



WMO-CGMS Virtual Laboratory
for Education and Training in Satellite Meteorology

ACTIVITY REPORT

Period: September 2011 to August 2012

Satellite Operator/Agency: NOAA

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUPPORT OFFERED TO VLAB CENTRE(S) OF EXCELLENCE (CoE) AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF VLAB TRAINING ACTIVITIES

NOAA provides training support through many organizations. CIRA, NWS Training Division and Hydrometeorological Prediction Center (HPC)/NCEP International Desks in collaboration with the CoEs Barbados and Costa Rica conduct the monthly Americas and Caribbean Regional Focus Group discussions. The email distribution list for the RFG is also used to disseminate information about satellite status. CIRA with CoE Barbados provides support for the monthly Caribbean Focus Group discussions.

Lectures/presentations (HPC/NCEP, CIRA, NRL, NWS TD) and in some cases editing (CIRA) support were provided for:

Caribbean Aviation Week training event

WMO Regional Training Seminar for National Instructors of RA III and RA IV

Mexican workshop on Quantitative Precipitation Forecasting Techniques

WMO/EUMETSat RGB Imagery Analysis and Interpretation Workshop

EUMETSat Dust and Ash Week

Caribbean Aeronautical Continuing Professional Development Course

COMET provides the upkeep of the Environmental Satellite Resource Center (ESRC), a sortable catalog of resources available to the VLab and global user community. CIRA in collaboration with NOAA's Direct Readout Service have initiated and started sending training materials through a GEONETCast Americas channel called "VLab Training".

NOAA through CIRA has provided support for the VLab Technical Support Officer.

Which VLab CoE(s) is(are) supported by this Satellite Operator/Agency?

NOAA supports Barbados, Costa Rica, Brazil, and Argentina.

What were the major achievements in supporting VLab CoE(s) during this reporting period?

NOAA with its cooperative institute (CIRA) worked to ensure that the VLab Technical Support Officer was funded to assist with CoE activities.

NOAA quickly passed along information to the user community about the interruption in service experienced by GOES-13 (September 23) and the resumption of service by the GOES-14 backup satellite.

NOAA and its partners continue to provide on-going and thriving monthly Focus Group sessions. COMET is active in producing new satellite training modules (many translated into Spanish) and in supporting the ESRC. In coordination with WMO Space Programme, the ESRC Web site interface was translated into French and Russian. VISIT continues to produce new satellite training modules and conducts several live teletraining sessions every month.

What were the main difficulties in supporting VLab CoE(s) during this reporting period?

NOAA and its partners can train on imagery and products, but if they are not easily accessible for optimal interpretation, we are falling short of our goals. NOAA and partners

are investigating how to provide reliable, relatively inexpensive software to display imagery, product, model output, and surface observations. Various packages are being assessed: McIDAS-V, UNIDATA options (IDV, NAWIPS/GEMPAK).

Is any kind of Learning Management System (e.g. Moodle, Blackboard, etc) used by this Satellite Operator/Agency to conduct training activities? If so, can it be shared with the CoEs you support?

NOAA uses Learning Management System that is not available to persons outside the Federal Government. COMET tracks user activity through their MetEd site.

Moodle is currently being used through the COMET program to support the 2nd Caribbean Aeronautical Continuing Professional Development Course.

Is any kind of Online Conferencing System (e.g. Saba Centra, Blackboard Collaborate, GoToWebinar, etc) used by this Satellite Operator/Agency to conduct training activities? If so, can it be shared with the CoEs you support?

NOAA uses GoToWebinar and VISITview to conduct training activities. Both these software packages are already being used to support VLab training activities such as the regional focus group sessions. The VISITview software is free for use. NOAA pays for the GoToWebinar license and coordinates and schedules this service for the CoEs for the monthly focus group sessions. However, NOAA cannot offer free access for others to use GoToWebinar on their own at this time.

Can you suggest ways for the VLab (including CoEs, Supporting Satellite Agencies, Partner Programmes, WMO Space Programme, VLab Co-chairs and TSO) to provide better support to the training activities of this Satellite Operator/Agency?

Continue the announcement of training activities from all organizations, both in the calendar and through emails. Can these activities be archived in another area for reference (other than searching through individual reports)?

Does this Satellite Operator/Agency have a website dedicated to explain its involvement and support to VLab (as indicated in the document “Expectations from Satellite Operators)? If so, please provide URL.

<http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/training/rmtc/>

Do you maintain regular contact with the other VLab Supporting Satellite Operators/Agencies to discuss data access and format issues as well as training needs to improve the use of satellite data and products? Can you suggest ways of improving this contact?

Yes NOAA does maintain contact on a regular basis.

Ways to improve the contact: Provide a mechanism to “nudge” or promote the flow of information within the various CGMS /WMO communities and from larger countries down to the users. This is done somewhat with the NOAA Direct Readout Conference that will be conducted as part of a larger NOAA Satellite Conference in April 2013. The primary issue with a conference is that those that could benefit the most from the information are



not able to attend. NOAA is also planning to conduct more virtual conferences in the future. A Satellite Science Week virtual conference is planned for March 2013.

Please use the table below to list any training materials you may have developed over this reporting period:

Title of training material	Type of resource	Availability of resource	Submitted to ESRC
WMO Americas and Caribbean Focus Group - Recorded sessions	Real time interpretation of imagery and products.	Online	soon

Is this Satellite Operator/Agency working closely together with the supported CoE(s) in VLab training activities? Can you suggest ways to improve this collaboration?

NOAA works closely with CoEs that they have supported the longest: Barbados and Costa Rica. Brazil has received support in the past to get started on training activities and data access and distribution. Since they are a larger country than Barbados and Costa Rica, they have many internal resources to draw on and are doing very well continuing their training and data distribution activities. NOAA will work on strengthening collaboration with the Argentina CoE.

Please use this space for additional remarks you may wish to make relating to the delivery of training by the Satellite Operator/Agency and the sponsored CoE(s).

Please complete the table in the next page with information about the training events organised by this Satellite Operator/Agency, as part of VLab activities, during this reporting period.

Alternatively, you may export the information you have entered in the Online Calendar of Events to Excel and just add the post-event information needed (i.e.

number of participants and Country of origin of participants). You can then copy and paste your own table to the last page of this report.

Date	Title	Location	WMO region	Host	Type	Language	Number of trainees	Country of origin of trainees
19.09.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	38	Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Suriname
15.08.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	52	Bahamas, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago
25.07.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	40	Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Panama, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, Uruguay
20.06.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	21	Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago
24.05.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	24	Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Niger, Uruguay

19.04.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	12	Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Honduras, St. Kitts and Nevis
12.03.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	7	Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama
22.02.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	15	Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Honduras Bahamas, Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Panama, St. Lucia
19.01.2012	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	44	
22.12.2011	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	8	Antigua, Barbados, Colombia, Grenada, Mexico, Panama Barbados, Cayman Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Puerto Rico
22.11.2011	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	17	Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada Guyana, Honduras, Peru, St. Lucia, Uruguay
22.10.2011	RFG Americas and Caribbean	Online	III, IV	US, Barbados, Costa Rica	RFG	English/Spanish	41	