



NWS Reverses Course- Agrees to Fill Vacant ITO Positions

(August 20, 2012) National Weather Service has agreed to fill the 10 vacant ITO positions at WFOs from Caribou to Guam, at least one of which has been vacant for a year. This decision represents a radical course correction for the NWS, which has been telling Congress that the ITOs are unnecessary.

As part of his budget submission in February, the President proposed to abolish the ITOs at all 122 WFOs. Last March, NWS management informed NWSEO that it had decided not to fill any vacant ITO positions “to mitigate impacts to employees in case the President’s budget is enacted.” The union filed a grievance challenging the agency’s unilateral decision to phase out the ITO position without Congress’ approval. Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees rejected the President’s proposal to eliminate the ITOs, but the NWS continued its efforts to phase out the ITOs. A hearing on the union’s grievance was scheduled to commence this week, but NWSEO has now withdrawn the matter from arbitration due to the NWS agreement to fill the ITO positions.

The agency is preparing to issue a blanket vacancy announcement for the ITO positions in the continental U.S. A separate vacancy announcement is being prepared for Guam.

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