does not exceed six months. The Council can amend the Guidelines with minor changes intended to clarify the process at any time, with a simple majority vote through a deliberative process.

[This statement is considered in force until 09/21/2027 unless superseded by a new statement issued by the AMS Council before this date.]

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