THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
March 27, 1987

I am pleased to send my congratulations to the Air Weather Service as you celebrate your Golden Anniversary.

For 50 years, you have done an outstanding job supporting America's military forces and expediting many of the major advances in the science of meteorology. The Air Weather Service plays a vital role in the decision making process of military commanders by providing necessary weather information. You also perform a crucial function by aiding civilian meteorologists with accurate and timely weather reports through the use of satellites, radar and air reconnaissance.

I salute the men and women of the Air Weather Service for a job well done. With your continued dedication and professionalism, I am sure that the forecast of the Air Force will always be "clear and a million." Again, congratulations and God bless you.

Ronald Reagan

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Weather Service started in the military

The first U.S. government weather service was Army Signal Corps officers who served during the Civil War. By 1869, the Army Signal Corps was responsible for weather observations, including the famous "probabilities" chart. The first official weather service was established in 1870, when President Rutherford B. Hayes created the Weather Bureau, which later became the National Weather Service.

By 1890, the Weather Bureau had developed a national network of observing stations, including the famous "probabilities" chart. The first official weather service was established in 1870, when President Rutherford B. Hayes created the Weather Bureau, which later became the National Weather Service.

A half century of service

1917 - The War Department Central Staff transferred the Army's weather service to the Chief Signal Officer in the War Department.

1926 - The Weather Service established a national network of observing stations, including the famous "probabilities" chart. The first official weather service was established in 1870, when President Rutherford B. Hayes created the Weather Bureau, which later became the National Weather Service.

1929 - The first official weather service was established in 1870, when President Rutherford B. Hayes created the Weather Bureau, which later became the National Weather Service.

1942 - The Weather Service began using satellite imagery to monitor weather systems across the globe. The first official weather service was established in 1870, when President Rutherford B. Hayes created the Weather Bureau, which later became the National Weather Service.

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1947

UHF (ultra-high frequency) weather forecasting service established for AAF bases.

First Potsdam-Arctic weather reconnaissance balloon flown over the North Pole. "Potsdam" is now at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

1948

First radio forecast issued by AFSW (Air Force Weather Service), which later became the National Weather Service. AFSW was established in October 1941.

1950

First Weather Advisory Service inaugurated.

1951

Severe Weather Warning Center in Franklin, Texas, is established by AFSW at AFSW, Dallas.

1952

AWS begins transmission of radio weather forecasts from mobile units stationed in key areas.

1953

AWS begins implementing its first national network of weather observation stations.

1954

First weather receiver used in Operation Crossroads test begins at Eureka, AK.

1955

AWS begins experimenting with digital systems for weather forecasting.

1956

AWS begins experimenting with satellite weather monitoring.

1957

AWS begins experimenting with airborne weather sensors.

Weather regions

A weather region is a geographical area served by an AFSW office. The region had no precise boundaries and was often extended in areas where weather conditions were similar. For each region, the AFSW office maintained a network of weather observation stations and was responsible for issuing weather forecasts and warnings. The AFSW office was responsible for coordinating weather services with other regions, ensuring a smooth flow of information.

AAF WEATHER SERVICE REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

FOR RCO CONFERENCE

A weather observation network was set up, using the weather observations of the various stations, to provide a comprehensive picture of the weather across the United States. The network was instrumental in providing accurate and timely weather information to various sectors, including military, aviation, and maritime.
1966
- The first AN/TPQ-37 weather radar was delivered to Griffiss AFB, N.Y., for testing.

1969
- Continental United States (CONUS) Radar Weather Service, implemented as a joint venture with the Department of Commerce, began weather monitoring and forecasting using airborne radar equipment. The system was known as the "Air Weather Radar System."
The MAC computer flight plan transmittal system was established from Dec. 16, 1962, to April 1, 1963, by the Air Force Weather Agency (AFWA). This system was designed to improve the accuracy and efficiency of the existing weather data transmission network.

The system consisted of a network of computers and transmitters that were connected to various weather stations around the world. The computers were used to process the raw weather data collected by the stations and to generate detailed weather forecasts for use by military and civilian agencies.

The MAC computer flight plan transmittal system was successfully tested and implemented during the Vietnam War. The system was praised for its ability to provide accurate and timely weather information to military commanders in the field.

