

The National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS) and the NPOESS Preparatory Project (NPP) – Program Status and International Initiatives Status

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A Presidential Decision Directive (PDD), signed in May of 1994, directed the convergence of the polar orbiting weather satellites systems into a single national system. The Integrated Program Office (IPO) within NOAA was established in October 1994 as a result of the signing of a tri-agency Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in May 1994. The new converged system was identified as the National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS). The IPO is staffed with representatives of NOAA, Department of Defense and NASA. This unique tri-agency office has the mission to provide a converged polar-orbiting operational, environmental satellite system that meets user community requirements. The NPP is a joint-agency mission intending to serve the National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS) Integrated Program Office (IPO) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and their user communities. The NPP provides the Earth science community with data continuity and also provides the IPO and its users a risk reduction demonstration of capabilities for critical NPOESS instruments. NPOESS was formally restructured in 2007. This restructure has changed the NPOESS and NPP payload compliments and has changed the anticipated launch dates. All these changes impact NPOESS-NPP data users as they prepare to receive data from this next generation polar-orbiting system. As a result of the restructure, the NPOESS Program Executive Office (PEO) initiated installing additional ground resources in Antarctica to capture Europe's current MetOp satellites, thus potentially reducing data latency by almost half of the current timeliness. This capability could be operational by 2012. Additionally, the PEO office is actively engaged internationally to seek other sources of satellite data to compliment NPOESS. For example, the PEO office and NOAA are actively discussing how to have JAXA's GCOM series of satellites compliment the NPOESS constellation. This paper shall briefly discuss NPOESS-NPP program status as well as a comprehensive update on international activities that will positively affect our world-wide data users.

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