Charter of the Federal Forecasters Consortium

The Federal Forecasters Consortium is a collaborative effort of agencies in the United States Government, as well as other interested parties in the academic and not-for-profit communities, who share an interest in the practice, planning, and use of forecasting activities by and within the Federal Government. In this context forecasting is taken to mean advance planning, decision-making, and the description of expected outcomes, all for unknown future situations. The art of forecasting encompasses many disciplines and utilizes many tools, all applied with the intent of predicting and evaluating alternative futures. The Consortium provides an environment in which forecasters can network, present papers, take courses, attend seminars, and otherwise improve their ability to prepare meaningful and timely forecasts of occurrences in today's complex and changing world. The primary objectives of the Consortium are as follows:

1. To provide a forum for forecasters to exchange information on data issues and data quality, on forecast methodologies, and on evaluation techniques.

2. To promote an ongoing dialogue about various forecasting topics among professionals from a variety of disciplines.

3. To build a core network of professionals whose collaboration furthers the use of forecasting as an important planning tool in the 21st century.

4. To expand the network of forecasters by seeking sponsorship from agencies in all parts of the Government and by actively seeking out and fostering working relationships among government, private, and academic communities of forecasters.

5. To provide both formal and informal opportunities to learn about general forecasting methodologies or about new techniques still in experimental stages.

6. To discuss data presentation and dissemination issues.

Membership

The role of member organizations is to provide support and advice to the Federal Forecasters Consortium Governing Board in promoting, planning, and conducting the periodic Federal Forecasters Conference, forecast methodology workshops, and such seminars and networking events as are deemed necessary and useful by the Board. Any government agency may seek to become a member of the Consortium by satisfying the following criteria:

1. Provide support to the Federal Forecasters Consortium in the form of financial support, in-kind contributions, or person-hour support for the programs of the Consortium.

2. Name one or more representatives to the Consortium Governing Board who shall regularly attend and participate in the meetings of the Consortium.

Any not-for-profit or academic organization with an interest in the purposes and goals of the Consortium may become an associate member of the Consortium by satisfying the same criteria.

While there is no intent to exclude agency representatives from the Governing Board if their management is unwilling or unable to formally commit to support for the organization, we feel that it is equally important for the largest participating agencies to understand, acknowledge, and support in a more formal way the activities of the FFC. If it is not against current policies of these agencies, a Memorandum of Understanding is one appropriate way to show high-level agency support of the Consortium.

Governing Board

The Federal Forecasters Consortium Governing Board shall consist of one or more individuals from each sponsoring agency and partnering organization. These individuals are named to the Board by their respective organization or agency. The chairperson, recording secretary, and other committee assignments are chosen from and by the Governing Board on a sesquiennial basis. The work of the Governing Board is to meet at least four times a year to plan the conference, locate resources to conduct the conference, deliberate on issues affecting its operations, promote collaboration among forecasters, organize forecasting workshops, host networking events, and support an ongoing seminar series focusing on topics of interest to forecasters.