The success of the MAC computer flight plan transmittal system paved the way for the development of future weather information systems, including the next-generation weather information system (NWSIS) and the global weather information system (GWIS). These systems are designed to provide even more accurate and timely weather information to military and civilian agencies around the world.

In conclusion, the MAC computer flight plan transmittal system was a significant achievement in the field of weather information systems. Its success in the Vietnam War demonstrated the potential of technology to improve the accuracy and efficiency of weather forecasting, and it paved the way for future developments in this field.
AWS Commanders and

Captain Randolph P. Williams
1937

Capt. Robert W. Leady
1937 - 1940

Maj. Arthur F. Herrnstein
1940 - 1942

1950 - 1956

Brig. Gen. Norman L. Peterson
1958 - 1960, 1963

1963 - 1965

1965 - 1970

1970 - 1982

Brig. Gen. George E. Chaplin
1987 - Present

CMGen. William W. Gardner
1966 - 1970

CMGen. Martha W. Bryan
1970 - 1973
Enlisted Advisors

Col. Deo. Z. Zimmerman
1942 - 1943

Maj. Gen. Harold H. Bassett
1945 - 1946; 1956 - 1959

Brig. Gen. Donald N. Yates
1945 - 1950

Maj. Gen. William O. Senter
1956 - 1954

1970 - 1973

Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Aldrich
1973 - 1974

Brig. Gen. John W. Collins III
1974 - 1975

Brig. Gen. Harry W. Faw
1975 - 1978

CMSgt Sam E. Parks
1973 - 1975

CMSgt Howard M. Beek
1975 - 1978

CMSgt George M. Karn
1978 - 1982

CMSgt Charles T. Nelson
1982 - Present
Many aircraft types used for aerial weather reconnaissance

Air Weather Service's first aerial weather reconnaissance squadron, equipped at Patrick AFB, Fla., in 1944, flew three years before the first operational AWP. Aircraft included the B-25, B-47, WB-47, WB-25, WB-30, WB-40, WC-130, WB-50 and RB-50, and the WC-190.

In fiscal year 1954, the AWS Weather Reconnaissance Program, utilizing B-24s and B-25s, was transferred to the Meteorological Service and Command, and the B-24s were converted to AWB-2s. AWS personnel stationed at mobile and permanent weather data collection sites were equipped with WB-47s and WC-130s.

In early 1957, plans to construct a new AWB-2 weather reconnaissance were completed. Plans for several new AWB-2 reconnaissance aircraft were constructed at McConnell, N.Y., in 1957, and the first of these aircraft was delivered to AWS in 1958. The last AWB-2 was delivered to AWS in 1959.

The second Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, Detachment 11, was established at Keesler AFB, Miss., to conduct flying weather reconnaissance for the National Weather and Airborne Weather reconnaissance requirements for the National Weather Service. These aircraft are used for meteorological reconnaissance, weather research, and demonstration of new weather reconnaissance techniques.
Congratulations from around the world

The following are letters sent to Brig. Gen. George R. O'Connell, the Chief of the Weather and Air Operations Laboratory, Air Combat Command, USAF.

MAC
July 1st is a great day for the Air Weather Service and the United States Air Force. You and your people can be justifiably proud of a distinguished heritage and extensive contributions made in the defense of our country. I join the men and women of the Military Airlift Command in saluting you and your many accomplishments as you celebrate this special day. All our best for a good 50th anniversary.

Gen. Donald H. Cook

SAC
On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Air Weather Service, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to you and all the men and women of Air Weather Service. During the past 50 years, you have contributed to the continued progress in providing weather service tailored to our many complex weapon systems. The high degree of professionalism and dedication displayed by your people, in particular those of the 3rd Weather Wing, has given us the weather support necessary to keep pace with the rapid progress of change in today's ever demanding environment. I am confident that the future of your organization will be bright and provide the same high standards of efficiency that have marked its performance in the past.


AFSC
Congratulations to the men and women of the Air Weather Service as you celebrate your command's 50th anniversary on 1 July 1987. I wish you every measure of success and good fortune in all your future endeavors. Your support and efforts have contributed to the successful accomplishment of the mission of the Air Weather Service and the USAF. I commend you for your hard work and perseverance. May you have every measure of success in all your future endeavors.


AFSC
The men and women of the Air Force Logistics Command join me in extending our heartfelt congratulations to you on the occasion of your 50th anniversary. We wish you every measure of success and good fortune in all your future endeavors. May your efforts be as distinguished as your past accomplishments.

