

The growing role of NOAA in DHS operations and planning: Storm surge et al

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Since 2004, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has provided direct support to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) National Operations Center (NOC) and the Director of Operations Coordination and Planning. This support consists of the manning of a NOAA desk within the DHS NOC (located in the DHS Complex near the intersection of Massachusetts and Nebraska Avenues in Northwest Washington DC), the provision of products and consultation that help DHS leaders make decisions regarding the impacts of severe weather on their operations, and the support during emergency relocation of DHS components and desk officers (to a location 40 miles west of Washington). On an annual basis the NOAA desk officers monitor observed and predicted weather for the United States and its territories to include flash flooding, heavy snow, severe weather (tornadoes, hail and high winds), critical fire weather conditions, solar storms and tropical storms. Operations dramatically increase during the summer and early Fall (24 hour per day, 7 days per week, virtual and on-site) to support operations related to tropical storms and hurricanes. The NOAA desk officers also provide support for special events such as the Republican and Democratic Conventions, Super Bowls, Presidential Inaugurations, and any manmade/natural disasters (earthquake recovery, oil spills, toxic dispersion, etc). Over the past year the DHS NOAA desk led the synchronization of requirements between DHS Director of Operations Coordination and Planning and the NOAA Under Secretary Office, as well as the improved coordination with agencies supported by both NOAA and Department of Defense (DoD). The presentation will give a detailed look at DHS customer, NOAA DHS NOC desk operations, and examples of support over the past 4-5 years. It will also concentrate on what NOAA is doing to improve storm surge analysis and forecasting, so as to prepare for future storms like Hurricane Sandy.

Biography

Peter B. Roohr is a meteorologist managing the fire weather science and technology and Small Business Innovation Research programs within the Office of Science and Technology at Headquarters National Weather Service. He is also a subject matter expert in topics of lightning, winter weather and volcanic ash. He grew up in Alexandria VA and obtained a B.A. degree in Environmental Science at the University of Virginia (minor in Astronomy), and M.S. (1991) and Ph.D. (1999) degrees in Atmospheric Science from Colorado State University. His thesis and dissertation concentrated on the incorporation of lightning data into nowcasting of phenomena such as intense bands of snow and ice. From 1986 to 2007 he was a U.S. Air Force officer managing major weather system program acquisition and technology transition, as well as directing the diverse operations and policy development of four major weather squadrons/divisions in Korea, within AF Materiel Command, at AF Weather Agency and at the Pentagon.

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