The WMO Competency Framework for Weather Forecasters

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Over the past number of years, a range of competency frameworks, focused on different tasks and responsibilities, have been developed by groups of experts working with WMO. First to be developed were competency frameworks for personnel engaged in Aviation Meteorology (both observers and forecasters) and it is now mandatory that all personnel working in Aviation Meteorology be regularly tested and deemed competent in their jobs.

A competency framework for "Public Weather Service" (PWS) forecasters was developed, as were frameworks for weather broadcasters and others in public-facing, service-oriented roles in meteorology. Following the publication of the "WMO Guide to Competencies" (Feb 2018) the competency frameworks relating to PWS forecasters, weather broadcasters etc were significantly revised to bring them into line with the new guidelines.

The number of competency frameworks relevant to PWS has now been reduced from five to four. The fundamental framework is for operational weather forecasters, and seeks to capture the essential skills and competencies needed on the forecast bench. The next category is "Weather Broadcasters" which build on the forecasters competencies to add essential skills in communication, both visual and verbal. This category also covers those who work as media liaison personnel with meteorological organisations.

The growing importance and relevance of emergency management is reflected in a competency framework for those forecasters / meteorologists whose role is to liaise with and support emergency management activity, both in the strategic and planning phases and operationally.

Finally, given the profusion of weather-related products and services available on-line, there is a competency framework for those personnel whose task it is to design products and services, both for the public and for specialised users.

For each competency framework there are "top-level competencies" that seek to encapsulate the key capabilities required to successfully carry out each task. Underneath these are the "second-level competencies", divided into performance criteria" and "background knowledge and skills". The key attribute of these second-level competencies is that they be testable, as it is through testing personnel against these that competency is illustrated or otherwise.

The presentation will provide an overview of the PWS-related frameworks following revision, and sketch out a timeline for their introduction to forecast offices.