Gen. Robert E. Rose

AFSC
Throughout my flying career, I have been keenly aware of the invaluable contribution of the men and women of the Air Weather Service. Your knowledge in the use of aircraft weather forecasting is as important to airmen as the weather forecaster is to the civilian world. You provide an accurate and reliable service to the pilot, whether in the air or on the ground. Your service to the Air Force has been a vital asset in the conduct of military operations.

Gen. Robert E. Rose

AFCS
On behalf of the men and women of the Air Force Communications Command, I commend you for your distinguished service to the Air Force. The dedication and professionalism displayed by the men and women of the Air Weather Service have contributed significantly to the success of Air Force operations.

Gen. Robert E. Rose

AFCS
On behalf of the men and women of the Air Force Communications Command, I congratulate you on your 50th anniversary. The professionalism and dedication displayed by the men and women of the Air Weather Service have contributed significantly to the success of Air Force operations. Your service to the Air Force has been a vital asset in the conduct of military operations.

Gen. Robert E. Rose

ESC
On behalf of the Electronic Security Command, I congratulate you on your 50th anniversary. The professionalism and dedication displayed by the men and women of the Air Weather Service have contributed significantly to the success of Air Force operations. Your service to the Air Force has been a vital asset in the conduct of military operations.

Gen. Robert E. Rose

ESC
On behalf of the Electronic Security Command, I congratulate you on your 50th anniversary. The professionalism and dedication displayed by the men and women of the Air Weather Service have contributed significantly to the success of Air Force operations. Your service to the Air Force has been a vital asset in the conduct of military operations.

Gen. Robert E. Rose

ESC
On behalf of the Electronic Security Command, I congratulate you on your 50th anniversary. The professionalism and dedication displayed by the men and women of the Air Weather Service have contributed significantly to the success of Air Force operations. Your service to the Air Force has been a vital asset in the conduct of military operations.

Gen. Robert E. Rose

ESC
SPACECOM (USAF)  
Air Force Space Command extends sincere congratulations to all members of Air Weather Service on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of your organization.

For half a century, Air Weather Service has been a leader in technological innovation in support of operational forces. As the military services entered the space age, you led the way in space environmental support to the weather and satellite systems which are key to the Air Force Space Command mission. Currently, our cooperative roles in the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program stand as prime examples of the use of space as a medium for military support activities.

Air Force Space Command extends their best wishes for the next 50 years to the men and women of the Air Weather Service.

Maj. Gen. Maurice C. Peden

NORAD  
On behalf of the men and women of NORAD, I extend our heartfelt congratulations to you and all the men and women of the Air Weather Service on the occasion of your 50th Anniversary.

As the Space Command and NORAD continue to evolve, our common mission to provide joint, all-domain command and control for military operations, continues to grow and develop. We appreciate your continuing support for this mission.

I am confident that the 50th Anniversary will be a renewed commitment to excellence and a continued contribution to the Air Weather Service.

Gen. James D. Thurman

U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army  
Congratulations to you and the members of your command on the 50th Anniversary of the Air Weather Service. Your hard work and professionalism have made the Army a better armed force. The Army is proud to be able to use the Air Weather Service.

The Army is proud to have had the opportunity to support your mission. We look forward to continued success.

Gen. Thomas E. Bostick

U.S. Forces Korea  
The United States has always been a leader in providing accurate and timely weather information. Your organization has contributed to our nation's security and prosperity.

Your continued support for our mission is greatly appreciated. Please accept this message as a symbol of our admiration for your work.

Gen. Wayne W. Moore

Air Force Academy  
It is a pleasure to extend our sincere congratulations to you and all members of your command on the 50th Anniversary of the Air Weather Service.

The Academy is proud to have been a part of your mission. Please accept this message as a symbol of our admiration for your hard work.

Lt. Gen. John F. Emmerich

CENTCOM  
All soldiers, sailors, marines, and airman of U.S. Central Command join me in extending a very special congratulations to you and all members of the Air Weather Service on your 50th Anniversary. I am proud to be associated with the Air Weather Service, and I am honored to join you in your efforts.

The Air Weather Service has made significant contributions to our nation's security. Please accept this message as a symbol of our admiration for your work.

Gen. H.R. McMaster

FORSCOM  
It is my great pleasure and honor to offer my personal congratulations to the Air Weather Service on its 50th anniversary.

As the past, I have observed the continued growth of the Air Weather Service, which has been a valuable asset to the United States. I extend my congratulations to the personnel of the Air Weather Service for their hard work and dedication.

I am confident that the Air Weather Service will continue to provide valuable support to our country.

Gen. Thomas C. Richards

USSOUTHCOM  
We at United States Southern Command extend our heartfelt congratulations to you and all the men and women of the Air Weather Service on the occasion of your 50th Anniversary.

We are proud of the support that you have provided to our command and to the United States. Your contributions have been invaluable, and we look forward to continued success.

Maj. Gen. H.R. Thordal

7th AF (PACAF)  
The Air Weather Service has made full use of the technical and professional support provided by the Air Weather Service, and I extend my congratulations to you and all members of your command on the 50th Anniversary of the Air Weather Service.

I am confident that the Air Weather Service will continue to provide valuable support to our nation.

Gen. T. Michael Moseley

Kansas ANG  
I wish to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations to you and all members of your command on the 50th Anniversary of the Air Weather Service. The men and women of your command have always demonstrated outstanding professionalism and dedication to the difficult task of ensuring the safety and security of our nation.

I am confident that your command will continue to provide valuable support to our nation.

Gen. T. Michael Moseley

USSFORTHCOM  
We at United States Southern Command extend our heartfelt congratulations to you and all the men and women of the Air Weather Service on the occasion of your 50th Anniversary.

We are proud of the support that you have provided to our command and to the United States. Your contributions have been invaluable, and we look forward to continued success.

Maj. Gen. H.R. Thordal

USAF, 5th Weather Wing  
We at United States Southern Command extend our heartfelt congratulations to you and all the men and women of the Air Weather Service on the occasion of your 50th Anniversary.

We are proud of the support that you have provided to our command and to the United States. Your contributions have been invaluable, and we look forward to continued success.

Maj. Gen. H.R. Thordal
TO THE AIR WEATHER SERVICE

The 50th Anniversary of the Air Weather Service is an important milestone in the history of the United States Air Force. In serving the operational support requirements of combat and ground forces all over the world, the Air Weather Service has been a leader in applied meteorology.

As the United States Air Force launches into space, we find Air Weather Service already engaged in orbiting and forecasting the space environment. The importance of environmental support to national military missions continues to grow. We are confident that Air Weather Service will have an even greater fifty years of distinguished service to the Air Force and Army.

E. C. Aldridge, Jr.

TO THE MEN AND WOMEN OF AIR WEATHER SERVICE

Congratulations on 50 years of dedicated support to the United States Air Force. The accomplishments of the Air Weather Service in the atmospheric and space sciences have contributed significantly to our nation's security. Air Weather Service units worldwide provide invaluable day-to-day operational support to our fighting forces. The Air Weather Service is, and will continue to be, an essential element of national security.

Larry Welch

Chief of Staff

NOAA

We at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are pleased to join in celebrating the United States Air Force's Air Weather Service 50th Anniversary. Throughout its history, the Air Weather Service has earned a reputation within the international meteorological community as one of the finest and most respected organizations in the world. In the United States and abroad, their dedication, devotion, and work have contributed a weather service worthy of the highest praise. Theirs is a service that is more secure and more safe because of the diligent efforts of the Air Weather Service. We wish you great success in the years to come.

R.D. Vale

Administrator

Korea Meteorological Service

The Korean Meteorological Service proudly sends a big congratulations to the US Air Weather Service on its 50th anniversary of service to aviation. Over the years your mission has expanded, and we look forward to seeing these new challenges.

You have not only been professional, you have been a great group of people.

H.J. Sun

Director

German Military Geophysical Service

On behalf of the German Military Geophysical Service (GMGS), it is our pleasure to congratulate you most warmly on the 50th Anniversary of the US Air Weather Service. The close ties between these services have been even clearer when the 15th Detachment of the 2nd Weather Wing began to operate at the German Military Geophysical Office in the vicinity of Traben-Trarbach. Besides, there have been many other occasions on which we have been cooperating successfully on a bilateral basis as well as in the framework of the NATO Alliance.

Services consist of -- and are run by -- people who, at times, seem a rather trivial and repetitious statement. However, it is the people of a service which are at the root of the image and the ability to establish and maintain a good relationship with colleagues at other stations. And here we gladly take the opportunity to congratulate you, especially on the high respect that your service enjoys among other nations.

We trust that these close relations will continue to contribute to maintaining a friendly and mutually fruitful cooperation between our services.

Jr. J. U. Greenööing

For the Minister of Defense

Dr. H. Leue

For the GMGS

National Meteorological Service of Honduras

The National Meteorological Service of Honduras, which is a Department of the General Directorate of Civil Aeronautics, has kept close relations and cooperation with the US Air Weather Service since 1965. This cooperation has permitted the training of professional personnel and technicians in meteorology.

We wish to congratulate the US Air Weather Service on its 50th anniversary and extend our best wishes for continued success.

Saul A. Zaucha

Director
AGI20.2 GHQ Air Forces
(8-21-36)

January 28, 1937

SUBJECT: Meteorological Services.

TO: Chief of the Air Corps.

1. Effective July 1, 1937, the Chief of the Air Corps will be charged with responsibility for the meteorological service for that arm and for weather forecasts required by divisions and higher headquarters.

2. After the above date such meteorological data as may be required by arms and services concerned. Chiefs of these arms and services will submit recommendations for changes in Tables of Basic Allowances or Tables of Allowances to provide the necessary equipment and supplies for this purpose.

3. The Chief Signal Officer will continue to be responsible for the development, procurement, storage and issue of meteorological equipment and supplies, and for teletype and other signal communications required by the meteorological service.

4. Subject to the approval of the Chief of the Air Corps in each instance, Signal Corps Officers of the Regular Army with meteorological experience may be detailed, upon their own application, to temporary duty with the Air Corps.

5. With the approval of the Chief of the Air Corps in each instance, Signal Corps Reserve Officers who are meteorological specialists will be permitted to transfer to the Air Corps as nonflying reserve officers, provided that no officer will be transferred without his own consent.

6. Enlisted meteorological personnel now in the Signal Corps will be transferred without loss of grades or rating in accordance with instructions to be issued by the War Department at a later date. The training of meteorological observers and forecasters in the Enlisted Division of the Signal Corps School will be continued until such time as the Chief Signal Officer and the Chief of the Air Corps shall make mutual arrangements for the transfer of this course to the appropriate Air Corps School.

7. Allotment of additional grades and ratings for the expansion of this service will be published at a later date.

8. The Chief Signal Officer will submit recommendations for appropriate changes in Army Regulation 195-5 and the Chief of the Air Corps for corresponding changes in Army Regulations 85-5 to carry out the above instructions. The later will also submit recommendations for necessary changes in Tables of Basic Allowances and Tables of Allowances to authorize the necessary equipment and supplies.

By Order of the Secretary of War

HQ AWS/PA
SCOTT AFB, IL 62225-5008

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Meteorologists badge approved

The long-awaited Meteorologists badge was approved by the Air Force Chief of Staff in April 1937.

The Meteorologists badge (right) is similar to the design of the air traffic controllers badge, except that it depicts the Air Weather Service shield in the center.

The badge, in antiqued silver or shiny platinum finish, will be awarded in three grades: basic, senior and master. A two-third scale and a subdued version embroidered in cloth are expected to be available for wear in conformity with Air Force Regulation 26-10.

Specialized Support Award named for WWI weathermen

The AWS Specialized Support Award has been named in honor of SSgt. Robert A. Dodson, a weather observer who parachuted into France in the predawn darkness of D-Day, in World War II. The award was established in 1968 to recognize individual excellence by an AWS NCO or airman in AFSC 20xx providing specialized weather support.

Trained as a weather installation observer, Sergeant Dodson was assigned to Ascot, England in April 1944. He volunteered for jump school just before "D-day," and received a minimum of training prior to his first, and only jump, with the 52nd Airborne Division at 2:30 a.m., June 6, 1944.

Landing just outside St. Mere Eglise, France, Dodson and eight members of his Air Support Party, came under fire, forcing them all to act as riflemen soon after entering the city. When the siege lifted 30 hours later, Sergeant Dodson began duties as a weatherman, sending hourly observations, including wind direction and force, visibility, ceiling cloud and cloud heights, temperature and dewpoint, by radio. He continued taking and sending observations until June 21, when he was evacuated to the hospital at Bouville for treatment of his knee, injured when he landed 15 days earlier. After the war, SSgt. Dodson left the Army.